Dr. Johnson's Works: Life, Poems, and Tales, Volume 1 eBook

Dr. Johnson's Works: Life, Poems, and Tales, Volume 1 by Samuel Johnson

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An essay
on
the life and genius
of
Samuel Johnson, *ll*.D.

When the works of a great writer, who has bequeathed to posterity a lasting legacy, are presented to the world, it is naturally expected that some account of his life should accompany the edition. The reader wishes to know as much as possible of the author. The circumstances that attended him, the features of his private character, his conversation, and the means by which he arose to eminence, become the favourite objects of inquiry. Curiosity is excited; and the admirer of his works is eager to know his private opinions, his course of study, the particularities of his conduct, and, above all, whether he pursued the wisdom which he recommends, and practised the virtue which his writings inspire. A principle of gratitude is awakened in every generous mind. For the entertainment and instruction which genius and diligence have provided for the world, men of refined and sensible tempers are ready to pay their tribute of praise, and even to form a posthumous friendship with the author.

In reviewing the life of such a writer, there is, besides, a rule of justice to which the public have an undoubted claim. Fond admiration and partial friendship should not be suffered to represent his virtues with exaggeration; nor should malignity be allowed, under a specious disguise, to magnify mere defects, the usual failings of human nature, into vice or gross deformity. The lights and shades of the character should be given; and if this be done with a strict regard to truth, a just estimate of Dr. Johnson will afford

a lesson, perhaps, as valuable as the moral doctrine that speaks with energy in every page of his works.

The present writer enjoyed the conversation and friendship of that excellent man more than thirty years. He thought it an honour to be so connected, and to this hour he reflects on his loss with regret; but regret, he knows, has secret bribes, by which the judgment may be influenced, and partial affection may be carried beyond the bounds of truth. In the present case, however, nothing needs to be disguised, and exaggerated praise is unnecessary. It is an observation of the younger Pliny, in his epistle to his friend Tacitus, that history ought never to magnify matters of fact, because worthy actions require nothing but the truth: "nam nec historia debet egredi veritatem, et honeste factis veritas sufficit." This rule, the present biographer promises, shall guide his pen throughout the following narrative.

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It may be said, the death of Dr. Johnson kept the public mind in agitation beyond all former example. No literary character ever excited so much attention; and, when the press has teemed with anecdotes, apophthegms, essays, and publications of every kind, what occasion now for a new tract on the same thread-bare subject? The plain truth shall be the answer. The proprietors of Johnson's works thought the life, which they prefixed to their former edition, too unwieldy for republication. The prodigious variety of foreign matter, introduced into that performance, seemed to overload the memory of Dr. Johnson, and, in the account of his own life, to leave him hardly visible. They wished to have a more concise, and, for that reason, perhaps, a more satisfactory account, such as may exhibit a just picture of the man, and keep him the principal figure in the foreground of his own picture. To comply with that request is the design of this essay, which the writer undertakes with a trembling hand. He has no discoveries, no secret anecdotes, no occasional controversy, no sudden flashes of wit and humour, no private conversation, and no new facts, to embellish his work. Every thing has been gleaned. Dr. Johnson said of himself, "I am not uncandid, nor severe: I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest, and people are apt to think me serious[a]." The exercise of that privilege, which is enjoyed by every man in society, has not been allowed to him. His fame has given importance even to trifles; and the zeal of his friends has brought every thing to light. What should be related, and what should not, has been published without distinction: "dicenda tacenda locuti!" Every thing that fell from him has been caught with eagerness by his admirers, who, as he says in one of his letters, have acted with the diligence of spies upon his conduct. To some of them the following lines, in Mallet's poem on verbal criticism, are not inapplicable:

"Such that grave bird in northern seas is found.
Whose name a Dutchman only knows to sound;
Where'er the king of fish moves on before,
This humble friend attends from shore to shore;
With eye still earnest, and with bill inclined,
He picks up what his patron drops behind,
With those choice cates his palate to regale,
And is the careful Tibbald of a whale."

After so many essays and volumes of Johnsoniana, what remains for the present writer? Perhaps, what has not been attempted; a short, yet full, a faithful, yet temperate, history of Dr. Johnson.

Samuel Johnson was born at Lichfield, September 7, 1709, O. S[b]. His father, Michael Johnson, was a bookseller in that city; a man of large, athletic make, and violent passions; wrong-headed, positive, and, at times, afflicted with a degree of melancholy, little short of madness. His mother was sister to Dr. Ford, a practising physician, and father of Cornelius Ford, generally known by the name of parson

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Ford, the same who is represented near the punch-bowl in Hogarth's Midnight Modern Conversation. In the life of Fenton, Johnson says, that "his abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise." Being chaplain to the earl of Chesterfield, he wished to attend that nobleman on his embassy to the Hague. Colley Cibber has recorded the anecdote. "You should go," said the witty peer, "if to your many vices you would add one more." "Pray, my lord, what is that?" "Hypocrisy, my dear doctor." Johnson had a younger brother named Nathaniel, who died at the age of twenty-seven or twenty-eight. Michael Johnson, the father, was chosen, in the year 1718, under bailiff of Lichfield; and, in the year 1725, he served the office of the senior bailiff. He had a brother of the name of Andrew, who, for some years, kept the ring at Smithfield, appropriated to wrestlers and boxers. Our author used to say, that he was never thrown or conquered. Michael, the father, died December 1731, at the age of seventy-six: his mother at eighty-nine, of a gradual decay, in the year 1759. Of the family nothing more can be related worthy of notice. Johnson did not delight in talking of his relations. "There is little pleasure," he said to Mrs. Piozzi, "in relating the anecdotes of beggary."

Johnson derived from his parents, or from an unwholesome nurse, the distemper called the king's evil. The Jacobites at that time believed in the efficacy of the royal touch, and, accordingly, Mrs. Johnson presented her son, when two years old, before queen Anne, who, for the first time, performed that office, and communicated to her young patient all the healing virtue in her power[c]. He was afterwards cut for that scrophulous humour, and the under part of his face was seamed and disfigured by the operation. It is supposed, that this disease deprived him of the sight of his left eye, and also impaired his hearing. At eight years old, he was placed under Mr. Hawkins, at the free school in Lichfield, where he was not remarkable for diligence or regular application. Whatever he read, his tenacious memory made his own. In the fields, with his schoolfellows, he talked more to himself than with his companions. In 1725, when he was about sixteen years old, he went on a visit to his cousin Cornelius Ford, who detained him for some months, and, in the mean time, assisted him in the classics. The general direction for his studies, which he then received, he related to Mrs. Piozzi. "Obtain," says Ford, "some general principles of every science: he who can talk only on one subject, or act only in one department, is seldom wanted, and, perhaps, never wished for; while the man of general knowledge can often benefit, and always please." This advice Johnson seems to have pursued with a good inclination. His reading was always desultory, seldom resting on any particular author, but rambling from one book

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to another, and, by hasty snatches, hoarding up a variety of knowledge. It may be proper, in this place, to mention another general rule laid down by Ford for Johnson's future conduct: "You will make your way the more easily in the world, as you are contented to dispute no man's claim to conversation excellence: they will, therefore, more willingly allow your pretensions as a writer." "But," says Mrs. Piozzi, "the features of peculiarity, which mark a character to all succeeding generations, are slow in coming to their growth." That ingenious lady adds, with her usual vivacity, "Can one, on such an occasion, forbear recollecting the predictions of Boileau's father, who said, stroking the head of the young satirist, 'This little man has too much wit, but he will never speak ill of any one.'"

On Johnson's return from Cornelius Ford, Mr. Hunter, then master of the free school at Lichfield, refused to receive him again on that foundation. At this distance of time, what his reasons were, it is vain to inquire; but to refuse assistance to a lad of promising genius must be pronounced harsh and illiberal. It did not, however, stop the progress of the young student's education. He was placed at another school, at Stourbridge in Worcestershire, under the care of Mr. Wentworth. Having gone through the rudiments of classic literature, he returned to his father's house, and was probably intended for the trade of a bookseller. He has been heard to say that he could bind a book. At the end of two years, being then about nineteen, he went to assist the studies of a young gentleman, of the name of Corbet, to the university of Oxford; and on the 31st of October, 1728, both were entered of Pembroke college; Corbet as a gentleman-commoner, and Johnson as a commoner. The college tutor, Mr. Jordan, was a man of no genius; and Johnson, it seems, shewed an early contempt of mean abilities, in one or two instances behaving with insolence to that gentleman. Of his general conduct at the university there are no particulars that merit attention, except the translation of Pope's Messiah, which was a college exercise imposed upon him as a task by Mr. Jordan. Corbet left the university in about two years, and Johnson's salary ceased. He was, by consequence, straitened in his circumstances; but he still remained at college. Mr. Jordan, the tutor, went off to a living; and was succeeded by Dr. Adams, who afterwards became head of the college, and was esteemed through life for his learning, his talents, and his amiable character. Johnson grew more regular in his attendance. Ethics, theology, and classic literature, were his favourite studies. He discovered, notwithstanding, early symptoms of that wandering disposition of mind, which adhered to him to the end of his life. His reading was by fits and starts, undirected to any particular science. General philology, agreeably to his cousin Ford's advice, was the object of his ambition. He received, at that time, an

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early impression of piety, and a taste for the best authors, ancient and modern. It may, notwithstanding, be questioned whether, except his bible, he ever read a book entirely through. Late in life, if any man praised a book in his presence, he was sure to ask, “Did you read it through?” If the answer was in the affirmative, he did not seem willing to believe it. He continued at the university, till the want of pecuniary supplies obliged him to quit the place. He obtained, however, the assistance of a friend, and, returning in a short time, was able to complete a residence of three years. The history of his exploits at Oxford, he used to say, was best known to Dr. Taylor and Dr. Adams. Wonders are told of his memory, and, indeed, all who knew him late in life can witness, that he retained that faculty in the greatest vigour.

From the university, Johnson returned to Lichfield. His father died soon after, December, 1731; and the whole receipt out of his effects, as appeared by a memorandum in the son’s handwriting, dated 15th of June, 1732, was no more than twenty pounds[d]. In this exigence, determined that poverty should neither depress his spirits nor warp his integrity, he became under-master of a grammar school at Market Bosworth, in Leicestershire. That resource, however, did not last long. Disgusted by the pride of sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of that little seminary, he left the place in discontent, and ever after spoke of it with abhorrence. In 1733, he went on a visit to Mr. Hector, who had been his schoolfellow, and was then a surgeon at Birmingham, lodging at the house of Warren, a bookseller. At that place Johnson translated a Voyage to Abyssinia, written by Jerome Lobo, a Portuguese missionary. This was the first literary work from the pen of Dr. Johnson. His friend, Hector, was occasionally his amanuensis. The work was, probably, undertaken at the desire of Warren, the bookseller, and was printed at Birmingham; but it appears, in the Literary Magazine, or history of the works of the learned, for March, 1735, that it was published by Bettesworth and Hitch, Paternoster row. It contains a narrative of the endeavours of a company of missionaries to convert the people of Abyssinia to the church of Rome. In the preface to this work, Johnson observes, “that the Portuguese traveller, contrary to the general view of his countrymen, has amused his readers with no romantick absurdities, or incredible fictions. He appears, by his modest and unaffected narration, to have described things, as he saw them; to have copied nature from the life; and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no basilisks, that destroy with their eyes; his crocodiles devour their prey, without tears; and his cataracts fall from the rock, without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants. The reader will here find no regions cursed with irremediable barrenness, or blessed with spontaneous fecundity; no perpetual gloom, or unceasing sunshine; nor are the nations,

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here described, either void of all sense of humanity, or consummate in all private and social virtues; here are no Hottentots without religion, polity or articulate language; no Chinese perfectly polite, and completely skilled in all sciences; he will discover, what will always be discovered by a diligent and impartial inquirer, that, wherever human nature is to be found, there is a mixture of vice and virtue, a contest of passion and reason; and that the Creator doth not appear partial in his distributions, but has balanced, in most countries, their particular inconveniencies, by particular favours."—We have here an early specimen of Johnson's manner; the vein of thinking, and the frame of the sentences, are manifestly his: we see the infant Hercules. The translation of Lobo's narrative has been reprinted lately in a separate volume, with some other tracts of Dr. Johnson's, and, therefore, forms no part of this edition; but a compendious account of so interesting a work, as father Lobo's discovery of the head of the Nile, will not, it is imagined, be unacceptable to the reader.

"Father Lobo, the Portuguese missionary, embarked, in 1622, in the same fleet with the count Vidigueira, who was appointed, by the king of Portugal, viceroy of the Indies. They arrived at Goa; and, in January 1624, father Lobo set out on the mission to Abyssinia. Two of the Jesuits, sent on the same commission, were murdered in their attempt to penetrate into that empire. Lobo had better success; he surmounted all difficulties, and made his way into the heart of the country. Then follows a description of Abyssinia, formerly the largest empire of which we have an account in history. It extended from the Red sea to the kingdom of Congo, and from Egypt to the Indian sea, containing no less than forty provinces. At the time of Lobo's mission, it was not much larger than Spain, consisting then but of five kingdoms, of which part was entirely subject to the emperour, and part paid him a tribute, as an acknowledgment. The provinces were inhabited by Moors, Pagans, Jews, and Christians. The last was, in Lobo's time, the established and reigning religion. The diversity of people and religion is the reason why the kingdom was under different forms of government, with laws and customs extremely various. Some of the people neither sowed their lands, nor improved them by any kind of culture, living upon milk and flesh, and, like the Arabs, encamping without any settled habitation. In some places they practised no rites of worship, though they believed that, in the regions above, there dwells a being that governs the world. This deity they call, in their language, Oul. The christianity, professed by the people in some parts, is so corrupted with superstitions, errours, and heresies, and so mingled with ceremonies borrowed from the Jews, that little, besides the name of christianity, is to be found among them. The Abyssins cannot properly be said to have either cities

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or houses; they live in tents or cottages made of straw or clay, very rarely building with stone. Their villages, or towns, consist of these huts; yet even of such villages they have but few, because the grandees, the viceroys, and the emperour himself, are always in camp, that they may be prepared, upon the most sudden alarm, to meet every emergence in a country, which is engaged, every year, either in foreign wars or intestine commotions. Aethiopia produces very near the same kinds of provision as Portugal, though, by the extreme laziness of the inhabitants, in a much less quantity. What the ancients imagined of the torrid zone being a part of the world uninhabitable, is so far from being true, that the climate is very temperate. The blacks have better features than in other countries, and are not without wit and ingenuity. Their apprehension is quick, and their judgment sound. There are, in this climate, two harvests in the year; one in winter, which lasts through the months of July, August, and September; the other in the spring. They have, in the greatest plenty, raisins peaches pomegranates, sugar-canes, and some figs. Most of these are ripe about lent, which the Abyssins keep with great strictness. The animals of the country are the lion, the elephant, the rhinoceros, the unicorn, horses, mules, oxen, and cows without number. They have a very particular custom, which obliges every man, that has a thousand cows, to save every year one day's milk of all his herd, and make a bath with it for his relations. This they do so many days in each year, as they have thousands of cattle; so that, to express how rich a man is, they tell you, 'he bathes so many times.'

"Of the river Nile, which has furnished so much controversy, we have a full and clear description. It is called, by the natives, Abavi, the Father of Water. It rises in Sacala, a province of the kingdom of Goiama, the most fertile and agreeable part of the Abyssinian dominions. On the eastern side of the country, on the declivity of a mountain, whose descent is so easy, that it seems a beautiful plain, is that source of the Nile, which has been sought after, at so much expense and labour. This spring, or rather these two springs, are two holes, each about two feet diameter, a stone's cast distant from each other. One of them is about five feet and a half in depth. Lobo was not able to sink his plummet lower, perhaps, because it was stopped by roots, the whole place being full of trees. A line of ten feet did not reach the bottom of the other. These springs are supposed, by the Abyssins, to be the vents of a great subterraneous lake. At a small distance to the south, is a village called Guix, through which you ascend to the top of the mountain, where there is a little hill, which the idolatrous Agaci hold in great veneration. Their priest calls them together to this place once a year; and every one sacrifices a cow, or more, according to the different degrees of wealth and devotion. Hence we have sufficient proof, that these nations always paid adoration to the deity of this famous river.

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“As to the course of the Nile, its waters, after their first rise, run towards the east, about the length of a musket-shot; then, turning northward, continue hidden in the grass and weeds for about a quarter of a league, when they reappear amongst a quantity of rocks. The Nile, from its source, proceeds with so inconsiderable a current that it is in danger of being dried up by the hot season; but soon receiving an increase from the Gemma, the Keltu, the Bransa, and the other smaller rivers, it expands to such a breadth in the plains of Boad, which is not above three days’ journey from its source, that a musket-ball will scarcely fly from one bank to the other. Here it begins to run northward, winding, however, a little to the east, for the space of nine or ten leagues, and then enters the so-much-talked-of lake of Dambia, flowing with such violent rapidity, that its waters may be distinguished through the whole passage, which is no less than six leagues. Here begins the greatness of the Nile. Fifteen miles farther, in the land of Alata, it rushes precipitately from the top of a high rock, and forms one of the most beautiful waterfalls in the world. Lobo says, he passed under it without being wet, and resting himself, for the sake of the coolness, was charmed with a thousand delightful rainbows, which the sunbeams painted on the water, in all their shining and lively colours[e]. The fall of this mighty stream, from so great a height, makes a noise that may be heard at a considerable distance: but it was not found, that the neighbouring inhabitants were deaf. After the cataract, the Nile collects its scattered stream among the rocks, which are so near each other, that, in Lobo’s time, a bridge of beams, on which the whole imperial army passed, was laid over them. Sultan Sequed has since built a stone bridge of one arch, in the same place, for which purpose he procured masons from India. Here the river alters its course, and passes through various kingdoms, such as Amhara, Olaca, Choaa, Damot, and the kingdom of Goiama, and, after various windings, returns within a short day’s journey of its spring. To pursue it through all its mazes, and accompany it round the kingdom of Goiama, is a journey of twenty-nine days. From Abyssinia, the river passes into the countries of Fazulo and Ombarca, two vast regions little known, inhabited by nations entirely different from the Abyssins. Their hair, like that of the other blacks in those regions, is short and curled. In the year 1615, Rassela Christos, lieutenant-general to sultan Sequed, entered those kingdoms in a hostile manner; but, not being able to get intelligence, returned without attempting any thing. As the empire of Abyssinia terminates at these descents, Lobo followed the course of the Nile no farther, leaving it to rage over barbarous kingdoms, and convey wealth and plenty into Aegypt, which owes to the annual inundations of this river its envied fertility[f]. Lobo knows nothing of

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the Nile in the rest of its passage, except that it receives great increase from many other rivers, has several cataracts like that already described, and that few fish are to be found in it: that scarcity is to be attributed to the river-horse, and the crocodile, which destroy the weaker inhabitants of the river. Something, likewise, must be imputed to the cataracts, where fish cannot fall without being killed. Lobo adds, that neither he, nor any with whom he conversed about the crocodile, ever saw him weep; and, therefore, all that hath been said about his tears, must be ranked among the fables, invented for the amusement of children.

"As to the causes of the inundations of the Nile, Lobo observes, that many an idle hypothesis has been framed. Some theorists ascribe it to the high winds, that stop the current, and force the water above its banks. Others pretend a subterraneous communication between the ocean and the Nile, and that the sea, when violently agitated, swells the river. Many are of opinion, that this mighty flood proceeds from the melting of the snow on the mountains of Aethiopia; but so much snow and such prodigious heat are never met with in the same region. Lobo never saw snow in Abyssinia, except on mount Semen, in the kingdom of Tigre, very remote from the Nile; and on Namara, which is, indeed, nor far distant, but where there never falls snow enough to wet, when dissolved, the foot of the mountain. To the immense labours of the Portuguese mankind is indebted for the knowledge of the real cause of these inundations, so great and so regular. By them we are informed, that Abyssinia, where the Nile rises, is full of mountains, and, in its natural situation, is much higher than Aegypt; that in the winter, from June to September, no day is without rain; that the Nile receives in its course, all the rivers, brooks, and torrents, that fall from those mountains, and, by necessary consequence, swelling above its banks, fills the plains of Aegypt with inundations, which come regularly about the month of July, or three weeks after the beginning of the rainy season in Aethiopia. The different degrees of this flood are such certain indications of the fruitfulness or sterility of the ensuing year, that it is publickly proclaimed at Cairo how much the water hath gained during the night."

Such is the account of the Nile and its inundations, which, it is hoped, will not be deemed an improper or tedious digression, especially as the whole is an extract from Johnson's translation. He is, all the time, the actor in the scene, and, in his own words, relates the story. Having finished this work, he returned in February, 1734, to his native city; and, in the month of August following, published proposals for printing, by subscription, the Latin poems of Politian, with the history of Latin poetry, from the aera of Petrarch to the time of Politian; and also the life of Politian, to be added by the editor, Samuel Johnson. The book to be printed

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in thirty octavo sheets, price five shillings. It is to be regretted that this project failed for want of encouragement. Johnson, it seems, differed from Boileau, Voltaire, and D'Alembert, who had taken upon them to proscribe all modern efforts to write with elegance in a dead language. For a decision pronounced in so high a tone, no good reason can be assigned. The interests of learning require, that the diction of Greece and Rome should be cultivated with care; and he who can write a language with correctness, will be most likely to understand its idiom, its grammar, and its peculiar graces of style. What man of taste would willingly forego the pleasure of reading Vida, Fracastorius, Sannazaro, Strada, and others, down to the late elegant productions of bishop Lowth? The history which Johnson proposed to himself would, beyond all question, have been a valuable addition to the history of letters; but his project failed. His next expedient was to offer his assistance to Cave, the original projector of the Gentleman's Magazine. For this purpose he sent his proposals in a letter, offering, on reasonable terms, occasionally to fill some pages with poems and inscriptions, never printed before; with fugitive pieces that deserved to be revived, and critical remarks on authors, ancient and modern. Cave agreed to retain him as a correspondent and contributor to the magazine. What the conditions were cannot now be known; but, certainly, they were not sufficient to hinder Johnson from casting his eyes about him in quest of other employment. Accordingly, in 1735, he made overtures to the reverend Mr. Budworth, master of a grammar school at Brerewood, in Staffordshire, to become his assistant. This proposition did not succeed. Mr. Budworth apprehended, that the involuntary motions, to which Johnson's nerves were subject, might make him an object of ridicule with his scholars, and, by consequence, lessen their respect for their master. Another mode of advancing himself presented itself about this time. Mrs. Porter, the widow of a mercer in Birmingham, admired his talents. It is said, that she had about eight hundred pounds; and that sum, to a person in Johnson's circumstances, was an affluent fortune. A marriage took place; and, to turn his wife's money to the best advantage, he projected the scheme of an academy for education. Gilbert Walmsley, at that time, registrar of the ecclesiastical court of the bishop of Lichfield, was distinguished by his erudition, and the politeness of his manners. He was the friend of Johnson, and, by his weight and influence, endeavoured to promote his interest. The celebrated Garrick, whose father, captain Garrick, lived at Lichfield, was placed in the new seminary of education by that gentleman's advice.—Garrick was then about eighteen years old. An accession of seven or eight pupils was the most that could be obtained, though notice was given by a public advertisement[g], that at Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by Samuel Johnson.

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The undertaking proved abortive. Johnson, having now abandoned all hopes of promoting his fortune in the country, determined to become an adventurer in the world at large. His young pupil, Garrick, had formed the same resolution; and, accordingly, in March, 1737, they arrived in London together. Two such candidates for fame, perhaps never, before that day, entered the metropolis together. Their stock of money was soon exhausted. In his visionary project of an academy, Johnson had probably wasted his wife's substance; and Garrick's father had little more than his half-pay.—The two fellow-travellers had the world before them, and each was to choose his road to fortune and to fame. They brought with them genius, and powers of mind, peculiarly formed by nature for the different vocations to which each of them felt himself inclined. They acted from the impulse of young minds, even then meditating great things, and with courage anticipating success. Their friend, Mr. Walmsley, by a letter to the reverend Mr. Colson, who, it seems, was a great mathematician, exerted his good offices in their favour. He gave notice of their intended journey: "Davy Garrick," he said, "will be with you next week; and Johnson, to try his fate with a tragedy, and to get himself employed in some translation, either from the Latin or French. Johnson is a very good scholar and a poet, and, I have great hopes, will turn out a fine tragedy-writer. If it should be in your way, I doubt not but you will be ready to recommend and assist your countrymen." Of Mr. Walmsley's merit, and the excellence of his character, Johnson has left a beautiful testimonial at the end of the life of Edmund Smith. It is reasonable to conclude, that a mathematician, absorbed in abstract speculations, was not able to find a sphere of action for two men, who were to be the architects of their own fortune. In three or four years afterwards, Garrick came forth with talents that astonished the public. He began his career at Goodman's fields, and there, "monstratus fatis Vespasianus!" he chose a lucrative profession, and, consequently, soon emerged from all his difficulties. Johnson was left to toil in the humble walks of literature. A tragedy, as appears by Walmsley's letter, was the whole of his stock. This, most probably, was Irene; but, if then finished, it was doomed to wait for a more happy period. It was offered to Fleetwood, and rejected. Johnson looked round him for employment. Having, while he remained in the country, corresponded with Cave, under a feigned name, he now thought it time to make himself known to a man, whom he considered as a patron of literature. Cave had announced, by public advertisement, a prize of fifty pounds for the best poem on life, death, judgment, heaven, and hell; and this circumstance diffused an idea of his liberality. Johnson became connected with him in business, and in a close and intimate acquaintance. Of Cave's character it is unnecessary to say any thing in this place, as Johnson

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was afterwards the biographer of his first and most useful patron. To be engaged in the translation of some important book was still the object which Johnson had in view. For this purpose, he proposed to give the history of the council of Trent, with copious notes, then lately added to a French edition. Twelve sheets of this work were printed, for which Johnson received forty-nine pounds, as appears by his receipt, in the possession of Mr. Nichols, the compiler of that entertaining and useful work, The Gentleman's Magazine. Johnson's translation was never completed: a like design was offered to the public, under the patronage of Dr. Zachary Pearce; and, by that contention, both attempts were frustrated. Johnson had been commended by Pope, for the translation of the Messiah into Latin verse; but he knew no approach to so eminent a man. With one, however, who was connected with Pope, he became acquainted at St. John's gate; and that person was no other than the well-known Richard Savage, whose life was afterwards written by Johnson with great elegance, and a depth of moral reflection. Savage was a man of considerable talents. His address, his various accomplishments, and, above all, the peculiarity of his misfortunes, recommended him to Johnson's notice. They became united in the closest intimacy. Both had great parts, and they were equally under the pressure of want. Sympathy joined them in a league of friendship. Johnson has been often heard to relate, that he and Savage walked round Grosvenor square till four in the morning; in the course of their conversation reforming the world, dethroning princes, establishing new forms of government, and giving laws to the several states of Europe, till, fatigued at length with their legislative office, they began to feel the want of refreshment, but could not muster up more than four-pence-halfpenny. Savage, it is true, had many vices; but vice could never strike its roots in a mind like Johnson's, seasoned early with religion, and the principles of moral rectitude. His first prayer was composed in the year 1738. He had not, at that time, renounced the use of wine; and, no doubt, occasionally enjoyed his friend and his bottle. The love of late hours, which followed him through life, was, perhaps, originally contracted in company with Savage. However that may be, their connexion was not of long duration. In the year 1738, Savage was reduced to the last distress. Mr. Pope, in a letter to him, expressed his concern for "the miserable withdrawing of his pension after the death of the queen;" and gave him hopes that, "in a short time, he should find himself supplied with a competence, without any dependance on those little creatures, whom we are pleased to call the great." The scheme proposed to him was, that he should retire to Swansea in Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raised by subscription: Pope was to pay twenty pounds. This plan, though finally established, took more than a year before it was carried into execution. In the mean time, the intended retreat of Savage called to Johnson's mind the third satire of Juvenal, in which that poet takes leave of a friend, who was withdrawing himself from all the vices of Rome. Struck with this idea, he wrote that well-known poem, called London. The first lines manifestly point to Savage.

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"Though grief and fondness in my breast rebel,
When injur'd Thales bids the town farewell;
Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend;
I praise the hermit, but regret the friend:
Resolv'd, at length, from vice and London far,
To breathe, in distant fields, a purer air;
And, fix'd on Cambria's solitary shore,
Give to St. David one true Briton more."

Johnson, at that time, lodged at Greenwich. He there fixes the scene, and takes leave of his friend; who, he says in his life, parted from him with tears in his eyes. The poem, when finished, was offered to Cave. It happened, however, that the late Mr. Dodsley was the purchaser, at the price of ten guineas. It was published in 1738; and Pope, we are told, said, "The author, whoever he is, will not be long concealed;" alluding to the passage in Terence, "Ubi, ubi est, diu celari non potest." Notwithstanding that prediction, it does not appear that, besides the copy-money, any advantage accrued to the author of a poem, written with the elegance and energy of Pope. Johnson, in August, 1738, went, with all the fame of his poetry, to offer himself a candidate for the mastership of the school at Appleby, in Leicestershire. The statutes of the place required, that the person chosen should be a master of arts. To remove this objection, the then lord Gower was induced to write to a friend, in order to obtain for Johnson a master's degree in the university of Dublin, by the recommendation of Dr. Swift. The letter was printed in one of the magazines, and was as follows:

Sir,—Mr. Samuel Johnson, author of London, a satire, and some other poetical pieces, is a native of this county, and much respected by some worthy gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who are trustees of a charity-school, now vacant; the certain salary of which is sixty pounds per year, of which they are desirous to make him master; but, unfortunately, he is not capable of receiving their bounty, which would make him happy for life, by not being a master of arts, which, by the statutes of the school, the master of it must be.

Now these gentlemen do me the honour to think, that I have interest enough in you, to prevail upon you to write to dean Swift, to persuade the university of Dublin to send a diploma to me, constituting this poor man master of arts in their university. They highly extol the man's learning and probity; and will not be persuaded, that the university will make any difficulty of conferring such a favour upon a stranger, if he is recommended by the dean. They say, he is not afraid of the strictest examination, though he is of so long a journey; and yet he will venture it, if the dean thinks it necessary, choosing rather to die upon the road, than to be starved to death in translating for booksellers, which has been his only subsistence for some time past.

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I fear there is more difficulty in this affair than these good-natured gentlemen apprehend, especially as their election cannot be delayed longer than the eleventh of next month. If you see this matter in the same light that it appears to me, I hope you will burn this, and pardon me for giving you so much trouble about an impracticable thing; but, if you think there is a probability of obtaining the favour asked, I am sure your humanity and propensity to relieve merit, in distress, will incline you to serve the poor man, without my adding any more to the trouble I have already given you, than assuring you, that I am, with great truth, sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

Trentham, Aug. 1st. *Gower*.

This scheme miscarried. There is reason to think, that Swift declined to meddle in the business; and, to that circumstance, Johnson's known dislike of Swift has been often imputed.

It is mortifying to pursue a man of merit through all his difficulties; and yet this narrative must be, through many following years, the history of genius and virtue struggling with adversity. Having lost the school at Appleby, Johnson was thrown back on the metropolis. Bred to no profession, without relations, friends, or interest, he was condemned to drudgery in the service of Cave, his only patron. In November, 1738, was published a translation of Crousaz's Examen of Pope's Essay on Man; containing a succinct view of the system of the fatalists, and a confutation of their opinions; with an illustration of the doctrine of free will; and an enquiry, what view Mr. Pope might have in touching upon the Leibnitzian philosophy, and fatalism: by Mr. Crousaz, professor of philosophy and mathematics at Lausanne. This translation has been generally thought a production of Johnson's pen; but it is now known, that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter has acknowledged it to be one of her early performances. It is certain, however, that Johnson was eager to promote the publication. He considered the foreign philosopher as a man zealous in the cause of religion; and with him he was willing to join against the system of the fatalists, and the doctrine of Leibnitz. It is well known, that Warburton wrote a vindication of Mr. Pope; but there is reason to think, that Johnson conceived an early prejudice against the Essay on Man; and what once took root in a mind like his, was not easily eradicated. His letter to Cave on this subject is still extant, and may well justify sir John Hawkins, who inferred that Johnson was the translator of Crousaz. The conclusion of the letter is remarkable: "I am yours, Impransus." If by that Latin word was meant, that he had not dined, because he wanted the means, who can read it, even at this hour, without an aching heart?

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With a mind naturally vigorous, and quickened by necessity, Johnson formed a multiplicity of projects; but most of them proved abortive. A number of small tracts issued from his pen with wonderful rapidity; such as Marmor Norfolciense; or an essay on an ancient prophetical inscription, in monkish rhyme, discovered at Lynn, in Norfolk. By Probus Britannicus. This was a pamphlet against sir Robert Walpole. According to sir John Hawkins, a warrant was issued to apprehend the author, who retired, with his wife, to an obscure lodging near Lambeth marsh, and there eluded the search of the messengers. But this story has no foundation in truth. Johnson was never known to mention such an incident in his life; and Mr. Steele, late of the treasury, caused diligent search to be made at the proper offices, and no trace of such a proceeding could be found. In the same year (1739) the lord chamberlain prohibited the representation of a tragedy, called Gustavus Vasa, by Henry Brooke. Under the mask of irony, Johnson published, A Vindication of the Licenser from the malicious and scandalous Aspersions of Mr. Brooke. Of these two pieces, sir John Hawkins says, “they have neither learning nor wit; nor a single ray of that genius, which has since blazed forth;” but, as they have been lately reprinted, the reader, who wishes to gratify his curiosity, is referred to the fourteenth volume of Johnson’s works, published by Stockdale[h]. The lives of Boerhaave, Blake, Barratier, father Paul, and others, were, about that time, printed in the Gentleman’s Magazine. The subscription of fifty pounds a year for Savage was completed; and, in July 1739, Johnson parted with the companion of his midnight hours, never to see him more. The separation was, perhaps, an advantage to him, who wanted to make a right use of his time, and even then beheld, with self-reproach, the waste occasioned by dissipation. His abstinence from wine and strong liquors began soon after the departure of Savage. What habits he contracted in the course of that acquaintance cannot now be known. The ambition of excelling in conversation, and that pride of victory, which, at times, disgraced a man of Johnson’s genius, were, perhaps, native blemishes. A fierce spirit of independence, even in the midst of poverty, may be seen in Savage; and, if not thence transfused by Johnson into his own manners, it may, at least, be supposed to have gained strength from the example before him. During that connexion, there was, if we believe sir John Hawkins, a short separation between our author and his wife; but a reconciliation soon took place. Johnson loved her, and showed his affection in various modes of gallantry, which Garrick used to render ridiculous by his mimicry. The affectation of soft and fashionable airs did not become an unwieldy figure: his admiration was received by the wife with the flutter of an antiquated coquette; and both, it is well known, furnished matter for the lively genius of Garrick.

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It is a mortifying reflection, that Johnson, with a store of learning and extraordinary talents, was not able, at the age of thirty, to force his way to the favour of the public:

"Slow rises worth by poverty depress'd."

"He was still," as he says himself, "to provide for the day that was passing over him." He saw Cave involved in a state of warfare with the numerous competitors, at that time, struggling with the Gentleman's Magazine; and gratitude for such supplies as Johnson received, dictated a Latin ode on the subject of that contention. The first lines,

"Urbane, nullis fesse laboribus,
Urbane, nullis victe calumniis,"

put one in mind of Casimir's ode to Pope Urban:

"Urbane, regum maxime, maxime
Urbane vatum."—

The Polish poet was, probably, at that time, in the hands of a man, who had meditated the history of the Latin poets. Guthrie, the historian, had, from July, 1736, composed the parliamentary speeches for the magazine; but, from the beginning of the session, which opened on the 19th of November, 1740, Johnson succeeded to that department, and continued it from that time to the debate on spirituous liquors, which happened in the house of lords, in February, 1742-3. The eloquence, the force of argument, and the splendor of language, displayed in the several speeches, are well known, and universally admired. That Johnson was the author of the debates, during that period, was not generally known; but the secret transpired several years afterwards, and was avowed, by himself, on the following occasion. Mr. Wedderburne, now lord Loughborough[i], Dr. Johnson, Dr. Francis, the translator of Horace, the present writer, and others, dined with the late Mr. Foote. An important debate, towards the end of sir Robert Walpole's administration, being mentioned, Dr. Francis observed, "that Mr. Pitt's speech, on that occasion, was the best he had ever read." He added, "that he had employed eight years of his life in the study of Demosthenes, and finished a translation of that celebrated orator, with all the decorations of style and language within the reach of his capacity; but he had met with nothing equal to the speech above mentioned." Many of the company remembered the debate, and some passages were cited, with the approbation and applause of all present. During the ardour of conversation, Johnson remained silent. As soon as the warmth of praise subsided, he opened with these words: "That speech I wrote in a garret in Exeter street." The company was struck with astonishment. After staring at each other in silent amaze, Dr. Francis asked, "how that speech could be written by him?" "Sir," said Johnson, "I wrote it in Exeter street. I never had been in the gallery of the house of commons but once. Cave had interest with the door-keepers. He, and the persons employed under him, gained admittance; they brought away the subject of discussion, the names

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of the speakers, the side they took, and the order in which they rose, together with notes of the arguments advanced in the course of the debate. The whole was afterwards communicated to me, and I composed the speeches in the form which they now have in the parliamentary debates." To this discovery, Dr. Francis made answer: "Then, sir, you have exceeded Demosthenes himself; for to say, that you have exceeded Francis's Demosthenes, would be saying nothing." The rest of the company bestowed lavish encomiums on Johnson: one, in particular, praised his impartiality; observing, that he dealt out reason and eloquence, with an equal hand to both parties. "That is not quite true," said Johnson; "I saved appearances tolerably well; but I took care that the *whig dogs* should not have the best of it." The sale of the magazine was greatly increased by the parliamentary debates, which were continued by Johnson till the month of March, 1742-3. From that time the magazine was conducted by Dr. Hawkesworth.

In 1743-4, Osborne, the bookseller, who kept a shop in Gray's inn, purchased the earl of Oxford's library, at the price of thirteen thousand pounds. He projected a catalogue in five octavo volumes, at five shillings each. Johnson was employed in that painful drudgery. He was, likewise, to collect all such small tracts as were, in any degree, worth preserving, in order to reprint and publish the whole in a collection, called The Harleian Miscellany. The catalogue was completed; and the miscellany, in 1749, was published in eight quarto volumes. In this business Johnson was a day-labourer for immediate subsistence, not unlike Gustavus Vasa, working in the mines of Dalecarlia. What Wilcox, a bookseller of eminence in the Strand, said to Johnson, on his first arrival in town, was now almost confirmed. He lent our author five guineas, and then asked him, "How do you mean to earn your livelihood in this town?" "By my literary labours," was the answer. Wilcox, staring at him, shook his head: "By your literary labours! You had better buy a porter's knot." Johnson used to tell this anecdote to Mr. Nichols: but he said, "Wilcox was one of my best friends, and he meant well." In fact, Johnson, while employed in Gray's inn, may be said to have carried a porter's knot. He paused occasionally to peruse the book that came to his hand. Osborne thought that such curiosity tended to nothing but delay, and objected to it with all the pride and insolence of a man who knew that he paid daily wages. In the dispute that of course ensued, Osborne, with that roughness which was natural to him, enforced his argument by giving the lie. Johnson seized a folio, and knocked the bookseller down. This story has been related as an instance of Johnson's ferocity; but merit cannot always take the spurns of the unworthy with a patient spirit[k].

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That the history of an author must be found in his works is, in general, a true observation; and was never more apparent than in the present narrative. Every aera of Johnson's life is fixed by his writings. In 1744, he published the life of Savage; and then projected a new edition of Shakespeare. As a prelude to that design, he published, in 1745, Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, with remarks on sir Thomas Hanmer's edition; to which were prefixed, Proposals for a new Edition of Shakespeare, with a specimen. Of this pamphlet, Warburton, in the preface to Shakespeare, has given his opinion: "As to all those things, which have been published under the title of essays, remarks, observations, &c. on Shakespeare, if you except some critical notes on Macbeth, given as a specimen of a projected edition, and written, as appears, by a man of parts and genius, the rest are absolutely below a serious notice." But the attention of the public was not excited; there was no friend to promote a subscription; and the project died to revive at a future day. A new undertaking, however, was soon after proposed; namely, an English dictionary upon an enlarged plan. Several of the most opulent booksellers had meditated a work of this kind; and the agreement was soon adjusted between the parties. Emboldened by this connexion, Johnson thought of a better habitation than he had hitherto known. He had lodged with his wife in courts and alleys about the Strand; but now, for the purpose of carrying on his arduous undertaking, and to be nearer his printer and friend, Mr. Strahan, he ventured to take a house in Gough square, Fleet street. He was told, that the earl of Chesterfield was a friend to his undertaking; and, in consequence of that intelligence, he published, in 1747, The Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language, addressed to the right honourable Philip Dormer, earl of Chesterfield, one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state. Mr. Whitehead, afterwards poet laureate, undertook to convey the manuscript to his lordship: the consequence was an invitation from lord Chesterfield to the author. A stronger contrast of characters could not be brought together; the nobleman, celebrated for his wit, and all the graces of polite behaviour; the author, conscious of his own merit, towering in idea above all competition, versed in scholastic logic, but a stranger to the arts of polite conversation, uncouth, vehement, and vociferous. The coalition was too unnatural. Johnson expected a Maecenas, and was disappointed. No patronage, no assistance followed. Visits were repeated; but the reception was not cordial. Johnson, one day, was left a full hour, waiting in an antichamber, till a gentleman should retire, and leave his lordship at leisure. This was the famous Colley Cibber. Johnson saw him go, and, fired with indignation, rushed out of the house[l]. What lord Chesterfield thought of his visitor may be seen in a passage in one of that nobleman's

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letters to his son[m]. “There is a man, whose moral character, deep learning, and superior parts, I acknowledge, admire, and respect; but whom it is so impossible for me to love, that I am almost in a fever, whenever I am in his company. His figure (without being deformed) seems made to disgrace or ridicule the common structure of the human body. His legs and arms are never in the position which, according to the situation of his body, they ought to be in, but constantly employed in committing acts of hostility upon the graces. He throws any where, but down his throat, whatever he means to drink; and mangles what he means to carve. Inattentive to all the regards of social life, he mistimes and misplaces every thing. He disputes with heat indiscriminately, mindless of the rank, character, and situation of those with whom he disputes. Absolutely ignorant of the several gradations of familiarity and respect, he is exactly the same to his superiors, his equals, and his inferiors; and, therefore, by a necessary consequence, is absurd to two of the three. Is it possible to love such a man? No. The utmost I can do for him is, to consider him a respectable Hottentot.” Such was the idea entertained by lord Chesterfield. After the incident of Colley Cibber, Johnson never repeated his visits. In his high and decisive tone, he has been often heard to say, “lord Chesterfield is a wit among lords, and a lord among wits.”

In the course of the year 1747, Garrick, in conjunction with Lacy, became patentee of Drury lane playhouse. For the opening of the theatre, at the usual time, Johnson wrote, for his friend, the well-known prologue, which, to say no more of it, may, at least, be placed on a level with Pope’s to the tragedy of Cato. The playhouse being now under Garrick’s direction, Johnson thought the opportunity fair to think of his tragedy of Irene, which was his whole stock on his first arrival in town, in the year 1737. That play was, accordingly, put into rehearsal in January, 1749. As a precursor to prepare the way, and to awaken the public attention, The Vanity of human Wishes, a poem in imitation of the tenth satire of Juvenal, by the author of London, was published in the same month. In the Gentleman’s Magazine, for February, 1749, we find that the tragedy of Irene was acted at Drury lane, on Monday, February the 6th, and, from that time, without interruption, to Monday, February the 20th, being in all thirteen nights. Since that time, it has not been exhibited on any stage. Irene may be added to some other plays in our language, which have lost their place in the theatre, but continue to please in the closet. During the representation of this piece, Johnson attended every night behind the scenes. Conceiving that his character, as an author, required some ornament for his person, he chose, upon that occasion, to decorate himself with a handsome waistcoat, and a gold-laced hat. The late Mr. Topham Beauclerc, who had a great deal of that humour, which pleases the more

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for seeming undesigned, used to give a pleasant description of this green-room finery, as related by the author himself; “But,” said Johnson, with great gravity, “I soon laid aside my gold-laced hat, lest it should make me proud.” The amount of the three benefit nights for the tragedy of Irene, it is to be feared, was not very considerable, as the profit, that stimulating motive, never invited the author to another dramatic attempt. Some years afterwards, when the present writer was intimate with Garrick, and knew Johnson to be in distress, he asked the manager, why he did not produce another tragedy for his Lichfield friend? Garrick’s answer was remarkable: “When Johnson writes tragedy, ‘declamation roars, and passion sleeps:’ when Shakespeare wrote, he dipped his pen in his own heart.”

There may, perhaps, be a degree of sameness in this regular way of tracing an author from one work to another, and the reader may feel the effect of a tedious monotony; but, in the life of Johnson, there are no other landmarks. He was now forty years old, and had mixed but little with the world. He followed no profession, transacted no business, and was a stranger to what is called a town life. We are now arrived at the brightest period, he had hitherto known. His name broke out upon mankind with a degree of lustre that promised a triumph over all his difficulties. The life of Savage was admired, as a beautiful and instructive piece of biography. The two imitations of Juvenal were thought to rival even the excellence of Pope; and the tragedy of Irene, though uninteresting on the stage, was universally admired in the closet, for the propriety of the sentiments, the richness of the language, and the general harmony of the whole composition. His fame was widely diffused; and he had made his agreement with the booksellers for his English dictionary at the sum of fifteen hundred guineas; a part of which was to be, from time to time, advanced, in proportion to the progress of the work. This was a certain fund for his support, without being obliged to write fugitive pieces for the petty supplies of the day. Accordingly we find that, in 1749, he established a club, consisting of ten in number, at Horseman’s, in Ivy lane, on every Tuesday evening. This is the first scene of social life to which Johnson can be traced, out of his own house. The members of this little society were, Samuel Johnson; Dr. Salter, father of the late master of the Charter house; Dr. Hawkesworth; Mr. Ryland, a merchant; Mr. Payne, a bookseller, in Paternoster row; Mr. Samuel Dyer, a learned young man; Dr. William M’Ghie, a Scotch physician; Dr. Edmund Barker, a young physician; Dr. Bathurst, another young physician; and sir John Hawkins. This list is given by sir John, as it should seem, with no other view than to draw a spiteful and malevolent character of almost every one of them. Mr. Dyer, whom sir John says he loved with the affection of a brother, meets with the harshest treatment, because

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it was his maxim, that “to live in peace with mankind, and in a temper to do good offices, was the most essential part of our duty.” That notion of moral goodness gave umbrage to sir John Hawkins, and drew down upon the memory of his friend, the bitterest imputations. Mr. Dyer, however, was admired and loved through life. He was a man of literature. Johnson loved to enter with him into a discussion of metaphysical, moral, and critical subjects; in those conflicts, exercising his talents, and, according to his custom, always contending for victory. Dr. Bathurst was the person on whom Johnson fixed his affection. He hardly ever spoke of him without tears in his eyes. It was from him, who was a native of Jamaica, that Johnson received into his service Frank[n], the black servant, whom, on account of his master, he valued to the end of his life. At the time of instituting the club in Ivy lane, Johnson had projected the Rambler. The title was most probably suggested by the Wanderer; a poem which he mentions, with the warmest praise, in the life of Savage. With the same spirit of independence with which he wished to live, it was now his pride to write. He communicated his plan to none of his friends: he desired no assistance, relying entirely on his own fund, and the protection of the divine being, which he implored in a solemn form of prayer, composed by himself for the occasion. Having formed a resolution to undertake a work that might be of use and honour to his country, he thought, with Milton, that this was not to be obtained “but by devout prayer to that eternal spirit, that can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and send out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases.”

Having invoked the special protection of heaven, and by that act of piety fortified his mind, he began the great work of the Rambler. The first number was published on Tuesday, March the 20th, 1750; and from that time was continued regularly every Tuesday and Saturday, for the space of two years, when it finally closed on Saturday, March 14, 1752. As it began with motives of piety, so it appears that the same religious spirit glowed, with unabating ardour, to the last. His conclusion is: “The essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of christianity, without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I, therefore, look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no man shall diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth.” The whole number of essays amounted to two hundred and eight. Addison’s, in the Spectator, are more in number, but not half in point of quantity: Addison was not bound to publish on stated days; he could watch the ebb and flow of

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his genius, and send his paper to the press, when his own taste was satisfied. Johnson's case was very different. He wrote singly and alone. In the whole progress of the work he did not receive more than ten essays. This was a scanty contribution. For the rest, the author has described his situation: "He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease: he will labour on a barren topick, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce." Of this excellent production, the number sold on each day did not amount to five hundred: of course, the bookseller, who paid the author four guineas a week, did not carry on a successful trade. His generosity and perseverance deserve to be commended; and happily, when the collection appeared in volumes, were amply rewarded. Johnson lived to see his labours nourish in a tenth edition. His posterity, as an ingenious French writer has said, on a similar occasion, began in his life-time.

In the beginning of 1750, soon after the Rambler was set on foot, Johnson was induced, by the arts of a vile impostor, to lend his assistance, during a temporary delusion, to a fraud not to be paralleled in the annals of literature[o]. One Lauder, a native of Scotland, who had been a teacher in the university of Edinburgh, had conceived a mortal antipathy to the name and character of Milton. His reason was, because the prayer of Pamela, in sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, was, as he supposed, maliciously inserted by the great poet in an edition of the Eikon Basilike, in order to fix an imputation of impiety on the memory of the murdered king. Fired with resentment, and willing to reap the profits of a gross imposition, this man collected, from several Latin poets, such as Masenius the jesuit, Staphorstius, a Dutch divine, Beza, and others, all such passages as bore any kind of resemblance to different places in the Paradise Lost; and these he published, from time to time, in the Gentleman's Magazine, with occasional interpolations of lines, which he himself translated from Milton. The public credulity swallowed all with eagerness; and Milton was supposed to be guilty of plagiarism from inferior modern writers. The fraud succeeded so well, that Lauder collected the whole into a volume, and advertised it under the title of An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns, in his Paradise Lost; dedicated to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. While the book was in the press, the proof-sheets were shown to Johnson, at the Ivy lane club, by Payne, the bookseller, who was one of the members. No man in that society was in possession of the authors from whom Lauder professed to make his extracts. The charge was believed, and the

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contriver of it found his way to Johnson, who is represented, by sir John Hawkins, not indeed as an accomplice in the fraud, but, through motives of malignity to Milton, delighting in the detection, and exulting that the poet's reputation would suffer by the discovery. More malice to a deceased friend cannot well be imagined. Hawkins adds, "that he wished well to the argument must be inferred from the preface, which, indubitably, was written by him." The preface, it is well known, was written by Johnson, and for that reason is inserted in this edition. But if Johnson approved of the argument, it was no longer than while he believed it founded in truth. Let us advert to his own words in that very preface. "Among the inquiries to which the ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospection of the progress of this mighty genius in the construction of his work; a view of the fabrick gradually rising, perhaps from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the centre, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure, through all its varieties, to the simplicity of the first plan; to find what was projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected; whether its founder dug them from the quarries of nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own." These were the motives that induced Johnson to assist Lauder with a preface; and are not these the motives of a critic and a scholar? What reader of taste, what man of real knowledge, would not think his time well employed in an enquiry so curious, so interesting, and instructive? If Lauder's facts were really true, who would not be glad, without the smallest tincture of malevolence, to receive real information? It is painful to be thus obliged to vindicate a man who, in his heart, towered above the petty arts of fraud and imposition, against an injudicious biographer, who undertook to be his editor, and the protector of his memory. Another writer, Dr. Towers, in an Essay on the Life and Character of Dr. Johnson, seems to countenance this calumny. He says: "It can hardly be doubted, but that Johnson's aversion to Milton's politics was the cause of that alacrity, with which he joined with Lauder in his infamous attack on our great epic poet, and which induced him to assist in that transaction." These words would seem to describe an accomplice, were they not immediately followed by an express declaration, that Johnson was "unacquainted with the imposture." Dr. Towers adds, "It seems to have been, by way of making some compensation to the memory of Milton, for the share he had in the attack of Lauder, that Johnson wrote the prologue, spoken by Garrick, at Drury lane theatre, 1750, on the performance of the Masque of Comus, for the benefit of Milton's granddaughter." Dr. Towers is not free from prejudice; but, as Shakespeare

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has it, “he begets a temperance, to give it smoothness.” He is, therefore, entitled to a dispassionate answer. When Johnson wrote the prologue, it does appear that he was aware of the malignant artifices practised by Lauder. In the postscript to Johnson’s preface, a subscription is proposed, for relieving the granddaughter of the author of Paradise Lost. Dr. Towers will agree, that this shows Johnson’s alacrity in doing good. That alacrity showed itself again, in the letter printed in the European Magazine, January, 1785, and there said to have appeared originally in the General Advertiser, 4th April, 1750, by which the public were invited to embrace the opportunity of paying a just regard to the illustrious dead, united with the pleasure of doing good to the living. The letter adds, “To assist industrious indigence, struggling with distress, and debilitated by age, is a display of virtue, and an acquisition of happiness and honour. Whoever, therefore, would be thought capable of pleasure, in reading the works of our incomparable Milton, and not so destitute of gratitude, as to refuse to lay out a trifle, in a rational and elegant entertainment, for the benefit of his living remains, for the exercise of their own virtue, the increase of their reputation, and the consciousness of doing good, should appear at Drury lane theatre, to-morrow, April 5, when Comus will be performed, for the benefit of Mrs. Elizabeth Foster, granddaughter to the author, and the only surviving branch of his family. *Nota bene*, there will be a new prologue on the occasion, written by the author of Irene, and spoken by Mr. Garrick.” The man, who had thus exerted himself to serve the granddaughter, cannot be supposed to have entertained personal malice to the grandfather. It is true, that the malevolence of Lauder, as well as the impostures of Archibald Bower, were fully detected by the labours, in the cause of truth, of the reverend Dr. Douglas, the late lord bishop of Salisbury,

—“Diram qui contudit Hydram
Notaque fatali portenta labore subegit.”

But the pamphlet, entitled, Milton vindicated from the Charge of Plagiarism brought against him by Mr. Lauder, and Lauder himself convicted of several forgeries, and gross impositions on the public, by John Douglas, M.A. rector of Eaton Constantine, Salop, was not published till the year 1751. In that work, p. 77, Dr. Douglas says, “It is to be hoped, nay, it is expected, that the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments, and inimitable style, point out the author of Lauder’s preface and postcript, will no longer allow a man to plume himself with his feathers, who appears so little to have deserved his assistance; an assistance which, I am persuaded, would never have been communicated, had there been the least suspicion of those facts, which I have been the instrument of conveying to the world.” We have here a contemporary testimony to the integrity of Dr. Johnson, throughout the whole of that vile transaction.

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What was the consequence of the requisition made by Dr. Douglas? Johnson, whose ruling passion may be said to be the love of truth, convinced Lauder, that it would be more for his interest to make a full confession of his guilt, than to stand forth the convicted champion of a lie; and, for this purpose, he drew up, in the strongest terms, a recantation, in a letter to the reverend Mr. Douglas, which Lauder signed, and published in the year 1751. That piece will remain a lasting memorial of the abhorrence, with which Johnson beheld a violation of truth. Mr. Nichols, whose attachment to his illustrious friend was unwearied, showed him, in 1780, a book, called Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton; in which the affair of Lauder was renewed with virulence; and a poetical scale in the Literary Magazine, 1758, (when Johnson had ceased to write in that collection,) was urged as an additional proof of deliberate malice. He read the libellous passage with attention, and instantly wrote on the margin: "In the business of Lauder I was deceived, partly by thinking the man too frantick to be fraudulent. Of the poetical scale, quoted from the magazine, I am not the author. I fancy it was put in after I had quitted that work; for I not only did not write it, but I do not remember it." As a critic and a scholar, Johnson was willing to receive what numbers, at the time, believed to be true information: when he found that the whole was a forgery, he renounced all connexion with the author.

In March, 1752, he felt a severe stroke of affliction in the death of his wife. The last number of the Rambler, as already mentioned, was on the 14th of that month. The loss of Mrs. Johnson was then approaching, and, probably, was the cause that put an end to those admirable periodical essays. It appears that she died on the 28th of March, in a memorandum, at the foot of the Prayers and Meditations, that is called her Dying Day. She was buried at Bromley, under the care of Dr. Hawkesworth. Johnson placed a Latin inscription on her tomb, in which he celebrated her beauty. With the singularity of his prayers for his deceased wife, from that time to the end of his days, the world is sufficiently acquainted. On Easter day, 22nd April, 1764, his memorandum says: "Thought on Tetty, poor dear Tetty! with my eyes full. Went to church. After sermon I recommended Tetty in a prayer by herself; and my father, mother, brother, and Bathurst, in another. I did it only once, so far as it might be lawful for me." In a prayer, January 23, 1759, the day on which his mother was buried, he commends, as far as may be lawful, her soul to God, imploring for her whatever is most beneficial to her in her present state. In this habit he persevered to the end of his days. The reverend Mr. Strahan, the editor of the Prayers and Meditations, observes, "that Johnson, on some occasions, prays that the Almighty *may have had mercy* on his wife and Mr. Thrale; evidently supposing their sentence to have been already

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passed in the divine mind; and, by consequence, proving, that he had no belief in a state of purgatory, and no reason for praying for the dead that could impeach the sincerity of his profession as a protestant." Mr. Strahan adds, "that, in praying for the regretted tenants of the grave, Johnson conformed to a practice which has been retained by many learned members of the established church, though the liturgy no longer admits it, if *where the tree, falleth, there it shall be*; if our state, at the close of life, is to be the measure of our final sentence, then prayers for the dead, being visibly fruitless, can be regarded only as the vain oblations of superstition. But of all superstitions this, perhaps, is one of the least unamiable, and most incident to a good mind. If our sensations of kindness be intense, those, whom we have revered and loved, death cannot wholly seclude from our concern. It is true, for the reason just mentioned, such evidences of our surviving affection may be thought ill judged; but surely they are generous, and some natural tenderness is due even to a superstition, which thus originates in piety and benevolence." These sentences, extracted from the reverend Mr. Strahan's preface, if they are not a full justification, are, at least, a beautiful apology. It will not be improper to add what Johnson himself has said on the subject. Being asked by Mr. Boswell[p], what he thought of purgatory, as believed by the Roman catholicks? his answer was, "It is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion, that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked, as to deserve everlasting punishment; nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits; and, therefore, that God is graciously pleased to allow a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see there is nothing unreasonable in this; and if it be once established, that there are souls in purgatory, it is as proper to pray for them, as for our brethren of mankind, who are yet in this life." This was Dr. Johnson's guess into futurity; and to guess is the utmost that man can do:

"Shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it."

Mrs. Johnson left a daughter, Lucy Porter, by her first husband. She had contracted a friendship with Mrs. Anne Williams, the daughter of Zachary Williams, a physician of eminence in South Wales, who had devoted more than thirty years of a long life to the study of the longitude, and was thought to have made great advances towards that important discovery. His letters to lord Halifax, and the lords of the admiralty, partly corrected and partly written by Dr. Johnson, are still extant in the hands of Mr. Nichols[q]. We there find Dr. Williams, in the eighty-third year of his age, stating, that he had prepared an instrument, which might be called an epitome or miniature of the terraqueous globe, showing, with the assistance of tables, constructed by himself, the variations of

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the magnetic needle, and ascertaining the longitude, for the safety of navigation. It appears that this scheme had been referred to sir Isaac Newton; but that great philosopher excusing himself on account of his advanced age, all applications were useless, till 1751, when the subject was referred, by order of lord Anson, to Dr. Bradley, the celebrated professor of astronomy. His report was unfavourable[r], though it allows that a considerable progress had been made. Dr. Williams, after all his labour and expense, died in a short time after, a melancholy instance of unrewarded merit. His daughter possessed uncommon talents, and, though blind, had an alacrity of mind that made her conversation agreeable, and even desirable. To relieve and appease melancholy reflexions, Johnson took her home to his house in Gough square. In 1755, Garrick gave her a benefit play, which produced two hundred pounds. In 1766, she published, by subscription, a quarto volume of miscellanies, and increased her little stock to three hundred pounds. That fund, with Johnson's protection, supported her, through the remainder of her life.

During the two years in which the Rambler was carried on, the Dictionary proceeded by slow degrees. In May, 1752, having composed a prayer, preparatory to his return from tears and sorrow to the duties of life, he resumed his grand design, and went on with vigour, giving, however, occasional assistance to his friend, Dr. Hawkesworth, in the Adventurer, which began soon after the Rambler was laid aside. Some of the most valuable essays in that collection were from the pen of Johnson. The Dictionary was completed towards the end of 1754; and, Cave being then no more, it was a mortification to the author of that noble addition to our language, that his old friend did not live to see the triumph of his labours. In May, 1755, that great work was published. Johnson was desirous that it should come from one who had obtained academical honours; and for that purpose his friend, the rev. Thos. Warton, obtained for him, in the preceding month of February, a diploma for a master's degree, from the university of Oxford.—Garrick, on the publication of the Dictionary, wrote the following lines:

"Talk of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
That one English soldier can beat ten of France.
Would we alter the boast, from the sword to the pen,
Our odds are still greater, still greater our men.
In the deep mines of science, though Frenchmen may toil,
Can their strength be compar'd to Locke, Newton, or Boyle?
Let them rally their heroes, send forth all their powers,
Their versemen and prosemen, then match them with ours.
First Shakespeare and Milton, like gods in the fight,
Have put their whole drama and epic to flight.
In satires, epistles, and odes would they cope?
Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope.

And Johnson, well arm'd, like a hero of yore,
Has beat forty French, and will beat forty more."

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It is, perhaps, needless to mention, that forty was the number of the French academy, at the time when their dictionary was published to settle their language.

In the course of the winter, preceding this grand publication, the late earl of Chesterfield gave two essays in the periodical paper, called The World, dated November 28, and December 5, 1754, to prepare the public for so important a work. The original plan, addressed to his lordship in the year 1747, is there mentioned, in terms of the highest praise; and this was understood, at the time, to be a courtly way of soliciting a dedication of the Dictionary to himself. Johnson treated this civility with disdain. He said to Garrick and others: "I have sailed a long and painful voyage round the world of the English language; and does he now send out two cockboats to tow me into harbour?" He had said, in the last number of the Rambler, "that, having laboured to maintain the dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it by the meanness of dedication." Such a man, when he had finished his Dictionary, "not," as he says himself, "in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academick bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow, and without the patronage of the great," was not likely to be caught by the lure, thrown out by lord Chesterfield. He had, in vain, sought the patronage of that nobleman; and his pride, exasperated by disappointment, drew from him the following letter, dated in the month of February, 1755.

"*To the right honourable the earl of Chesterfield*.

My lord,—I have been lately informed, by the proprietors of The World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish, that I might boast myself "le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre;" that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending. But I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in publick, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing, which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.Seven years, my lord, have now passed, since I waited in your outward room, or was repulsed from your door; during which time, I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect; for I never had a patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew acquainted with love, and found him a native of the rocks.

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Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed, till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations, where no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the publick should consider me as owing that to a patron, which providence has enabled me to do for myself.Having carried on my work, thus far, with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed, though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself, with so much exultation,

My lord,
your lordship's most humble
and most obedient servant,
Samuel Johnson."

It is said, upon good authority, that Johnson once received from lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds. It were to be wished that the secret had never transpired. It was mean to receive it, and meaner to give it. It may be imagined, that for Johnson's ferocity, as it has been called, there was some foundation in his finances; and, as his Dictionary was brought to a conclusion, that money was now to flow in upon him. The reverse was the case. For his subsistence, during the progress of the work, he had received, at different times, the amount of his contract; and, when his receipts were produced to him at a tavern dinner, given by the booksellers, it appeared, that he had been paid a hundred pounds and upwards more than his due. The author of a book, called Lexiphanes[s], written by a Mr. Campbell, a Scotchman, and purser of a man of war, endeavoured to blast his laurels, but in vain. The world applauded, and Johnson never replied. "Abuse," he said, "is often of service: there is nothing so dangerous to an author as silence; his name, like a shittlecock [Transcriber's note: sic], must be beat backward and forward, or it falls to the ground." Lexiphanes professed to be an imitation of the pleasant manner of Lucian; but humour was not the talent of the writer of Lexiphanes. As Dryden says, "he had too much horse-play in his raillery."

It was in the summer, 1754, that the present writer became acquainted with Dr. Johnson. The cause of his first visit is related by Mrs. Piozzi, nearly in the following manner:—Mr. Murphy being engaged in a periodical paper, the Gray's inn Journal, was at a friend's house in the country, and, not being disposed to lose pleasure for business, wished to content his bookseller by some unstudied essay. He, therefore, took up a French Journal Litteraire, and, translating something he liked, sent

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it away to town. Time, however, discovered that he translated from the French, a Rambler, which had been taken from the English, without acknowledgment. Upon this discovery, Mr. Murphy thought it right to make his excuses to Dr. Johnson. He went next day, and found him covered with soot, like a chimney-sweeper, in a little room, as if he had been acting Lungs, in the Alchemist, “making ether.” This being told by Mr. Murphy, in company, “Come, come,” said Dr. Johnson, “the story is black enough; but it was a happy day that brought you first to my house.” After this first visit, the author of this narrative, by degrees, grew intimate with Dr. Johnson. The first striking sentence, that he heard from him, was in a few days after the publication of lord Bolingbroke’s posthumous works. Mr. Garrick asked him, “If he had seen them.” “Yes, I have seen them.” “What do you think of them?” “Think of them!” He made a long pause, and then replied: “Think of them! A scoundrel, and a coward! A scoundrel, who spent his life in charging a gun against christianity; and a coward, who was afraid of hearing the report of his own gun; but left half a crown to a hungry Scotchman to draw the trigger, after his death.” His mind, at this time strained, and over-laboured by constant exertion, called for an interval of repose and indolence. But indolence was the time of danger: it was then that his spirits, not employed abroad, turned with inward hostility against himself. His reflections on his own life and conduct were always severe; and, wishing to be immaculate, he destroyed his own peace by unnecessary scruples. He tells us, that when he surveyed his past life, he discovered nothing but a barren waste of time, with some disorders of body, and disturbances of mind, very near to madness. His life, he says, from his earliest years, was wasted in a morning bed; and his reigning sin was a general sluggishness, to which he was always inclined, and, in part of his life, almost compelled, by morbid melancholy, and weariness of mind. This was his constitutional malady, derived, perhaps, from his father, who was, at times, overcast with a gloom that bordered on insanity. When to this it is added, that Johnson, about the age of twenty, drew up a description of his infirmities, for Dr. Swinfen, at that time an eminent physician, in Staffordshire; and received an answer to his letter, importing, that the symptoms indicated a future privation of reason; who can wonder, that he was troubled with melancholy, and dejection of spirit? An apprehension of the worst calamity that can befall human nature hung over him all the rest of his life, like the sword of the tyrant suspended over his guest. In his sixtieth year he had a mind to write the history of his melancholy; but he desisted, not knowing whether it would not too much disturb him. In a Latin poem, however, to which he has prefixed, as a title, [Greek: GNOTHI SEAUTON], he has left a picture of himself, drawn with as much truth, and as firm a hand, as can be seen in the portraits of Hogarth, or sir Joshua Reynolds. The learned reader will find the original poem in this volume; and it is hoped, that a translation, or rather imitation, of so curious a piece, will not be improper in this place.

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Know yourself.
(*After revising and enlarging the English lexicon*, *or dictionary*.)

When Scaliger, whole years of labour past,
Beheld his lexicon complete at last,
And weary of his task, with wond'ring eyes,
Saw, from words pil'd on words, a fabric rise,
He curs'd the industry, inertly strong,
In creeping toil that could persist so long;
And if, enrag'd he cried, heav'n meant to shed
Its keenest vengeance on the guilty head,
The drudgery of words the damn'd would know,
Doom'd to write lexicons in endless woe[t].

Yes, you had cause, great genius, to repent;
"You lost good days, that might be better spent;"
You well might grudge the hours of ling'ring pain,
And view your learned labours with disdain.
To you were given the large expanded mind,
The flame of genius, and the taste refin'd.
'Twas yours, on eagle wings, aloft to soar,
And, amidst rolling worlds, the great first cause explore,
To fix the aeras of recorded time,
And live in ev'ry age and ev'ry clime;
Record the chiefs, who propt their country's cause;
Who founded empires, and establish'd laws;
To learn whate'er the sage, with virtue fraught,
Whate'er the muse of moral wisdom taught.
These were your quarry; these to you were known,
And the world's ample volume was your own.

Yet, warn'd by me, ye pigmy wits, beware,
Nor with immortal Scaliger compare.
For me, though his example strike my view,
Oh! not for me his footsteps to pursue.
Whether first nature, unpropitious, cold,
This clay compounded in a ruder mould;
Or the slow current, loit'ring at my heart,
No gleam of wit or fancy can impart;
Whate'er the cause, from me no numbers flow,
No visions warm me, and no raptures glow.
A mind like Scaliger's, superior still,
No grief could conquer, no misfortune chill.
Though, for the maze of words, his native skies

He seem'd to quit, 'twas but again to rise;
To mount, once more, to the bright source of day,
And view the wonders of th' ethereal way.
The love of fame his gen'rous bosom fir'd;
Each science hail'd him, and each muse inspir'd.
For him the sons of learning trimm'd the bays,
And nations grew harmonious in his praise.

My task perform'd, and all my labours o'er,
For me what lot has fortune now in store?
The listless will succeeds, that worst disease,
The rack of indolence, the sluggish ease.
Care grows on care, and o'er my aching brain
Black melancholy pours her morbid train.
No kind relief, no lenitive at hand,
I seek, at midnight clubs, the social band;
But midnight clubs, where wit with noise conspires,
Where Comus revels, and where wine inspires,

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Delight no more: I seek my lonely bed,
And call on sleep to sooth my languid head.
But sleep from these sad lids flies far away;
I mourn all night, and dread the coming day.
Exhausted, tir'd, I throw my eyes around,
To find some vacant spot on classic ground;
And soon, vain hope! I form a grand design;
Languor succeeds, and all my pow'rs decline.
If science open not her richest vein,
Without materials all our toil is vain.
A form to rugged stone when Phidias gives—
Beneath his touch a new creation lives.
Remove his marble, and his genius dies:
With nature then no breathing statue vies.
Whate'er I plan, I feel my pow'rs confin'd
By fortune's frown, and penury of mind.
I boast no knowledge, glean'd with toil and strife,
That bright reward of a well acted life.
I view myself, while reason's feeble light
Shoots a pale glimmer through the gloom of night;
While passions, error, phantoms of the brain,
And vain opinions, fill the dark domain;
A dreary void, where fears, with grief combin'd,
Waste all within, and desolate the mind.

What then remains? Must I, in slow decline,
To mute inglorious ease old age resign?
Or, bold ambition kindling in my breast,
Attempt some arduous task? Or, were it best,
Brooding o'er lexicons to pass the day,
And in that labour drudge my life away?

Such is the picture for which Dr. Johnson sat to himself. He gives the prominent features of his character; his lassitude, his morbid melancholy, his love of fame, his dejection, his tavern-parties, and his wandering reveries, "Vacuae mala somnia mentis," about which so much has been written; all are painted in miniature, but in vivid colours, by his own hand. His idea of writing more dictionaries was not merely said in verse. Mr. Hamilton, who was at that time an eminent printer, and well acquainted with Dr. Johnson, remembers that he engaged in a Commercial Dictionary, and, as appears by the receipts in his possession, was paid his price for several sheets; but he soon

relinquished the undertaking. It is probable, that he found himself not sufficiently versed in that branch of knowledge.

He was again reduced to the expedient of short compositions, for the supply of the day. The writer of this narrative has now before him a letter, in Dr. Johnson's handwriting, which shows the distress and melancholy situation of the man, who had written the Rambler, and finished the great work of his Dictionary. The letter is directed to Mr. Richardson, the author of Clarissa, and is as follows:

"*Sir*,—I am obliged to entreat your assistance. I am now under an arrest for five pounds eighteen shillings. Mr. Strahan, from whom I should have received the necessary help in this case, is not at home; and I am afraid of not finding Mr. Millar. If you will be so good as to send me this sum, I will very gratefully repay you, and add it to all former obligations. I am, sir,

Your most obedient,

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and most humble servant,

Samuel Johnson.

Gough square, 16 March."

In the margin of this letter, there is a memorandum in these words: "March 16, 1756, sent six guineas. Witness, Wm. Richardson." For the honour of an admired writer it is to be regretted, that we do not find a more liberal entry. To his friend, in distress, he sent eight shillings more than was wanted. Had an incident of this kind occurred in one of his romances, Richardson would have known how to grace his hero; but in fictitious scenes, generosity costs the writer nothing.

About this time Johnson contributed several papers to a periodical miscellany, called The Visiter, from motives which are highly honourable to him, a compassionate regard for the late Mr. Christopher Smart. The criticism on Pope's epitaphs appeared in that work. In a short time after, he became a reviewer in the Literary magazine, under the auspices of the late Mr. Newbery, a man of a projecting head, good taste, and great industry. This employment engrossed but little of Johnson's time. He resigned himself to indolence, took no exercise, rose about two, and then received the visits of his friends. Authors, long since forgotten, waited on him, as their oracle, and he gave responses in the chair of criticism. He listened to the complaints, the schemes, and the hopes and fears of a crowd of inferior writers, "who," he said, in the words of Roger Ascham, "lived *men knew not how, and died obscure, men marked not when*." He believed, that he could give a better history of Grub street than any man living. His house was filled with a succession of visitors till four or five in the evening. During the whole time he presided at his tea-table. Tea was his favourite beverage; and, when the late Jonas Hanway pronounced his anathema against the use of tea, Johnson rose in defence of his habitual practice, declaring himself "in that article, a hardened sinner, who had for years diluted his meals with the infusion of that fascinating plant; whose tea-kettle had no time to cool; who, with tea, solaced the midnight hour, and with tea welcomed the morning."

The proposal for a new edition of Shakespeare, which had formerly miscarried, was resumed in the year 1756. The booksellers readily agreed to his terms: and subscription-tickets were issued out. For undertaking this work, money, he confessed, was the inciting motive. His friends exerted themselves to promote his interest; and, in the mean time, he engaged in a new periodical production, called The Idler. The first number appeared on Saturday, April 15, 1758 and the last, April 5, 1760. The profits of this work, and the subscriptions for the new edition of Shakespeare, were the means by which he supported himself for four or five years. In 1759, was published Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia. His translation of Lobo's Voyage to Abissinia, seems to have pointed out that country for the scene

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of action; and Rassela Christos, the general of sultan Sequed, mentioned in that work, most probably suggested the name of the prince. The author wanted to set out on a journey to Lichfield, in order to pay the last offices of filial piety to his mother, who, at the age of ninety, was then near her dissolution; but money was necessary. Mr. Johnston, a bookseller, who has, long since, left off business, gave one hundred pounds for the copy. With this supply Johnson set out for Lichfield; but did not arrive in time to close the eyes of a parent whom he loved. He attended the funeral, which, as appears among his memorandums, was on the 23rd of January, 1759.

Johnson now found it necessary to retrench his expenses. He gave up his house in Gough square. Mrs. Williams went into lodgings. He retired to Gray's inn, and soon removed to chambers in the Inner Temple lane, where he lived in poverty, total idleness, and the pride of literature: "Magni stat nominis umbra." Mr. Fitzherbert, the father of lord St. Helens, the present minister at Madrid, a man distinguished, through life, for his benevolence and other amiable qualities, used to say, that he paid a morning visit to Johnson, intending, from his chambers, to send a letter into the city; but, to his great surprise, he found an author by profession, without pen, ink, or paper. The present bishop of Salisbury was also among those who endeavoured, by constant attention, to sooth the cares of a mind, which he knew to be afflicted with gloomy apprehensions. At one of the parties made at his house, Boscovich, the jesuit, who had then lately introduced the Newtonian philosophy at Rome, and, after publishing an elegant Latin poem on the subject, was made a fellow of the Royal Society, was one of the company invited to meet Dr. Johnson. The conversation, at first, was mostly in French. Johnson, though thoroughly versed in that language, and a professed admirer of Boileau and La Bruyere, did not understand its pronunciation, nor could he speak it himself with propriety. For the rest of the evening the talk was in Latin. Boscovich had a ready current flow of that flimsy phraseology, with which a priest may travel through Italy, Spain, and Germany. Johnson scorned what he called colloquial barbarisms. It was his pride to speak his best. He went on, after a little practice, with as much facility as if it was his native tongue. One sentence this writer well remembers. Observing that Fontenelle, at first, opposed the Newtonian philosophy, and embraced it afterwards, his words were: "Fontinellus, ni fallor, in extrema senectute, fuit transfuga ad castra Newtoniana."

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We have now travelled through that part of Dr. Johnson's life, which was a perpetual struggle with difficulties. Halcyon days are now to open upon him. In the month of May, 1762, his majesty, to reward literary merit, signified his pleasure to grant to Johnson a pension of three hundred pounds a year. The earl of Bute was minister. Lord Loughborough, who, perhaps, was originally a mover in the business, had authority to mention it. He was well acquainted with Johnson; but, having heard much of his independent spirit, and of the downfal of Osborne, the bookseller, he did not know but his benevolence might be rewarded with a folio on his head. He desired the author of these memoirs to undertake the task. This writer thought the opportunity of doing so much good the most happy incident in his life. He went, without delay, to the chambers, in the Inner Temple lane, which, in fact, were the abode of wretchedness. By slow and studied approaches the message was disclosed. Johnson made a long pause: he asked if it was seriously intended: he fell into a profound meditation, and his own definition of a pensioner occurred to him. He was told, "that he, at least, did not come within the definition." He desired to meet next day, and dine at the Mitre tavern. At that meeting he gave up all his scruples. On the following day, lord Loughborough conducted him to the earl of Bute. The conversation that passed, was, in the evening, related to this writer, by Dr. Johnson. He expressed his sense of his majesty's bounty, and thought himself the more highly honoured, as the favour was not bestowed on him for having dipped his pen in faction. "No, sir," said lord Bute, "it is not offered to you for having dipped your pen in faction, nor with a design that you ever should." Sir John Hawkins will have it, that, after this interview, Johnson was often pressed to wait on lord Bute, but with a sullen spirit refused to comply. However that be, Johnson was never heard to utter a disrespectful word of that nobleman. The writer of this essay remembers a circumstance, which may throw some light on this subject. The late Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, whom Johnson loved and respected, contended for the pre-eminence of the Scotch writers; and Ferguson's book on Civil Society, then on the eve of publication, he said, would give the laurel to North Britain. "Alas! what can he do upon that subject?" said Johnson: "Aristotle, Polybius, Grotius, Puffendorf, and Burlemaqui, have reaped in that field before him." "He will treat it," said Dr. Rose, "in a new manner." "A new manner! Buckinger had no hands, and he wrote his name with his toes, at Charing Cross, for half a crown a piece; that was a new manner of writing!" Dr. Rose replied: "If that will not satisfy you, I will name a writer, whom you must allow to be the best in the kingdom." "Who is that?" "The earl of Bute, when he wrote an order for your pension." "There, sir," said Johnson, "you have me in the toil: to lord Bute I must allow whatever praise you claim for him." Ingratitude was no part of Johnson's character.

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Being now in the possession of a regular income, Johnson left his chambers in the temple, and, once more, became master of a house in Johnson's court, Fleet street. Dr. Levet, his friend and physician in ordinary[u], paid his daily visits, with assiduity; made tea all the morning, talked what he had to say, and did not expect an answer. Mrs. Williams had her apartment in the house, and entertained her benefactor with more enlarged conversation. Chymistry was a part of Johnson's amusement. For this love of experimental philosophy, sir John Hawkins thinks an apology necessary. He tells us, with great gravity, that curiosity was the only object in view; not an intention to grow suddenly rich by the philosopher's stone, or the transmutation of metals. To enlarge this circle, Johnson, once more, had recourse to a literary club. This was at the Turk's head, in Gerard street, Soho, on every Tuesday evening through the year. The members were, besides himself, the right honourable Edmund Burke, sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Nugent, Dr. Goldsmith, the late Mr. Topham Beauclerc, Mr. Langton, Mr. Chamier, sir J. Hawkins, and some others. Johnson's affection for sir Joshua was founded on a long acquaintance, and a thorough knowledge of the virtuous and amiable qualities of that excellent artist. He delighted in the conversation of Mr. Burke. He met him, for the first time, at Mr. Garrick's, several years ago. On the next day he said: "I suppose, Murphy, you are proud of your countryman: 'Cum talis sit, utinam noster esset!'" From that time, his constant observation was, "that a man of sense could not meet Mr. Burke, by accident, under a gateway, to avoid a shower, without being convinced, that he was the first man in England." Johnson felt not only kindness, but zeal and ardour for his friends. He did every thing in his power to advance the reputation of Dr. Goldsmith. He loved him, though he knew his failings, and particularly the leaven of envy, which corroded the mind of that elegant writer, and made him impatient, without disguise, of the praises bestowed on any person whatever. Of this infirmity, which marked Goldsmith's character, Johnson gave a remarkable instance. It happened that he went with sir Joshua Reynolds and Goldsmith, to see the fantoccini, which were exhibited, some years ago, in or near the Haymarket. They admired the curious mechanism by which the puppets were made to walk the stage, draw a chair to the table, sit down, write a letter, and perform a variety of other actions, with such dexterity, that "though nature's journeymen made the men, they imitated humanity," to the astonishment of the spectator. The entertainment being over, the three friends retired to a tavern. Johnson and sir Joshua talked with pleasure of what they had seen; and, says Johnson, in a tone of admiration: "How the little fellow brandished his spontoon!" "There is nothing in it," replied Goldsmith, starting up with impatience, "give me a spontoon; I can do it as well myself."

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Enjoying his amusements at his weekly club, and happy in a state of independence, Johnson gained, in the year 1765, another resource, which contributed, more than any thing else, to exempt him from the solicitudes of life. He was introduced to the late Mr. Thrale and his family. Mrs. Piozzi has related the fact, and it is, therefore, needless to repeat it in this place. The author of this narrative looks back to the share he had in that business, with self-congratulation, since he knows the tenderness which, from that time, soothed Johnson's cares at Streatham, and prolonged a valuable life. The subscribers to Shakespeare began to despair of ever seeing the promised edition. To acquit himself of this obligation, he went to work unwillingly, but proceeded with vigour. In the month of October, 1765, Shakespeare was published; and, in a short time after, the university of Dublin sent over a diploma, in honourable terms, creating him a doctor of laws. Oxford, in eight or ten years afterwards, followed the example; and, till then, Johnson never assumed the title of doctor. In 1766, his constitution seemed to be in a rapid decline; and that morbid melancholy, which often clouded his understanding, came upon him with a deeper gloom than ever. Mr. and Mrs. Thrale paid him a visit in this situation, and found him on his knees, with Dr. Delap, the rector of Lewes, in Sussex, beseeching God to continue to him the use of his understanding. Mr. Thrale took him to his house at Streatham, and Johnson, from that time, became a constant resident in the family. He went, occasionally, to the club in Gerard street, but his headquarters were fixed at Streatham. An apartment was fitted up for him, and the library was greatly enlarged. Parties were constantly invited from town; and Johnson was every day at an elegant table, with select and polished company. Whatever could be devised by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale to promote the happiness, and establish the health of their guest, was studiously performed from that time to the end of Mr. Thrale's life. Johnson accompanied the family, in all their summer excursions, to Brighthelmstone, to Wales, and to Paris. It is but justice to Mr. Thrale to say, that a more ingenuous frame of mind no man possessed. His education at Oxford gave him the habits of a gentleman; his amiable temper recommended his conversation; and the goodness of his heart made him a sincere friend. That he was the patron of Johnson, is an honour to his memory.

In petty disputes with contemporary writers, or the wits of the age, Johnson was seldom entangled. A single incident of that kind may not be unworthy of notice, since it happened with a man of great celebrity in his time. A number of friends dined with Garrick on a Christmas day. Foote was then in Ireland. It was said, at table, that the modern Aristophanes (so Foote was called) had been horsewhipped by a Dublin apothecary, for mimicking him on the stage. "I wonder," said Garrick, "that any man should

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show so much resentment to Foote; he has a patent for such liberties; nobody ever thought it worth his while to quarrel with him in London." "I am glad," said Johnson, "to find that the man is rising in the world." The expression was afterwards repeated to Foote, who, in return, gave out, that he would produce the Caliban of literature on the stage. Being informed of this design, Johnson sent word to Foote: "that the theatre being intended for the reformation of vice, he would step from the boxes on the stage, and correct him before the audience." Foote knew the intrepidity of his antagonist, and abandoned the design. No ill will ensued. Johnson used to say: "that for broad-faced mirth, Foote had not his equal."

Dr. Johnson's fame excited the curiosity of the king. His majesty expressed a desire to see a man of whom extraordinary things were said. Accordingly, the librarian at Buckingham house invited Johnson to see that elegant collection of books, at the same time giving a hint of what was intended. His majesty entered the room, and, among other things, asked the author, "if he meant to give the world any more of his compositions." Johnson answered: "that he thought he had written enough." "And I should think so too," replied his majesty, "if you had not written so well."

Though Johnson thought he had written enough, his genius, even in spite of bodily sluggishness, could not lie still. In 1770 we find him entering the lists, as a political writer. The flame of discord that blazed throughout the nation, on the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes, and the final determination of the house of commons, that Mr. Luttrell was duly elected by two hundred and six votes, against eleven hundred and forty-three, spread a general spirit of discontent. To allay the tumult, Dr. Johnson published the False Alarm. Mrs. Piozzi informs us, "that this pamphlet was written at her house, between eight o'clock on Wednesday night and twelve on Thursday night." This celerity has appeared wonderful to many, and some have doubted the truth. It may, however, be placed within the bounds of probability. Johnson has observed, that there are different methods of composition. Virgil was used to pour out a great number of verses in the morning, and pass the day in retrenching the exuberances, and correcting inaccuracies; and it was Pope's custom to write his first thoughts in his first words, and gradually to amplify, decorate, rectify, and refine them. Others employ, at once, memory and invention, and, with little intermediate use of the pen, form and polish large masses by continued meditation, and write their productions only, when, in their opinion, they have completed them. This last was Johnson's method. He never took his pen in hand till he had well weighed his subject, and grasped, in his mind, the sentiments, the train of argument, and the arrangement of the whole. As he often thought aloud, he had, perhaps, talked it over to himself. This may account for that rapidity with which, in general, he despatched his sheets to the press, without being at the trouble of a fair copy. Whatever may be the logic or eloquence of the False Alarm, the house of commons have since erased the resolution from the journals. But whether they have not left materials for a future controversy may be made a question.

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In 1771, he published another tract, on the subject of Falkland islands. The design was to show the impropriety of going to war with Spain for an island, thrown aside from human use, stormy in winter, and barren in summer. For this work it is apparent, that materials were furnished by direction of the minister.

At the approach of the general election in 1774, he wrote a short discourse, called The Patriot, not with any visible application to Mr. Wilkes; but to teach the people to reject the leaders of opposition, who called themselves patriots. In 1775, he undertook a pamphlet of more importance, namely, Taxation no Tyranny, in answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American congress. The scope of the argument was, that distant colonies, which had, in their assemblies, a legislature of their own, were, notwithstanding, liable to be taxed in a British parliament, where they had neither peers in one house, nor representatives in the other. He was of opinion, that this country was strong enough to enforce obedience. "When an Englishman," he says, "is told that the Americans shoot up like the hydra, he naturally considers how the hydra was destroyed." The event has shown how much he and the minister of that day were mistaken.

The account of the Tour to the Western Islands of Scotland, which was undertaken in the autumn of 1773, in company with Mr. Boswell, was not published till some time in the year 1775. This book has been variously received; by some extolled for the elegance of the narrative, and the depth of observation on life and manners; by others, as much condemned, as a work of avowed hostility to the Scotch nation. The praise was, beyond all question, fairly deserved; and the censure, on due examination, will appear hasty and ill founded. That Johnson entertained some prejudices against the Scotch must not be dissembled. It is true, as Mr. Boswell says, "that he thought their success in England exceeded their proportion of real merit, and he could not but see in them that nationality which no liberal-minded Scotsman will deny." The author of these memoirs well remembers, that Johnson one day asked him, "have you observed the difference between your own country impudence and Scotch impudence?" The answer being in the negative: "then I will tell you," said Johnson. "The impudence of an Irishman is the impudence of a fly, that buzzes about you, and you put it away, but it returns again, and flutters and teases you. The impudence of a Scotsman is the impudence of a leech, that fixes and sucks your blood." Upon another occasion, this writer went with him into the shop of Davies, the bookseller, in Russell street, Covent garden. Davies came running to him, almost out of breath with joy: "The Scots gentleman is come, sir; his principal wish is to see you; he is now in the back parlour." "Well, well, I'll see the gentleman," said Johnson. He walked towards the room. Mr. Boswell was the person. This writer followed, with no small curiosity. "I find," said Mr. Boswell, "that I am come to London, at a bad time, when great popular prejudice has gone forth against us North Britons; but, when I am talking to you, I am talking to a large and liberal mind, and you know that I cannot help coming from Scotland." "Sir," said Johnson, "no more can the rest of your countrymen[x]."

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He had other reasons that helped to alienate him from the natives of Scotland. Being a cordial well-wisher to the constitution in church and state, he did not think that Calvin and John Knox were proper founders of a national religion. He made, however, a wide distinction between the dissenters of Scotland and the separatists of England. To the former he imputed no disaffection, no want of loyalty. Their soldiers and their officers had shed their blood with zeal and courage in the service of great Britain; and the people, he used to say, were content with their own established modes of worship, without wishing, in the present age, to give any disturbance to the church of England.

This he was, at all times, ready to admit; and, therefore, declared, that, whenever he found a Scotchman, to whom an Englishman was as a Scotchman, that Scotchman should be as an Englishman to him. In this, surely, there was no rancour, no malevolence. The dissenters, on this side the Tweed, appeared to him in a different light. Their religion, he frequently said, was too worldly, too political, too restless and ambitious. The doctrine of cashiering kings, and erecting, on the ruins of the constitution, a new form of government, which lately issued from their pulpits, he always thought was, under a calm disguise, the principle that lay lurking in their hearts. He knew, that a wild democracy had overturned kings, lords, and commons; and that a set of republican fanatics, who would not bow at the name of Jesus, had taken possession of all the livings, and all the parishes in the kingdom. That those scenes of horror might never be renewed, was the ardent wish of Dr. Johnson; and, though he apprehended no danger from Scotland, it is probable, that his dislike of calvinism mingled, sometimes, with his reflections on the natives of that country. The association of ideas could not be easily broken; but it is well known, that he loved and respected many gentlemen from that part of the island. Dr. Robertson's History of Scotland, and Dr. Beattie's Essays, were subjects of his constant praise. Mr. Boswell, Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, Andrew Millar, Mr. Hamilton, the printer, and the late Mr. Strahan, were among his most intimate friends. Many others might be added to the list. He scorned to enter Scotland as a spy; though Hawkins, his biographer, and the professing defender of his fame, allowed himself leave to represent him in that ignoble character. He went into Scotland to survey men and manners. Antiquities, fossils, and minerals, were not within his province. He did not visit that country to settle the station of Roman camps, or the spot, where Galgacus fought the last battle for public liberty. The people, their customs, and the progress of literature, were his objects. The civilities which he received in the course of his tour, have been repaid with grateful acknowledgment, and, generally, with great elegance of expression. His crime is, that he found the

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country bare of trees, and he has stated the fact. This, Mr. Boswell, in his tour to the Hebrides, has told us, was resented, by his countrymen, with anger inflamed to rancour; but he admits that there are few trees on the east side of Scotland. Mr. Pennant, in his tour, says, that, in some parts of the eastern side of the country, he saw several large plantations of pine, planted by gentlemen near their seats; and, in this respect, such a laudable spirit prevails, that, in another half-century, it never shall be said, "To spy the nakedness of the land are you come." Johnson could not wait for that half-century, and, therefore, mentioned things as he found them. If, in any thing, he has been mistaken, he has made a fair apology, in the last paragraph of his book, avowing with candour: "That he may have been surprised by modes of life, and appearances of nature, that are familiar to men of wider survey, and more varied conversation. Novelty and ignorance must always be reciprocal: and he is conscious that his thoughts on national manners, are the thoughts of one who has seen but little."

The poems of Ossian made a part of Johnson's inquiry, during his residence in Scotland and the Hebrides. On his return to England, November, 1773, a storm seemed to be gathering over his head; but the cloud never burst, and the thunder never fell.—Ossian, it is well known, was presented to the public, as a translation from the Erse; but that this was a fraud, Johnson declared, without hesitation. "The Erse," he says, "was always oral only, and never a written language. The Welsh and the Irish were more cultivated. In Erse, there was not in the world a single manuscript a hundred years old. Martin, who, in the last century, published an account of the Western Islands, mentions Irish, but never Erse manuscripts, to be found in the islands in his time. The bards could not read; if they could, they might, probably, have written. But the bard was a barbarian among barbarians, and, knowing nothing himself, lived with others that knew no more. If there is a manuscript from which the translation was made, in what age was it written, and where is it? If it was collected from oral recitation, it could only be in detached parts, and scattered fragments: the whole is too long to be remembered. Who put it together in its present form?" For these, and such like reasons, Johnson calls the whole an imposture. He adds, "The editor, or author, never could show the original, nor can it be shown by any other. To revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt." This reasoning carries with it great weight. It roused the resentment of Mr. Macpherson. He sent a threatening letter to the author; and Johnson answered him in the rough phrase of stern defiance. The two heroes frowned at a distance, but never came to action.

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In the year 1777, the misfortunes of Dr. Dodd excited his compassion. He wrote a speech for that unhappy man, when called up to receive judgment of death; besides two petitions, one to the king, and another to the queen; and a sermon to be preached by Dodd to the convicts in Newgate. It may appear trifling to add, that, about the same time, he wrote a prologue to the comedy of a Word to the Wise, written by Hugh Kelly. The play, some years before, had been damned by a party on the first night. It was revived for the benefit of the author's widow. Mrs. Piozzi relates, that when Johnson was rallied for these exertions, so close to one another, his answer was, "When they come to me with a dying parson, and a dead stay-maker, what can a man do?"

We come now to the last of his literary labours. At the request of the booksellers, he undertook the Lives of the Poets. The first publication was in 1779, and the whole was completed in 1781. In a memorandum of that year, he says, some time in March he finished the Lives of the Poets, which he wrote in his usual way, dilatorily and hastily, unwilling to work, yet working with vigour and haste. In another place, he hopes they are written in such a manner, as may tend to the promotion of piety. That the history of so many men, who, in their different degrees, made themselves conspicuous in their time, was not written recently after their deaths, seems to be an omission that does no honour to the republic of letters. Their contemporaries, in general, looked on with calm indifference, and suffered wit and genius to vanish out of the world in total silence, unregarded and unlamented. Was there no friend to pay the tribute of a tear? No just observer of life to record the virtues of the deceased? Was even envy silent? It seemed to have been agreed, that if an author's works survived, the history of the man was to give no moral lesson to after-ages. If tradition told us that Ben Jonson went to the Devil tavern; that Shakespeare stole deer, and held the stirrup at play-house doors; that Dryden frequented Button's coffee-house; curiosity was lulled asleep, and biography forgot the best part of her function, which is, to instruct mankind by examples taken from the school of life. This task remained for Dr. Johnson, when years had rolled away; when the channels of information were, for the most part, choked up, and little remained besides doubtful anecdote, uncertain tradition, and vague report.

"Nunc situs informis premit et deserta vetustas."

The value of biography has been better understood in other ages, and in other countries. Tacitus informs us, that to record the lives and characters of illustrious men, was the practice of the Roman authors, in the early periods of the republic. In France, the example has been followed. Fontenelle, D'Alembert, and monsieur Thomas, have left models in this kind of composition. They have embalmed the dead. But it is true, that they had incitements and advantages,

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even at a distant day, which could not, by any diligence, be obtained by Dr. Johnson. The wits of France had ample materials. They lived in a nation of critics, who had, at heart, the honour done to their country by their poets, their heroes, and their philosophers. They had, besides, an academy of belles-lettres, where genius was cultivated, refined, and encouraged. They had the tracts, the essays, and dissertations, which remain in the memoirs of the academy, and they had the speeches of the several members, delivered at their first admission to a seat in that learned assembly. In those speeches the new academician did ample justice to the memory of his predecessor; and though his harangue was decorated with the colours of eloquence, and was, for that reason, called panegyric, yet, being pronounced before qualified judges, who knew the talents, the conduct, and morals of the deceased, the speaker could not, with propriety, wander into the regions of fiction. The truth was known, before it was adorned. The academy saw the marble before the artist polished it. But this country has had no academy of literature. The public mind, for centuries, has been engrossed by party and faction; “by the madness of many for the gain of a few;” by civil wars, religious dissensions, trade and commerce, and the arts of accumulating wealth. Amidst such attentions, who can wonder that cold praise has been often the only reward of merit? In this country, Dr. Nathaniel Hodges, who, like the good bishop of Marseilles, drew purer breath amidst the contagion of the plague in London, and, during the whole time, continued in the city, administering medical assistance, was suffered, as Johnson used to relate, with tears in his eyes, to die for debt, in a gaol. In this country, the man who brought the New river to London, was ruined by that noble project; and, in this country, Otway died for want, on Tower hill; Butler, the great author of Hudibras, whose name can only die with the English language, was left to languish in poverty; the particulars of his life almost unknown, and scarce a vestige of him left, except his immortal poem. Had there been an academy of literature, the lives, at least, of those celebrated persons, would have been written for the benefit of posterity. Swift, it seems, had the idea of such an institution, and proposed it to lord Oxford; but whig and tory were more important objects. It is needless to dissemble, that Dr. Johnson, in the life of Roscommon, talks of the inutility of such a project. “In this country,” he says, “an academy could be expected to do but little. If an academician’s place were profitable, it would be given by interest; if attendance were gratuitous, it would be rarely paid, and no man would endure the least disgust. Unanimity is impossible, and debate would separate the assembly.” To this it may be sufficient to answer, that the Royal society has not been dissolved by sullen disgust; and the modern academy, at Somerset

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house, has already performed much, and promises more. Unanimity is not necessary to such an assembly. On the contrary, by difference of opinion, and collision of sentiment, the cause of literature would thrive and flourish. The true principles of criticism, the secret of fine writing, the investigation of antiquities, and other interesting subjects, might occasion a clash of opinions; but, in that contention, truth would receive illustration, and the essays of the several members would supply the memoirs of the academy. "But," says Dr. Johnson, "suppose the philological decree made and promulgated, what would be its authority? In absolute government there is, sometimes, a general reverence paid to all that has the sanction of power the countenance of greatness.—How little this is the state of our country, needs not to be told. The edicts of an English academy would, probably, be read by many, only that they may be sure to disobey them. The present manners of the nation would deride authority, and, therefore, nothing is left, but that every writer should criticise himself." This, surely, is not conclusive. It is by the standard of the best writers, that every man settles, for himself, his plan of legitimate composition; and since the authority of superior genius is acknowledged, that authority, which the individual obtains, would not be lessened by an association with others of distinguished ability. It may, therefore, be inferred, that an academy of literature would be an establishment highly useful, and an honour to literature. In such an institution, profitable places would not be wanted. "Vatis avarus haud facile est animus;" and the minister, who shall find leisure, from party and faction, to carry such a scheme into execution, will, in all probability, be respected by posterity, as the Maecenas of letters.

We now take leave of Dr. Johnson, as an author. Four volumes of his Lives of the Poets were published in 1778, and the work was completed in 1781. Should biography fall again into disuse, there will not always be a Johnson to look back through a century, and give a body of critical and moral instruction. In April, 1781, he lost his friend Mr. Thrale. His own words, in his diary, will best tell that melancholy event. "On Wednesday, the 11th of April, was buried my dear friend Mr. Thrale, who died on Wednesday, the 4th, and with him were buried many of my hopes and pleasures. About five, I think, on Wednesday morning, he expired. I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked, for the last time, upon the face, that, for fifteen years before, had never been turned upon me but with respect and benignity. Farewell: may God, that delighteth in mercy, have had mercy on thee! I had constantly prayed for him before his death. The decease of him, from whose friendship I had obtained many opportunities of amusement, and to whom I turned my thoughts, as to a refuge from misfortunes, has left me heavy. But my business is with myself."—From

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the close of his last work, the malady that persecuted him through life came upon him with alarming severity, and his constitution declined apace. In 1782, his old friend, Levet, expired, without warning and without a groan. Events like these reminded Johnson of his own mortality. He continued his visits to Mrs. Thrale, at Streatham, to the 7th day of October, 1782, when, having first composed a prayer for the happiness of a family, with whom he had, for many years, enjoyed the pleasures and comforts of life, he removed to his own house in town. He says he was up early in the morning, and read fortuitously in the Gospel, “which was his parting use of the library.” The merit of the family is manifested by the sense he had of it, and we see his heart overflowing with gratitude. He leaves the place with regret, and “casts a lingering look behind.”

The few remaining occurrences may be soon despatched. In the month of June, 1783, Johnson had a paralytic stroke, which affected his speech only. He wrote to Dr. Taylor, of Westminster; and to his friend Mr. Allen, the printer, who lived at the next door. Dr. Brocklesby arrived in a short time, and by his care, and that of Dr. Heberden, Johnson soon recovered. During his illness, the writer of this narrative visited him, and found him reading Dr. Watson’s Chymistry. Articulating with difficulty, he said, “From this book, he who knows nothing may learn a great deal; and he who knows, will be pleased to find his knowledge recalled to his mind in a manner highly pleasing.” In the month of August he set out for Lichfield, on a visit to Mrs. Lucy Porter, the daughter of his wife by her first husband; and, in his way back, paid his respects to Dr. Adams, at Oxford. Mrs. Williams died, at his house in Bolt court, in the month of September, during his absence. This was another shock to a mind like his, ever agitated by the thoughts of futurity. The contemplation of his own approaching end was constantly before his eyes; and the prospect of death, he declared, was terrible. For many years, when he was not disposed to enter into the conversation going forward, whoever sat near his chair, might hear him repeating, from Shakespeare,

“Aye, but to die, and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod, and the delighted spirit
To bathe in fiery floods”—

And from Milton,

—“Who would lose,
For fear of pain, this intellectual being?”

By the death of Mrs. Williams he was left in a state of destitution, with nobody but Frank, his black servant, to sooth his anxious moments. In November, 1783, he was swelled from head to foot with a dropsy. Dr. Brocklesby, with that benevolence with which he

always assists his friends, paid his visits with assiduity. The medicines prescribed were so efficacious, that, in a few days, Johnson, while he was offering up his prayers, was suddenly obliged to rise, and, in the course of the day, discharged twenty pints of water.

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Johnson, being eased of his dropsy, began to entertain hopes that the vigour of his constitution was not entirely broken. For the sake of conversing with his friends, he established a conversation club, to meet on every Wednesday evening; and, to serve a man whom he had known in Mr. Thrale's household for many years, the place was fixed at his house, in Essex street, near the Temple. To answer the malignant remarks of sir John Hawkins, on this subject, were a wretched waste of time. Professing to be Johnson's friend, that biographer has raised more objections to his character, than all the enemies to that excellent man. Sir John had a root of bitterness that "put rancours in the vessel of his peace." Fielding, he says, was the inventor of a cant phrase, "Goodness of heart, which means little more than the virtue of a horse or a dog." He should have known, that kind affections are the essence of virtue: they are the will of God implanted in our nature, to aid and strengthen moral obligation; they incite to action: a sense of benevolence is no less necessary than a sense of duty. Good affections are an ornament, not only to an author, but to his writings. He who shows himself upon a cold scent for opportunities to bark and snarl throughout a volume of six hundred pages, may, if he will, pretend to moralise; but goodness of heart, or, to use that politer phrase, "the virtue of a horse or a dog," would redound more to his honour. But sir John is no more: our business is with Johnson. The members of his club were respectable for their rank, their talents, and their literature. They attended with punctuality, till about Midsummer, 1784, when, with some appearance of health, Johnson went into Derbyshire, and thence to Lichfield. While he was in that part of the world, his friends, in town, were labouring for his benefit. The air of a more southern climate, they thought, might prolong a valuable life. But a pension of three hundred pounds a year was a slender fund for a travelling valetudinarian, and it was not then known that he had saved a moderate sum of money. Mr. Boswell and sir Joshua Reynolds undertook to solicit the patronage of the chancellor. With lord Thurlow, while he was at the bar, Johnson was well acquainted. He was often heard to say, "Thurlow is a man of such vigour of mind, that I never knew I was to meet him, but—I was going to say, I was afraid, but that would not be true, for I never was afraid of any man; but I never knew that I was to meet Thurlow, but I knew I had something to encounter." The chancellor undertook to recommend Johnson's case; but without success. To protract, if possible, the days of a man, whom he respected, he offered to advance the sum of five hundred pounds. Being informed of this at Lichfield, Johnson wrote the following letter:

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"*My lord*,—After a long, and not inattentive observation of mankind, the generosity of your lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty, so liberally bestowed, I should gladly receive, if my condition made it necessary; for to such a mind who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that, if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim. My journey to the continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians; and I was very desirous that your lordship should be told it, by sir Joshua Reynolds, as an event very uncertain; for, if I grew much better, I should not be willing; if much worse, I should not be able to migrate. Your lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal; yet, as I have had no long time to brood hopes, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment; and from your lordship's kindness I have received a benefit which only men, like you, are able to bestow. I shall now live *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit.

I am, my lord,

Your lordship's most obliged,

Most grateful, and most humble servant,

Samuel Johnson.

September, 1784."

We have, in this instance, the exertion of two congenial minds; one, with a generous impulse, relieving merit in distress; and the other, by gratitude and dignity of sentiment, rising to an equal elevation.

It seems, however, that greatness of mind is not confined to greatness of rank. Dr. Brocklesby was not content to assist with his medical art; he resolved to minister to his patient's mind, and pluck from his memory the sorrow which the late refusal from a high quarter might occasion. To enable him to visit the south of France, in pursuit of health, he offered, from his own funds, an annuity of one hundred pounds, payable quarterly. This was a sweet oblivious antidote, but it was not accepted, for the reasons assigned to the chancellor. The proposal, however, will do honour to Dr. Brocklesby, as long as liberal sentiment shall be ranked among the social virtues.

In the month of October, 1784, we find Dr. Johnson corresponding with Mr. Nichols, the intelligent compiler of the Gentleman's Magazine, and, in the languor of sickness, still desirous to contribute all in his power to the advancement of science and useful knowledge. He says, in a letter to that gentleman, dated Lichfield, October 20, that "he

should be glad to give so skilful a lover of antiquities any information." He adds, "At Ashbourne, where I had very little company, I had the luck to borrow Mr. Bowyer's

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Life, a book, so full of contemporary history, that a literary man must find some of his old friends. I thought that I could, now and then, have told you some hints worth your notice: we, perhaps, may talk a life over. I hope we shall be much together. You must now be to me what you were before, and what dear Mr. Allen was besides. He was taken unexpectedly away, but, I think, he was a very good man. I have made very little progress in recovery. I am very weak, and very sleepless; but I live on and hope."

In that languid condition he arrived, on the 16th of November, at his house in Bolt court, there to end his days. He laboured with the dropsy and an asthma. He was attended by Dr. Heberden, Dr. Warren, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Butter, and Mr. Cruikshank, the eminent surgeon. Eternity presented to his mind an awful prospect, and, with as much virtue as, perhaps, ever is the lot of man, he shuddered at the thought of his dissolution. His friends awakened the comfortable reflection of a well-spent life; and, as his end drew near, they had the satisfaction of seeing him composed, and even cheerful, insomuch that he was able, in the course of his restless nights, to make translations of Greek epigrams from the Anthologia; and to compose a Latin epitaph for his father, his mother, and his brother Nathaniel. He meditated, at the same time, a Latin inscription to the memory of Garrick; but his vigour was exhausted.

His love of literature was a passion that stuck to his last sand. Seven days before his death he wrote the following letter to his friend Mr. Nichols:

"*Sir*,—The late learned Mr. Swinton, of Oxford, having one day remarked, that one man, meaning, I suppose, no man but himself, could assign all the parts of the Ancient Universal History to their proper authors, at the request of sir Robert Chambers, or myself, gave the account which I now transmit to you, in his own hand, being willing that of so great a work the history should be known, and that each writer should receive his due proportion of praise from posterity.

I recommend to you to preserve this scrap of literary intelligence, in Mr. Swinton's own hand, or to deposit it in the Museum[y], that the veracity of this account may never be doubted.

I am, sir,

Your most humble servant,

Sam. Johnson.

Dec. 6, 1784."

Mr. Swinton.

The History of the Carthaginians.
—Numidians.
—Mauritanians.
—Gaetulians.
—Garamantes.
—Melano-Gaetulians.
—Nigritae.
—Cyrenaica.
—Marmarica.
—Regio Syrtica.
—Turks, Tartars, and Moguls.
—Indians.
—Chinese.
The Dissertation on the peopling of America.
The Dissertation on the Independency of the Arabs.
The Cosmogony, and a small part of the History immediately following. By Mr. Sale.
To the Birth of Abraham. Chiefly by Mr. Shelvock.
History of the Jews, Gauls, and Spaniards. By Mr. Psalmanazai.
Xenophon's Retreat. By the same.
History of the Persians, and the Constantinopolitan Empire. By Dr. Campbell.
History of the Romans. By Mr. Bower[z].

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On the morning of December 7, Dr. Johnson requested to see Mr. Nichols. A few days before, he had borrowed some of the early volumes of the magazine, with a professed intention to point out the pieces which he had written in that collection. The books lay on the table, with many leaves doubled down, and, in particular, those which contained his share in the parliamentary debates. Such was the goodness of Johnson's heart, that he then declared, that "those debates were the only parts of his writings which gave him any compunction: but that, at the time he wrote them, he had no conception that he was imposing upon the world, though they were, frequently, written from very slender materials, and often from none at all, the mere coinage of his own imagination." He added, "that he never wrote any part of his work with equal velocity." "Three columns of the magazine in an hour," he said, "was no uncommon effort; which was faster than most persons could have transcribed that quantity. In one day, in particular, and that not a very long one, he wrote twelve pages, more in quantity than ever he wrote at any other time, except in the Life of Savage, of which forty-eight pages, in octavo, were the production of one long day, including a part of the night."

In the course of the conversation, he asked whether any of the family of Faden, the printer, were living. Being told that the geographer, near Charing Cross, was Faden's son, he said, after a short pause, "I borrowed a guinea of his father near thirty years ago; be so good as to take this, and pay it for me."

Wishing to discharge every duty, and every obligation, Johnson recollected another debt of ten pounds, which he had borrowed from his friend, Mr. Hamilton, the printer, about twenty years before. He sent the money to Mr. Hamilton, at his house in Bedford row, with an apology for the length of time. The reverend Mr. Strahan was the bearer of the message, about four or five days before Johnson breathed his last.

Mr. Sastres, whom Dr. Johnson esteemed and mentioned in his will, entered the room, during his illness. Dr. Johnson, as soon as he saw him, stretched forth his hand, and, in a tone of lamentation, called out, "Jam moriturus!" But the love of life was still an active principle. Feeling himself swelled with the dropsy, he conceived that, by incisions in his legs, the water might be discharged. Mr. Cruikshank apprehended that a mortification might be the consequence; but, to appease a distempered fancy, he gently lanced the surface. Johnson cried out, "Deeper, deeper! I want length of life, and you are afraid of giving me pain, which I do not value."

On the 8th of December, the reverend Mr. Strahan drew his will, by which, after a few legacies, the residue, amounting to about fifteen hundred pounds, was bequeathed to Frank, the black servant, formerly consigned to the testator by his friend Dr. Bathurst.

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The history of a death-bed is painful. Mr. Strahan informs us, that the strength of religion prevailed against the infirmity of nature; and his foreboding dread of the divine justice subsided into a pious trust, and humble hope of mercy, at the throne of grace. On Monday, the 13th day of December, the last of his existence on this side the grave, the desire of life returned with all its former vehemence. He still imagined, that, by puncturing his legs, relief might be obtained. At eight in the morning he tried the experiment, but no water followed. In an hour or two after, he fell into a doze, and about seven in the evening expired without a groan.

On the 20th of the month his remains, with due solemnities, and a numerous attendance of his friends, were buried in Westminster abbey, near the foot of Shakespeare's monument, and close to the grave of the late Mr. Garrick. The funeral service was read by his friend, Dr. Taylor.

A black marble over his grave has the following inscription:

Samuel Johnson, *ll*.D.
obiit XIII die Decembris,
Anno Domini
MDCCLXXXIV.
Aetatis suae LXXV.

If we now look back, as from an eminence, to view the scenes of life, and the literary labours in which Dr. Johnson was engaged, we may be able to delineate the features of the man, and to form an estimate of his genius.

As a man, Dr. Johnson stands displayed in open daylight. Nothing remains undiscovered. Whatever he said is known; and without allowing him the usual privilege of hazarding sentiments, and advancing positions for mere amusement, or the pleasure of discussion, criticism has endeavoured to make him answerable for what, perhaps, he never seriously thought. His diary, which has been printed, discovers still more. We have before us the very heart of the man, with all his inward consciousness; and yet neither in the open paths of life, nor in his secret recesses, has any one vice been discovered. We see him reviewing every year of his life, and severely censuring himself, for not keeping resolutions, which morbid melancholy, and other bodily infirmities, rendered impracticable. We see him, for every little defect, imposing on himself voluntary penance, going through the day with only one cup of tea without milk, and to the last, amidst paroxysms and remissions of illness, forming plans of study and resolutions to amend his life[aa]. Many of his scruples may be called weaknesses; but they are the weaknesses of a good, a pious, and most excellent man.

His person, it is well known, was large and unwieldy. His nerves were affected by that disorder, for which, at two years of age, he was presented to the royal touch. His head shook, and involuntary motions made it uncertain that his legs and arms would, even at

a tea-table, remain in their proper place. A person of lord Chesterfield's delicacy might, in his company, be in a fever. He would, sometimes,

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of his own accord, do things inconsistent with the established modes of behaviour. Sitting at table with the celebrated Mrs. Cholmondeley, who exerted herself to circulate the subscription for Shakespeare, he took hold of her hand, in the middle of dinner, and held it close to his eye, wondering at the delicacy and whiteness, till, with a smile, she asked, “Will he give it to me again, when he has done with it?” The exteriors of politeness did not belong to Johnson. Even that civility, which proceeds, or ought to proceed, from the mind, was sometimes violated. His morbid melancholy had an effect on his temper; his passions were irritable; and the pride of science, as well as of a fierce independent spirit, inflamed him, on some occasions, above all bounds of moderation. Though not in the shade of academic bowers, he led a scholastic life; and the habit of pronouncing decisions to his friends and visitors, gave him a dictatorial manner, which was much enforced by a voice naturally loud, and often overstretched. Metaphysical discussion, moral theory, systems of religion, and anecdotes of literature, were his favourite topics. General history had little of his regard. Biography was his delight. The proper study of mankind is man. Sooner than hear of the Punic war, he would be rude to the person that introduced the subject.

Johnson was born a logician; one of those, to whom only books of logic are said to be of use. In consequence of his skill in that art, he loved argumentation. No man thought more profoundly, nor with such acute discernment. A fallacy could not stand before him; it was sure to be refuted by strength of reasoning, and a precision, both in idea and expression, almost unequalled. When he chose, by apt illustration, to place the argument of his adversary in a ludicrous light, one was almost inclined to think ridicule the test of truth. He was surprised to be told, but it is certainly true, that, with great powers of mind, wit and humour were his shining talents. That he often argued for the sake of triumph over his adversary, cannot be dissembled. Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, has been heard to tell of a friend of his, who thanked him for introducing him to Dr. Johnson, as he had been convinced, in the course of a long dispute, that an opinion, which he had embraced as a settled truth, was no better than a vulgar error. This being reported to Johnson, “Nay,” said he, “do not let him be thankful, for he was right, and I was wrong.” Like his uncle Andrew, in the ring at Smithfield, Johnson, in a circle of disputants, was determined neither to be thrown nor conquered. Notwithstanding all his piety, self-government or the command of his passions in conversation, does not seem to have been among his attainments. Whenever he thought the contention was for superiority, he has been known to break out with violence, and even ferocity. When the fray was over, he generally softened into repentance, and, by conciliating measures,

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took care that no animosity should be left rankling in the breast of his antagonist. Of this defect he seems to have been conscious. In a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he says, “Poor Baretti! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank and manly and independent, and, perhaps, as you say, a little wise. To be frank, he thinks, is to be cynical; and to be independent, is to be rude. Forgive him, dearest lady, the rather, because of his misbehaviour, I am afraid, he learned part of me. I hope to set him, hereafter, a better example.” For his own intolerant and over-bearing spirit he apologized, by observing, that it had done some good; obscenity and impiety were repressed in his company.

It was late in life, before he had the habit of mixing, otherwise than occasionally, with polite company. At Mr. Thrale’s he saw a constant succession of well-accomplished visiters. In that society he began to wear off the rugged points of his own character. He saw the advantages of mutual civility, and endeavoured to profit by the models before him. He aimed at what has been called, by Swift, the “lesser morals,” and by Cicero, “minores virtutes.” His endeavour, though new and late, gave pleasure to all his acquaintance. Men were glad to see that he was willing to be communicative on equal terms and reciprocal complacence. The time was then expected, when he was to cease being what George Garrick, brother to the celebrated actor, called him, the first time he heard him converse, “a tremendous companion.” He certainly wished to be polite, and even thought himself so; but his civility still retained something uncouth and harsh. His manners took a milder tone, but the endeavour was too palpably seen. He laboured even in trifles. He was a giant gaining a purchase to lift a feather.

It is observed, by the younger Pliny, that “in the confines of virtue and great qualities, there are, generally, vices of an opposite nature.” In Dr. Johnson not one ingredient can take the name of vice. From his attainments in literature, grew the pride of knowledge; and from his powers of reasoning, the love of disputation and the vain glory of superior vigour.—His piety, in some instances, bordered on superstition. He was willing to believe in preternatural agency, and thought it not more strange, that there should be evil spirits than evil men. Even the question about second sight held him in suspense. “Second sight,” Mr. Pennant tells us, “is a power of seeing images impressed on the organs of sight, by the power of fancy; or on the fancy, by the disordered spirits operating on the mind. It is the faculty of seeing spectres or visions, which represent an event actually passing at a distance, or likely to happen at a future day. In 1771, a gentleman, the last who was supposed to be possessed of this faculty, had a boat at sea, in a tempestuous night, and, being anxious for his freight, suddenly started up, and said his men would

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be drowned, for he had seen them pass before him with wet garments and dropping locks. The event corresponded with his disordered fancy. And thus," continues Mr. Pennant, "a distempered imagination, clouded with anxiety, may make an impression on the spirits; as persons, restless, and troubled with indignation, see various forms and figures, while they lie awake in bed." This is what Dr. Johnson was not willing to reject. He wished for some positive proof of communications with another world. His benevolence embraced the whole race of man, and yet was tinctured with particular prejudices. He was pleased with the minister in the isle of Skie, and loved him so much, that he began to wish him not a presbyterian. To that body of dissenters his zeal for the established church, made him, in some degree, an adversary; and his attachment to a mixed and limited monarchy, led him to declare open war against what he called a sullen republican. He would rather praise a man of Oxford than of Cambridge. He disliked a whig, and loved a tory. These were the shades of his character, which it has been the business of certain party-writers to represent in the darkest colours.

Since virtue, or moral goodness, consists in a just conformity of our actions to the relations, in which we stand to the supreme being and to our fellow-creatures, where shall we find a man who has been, or endeavoured to be, more diligent in the discharge of those essential duties? His first prayer was composed in 1738; he continued those fervent ejaculations of piety to the end of his life. In his Meditations we see him scrutinizing himself with severity, and aiming at perfection unattainable by man. His duty to his neighbour consisted in universal benevolence, and a constant aim at the production of happiness. Who was more sincere and steady in his friendships? It has been said, that there was no real affection between him and Garrick. On the part of the latter, there might be some corrosions of jealousy. The character of Prospero, in the Rambler, No. 200, was, beyond all question, occasioned by Garrick's ostentatious display of furniture and Dresden china. It was surely fair to take, from this incident, a hint for a moral essay; and, though no more was intended, Garrick, we are told, remembered it with uneasiness. He was also hurt, that his Lichfield friend did not think so highly of his dramatic art, as the rest of the world. The fact was, Johnson could not see the passions, as they rose, and chased one another, in the varied features of that expressive face; and, by his own manner of reciting verses, which was wonderfully impressive, he plainly showed, that he thought, there was too much of artificial tone and measured cadence, in the declamation of the theatre. The present writer well remembers being in conversation with Dr. Johnson, near the side of the scenes, during the tragedy of King Lear: when Garrick came off the stage, he said, "You two talk so loud, you destroy all

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my feelings." "Prithee," replied Johnson, "do not talk of feelings, Punch has no feelings." This seems to have been his settled opinion; admirable as Garrick's imitation of nature always was, Johnson thought it no better than mere mimickry. Yet, it is certain, that he esteemed and loved Garrick; that he dwelt with pleasure on his praise; and used to declare, that he deserved his great success, because, on all applications for charity, he gave more than was asked. After Garrick's death, he never talked of him, without a tear in his eye. He offered, if Mrs. Garrick would desire it of him, to be the editor of his works, and the historian of his life[bb]. It has been mentioned, that, on his death-bed, he thought of writing a Latin inscription to the memory of his friend. Numbers are still living who know these facts, and still remember, with gratitude, the friendship which he showed to them, with unaltered affection, for a number of years. His humanity and generosity, in proportion to his slender income, were unbounded. It has been truly said, that the lame, the blind, and the sorrowful, found, in his house, a sure retreat. A strict adherence to truth he considered as a sacred obligation, insomuch that, in relating the most minute anecdote, he would not allow himself the smallest addition to embellish his story. The late Mr. Tyers, who knew Dr. Johnson intimately, observed, "that he always talked, as if he was talking upon oath."

After a long acquaintance with this excellent man, and an attentive retrospect to his whole conduct, such is the light in which he appears to the writer of this essay. The following lines of Horace, may be deemed his picture in miniature:

"Iracundior est paulo? minus aptus acutis
Naribus horum hominum? rideri possit, eo quod
Rusticius tonso toga defluit, et male laxus
In pede calceus haeret? At est bonus, ut melior vir
Non alius quisquam: at tibi amicus: at ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore."

"Your friend is passionate, perhaps unfit
For the brisk petulance of modern wit.
His hair ill-cut, his robe, that awkward flows,
Or his large shoes, to raillery expose
The man you love; yet is he not possess'd
Of virtues, with which very few are blest?
While underneath this rude, uncouth disguise,
A genius of extensive knowledge lies."

Francis's Hor. book i. sat. 3.

It remains to give a review of Johnson's works; and this, it is imagined, will not be unwelcome to the reader.

Like Milton and Addison, he seems to have been fond of his Latin poetry. Those compositions show, that he was an early scholar; but his verses have not the graceful ease, that gave so much suavity to the poems of Addison. The translation of the Messiah labours under two disadvantages: it is first to be compared with Pope's inimitable performance, and afterwards with the Pollio of Virgil. It

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may appear trifling to remark, that he has made the letter *o*, in the word *virgo*, long and short in the same line: "Virgo, virgo parit." But the translation has great merit, and some admirable lines. In the odes there is a sweet flexibility, particularly—to his worthy friend Dr. Lawrence; on himself at the theatre, March 8, 1771; the ode in the isle of Skie; and that to Mrs. Thrale, from the same place.

His English poetry is such as leaves room to think, if he had devoted himself to the muses, that he would have been the rival of Pope. His first production, in this kind, was London, a poem in imitation of the third satire of Juvenal. The vices of the metropolis are placed in the room of ancient manners. The author had heated his mind with the ardour of Juvenal, and, having the skill to polish his numbers, he became a sharp accuser of the times. The Vanity of Human Wishes, is an imitation of the tenth satire of the same author. Though it is translated by Dryden, Johnson's imitation approaches nearest to the spirit of the original. The subject is taken from the Alcibiades of Plato, and has an intermixture of the sentiments of Socrates, concerning the object of prayers offered up to the deity. The general proposition is, that good and evil are so little understood by mankind, that their wishes, when granted, are always destructive. This is exemplified in a variety of instances, such as riches, state-preferment, eloquence, military glory, long life, and the advantages of form and beauty. Juvenal's conclusion is worthy of a christian poet, and such a pen as Johnson's. "Let us," he says, "leave it to the gods to judge what is fittest for us. Man is dearer to his creator than to himself. If we must pray for special favour, let it be for a sound mind in a sound body. Let us pray for fortitude, that we may think the labours of Hercules, and all his sufferings, preferable to a life of luxury, and the soft repose of Sardanapalus. This is a blessing within the reach of every man; this we can give ourselves. It is virtue, and virtue only, that can make us happy." In the translation, the zeal of the christian conspired with the warmth and energy of the poet; but Juvenal is not eclipsed. For the various characters in the original, the reader is pleased, in the English poem, to meet with cardinal Wolsey, Buckingham stabbed by Felton, lord Strafford, Clarendon, Charles the twelfth of Sweden; and for Tully and Demosthenes, Lydiat, Galileo, and archbishop Laud. It is owing to Johnson's delight in biography, that the name of Lydiat is called forth from obscurity. It may, therefore, not be useless to tell, that Lydiat was a learned divine and mathematician in the beginning of the last century. He attacked the doctrine of Aristotle and Scaliger, and wrote a number of sermons on the harmony of the evangelists. With all his merit, he lay in the prison of Bocardo, at Oxford, till bishop Usher, Laud, and others, paid his debts. He petitioned Charles the first to be sent to Ethiopia, to procure manuscripts. Having spoken in favour of monarchy and bishops, he was plundered by the puritans, and twice carried away, a prisoner, from his rectory. He died, very poor, in 1646.

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The tragedy of Irene is founded on a passage in Knolles's History of the Turks; an author highly commended in the Rambler, No. 122. An incident in the life of Mahomet the great, first emperor of the Turks, is the hinge on which the fable is made to move. The substance of the story is shortly this: In 1453, Mahomet laid siege to Constantinople, and having reduced the place, became enamoured of a fair Greek, whose name was Irene. The sultan invited her to embrace the law of the prophet, and to grace his throne. Enraged at this intended marriage, the janizaries formed a conspiracy to dethrone the emperor. To avert the impending danger, Mahomet, in a full assembly of the grandees, "catching with one hand," as Knolles relates it, "the fair Greek by the hair of her head, and drawing his falchion with the other, he, at one blow, struck off her head, to the great terror of them all; and, having so done, said unto them: 'Now by this, judge whether your emperor is able to bridle his affections or not.'" The story is simple, and it remained for the author to amplify it, with proper episodes, and give it complication and variety. The catastrophe is changed, and horror gives place to terror and pity. But, after all, the fable is cold and languid. There is not, throughout the piece, a single situation to excite curiosity, and raise a conflict of passions. The diction is nervous, rich, and elegant; but splendid language, and melodious numbers, will make a fine poem—not a tragedy. The sentiments are beautiful, always happily expressed, but seldom appropriated to the character, and generally too philosophic. What Johnson has said of the tragedy of Cato, may be applied to Irene: "It is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama; rather a succession of just sentiments, in elegant language, than a representation of natural affections. Nothing excites or assuages emotion. The events are expected without solicitude, and are remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the agents we have no care; we consider not what they are doing, nor what they are suffering; we wish only to know, what they have to say. It is unaffecting elegance, and chill philosophy." The following speech, in the mouth of a Turk, who is supposed to have heard of the British constitution, has been often selected from the numberless beauties with which Irene abounds:

"If there be any land, as fame reports,
Where common laws restrain the prince and subject;
A happy land, where circulating power
Flows through each member of th' embodied state,
Sure, not unconscious of the mighty blessing,
Her grateful sons shine bright with ev'ry virtue;
Untainted with the *lust of innovation*;
Sure, all unite to hold her league of rule,
Unbroken, as the sacred chain of nature,
That links the jarring elements in peace."

These are British sentiments. Above forty years ago, they found an echo in the breast of applauding audiences; and to this hour they are the voice of the people, in defiance of the metaphysics, and the new lights of certain politicians, who would gladly find their

private advantage in the disasters of their country; a race of men, “quibus nulla ex honesto spes.”

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The prologue to Irene is written with elegance, and, in a peculiar style, shows the literary pride and lofty spirit of the author. The epilogue, we are told, in a late publication, was written by sir William Yonge. This is a new discovery, but by no means probable. When the appendages to a dramatic performance are not assigned to a friend, or an unknown hand, or a person of fashion, they are always supposed to be written by the author of the play. It is to be wished, however, that the epilogue, in question, could be transferred to any other writer. It is the worst jeu d'esprit that ever fell from Johnson's pen[cc].

An account of the various pieces contained in this edition, such as miscellaneous tracts, and philological dissertations, would lead beyond the intended limits of this essay. It will suffice to say, that they are the productions of a man, who never wanted decorations of language, and always taught his reader to think. The life of the late king of Prussia, as far as it extends, is a model of the biographical style. The review of the Origin of Evil was, perhaps, written with asperity; but the angry epitaph which it provoked from Soame Jenyns, was an ill-timed resentment, unworthy of the genius of that amiable author.

The Rambler may be considered, as Johnson's great work. It was the basis of that high reputation, which went on increasing to the end of his days. The circulation of those periodical essays was not, at first, equal to their merit. They had not, like the Spectators, the art of charming by variety; and, indeed, how could it be expected? The wits of queen Anne's reign sent their contributions to the Spectator; and Johnson stood alone. A stagecoach, says sir Richard Steele, must go forward on stated days, whether there are passengers or not. So it was with the Rambler, every Tuesday and Saturday, for two years. In this collection Johnson is the great moral teacher of his countrymen; his essays form a body of ethics; the observations on life and manners, are acute and instructive; and the papers, professedly critical, serve to promote the cause of literature. It must, however, be acknowledged, that a settled gloom hangs over the author's mind; and all the essays, except eight or ten, coming from the same fountain-head, no wonder that they have the raciness of the soil from which they sprang. Of this uniformity Johnson was sensible. He used to say, that if he had joined a friend or two, who would have been able to intermix papers of a sprightly turn, the collection would have been more miscellaneous, and, by consequence, more agreeable to the generality of readers. This he used to illustrate by repeating two beautiful stanzas from his own ode to Cave, or Sylvanus Urban:

"Non ulla musis pagina gratior,
Quam quae severis ludicra jungere
  Novit, fatigatamque nugis
    Utilibus recreare mentem.

Texente nymphis serta Lycoride,
Rosae ruborem sic viola adjuvat

Iramista, sic Iris refulget
Aethereis variata fucis.”

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It is remarkable, that the pomp of diction, which has been objected to Johnson, was first assumed in the Rambler. His Dictionary was going on at the same time, and, in the course of that work, as he grew familiar with technical and scholastic words, he thought that the bulk of his readers were equally learned; or, at least, would admire the splendour and dignity of the style. And yet it is well known, that he praised, in Cowley, the ease and unaffected structure of the sentences. Cowley may be placed at the head of those who cultivated a clear and natural style. Dryden, Tillotson, and sir William Temple followed. Addison, Swift, and Pope, with more correctness, carried our language well nigh to perfection. Of Addison, Johnson was used to say, “he is the Raphael of essay writers.” How he differed so widely from such elegant models, is a problem not to be solved, unless it be true, that he took an early tincture from the writers of the last century, particularly sir Thomas Browne. Hence the peculiarities of his style, new combinations, sentences of an unusual structure, and words derived from the learned languages. His own account of the matter is: “When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas.” But he forgot the observation of Dryden: “If too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks, as if they were designed, not to assist the natives, but to conquer them.” There is, it must be admitted, a swell of language, often out of all proportion to the sentiment; but there is, in general, a fulness of mind, and the thought seems to expand with the sound of the words. Determined to discard colloquial barbarisms and licentious idioms, he forgot the elegant simplicity that distinguishes the writings of Addison. He had, what Locke calls, a round-about view of his subject; and, though he never was tainted, like many modern wits, with the ambition of shining in paradox, he may be fairly called an original thinker. His reading was extensive. He treasured in his mind whatever was worthy of notice, but he added to it from his own meditation. He collected, “quae reconderet, auetaque promeret.” Addison was not so profound a thinker. He was “born to write, converse, and live with ease;” and he found an early patron in lord Somers. He depended, however, more upon a fine taste than the vigour of his mind. His Latin poetry shows, that he relished, with a just selection, all the refined and delicate beauties of the Roman classics; and, when he cultivated his native language, no wonder that he formed that graceful style, which has been so justly admired; simple, yet elegant; adorned, yet never over-wrought; rich in allusion, yet pure and perspicuous; correct, without labour; and though, sometimes, deficient in strength, yet always musical. His essays, in general, are on the surface of life; if ever original, it was in pieces of humour. Sir Roger de Coverly, and the

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tory fox-hunter, need not to be mentioned. Johnson had a fund of humour, but he did not know it; nor was he willing to descend to the familiar idiom, and the variety of diction, which that mode of composition required. The letter, in the Rambler, No. 12, from a young girl that wants a place, will illustrate this observation. Addison possessed an unclouded imagination, alive to the first objects of nature and of art. He reaches the sublime without any apparent effort. When he tells us, “If we consider the fixed stars as so many oceans of flame, that are each of them attended with a different set of planets; if we still discover new firmaments, and new lights, that are sunk further in those unfathomable depths of ether; we are lost in a labyrinth of suns and worlds, and confounded with the magnificence and immensity of nature;” the ease, with which this passage rises to unaffected grandeur, is the secret charm that captivates the reader. Johnson is always lofty; he seems, to use Dryden’s phrase, to be “o’erinform’d with meaning,” and his words do not appear to himself adequate to his conception. He moves in state, and his periods are always harmonious. His Oriental Tales are in the true style of eastern magnificence, and yet none of them are so much admired, as the Visions of Mirza. In matters of criticism, Johnson is never the echo of preceding writers. He thinks, and decides, for himself. If we except the essays on the Pleasures of Imagination, Addison cannot be called a philosophical critic. His moral essays are beautiful; but in that province nothing can exceed the Rambler, though Johnson used to say, that the essay on “the burthens of mankind,” (in the Spectator, No. 558,) was the most exquisite he had ever read. Talking of himself, Johnson said, “Topham Beauclerk has wit, and every thing comes from him with ease; but when I say a good thing, I seem to labour.” When we compare him with Addison, the contrast is still stronger: Addison lends grace and ornament to truth; Johnson gives it force and energy. Addison makes virtue amiable; Johnson represents it as an awful duty: Addison insinuates himself with an air of modesty; Johnson commands like a dictator; but a dictator in his splendid robes, not labouring at the plough: Addison is the Jupiter of Virgil, with placid serenity talking to Venus,

“Vultu, quo coelum tempestatesque serenat.”

Johnson is Jupiter Tonans: he darts his lightning and rolls his thunder, in the cause of virtue and piety. The language seems to fall short of his ideas; he pours along, familiarizing the terms of philosophy, with bold inversions, and sonorous periods; but we may apply to him, what Pope has said of Homer: “It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it: like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude, as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense.”

It is not the design of this comparison to decide between these two eminent writers. In matters of taste every reader will choose for himself. Johnson is always profound, and, of course, gives the fatigue of thinking. Addison charms, while he instructs; and writing,

as he always does, a pure, an elegant, and idiomatic style, he may be pronounced the safest model for imitation.

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The essays written by Johnson in the Adventurer, may be called a continuation of the Rambler. The Idler, in order to be consistent with the assumed character, is written with abated vigour, in a style of ease and unlaboured elegance. It is the Odyssey, after the Iliad. Intense thinking would not become the Idler. The first number presents a well-drawn portrait of an Idler, and from that character no deviation could be made. Accordingly, Johnson forgets his austere manner, and plays us into sense. He still continues his lectures on human life, but he adverts to common occurrences, and is often content with the topic of the day. An advertisement in the beginning of the first volume informs us, that twelve entire essays were a contribution from different hands. One of these, No. 33, is the journal of a senior fellow, at Cambridge, but, as Johnson, being himself an original thinker, always revolted from servile imitation, he has printed the piece with an apology, importing, that the journal of a citizen, in the Spectator, almost precluded the attempt of any subsequent writer. This account of the Idler may be closed, after observing, that the author's mother being buried on the 23rd of January, 1759, there is an admirable paper occasioned by that event, on Saturday, the 27th of the same month, No. 41. The reader, if he pleases, may compare it with another fine paper in the Rambler, No. 54, on the conviction that rushes on the mind at the bed of a dying friend.

"Rasselas," says sir John Hawkins, "is a specimen of our language scarcely to be paralleled; it is written in a style refined to a degree of immaculate purity, and displays the whole force of turgid eloquence." One cannot but smile at this encomium. Rasselas, is, undoubtedly, both elegant and sublime. It is a view of human life, displayed, it must be owned, in gloomy colours. The author's natural melancholy, depressed, at the time, by the approaching dissolution of his mother, darkened the picture. A tale, that should keep curiosity awake by the artifice of unexpected incidents, was not the design of a mind pregnant with better things. He, who reads the heads of the chapters, will find, that it is not a course of adventures that invites him forward, but a discussion of interesting questions; reflections on human life; the history of Imlac, the man of learning; a dissertation upon poetry; the character of a wise and happy man, who discourses, with energy, on the government of the passions, and, on a sudden, when death deprives him of his daughter, forgets all his maxims of wisdom, and the eloquence that adorned them, yielding to the stroke of affliction, with all the vehemence of the bitterest anguish. It is by pictures of life, and profound moral reflection, that expectation is engaged, and gratified throughout the work. The history of the mad astronomer, who imagines that, for five years, he possessed the regulation of the weather, and that the sun passed, from tropic

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to tropic, by his direction, represents, in striking colours, the sad effects of a distempered imagination. It becomes the more affecting when we recollect, that it proceeds from one who lived in fear of the same dreadful visitation; from one who says emphatically: "Of the uncertainties in our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason." The inquiry into the cause of madness, and the dangerous prevalence of imagination, till, in time, some particular train of ideas fixes the attention, and the mind recurs constantly to the favourite conception, is carried on in a strain of acute observation; but it leaves us room to think, that the author was transcribing from his own apprehensions. The discourse on the nature of the soul, gives us all that philosophy knows, not without a tincture of superstition. It is remarkable, that the vanity of human pursuits was, about the same time, the subject that employed both Johnson and Voltaire; but Candide is the work of a lively imagination; and Rasselas, with all its splendour of eloquence, exhibits a gloomy picture. It should, however, be remembered, that the world has known the weeping, as well as the laughing philosopher.

The Dictionary does not properly fall within the province of this essay. The preface, however, will be found in this edition. He who reads the close of it, without acknowledging the force of the pathethic and sublime, must have more insensibility in his composition, than usually falls to the share of a man. The work itself, though, in some instances, abuse has been loud, and, in others, malice has endeavoured to undermine its fame, still remains the *mount Atlas* of English literature.

"Though storms and tempests thunder on its brow,
And oceans break their billows at its feet,
It stands unmov'd, and glories in its height."

That Johnson was eminently qualified for the office of a commentator on Shakespeare, no man can doubt; but it was an office which he never cordially embraced. The public expected more than he had diligence to perform; and yet his edition has been the ground, on which every subsequent commentator has chosen to build. One note, for its singularity, may be thought worthy of notice in this place. Hamlet says, "For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god-kissing carrion." In this Warburton discovered the origin of evil. Hamlet, he says, breaks off in the middle of the sentence; but the learned commentator knows what he was going to say, and, being unwilling to keep the secret, he goes on in a train of philosophical reasoning, that leaves the reader in astonishment. Johnson, with true piety, adopts the fanciful hypothesis, declaring it to be a noble emendation, which almost sets the critic on a level with the author. The general observations at the end of the several plays, and the preface, will be found in this edition. The former, with great elegance and precision, give a summary view of each drama. The preface is a tract of great erudition and philosophical criticism.

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Johnson's political pamphlets, whatever was his motive for writing them, whether gratitude for his pension, or the solicitation of men in power, did not support the cause for which they were undertaken. They are written in a style truly harmonious, and with his usual dignity of language. When it is said that he advanced positions repugnant to the "common rights of mankind," the virulence of party may be suspected. It is, perhaps, true, that in the clamour, raised throughout the kingdom, Johnson overheated his mind; but he was a friend to the rights of man, and he was greatly superior to the littleness of spirit, that might incline him to advance what he did not think and firmly believe. In the False Alarm, though many of the most eminent men in the kingdom concurred in petitions to the throne, yet Johnson, having well surveyed the mass of the people, has given, with great humour, and no less truth, what may be called, "the birth, parentage, and education of a remonstrance." On the subject of Falkland's islands, the fine dissuasive from too hastily involving the world in the calamities of war, must extort applause even from the party that wished, at that time, for scenes of tumult and commotion. It was in the same pamphlet, that Johnson offered battle to Junius, a writer, who, by the uncommon elegance of his style, charmed every reader, though his object was to inflame the nation in favour of a faction. Junius fought in the dark; he saw his enemy, and had his full blow; while he himself remained safe in obscurity. "But let us not," said Johnson, "mistake the venom of the shaft, for the vigour of the bow." The keen invective which he published, on that occasion, promised a paper war between two combatants, who knew the use of their weapons. A battle between them was as eagerly expected, as between Mendoza and Big Ben. But Junius, whatever was his reason, never returned to the field. He laid down his arms, and has, ever since, remained as secret as the man in the mask, in Voltaire's history.

The account of his journey to the Hebrides, or western isles of Scotland, is a model for such as shall, hereafter, relate their travels. The author did not visit that part of the world in the character of an antiquary, to amuse us with wonders taken from the dark and fabulous ages; nor, as a mathematician, to measure a degree, and settle the longitude and latitude of the several islands. Those, who expected such information, expected what was never intended. "In every work regard the writer's end." Johnson went to see men and manners, modes of life, and the progress of civilization. His remarks are so artfully blended with the rapidity and elegance of his narrative, that the reader is inclined to wish, as Johnson did, with regard to Gray, that "to travel, and to tell his travels, had been more of his employment."

As to Johnson's Parliamentary Debates, nothing, with propriety, can be said in this place. They are collected, in two volumes, by Mr. Stockdale, and the flow of eloquence which runs through the several speeches, is sufficiently known.

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It will not be useless to mention two more volumes, which may form a proper supplement to this edition. They contain a set of sermons, left for publication by John Taylor, *ll*.D. The reverend Mr. Hayes, who ushered these discourses into the world, has not given them, as the composition of Dr. Taylor. All he could say for his departed friend was, that he left them, in silence, among his papers. Mr. Hayes knew them to be the production of a superior mind; and the writer of these memoirs owes it to the candour of that elegant scholar, that he is now warranted to give an additional proof of Johnson's ardour in the cause of piety, and every moral duty. The last discourse in the collection was intended to be delivered by Dr. Taylor, at the funeral of Johnson's wife; but that reverend gentleman declined the office, because, as he told Mr. Hayes, the praise of the deceased was too much amplified. He, who reads the piece, will find it a beautiful moral lesson, written with temper, and nowhere overcharged with ambitious ornaments. The rest of the discourses were the fund, which Dr. Taylor, from time to time, carried with him to his pulpit. He had the *largest bull*[dd] in England, and some of the best sermons.

We come now to the Lives of the Poets, a work undertaken at the age of seventy, yet, the most brilliant, and, certainly, the most popular, of all our author's writings. For this performance he needed little preparation. Attentive always to the history of letters, and, by his own natural bias, fond of biography, he was the more willing to embrace the proposition of the booksellers. He was versed in the whole body of English poetry, and his rules of criticism were settled with precision. The dissertation, in the life of Cowley, on the metaphysical poets of the last century, has the attraction of novelty, as well as sound observation. The writers, who followed Dr. Donne, went in quest of something better than truth and nature. As Sancho says, in Don Quixote, they wanted better bread than is made with wheat. They took pains to bewilder themselves, and were ingenious for no other purpose than to err. In Johnson's review of Cowley's works, false wit is detected in all its shapes, and the Gothic taste for glittering conceits, and far-fetched allusions, is exploded, never, it is hoped, to revive again.

An author who has published his observations on the Life and Writings of Dr. Johnson, speaking of the Lives of the Poets, says, "These compositions, abounding in strong and acute remark, and with many fine, and even sublime, passages, have, unquestionably, great merit; but, if they be regarded, merely as containing narrations of the lives, delineations of the characters, and strictures of the several authors, they are far from being always to be depended on." He adds: "The characters are sometimes partial, and there is, sometimes, too much malignity of misrepresentation, to which, perhaps, may be joined no inconsiderable portion of erroneous criticism." The several clauses of this censure deserve to be answered, as fully as the limits of this essay will permit.

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In the first place, the facts are related upon the best intelligence, and the best vouchers that could be gleaned, after a great lapse of time. Probability was to be inferred from such materials, as could be procured, and no man better understood the nature of historical evidence than Dr. Johnson; no man was more religiously an observer of truth. If his history is any where defective, it must be imputed to the want of better information, and the errors of uncertain tradition.

"Ad nos vix tenuis famae perlabitur aura."

If the strictures on the works of the various authors are not always satisfactory, and if erroneous criticism may sometimes be suspected, who can hope, that in matters of taste, all shall agree? The instances, in which the public mind has differed, from the positions advanced by the author, are few in number. It has been said, that justice has not been done to Swift; that Gay and Prior are undervalued; and that Gray has been harshly treated. This charge, perhaps, ought not to be disputed. Johnson, it is well known, had conceived a prejudice against Swift. His friends trembled for him, when he was writing that life, but were pleased, at last, to see it executed with temper and moderation. As to Prior, it is probable that he gave his real opinion, but an opinion that will not be adopted by men of lively fancy. With regard to Gray, when he condemns the apostrophe, in which father Thames is desired to tell who drives the hoop, or tosses the ball, and then adds, that father Thames had no better means of knowing than himself; when he compares the abrupt beginning of the first stanza of the bard, to the ballad of Johnny Armstrong, "Is there ever a man in all Scotland;" there are, perhaps, few friends of Johnson, who would not wish to blot out both the passages.

It may be questioned, whether the remarks on Pope's Essay on Man can be received, without great caution. It has been already mentioned, that Crousaz, a professor in Switzerland, eminent for his Treatise of Logic, started up a professed enemy to that poem. Johnson says, "his mind was one of those, in which philosophy and piety are happily united. He looked, with distrust, upon all metaphysical systems of theology, and was persuaded, that the positions of Pope were intended to draw mankind away from revelation, and to represent the whole course of things, as a necessary concatenation of indissoluble fatality." This is not the place fur a controversy about the Leibnitzian system. Warburton, with all the powers of his large and comprehensive mind, published a vindication of Pope; and yet Johnson says, that, "in many passages, a religious eye may easily discover expressions not very favourable to morals, or to liberty." This sentence is severe, and, perhaps, dogmatical. Crousaz wrote an Examen of the Essay on Man, and, afterwards, a commentary on every remarkable passage; and, though it now appears, that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter translated the foreign critic, yet it is certain, that

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Johnson encouraged the work, and, perhaps, imbibed those early prejudices, which adhered to him to the end of his life. He shuddered at the idea of irreligion. Hence, we are told, in the life of Pope, “Never were penury of knowledge, and vulgarity of sentiment, so happily disguised; Pope, in the chair of wisdom, tells much that every man knows, and much that he did not know himself; and gives us comfort in the position, that though man’s a fool, yet God is wise; that human advantages are unstable; that our true honour is, not to have a great part, but to act it well; that virtue only is our own, and that happiness is always in our power.” The reader, when he meets all this in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurse. But, may it not be said, that every system of ethics must, or ought, to terminate, in plain and general maxims for the use of life? and, though in such anxioms no discovery is made, does not the beauty of the moral theory consist in the premises, and the chain of reasoning that leads to the conclusion? May not truth, as Johnson himself says, be conveyed to the mind by a new train of intermediate images? Pope’s doctrine, about the ruling passion, does not seem to be refuted, though it is called, in harsh terms, pernicious, as well as false, tending to establish a kind of moral predestination, or overruling principle, which cannot be resisted. But Johnson was too easily alarmed in the cause of religion. Organized as the human race is, individuals have different inlets of perception, different powers of mind, and different sensations of pleasure and pain.

> “All spread their charms, but charm not all alike,
> On different senses different objects strike:
> Hence different passions more or less inflame,
> As strong or weak the organs of the frame.
> And hence one master-passion in the breast,
> Like Aaron’s serpent, swallows up the rest.”

Brumoy says, Pascal, from his infancy, felt himself a geometrician; and Vandyke, in like manner, was a painter. Shakespeare, who, of all poets, had the deepest insight into human nature, was aware of a prevailing bias in the operations of every mind. By him we are told, “Masterless passion sways us to the mood of what it likes or loathes.”

It remains to inquire, whether, in the lives before us, the characters are partial, and too often drawn with malignity of misrepresentation? To prove this, it is alleged, that Johnson has misrepresented the circumstances relative to the translation of the first Iliad, and maliciously ascribed that performance to Addison, instead of Tickell, with too much reliance on the testimony of Pope, taken from the account in the papers left by Mr. Spence. For a refutation of the fallacy imputed to Addison, we are referred to a note in the Biographia Britannica, written by the late judge Blackstone, who, it is said, examined the whole matter with accuracy, and found, that the first regular statement of the accusation against Addison, was published by Ruffhead, in his life of Pope, from the

materials which he received from Dr. Warburton. But, with all due deference to the learned judge, whose talents deserve all praise, this account is by no means accurate.

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Sir Richard Steele, in a dedication of the comedy of the Drummer, to Mr. Congreve, gave the first insight into that business. He says, in a style of anger and resentment: "If that gentleman (Mr. Tickell) thinks himself injured, I will allow I have wronged him upon this issue, that, if the reputed translator of the first book of Homer shall please to give us another book, there shall appear another good judge in poetry, besides Mr. Alexander Pope, who shall like it." The authority of Steele outweighs all opinions, founded on vain conjecture, and, indeed, seems to be decisive, since we do not find that Tickell, though warmly pressed, thought proper to vindicate himself.

But the grand proof of Johnson's malignity, is the manner in which he has treated the character and conduct of Milton. To enforce this charge has wearied sophistry, and exhausted the invention of a party. What they cannot deny, they palliate; what they cannot prove, they say is probable. But why all this rage against Dr. Johnson? Addison, before him, had said of Milton:

"Oh! had the poet ne'er profan'd his pen,
To varnish o'er the guilt of faithless men!"

And had not Johnson an equal right to avow his sentiments? Do his enemies claim a privilege to abuse whatever is valuable to Englishmen, either in church or state? and must the liberty of unlicensed printing be denied to the friends of the British constitution?

It is unnecessary to pursue the argument through all its artifices, since, dismantled of ornament and seducing language, the plain truth may be stated in a narrow compass. Johnson knew that Milton was a republican: he says, "an acrimonious and surly republican, for which it is not known that he gave any better reason than, that a popular government was the most frugal; for the trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth." Johnson knew that Milton talked aloud "of the danger of readmitting kingship in this nation;" and when Milton adds, "that a commonwealth was commended, or rather enjoined, by our Saviour himself, to all christians, not without a remarkable disallowance, and the brand of gentilism upon kingship," Johnson thought him no better than a wild enthusiast. He knew, as well as Milton, "that the happiness of a nation must needs be firmest and certainest in a full and free council of their own electing, where no single person, but reason only, sways;" but the example of all the republicks, recorded in the annals of mankind, gave him no room to hope, that reason only would be heard. He knew, that the republican form of government, having little or no complication, and no consonance of parts, by a nice mechanism forming a regular whole, was too simple to be beautiful, even in theory. In practice it, perhaps, never existed. In its most flourishing state, at Athens, Rome, and Carthage, it was a constant scene of tumult and commotion. From the mischiefs of a wild democracy, the progress

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has ever been to the dominion of an aristocracy; and the word aristocracy, fatally includes the boldest and most turbulent citizens, who rise by their crimes, and call themselves the best men in the state. By intrigue, by cabal, and faction, a pernicious oligarchy is sure to succeed, and end, at last, in the tyranny of a single ruler. Tacitus, the great master of political wisdom, saw, under the mixed authority of king, nobles, and people, a better form of government than Milton's boasted republick; and what Tacitus admired in theory, but despaired of enjoying, Johnson saw established in this country. He knew that it had been overturned by the rage of frantic men; but he knew that, after the iron rod of Cromwell's usurpation, the constitution was once more restored to its first principles. Monarchy was established, and this country was regenerated. It was regenerated a second time, at the revolution: the rights of men were then defined, and the blessings of good order, and civil liberty, have been ever since diffused through the whole community.

The peace and happiness of society were what Dr. Johnson had at heart. He knew that Milton called his defence of the regicides, a defence of the people of England; but, however glossed and varnished, he thought it an apology for murder. Had the men, who, under a show of liberty, brought their king to the scaffold, proved, by their subsequent conduct, that the public good inspired their actions, the end might have given some sanction to the means; but usurpation and slavery followed. Milton undertook the office of secretary, under the despotic power of Cromwell, offering the incense of adulation to his master, with the titles of "director of public councils, the leader of unconquered armies, the father of his country." Milton declared, at the same time, "that nothing is more pleasing to God, or more agreeable to reason, than that the highest mind should have the sovereign power." In this strain of servile flattery, Milton gives us the right divine of tyrants. But it seems, in the same piece, he exhorts Cromwell "not to desert those great principles of liberty which he had professed to espouse; for, it would be a grievous enormity, if, after having successfully opposed tyranny, he should himself act the part of a tyrant, and betray the cause that he had defended." This desertion of every honest principle the advocate for liberty lived to see. Cromwell acted the tyrant; and, with vile hypocrisy, told the people, that he had consulted the Lord, and the Lord would have it so. Milton took an under part in the tragedy. Did that become the defender of the people of England? Brutus saw his country enslaved; he struck the blow for freedom, and he died with honour in the cause. Had he lived to be a secretary under Tiberius, what would now be said of his memory?

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But still, it seems, the prostitution with which Milton is charged, since it cannot be defended, is to be retorted on the character of Johnson. For this purpose, a book has been published, called Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton; to which are added, Milton's Tractate of Education, and Areopagitica. In this laboured tract we are told, "There is one performance, ascribed to the pen of the Doctor, where the prostitution is of so singular a nature, that it would be difficult to select an adequate motive for it, out of the mountainous heap of conjectural causes of human passions, or human caprice. It is the speech of the late unhappy Dr. William Dodd, when he was about to hear the sentence of the law pronounced upon him, in consequence of an indictment for forgery. The voice of the public has given the honour of manufacturing this speech to Dr. Johnson; and the style, and configuration of the speech itself, confirm the imputation. But it is hardly possible to divine what could be his motive for accepting the office. A man, to express the precise state of mind of another, about to be destined to an ignominious death, for a capital crime, should, one would imagine, have some consciousness, that he himself had incurred some guilt of the same kind." In all the schools of sophistry, is there to be found so vile an argument? In the purlieus of Grub street, is there such another mouthful of dirt? In the whole quiver of malice, is there so envenomed a shaft?

After this, it is to be hoped, that a certain class of men will talk no more of Johnson's malignity. The last apology for Milton is, that he acted according to his principles. But Johnson thought those principles detestable; pernicious to the constitution, in church and state, destructive of the peace of society, and hostile to the great fabric of civil policy, which the wisdom of ages has taught every Briton to revere, to love, and cherish. He reckoned Milton in that class of men, of whom the Roman historian says, when they want, by a sudden convulsion, to overturn the government, they roar and clamour for liberty; if they succeed, they destroy liberty itself: "Ut imperium evertant, libertatem praeferunt; si perverterint, libertatem ipsam aggredientur." Such were the sentiments of Dr. Johnson; and it may be asked, in the language of Bolingbroke, "Are these sentiments, which any man, who is born a Briton, in any circumstances, in any situation, ought to be ashamed, or afraid to avow?" Johnson has done ample justice to Milton's poetry: the criticism on Paradise Lost is a sublime composition. Had he thought the author as good and pious a citizen as Dr. Watts, he would have been ready, notwithstanding his nonconformity, to do equal honour to the memory of the man.

It is now time to close this essay, which the author fears has been drawn too much into length. In the progress of the work, feeble as it may be, he thought himself performing the last human office to the memory of a friend, whom he loved, esteemed, and honoured:

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"His saltern accumulem donis, et fungar inani
Munere."—

The author of these memoirs has been anxious to give the features of the man, and the true character of the author. He has not suffered the hand of partiality to colour his excellencies with too much warmth; nor has he endeavoured to throw his singularities too much into the shade. Dr. Johnson's failings may well be forgiven, for the sake of his virtues. His defects were spots in the sun. His piety, his kind affections, and the goodness of his heart, present an example worthy of imitation. His works still remain a monument of genius and of learning. Had he written nothing but what is contained in this edition, the quantity shows a life spent in study and meditation. If to this be added, the labour of his Dictionary, and other various productions, it may be fairly allowed, as he used to say of himself, that he has written his share. In the volumes here presented to the public the reader will find a perpetual source of pleasure and instruction. With due precautions, authors may learn to grace their style with elegance, harmony, and precision; they may be taught to think with vigour and perspicuity; and, to crown the whole, by a diligent attention to these books, all may advance in virtue.

Footnotes

[a] Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. ii. p. 465, 4to. edit.

[b] This appears in a note to Johnson's Diary, prefixed to the first of his Prayers. After the alteration of the style, he kept his birthday on the 18th of September, and it is accordingly marked September 7/18

[c] The impression which this interview left on Johnson's fancy, is recorded by Mrs. Piozzi in her anecdotes; and Johnson's description of it is picturesque and poetical. Being asked if he could remember queen Anne, "he had (he said) a confused, but somehow a sort of solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds, and a long black hood." —*Ed*.

[d] The entry of this is remarkable for his early resolution to preserve through life a fair and upright character. "1732, Junii 15. Undecim aureos deposui, quo die, quidquid ante matris funus (quod serum sit precor) de paternis bonis sperare licet, viginti scilicet libras, accepi. Usque adeo mihi mea fortuna fingenda est. Interea, ne paupertate vires animi languescant, nec in flagitia egestas abigat, cavendum."

[e] This, Mr. Bruce, the late traveller, avers to be a downright falsehood. He says, a deep pool of water reaches to the very foot of the rock; and, allowing that there was a seat or bench (which there is not) in the middle of the pool, it is absolutely impossible, by any exertion of human strength, to have arrived at it. But it may be asked, can Mr. Bruce say what was the face of the country in the year 1622, when Lobo saw the magnificent sight which he has

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described? Mr. Bruce's pool of water may have been formed since; and Lobo, perhaps, was content to sit down without a bench.

[f] After comparing this description with that lately given by Mr. Bruce, the reader will judge, whether Lobo is to lose the honour of having been at the head of the Nile, near two centuries before any other European traveller.

[g] See the Gentleman's Magazine for 1736, p. 418.

[h] It is added to the present edition of Dr. Johnson's works; vol. v. p. 202.

[i] Afterwards earl of Roslin. He died January 3, 1805.

[Transcriber's Note: There is no Footnote [j]]

[k] Mr. Boswell says, "The simple truth I had from Johnson himself. 'Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him. But it was not in his shop: it was in my own chamber.'"

[l] Dr. Johnson denies the whole of this story. See Boswell's Life, vol. i. p. 128. oct. edit. 1804.

[m] Letter 212. [n] See Gent. Mag. vol. lxxi. p. 190. [o] It has since been paralleled, in the case of the Shakespeare MSS. by a yet more vile impostor.

[p] Life of Johnson, vol. i. p.328. 4to. edit. [q] See Gentleman's Magazine for Nov. and Dec. 1787. [r] See Gentleman's Magazine for Dec. 1787, p. 1042. [s] This work was not published until the year 1767, when Dr. Johnson's Dictionary was fully established in reputation.

[t] See Scaliger's epigram on this subject, (communicated, without doubt, by Dr. Johnson,) Gent. Mag. 1748, p. 8.

[u] See Johnson's epitaph on him, in this volume, p. 130.

[Transcriber's note: There is no Footnote [v] or Footnote [w]]

[x] Mr. Boswell's account of this introduction is very different from the above. See his Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 360. 8vo. edit. 1804.

[y] It is there deposited.

[z] Before this authentic communication, Mr. Nichols had given, in the volume of the Gentleman's Magazine, for 1781, p. 370, the following account of the Universal History. The proposals were published October 6, 1729; and the authors of the first seven volumes were,

Vol. I. Mr. Sale, translator of the Koran. IV. The same as vol. iii.
II. George Psalmanazar. V. Mr. Bower.
III. George Psalmanazar. VI. Mr. Bower.
Archibald Bower. Rev. John Swinton.
Captain Shelvock. VII. Mr. Swinton.
Dr. Campbell. Mr. Bower.

[aa] On the subject of voluntary penance, see the Rambler, No. 110.
[bb] It is to be regretted, that he was not encouraged in this undertaking. The assistance, however, which he gave to Davies, in writing the Life of Garrick, has been acknowledged, in general terms, by that writer, and, from the evidence of style, appears to have been very considerable.

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[cc] Dr. Johnson informed Mr. Boswell, that this epilogue was written by sir William Yonge. See Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 469—70. 8vo. edit. 1804. The internal evidence, that it is not Johnson's, is very strong, particularly in the line, "But how the devil," &c.
[dd] See Johnson's letters from Ashbourne, in this volume.

Poems.

PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS

TO THE IMITATIONS OF THE

Third and tenth satires of Juvenal.

We will not examine here Johnson's poetical merits, since that discussion will more properly introduce his Lives of the Poets, but merely offer some few biographical remarks. In the poem of London, Mr. Boswell was of opinion, that Johnson did not allude to Savage, under the name of Thales, and adds, for his reason, that Johnson was not so much as acquainted with Savage when he *wrote* his London. About a month, however, before he *published* this poem, he addressed the following lines to him, through the Gentleman's Magazine, for April, 1738.

Ad RICARDUM *savage*.

Humanani studium generis cui pectore fervet
O colat humanum te, foveatque, genus!

We cannot certainly infer, from this, an intimacy with Savage, but it is more probable, that these lines flowed from a feeling of private friendship, than mere admiration of an author, in a public point of view; and they, at any rate, give credibility to the general opinion, that, under the name of Thales, the poet referred to the author of the Wanderer, who was, at this time, preparing for his retreat to Wales, whither he actually went in the ensuing year.

The names of Lydiat, Vane, and Sedley, which are brought forward in the poem on the Vanity of Human Wishes, as examples of inefficiency of either learning or beauty, to shield their possessors from distress, have exercised inquiry. The following is the best account of them we can collect:

Thomas Lydiat was born in 1572. After passing through the studies of the university of Oxford, with applause, he was elected fellow of New college; but his defective utterance induced him to resign his fellowship, in order to avoid entering holy orders, and to live upon a small patrimony. He was highly esteemed by the accomplished and unfortunate prince Henry, son of James the first. But his hopes of provision in that quarter were blasted by that prince's premature death; and he then accompanied the celebrated Usher into Ireland. After two or three years, he returned to England, and poverty induced him now to accept the rectory of Okerton, near Banbury, which he had before declined. Here he imprudently became security for the debts of a relation, and, being unable to pay, was imprisoned for several years. He was released, at last, by his patron, Usher, sir W.

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Boswell, Dr. Pink, then warden of New college, and archbishop Laud, to whom he showed his gratitude by writing in defence of his measures of church-government. He now applied to Charles the first for his protection and encouragement to travel into the east, to collect MSS. but the embarrassed state of the king's affairs prevented his petition from receiving attention. Lastly, his well-known attachment to the royal cause drew upon him the repeated violence of the parliament troops, who plundered, imprisoned, and abused him, in the most cruel manner. He died in obscurity and indigence, in 1646. A stone was laid over his grave in Okerton church, in 1669, by the society of New college, who also erected an honorary monument to his memory in the cloisters of their college. We have dwelt thus long on Lydiat's name, because, when this poem was published, it was a subject of inquiry, who Lydiat was, though some of his contemporaries, both in England and on the continent, ranked him with lord Bacon, in mathematical and physical knowledge. For a more detailed account, see Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary, vol. xxi. whence the above facts have been extracted, and Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lxviii. *Galileo*, and his history, are too well known to require a note in this place.

The *Vane*, who told, "what ills from beauty spring," was not Lady Vane, the subject of Smollett's memoirs, in Peregrine Pickle, but, according to Mr. Malone, she was Anne Vane, mistress to Frederick prince of Wales, and died in 1736, not long before Johnson settled in London. Some account of her was published, under the title of the Secret History of Vanella, 8vo. 1732, and in other similar works, referred to in Boswell, i. 173. In Mr. Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides, we find lord Hailes objecting to the instances of unfortunate beauties selected by Johnson, and suggesting, in place of Vane and Sedley, the names of Shore and Valiere.

Catherine Sedley was daughter of sir Charles Sedley, mistress of king James the second, who created her countess of Dorchester. She was a woman of a sprightly and agreeable wit, which could charm without the aid of beauty, and longer maintain its power. She had been the king's mistress before he ascended the throne, and soon after (January 2, 1685-6) was created countess of Dorchester. Sir C. Sedley, her father, looked on this title, as a splendid indignity, purchased at the expense of his daughter's honour; and when he was very active against the king, about the time of the revolution, he said, that, in gratitude, he should do his utmost to make his majesty's daughter a queen, as the king had made his own a countess. The king continued to visit her, which gave great uneasiness to the queen, who employed her friends, particularly the priests, to persuade him to break off the correspondence. They remonstrated with him on the guilt of the commerce, and the reproach it would bring on the catholic religion; she, on the contrary, employed the whole force of her ridicule against the priests and their counsels. They, at length, prevailed, and he is said to have sent her word to retire to France, or that her pension of 4,000_l_. a year should be withdrawn. She then,

probably, repented of having been the royal mistress, and “cursed the form that pleased the king.”

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See Manning and Bray's Surrey, ii. 788. where the countess's issue is also given. See, also, Christian's note on Blackstone's Com. iv. p. 65. It is remarkable, that when Johnson was asked, at a late period of his life, to whom he had alluded, under the name of Sedley, he said, that he had quite forgotten. See note on Idler, No. 36.—*Ed*.

London; A *poem*:

IN IMITATION OF

THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL

Written in 1738.

—Quis ineptae
Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus ut teneat se? JUV.

[a]Though grief and fondness in my breast rebel,
When injur'd Thales bids the town farewell,
Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend,
I praise the hermit, but regret the friend;
Resolv'd at length, from vice and London far,
To breathe, in distant fields, a purer air,
And, fix'd on Cambria's solitary shore,
Give to St. David one true Briton more.
[b]For who would leave, unbrib'd, Hibernia's land,
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand?
There none are swept by sudden fate away,
But all, whom hunger spares, with age decay:
Here malice, rapine, accident, conspire,
And now a rabble rages, now a fire;
Their ambush here relentless ruffians lay,
And here the fell attorney prowls for prey;
Here falling houses thunder on your head,
And here a female atheist talks you dead.
[c]While Thales waits the wherry, that contains
Of dissipated wealth the small remains,
On Thames's banks, in silent thought, we stood
Where Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood;
Struck with the seat that gave Eliza[A] birth,
We kneel, and kiss the consecrated earth;
In pleasing dreams the blissful age renew,
And call Britannia's glories back to view;
Behold her cross triumphant on the main,

The guard of commerce, and the dread of Spain,
Ere masquerades debauch'd, excise oppress'd
Or English honour grew a standing jest.
  A transient calm the happy scenes bestow,
And, for a moment, lull the sense of woe.
At length awaking, with contemptuous frown,
Indignant Thales eyes the neighb'ring town.
  [d] Since worth, he cries, in these degen'rate days,
Wants ev'n the cheap reward of empty praise;
In those curs'd walls, devote to vice and gain,
Since unrewarded science toils in vain;
Since hope but sooths to double my distress,
And ev'ry moment leaves my little less;
While yet my steady steps no [e]staff sustains,
And life, still vig'rous, revels in my veins;
Grant me, kind heaven, to find some happier place,
Where honesty and sense are no disgrace;
Some pleasing bank where verdant osiers play,
Some peaceful vale, with nature's paintings gay;
Where once the harass'd Briton found repose,
And, safe in poverty, defied his foes;
Some secret cell, ye pow'rs, indulgent give,

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[f]Let—live here, for—has learn'd to live.
Here let those reign, whom pensions can incite
To vote a patriot black, a courtier white;
Explain their country's dear-bought rights away,
And plead for[B] pirates in the face of day;
With slavish tenets taint our poison'd youth,
And lend a lie the confidence of truth.
[g]Let such raise palaces, and manors buy,
Collect a tax, or farm a lottery;
With warbling eunuchs fill a [C]licens'd [D]stage,
And lull to servitude a thoughtless age.
Heroes, proceed! what bounds your pride shall hold,
What check restrain your thirst of pow'r and gold?
Behold rebellious virtue quite o'erthrown,
Behold our fame, our wealth, our lives, your own.
To such the plunder of a land is giv'n,
When publick crimes inflame the wrath of heaven:
[h]But what, my friend, what hope remains for me.
Who start at theft, and blush at perjury?
Who scarce forbear, though Britain's court he sing,
To pluck a titled poet's borrow'd wing;
A statesman's logick unconvinc'd can hear.
And dare to slumber o'er the [E]Gazetteer;
Despise a fool in half his pension dress'd,
And strive, in vain, to laugh at Clodio's jest[F].
[i]Others, with softer smiles, and subtler art,
Can sap the principles, or taint the heart;
With more address a lover's note convey,
Or bribe a virgin's innocence away.
Well may they rise, while I, whose rustick tongue
Ne'er knew to puzzle right, or varnish wrong,
Spurn'd as a beggar, dreaded as a spy,
Live unregarded, unlamented die.
[k]For what but social guilt the friend endears?
Who shares Orgilio's crimes, his fortune shares.
[l]But thou, should tempting villany present
All Marlb'rough hoarded, or all Villiers spent,
Turn from the glitt'ring bribe thy scornful eye,
Nor sell for gold, what gold could never buy,
The peaceful slumber, self-approving day,

Unsullied fame, and conscience ever gay.
[m] The cheated nation's happy fav'rites, see!
Mark whom the great caress, who frown on me!
London! the needy villain's gen'ral home,
The common sewer of Paris and of Rome;
With eager thirst, by folly or by fate,
Sucks in the dregs of each corrupted state.
Forgive my transports, on a theme like this,
[n]I cannot bear a French metropolis.
[o]Illustrious Edward! from the realms of day,
The land of heroes and of saints survey;
Nor hope the British lineaments to trace,
The rustick grandeur, or the surly grace;
But, lost in thoughtless ease and empty show,
Behold the warriour dwindled to a beau;
Sense, freedom, piety, refin'd away,
Of France the mimick, and of Spain the prey.
All that at home no more can beg or steal,
Or like a gibbet better than a wheel;
Hiss'd from the stage, or hooted from the court,
Their air, their dress, their politicks, import;
[p]Obsequious, artful, voluble and gay,

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On Britain's fond credulity they prey.
No gainful trade their industry can 'scape,
[q]They sing, they dance, clean shoes, or cure a clap:
All sciences a fasting Monsieur knows,
And, bid him go to hell, to hell he goes.
[r]Ah! what avails it, that, from slav'ry far,
I drew the breath of life in English air;
Was early taught a Briton's right to prize,
And lisp the tale of Henry's victories;
If the gull'd conqueror receives the chain,
And flattery prevails, when arms are vain![G]
[s]Studious to please, and ready to submit,
The supple Gaul was born a parasite:
Still to his int'rest true, where'er he goes,
Wit, brav'ry, worth, his lavish tongue bestows;
In ev'ry face a thousand graces shine,
From ev'ry tongue flows harmony divine.
[t]These arts in vain our rugged natives try,
Strain out, with fault'ring diffidence, a lie,
And get a kick[H] for awkward flattery.
Besides, with justice, this discerning age
Admires their wondrous talents for the stage:
[u]Well may they venture on the mimick's art,
Who play from morn to night a borrow'd part;
Practis'd their master's notions to embrace,
Repeat his maxims, and reflect his face;
With ev'ry wild absurdity comply,
And view each object with another's eye;
To shake with laughter, ere the jest they hear,
To pour at will the counterfeited tear;
And, as their patron hints the cold or heat.
To shake in dog-days, in December sweat.
[x]How, when competitors, like these, contend,
Can surly virtue hope to fix a friend?
Slaves that with serious impudence beguile,
And lie without a blush, without a smile;
Exalt each trifle, ev'ry vice adore,
Your taste in snuff, your judgment in a whore:
Can Balbo's eloquence applaud, and swear,
He gropes his breeches with a monarch's air.

For arts, like these, preferr'd, admir'd, caress'd,
They first invade your table, then your breast;
[y]Explore your secrets with insidious art,
Watch the weak hour, and ransack all the heart;
Then soon your ill-placed confidence repay,
Commence your lords, and govern or betray.
[z]By numbers here from shame or censure free,
All crimes are safe, but hated poverty.
This, only this, the rigid law pursues,
This, only this, provokes the snarling muse.
The sober trader at a tatter'd cloak
Wakes from his dream, and labours for a joke;
With brisker air the silken courtiers gaze,
And turn the varied taunt a thousand ways.
[aa]Of all the griefs, that harass the distress'd,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest;
Fate never wounds more deep the gen'rous heart,
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart.
[bb]Has heaven reserv'd, in pity to the poor,
No pathless waste, or undiscover'd shore?
No secret island in the boundless main?
No peaceful desert, yet unclaim'd by Spain?[l]
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,

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And bear oppression's insolence no more.
This mournful truth is ev'ry where confess'd,
[cc]*slow rises worth*, *by poverty depress'd*:
But here more slow, where all are slaves to gold,
Where looks are merchandise, and smiles are sold;
Where won by bribes, by flatteries implor'd,
The groom retails the favours of his lord.
But hark! th' affrighted crowd's tumultuous cries
Roll through the streets, and thunder to the skies:
Rais'd from some pleasing dream of wealth and pow'r,
Some pompous palace, or some blissful bow'r,
Aghast you start, and scarce, with aching sight,
Sustain th' approaching fire's tremendous light;
Swift from pursuing horrours take your way,
And leave your little *all* to flames a prey;
[dd]Then through the world a wretched vagrant roam;
For where can starving merit find a home?
In vain your mournful narrative disclose,
While all neglect, and most insult your woes.
[ee]Should heav'n's just bolts Orgilio's wealth confound,
[J]And spread his flaming palace on the ground,
Swift o'er the land the dismal rumour flies,
And publick mournings pacify the skies;
The laureate tribe in venal verse relate,
How virtue wars with persecuting fate;
[ff]With well-feign'd gratitude the pension'd band
Refund the plunder of the beggar'd land.
See! while he builds, the gaudy vassals come,
And crowd with sudden wealth the rising dome;
The price of boroughs and of souls restore;
And raise his treasures higher than before.
Now bless'd with all the baubles of the great,
The polish'd marble and the shining plate,
[gg]Orgilio sees the golden pile aspire,
And hopes from angry heav'n another fire.
[hh]Could'st thou resign the park and play, content,
For the fair banks of Severn or of Trent;
There might'st thou find some elegant retreat,
Some hireling senator's deserted seat;
And stretch thy prospects o'er the smiling land,

For less than rent the dungeons of the Strand;
There prune thy walks, support thy drooping flowers,
Direct thy rivulets, and twine thy bowers;
[K] And, while thy grounds a cheap repast afford,
Despise the dainties of a venal lord:
There ev'ry bush with nature's musick rings;
There ev'ry breeze bears health upon its wings;
On all thy hours security shall smile,
And bless thine evening walk and morning toil.
[ii]Prepare for death, if here at night you roam,
And sign your will, before you sup from home.
[kk] Some fiery fop, with new commission vain,
Who sleeps on brambles, till he kills his man;
Some frolick drunkard, reeling from a feast,
Provokes a broil, and stabs you for a jest.
[ll]Yet e'en these heroes, mischievously gay,
Lords of the street, and terrours of the way;
Flush'd, as they are, with folly, youth, and wine;
Their prudent insults to the poor confine;

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Afar they mark the flambeau's bright approach,
And shun the shining train, and golden coach.
[mm]In vain, these dangers past, your doors you close,
And hope the balmy blessings of repose;
Cruel with guilt, and daring with despair,
The midnight murd'rer bursts the faithless bar;
Invades the sacred hour of silent rest,
[L]And leaves, unseen, a dagger in your breast.
[nn]Scarce can our fields, such crowds at Tyburn die,
With hemp the gallows and the fleet supply.
Propose your schemes, ye senatorian band,
Whose ways and means[M]support the sinking land:
Lest ropes be wanting in the tempting spring,
To rig another convoy for the king[N].
[oo]A single gaol, in Alfred's golden reign,
Could half the nation's criminals contain;
Fair justice, then, without constraint ador'd,
Held high the steady scale, but sheath'd the sword [D];
No spies were paid, no special juries known,
Blest age! but ah! how different from our own!
[pp]Much could I add,—but see the boat at hand,
The tide, retiring, calls me from the land:
[qq] Farewell!—When youth, and health, and fortune spent,
Thou fly'st for refuge to the wilds of Kent;
And, tir'd, like me, with follies and with crimes,
In angry numbers warn'st succeeding times;
Then shall thy friend, nor thou refuse his aid,
Still foe to vice, forsake his Cambrian shade;
In virtue's cause, once more, exert his rage,
Thy satire point, and animate thy page.

FOOTNOTES

[a]
Quamvis digressu veteris confusus amici,
Laudo, tamen, vacuis quod sedem figere Cumis
Destinet atque unum civcm donare Sibyllae.

[b]
—Ego vel Prochytam praepono Suburae.
Nam quid tam miserum, tam solum vidimus, ut non
Deterius credas horrere incendia, lapsus
Tectorum assiduos, ae mille pericula saevae
Urbis et Augusto recitantes mense poetas

[c]
Sed dum tota domus reda componitur una,
Substitit ad veteres arcus—

[d]
Hic tunc Umbricius; Quando artibus, inquit, honestis
Nullus in urbe locus, nulla emolumenta laborum,
Res hodie minor est, here quam fuit, atque eadem eras
Deteret exiguis aliquid: proponimus illue
Ire, fatigatas ubi Daedalus exuit alas,
Dum nova canities,—

[e] —et pedibus me Porto meis, nullo dextram subeunte bacillo.

[f]
Cedamus patria: vivant Artorius istic
Et Catulus: maneant, qui nigrum in candida vertunt.

[g]
Queis facile est aedem conducere, flumina, portus,
Siccandam eluviem, portandum ad busta cadaver,—
Munera nunc edunt.

[h] Quid Romae faciam? Mentiri nescio: librum, Si malus est, nequeo laudare et poscere:—

[i]
—Ferre ad nuptam, quae mittit adulter,
Quae mandat, norunt alii; me nemo ministro
Fur erit, atque ideo nulli comes exeo,—

[Transcriber’s note: There is no Footnote [j]]

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[k]
Quis nune diligitur, nisi conscius?—
Carus erit Verri, qui Verrem tempore, quo vult,
Acuusare potest.—

[l]
—Tanti tibi non sit opaci
Omnis arena Tagi, quodque in mare volvitur aurum,
Ut somno careas—

[m] Quae nunc divitibus gens acceptissima nostris Et quos praecipue fugiam, properabo fateri.

[n]
—Non possum ferre, Quirites,
Graecam urbem:—

[o] Rusticus ille tuus sumit trechedipna, Quirine, Et ceromatico fert niceteria collo.

[p]
Ingenium velox, audacia perdita, sermo
Promptus—

[q] Augur, schoenobates, medicus, magus: omnia novit. Graeculus esuriens in coelum, jusseris, ibit.

[r] Usque adeo nihil est, quod nostra infantia coelum Hausit Aventinum?—

[s] Quid? quod adulandi gens prudentissima laudat Sermonem indocti, faciem deformis amici?

[t] Haec eadem licet et nobis laudare: sed illis Creditur.—

[u] Natio comoeda est. Rides? majore cachinno Coneutitur, &c.

[Transcriber’s note: There is no Footnote [v] or Footnote [w]]

[x]
Non sumus ergo pares: melior, qui semper et omni
Nocte dieque potest alienum sumere vultum,
A facie jactare manus, laudare paratus,
Si bene ructavit, si rectum minxit amicus.—

[y] Scire volunt secreta domus atque inde timeri.

[z] —Materiam praebet causasque jocorum Omnibus hic idem, si foeda et scissa lacerna, &c.

[aa] Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se, Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.—

[bb] —Agmine facto, Debuerant olim tenues migrasse Quirites.

[cc]
Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta domi; sed Romae; durior illis
Conatus:—
—Omnia Romaae
Cum pretio.—
Cogimur, et cultis augere peculia servis.

[dd]
—Ultimus autem
Aerumnae cumulus, quod nudum et frustra rogautem
Nemo cibo, nemo hospitio tectoque juvabit.

[ee] Si magna Asturii cecidit domus, horrida mater: Pullati proccres,—

[ff]
—Jam accurrit, qui marmora donet,
Conferat impensas: hic &c.

[gg] Hic modium argenti. Meliora, ac plura reponit Persicus orborum lautissimus—

[hh]
Si potes avelli Circensibus, optima Sorae,
Aut Fabrateriae domus, aut Frusinone paratur,
Quanti nunc tenebras unum conducis in annum.
Hortulus hic—
Vive bidentis amans et culti villicus horti;
Unde epulum possis centum dare Pythagoreis.

[ii]
—Possis ignavus haberi
Et subiti casus improvidus, ad coenam si
Intestatus eas.—

[Transcriber's note: There is no Footnote [jj]]

[kk]
Ebrius, ac petulans, qui nullum forte cecidit,
Dat poenas, noetem patitur lugentis amicum
Pelidae.—

[II]
—Sed, quamvis improbus annis,
Atque mero fervens, cavet hunc, quem coccina lae [Transcriber's note: remainder of word illegible]
Vitari jubet, et comitum longissimus ordo,
Multum praeterca flammarum, atque aenca lampas,

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[mm] Nec tamen hoc tantum metuas: nam qui spoliet te, Non deerit, clausis domibus, &c.

[nn] Maximus in vinclis ferri modus, ut timeas, ne Vomer deficiat, ne marrae et sarcula desint.

[oo]
Felices proavorum atavos, felicia dicas
Saecula, quae quondam sub regibus atque tribunis
Viderunt uno contentam carcere Romam.

[pp] His alias poteram, et plures subnectere causas: Sed jumenta vocant—

[qq]
—Ergo vale nostri memor et, quoties te
Roma tuo refici properantem reddet Aquino,
Me quoque ad Helvinam Cererem vestramque Dianam
Convelle a Cumis. Satirarum ego, ni pudet illas,
Adjutor gelidos veniam caligatus in agros.

[A] Queen Elizabeth, born at Greenwich. [B] The invasions of the Spaniards were defended in the houses of
parliament.
[C] The licensing act was then lately made. [D] *Our silenc'd.* [E] The paper which, at that time, contained apologies for the court. [F] H—y's jest. [G] And what their armies lost, their cringes gain [H] And *gain* a kick. [I] The Spaniards at this time were said to make claim to some of our
American provinces.
[J] This was by Hitch, a bookseller. Justly observed to be no picture of
modern manners, though it might be true at Rome. MS. note in Dr.
Johnson's hand-writing.
[K] And, while thy *beds*. [L] And *plants* unseen. [M] A cant term in the house of commons for methods of raising money. [N] The nation was discontented at the visits made by the king to
Hanover.
[O] *Sustain'd* the *balance*, but *resign'd* the sword.

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES;

IN IMITATION OF

THE TENTH SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

Let[a] observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind, from China to Peru;
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;
Then say, how hope and fear, desire and hate
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,
Where wav'ring man, betray'd by vent'rous pride
To tread the dreary paths, without a guide,
As treach'rous phantoms in the mist delude,
Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good;
How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice.
How nations sink, by darling schemes oppress'd,
When vengeance listens to the fool's request.
Fate wings with ev'ry wish th' afflictive dart,
Each gift of nature, and each grace of art;
With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,
With fatal sweetness elocution flows,
Impeachment stops the speaker's pow'rful breath,
And restless fire precipitates on death.
[b]But, scarce observ'd, the knowing and the bold
Fall in the gen'ral massacre of gold;
Wide wasting pest! that rages unconfin'd,
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind;

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For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,
For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws;
Wealth heap'd on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys,
The dangers gather as the treasures rise.
Let hist'ry tell where rival kings command,
And dubious title shakes the madded land,
When statutes glean the refuse of the sword,
How much more safe the vassal than the lord;
Low sculks the hind beneath the rage of power,
And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tower[c],
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,
Though confiscation's vultures hover round[d].
The needy traveller, serene and gay,
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
Does envy seize thee? crush th' upbraiding joy;
Increase his riches, and his peace destroy;
[e]Now fears, in dire vicissitude, invade,
The rustling brake alarms, and quiv'ring shade;
Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,
One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.
[f] Yet still one gen'ral cry[g] the skies assails,
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales:
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,
Th' insidious rival, and the gaping heir.
[h]Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth,
See motley life in modern trappings dress'd,
And feed with varied fools th' eternal jest:
Thou, who could'st laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece;
Where wealth, unlov'd, without a mourner died;
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride;
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;
Where change of fav'rites made no change of laws,
And senates heard, before they judg'd a cause;
How would'st thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe?
Attentive truth and nature to descry,
And pierce each scene with philosophick eye;

To thee were solemn toys, or empty show,
The robes of pleasure, and the veils of woe:
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,
Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.
  Such was the scorn that fill'd the sage's mind,
Renew'd at ev'ry glance on human kind;
How just that scorn, ere yet thy voice declare,
Search ev'ry state, and canvass ev'ry pray'r.
  [i]Unnumber'd suppliants crowd preferment's gate,
Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;
Delusive fortune hears th' incessant call,
They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.
On ev'ry stage the foes of peace attend,
Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.
Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door
Pours in the morning worshipper no more;
For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,
To growing wealth the dedicator flies;
From ev'ry room descends the painted face,
That hung the bright palladium of the place;
And, smok'd in kitchens, or in auctions sold,

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To better features yields the frame of gold;
For now no more we trace in ev'ry line
Heroick worth, benevolence divine:
The form, distorted, justifies the fall,
And detestation rids th' indignant wall.
  But will not Britain hear the last appeal,
Sign her foes' doom, or guard her fav'rites' zeal?
Through freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,
Degrading nobles and controling kings;
Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,
And ask no questions but the price of votes;
With weekly libels and septennial ale,
Their wish is full to riot and to rail.
  In full-blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand;
To him the church, the realm their pow'rs consign,
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine;
Turn'd by his nod the stream of honour flows,
His smile alone security bestows.
Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r,
Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r;
Till conquest, unresisted, ceas'd to please,
And rights, submitted, left him none to seize.
At length his sov'reign frowns—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.
Where'er he turns, he meets a stranger's eye,
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;
Now drops, at once, the pride of awful state,
The golden canopy, the glitt'ring plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liv'ried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastick rest:
Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.
  Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine,
Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end, be thine?
Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content,
[k]The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?
For, why did Wolsey, near the steeps of fate,

On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight?
Why but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,
With louder ruin to the gulfs below?
[l]What gave great Villiers to th' assassin's knife,
And fix'd disease on Harley's closing life?
What murder'd Wentworth, and what exil'd Hyde,
By kings protected, and to kings allied?
What but their wish indulg'd in courts to shine,
And pow'r too great to keep, or to resign?
[m]When first the college rolls receive his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame; [n]Through all his veins the fever of renown
Spreads from the strong contagion of the gown;
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,
And [o]Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head.
Are these thy views? Proceed, illustrious youth,
And virtue guard thee to the throne of truth!
Yet, should thy soul indulge the gen'rous heat
Till captive science yields her last retreat;
Should reason guide thee with her brightest ray,
And pour on misty doubt resistless day;

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Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,
Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;
Should tempting novelty thy cell refrain,
[p]And sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain;
Should beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,
Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd heart;
Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,
Nor melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade;
Yet hope not life, from grief or danger free,
Nor think the doom of man revers'd for thee:
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause awhile from letters, to be wise;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the gaol[q].
See nations, slowly wise and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,
Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end[r].
Nor deem, when learning her last prize bestows,
The glitt'ring eminence exempt from woes;
See, when the vulgar scape[s], despis'd or aw'd,
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
From meaner minds though smaller fines content,
The plunder'd palace, or sequester'd rent;
Mark'd out by dang'rous parts, he meets the shock,
And fatal learning leads him to the block:
Around his tomb let art and genius weep,
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.
[t]The festal blazes, the triumphal show,
The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,
The senate's thanks, the gazette's pompous tale,
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.
Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirl'd;
For such the steady Romans shook the world;
For such, in distant lands, the Britons shine,
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine;
This pow'r has praise, that virtue scarce can warm,
Till fame supplies the universal charm.
Yet reason frowns on war's unequal game,
Where wasted nations raise a single name;

And mortgag'd states, their grandsires' wreaths regret.
From age to age in everlasting debt;
Wreaths which, at last, the dear-bought right convey
To rust on medals, or on stones decay.
  [u]On what foundation stands the warriour's pride,
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide;
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
[x]O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacifick sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their pow'rs combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign;
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
"Think nothing gain'd," he cries, "till nought remain,
On Moscow's walls till Gothick standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky."
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait;
Stern famine guards the solitary coast,
And winter barricades the realm of frost;

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He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay;—
Hide, blushing glory, hide Pultowa's day:
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;
Condemn'd a needy supplicant to wait,
While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.
But did not chance, at length, her errour mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.
[y]All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,
From Persia's tyrant to Bavaria's lord.
In gay hostility and barb'rous pride,
With half mankind embattl'd at his side,
Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
And starves exhausted regions in his way;
Attendant flatt'ry counts his myriads o'er,
Till counted myriads sooth his pride no more;
Fresh praise is try'd till madness fires his mind,
The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind,
New pow'rs are claim'd, new pow'rs are still bestow'd,
Till rude resistance lops the spreading god;
The daring Greeks deride the martial show,
And heap their valleys with the gaudy foe;
Th' insulted sea, with humbler thoughts, he gains;
A single skiff to speed his flight remains;
Th' incumber'd oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast
Through purple billows and a floating host.
The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Caesarean pow'r,
With unexpected legions bursts away,
And sees defenceless realms receive his sway;—
Short sway! fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms;
From hill to hill the beacon's rousing blaze
Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise;

The fierce Croatian, and the wild Hussar,
[z]With all the sons of ravage, crowd the war;
The baffled prince, in honour's flatt'ring bloom
Of hasty greatness, finds the fatal doom,
His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,
And steals to death from anguish and from shame.
  [aa]Enlarge my life with multitude of days!
In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays;
Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know,
That life protracted is protracted woe.
Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,
And shuts up all the passages of joy;
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flow'r;
With listless eyes the dotard views the store,
He views, and wonders that they please no more;
Now pall the tasteless meats, and joyless wines,
And luxury with sighs her slave resigns.
Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,
[bb]Diffuse the tuneful lenitives of pain:
No sounds, alas! would touch th' impervious ear,
Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus near;

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Nor lute nor lyre his feeble pow’rs attend,
Nor sweeter musick of a virtuous friend;
But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,
Perversely grave, or positively wrong.
The still returning tale, and ling’ring jest,
Perplex the fawning niece and pamper’d guest,
While growing hopes scarce awe the gath’ring sneer,
And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear;
The watchful guests still hint the last offence;
The daughter’s petulance, the son’s expense,
Improve his heady rage with treach’rous skill,
And mould his passions till they make his will.
  Unnumber’d maladies his joints invade,
Lay siege to life, and press the dire blockade;
But unextinguish’d av’rice still remains,
And dreaded losses aggravate his pains;
He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,
His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands;
Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,
Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.
  But grant, the virtues of a temp’rate prime
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime;
[cc]An age that melts with unperceiv’d decay,
And glides in modest innocence away;
Whose peaceful day benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating conscience cheers;
The gen’ral fav’rite as the gen’ral friend;
Such age there is, and who shall wish its end[dd]?
  Yet e’en on this her load misfortune flings,
To press the weary minutes’ flagging wings;
New sorrow rises as the day returns,
A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.
Now kindred merit fills the sable bier,
Now lacerated friendship claims a tear;
Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy from with’ring life away;
New forms arise, and diff’rent views engage,
Superfluous lags the vet’ran on the stage,
Till pitying nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.

But few there are whom hours like these await,
Who set unclouded in the gulfs of fate.
From Lydia's monarch should the search descend,
By Solon caution'd to regard his end,
In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise!
From Marlb'rough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driv'ller and a show.
[ee]The teeming mother, anxious for her race,
Begs for each birth the fortune of a face;
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring;
And Sedley curs'd the form that pleas'd a king.
Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes,
Whom pleasure keeps too busy to be wise;
Whom joys with soft varieties invite,
By day the frolick, and the dance by night;
Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,
And ask the latest fashion of the heart;
What care, what rules, your heedless charms shall save,
Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave?
Against your fame with fondness hate combines,
The rival batters, and the lover mines.

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With distant voice neglected virtue calls,
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls;
Tir'd with contempt, she quits the slipp'ry reign,
And pride and prudence take her seat in vain.
In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,
The harmless freedom, and the private friend.
The guardians yield, by force superiour ply'd:
To int'rest, prudence; and to flatt'ry, pride.
Here beauty falls, betray'd, despis'd, distress'd,
And hissing infamy proclaims the rest.
[ff]Where then shall hope and fear their objects find?
Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?
Inquirer, cease; petitions yet remain
Which heav'n may hear; nor deem religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to heav'n the measure and the choice.
Safe in his pow'r, whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious pray'r;
Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
Secure, whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
Yet, when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires[gg],
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resign'd;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sov'reign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
[hh]Counts death kind nature's signal of retreat:
These goods for man the laws of heav'n ordain;
These goods he grants, who grants the pow'r to gain;
With these celestial wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

FOOTNOTES [a] Ver. 1—11. [b] Ver. 12—22. [c] In the first edition, "the *bonny* traitor!" an evident
allusion to the Scotch lords who suffered for the rebellion in 1745.

[d] Clang around. [e] New fears. [f] Ver. 23-37. [g] Yet still the gen'ral cry. [h] Ver. 28-55. [i] Ver. 56—107. [Transcriber's note: There is no Footnote [j]] [k] The richest landlord. [l] Ver. 108—113. [m] Ver. 114—132. [n]

Resistless burns the fever of renown,
Caught from the strong contagion of the gown.

Mr. Boswell tells us, that when he remarked to Dr. Johnson, that there was an awkward repetition of the word spreads in this passage, he altered it to "Burns from the strong contagion of the gown;" but this expression, it appears, was only resumed from the reading in the first edition.

[o] There is a tradition, that the study of friar Bacon, built on an arch over the bridge, will fall, when a man greater than Bacon shall pass under it. To prevent so shocking an accident, it was pulled down many years since.

[p] And sloth's *bland* opiates *shed* their fumes in vain. [q] The *garret* and the

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gaol. [r] See Gent. Mag. vol. lxviii. p. 951, 1027. [s] This was first written, “See, when the vulgar scap_ed_;” but,
as the rest of the paragraph was in the present tense, he altered it to scape_s_; but again recollecting that the word *vulgar* is never used as a singular substantive, he adopted the reading of the text.
[t] Ver. 133—146.
[u] Ver. 147—167.

[Transcriber’s note: There is no Footnote [v] or Footnote [w]]

[x] O’er love or *force*. [y] Ver. 168—187. [z] *And* all the sons. [aa] Ver. 188—288. [bb] And *yield*. [cc] An age that melts *in*. [dd] *Could* wish its end. [ee] Ver. 289-345. [ff] Ver. 346-366. [gg]
Yet, *with* the sense of sacred presence *press’d*,
When strong devotion *fills thy glowing breast*.

[hh] *Thinks* death.

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK, AT THE OPENING OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY LANE, 1747.

When learning’s triumph o’er her barb’rous foes
First rear’d the stage, immortal Shakespeare rose;
Each change of many-colour’d life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagin’d new:
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting time toil’d after him in vain:
His pow’rful strokes presiding truth impress’d,
And unresisted passion storm’d the breast.
Then Jonson came, instructed from the school
To please in method, and invent by rule;
His studious patience and laborious art,
By regular approach, assail’d the heart:
Cold approbation gave the ling’ring bays;
For those, who durst not censure, scarce could praise:
A mortal born, he met the gen’ral doom,
But left, like Egypt’s kings, a lasting tomb.
The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,

Nor wish'd for Jonson's art, or Shakespeare's flame:
Themselves they studied, as they felt, they writ;
Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit;
Vice always found a sympathetick friend;
They pleas'd their age, and did not aim to mend.
Yet bards, like these, aspir'd to lasting praise,
And proudly hop'd to pimp in future days.
Their cause was gen'ral, their supports were strong;
Their slaves were willing, and their reign was long:
Till shame regain'd the post that sense betray'd,
And virtue call'd oblivion to her aid.
  Then, crush'd by rules, and weaken'd, as refin'd,
For years the pow'r of tragedy declin'd;
From bard to bard the frigid caution crept,
Till declamation roar'd, while passion slept;
Yet still did virtue deign the stage to tread,
Philosophy remain'd, though nature fled.
But forced, at length, her ancient reign to quit,
She saw great Faustus lay the ghost of wit;
Exulting folly hail'd the joyful day,
And pantomime and song confirm'd her sway.
  But who the coming changes can presage,

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And mark the future periods of the stage?
Perhaps, if skill could distant times explore,
New Behns, new Durfeys, yet remain in store;
Perhaps, where Lear has ray'd, and Hamlet dy'd,
On flying cars new sorcerers may ride:
Perhaps, (for who can guess th' effects of chance?)
Here Hunt[a] may box, or Mahomet may dance.
  Hard is his lot that, here by fortune plac'd,
Must watch the wild vicissitudes of taste;
With ev'ry meteor of caprice must play,
And chase the new-blown bubbles of the day.
Ah! let not censure term our fate our choice,
The stage but echoes back the publick voice;
The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
For we that live to please, must please to live.
  Then prompt no more the follies you decry,
As tyrants doom their tools of guilt to die;
'Tis yours, this night, to bid the reign commence
Of rescued nature and reviving sense;
To chase the charms of sound, the pomp of show,
For useful mirth and salutary woe;
Bid scenick virtue form the rising age,
And truth diffuse her radiance from the stage.

[a] Hunt, a famous boxer on the stage; Mahomet, a ropedancer, who had exhibited at Covent garden theatre the winter before, said to be a Turk.

PREFATORY NOTICE TO

THE TRAGEDY OF IRENE.

The history of this tragedy's composition is interesting, as affording dates to distinguish Johnson's literary progress. It was begun, and considerably advanced, while he kept a school at Edial, near Lichfield, in 1736. In the following year, when he relinquished the task of a schoolmaster, so little congenial with his mind and disposition, and resolved to seek his fortunes in the metropolis, Irene was carried along with him as a foundation for his success. Mr. Walmsley, one of his early friends, recommended him, and his fellow-adventurer, Garrick, to the notice and protection of Colson, the mathematician. Unless

Mrs. Piozzi is correct, in rescuing the character of Colson from any identity with that of Gelidus, in the Rambler[a], Johnson entertained no lively recollection of his first patron's kindness. He was ever warm in expressions of gratitude for favours, conferred on him in his season of want and obscurity; and from his deep silence here, we may conclude, that the recluse mathematician did not evince much sympathy with the distresses of the young candidate for dramatic fame. Be this, however, as it may, Johnson, shortly after this introduction, took lodgings at Greenwich, to proceed with his Irene in quiet and retirement, but soon returned to Lichfield, to complete it. The same year that saw these successive disappointments, witnessed also Johnson's return to London, with his tragedy completed, and its rejection by Fleetwood, the patentee, at that time, of Drury lane theatre. Twelve years elapsed, before it was acted, and, after many alterations by his pupil and companion, Garrick,

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who was then manager of the theatre, it was, by his zeal, and the support of the most eminent performers of the day, carried through a representation of nine nights. Johnson's profits, after the deduction of expenses, and together with the hundred pounds, which he received from Robert Dodsley, for the copy, were nearly three hundred pounds. So fallacious were the hopes cherished by Walmsley, that Johnson would "turn out a fine tragedy writer[b]."

"The tragedy of Irene," says Mr. Murphy, "is founded on a passage in Knolles's History of the Turks;" an author highly commended in the Rambler, No. 122. An incident in the life of Mahomet the great, first emperor of the Turks, is the hinge, on which the fable is made to move. The substance of the story is shortly this:—In 1453, Mahomet laid siege to Constantinople, and, having reduced the place, became enamoured of a fair Greek, whose name was Irene. The sultan invited her to embrace the law of the prophet, and to grace his throne. Enraged at this intended marriage, the janizaries formed a conspiracy to dethrone the emperor. To avert the impending danger, Mahomet, in a full assembly of the grandees, "catching, with one hand," as Knolles relates it, "the fair Greek by the hair of her head, and drawing his falchion with the other, he, at one blow, struck off her head, to the great terror of them all; and, having so done, said unto them, 'Now, by this, judge whether your emperor is able to bridle his affections or not[c].'" We are not unjust, we conceive, in affirming, that there is an interest kept alive in the plain and simple narrative of the old historian, which is lost in the declamatory tragedy of Johnson.

It is sufficient, for our present purpose, to confess that he *has* failed in this his only dramatic attempt; we shall endeavour, more fully, to show *how* he has failed, in our discussion of his powers as a critic. That they were not blinded to the defects of others, by his own inefficiency in dramatic composition, is fully proved by his judicious remarks on Cato, which was constructed on a plan similar to Irene: and the strongest censure, ever passed on this tragedy, was conveyed in Garrick's application of Johnson's own severe, but correct critique, on the wits of Charles, in whose works

"Declamation roar'd, while passion slept."[d]

"Addison speaks the language of poets," says Johnson, in his preface to Shakespeare, "and Shakespeare of men. We find in Cato innumerable beauties, which enamour us of its author, but we see nothing that acquaints us with human sentiments, or human actions; we place it with the fairest and the noblest progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning; but Othello is the vigorous and vivacious offspring of observation, impregnated by genius. Cato affords a splendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers just and noble sentiments, in diction easy, elevated and harmonious; but its

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hopes and fears communicate no vibration to the heart: the composition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of Cato, but we think on Addison." The critic's remarks on the same tragedy, in his Life of Addison, are as applicable as the above to his own production. "Cato is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama; rather a succession of just sentiments in elegant language, than a representation of natural affections, or of any state probable or possible in human life. Nothing here 'excites or assuages emotion:' here is no 'magical power of raising phantastick terrour or wild anxiety.' The events are expected without solicitude, and are remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the agents we have no care; we consider not what they are doing, or what they are suffering; we wish only to know what they have to say."

But, while we thus pronounce Johnson's failure in the production of dramatic effect, we will not withhold our tribute of admiration from Irene, as a moral piece. For, although a remark of Fox's on an unpublished tragedy of Burke's, that it was rather rhetorical than poetical, may be applied to the work under consideration; still it abounds, throughout, with the most elevated and dignified lessons of morality and virtue. The address of Demetrius to the aged Cali, on the dangers of procrastination[e]; Aspasia's reprobation of Irene's meditated apostasy[f]; and the allusive panegyric on the British constitution[g], may be enumerated, as examples of its excellence in sentiment and diction.

Lastly, we may consider Irene, as one other illustrious proof, that the most strict adherence to the far-famed unities, the most harmonious versification, and the most correct philosophy, will not vie with a single and simple touch of nature, expressed in simple and artless language. "But how rich in reputation must that author be, who can spare *an Irene*, and not feel the loss [h]."

FOOTNOTES [a] Rambler, No. 24, and note. [b] Boswell's Life, i. [c] Murphy's Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson. [d] Prologue at the opening of Drury lane theatre, 1747. [e] Act iii. scene ii. "To-morrow's action!" &c. [f] Act iii. scene viii. "Reflect, that life and death," &c. [g] Act i. scene ii. "If there be any land, as fame reports," &c. [h] Dr. Young's remark on Addison's Cato. See his Conjectures on
Original Composition. Works, vol. v.

PROLOGUE.

Ye glitt'ring train, whom lace and velvet bless,
Suspend the soft solicitudes of dress!
From grov'ling bus'ness and superfluous care,
Ye sons of avarice, a moment spare!
Vot'ries of fame, and worshippers of power,
Dismiss the pleasing phantoms for an hour!
Our daring bard, with spirit unconfin'd,

Spreads wide the mighty moral for mankind.
Learn here, how heaven supports the virtuous mind,
Daring, though calm; and vig'rous, though resign'd;
Learn here, what anguish racks the guilty breast,
In pow'r dependant, in success depress'd.
Learn here, that peace from innocence must flow;
All else is empty sound, and idle show.

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If truths, like these, with pleasing language join;
Ennobled, yet unchang'd, if nature shine;
If no wild draught depart from reason's rules;
Nor gods his heroes, nor his lovers fools;
Intriguing wits! his artless plot forgive;
And spare him, beauties! though his lovers live.

Be this, at least, his praise, be this his pride;
To force applause, no modern arts are try'd.
Should partial catcals all his hopes confound,
He bids no trumpet quell the fatal sound.
Should welcome sleep relieve the weary wit,
He rolls no thunders o'er the drowsy pit;
No snares, to captivate the judgment, spreads,
Nor bribes your eyes to prejudice your heads.
Unmov'd, though witlings sneer, and rivals rail,
Studious to please, yet not asham'd to fail,
He scorns the meek address, the suppliant strain,
With merit needless, and without it vain.
In reason, nature, truth, he dares to trust:
Ye fops, be silent: and, ye wits, be just!

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

MAHOMET, Emperour of the Turks, Mr. BARRY.

CALI BASSA, First vizier, Mr. BERRY.

MUSTAPHA, A Turkish aga, Mr. SOWDEN.

ABDALLA, An officer, Mr. HAVARD.

HASAN, \ / Mr. USHER,
Turkish captains,
CARAZA, / \ Mr. BURTON.

DEMETRIUS, \ / Mr. GARRICK,
Greek noblemen,
LEONTIUS, / \ MR. BLAKES.

MURZA, An eunuch, Mr. KING.

WOMEN.

ASPASIA, \ / Mrs. GIBBER,
Greek ladies,
IRENE, / \ Mrs. PRITCHARD.

Attendants on IRENE.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

DEMETRIUS *and* LEONTIUS, *in Turkish habits*.

LEONTIUS.
And, is it thus Demetrius meets his friend,
Hid in the mean disguise of Turkish robes,
With servile secrecy to lurk in shades,
And vent our suff'rings in clandestine groans?

DEMETRIUS.
Till breathless fury rested from destruction,
These groans were fatal, these disguises vain:
But, now our Turkish conquerors have quench'd
Their rage, and pall'd their appetite of murder,
No more the glutted sabre thirsts for blood;
And weary cruelty remits her tortures.

LEONTIUS.
Yet Greece enjoys no gleam of transient hope,
No soothing interval of peaceful sorrow:
The lust of gold succeeds the rage of conquest;
—The lust of gold, unfeeling and remorseless,
The last corruption of degen'rate man!
Urg'd by th' imperious soldiers' fierce command,
The groaning Greeks break up their golden caverns,
Pregnant with stores, that India's mines might envy,
Th' accumulated wealth of toiling ages.

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DEMETRIUS.
That wealth, too sacred for their country's use!
That wealth, too pleasing to be lost for freedom!
That wealth, which, granted to their weeping prince,
Had rang'd embattled nations at our gates!
But, thus reserv'd to lure the wolves of Turkey,
Adds shame to grief, and infamy to ruin.
Lamenting av'rice, now too late, discovers
Her own neglected in the publick safety.

LEONTIUS.
Reproach not misery.—The sons of Greece,
Ill fated race! so oft besieg'd in vain,
With false security beheld invasion.
Why should they fear?—That pow'r that kindly spreads
The clouds, a signal of impending show'rs,
To warn the wand'ring linnet to the shade,
Beheld without concern expiring Greece;
And not one prodigy foretold our fate.

DEMETRIUS.
A thousand horrid prodigies foretold it:
A feeble government, eluded laws,
A factious populace, luxurious nobles,
And all the maladies of sinking states.
When publick villany, too strong for justice,
Shows his bold front, the harbinger of ruin,
Can brave Leontius call for airy wonders,
Which cheats interpret, and which fools regard?
When some neglected fabrick nods beneath
The weight of years, and totters to the tempest,
Must heav'n despatch the messengers of light,
Or wake the dead, to warn us of its fall?

LEONTIUS.
Well might the weakness of our empire sink
Before such foes of more than human force:
Some pow'r invisible, from heav'n or hell,
Conducts their armies, and asserts their cause.

DEMETRIUS.
And yet, my friend, what miracles were wrought
Beyond the pow'r of constancy and courage?
Did unresisted lightning aid their cannon?

Did roaring whirlwinds sweep us from the ramparts?
’Twas vice that shook our nerves, ’twas vice, Leontius,
That froze our veins, and wither’d all our pow’rs.

LEONTIUS.
Whate’er our crimes, our woes demand compassion.
Each night, protected by the friendly darkness,
Quitting my close retreat, I range the city,
And, weeping, kiss the venerable ruins;
With silent pangs, I view the tow’ring domes,
Sacred to pray’r; and wander through the streets,
Where commerce lavish’d unexhausted plenty,
And jollity maintain’d eternal revels—

DEMETRIUS.
—How chang’d, alas!—Now ghastly desolation,
In triumph, sits upon our shatter’d spires;
Now superstition, ignorance, and errour,
Usurp our temples, and profane our altars.

LEONTIUS.
From ev’ry palace bursts a mingled clamour,
The dreadful dissonance of barb’rous triumph,
Shrieks of affright, and waitings of distress.
Oft when the cries of violated beauty
Arose to heav’n, and pierc’d my bleeding breast,
I felt thy pains, and trembled for Aspasia.

DEMETRIUS.
Aspasia!—spare that lov’d, that mournful name:
Dear, hapless maid—tempestuous grief o’erbears
My reasoning pow’rs—Dear, hapless, lost Aspasia!

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LEONTIUS.
Suspend the thought.

DEMETRIUS.
All thought on her is madness;
Yet let me think—I see the helpless maid;
Behold the monsters gaze with savage rapture,
Behold how lust and rapine struggle round her!

LEONTIUS.
Awake, Demetrius, from this dismal dream;
Sink not beneath imaginary sorrows;
Call to your aid your courage and your wisdom;
Think on the sudden change of human scenes;
Think on the various accidents of war;
Think on the mighty pow'r of awful virtue;
Think on that providence that guards the good.

DEMETRIUS.
O providence! extend thy care to me;
For courage droops, unequal to the combat;
And weak philosophy denies her succours.
Sure, some kind sabre in the heat of battle,
Ere yet the foe found leisure to be cruel,
Dismiss'd her to the sky.

LEONTIUS.
Some virgin martyr,
Perhaps, enamour'd of resembling virtue,
With gentle hand, restrain'd the streams of life,
And snatch'd her timely from her country's fate.

DEMETRIUS.
From those bright regions of eternal day,
Where now thou shin'st among thy fellow-saints,
Array'd in purer light, look down on me:
In pleasing visions and assuasive dreams,
O! sooth my soul, and teach me how to lose thee.

LEONTIUS.
Enough of unavailing tears, Demetrius:
I come obedient to thy friendly summons,
And hop'd to share thy counsels, not thy sorrows:

While thus we mourn the fortune of Aspasia,
To what are we reserv'd?

DEMETRIUS.
To what I know not:
But hope, yet hope, to happiness and honour;
If happiness can be, without Aspasia.

LEONTIUS.
But whence this new-sprung hope?

DEMETRIUS.
From Cali bassa,
The chief, whose wisdom guides the Turkish counsels.
He, tir'd of slav'ry, though the highest slave,
Projects, at once, our freedom and his own;
And bids us, thus disguis'd, await him here.

LEONTIUS.
Can he restore the state he could not save?
In vain, when Turkey's troops assail'd our walls,
His kind intelligence betray'd their measures;
Their arms prevail'd, though Cali was our friend.

DEMETRIUS.
When the tenth sun had set upon our sorrows,
At midnight's private hour, a voice unknown
Sounds in my sleeping ear, 'Awake, Demetrius,
Awake, and follow me to better fortunes.'
Surpris'd I start, and bless the happy dream;
Then, rousing, know the fiery chief Abdalla,
Whose quick impatience seiz'd my doubtful hand,
And led me to the shore where Cali stood,
Pensive, and list'ning to the beating surge.
There, in soft hints, and in ambiguous phrase,
With all the diffidence of long experience,
That oft had practis'd fraud, and oft detected,
The vet'ran courtier half reveal'd his project.
By his command, equipp'd for speedy flight,
Deep in a winding creek a galley lies,
Mann'd with the bravest of our fellow-captives,
Selected by my care, a hardy band,
That long to hail thee chief.

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LEONTIUS.
But what avails
So small a force? or, why should Cali fly?
Or, how can Call's flight restore our country?

DEMETRIUS.
Reserve these questions for a safer hour;
Or hear himself, for see the bassa comes.

SCENE II.

DEMETRIUS, LEONTIUS, CALI.

CALI.
Now summon all thy soul, illustrious Christian!
Awake each faculty that sleeps within thee:
The courtier's policy, the sage's firmness,
The warriour's ardour, and the patriot's zeal.
If, chasing past events with vain pursuit,
Or wand'ring in the wilds of future being,
A single thought now rove, recall it home.—
But can thy friend sustain the glorious cause,
The cause of liberty, the cause of nations?

DEMETRIUS.
Observe him closely, with a statesman's eye,
Thou, that hast long perus'd the draughts of nature,
And know'st the characters of vice and virtue,
Left by the hand of heav'n on human clay.

CALI.
His mien is lofty, his demeanour great;
Nor sprightly folly wantons in his air;
Nor dull serenity becalms his eyes.
Such had I trusted once, as soon as seen,
But cautious age suspects the flatt'ring form,
And only credits what experience tells.
Has silence press'd her seal upon his lips?
Does adamantine faith invest his heart?
Will he not bend beneath a tyrant's frown?
Will he not melt before ambition's fire?
Will he not soften in a friend's embrace?
Or flow dissolving in a woman's tears?

DEMETRIUS.
Sooner the trembling leaves shall find a voice,
And tell the secrets of their conscious walks;
Sooner the breeze shall catch the flying sounds,
And shock the tyrant with a tale of treason.
Your slaughter'd multitudes, that swell the shore
With monuments of death, proclaim his courage;
Virtue and liberty engross his soul,
And leave no place for perfidy, or fear.

LEONTIUS.
I scorn a trust unwillingly repos'd;
Demetrius will not lead me to dishonour;
Consult in private, call me, when your scheme
Is ripe for action, and demands the sword. [*Going*.

DEMETRIUS.
Leontius, stay.

CALI.
Forgive an old man's weakness,
And share the deepest secrets of my soul,
My wrongs, my fears, my motives, my designs.—
When unsuccessful wars, and civil factions
Embroil'd the Turkish state, our sultan's father,
Great Amurath, at my request, forsook
The cloister's ease, resum'd the tott'ring throne,
And snatch'd the reins of abdicated pow'r
From giddy Mahomet's unskilful hand.
This fir'd the youthful king's ambitious breast:
He murmurs vengeance, at the name of Cali,
And dooms my rash fidelity to ruin.

DEMETRIUS.
Unhappy lot of all that shine in courts,
For forc'd compliance, or for zealous virtue,
Still odious to the monarch, or the people.

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CALI.
Such are the woes, when arbitrary pow'r
And lawless passion hold the sword of justice.
If there be any land, as fame reports,
Where common laws restrain the prince and subject,
A happy land, where circulating pow'r
Flows through each member of th' embodied state;
Sure, not unconscious of the mighty blessing,
Her grateful sons shine bright with every virtue;
Untainted with the lust of innovation,
Sure, all unite to hold her league of rule
Unbroken, as the sacred chain of nature
That links the jarring elements in peace.

LEONTIUS.
But say, great bassa, why the sultan's anger,
Burning in vain, delays the stroke of death?

CALI.
Young, and unsettled in his father's kingdoms,
Fierce as he was, he dreaded to destroy
The empire's darling, and the soldier's boast;
But now confirm'd, and swelling with his conquests,
Secure, he tramples my declining fame,
Frowns unrestrain'd, and dooms me with his eyes.

DEMETRIUS.
What can reverse thy doom?

CALI.
The tyrant's death.

DEMETRIUS.
But Greece is still forgot.

CALI.
On Asia's coast,
Which lately bless'd my gentle government,
Soon as the sultan's unexpected fate
Fills all th' astonish'd empire with confusion,
My policy shall raise an easy throne;
The Turkish pow'rs from Europe shall retreat,
And harass Greece no more with wasteful war.

A galley mann'd with Greeks, thy charge, Leontius,
Attends to waft us to repose and safety.

DEMETRIUS.
That vessel, if observ'd, alarms the court,
And gives a thousand fatal questions birth:
Why stor'd for flight? and why prepar'd by Cali?

CALI.
This hour I'll beg, with unsuspecting face,
Leave to perform my pilgrimage to Mecca;
Which granted, hides my purpose from the world,
And, though refus'd, conceals it from the sultan.

LEONTIUS.
How can a single hand attempt a life,
Which armies guard, and citadels enclose?

CALI.
Forgetful of command, with captive beauties,
Far from his troops, he toys his hours away.
A roving soldier seiz'd, in Sophia's temple,
A virgin, shining with distinguish'd charms,
And brought his beauteous plunder to the sultan—

DEMETRIUS.
In Sophia's temple!—What alarm!—Proceed.

CALI.
The sultan gaz'd, he wonder'd, and he lov'd:
In passion lost, he bade the conqu'ring fair
Renounce her faith, and be the queen of Turkey.
The pious maid, with modest indignation,
Threw back the glitt'ring bribe.

DEMETRIUS.
Celestial goodness!
It must, it must be she;—her name?

CALI.
Aspasia.

DEMETRIUS.
What hopes, what terrours, rush upon my soul!
O lead me quickly to the scene of fate;
Break through the politician's tedious forms;
Aspasia calls me, let me fly to save her.

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LEONTIUS.
Did Mahomet reproach, or praise her virtue?

CALI.
His offers, oft repeated, still refus'd,
At length rekindled his accustomed fury,
And chang'd th' endearing smile, and am'rous whisper
To threats of torture, death, and violation.

DEMETRIUS.
These tedious narratives of frozen age
Distract my soul;—despatch thy ling'ring tale;
Say, did a voice from heav'n restrain the tyrant?
Did interposing angels guard her from him?

CALI.
Just in the moment of impending fate,
Another plund'rer brought the bright Irene;
Of equal beauty, but of softer mien,
Fear in her eye, submission on her tongue,
Her mournful charms attracted his regards,
Disarm'd his rage, and, in repeated visits,
Gain'd all his heart; at length, his eager love
To her transferr'd the offer of a crown,

LEONTIUS.
Nor found again the bright temptation fail?

CALI.
Trembling to grant, nor daring to refuse,
While heav'n and Mahomet divide her fears,
With coy caresses and with pleasing wiles
She feeds his hopes, and sooths him to delay.
For her, repose is banish'd from the night,
And bus'ness from the day: in her apartments
He lives—

LEONTIUS.
And there must fall.

CALI.
But yet, th' attempt
Is hazardous.

LEONTIUS.
Forbear to speak of hazards;
What has the wretch, that has surviv'd his country,
His friends, his liberty, to hazard?

CALI.
Life.

DEMETRIUS.
Th' inestimable privilege of breathing!
Important hazard! What's that airy bubble,
When weigh'd with Greece, with virtue, with Aspasia?—
A floating atom, dust that falls, unheeded,
Into the adverse scale, nor shakes the balance.

CALI.
At least, this day be calm—If we succeed,
Aspasia's thine, and all thy life is rapture.—
See! Mustapha, the tyrant's minion, comes;
Invest Leontius with his new command;
And wait Abdalla's unsuspected visits:
Remember freedom, glory, Greece, and love.
[*Exeunt* Demetrius *and* Leontius.

SCENE III.

CALI, MUSTAPHA.

MUSTAPHA.
By what enchantment does this lovely Greek
Hold in her chains the captivated sultan?
He tires his fav'rites with Irene's praise,
And seeks the shades to muse upon Irene;
Irene steals, unheeded, from his tongue,
And mingles, unperceiv'd, with ev'ry thought.

CALI.
Why should the sultan shun the joys of beauty,
Or arm his breast against the force of love?
Love, that with sweet vicissitude relieves
The warriour's labours and the monarch's cares.
But, will she yet receive the faith of Mecca?

MUSTAPHA.
Those pow'rful tyrants of the female breast,
Fear and ambition, urge her to compliance;
Dress'd in each charm of gay magnificence,

Alluring grandeur courts her to his arms,
Religion calls her from the wish'd embrace,
Paints future joys, and points to distant glories.

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CALI.
Soon will th' unequal contest be decided.
Prospects, obscur'd by distance, faintly strike;
Each pleasure brightens, at its near approach,
And ev'ry danger shocks with double horrour.

MUSTAPHA.
How shall I scorn the beautiful apostate!
How will the bright Aspasia shine above her!

CALI.
Should she, for proselytes are always zealous,
With pious warmth receive our prophet's law—

MUSTAPHA.
Heav'n will contemn the mercenary fervour,
Which love of greatness, not of truth, inflames.

CALI.
Cease, cease thy censures; for the sultan comes
Alone, with am'rous haste to seek his love.

SCENE IV.

MAHOMET, CALI, MUSTAPHA.

CALI.
Hail! terrour of the monarchs of the world;
Unshaken be thy throne, as earth's firm base;
Live, till the sun forgets to dart his beams,
And weary planets loiter in their courses!

MAHOMET.
But, Cali, let Irene share thy prayers;
For what is length of days, without Irene?
I come from empty noise, and tasteless pomp,
From crowds, that hide a monarch from himself,
To prove the sweets of privacy and friendship,
And dwell upon the beauties of Irene.

CALI.
O may her beauties last, unchang'd by time,
As those that bless the mansions of the good!

MAHOMET.
Each realm, where beauty turns the graceful shape,
Swells the fair breast, or animates the glance,
Adorns my palace with its brightest virgins;
Yet, unacquainted with these soft emotions,
I walk'd superiour through the blaze of charms,
Prais'd without rapture, left without regret.
Why rove I now, when absent from my fair,
From solitude to crowds, from crowds to solitude,
Still restless, till I clasp the lovely maid,
And ease my loaded soul upon her bosom?

MUSTAPHA.
Forgive, great sultan, that intrusive duty
Inquires the final doom of Menodorus,
The Grecian counsellor.

MAHOMET.
Go, see him die;
His martial rhet'rick taught the Greeks resistance;
Had they prevail'd, I ne'er had known Irene.

[*Exit* Mustapha.

SCENE V.

MAHOMET, CALI.

MAHOMET.
Remote from tumult, in th' adjoining palace,
Thy care shall guard this treasure of my soul:
There let Aspasia, since my fair entreats it,
With converse chase the melancholy moments.
Sure, chill'd with sixty winter camps, thy blood,
At sight of female charms, will glow no more.

CALI.
These years, unconquer'd Mahomet, demand
Desires more pure, and other cares than love.
Long have I wish'd, before our prophet's tomb,
To pour my pray'rs for thy successful reign,
To quit the tumults of the noisy camp,
And sink into the silent grave in peace.

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MAHOMET.
What! think of peace, while haughty Scanderbeg,
Elate with conquest, in his native mountains,
Prowls o'er the wealthy spoils of bleeding Turkey!
While fair Hungaria's unexhausted valleys
Pour forth their legions; and the roaring Danube
Rolls half his floods, unheard, through shouting camps!
Nor could'st thou more support a life of sloth
Than Amurath—

CALI.
Still, full of Amurath! [*Aside*.

MAHOMET.
Than Amurath, accustom'd to command,
Could bear his son upon the Turkish throne.

CALI.
This pilgrimage our lawgiver ordain'd—

MAHOMET.
For those, who could not please by nobler service.—
Our warlike prophet loves an active faith.
The holy flame of enterprising virtue
Mocks the dull vows of solitude and penance,
And scorns the lazy hermit's cheap devotion.
Shine thou, distinguish'd by superiour merit;
With wonted zeal pursue the task of war,
Till ev'ry nation reverence the koran,
And ev'ry suppliant lift his eyes to Mecca.

CALI.
This regal confidence, this pious ardour,
Let prudence moderate, though not suppress.
Is not each realm, that smiles with kinder suns,
Or boasts a happier soil, already thine?
Extended empire, like expanded gold,
Exchanges solid strength for feeble splendour.

MAHOMET.
Preach thy dull politicks to vulgar kings,
Thou know'st not yet thy master's future greatness,
His vast designs, his plans of boundless pow'r.
When ev'ry storm in my domain shall roar,

When ev'ry wave shall beat a Turkish shore;
Then, Cali, shall the toils of battle cease,
Then dream of pray'r, and pilgrimage, and peace.
[*Exeunt*.

ACT II.—SCENE I. ASPASIA, IRENE.

IRENE.
Aspasia, yet pursue the sacred theme;
Exhaust the stores of pious eloquence,
And teach me to repel the sultan's passion.
Still, at Aspasia's voice, a sudden rapture
Exalts my soul, and fortifies my heart;
The glitt'ring vanities of empty greatness,
The hopes and fears, the joys and pains of life,
Dissolve in air, and vanish into nothing.

ASPASIA.
Let nobler hopes and juster fears succeed,
And bar the passes of Irene's mind
Against returning guilt.

IRENE.
When thou art absent,
Death rises to my view, with all his terrours;
Then visions, horrid as a murd'rer's dreams,
Chill my resolves, and blast my blooming virtue:
Stern torture shakes his bloody scourge before me,
And anguish gnashes on the fatal wheel.

ASPASIA.
Since fear predominates in ev'ry thought,
And sways thy breast with absolute dominion,
Think on th' insulting scorn, the conscious pangs,
The future mis'ries, that wait th' apostate;
So shall timidity assist thy reason,
And wisdom into virtue turn thy frailty.

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IRENE.
Will not that pow'r, that form'd the heart of woman,
And wove the feeble texture of her nerves,
Forgive those fears that shake the tender frame?

ASPASIA.
The weakness we lament, ourselves create;
Instructed, from our infant years, to court,
With counterfeited fears, the aid of man,
We learn to shudder at the rustling breeze,
Start at the light, and tremble in the dark;
Till, affectation ripening to belief,
And folly, frighted at her own chimeras,
Habitual cowardice usurps the soul.

IRENE.
Not all, like thee, can brave the shocks of fate.
Thy soul, by nature great, enlarg'd by knowledge,
Soars unincumber'd with our idle cares,
And all Aspasia, but her beauty's man.

ASPASIA.
Each gen'rous sentiment is thine, Demetrius,
Whose soul, perhaps, yet mindful of Aspasia,
Now hovers o'er this melancholy shade,
Well pleas'd to find thy precepts not forgotten.
Oh! could the grave restore the pious hero,
Soon would his art or valour set us free,
And bear us far from servitude and crimes.

IRENE.
He yet may live.

ASPASIA.
Alas! delusive dream!
Too well I know him; his immoderate courage,
Th' impetuous sallies of excessive virtue,
Too strong for love, have hurried him on death.

SCENE II.

ASPASIA, IRENE, CALI, ABDALLA.

CALI *to* ABDALLA, *as they advance*.
Behold our future sultaness, Abdalla;—
Let artful flatt'ry now, to lull suspicion,
Glide, through Irene, to the sultan's ear.
Would'st thou subdue th' obdurate cannibal
To tender friendship, praise him to his mistress.

[*To* IRENE.]

Well may those eyes, that view these heav'nly charms,
Reject the daughters of contending kings;
For what are pompous titles, proud alliance,
Empire or wealth, to excellence like thine?

ABDALLA.
Receive th' impatient sultan to thy arms;
And may a long posterity of monarchs,
The pride and terrour of succeeding days,
Rise from the happy bed; and future queens
Diffuse Irene's beauty through the world!

IRENE.
Can Mahomet's imperial hand descend
To clasp a slave? or can a soul, like mine,
Unus'd to pow'r, and form'd for humbler scenes,
Support the splendid miseries of greatness?

CALI.
No regal pageant, deck'd with casual honours,
Scorn'd by his subjects, trampled by his foes;
No feeble tyrant of a petty state,
Courts thee to shake on a dependant throne;
Born to command, as thou to charm mankind,
The sultan from himself derives his greatness.
Observe, bright maid, as his resistless voice
Drives on the tempest of destructive war,
How nation after nation falls before him.

ABDALLA.
At his dread name the distant mountains shake
Their cloudy summits, and the sons of fierceness,
That range uncivilized from rock to rock,
Distrust th' eternal fortresses of nature,
And wish their gloomy caverns more obscure.

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ASPASIA.
Forbear this lavish pomp of dreadful praise;
The horrid images of war and slaughter
Renew our sorrows, and awake our fears.

ABDALLA.
Cali, methinks yon waving trees afford
A doubtful glimpse of our approaching friends;
Just as I mark'd them, they forsook the shore,
And turn'd their hasty steps towards the garden.

CALI.
Conduct these queens, Abdalla, to the palace:
Such heav'nly beauty, form'd for adoration,
The pride of monarchs, the reward of conquest!
Such beauty must not shine to vulgar eyes.

SCENE III.

CALI, *solus*.

How heav'n, in scorn of human arrogance,
Commits to trivial chance the fate of nations!
While, with incessant thought, laborious man
Extends his mighty schemes of wealth and pow'r,
And towers and triumphs in ideal greatness;
Some accidental gust of opposition
Blasts all the beauties of his new creation,
O'erturns the fabrick of presumptuous reason,
And whelms the swelling architect beneath it.
Had not the breeze untwin'd the meeting boughs,
And, through the parted shade, disclos'd the Greeks,
Th' important hour had pass'd, unheeded, by,
In all the sweet oblivion of delight,
In all the fopperies of meeting lovers;
In sighs and tears, in transports and embraces,
In soft complaints, and idle protestations.

SCENE IV.

CALI, DEMETRIUS, LEONTIUS.

CALI.
Could omens fright the resolute and wise,
Well might we fear impending disappointments.

LEONTIUS.
Your artful suit, your monarch's fierce denial,
The cruel doom of hapless Menodorus—

DEMETRIUS.
And your new charge, that dear, that heav'nly maid—

LEONTIUS.
All this we know already from Abdalla.

DEMETRIUS.
Such slight defeats but animate the brave
To stronger efforts and maturer counsels.

CALI.
My doom confirm'd establishes my purpose.
Calmly he heard, till Amurath's resumption
Rose to his thought, and set his soul on fire:
When from his lips the fatal name burst out,
A sudden pause th' imperfect sense suspended,
Like the dread stillness of condensing storms.

DEMETRIUS.
The loudest cries of nature urge us forward;
Despotick rage pursues the life of Cali;
His groaning country claims Leontius' aid;
And yet another voice, forgive me, Greece,
The pow'rful voice of love, inflames Demetrius;
Each ling'ring hour alarms me for Aspasia.

CALI.
What passions reign among thy crew, Leontius?
Does cheerless diffidence oppress their hearts?
Or sprightly hope exalt their kindling spirits?
Do they, with pain, repress the struggling shout,
And listen eager to the rising wind?

LEONTIUS.
All there is hope, and gaiety, and courage,
No cloudy doubts, or languishing delays;
Ere I could range them on the crowded deck,
At once a hundred voices thunder'd round me,
And ev'ry voice was liberty and Greece.

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DEMETRIUS.
Swift let us rush upon the careless tyrant,
Nor give him leisure for another crime.

LEONTIUS.
Then let us now resolve, nor idly waste
Another hour in dull deliberation.

CALI.
But see, where destin'd to protract our counsels,
Comes Mustapha.—Your Turkish robes conceal you.
Retire with speed, while I prepare to meet him
With artificial smiles, and seeming friendship.

SCENE V.

CALI, MUSTAPHA.

CALI.
I see the gloom, that low'rs upon thy brow;
These days of love and pleasure charm not thee;
Too slow these gentle constellations roll;
Thou long'st for stars, that frown on human kind,
And scatter discord from their baleful beams.

MUSTAPHA.
How blest art thou, still jocund and serene,
Beneath the load of business, and of years!

CALI.
Sure, by some wond'rous sympathy of souls,
My heart still beats responsive to the sultan's;
I share, by secret instinct, all his joys,
And feel no sorrow, while my sov'reign smiles.

MUSTAPHA.
The sultan comes, impatient for his love;
Conduct her hither; let no rude intrusion
Molest these private walks, or care invade
These hours, assign'd to pleasure and Irene.

SCENE VI.

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA.

MAHOMET.
Now, Mustapha, pursue thy tale of horrour.
Has treason's dire infection reach'd my palace?
Can Cali dare the stroke of heav'nly justice,
In the dark precincts of the gaping grave,
And load with perjuries his parting soul?
Was it for this, that, sick'ning in Epirus,
My father call'd me to his couch of death,
Join'd Cali's hand to mine, and falt'ring cried,
Restrain the fervour of impetuous youth
With venerable Cali's faithful counsels?
Are these the counsels, this the faith of Cali?
Were all our favours lavish'd on a villain?
Confest?—

MUSTAPHA.
Confest by dying Menodorus.
In his last agonies, the gasping coward,
Amidst the tortures of the burning steel,
Still fond of life, groan'd out the dreadful secret,
Held forth this fatal scroll, then sunk to nothing.

MAHOMET. *examining the paper*.
His correspondence with our foes of Greece!
His hand! his seal! The secrets of my soul,
Conceal'd from all but him! All, all conspire
To banish doubt, and brand him for a villain!
Our schemes for ever cross'd, our mines discover'd,
Betray'd some traitor lurking near my bosom.
Oft have I rag'd, when their wide-wasting cannon
Lay pointed at our batt'ries yet unform'd,
And broke the meditated lines of war.
Detested Cali, too, with artful wonder,
Would shake his wily head, and closely whisper,
Beware of Mustapha, beware of treason.

MUSTAPHA.
The faith of Mustapha disdains suspicion;
But yet, great emperour, beware of treason;
Th' insidious bassa, fir'd by disappointment—

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MAHOMET.
Shall feel the vengeance of an injur'd king.
Go, seize him, load him with reproachful chains;
Before th' assembled troops, proclaim his crimes;
Then leave him, stretch'd upon the ling'ring rack,
Amidst the camp to howl his life away.

MUSTAPHA.
Should we, before the troops, proclaim his crimes,
I dread his arts of seeming innocence,
His bland address, and sorcery of tongue;
And, should he fall, unheard, by sudden justice,
Th' adoring soldiers would revenge their idol.

MAHOMET.
Cali, this day, with hypocritick zeal,
Implor'd my leave to visit Mecca's temple;
Struck with the wonder of a statesman's goodness,
I rais'd his thoughts to more sublime devotion.
Now let him go, pursu'd by silent wrath,
Meet unexpected daggers in his way,
And, in some distant land, obscurely die.

MUSTAPHA.
There will his boundless wealth, the spoil of Asia,
Heap'd by your father's ill-plac'd bounties on him,
Disperse rebellion through the eastern world;
Bribe to his cause, and list beneath his banners,
Arabia's roving troops, the sons of swiftness,
And arm the Persian heretick against thee;
There shall he waste thy frontiers, check thy conquests,
And, though at length subdued, elude thy vengeance.

MAHOMET.
Elude my vengeance! No—My troops shall range
Th' eternal snows that freeze beyond Maeotis,
And Africk's torrid sands, in search of Cali.
Should the fierce north, upon his frozen wings,
Bear him aloft, above the wond'ring clouds,
And seat him in the pleiads' golden chariots,
Thence shall my fury drag him down to tortures;
Wherever guilt can fly, revenge can follow.

MUSTAPHA.
Wilt thou dismiss the savage from the toils,
Only to hunt him round the ravag'd world?

MAHOMET.
Suspend his sentence—Empire and Irene
Claim my divided soul. This wretch, unworthy
To mix with nobler cares, I'll throw aside
For idle hours, and crush him at my leisure.

MUSTAPHA.
Let not th' unbounded greatness of his mind
Betray my king to negligence of danger.
Perhaps, the clouds of dark conspiracy
Now roll, full fraught with thunder, o'er your head.
Twice, since the morning rose, I saw the bassa,
Like a fell adder swelling in a brake,
Beneath the covert of this verdant arch,
In private conference; beside him stood
Two men unknown, the partners of his bosom;
I mark'd them well, and trac'd in either face
The gloomy resolution, horrid greatness,
And stern composure, of despairing heroes;
And, to confirm my thoughts, at sight of me,
As blasted by my presence, they withdrew,
With all the speed of terrour and of guilt.

MAHOMET.
The strong emotions of my troubled soul
Allow no pause for art or for contrivance;
And dark perplexity distracts my counsels.
Do thou resolve: for, see, Irene comes!
At her approach each ruder gust of thought
Sinks, like the sighing of a tempest spent,
And gales of softer passion fan my bosom.
[Cali *enters with* Irene, *and exit [Transcriber's note: sic] with* Mustapha.

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SCENE VII.

MAHOMET, IRENE.

MAHOMET.
Wilt thou descend, fair daughter of perfection,
To hear my vows, and give mankind a queen?
Ah! cease, Irene, cease those flowing sorrows,
That melt a heart impregnable till now,
And turn thy thoughts, henceforth, to love and empire.
How will the matchless beauties of Irene,
Thus bright in tears, thus amiable in ruin,
With all the graceful pride of greatness heighten'd,
Amidst the blaze of jewels and of gold,
Adorn a throne, and dignify dominion!

IRENE.
Why all this glare of splendid eloquence,
To paint the pageantries of guilty state?
Must I, for these, renounce the hope of heav'n,
Immortal crowns, and fulness of enjoyment?

MAHOMET.
Vain raptures all—For your inferiour natures,
Form'd to delight, and happy by delighting,
Heav'n has reserv'd no future paradise,
But bids you rove the paths of bliss, secure
Of total death, and careless of hereafter;
While heaven's high minister, whose awful volume
Records each act, each thought of sov'reign man,
Surveys your plays with inattentive glance,
And leaves the lovely trifler unregarded.

IRENE.
Why then has nature's vain munificence
Profusely pour'd her bounties upon woman?
Whence, then, those charms thy tongue has deign'd to flatter,
That air resistless, and enchanting blush,
Unless the beauteous fabrick was design'd
A habitation for a fairer soul?

MAHOMET.
Too high, bright maid, thou rat'st exteriour grace:

Not always do the fairest flow’rs diffuse
The richest odours, nor the speckled shells
Conceal the gem; let female arrogance
Observe the feather’d wand’rers of the sky;
With purple varied, and bedrop’d with gold,
They prune the wing, and spread the glossy plumes,
Ordain’d, like you, to flutter and to shine,
And cheer the weary passenger with musick.

IRENE.
Mean as we are, this tyrant of the world
Implores our smiles, and trembles at our feet.
Whence flow the hopes and fears, despair and rapture,
Whence all the bliss and agonies of love?

MAHOMET.
Why, when the balm of sleep descends on man,
Do gay delusions, wand’ring o’er the brain,
Sooth the delighted soul with empty bliss?
To want, give affluence? and to slav’ry, freedom?
Such are love’s joys, the lenitives of life,
A fancy’d treasure, and a waking dream.

IRENE.
Then let me once, in honour of our sex,
Assume the boastful arrogance of man.
Th’ attractive softness, and th’ endearing smile,
And pow’rful glance, ’tis granted, are our own;
Nor has impartial nature’s frugal hand
Exhausted all her nobler gifts on you.
Do not we share the comprehensive thought,
Th’ enlivening wit, the penetrating reason?
Beats not the female breast with gen’rous passions,
The thirst of empire, and the love of glory?

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MAHOMET.
Illustrious maid, new wonders fix me thine;
Thy soul completes the triumphs of thy face.
I thought (forgive, my fair,) the noblest aim,
The strongest effort of a female soul,
Was but to choose the graces of the day;
To tune the tongue, to teach the eyes to roll,
Dispose the colours of the flowing robe,
And add new roses to the faded cheek.
Will it not charm a mind, like thine, exalted,
To shine, the goddess of applauding nations;
To scatter happiness and plenty round thee,
To bid the prostrate captive rise and live,
To see new cities tow'r, at thy command,
And blasted kingdoms flourish, at thy smile?

IRENE.
Charm'd with the thought of blessing human kind,
Too calm I listen to the flatt'ring sounds.

MAHOMET.
O! seize the power to bless—Irene's nod
Shall break the fetters of the groaning Christian;
Greece, in her lovely patroness secure,
Shall mourn no more her plunder'd palaces.

IRENE.
Forbear—O! do not urge me to my ruin!

MAHOMET.
To state and pow'r I court thee, not to ruin:
Smile on my wishes, and command the globe.
Security shall spread her shield before thee,
And love infold thee with his downy wings.
If greatness please thee, mount th' imperial seat;
If pleasure charm thee, view this soft retreat;
Here ev'ry warbler of the sky shall sing;
Here ev'ry fragrance breathe of ev'ry spring:
To deck these bow'rs each region shall combine,
And e'en our prophet's gardens envy thine:
Empire and love shall share the blissful day,
And varied life steal, unperceiv'd, away.

[*Exeunt*.

ACT III.—SCENE I.

CALI, ABDALLA.

[CALI *enters, with a discontented air; to him enters* ABDALLA.]

CALI.
Is this the fierce conspirator, Abdalla?
Is this the restless diligence of treason?
Where hast thou linger'd, while th' incumber'd hours
Fly, lab'ring with the fate of future nations,
And hungry slaughter scents imperial blood?

ABDALLA.
Important cares detain'd me from your counsels.

CALI.
Some petty passion! some domestick trifle!
Some vain amusement of a vacant soul!
A weeping wife, perhaps, or dying friend,
Hung on your neck, and hinder'd your departure.
Is this a time for softness or for sorrow?
Unprofitable, peaceful, female virtues!
When eager vengeance shows a naked foe,
And kind ambition points the way to greatness.

ABDALLA.
Must then ambition's votaries infringe
The laws of kindness, break the bonds of nature,
And quit the names of brother, friend, and father?

CALI.
This sov'reign passion, scornful of restraint,
E'en from the birth, affects supreme command,
Swells in the breast, and, with resistless force,
O'erbears each gentler motion of the mind:
As, when a deluge overspreads the plains,
The wand'ring rivulet, and silver lake,
Mix undistinguish'd with the gen'ral roar.

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ABDALLA.
Yet can ambition, in Abdalla's breast,
Claim but the second place: there mighty love
Has fix'd his hopes, inquietudes, and fears,
His glowing wishes, and his jealous pangs.

CALI.
Love is, indeed, the privilege of youth;
Yet, on a day like this, when expectation
Pants for the dread event—But let us reason—

ABDALLA.
Hast thou grown old, amidst the crowd of courts,
And turn'd th' instructive page of human life,
To cant, at last, of reason to a lover?
Such ill-tim'd gravity, such serious folly,
Might well befit the solitary student,
Th' unpractis'd dervis, or sequester'd faquir.
Know'st thou not yet, when love invades the soul,
That all her faculties receive his chains?
That reason gives her sceptre to his hand,
Or only struggles to be more enslav'd?
Aspasia, who can look upon thy beauties?
Who hear thee speak, and not abandon reason?
Reason! the hoary dotard's dull directress,
That loses all, because she hazards nothing!
Reason! the tim'rous pilot, that, to shun
The rocks of life, for ever flies the port!

CALI.
But why this sudden warmth?

ABDALLA.
Because I love:
Because my slighted passion burns in vain!
Why roars the lioness, distress'd by hunger?
Why foam the swelling waves, when tempests rise?
Why shakes the ground, when subterraneous fires
Fierce through the bursting caverns rend their way?

CALI.
Not till this day, thou saw'st this fatal fair;
Did ever passion make so swift a progress?
Once more reflect; suppress this infant folly.

ABDALLA.
Gross fires, enkindled by a mortal hand,
Spread, by degrees, and dread th' oppressing stream;
The subtler flames, emitted from the sky,
Flash out at once, with strength above resistance.

CALI.
How did Aspasia welcome your address?
Did you proclaim this unexpected conquest?
Or pay, with speaking eyes, a lover's homage?

ABDALLA.
Confounded, aw'd, and lost in admiration,
I gaz'd, I trembled; but I could not speak;
When e'en, as love was breaking off from wonder,
And tender accents quiver'd on my lips,
She mark'd my sparkling eyes, and heaving breast,
And smiling, conscious of her charms, withdrew.

[*Enter* Demetrius *and* Leontius.

CALI.
Now be, some moments, master of thyself;
Nor let Demetrius know thee for a rival.
Hence! or be calm—To disagree is ruin.

SCENE II.

CALI, DEMETRIUS, LEONTIUS, ABDALLA.

DEMETRIUS.
When will occasion smile upon our wishes,
And give the tortures of suspense a period?
Still must we linger in uncertain hope?
Still languish in our chains, and dream of freedom,
Like thirsty sailors gazing on the clouds,
Till burning death shoots through their wither'd limbs?

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CALI.
Deliverance is at hand; for Turkey's tyrant,
Sunk in his pleasures, confident and gay,
With all the hero's dull security,
Trusts to my care his mistress and his life,
And laughs, and wantons in the jaws of death.

LEONTIUS.
So weak is man, when destin'd to destruction!—
The watchful slumber, and the crafty trust.

CALI.
At my command, yon iron gates unfold;
At my command, the sentinels retire;
With all the license of authority,
Through bowing slaves, I range the private rooms,
And of to-morrow's action fix the scene.

DEMETRIUS.
To-morrow's action! Can that hoary wisdom,
Borne down with years, still dote upon to-morrow?
That fatal mistress of the young, the lazy,
The coward, and the fool, condemn'd to lose
An useless life, in waiting for to-morrow,
To gaze with longing eyes upon to-morrow,
Till interposing death destroys the prospect!
Strange! that this gen'ral fraud, from day to day,
Should fill the world with wretches undetected.
The soldier, lab'ring through a winter's march,
Still sees to-morrow drest in robes of triumph;
Still to the lover's long-expecting arms
To-morrow brings the visionary bride.
But thou, too old to bear another cheat,
Learn, that the present hour alone is man's.

LEONTIUS.
The present hour, with open arms, invites;
Seize the kind fair, and press her to thy bosom.

DEMETRIUS.
Who knows, ere this important morrow rise,
But fear or mutiny may taint the Greeks?
Who knows, if Mahomet's awaking anger
May spare the fatal bowstring till to-morrow?

ABDALLA.
Had our first Asian foes but known this ardour,
We still had wander'd on Tartarian hills.
Rouse, Cali; shall the sons of conquer'd Greece
Lead us to danger, and abash their victors?
This night, with all her conscious stars, be witness,
Who merits most, Demetrius or Abdalla.

DEMETRIUS.
Who merits most!—I knew not, we were rivals.

CALI.
Young man, forbear—the heat of youth, no more—
Well,—'tis decreed—This night shall fix our fate.
Soon as the veil of ev'ning clouds the sky,
With cautious secrecy, Leontius, steer
Th' appointed vessel to yon shaded bay,
Form'd by this garden jutting on the deep;
There, with your soldiers arm'd, and sails expanded,
Await our coming, equally prepar'd
For speedy flight, or obstinate defence. [Exit Leont.

SCENE III.

CALI, ABDALLA, DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.
Now pause, great bassa, from the thoughts of blood,
And kindly grant an ear to gentler sounds.
If e'er thy youth has known the pangs of absence,
Or felt th' impatience of obstructed love,
Give me, before th' approaching hour of fate,
Once to behold the charms of bright Aspasia,
And draw new virtue from her heav'nly tongue.

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CALI.
Let prudence, ere the suit be farther urg'd,
Impartial weigh the pleasure with the danger.
A little longer, and she's thine for ever.

DEMETRIUS.
Prudence and love conspire in this request,
Lest, unacquainted with our bold attempt,
Surprise o'erwhelm her, and retard our flight.

CALI.
What I can grant, you cannot ask in vain—

DEMETRIUS.
I go to wait thy call; this kind consent
Completes the gift of freedom and of life. [*Exit* Dem.

SCENE IV.

CALI, ABDALLA.

ABDALLA.
And this is my reward—to burn, to languish,
To rave, unheeded; while the happy Greek,
The refuse of our swords, the dross of conquest,
Throws his fond arms about Aspasia's neck,
Dwells on her lips, and sighs upon her breast.
Is't not enough, he lives by our indulgence,
But he must live to make his masters wretched?

CALI.
What claim hast thou to plead?

ABDALLA.
The claim of pow'r,
Th' unquestion'd claim of conquerors and kings!

CALI.
Yet, in the use of pow'r, remember justice.

ABDALLA.
Can then th' assassin lift his treach'rous hand
Against his king, and cry, remember justice?
Justice demands the forfeit life of Cali;

Justice demands, that I reveal your crimes;
Justice demands—but see th' approaching sultan!
Oppose my wishes, and—remember justice.

CALI.
Disorder sits upon thy face—retire.

[*Exit* Abdalla; enter Mahomet.

SCENE V.

CALI, MAHOMET.

CALI.
Long be the sultan bless'd with happy love!
My zeal marks gladness dawning on thy cheek,
With raptures, such as fire the pagan crowds,
When, pale and anxious for their years to come,
They see the sun surmount the dark eclipse,
And hail, unanimous, their conqu'ring god.

MAHOMET.
My vows, 'tis true, she hears with less aversion;
She sighs, she blushes, but she still denies.

CALI.
With warmer courtship press the yielding fair:
Call to your aid, with boundless promises,
Each rebel wish, each traitor inclination,
That raises tumults in the female breast,
The love of pow'r, of pleasure, and of show.

MAHOMET.
These arts I try'd, and, to inflame her more,
By hateful business hurried from her sight,
I bade a hundred virgins wait around her,
Sooth her with all the pleasures of command,
Applaud her charms, and court her to be great.

[*Exit* Mahomet.

SCENE VI.

CALI, *solus*.

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He's gone—Here rest, my soul, thy fainting wing;
Here recollect thy dissipated pow'rs.—
Our distant int'rests, and our diff'rent passions.
Now haste to mingle in one common centre.
And fate lies crowded in a narrow space.
Yet, in that narrow space what dangers rise!—
Far more I dread Abdalla's fiery folly,
Than all the wisdom of the grave divan.
Reason with reason fights on equal terms;
The raging madman's unconnected schemes
We cannot obviate, for we cannot guess.
Deep in my breast be treasur'd this resolve,
When Cali mounts the throne, Abdalla dies,
Too fierce, too faithless, for neglect or trust.

[*Enter* Irene *with attendants*.

SCENE VII.

CALI, IRENE, ASPASIA, &c.

CALI.
Amidst the splendour of encircling beauty,
Superiour majesty proclaims thee queen,
And nature justifies our monarch's choice.

IRENE.
Reserve this homage for some other fair;
Urge me not on to glitt'ring guilt, nor pour
In my weak ear th' intoxicating sounds.

CALI.
Make haste, bright maid, to rule the willing world;
Aw'd by the rigour of the sultan's justice,
We court thy gentleness.

ASPASIA.
Can Cali's voice
Concur to press a hapless captive's ruin?

CALI.
Long would my zeal for Mahomet and thee
Detain me here. But nations call upon me,

And duty bids me choose a distant walk,
Nor taint with care the privacies of love.

SCENE VIII.

IRENE, ASPASIA, *attendants*.

ASPASIA.
If yet this shining pomp, these sudden honours,
Swell not thy soul, beyond advice or friendship,
Nor yet inspire the follies of a queen,
Or tune thine ear to soothing adulation,
Suspend awhile the privilege of pow'r,
To hear the voice of truth; dismiss thy train,
Shake off th' incumbrances of state, a moment,
And lay the tow'ring sultaness aside,

Irene *signs to her attendants to retire*.

While I foretell thy fate: that office done,—
No more I boast th' ambitious name of friend,
But sink among thy slaves, without a murmur.

IRENE.
Did regal diadems invest my brow,
Yet should my soul, still faithful to her choice,
Esteem Aspasia's breast the noblest kingdom.

ASPASIA.
The soul, once tainted with so foul a crime,
No more shall glow with friendship's hallow'd ardour:
Those holy beings, whose superiour care
Guides erring mortals to the paths of virtue,
Affrighted at impiety, like thine,
Resign their charge to baseness and to ruin[a].

[a] In the original copy of this tragedy, given to Mr. Langton, the above speech is as follows; and, in Mr. Boswell's judgment, is finer than in the present editions:

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> “Nor think to say, here will I stop;
> Here will I fix the limits of transgression,
> Nor farther tempt the avenging rage of heaven.
> When guilt, like this, once harbours in the breast,
> Those holy beings, whose unseen direction
> Guides, through the maze of life, the steps of man.
> Fly the detested mansions of impiety,
> And quit their charge to horrour and to ruin.”
>
> See Boswell, i. for other compared extracts from the first sketch.
> —ED.

IRENE.
Upbraid me not with fancied wickedness;
I am not yet a queen, or an apostate.
But should I sin beyond the hope of mercy,
If, when religion prompts me to refuse,
The dread of instant death restrains my tongue?

ASPASIA.
Reflect, that life and death, affecting sounds!
Are only varied modes of endless being;
Reflect, that life, like ev’ry other blessing,
Derives its value from its use alone;
Not for itself, but for a nobler end,
Th’ Eternal gave it, and that end is virtue.
When inconsistent with a greater good,
Reason commands to cast the less away:
Thus life, with loss of wealth, is well preserv’d,
And virtue cheaply say’d, with loss of life.

IRENE.
If built on settled thought, this constancy
Not idly flutters on a boastful tongue,
Why, when destruction rag’d around our walls,
Why fled this haughty heroine from the battle?
Why, then, did not this warlike amazon
Mix in the war, and shine among the heroes?

ASPASIA.
Heav’n, when its hand pour’d softness on our limbs,
Unfit for toil, and polish’d into weakness,
Made passive fortitude the praise of woman:
Our only arms are innocence and meekness.

Not then with raving cries I fill'd the city;
But, while Demetrius, dear, lamented name!
Pour'd storms of fire upon our fierce invaders,
Implor'd th' eternal pow'r to shield my country,
With silent sorrows, and with calm devotion.

IRENE.
O! did Irene shine the queen of Turkey,
No more should Greece lament those pray'rs rejected;
Again, should golden splendour grace her cities,
Again, her prostrate palaces should rise,
Again, her temples sound with holy musick:
No more should danger fright, or want distress
The smiling widows, and protected orphans.

ASPASIA.
Be virtuous ends pursued by virtuous means,
Nor think th' intention sanctifies the deed:
That maxim, publish'd in an impious age,
Would loose the wild enthusiast to destroy,
And fix the fierce usurper's bloody title;
Then bigotry might send her slaves to war,
And bid success become the test of truth:
Unpitying massacre might waste the world,
And persecution boast the call of heaven.

IRENE.
Shall I not wish to cheer afflicted kings,
And plan the happiness of mourning millions?

ASPASIA.
Dream not of pow'r, thou never canst attain:
When social laws first harmoniz'd the world,
Superiour man possess'd the charge of rule,
The scale of justice, and the sword of power,
Nor left us aught, but flattery and state.

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IRENE.
To me my lover's fondness will restore
Whate'er man's pride has ravish'd from our sex.

ASPASIA.
When soft security shall prompt the sultan,
Freed from the tumults of unsettled conquest,
To fix his court, and regulate his pleasures,
Soon shall the dire seraglio's horrid gates
Close, like th' eternal bars of death, upon thee.
Immur'd, and buried in perpetual sloth,
That gloomy slumber of the stagnant soul,
There shalt thou view, from far, the quiet cottage,
And sigh for cheerful poverty in vain;
There wear the tedious hours of life away,
Beneath each curse of unrelenting heav'n,
Despair and slav'ry, solitude and guilt.

IRENE.
There shall we find the yet untasted bliss
Of grandeur and tranquillity combin'd.

ASPASIA.
Tranquillity and guilt, disjoin'd by heaven,
Still stretch in vain their longing arms afar;
Nor dare to pass th' insuperable bound.
Ah! let me rather seek the convent's cell;
There, when my thoughts, at interval of prayer,
Descend to range these mansions of misfortune,
Oft shall I dwell on our disastrous friendship,
And shed the pitying tear for lost Irene.

IRENE.
Go, languish on in dull obscurity;
Thy dazzled soul, with all its boasted greatness,
Shrinks at th' o'erpow'ring gleams of regal state,
Stoops from the blaze, like a degen'rate eagle,
And flies for shelter to the shades of life.

ASPASIA.
On me should providence, without a crime,
The weighty charge of royalty confer;
Call me to civilize the Russian wilds,
Or bid soft science polish Britain's heroes;

Soon should’st thou see, how false thy weak reproach,
My bosom feels, enkindled from the sky,
The lambent flames of mild benevolence,
Untouch’d by fierce ambition’s raging fires.

IRENE.
Ambition is the stamp, impress’d by heav’n
To mark the noblest minds; with active heat
Inform’d, they mount the precipice of pow’r,
Grasp at command, and tow’r in quest of empire;
While vulgar souls compassionate their cares,
Gaze at their height, and tremble at their danger:
Thus meaner spirits, with amazement, mark
The varying seasons, and revolving skies,
And ask, what guilty pow’r’s rebellious hand
Rolls with eternal toil the pond’rous orbs;
While some archangel, nearer to perfection,
In easy state, presides o’er all their motions,
Directs the planets, with a careless nod,
Conducts the sun, and regulates the spheres.

ASPASIA.
Well may’st thou hide in labyrinths of sound
The cause that shrinks from reason’s pow’rful voice.
Stoop from thy flight, trace back th’ entangled thought,
And set the glitt’ring fallacy to view.
Not pow’r I blame, but pow’r obtain’d by crime;
Angelick greatness is angelick virtue.
Amidst the glare of courts, the shout of armies,
Will not th’ apostate feel the pangs of guilt,
And wish, too late, for innocence and peace,
Curst, as the tyrant of th’ infernal realms,
With gloomy state and agonizing pomp?

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SCENE IX.

IRENE, ASPASIA, MAID.

MAID.
A Turkish stranger, of majestick mien,
Asks at the gate admission to Aspasia,
Commission'd, as he says, by Cali bassa.

IRENE.
Whoe'er thou art, or whatsoe'er thy message, [Aside.
Thanks for this kind relief—With speed admit him.

ASPASIA.
He comes, perhaps, to separate us for ever;
When I am gone, remember, O! remember,
That none are great, or happy, but the virtuous.

[*Exit* Irene; *enter* Demetrius.

SCENE X.

ASPASIA, DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.
'Tis she—my hope, my happiness, my love!
Aspasia! do I, once again, behold thee?
Still, still the same—unclouded by misfortune!
Let my blest eyes for ever gaze—

ASPASIA.
Demetrius!

DEMETRIUS.
Why does the blood forsake thy lovely cheek?
Why shoots this chilness through thy shaking nerves?
Why does thy soul retire into herself?
Recline upon my breast thy sinking beauties:
Revive—Revive to freedom and to love.

ASPASIA.
What well-known voice pronounc'd the grateful sounds,
Freedom and love? Alas! I'm all confusion;

A sudden mist o'ercasts my darken'd soul;
The present, past, and future swim before me,
Lost in a wild perplexity of joy.

DEMETRIUS.
Such ecstasy of love, such pure affection,
What worth can merit? or what faith reward?

ASPASIA.
A thousand thoughts, imperfect and distracted,
Demand a voice, and struggle into birth;
A thousand questions press upon my tongue,
But all give way to rapture and Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS.
O say, bright being, in this age of absence,
What fears, what griefs, what dangers, hast thou known?
Say, how the tyrant threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd!
Say, how he threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd in vain!
Say, how the hand of violence was rais'd!
Say, how thou call'dst in tears upon Demetrius!

ASPASIA.
Inform me rather, how thy happy courage
Stemm'd in the breach the deluge of destruction,
And pass'd, uninjur'd, through the walks of death.
Did savage anger and licentious conquest
Behold the hero with Aspasia's eyes?
And, thus protected in the gen'ral ruin,
O! say, what guardian pow'r convey'd thee hither.

DEMETRIUS.
Such strange events, such unexpected chances,
Beyond my warmest hope, or wildest wishes,
Concurr'd to give me to Aspasia's arms,
I stand amaz'd, and ask, if yet I clasp thee.

ASPASIA.
Sure heav'n, (for wonders are not wrought in vain!)
That joins us thus, will never part us more.

SCENE XI.

DEMETRIUS, ASPASIA, ABDALLA.

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ABDALLA.
It parts you now—The hasty sultan sign'd
The laws unread, and flies to his Irene.

DEMETRIUS.
Fix'd and intent on his Irene's charms,
He envies none the converse of Aspasia.

ABDALLA.
Aspasia's absence will inflame suspicion;
She cannot, must not, shall not, linger here;
Prudence and friendship bid me force her from you.

DEMETRIUS.
Force her! profane her with a touch, and die!

ABDALLA.
'Tis Greece, 'tis freedom, calls Aspasia hence;
Your careless love betrays your country's cause.

DEMETRIUS.
If we must part—

ASPASIA.
No! let us die together.

DEMETRIUS.
If we must part—

ABDALLA.
Despatch; th' increasing danger
Will not admit a lover's long farewell,
The long-drawn intercourse of sighs and kisses.

DEMETRIUS.
Then—O! my fair, I cannot bid thee go.
Receive her, and protect her, gracious heav'n!
Yet let me watch her dear departing steps;
If fate pursues me, let it find me here.
Reproach not, Greece, a lover's fond delays,
Nor think thy cause neglected, while I gaze;
New force, new courage, from each glance I gain,
And find our passions not infus'd in vain. [*Exeunt*.

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

DEMETRIUS, ASPASIA, *enter as talking*.

ASPASIA.
Enough—resistless reason calms my soul—
Approving justice smiles upon your cause,
And nature's rights entreat th' asserting sword.
Yet, when your hand is lifted to destroy,
Think, but excuse a woman's needless caution,—
Purge well thy mind from ev'ry private passion,
Drive int'rest, love, and vengeance, from thy thoughts;
Fill all thy ardent breast with Greece and virtue;
Then strike secure, and heav'n assist the blow!

DEMETRIUS.
Thou kind assistant of my better angel,
Propitious guide of my bewilder'd soul,
Calm of my cares, and guardian of my virtue!

ASPASIA.
My soul, first kindled by thy bright example,
To noble thought and gen'rous emulation,
Now but reflects those beams that flow'd from thee.

DEMETRIUS.
With native lustre and unborrow'd greatness,
Thou shin'st, bright maid, superiour to distress;
Unlike the trifling race of vulgar beauties,
Those glitt'ring dewdrops of a vernal morn,
That spread their colours to the genial beam,
And, sparkling, quiver to the breath of May;
But, when the tempest, with sonorous wing,
Sweeps o'er the grove, forsake the lab'ring bough,
Dispers'd in air, or mingled with the dust.

ASPASIA.
Forbear this triumph—still new conflicts wait us,
Foes unforeseen, and dangers unsuspected.
Oft, when the fierce besiegers' eager host
Beholds the fainting garrison retire,
And rushes joyful to the naked wall,
Destruction flashes from th' insidious mine,
And sweeps th' exulting conqueror away.
Perhaps, in vain the sultan's anger spar'd me,
To find a meaner fate from treach'rous friendship—
Abdalla!—

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DEMETRIUS.
Can Abdalla then dissemble!
That fiery chief, renown'd for gen'rous freedom,
For zeal unguarded, undissembled hate,
For daring truth, and turbulence of honour!

ASPASIA.
This open friend, this undesigning hero,
With noisy falsehoods, forc'd me from your arms,
To shock my virtue with a tale of love.

DEMETRIUS.
Did not the cause of Greece restrain my sword,
Aspasia should not fear a second insult.

ASPASIA.
His pride and love, by turns, inspir'd his tongue,
And intermix'd my praises with his own;
His wealth, his rank, his honours, he recounted,
Till, in the midst of arrogance and fondness,
Th' approaching sultan forc'd me from the palace;
Then, while he gaz'd upon his yielding mistress,
I stole, unheeded, from their ravish'd eyes,
And sought this happy grove in quest of thee.

DEMETRIUS.
Soon may the final stroke decide our fate,
Lest baleful discord crush our infant scheme,
And strangled freedom perish in the birth!

ASPASIA.
My bosom, harass'd with alternate passions,
Now hopes, now fears—

DEMETRIUS.
Th' anxieties of love.

ASPASIA.
Think, how the sov'reign arbiter of kingdoms
Detests thy false associates' black designs,
And frowns on perjury, revenge, and murder.
Embark'd with treason on the seas of fate,
When heaven shall bid the swelling billows rage,
And point vindictive lightnings at rebellion,

Will not the patriot share the traitor's danger?
Oh! could thy hand, unaided, free thy country,
Nor mingled guilt pollute the sacred cause!

DEMETRIUS.
Permitted oft, though not inspir'd, by heaven,
Successful treasons punish impious kings.

ASPASIA.
Nor end my terrours with the sultan's death;
Far as futurity's untravell'd waste
Lies open to conjecture's dubious ken,
On ev'ry side confusion, rage, and death,
Perhaps, the phantoms of a woman's fear,
Beset the treach'rous way with fatal ambush;
Each Turkish bosom burns for thy destruction,
Ambitious Cali dreads the statesman's arts,
And hot Abdalla hates the happy lover.

DEMETRIUS.
Capricious man! to good and ill inconstant,
Too much to fear or trust is equal weakness.
Sometimes the wretch, unaw'd by heav'n or hell,
With mad devotion idolizes honour.
The bassa, reeking with his master's murder,
Perhaps, may start at violated friendship.

ASPASIA.
How soon, alas! will int'rest, fear, or envy,
O'erthrow such weak, such accidental virtue,
Nor built on faith, nor fortified by conscience!

DEMETRIUS.
When desp'rate ills demand a speedy cure,
Distrust is cowardice, and prudence folly.

ASPASIA.
Yet, think a moment, ere you court destruction,
What hand, when death has snatch'd away Demetrius,
Shall guard Aspasia from triumphant lust.

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DEMETRIUS.
Dismiss these needless fears—a troop of Greeks,
Well known, long try'd, expect us on the shore.
Borne on the surface of the smiling deep,
Soon shalt thou scorn, in safety's arms repos'd,
Abdalla's rage and Cali's stratagems.

ASPASIA.
Still, still, distrust sits heavy on my heart.
Will e'er a happier hour revisit Greece?

DEMETRIUS.
Should heav'n, yet unappeas'd, refuse its aid,
Disperse our hopes, and frustrate our designs,
Yet shall the conscience of the great attempt
Diffuse a brightness on our future days;
Nor will his country's groans reproach Demetrius.
But how canst thou support the woes of exile?
Canst thou forget hereditary splendours,
To live obscure upon a foreign coast,
Content with science, innocence, and love?

ASPASIA.
Nor wealth, nor titles, make Aspasia's bliss.
O'erwhelm'd and lost amidst the publick ruins,
Unmov'd, I saw the glitt'ring trifles perish,
And thought the petty dross beneath a sigh.
Cheerful I follow to the rural cell;
Love be my wealth, and my distinction virtue.

DEMETRIUS.
Submissive, and prepar'd for each event,
Now let us wait the last award of heav'n,
Secure of happiness from flight or conquest;
Nor fear the fair and learn'd can want protection.
The mighty Tuscan courts the banish'd arts
To kind Italia's hospitable shades;
There shall soft leisure wing th' excursive soul,
And peace, propitious, smile on fond desire;
There shall despotick eloquence resume
Her ancient empire o'er the yielding heart;
There poetry shall tune her sacred voice,
And wake from ignorance the western world.

SCENE II.

DEMETRIUS, ASPASIA, CALI.

CALI.
At length th' unwilling sun resigns the world
To silence and to rest. The hours of darkness,
Propitious hours to stratagem and death,
Pursue the last remains of ling'ring light.

DEMETRIUS.
Count not these hours, as parts of vulgar time;
Think them a sacred treasure lent by heaven,
Which, squander'd by neglect, or fear, or folly,
No prayer recalls, no diligence redeems.
To-morrow's dawn shall see the Turkish king
Stretch'd in the dust, or tow'ring on his throne;
To-morrow's dawn shall see the mighty Cali
The sport of tyranny, or lord of nations.

CALI.
Then waste no longer these important moments
In soft endearments, and in gentle murmurs;
Nor lose, in love, the patriot and the hero.

DEMETRIUS.
'Tis love, combin'd with guilt alone, that melts
The soften'd soul to cowardice and sloth;
But virtuous passion prompts the great resolve,
And fans the slumbering spark of heavenly fire.
Retire, my fair; that pow'r that smiles on goodness,
Guide all thy steps, calm ev'ry stormy thought,
And still thy bosom with the voice of peace!

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ASPASIA.
Soon may we meet again, secure and free,
To feel no more the pangs of separation! [*Exit*.

DEMETRIUS, CALI.

DEMETRIUS.
This night alone is ours—Our mighty foe,
No longer lost in am'rous solitude,
Will now remount the slighted seat of empire,
And show Irene to the shouting people:
Aspasia left her, sighing in his arms,
And list'ning to the pleasing tale of pow'r;
With soften'd voice she dropp'd the faint refusal,
Smiling consent she sat, and blushing love.

CALI.
Now, tyrant, with satiety of beauty
Now feast thine eyes; thine eyes, that ne'er hereafter
Shall dart their am'rous glances at the fair,
Or glare on Cali with malignant beams.

SCENE III.

DEMETRIUS, CALI, LEONTIUS, ABDALLA.

LEONTIUS.
Our bark, unseen, has reach'd th' appointed bay,
And, where yon trees wave o'er the foaming surge,
Reclines against the shore: our Grecian troop
Extends its lines along the sandy beach,
Elate with hope, and panting for a foe.

ABDALLA.
The fav'ring winds assist the great design,
Sport in our sails, and murmur o'er the deep.

CALI.
'Tis well—A single blow completes our wishes;
Return with speed, Leontius, to your charge;
The Greeks, disorder'd by their leader's absence,
May droop dismay'd, or kindle into madness.

LEONTIUS.
Suspected still!—What villain's pois'nous tongue
Dares join Leontius' name with fear or falsehood?
Have I for this preserv'd my guiltless bosom,
Pure as the thoughts of infant innocence?
Have I for this defy'd the chiefs of Turkey,
Intrepid in the flaming front of war?

CALI.
Hast thou not search'd my soul's profoundest thoughts?
Is not the fate of Greece and Cali thine?

LEONTIUS.
Why has thy choice then pointed out Leontius,
Unfit to share this night's illustrious toils?
To wait, remote from action, and from honour,
An idle list'ner to the distant cries
Of slaughter'd infidels, and clash of swords?
Tell me the cause, that while thy name, Demetrius,
Shall soar, triumphant on the wings of glory,
Despis'd and curs'd, Leontius must descend
Through hissing ages, a proverbial coward,
The tale of women, and the scorn of fools?

DEMETRIUS.
Can brave Leontius be the slave of glory?
Glory, the casual gift of thoughtless crowds!
Glory, the bribe of avaricious virtue!
Be but my country free, be thine the praise;
I ask no witness, but attesting conscience,
No records, but the records of the sky.

LEONTIUS.
Wilt thou then head the troop upon the shore,
While I destroy th' oppressor of mankind?

DEMETRIUS.
What canst thou boast superiour to Demetrius?
Ask, to whose sword the Greeks will trust their cause,
My name shall echo through the shouting field:
Demand, whose force yon Turkish heroes dread,
The shudd'ring camp shall murmur out Demetrius.

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CALI
Must Greece, still wretched by her children's folly,
For ever mourn their avarice or factions?
Demetrius justly pleads a double title;
The lover's int'rest aids the patriot's claim.

LEONTIUS.
My pride shall ne'er protract my country's woes;
Succeed, my friend, unenvied by Leontius.

DEMETRIUS.
I feel new spirit shoot along my nerves;
My soul expands to meet approaching freedom.
Now hover o'er us, with propitious wings,
Ye sacred shades of patriots and of martyrs!
All ye, whose blood tyrannick rage effus'd,
Or persecution drank, attend our call;
I And from the mansions of perpetual peace
Descend, to sweeten labours, once your own!

CALI.
Go then, and with united eloquence
Confirm your troops; and, when the moon's fair beam
Plays on the quiv'ring waves, to guide our flight,
Return, Demetrius, and be free for ever.
[*Exeunt* Dem. *and* Leon.

SCENE IV.

CALI, ABDALLA.

ABDALLA.
How the new monarch, swell'd with airy rule,
Looks down, contemptuous, from his fancy'd height,
And utters fate, unmindful of Abdalla!

CALI.
Far be such black ingratitude from Cali!
When Asia's nations own me for their lord,
Wealth, and command, and grandeur shall be thine!

ABDALLA.
Is this the recompense reserv'd for me?
Dar'st thou thus dally with Abdalla's passion?
Henceforward, hope no more my slighted friendship;
Wake from thy dream of power to death and tortures,
And bid thy visionary throne farewell.

CALI.
Name, and enjoy thy wish—

ABDALLA.
I need not name it;
Aspasia's lovers know but one desire,
Nor hope, nor wish, nor live, but for Aspasia.

CALI.
That fatal beauty, plighted to Demetrius,
Heaven makes not mine to give.

ABDALLA.
Nor to deny.

CALI.
Obtain her, and possess; thou know'st thy rival.

ABDALLA.
Too well I know him, since, on Thracia's plains,
I felt the force of his tempestuous arm,
And saw my scatter'd squadrons fly before him.
Nor will I trust th' uncertain chance of combat;
The rights of princes let the sword decide,
The petty claims of empire and of honour:
Revenge and subtle jealousy shall teach
A surer passage to his hated heart.

CALI.
Oh! spare the gallant Greek, in him we lose
The politician's arts, and hero's flame.

ABDALLA.
When next we meet, before we storm the palace,
The bowl shall circle to confirm our league;
Then shall these juices taint Demetrius' draught,
[*Showing a phial*.
And stream, destructive, through his freezing veins:
Thus shall he live to strike th' important blow,
And perish, ere he taste the joys of conquest.

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SCENE V.

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, CALI, ABDALLA.

MAHOMET.
Henceforth, for ever happy be this day,
Sacred to love, to pleasure, and Irene!
The matchless fair has bless'd me with compliance;
Let every tongue resound Irene's praise,
And spread the gen'ral transport through mankind.

CALI.
Blest prince, for whom indulgent heav'n ordains,
At once, the joys of paradise and empire,
Now join thy people's and thy Cali's prayers;
Suspend thy passage to the seats of bliss,
Nor wish for houries in Irene's arms.

MAHOMET.
Forbear—I know the long-try'd faith of Cali.

CALI.
Oh! could the eyes of kings, like those of heav'n,
Search to the dark recesses of the soul,
Oft would they find ingratitude and treason,
By smiles, and oaths, and praises, ill disguis'd.
How rarely would they meet, in crowded courts,
Fidelity so firm, so pure, as mine.

MUSTAPHA.
Yet, ere we give our loosen'd thoughts to rapture,
Let prudence obviate an impending danger:
Tainted by sloth, the parent of sedition,
The hungry janizary burns for plunder,
And growls, in private, o'er his idle sabre.

MAHOMET.
To still their murmurs, ere the twentieth sun
Shall shed his beams upon the bridal bed,
I rouse to war, and conquer for Irene.
Then shall the Rhodian mourn his sinking tow'rs,
And Buda fall, and proud Vienna tremble;

Then shall Venetia feel the Turkish pow'r,
And subject seas roar round their queen in vain.

ABDALLA.
Then seize fair Italy's delightful coast,
To fix your standard in imperial Rome.

MAHOMET.
Her sons malicious clemency shall spare,
To form new legends, sanctify new crimes;
To canonize the slaves of superstition,
And fill the world with follies and impostures,
Till angry heav'n shall mark them out for ruin,
And war o'erwhelm them in their dream of vice.
O! could her fabled saints and boasted prayers
Call forth her ancient heroes to the field,
How should I joy, midst the fierce shock of nations,
To cross the tow'rings of an equal soul,
And bid the master-genius rule the world!
Abdalla, Cali, go—proclaim my purpose.
[*Exeunt* Cali *and* Abdalla.

SCENE VI.

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA.

MAHOMET.
Still Cali lives: and must he live to-morrow?
That fawning villain's forc'd congratulations
Will cloud my triumphs, and pollute the day.

MUSTAPHA.
With cautious vigilance, at my command,
Two faithful captains, Hasan and Caraza,
Pursue him through his labyrinths of treason,
And wait your summons to report his conduct.

MAHOMET.
Call them—but let them not prolong their tale,
Nor press, too much, upon a lover's patience.
[*Exit* Mustapha.

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SCENE VII.

Mahomet, *Solus*.

Whome'er the hope, still blasted, still renew'd,
Of happiness lures on from toil to toil,
Remember Mahomet, and cease thy labour.
Behold him here, in love, in war, successful;
Behold him, wretched in his double triumph!
His fav'rite faithless, and his mistress base.
Ambition only gave her to my arms,
By reason not convinc'd, nor won by love.
Ambition was her crime; but meaner folly
Dooms me to loathe, at once, and dote on falsehood,
And idolize th' apostate I contemn.
If thou art more than the gay dream of fancy,
More than a pleasing sound, without a meaning,
O happiness! sure thou art all Aspasia's.

SCENE VIII.

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, HASAN, CARAZA.

MAHOMET.
Caraza, speak—have ye remark'd the bassa?

CARAZA.
Close, as we might unseen, we watch'd his steps:
His hair disorder'd, and his gait unequal,
Betray'd the wild emotions of his mind.
Sudden he stops, and inward turns his eyes,
Absorb'd in thought; then, starting from his trance,
Constrains a sullen smile, and shoots away.
With him Abdalla we beheld—

MUSTAPHA.
Abdalla!

MAHOMET.
He wears, of late, resentment on his brow,
Deny'd the government of Servia's province.

CARAZA.
We mark'd him storming in excess of fury,
And heard, within the thicket that conceal'd us,
An undistinguish'd sound of threat'ning rage.

MUSTAPHA.
How guilt, once harbour'd in the conscious breast,
Intimidates the brave, degrades the great;
See Cali, dread of kings, and pride of armies,
By treason levell'd with the dregs of men!
Ere guilty fear depress'd the hoary chief,
An angry murmur, a rebellious frown,
Had stretch'd the fiery boaster in the grave.

MAHOMET.
Shall monarchs fear to draw the sword of justice,
Aw'd by the crowd, and by their slaves restrain'd?
Seize him this night, and, through the private passage, Convey him to the prison's inmost depths, Reserv'd to all the pangs of tedious death.
[*Exeunt* Mahomet *and* Mustapha.

SCENE IX.

HASAN, CARAZA.

HASAN.
Shall then the Greeks, unpunish'd and conceal'd,
Contrive, perhaps, the ruin of our empire;
League with our chiefs, and propagate sedition?

CARAZA.
Whate'er their scheme, the bassa's death defeats it,
And gratitude's strong ties restrain my tongue.

HASAN.
What ties to slaves? what gratitude to foes?

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CARAZA.
In that black day, when slaughter'd thousands fell
Around these fatal walls, the tide of war
Bore me victorious onward, where Demetrius
Tore, unresisted, from the giant hand
Of stern Sebalias, the triumphant crescent,
And dash'd the might of Asam from the ramparts.
There I became, nor blush to make it known,
The captive of his sword. The coward Greeks,
Enrag'd by wrongs, exulting with success,
Doom'd me to die with all the Turkish captains;
But brave Demetrius scorn'd the mean revenge,
And gave me life.—

HASAN.
Do thou repay the gift,
Lest unrewarded mercy lose its charms.
Profuse of wealth, or bounteous of success,
When heav'n bestows the privilege to bless,
Let no weak doubt the gen'rous hand restrain;
For when was pow'r beneficent in vain? [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.

ASPASIA, *sola*.

In these dark moments of suspended fate,
While yet the future fortune of my country
Lies in the womb of providence conceal'd,
And anxious angels wait the mighty birth;
O! grant thy sacred influence, pow'rful virtue!
Attentive rise, survey the fair creation,
Till, conscious of th' encircling deity,
Beyond the mists of care thy pinion tow'rs.
This calm, these joys, dear innocence! are thine:
Joys ill exchang'd for gold, and pride, and empire.

[*Enter* Irene *and attendants*.

SCENE II.

ASPASIA, IRENE *and attendants*.

IRENE.
See how the moon, through all th' unclouded sky,
Spreads her mild radiance, and descending dews
Revive the languid flow'rs; thus nature shone
New from the maker's hand, and fair array'd
In the bright colours of primeval spring;
When purity, while fraud was yet unknown,
Play'd fearless in th' inviolated shades.
This elemental joy, this gen'ral calm,
Is, sure, the smile of unoffended heav'n.
Yet! why—

MAID.
Behold, within th' embow'ring grove
Aspasia stands—

IRENE.
With melancholy mien,
Pensive, and envious of Irene's greatness.
Steal, unperceiv'd, upon her meditations
But see, the lofty maid, at our approach,
Resumes th' imperious air of haughty virtue.
Are these th' unceasing joys, th' unmingled pleasures,
[*To* Aspasia.
For which Aspasia scorn'd the Turkish crown?
Is this th' unshaken confidence in heav'n?
Is this the boasted bliss of conscious virtue?
When did content sigh out her cares in secret?
When did felicity repine in deserts?

ASPASIA.
Ill suits with guilt the gaieties of triumph;
When daring vice insults eternal justice,
The ministers of wrath forget compassion,
And snatch the flaming bolt with hasty hand.

IRENE.
Forbear thy threats, proud prophetess of ill,
Vers'd in the secret counsels of the sky.

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ASPASIA.
Forbear!—But thou art sunk beneath reproach;
In vain affected raptures flush the cheek,
And songs of pleasure warble from the tongue,
When fear and anguish labour in the breast,
And all within is darkness and confusion.
Thus, on deceitful Etna's flow'ry side,
Unfading verdure glads the roving eye;
While secret flames, with unextinguish'd rage,
Insatiate on her wasted entrails prey,
And melt her treach'rous beauties into ruin.
[*Enter* Demetrius.

SCENE III.

ASPASIA, IRENE, DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.
Fly, fly, my love! destruction rushes on us,
The rack expects us, and the sword pursues.

ASPASIA.
Is Greece deliver'd? is the tyrant fall'n?

DEMETRIUS.
Greece is no more; the prosp'rous tyrant lives,
Reserv'd for other lands, the scourge of heav'n.

ASPASIA.
Say, by what fraud, what force, were you defeated?
Betray'd by falsehood, or by crowds o'erborne?

DEMETRIUS.
The pressing exigence forbids relation.
Abdalla—

ASPASIA.
Hated name! his jealous rage
Broke out in perfidy—Oh! curs'd Aspasia,
Born to complete the ruin of her country!
Hide me, oh hide me from upbraiding Greece;
Oh, hide me from myself!

DEMETRIUS.
Be fruitless grief
The doom of guilt alone, nor dare to seize
The breast, where virtue guards the throne of peace.
Devolve, dear maid, thy sorrows on the wretch,
Whose fear, or rage, or treachery, betray'd us!

IRENE. *aside*.
A private station may discover more;
Then let me rid them of Irene's presence;
Proceed, and give a loose to love and treason.

[*Withdraws*

ASPASIA.
Yet tell.

DEMETRIUS.
To tell or hear were waste of life.

ASPASIA.
The life, which only this design supported,
Were now well lost in hearing how you fail'd.

DEMETRIUS.
Or meanly fraudulent or madly gay,
Abdalla, while we waited near the palace,
With ill tim'd mirth propos'd the bowl of love.
Just as it reach'd my lips, a sudden cry
Urg'd me to dash it to the ground, untouch'd,
And seize my sword with disencumber'd hand.

ASPASIA.
What cry? The stratagem? Did then Abdalla—

DEMETRIUS.
At once a thousand passions fir'd his cheek!
Then all is past, he cry'd—and darted from us;
Nor, at the call of Cali, deign'd to turn.

ASPASIA.
Why did you stay, deserted and betray'd?
What more could force attempt, or art contrive?

DEMETRIUS.
Amazement seiz'd us, and the hoary bassa
Stood, torpid in suspense; but soon Abdalla
Return'd with force that made resistance vain,

And bade his new confed’rates seize the traitors.
Cali, disarm’d, was borne away to death;
Myself escap’d, or favour’d, or neglected.

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ASPASIA.
Oh Greece! renown'd for science and for wealth,
Behold thy boasted honours snatch'd away.

DEMETRIUS.
Though disappointment blast our general scheme,
Yet much remains to hope. I shall not call
The day disastrous, that secures our flight;
Nor think that effort lost, which rescues thee.

[*Enter* Abdalla.

SCENE IV.

IRENE, ASPASIA, DEMETRIUS, ABDALLA.

ABDALLA.
At length, the prize is mine—The haughty maid,
That bears the fate of empires in her air,
Henceforth shall live for me; for me alone
Shall plume her charms, and, with attentive watch,
Steal from Abdalla's eye the sign to smile.

DEMETRIUS.
Cease this wild roar of savage exultation;
Advance, and perish in the frantick boast.

ASPASIA.
Forbear, Demetrius, 'tis Aspasia calls thee;
Thy love, Aspasia, calls; restrain thy sword;
Nor rush on useless wounds, with idle courage.

DEMETRIUS.
What now remains?

ASPASIA.
It now remains to fly!

DEMETRIUS.
Shall, then, the savage live, to boast his insult;
Tell, how Demetrius shunn'd his single hand,
And stole his life and mistress from his sabre?

ABDALLA.
Infatuate loiterer, has fate, in vain,
Unclasp'd his iron gripe to set thee free?
Still dost thou flutter in the jaws of death;
Snar'd with thy fears, and maz'd in stupefaction?

DEMETRIUS.
Forgive, my fair; 'tis life, 'tis nature calls:
Now, traitor, feel the fear that chills my hand.

ASPASIA.
'Tis madness to provoke superfluous danger,
And cowardice to dread the boast of folly.

ABDALLA.
Fly, wretch, while yet my pity grants thee flight;
The pow'r of Turkey waits upon my call.
Leave but this maid, resign a hopeless claim,
And drag away thy life, in scorn and safety,
Thy life, too mean a prey to lure Abdalla.

DEMETRIUS.
Once more I dare thy sword; behold the prize,
Behold, I quit her to the chance of battle.
[*Quitting* Aspasia.
ABDALLA.
Well may'st thou call thy master to the combat,
And try the hazard, that hast nought to stake;
Alike my death or thine is gain to thee;
But soon thou shalt repent: another moment
Shall throw th' attending janizaries round thee.
[*Exit, hastily*, Abdalla.

SCENE V.

ASPASIA, IRENE, DEMETRIUS.

IRENE.
Abdalla fails; now, fortune, all is mine. [*Aside*. Haste, Murza, to the palace, let the sultan
[*To one of her attendant*
Despatch his guards to stop the flying traitors,
While I protract their stay. Be swift and faithful.
[*Exit* Murza.
This lucky stratagem shall charm the sultan, [*Aside*. Secure his confidence, and fix his love.

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DEMETRIUS.
Behold a boaster's worth! Now snatch, my fair,
The happy moment; hasten to the shore,
Ere he return with thousands at his side.

ASPASIA.
In vain I listen to th' inviting call
Of freedom and of love; my trembling joints,
Relax'd with fear, refuse to bear me forward.
Depart, Demetrius, lest my fate involve thee;
Forsake a wretch abandon'd to despair,
To share the miseries herself has caus'd.

DEMETRIUS.
Let us not struggle with th' eternal will,
Nor languish o'er irreparable ruins;
Come, haste and live—Thy innocence and truth
Shall bless our wand'rings, and propitiate heav'n.

IRENE.
Press not her flight, while yet her feeble nerves
Refuse their office, and uncertain life
Still labours with imaginary woe;
Here let me tend her with officious care,
Watch each unquiet flutter of the breast,
And joy to feel the vital warmth return,
To see the cloud forsake her kindling cheek,
And hail the rosy dawn of rising health.

ASPASIA.
Oh! rather, scornful of flagitious greatness,
Resolve to share our dangers and our toils,
Companion of our flight, illustrious exile,
Leave slav'ry, guilt, and infamy behind.

IRENE.
My soul attends thy voice, and banish'd virtue
Strives to regain her empire of the mind:
Assist her efforts with thy strong persuasion;
Sure, 'tis the happy hour ordain'd above,
When vanquish'd vice shall tyrannise no more.

DEMETRIUS.
Remember, peace and anguish are before thee,
And honour and reproach, and heav'n and hell.

ASPASIA.
Content with freedom, and precarious greatness.

DEMETRIUS.
Now make thy choice, while yet the pow'r of choice
Kind heav'n affords thee, and inviting mercy
Holds out her hand to lead thee back to truth.

IRENE.
Stay—in this dubious twilight of conviction,
The gleams of reason, and the clouds of passion,
Irradiate and obscure my breast, by turns:
Stay but a moment, and prevailing truth
Will spread resistless light upon my soul.

DEMETRIUS.
But, since none knows the danger of a moment,
And heav'n forbids to lavish life away,
Let kind compulsion terminate the contest.
[*Seizing her hand*.
Ye christian captives, follow me to freedom:
A galley waits us, and the winds invite.

IRENE.
Whence is this violence?

DEMETRIUS.
Your calmer thought
Will teach a gentler term.

IRENE.
Forbear this rudeness,
And learn the rev'rence due to Turkey's queen:
Fly, slaves, and call the sultan to my rescue.

DEMETRIUS.
Farewell, unhappy maid; may every joy
Be thine, that wealth can give, or guilt receive!

ASPASIA.
nd when, contemptuous of imperial pow'r,
Disease shall chase the phantoms of ambition,
May penitence attend thy mournful bed,

And wing thy latest pray'r to pitying heav'n!
[*Exeunt* Dem. Asp. *with part of the attendants*.

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SCENE VI.

[IRENE *walks at a distance from her attendants.*]

After a pause.
Against the head, which innocence secures,
Insidious malice aims her darts in vain,
Turn'd backwards by the pow'rful breath of heav'n.
Perhaps, e'en now the lovers, unpursu'd,
Bound o'er the sparkling waves. Go, happy bark,
Thy sacred freight shall still the raging main.
To guide thy passage shall th' aerial spirits
Fill all the starry lamps with double blaze;
Th' applauding sky shall pour forth all its beams,
To grace the triumph of victorious virtue;
While I, not yet familiar to my crimes,
Recoil from thought, and shudder at myself.
How am I chang'd! How lately did Irene
Fly from the busy pleasures of her sex,
Well pleas'd to search the treasures of remembrance,
And live her guiltless moments o'er anew!
Come, let us seek new pleasures in the palace,
[*To her attendants, going off*.
Till soft fatigue invite us to repose.

SCENE VII.

[*Enter* MUSTAPHA, *meeting and stopping her*.]

MUSTAPHA.
Fair falsehood, stay.

IRENE.
What dream of sudden power
Has taught my slave the language of command?
Henceforth, be wise, nor hope a second pardon.

MUSTAPHA.
Who calls for pardon from a wretch condemn'd?

IRENE.
Thy look, thy speech, thy action, all is wildness—
Who charges guilt, on me?

MUSTAPHA.
Who charges guilt!
Ask of thy heart; attend the voice of conscience—
Who charges guilt! lay by this proud resentment
That fires thy cheek, and elevates thy mien,
Nor thus usurp the dignity of virtue.
Review this day.

IRENE.
Whate'er thy accusation,
The sultan is my judge.

MUSTAPHA.
That hope is past;
Hard was the strife of justice and of love;
But now 'tis o'er, and justice has prevail'd.
Know'st thou not Cali? know'st thou not Demetrius?

IRENE.
Bold slave, I know them both—I know them traitors.

MUSTAPHA.
Perfidious!—yes—too well thou know'st them traitors.

IRENE.
Their treason throws no stain upon Irene.
This day has prov'd my fondness for the sultan;
He knew Irene's truth.

MUSTAPHA.
The sultan knows it;
He knows, how near apostasy to treason—
But 'tis not mine to judge—I scorn and leave thee.
I go, lest vengeance urge my hand to blood,
To blood too mean to stain a soldier's sabre.
[*Exit* Mustapha.

IRENE, *to her attendants*.
Go, blust'ring slave—He has not heard of Murza.
That dext'rous message frees me from suspicion.

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SCENE VIII.

Enter HASAN, CARAZA, *with mutes, who throw the black robe upon* IRENE, *and sign to her attendants to withdraw*.

HASAN.
Forgive, fair excellence, th' unwilling tongue,
The tongue, that, forc'd by strong necessity,
Bids beauty, such as thine, prepare to die.

IRENE.
What wild mistake is this! Take hence, with speed,
Your robe of mourning, and your dogs of death.
Quick from my sight, you inauspicious monsters;
Nor dare, henceforth, to shock Irene's walks.

HASAN.
Alas! they come commanded by the sultan,
Th' unpitying ministers of Turkish justice,
Nor dare to spare the life his frown condemns.

IRENE.
Are these the rapid thunderbolts of war,
That pour with sudden violence on kingdoms,
And spread their flames, resistless, o'er the world?
What sleepy charms benumb these active heroes,
Depress their spirits, and retard their speed?
Beyond the fear of ling'ring punishment,
Aspasia now, within her lover's arms,
Securely sleeps, and, in delightful dreams,
Smiles at the threat'nings of defeated rage.

CARAZA.
We come, bright virgin, though relenting nature
Shrinks at the hated task, for thy destruction.
When summon'd by the sultan's clam'rous fury,
We ask'd, with tim'rous tongue, th' offender's name,
He struck his tortur'd breast, and roar'd, Irene!
We started at the sound, again inquir'd;
Again his thund'ring voice return'd, Irene!

IRENE.
Whence is this rage; what barb'rous tongue has wrong'd me?
What fraud misleads him? or what crimes incense?

HASAN.
Expiring Cali nam'd Irene's chamber,
The place appointed for his master's death.

IRENE.
Irene's chamber! From my faithful bosom
Far be the thought—But hear my protestation.

CARAZA.
'Tis ours, alas! to punish, not to judge,
Not call'd to try the cause, we heard the sentence,
Ordain'd the mournful messengers of death.

IRENE.
Some ill designing statesman's base intrigue!
Some cruel stratagem of jealous beauty!
Perhaps, yourselves the villains that defame me:—
Now haste to murder, ere returning thought
Recall th' extorted doom.—It must be so:
Confess your crime, or lead me to the sultan;
There dauntless truth shall blast the vile accuser;
Then shall you feel, what language cannot utter,
Each piercing torture, ev'ry change of pain,
That vengeance can invent, or pow'r inflict.
[*Enter* Abdalla: *he stops short and listens*.

SCENE IX.

IRENE, HASAN, CARAZA, ABDALLA.

ABDALLA, *aside*.
All is not lost, Abdalla; see the queen,
See the last witness of thy guilt and fear,
Enrob'd in death—Despatch her, and be great.

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CARAZA.
Unhappy fair! compassion calls upon me
To check this torrent of imperious rage:
While unavailing anger crowds thy tongue
With idle threats and fruitless exclamation,
The fraudful moments ply their silent wings,
And steal thy life away. Death's horrid angel
Already shakes his bloody sabre o'er thee.
The raging sultan burns, till our return,
Curses the dull delays of ling'ring mercy,
And thinks his fatal mandates ill obey'd.

ABDALLA.
Is then your sov'reign's life so cheaply rated,
That thus you parley with detected treason?
Should she prevail to gain the sultan's presence,
Soon might her tears engage a lover's credit;
Perhaps, her malice might transfer the charge;
Perhaps, her pois'nous tongue might blast Abdalla.

IRENE.
O! let me but be heard, nor fear from me
Or flights of pow'r, or projects of ambition.
My hopes, my wishes, terminate in life,
A little life, for grief, and for repentance.

ABDALLA.
I mark'd her wily messenger afar,
And saw him sculking in the closest walks:
I guess'd her dark designs, and warn'd the sultan,
And bring her former sentence new-confirmed.

HASAN.
Then call it not our cruelty, nor crime;
Deem us not deaf to woe, nor blind to beauty,
That, thus constrain'd, we speed the stroke of death.
[*Beckons the mutes*.

IRENE.
O, name not death! Distraction and amazement,
Horrour and agony are in that sound!
Let me but live, heap woes on woes upon me;
Hide me with murd'rers in the dungeon's gloom;

Send me to wander on some pathless shore,
Let shame and hooting infamy pursue me,
Let slav'ry harass, and let hunger gripe.

CARAZA.
Could we reverse the sentence of the sultan,
Our bleeding bosoms plead Irene's cause.
But cries and tears are vain; prepare, with patience,
To meet that fate, we can delay no longer.
[*The mutes, at the sign, lay hold of her*.

ABDALLA.
Despatch, ye ling'ring slaves; or nimbler hands,
Quick at my call, shall execute your charge;
Despatch, and learn a fitter time for pity.

IRENE.
Grant me one hour. O! grant me but a moment,
And bounteous heav'n repay the mighty mercy,
With peaceful death, and happiness eternal.

CARAZA.
The pray'r I cannot grant—I dare not hear.
Short be thy pains. [*Signs again to the mutes*.

IRENE.
Unutterable anguish!
Guilt and despair, pale spectres! grin around me,
And stun me with the yellings of damnation!
O, hear my pray'rs! accept, all-pitying heav'n,
These tears, these pangs, these last remains of life;
Nor let the crimes of this detested day
Be charg'd upon my soul. O, mercy! mercy!
[*Mutes force her out*.

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SCENE X.

ABDALLA, HASAN, CARAZA.

ABDALLA, *aside*.
Safe in her death, and in Demetrius' flight,
Abdalla, bid thy troubled breast be calm.
Now shalt thou shine, the darling of the sultan,
The plot all Cali's, the detection thine.

HASAN *to* CARAZA.
Does not thy bosom (for I know thee tender,
A stranger to th' oppressor's savage joy,)
Melt at Irene's fate, and share her woes?

CARAZA.
Her piercing cries yet fill the loaded air,
Dwell on my ear, and sadden all my soul.
But let us try to clear our clouded brows,
And tell the horrid tale with cheerful face;
The stormy sultan rages at our stay.

ABDALLA.
Frame your report with circumspective art:
Inflame her crimes, exalt your own obedience;
But let no thoughtless hint involve Abdalla.

CARAZA.
What need of caution to report the fate
Of her, the sultan's voice condemn'd to die?
Or why should he, whose violence of duty
Has serv'd his prince so well, demand our silence?

ABDALLA.
Perhaps, my zeal, too fierce, betray'd my prudence;
Perhaps, my warmth exceeded my commission;
Perhaps—I will not stoop to plead my cause,
Or argue with the slave that sav'd Demetrius.

CARAZA.
From his escape learn thou the pow'r of virtue;
Nor hope his fortune, while thou want'st his worth.

HASAN.
The sultan comes, still gloomy, still enraged.

SCENE XI.

HASAN, CARAZA, MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, ABDALLA.

MAHOMET.
Where's this fair traitress? Where's this smiling mischief,
Whom neither vows could fix, nor favours bind?

HASAN.
Thine orders, mighty sultan, are perform'd,
And all Irene now is breathless clay.

MAHOMET.
Your hasty zeal defrauds the claim of justice,
And disappointed vengeance burns in vain.
I came to heighten tortures by reproach,
And add new terrours to the face of death.
Was this the maid, whose love I bought with empire?
True, she was fair; the smile of innocence
Play'd on her cheek—So shone the first apostate—
Irene's chamber! Did not roaring Cali,
Just as the rack forc'd out his struggling soul,
Name for the scene of death, Irene's chamber?

MUSTAPHA.
His breath prolong'd, but to detect her treason,
Then, in short sighs, forsook his broken frame.

MAHOMET.
Decreed to perish in Irene's chamber!
There had she lull'd me with endearing falsehoods,
Clasp'd in her arms, or slumb'ring on her breast,
And bar'd my bosom to the ruffian's dagger.

SCENE XII.

HASAN, CARAZA, MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, MURZA, ABDALLA.

MURZA.
Forgive, great sultan, that, by fate prevented,
I bring a tardy message from Irene.

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MAHOMET.
Some artful wile of counterfeited love!
Some soft decoy to lure me to destruction!
And thou, the curs'd accomplice of her treason,
Declare thy message, and expect thy doom.

MURZA.
The queen requested, that a chosen troop
Might intercept the traitor Greek, Demetrius,
Then ling'ring with his captive mistress here.

MUSTAPHA.
The Greek, Demetrius! whom th' expiring bassa
Declar'd the chief associate of his guilt!

MAHOMET.
A chosen troop—to intercept—Demetrius—
The queen requested—Wretch, repeat the message;
And, if one varied accent prove thy falsehood,
Or but one moment's pause betray confusion,
Those trembling limbs—Speak out, thou shiv'ring traitor.

MURZA.
The queen requested—

MAHOMET. Who? the dead Irene?
Was she then guiltless! Has my thoughtless rage
Destroy'd the fairest workmanship of heav'n!
Doom'd her to death, unpity'd and unheard,
Amidst her kind solicitudes for me!
Ye slaves of cruelty, ye tools of rage,
[*To* Hasan *and* Caraza.
Ye blind, officious ministers of folly,
Could not her charms repress your zeal for murder?
Could not her pray'rs, her innocence, her tears,
Suspend the dreadful sentence for an hour?
One hour had freed me from the fatal errour!
One hour had say'd me from despair and madness.

CARAZA.
Your fierce impatience forc'd us from your presence,
Urg'd us to speed, and bade us banish pity,
Nor trust our passions with her fatal charms.

MAHOMET.
What hadst thou lost, by slighting those commands?
Thy life, perhaps—Were but Irene spar'd,
Well, if a thousand lives like thine had perish'd;
Such beauty, sweetness, love, were cheaply bought
With half the grov'ling slaves that load the globe.

MUSTAPHA.
Great is thy woe! But think, illustrious sultan,
Such ills are sent for souls, like thine, to conquer.
Shake off this weight of unavailing grief,
Rush to the war, display thy dreadful banners,
And lead thy troops, victorious, round the world.

MAHOMET.
Robb'd of the maid, with whom I wish'd to triumph,
No more I burn for fame, or for dominion;
Success and conquest now are empty sounds,
Remorse and anguish seize on all my breast;
Those groves, whose shades embower'd the dear Irene,
Heard her last cries, and fann'd her dying beauties,
Shall hide me from the tasteless world for ever.
[Mahomet *goes back, and returns*.
Yet, ere I quit the sceptre of dominion,
Let one just act conclude the hateful day—
Hew down, ye guards, those vassals of destruction,
[*Pointing to* Hasan *and* Caraza.
Those hounds of blood, that catch the hint to kill,
Bear off, with eager haste, th' unfinished sentence,
And speed the stroke, lest mercy should o'ertake them.

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CARAZA.
Then hear, great Mahomet, the voice of truth.

MAHOMET.
Hear! shall I hear thee! didst thou hear Irene?

CARAZA.
Hear but a moment.

MAHOMET.
Hadst thou heard a moment,
Thou might'st have liv'd, for thou hadst spar'd Irene.

CARAZA.
I heard her, pitied her, and wish'd to save her.

MAHOMET.
And wish'd—be still thy fate to wish in vain.

CARAZA.
I heard, and soften'd, till Abdalla brought
Her final doom, and hurried her destruction.

MAHOMET.
Abdalla brought her doom! Abdalla brought it!
The wretch, whose guilt, declar'd by tortur'd Cali,
My rage and grief had hid from my remembrance:
Abdalla brought her doom!

HASAN.
Abdalla brought it,
While yet she begg'd to plead her cause before thee.

MAHOMET.
O, seize me, madness—Did she call on me!
I feel, I see the ruffian's barb'rous rage.
He seiz'd her melting in the fond appeal,
And stopp'd the heav'nly voice that call'd on me.
My spirits fail; awhile support me, vengeance—
Be just, ye slaves; and, to be just, be cruel;
Contrive new racks, imbitter ev'ry pang,
Inflict whatever treason can deserve,
Which murder'd innocence that call'd on me.
[*Exit* Mahomet; Abdalla *is dragged off*.

SCENE XIII.

HASAN, CARAZA, MUSTAPHA, MURZA.

MUSTAPHA *to* MURZA.
What plagues, what tortures, are in store for thee,
Thou sluggish idler, dilatory slave!
Behold the model of consummate beauty,
Torn from the mourning earth by thy neglect.

MURZA.
Such was the will of heav'n—A band of Greeks,
That mark'd my course, suspicious of my purpose,
Rush'd out and seiz'd me, thoughtless and unarm'd,
Breathless, amaz'd, and on the guarded beach
Detain'd me, till Demetrius set me free.

MUSTAPHA.
So sure the fall of greatness, rais'd on crimes!
So fix'd the justice of all conscious heav'n!
When haughty guilt exults with impious joy,
Mistake shall blast, or accident destroy;
Weak man, with erring rage, may throw the dart,
But heav'n shall guide it to the guilty heart.

EPILOGUE.

BY SIR WILLIAM YONGE.

Marry a Turk! a haughty, tyrant king!
Who thinks us women born to dress and sing
To please his fancy! see no other man!
Let him persuade me to it—if he can;
Besides, he has fifty wives; and who can bear
To have the fiftieth part, her paltry share?

'Tis true, the fellow's handsome, straight, and tall,
But how the devil should he please us all!
My swain is little—true—but, be it known,
My pride's to have that little all my own.
Men will be ever to their errours blind,
Where woman's not allow'd to speak her mind.
I swear this eastern pageantry is nonsense,
And for one man—one wife's enough in conscience.

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In vain proud man usurps what's woman's due;
For us, alone, they honour's paths pursue:
Inspir'd by us, they glory's heights ascend;
Woman the source, the object, and the end.
Though wealth, and pow'r, and glory, they receive,
These are all trifles to what we can give.
For us the statesman labours, hero fights,
Bears toilsome days, and wakes long tedious nights;
And, when blest peace has silenc'd war's alarms;
Receives his full reward in beauty's arms.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

PROLOGUE; SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK, APRIL 5, 1750, BEFORE THE MASQUE OF COMUS.

Acted at Drury lane theatre, for the benefit of Milton's granddaughter[a].

Ye patriot crowds, who burn for England's fame,
Ye nymphs, whose bosoms beat at Milton's name;
Whose gen'rous zeal, unbought by flatt'ring rhymes,
Shames the mean pensions of Augustan times;
Immortal patrons of succeeding days,
Attend this prelude of perpetual praise;
Let wit, condemn'd the feeble war to wage
With close malevolence, or publick rage;
Let study, worn with virtue's fruitless lore,
Behold this theatre, and grieve no more.
This night, distinguish'd by your smiles, shall tell,
That never Britain can in vain excel;
The slighted arts futurity shall trust,
And rising ages hasten to be just.
  At length, our mighty bard's victorious lays
Fill the loud voice of universal praise;
And baffled spite, with hopeless anguish dumb,
Yields to renown the centuries to come;
With ardent haste each candidate of fame,
Ambitious, catches at his tow'ring name;
He sees, and pitying sees, vain wealth bestow
Those pageant honours, which he scorn'd below;
While crowds aloft the laureate bust behold,
Or trace his form on circulating gold.
Unknown, unheeded, long his offspring lay,

And want hung threat'ning o'er her slow decay,
What, though she shine with no Miltonian fire,
No fav'ring muse her morning dreams inspire;
Yet softer claims the melting heart engage,
Her youth laborious, and her blameless age;
Her's the mild merits of domestick life,
The patient sufferer, and the faithful wife.
Thus, grac'd with humble virtue's native charms,
Her grandsire leaves her in Britannia's arms;
Secure with peace, with competence, to dwell,
While tutelary nations guard her cell.
Yours is the charge, ye fair, ye wise, ye brave!
'Tis yours to crown desert—beyond the grave.

[a] See Life of Milton.

PROLOGUE TO THE COMEDY OF THE GOOD-NATUR'D MAN, 1769,

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Prest by the load of life, the weary mind
Surveys the gen'ral toil of human kind;
With cool submission joins the lab'ring train,
And social sorrow loses half its pain:
Our anxious bard, without complaint, may share
This bustling season's epidemick care;
Like Caesar's pilot, dignify'd by fate,
Tost in one common storm with all the great;
Distrest alike the statesman and the wit,
When one a borough courts, and one the pit.
The busy candidates for pow'r and fame
Have hopes, and fears, and wishes, just the same;
Disabled both to combat or to fly,
Must hear all taunts, and hear without reply.
Uncheck'd on both loud rabbles vent their rage,
As mongrels bay the lion in a cage.
Th' offended burgess hoards his angry tale,
For that blest year, when all that vote may rail;
Their schemes of spite the poet's foes dismiss,
Till that glad night, when all that hate may hiss.
"This day the powder'd curls and golden coat,"
Says swelling Crispin, "begg'd a cobbler's vote."
"This night our wit," the pert apprentice cries,
"Lies at my feet; I hiss him, and he dies."
The great, 'tis true, can charm th' electing tribe;
The bard may supplicate, but cannot bribe.
Yet, judg'd by those whose voices ne'er were sold,
He feels no want of ill persuading gold;
But, confident of praise, if praise be due,
Trusts, without fear, to merit and to you.

PROLOGUE
TO THE COMEDY OF A WORK TO THE WISE[a]
SPOKEN BY MR. HULL.

This night presents a play, which publick rage,
Or right, or wrong, once hooted from the stage[b].
From zeal or malice, now, no more we dread,
For English vengeance wars not with the dead.
A gen'rous foe regards, with pitying eye,
The man whom fate has laid, where all must lie.
To wit, reviving from its author's dust,
Be kind, ye judges, or at least be just.
For no renew'd hostilities invade

Th' oblivious grave's inviolable shade.
Let one great payment ev'ry claim appease;
And him, who cannot hurt, allow to please;
To please by scenes, unconscious of offence,
By harmless merriment, or useful sense.
Where aught of bright, or fair, the piece displays,
Approve it only—'tis too late to praise.
If want of skill, or want of care appear,
Forbear to hiss—the poet cannot hear.
By all, like him, must praise and blame be found,
At best a fleeting gleam, or empty sound.
Yet, then, shall calm reflection bless the night,
When lib'ral pity dignify'd delight;
When pleasure fir'd her torch at virtue's flame,
And mirth was bounty with an humbler name.

[a] Performed at Covent garden theatre in 1777, for the benefit of Mrs. Kelly, widow of Hugh Kelly, esq. (the author of the play,) and her children.

[b] Upon the first representation of this play, 1770, a party assembled to damn it, and succeeded.

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SPRING; AN ODE.

Stern winter now, by spring repress'd,
  Forbears the long-continued strife;
And nature, on her naked breast,
  Delights to catch the gales of life.
Now o'er the rural kingdom roves
  Soft pleasure with the laughing train,
Love warbles in the vocal groves,
  And vegetation plants the plain.
Unhappy! whom to beds of pain,
  Arthritick[a] tyranny consigns;
Whom smiling nature courts in vain,
  Though rapture sings, and beauty shines.
Yet though my limbs disease invades,
  Her wings imagination tries,
And bears me to the peaceful shades,
  Where—s humble turrets rise;
Here stop, my soul, thy rapid flight,
  Nor from the pleasing groves depart,
Where first great nature charm'd my sight,
  Where wisdom first inform'd my heart.
Here let me through the vales pursue
  A guide—a father—and a friend,
Once more great nature's works renew,
  Once more on wisdom's voice attend.
From false caresses, causeless strife,
  Wild hope, vain fear, alike remov'd,
Here let me learn the use of life,
  When best enjoy'd—when most improv'd.
Teach me, thou venerable bower,
  Cool meditation's quiet seat,
The gen'rous scorn of venal power,
  The silent grandeur of retreat.
When pride, by guilt, to greatness climbs,
  Or raging factions rush to war,
Here let me learn to shun the crimes,
I can't prevent, and will not share.
  But, lest I fall by subtler foes,
Bright wisdom, teach me Curio's art,
  The swelling passions to compose,
And quell the rebels of the heart.

[a] The author being ill of the gout.

MIDSUMMER; AN ODE.

O Phoebus! down the western sky,
  Far hence diffuse thy burning ray,
Thy light to distant worlds supply,
  And wake them to the cares of day.
Come, gentle eve, the friend of care,
  Come, Cynthia, lovely queen of night!
Refresh me with a cooling air,
  And cheer me with a lambent light:
Lay me, where o’er the verdant ground
  Her living carpet nature spreads;
Where the green bow’r, with roses crown’d,
  In show’rs its fragrant foliage sheds;
Improve the peaceful hour with wine;
  Let musick die along the grove;
Around the bowl let myrtles twine,
  And ev’ry strain be tun’d to love.
Come, Stella, queen of all my heart!
  Come, born to fill its vast desires!
Thy looks perpetual joys impart,
  Thy voice perpetual love inspires.
Whilst, all my wish and thine complete,
  By turns we languish and we burn,
Let sighing gales our sighs repeat,
  Our murmurs—murmuring brooks return,
Let me, when nature calls to rest,
  And blushing skies the morn foretell,
Sink on the down of Stella’s breast,
  And bid the waking world farewell.

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AUTUMN; AN ODE.

Alas! with swift and silent pace,
  Impatient time rolls on the year;
The seasons change, and nature's face
  Now sweetly smiles, now frowns severe,
'Twas spring, 'twas summer, all was gay,
  Now autumn bends a cloudy brow;
The flow'rs of spring are swept away,
  And summer-fruits desert the bough.
The verdant leaves, that play'd on high,
  And wanton'd on the western breeze,
Now, trod in dust, neglected lie,
  As Boreas strips the bending trees.
The fields, that way'd with golden grain,
  As russet heaths, are wild and bare;
Not moist with dew, but drench'd with rain,
  Nor health, nor pleasure, wanders there.
No more, while through the midnight shade,
  Beneath the moon's pale orb I stray,
Soft pleasing woes my heart invade,
  As Progne pours the melting lay.
From this capricious clime she soars,
  Oh! would some god but wings supply!
To where each morn the spring restores,
  Companion of her flight I'd fly.
Vain wish! me fate compels to bear
  The downward season's iron reign;
Compels to breathe polluted air,
  And shiver on a blasted plain.
What bliss to life can autumn yield,
  If glooms, and show'rs, and storms prevail,
And Ceres flies the naked field,
  And flowers, and fruits, and Phoebus fail?
Oh! what remains, what lingers yet,
  To cheer me in the dark'ning hour!
The grape remains! the friend of wit,
  In love, and mirth, of mighty pow'r.
Haste—press the clusters, fill the bowl;
  Apollo! shoot thy parting ray:
This gives the sunshine of the soul,
  This god of health, and verse, and day.
Still—still the jocund strain shall flow,

The pulse with vig’rous rapture beat;
My Stella with new charms shall glow,
And ev’ry bliss in wine shall meet.

WINTER; AN ODE.

No more tire morn, with tepid rays,
Unfolds the flow’r of various hue;
Noon spreads no more the genial blaze,
Nor gentle eve distils the dew.
The ling’ring hours prolong the night,
Usurping darkness shares the day;
Her mists restrain the force of light,
And Phoebus holds a doubtful sway.
By gloomy twilight, half reveal’d,
With sighs we view the hoary hill,
The leafless wood, the naked field,
The snow-topp’d cot, the frozen rill.
No musick warbles through the grove,
No vivid colours paint the plain;
No more, with devious steps, I rove
Through verdant paths, now sought in vain.
Aloud the driving tempest roars,
Congeal’d, impetuous show’rs descend;
Haste, close the window, bar the doors,
Fate leaves me Stella, and a friend.
In nature’s aid, let art supply
With light and heat my little sphere;
Rouse, rouse the fire, and pile it high,
Light up a constellation here.

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Let musick sound the voice of joy,
  Or mirth repeat the jocund tale;
Let love his wanton wiles employ,
  And o’er the season wine prevail.
Yet time life’s dreary winter brings,
  When mirth’s gay tale shall please no more
Nor musick charm—though Stella sings;
  Nor love, nor wine, the spring restore.
Catch, then, Oh! catch the transient hour,
  Improve each moment as it flies;
Life’s a short summer—man a flow’r:
  He dies—alas! how soon he dies!

THE WINTER’S WALK.

Behold, my fair, where’er we rove,
  What dreary prospects round us rise;
The naked hill, the leafless grove,
  The hoary ground, the frowning skies!
Nor only through the wasted plain,
  Stern winter! is thy force confess’d;
Still wider spreads thy horrid reign,
  I feel thy pow’r usurp my breast.
Enliv’ning hope, and fond desire,
  Resign the heart to spleen and care;
Scarce frighted love maintains her fire,
  And rapture saddens to despair.
In groundless hope, and causeless fear,
  Unhappy man! behold thy doom;
Still changing with the changeful year,
  The slave of sunshine and of gloom.
Tir’d with vain joys, and false alarms,
  With mental and corporeal strife,
Snatch me, my Stella, to thy arms,
  And screen me from the ills of life[a].

[a] And *hide* me from the *sight* of life. 1st edition.

TO MISS ****
ON HER GIVING THE AUTHOR A GOLD AND SILK NETWORK PURSE OF HER OWN WEAVING[a].

Though gold and silk their charms unite
To make thy curious web delight,
In vain the varied work would shine,
If wrought by any hand but thine;
Thy hand, that knows the subtler art
To weave those nets that catch the heart.

Spread out by me, the roving coin
Thy nets may catch, but not confine;
Nor can I hope thy silken chain
The glitt'ring vagrants shall restrain.
Why, Stella, was it then decreed,
The heart, once caught, should ne'er be freed?

[a] Printed among Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies.

TO MISS ****
ON HER PLAYING UPON THE HARPSICHORD, IN A ROOM HUNG WITH FLOWER-PIECES
OF HER OWN PAINTING[a].

When Stella strikes the tuneful string,
In scenes of imitated spring,
Where beauty lavishes her pow'rs
On beds of never-fading flow'rs,
And pleasure propagates around
Each charm of modulated sound;
Ah! think not, in the dang'rous hour,
The nymph fictitious as the flow'r;
But shun, rash youth, the gay alcove,
Nor tempt the snares of wily love.
When charms thus press on ev'ry sense,
What thought of flight, or of defence?
Deceitful hope, and vain desire,
For ever flutter o'er her lyre,
Delighting, as the youth draws nigh,
To point the glances of her eye,
And forming, with unerring art,
New chains to hold the captive heart.

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But on those regions of delight
Might truth intrude with daring flight,
Could Stella, sprightly, fair, and young,
One moment hear the moral song,
Instruction, with her flowers, might spring,
And wisdom warble from her string.
Mark, when from thousand mingled dies
Thou seest one pleasing form arise,
How active light, and thoughtful shade
In greater scenes each other aid;
Mark, when the different notes agree
In friendly contrariety,
How passion's well-accorded strife
Gives all the harmony of life;
Thy pictures shall thy conduct frame,
Consistent still, though not the same;
Thy musick teach the nobler art,
To tune the regulated heart.

[a] Printed among Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies.

EVENING; AN ODE. TO STELLA.

Ev'ning now from purple wings
Sheds the grateful gifts she brings;
Brilliant drops bedeck the mead,
Cooling breezes shake the reed;
Shake the reed, and curl the stream,
Silver'd o'er with Cynthia's beam;
Near the checquer'd, lonely grove,
Hears, and keeps thy secrets, love.
Stella, thither let us stray,
Lightly o'er the dewy way.
Phoebus drives his burning car
Hence, my lovely Stella, far;
In his stead, the queen of night
Round us pours a lambent light;
Light, that seems but just to show
Breasts that beat, and cheeks that glow.
Let us now, in whisper'd joy,

Ev'ning's silent hours employ;
Silence best, and conscious shades,
Please the hearts that love invades;
Other pleasures give them pain,
Lovers all but love disdain.

TO THE SAME.

Whether Stella's eyes are found
Fix'd on earth, or glancing round,
If her face with pleasure glow,
If she sigh at others' woe,
If her easy air express
Conscious worth, or soft distress,
Stella's eyes, and air, and face,
Charm with undiminish'd grace.
  If on her we see display'd
Pendent gems, and rich brocade;
If her chints with less expense
Flows in easy negligence;
Still she lights the conscious flame,
Still her charms appear the same;
If she strikes the vocal strings,
If she's silent, speaks, or sings,
If she sit, or if she move,
Still we love, and still approve.
  Vain the casual, transient glance,
Which alone can please by chance;
Beauty, which depends on art,
Changing with the changing heart,
Which demands the toilet's aid,
Pendent gems and rich brocade.
I those charms alone can prize,
Which from constant nature rise,
Which nor circumstance, nor dress,
E'er can make, or more, or less.

TO A FRIEND.

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No more thus brooding o’er yon heap,
With av’rice, painful vigils keep;
Still unenjoy’d the present store,
Still endless sighs are breath’d for more.
Oh! quit the shadow, catch the prize,
Which not all India’s treasure buys!
  To purchase heav’n has gold the power?
Can gold remove the mortal hour?
In life, can love be bought with gold?
Are friendship’s pleasures to be sold?
No—all that’s worth a wish—a thought,
Fair virtue gives unbrib’d, unbought.
Cease then on trash thy hopes to bind,
Let nobler views engage thy mind.
  With science tread the wondrous way,
Or learn the muses’ moral lay;
In social hours indulge thy soul,
Where mirth and temp’rance mix the bowl;
To virtuous love resign thy breast,
And be, by blessing beauty—blest.
  Thus taste the feast, by nature spread,
Ere youth, and all its joys are fled;
Come, taste with me the balm of life,
Secure from pomp, and wealth, and strife.
I boast whate’er for man was meant,
In health, and Stella, and content;
And scorn! oh! let that scorn be thine!
Mere things of clay that dig the mine.

STELLA IN MOURNING.

When lately Stella’s form display’d
The beauties of the gay brocade,
The nymphs, who found their pow’r decline,
Proclaim’d her not so fair as fine.
“Fate! snatch away the bright disguise,
And let the goddess trust her eyes.”
Thus blindly pray’d the fretful fair,
And fate malicious heard the pray’r;
But, brighten’d by the sable dress,
As virtue rises in distress,
Since Stella still extends her reign,
Ah! how shall envy sooth her pain?

Th’ adoring youth and envious fair,
Henceforth, shall form one common prayer:
And love and hate, alike, implore
The skies—“That Stella mourn no more.”

TO STELLA.

Not the soft sighs of vernal gales,
The fragrance of the flow’ry vales,
The murmurs of the crystal rill,
The vocal grove, the verdant hill;
Not all their charms, though all unite,
Can touch my bosom with delight.

Not all the gems on India’s shore,
Not all Peru’s unbounded store,
Not all the power, nor all the fame,
That heroes, kings, or poets claim;
Nor knowledge, which the learn’d approve;
To form one wish my soul can move.

Yet nature’s charms allure my eyes,
And knowledge, wealth, and fame I prize;
Fame, wealth, and knowledge I obtain,
Nor seek I nature’s charms in vain;
In lovely Stella all combine;
And, lovely Stella! thou art mine.

VERSES,
WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF A GENTLEMAN, TO WHOM A LADY HAD GIVEN A SPRIG
OF MYRTLE [a].

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What hopes, what terrours, does thy gift create!
Ambiguous emblem of uncertain fate!
The myrtle (ensign of supreme command,
Consign'd by Venus to Melissa's hand)
Not less capricious than a reigning fair,
Oft favours, oft rejects, a lover's pray'r.
In myrtle shades oft sings the happy swain,
In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain.
The myrtle crowns the happy lovers' heads,
Th' unhappy lovers' graves the myrtle spreads.
Oh! then, the meaning of thy gift impart,
And ease the throbbings of an anxious heart.
Soon must this bough, as you shall fix its doom,
Adorn Philander's head, or grace his tomb.

[a] These verses were first printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1768, p. 439, but were written many years earlier. Elegant as they are, Dr. Johnson assured me, they were composed in the short space of five minutes.—N.

TO LADY FIREBRACE[a].
AT BURY ASSIZES.

At length, must Suffolk beauties shine in vain,
So long renown'd in B—n's deathless strain?
Thy charms, at least, fair Firebrace, might inspire
Some zealous bard to wake the sleeping lyre;
For, such thy beauteous mind and lovely face,
Thou seem'st at once, bright nymph, a muse and grace.

[a] This lady was Bridget, third daughter of Philip Bacon, esq. of Ipswich, and relict of Philip Evers, esq. of that town. She became the second wife of sir Cordell Firebrace, the last baronet of that name, to whom she brought a fortune of 25,000 pounds, July 26, 1737. Being again left a widow, in 1759, she was a third time married, April 7, 1762, to William Campbell, esq. uncle to the late duke of Argyle, and died July 3, 1782.

TO LYCE, AN ELDERLY LADY.

Ye nymphs, whom starry rays invest,
By flatt'ring poets given;
Who shine, by lavish lovers drest,
In all the pomp of heaven;

Engross not all the beams on high,
  Which gild a lover's lays;
But, as your sister of the sky,
  Let Lyce share the praise.

Her silver locks display the moon,
  Her brows a cloudy show,
Strip'd rainbows round her eyes are seen,
  And show'rs from either flow.

Her teeth the night with darkness dies,
  She's starr'd with pimples o'er;
Her tongue, like nimble lightning, plies,
  And can with thunder roar.

But some Zelinda, while I sing,
  Denies my Lyce shines;
And all the pens of Cupid's wing
  Attack my gentle lines.

Yet, spite of fair Zelinda's eye,
  And all her bards express,
My Lyce makes as good a sky,
  And I but flatter less.

ON THE DEATH OF
MR. ROBERT LEVET[a],
A PRACTISER IN PHYSICK.

Condemn'd to hope's delusive mine,
  As on we toil, from day to day,
By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
  Our social comforts drop away.

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Well try'd, through many a varying year,
  See Levet to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
  Of ev'ry friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills affection's eye,
  Obscurely wise, and coarsely kind;
Nor, letter'd arrogance, deny
  Thy praise to merit unrefined.

When fainting nature call'd for aid,
  And hov'ring death prepar'd the blow,
His vig'rous remedy display'd
  The pow'r of art, without the show.

In mis'ry's darkest cavern known,
  His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless anguish pour'd his groan,
  And lonely want retir'd to die.

No summons, mock'd by chill delay,
  No petty gain, disdain'd by pride;
The modest wants of ev'ry day
  The toil of ev'ry day supply'd.

His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
  Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure the eternal master found
  The single talent well-employ'd.

The busy day—the peaceful night,
  Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm—his pow'rs were bright,
  Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then, with no fiery throbbing pain,
  No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke, at once, the vital chain,
  And freed his soul the nearest way.

[a] These stanzas, to adopt the words of Dr. Drake, "are warm from the heart; and this is the only poem, from the pen of Johnson, that has been bathed with tears." Levet was Johnson's constant and attentive companion, for near forty years; he was a practitioner in physic,

among the lower class of people, in London. Humanity, rather than desire of gain, seems to have actuated this single hearted and amiable being; and never were the virtues of charity recorded in more touching strains. "I am acquainted," says Dr. Drake, "with nothing superior to them in the productions of the moral muse." See Drake's Literary Life of Johnson; and Boswell, i. ii. iii. iv.—ED.

EPITAPH ON CLAUDE PHILLIPS, AN ITINERANT MUSICIAN[a].

Phillips! whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty pow'r, and hapless love,
Rest here, distress'd by poverty no more,
Find here that calm thou gay'st so oft before;
Sleep, undisturb'd, within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee, with a note like thine.

[a] These lines are among Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies: they are, nevertheless, recognised as Johnson's, in a memorandum of his handwriting, and were probably written at her request. This Phillips was a fiddler, who travelled up and down Wales, and was much celebrated for his skill. The above epitaph, according to Mr. Boswell, won the applause of lord Kames, prejudiced against Johnson as he was. It was published in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, and

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was, at first, ascribed to Garrick, from its appearing with the signature G.—Garrick, however, related, that they were composed, almost impromptu, by Johnson, on hearing some lines on the subject, by Dr. Wilkes, which he disapproved. See Boswell, i. 126, where is, likewise, preserved an epigram, by Johnson, on Colley Cibber and George the second, whose illiberal treatment of artists and learned men was a constant theme of his execration. As it has not yet been inserted among Johnson's works, we will present it to the readers of the present edition, in this note.

EPITAPHIUM[a]
IN
THOMAM HANMER, BARONETTUM.

Honorabilis admodum THOMAS HANMER,
Baronnettus,

Augustus still survives in Maro's strain,
And Spenser's verse prolongs Eliza's reign;
Great George's acts let tuneful Gibber sing;
For nature formed the poet for the king.

Wilhelmi Hanmer armigeri, e Peregrina Henrici
North
De Mildenhall, in Com. Suffolciae, baronetti sorore
et haerede,
Filius;
Johannis Hanmer de Hanmer baronetti
Haeres patruelis
Antiquo gentis suae et titulo et patrimonio successit.
Duas uxores sortitus est;
Alteram Isabellam, honore a patre derivato, de
Arlington comitissam,
Deinde celsissimi principis, ducis de Grafton, viduam
dotariam:
Alteram Elizabetham, Thomae Foulkes de Barton, in
Com. Suff. armigeri
Filiam et haeredem.
Inter humanitatis studia feliciter enutritus,
Omnes liberalium artium disciplinas avide arripuit,

Quas morum suavitate baud leviter ornavit,
Postquam excessit ex ephebis,
Continuo inter populares suos fama eminens,
Et comitatus sui legatus ad parliamentum missus,
Ad ardua regni negotia, per annos prope triginta,
se accinxit:
Cumque, apud illos amplissimorum virorum ordines,
Solent nihil temere effutire,
Sed probe perpensa diserte expromere,
Orator gravis et pressus,
Non minus integritatis quam eloquentiae laude
commendatus,
Aeque omnium, utcunque inter se alioqui dissidentium,
Aures atque arrimos attraxit.
Annoque demum M.DCC.XIII. regnante Anna,
Felicissimae florentissimaeque memoriae regina,
Ad prolocutoris cathedram,
Communi senatus universi voce, designatus est:
Quod munus,
Cum nullo tempore non difficile,
Tum illo certe, negotiis
Et variis, et lubricis, et implicatis, difficillimum,
Cum dignitate sustinuit.
Honores alios, et omnia quae sibi in lucrum cederent
munera,
Sedulo detrectavit,
Ut rei totus inserviret publicae;
Justi rectique tenax,
Et fide in patriam incorrupta notus.
Ubi omnibus, quae virum civemque bonum decent,
officiis satisfecisset,
Paulatim se a publicis consiliis in otium recipiens,
Inter literarum amoenitates,
Inter ante-actae vitae baud insuaves recordationes,
Inter amicorum convictus et amplexus,
Honorifice consenuit;
Et bonis omnibus, quibus charissimus vixit,
Desideratissimus obiit.
Hie, juxta cineres avi, suos condi voluit, et curavit
Gulielmus Bunbury B’ttus, nepos et haeres.

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PARAPHRASE OF THE ABOVE EPITAPH.
BY DR. JOHNSON (b).

Thou, who survey’st these walls with curious eye,
Pause at the tomb, where Hanmer’s ashes lie;
His various worth, through vary’d life, attend,
And learn his virtues, while thou mourn’st his end.
  His force of genius burn’d, in early youth,
With thirst of knowledge, and with love of truth;
His learning, join’d with each endearing art,
Charm’d ev’ry ear, and gain’d on ev’ry heart.
  Thus early wise, th’ endanger’d realm to aid,
His country call’d him from the studious shade;
In life’s first bloom his publick toils began,
At once commenc’d the senator and man.
In bus’ness dext’rous, weighty in debate,
Thrice ten long years he labour’d for the state;
In ev’ry speech persuasive wisdom flow’d,
In ev’ry act refulgent virtue glow’d:
Suspended faction ceas’d from rage and strife,
To hear his eloquence, and praise his life.
Resistless merit fix’d the senate’s choice,
Who hail’d him speaker, with united voice.
Illustrious age! how bright thy glories shone,
When Hanmer fill’d the chair—and Anne the throne!
Then, when dark arts obscur’d each fierce debate,
When mutual frauds perplex’d the maze of state,
The moderator firmly mild appear’d—
Beheld with love—with veneration heard.
This task perform’d—he sought no gainful post,
Nor wish’d to glitter, at his country’s cost:
Strict on the right he fix’d his steadfast eye,
With temp’rate zeal and wise anxiety;
Nor e’er from virtue’s paths was lur’d aside,
To pluck the flow’rs of pleasure, or of pride.
Her gifts despis’d, corruption blush’d, and fled,
And fame pursu’d him, where conviction led.
Age call’d, at length, his active mind to rest,
With honour sated, and with cares oppress’d;
To letter’d ease retir’d, and honest mirth,
To rural grandeur and domestick worth;
Delighted still to please mankind, or mend,
The patriot’s fire yet sparkled in the friend.

Calm conscience, then, his former life survey'd,
And recollected toils endear'd the shade,
Till nature call'd him to the gen'ral doom,
And virtue's sorrow dignified his tomb.

[a] At Hanmer church, in Flintshire.
[b] This paraphrase is inserted in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies. The Latin is there said to be written by Dr. Freind. Of the person whose memory it celebrates, a copious account may be seen in the appendix to the supplement to the Biographia Britannica.

TO MISS HICKMAN[a],
PLAYING ON THE SPINET.

Bright Stella, form'd for universal reign,
Too well you know to keep the slaves you gain;
When in your eyes resistless lightnings play,
Aw'd into love our conquer'd hearts obey,
And yield reluctant to despotick sway:
But, when your musick sooths the raging pain,
We bid propitious heav'n prolong your reign,
We bless the tyrant, and we hug the chain.

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When old Timotheus struck the vocal string,
Ambition's fury fir'd the Grecian king:
Unbounded projects lab'ring in his mind,
He pants for room, in one poor world confin'd.
Thus wak'd to rage, by musick's dreadful pow'r,
He bids the sword destroy, the flame devour.
Had Stella's gentle touches mov'd the lyre,
Soon had the monarch felt a nobler fire;
No more delighted with destructive war,
Ambitious only now to please the fair,
Resign'd his thirst of empire to her charms,
And found a thousand worlds in Stella's arms.

[a] These lines, which have been communicated by Dr. Turton, son to Mrs. Turton, the lady to whom they are addressed by her maiden name of Hickman, must have been written, at least, as early as 1734, as that was the year of her marriage: at how much earlier a period of Dr. Johnson's life they might have been written, is not known.

PARAPHRASE OF PROVERBS, CHAP. VI. VERSES 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard[a]."

Turn on the prudent ant thy heedful eyes,
Observe her labours, sluggard, and be wise:
No stern command, no monitory voice,
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;
Yet, timely provident, she hastes away,
To snatch the blessings of the plenteous day;
When fruitful summer loads the teeming plain,
She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.
How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,
Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy pow'rs;
While artful shades thy downy couch inclose,
And soft solicitation courts repose?
Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,
Year chases year with unremitted flight,
Till want now following, fraudulent and slow,
Shall spring to seize thee like an ambush'd foe.

[a] First printed in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies.

HORACE, LIB. IV. ODE VII. TRANSLATED.

The snow, dissolv'd, no more is seen,
The fields and woods, behold! are green;
The changing year renews the plain,
The rivers know their banks again;
The sprightly nymph and naked grace
The mazy dance together trace;
The changing year's successive plan
Proclaims mortality to man;
Rough winter's blasts to spring give way,
Spring yields to summer's sov'reign ray;
Then summer sinks in autumn's reign,
And winter chills the world again;
Her losses soon the moon supplies,
But wretched man, when once he lies
Where Priam and his sons are laid,
Is nought but ashes and a shade.
Who knows if Jove, who counts our score,
Will toss us in a morning more?
What with your friend you nobly share,
At least you rescue from your heir.
Not you, Torquatus, boast of Rome,
When Minos once has fixed your doom,
Or eloquence, or splendid birth,
Or virtue, shall restore to earth.
Hippolytus, unjustly slain,
Diana calls to life in vain;
Nor can the might of Theseus rend
The chains of hell that hold his friend.
Nov. 1784.

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The following translations, parodies, and burlesque verses, most of them extempore, are taken from Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson, published by Mrs. Piozzi.

ANACREON, ODE IX.

Lovely courier of the sky,
Whence and whither dost thou fly?
Scatt'ring, as thy pinions play,
Liquid fragrance all the way:
Is it business? is it love?
Tell me, tell me, gentle dove.
Soft Anacreon's vows I bear,
Vows to Myrtale the fair;
Grac'd with all that charms the heart,
Blushing nature, smiling art.
Venus, courted by an ode,
On the bard her dove bestow'd:
Vested with a master's right,
Now Anacreon rules my flight;
His the letters that you see,
Weighty charge, consign'd to me:
Think not yet my service hard,
Joyless task without reward;
Smiling at my master's gates,
Freedom my return awaits;
But the lib'ral grant in vain
Tempts me to be wild again.
Can a prudent dove decline
Blissful bondage such as mine?
Over hills and fields to roam,
Fortune's guest without a home;
Under leaves to hide one's head
Slightly shelter'd, coarsely fed:
Now my better lot bestows
Sweet repast and soft repose;
Now the gen'rous bowl I sip,
As it leaves Anacreon's lip:
Void of care, and free from dread,
From his fingers snatch his bread;
Then, with luscious plenty gay,
Round his chamber dance and play;
Or from wine, as courage springs,
O'er his face extend my wings;

And when feast and frolick tire,
Drop asleep upon his lyre.
This is all, be quick and go,
More than all thou canst not know;
Let me now my pinions ply,
I have chatter'd like a pie.

LINES
WRITTEN IN RIDICULE OF CERTAIN POEMS
PUBLISHED IN 1777.

Wheresor'er I turn my view,
All is strange, yet nothing new;
Endless labour all along,
Endless labour to be wrong;
Phrase that time hath flung away,
Uncouth words in disarray,
Trick'd in antique ruff and bonnet,
Ode, and elegy, and sonnet.

PARODY OF A TRANSLATION. FROM THE MEDEA OF EURIPIDES.

Err shall they not, who resolute explore
Times gloomy backward with judicious eyes;
And, scanning right the practices of yore,
Shall deem our hoar progenitors unwise.

They to the dome, where smoke, with curling play,
Announc'd the dinner to the regions round,
Summon'd the singer blithe, and harper gay,
And aided wine with dulcet-streaming sound.

The better use of notes, or sweet or shrill,
By quiv'ring string or modulated wind;
Trumpet or lyre—to their harsh bosoms chill
Admission ne'er had sought, or could not find.

Oh! send them to the sullen mansions dun,
Her baleful eyes where sorrow rolls around;
Where gloom-enamour'd mischief loves to dwell,
And murder, all blood-bolter'd, schemes the wound.

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When cates luxuriant pile the spacious dish,
And purple nectar glads the festive hour;
The guest, without a want, without a wish,
Can yield no room to musick's soothing pow'r.

TRANSLATION
FROM THE MEDEA OF EURIPIDES, V. 196[a]

The rites deriv'd from ancient days,
With thoughtless reverence we praise;
The rites that taught us to combine
The joys of musick and of wine,
And bade the feast, and song, and bowl
O'erfill the saturated soul:
But ne'er the flute or lyre applied
To cheer despair, or soften pride;
Nor call'd them to the gloomy cells
Where want repines and vengeance swells;
Where hate sits musing to betray,
And murder meditates his prey.
To dens of guilt and shades of care,
Ye sons of melody repair,
Nor deign the festive dome to cloy
With superfluities of joy.
Ah! little needs the minstrel's power
To speed the light convivial hour.
The board, with varied plenty crown'd,
May spare the luxuries of sound[b].

[a] The classical reader will, doubtless, be pleased to see the exquisite original in immediate comparison with this translation; we, therefore, subjoin it, and also Dr. J. Warton's imitation of the same passage.

[Greek:] skaious de legon kouden ti sophous tous prosthe brotous, ouk an amartois oitines umnous epi men thaliais, epi d'eilapinais kai para deipnois euronto biou terpnas akoas stugious de broton oudeis pulas eureto mousae kai poluchordois odais pauein, exon thanatoi deinai te tuchai sphallonsi domous kaitoi tade men kerdos akeisthai molpaisi brotous ina d'endeipnoi daites ti mataen teinousi boan to paron gar echei terpsin aph auton daitos plaeroma brotaoisin

MEDEA, 193—206. ED. PORSQueen of every moving measure,
Sweetest source of purest pleasure,
Music! why thy pow'rs employ
Only for the sons of joy;

Only for the smiling guests,
At natal or at nuptial feasts?
Rather thy lenient numbers pour
On those, whom secret griefs devour,
Bid be still the throbbing hearts
Of those whom death or absence parts,
And, with some softly whisper'd air,
Sooth the brow of dumb despair.

[b] This translation was written by Johnson for his friend Dr. Burney, and was inserted, as the work of "a learned friend," in that gentleman's History of Musick, vol. ii. p. 340. It has always been ascribed to Johnson; but, to put the matter beyond a doubt, Mr. Malone ascertained the fact by applying to Dr. Burney himself. J. B.

TRANSLATION
OF THE FIRST TWO STANZAS OF THE SONG "RIO VERDE, RIO VERDE," PRINTED IN BISHOP PERCY'S RELIQUES OF ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY.

AN IMPROMPTU.

Glassy water, glassy water,
  Down whose current, clear and strong,
Chiefs confused in mutual slaughter,
  Moor and Christian roll along.

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IMITATION OF THE STYLE OF ****.

Hermit hoar, in solemn cell
  Wearing out life's ev'ning grey,
Strike thy bosom, sage, and tell
  What is bliss, and which the way.

Thus I spoke, and speaking sigh'd,
  Scarce repress'd the starting tear,
When the hoary sage reply'd,
  Come, my lad, and drink some beer.

BURLESQUE
OF THE FOLLOWING LINES OF LOPEZ DE VEGA.
AN IMPROMPTU.

Se a quien los leones vence
  Vence una muger hermosa,
O el de flaco avergonze,
  O ella di ser mas furiosa.

If the man who turnips cries,
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof, that he had rather
Have a turnip than his father.

TRANSLATION
OF THE FOLLOWING LINES AT THE END OF BARETTI'S
EASY PHRASEOLOGY.

AN IMPROMPTU.

Viva, viva la padrona!
Tutta bella, e tutta buona,
La padrona e un' angiolella
Tutta buona e tutta bella;
Tutta bella e tutta buona;
Viva! viva la padrona!

Long may live my lovely Hetty!
Always young, and always pretty;
Always pretty, always young,
Live, my lovely Hetty, long!

Always young, and always pretty,
Long may live my lovely Hetty!

IMPROVISO TRANSLATION
OF THE FOLLOWING DISTICH ON THE DUKE OF MODENA'S
RUNNING AWAY FROM THE COMET IN 1742 OR 1743.

Se al venir vostro i principi sen' vanno
Deh venga ogni di—durate un' anno.

If at your coming princes disappear,
Comets! come every day—and stay a year.

IMPROVISO TRANSLATION OF THE FOLLOWING LINES OF M. BENSERADE A SON LIT.

Theatre des ris, et des pleurs,
Lit! ou je nais, et ou je meurs,
Tu nous fais voir comment voisins
Sont nos plaisirs, et nos chagrins.

In bed we laugh, in bed we cry,
And, born in bed, in bed we die;
The near approach a bed may show
Of human bliss to human woe.

EPITAPH FOR MR. HOGARTH.

The hand of him here torpid lies,
  That drew th' essential form of grace;
Here clos'd in death th' attentive eyes,
  That saw the manners in the face.

TRANSLATION
OF THE FOLLOWING LINES, WRITTEN UNDER A PRINT
REPRESENTING PERSONS SKATING.

Sur un mince cristal l'hiver conduit leurs pas,
  Le precipice est sous la glace:
  Telle est de nos plaisirs la legere surface:
Glissez, mortels; n'appuyez pas.

O'er ice the rapid skater flies,
  With sport above, and death below;
Where mischief lurks in gay disguise,
  Thus lightly touch and quickly go.

IMPROMPTU TRANSLATION OF THE SAME.

O’er crackling ice, o’er gulfs profound,
  With nimble glide the skaters play;
O’er treach’rous pleasure’s flow’ry ground
  Thus lightly skim, and haste away.

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TO MRS. THRALE,
ON HER COMPLETING HER THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR.
AN IMPROMPTU.

Oft in danger, yet alive,
We are come to thirty-five;
Long may better years arrive,
Better years than thirty-five!
Could philosophers contrive
Life to stop at thirty-five,
Time his hours should never drive
O'er the bounds of thirty-five.
High to soar, and deep to dive,
Nature gives at thirty-five.
Ladies, stock and tend your hive,
Trifle not at thirty-five;
For, howe'er we boast and strive.
Life declines from thirty-five.
He that ever hopes to thrive
Must begin by thirty-five;
And all, who wisely wish to wive,
Must look on Thrale at thirty-five.

IMPROMPTU TRANSLATION
OF AN AIR IN THE CLEMENZA DI TITO OF
METASTASIO,
BEGINNING "DEH SE PIACERMI VUOI."

Would you hope to gain my heart,
Bid your teasing doubts depart;
He, who blindly trusts, will find
Faith from ev'ry gen'rous mind:
He, who still expects deceit,
Only teaches how to cheat.

TRANSLATION
OF A SPEECH OF AQUILEIO, IN THE ADRIANO OF METASTASIO,
BEGINNING "TU CHE IN CORTE INVECCHIASTI[a]."

Grown old in courts, thou surely art not one
Who keeps the rigid rules of ancient honour;
Well skill'd to sooth a foe with looks of kindness,
To sink the fatal precipice before him,
And then lament his fall, with seeming friendship:

Open to all, true only to thyself,
Thou know'st those arts, which blast with envious praise,
Which aggravate a fault, with feign'd excuses,
And drive discountenanc'd virtue from the throne;
That leave the blame of rigour to the prince,
And of his ev'ry gift usurp the merit;
That hide, in seeming zeal, a wicked purpose,
And only build upon another's ruin.

[a] The character of Cali, in Irene, is a masterly sketch of the old and practised dissembler of a despotic court,—ED.

BURLESQUE
OF THE MODERN VERSIFICATIONS OF ANCIENT
LEGENDARY TALES. AN IMPROMPTU.

The tender infant, meek and mild,
  Fell down upon the stone:
The nurse took up the squealing child,
  But still the child squeal'd on.

FRIENDSHIP;
AN ODE[a].

Friendship, peculiar boon of heaven,
  The noble mind's delight and pride,
To men and angels only given,
  To all the lower world deny'd.

While love, unknown among the blest,
  Parent of thousand wild desires[b],
The savage and the human breast
  Torments alike with raging fires[c];

With bright, but oft destructive, gleam,
  Alike, o'er all his lightnings fly;
Thy lambent glories only beam
  Around the fav'rites of the sky.

Thy gentle flows of guiltless joys
  On fools and villains ne'er descend;
In vain for thee the tyrant sighs[d],
  And hugs a flatt'rer for a friend.

Directress of the brave and just[e],
  O! guide us through life's darksome way!
And let the tortures of mistrust
  On selfish bosoms only prey.

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Nor shall thine ardours cease to glow[f],
  When souls to blissful climes remove:
What rais'd our virtue here below,
  Shall aid our happiness above.

[a] This ode originally appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1743. See Boswell's Life of Johnson, under that year. It was afterwards printed in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, in 1766, with several variations, which are pointed out, below.—J.B.
[b] Parent of rage and hot desires.—Mrs. W.
[c] Inflames alike with equal fires.
[d] In vain for thee the *monarch* sighs.
[e] This stanza is omitted in Mrs. William's Miscellanies, and instead of it, we have the following, which may be suspected, from internal evidence, not to have been Johnson's:

When virtues, kindred virtues meet,
And sister-souls together join,
Thy pleasures permanent, as great,
Are all transporting—all divine.

[f] O! shall thy flames then cease to glow.

ON SEEING A BUST OF MRS. MONTAGUE.

Had this fair figure, which this frame displays,
Adorn'd in Roman time the brightest days,
In every dome, in every sacred place,
Her statue would have breath'd an added grace,
And on its basis would have been enroll'd,
"This is Minerva, cast in virtue's mould."

IMPROVISO ON A YOUNG HEIR'S COMING OF AGE

Long expected one-and-twenty,
  Ling'ring year, at length is flown;
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
  Great——, are now your own.

Loosen'd from the minor's tether,
  Free to mortgage or to sell;
Wild as wind, and light as feather,
  Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

Call the Betseys, Kates, and Jennies,
  All the names that banish care;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
  Show the spirit of an heir.

All that prey on vice or folly
  Joy to see their quarry fly:
There the gamester light and jolly,
  There the lender grave and sly.

Wealth, my lad, was made to wander,
  Let it wander as it will;
Call the jockey, call the pander,
  Bid them come, and take their fill.

When the bonny blade carouses,
  Pockets full, and spirits high—
What are acres? what are houses?
  Only dirt, or wet or dry.

Should the guardian friend, or mother
  Tell the woes of wilful waste;
Scorn their counsel, scorn their pother,
  You can hang or drown at last.

EPITAPHS.

AT LICHFIELD.
H. S. E.
MICHAEL JOHNSON,

VIR impavidus, constans, animosus, periculorum immemor, laborum patientissimus; fiducia christiana fortis, fervidusque; paterfamilias apprime strenuus; bibliopola admodum peritus; mente et libris et negotiis exculta; animo ita firmo, ut, rebus adversis diu conflictatus, nec sibi nec suis defuerit; lingua sic temperata, ut ei nihil quod aures vel pias vel castas laesisset, aut dolor vel voluptas unquam expresserit.

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Natus Cubleiae, in agro Derbiensi, anno MDCLVI; obijt
MDCCXXXI.

Apposita est SARA, conjux,

Antiqua FORDORUM gente oriunda; quam domi sedulam, foris paucis notam; nulli molestam, mentis acumine et judicii subtilitate praecellentem; aliis multum, sibi parum indulgentem: aeternitati semper attentam, omne fere virtutis nomen commendavit.

Nata Nortoniae Regis, in agro Varvicensi, anno
MDCLXIX; obijt MDCCLIX.

Cum NATHANAELE, illorum filio, qui natus MDCCXII. cum vires et animi et corporis multa pollicerentur, anno MDCCXXXVII. vitam brevem pia morte finivit.

IN BROMLEY CHURCH.
HIC conduntur reliquae
ELIZABETHAE
Antiqua JARVISIORUM gente
Peatlingae, apud Leicestrenses, ortae;
Formosae, cultae, ingeniosae, piae;
Uxoris, primis nuptiis, HENRICI PORTER,
secundis, SAMUELIS JOHNSON,
Qui multum amatam, diuque defletam,
Hoc lapide contexit.
Obijt Londini, mense Mart.
A. D. MDCCLIII.

IN WATFORD CHURCH.

In the vault below are deposited the remains of JANE BELL[a], wife of JOHN BELL, esq. who, in the fifty-third year of her age, surrounded with many worldly blessings, heard, with fortitude and composure truly great, the horrible malady, which had, for some time, begun to afflict her, pronounced incurable; and for more than three years, endured with patience, and concealed with decency, the daily tortures of gradual death; continued to divide the hours not allotted to devotion, between the cares of her family, and the converse of her friends; rewarded the attendance of duty, and acknowledged the offices of affection; and, while she endeavoured to alleviate by cheerfulness her husband’s sufferings and sorrows, increased them by her gratitude for his care, and her solicitude for his quiet. To the testimony of these virtues, more highly honoured, as more familiarly known, this monument is erected by JOHN BELL.

[a] She died in October, 1771.

IN STRETHAM CHURCH.

Juxta sepulta est HESTERA MARIA,
Thomae Cotton de Combermere, baronetti Cestriensis,
filia,
Johannis Salusbury, armigeri Flintiensis, uxor,
Forma felix, felix ingenio;
Omnibus jucunda, suorum amantissima.
Linguis artibusque ita exeulta,
Ut loquenti nunquam deessent
Sermonis nitor, sententiarum flosculi,
Sapientiae gravitas, leporum gratia:
Modum servandi adeo perita,
Ut domestica inter negotia literis oblectaretur;
Literarum inter delicias, rem familiarem sedulo curaret.
Multis illi multos annos precantibus
diri carcinomatis venene contabuit,
nexibusque vitae paulatim resolutis,
e terris, meliora sperans, emigravit.
Nata 1707. Nupta 1739. Obijt 1773.

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

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OLIVARII GOLDSMITH,
Poetae, Physici, Historici,
Qui nullum fere scribendi genus
Non tetigit,
Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit:
Sive risus essent movendi,
Sive lacrimae,
Affectuum potens, at lenis, dominator:
Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis,
Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus:
Hoc monumento memoriam coluit
Sodalium amor,
Amicorum fides,
Lectorum veneratio.
Elfiniae, in Hibernia, natus MDCCXXIX.
Eblauae literis institutus:
Londini obijt MDCCLXXIV [a].

[a] This is the epitaph, that drew from Gibbon, sir J. Reynolds, Sheridan, Joseph Warton, &c. the celebrated *Round Robin*, composed by Burke, intreating Johnson to write an English epitaph on an English author. His reply was, in the genuine spirit of an old scholar, “he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster abbey with an English inscription.” One of his arguments, in favour of a common learned language, was ludicrously cogent: “Consider, sir, how you should feel, were you to find, at Rotterdam, an epitaph, upon Erasmus, *in Dutch*!” Boswell, iii. He would, however, undoubtedly have written a better epitaph in English, than in Latin. His compositions in that language are not of first rate excellence, either in prose or verse. The epitaph, in Stretham church, on Mr. Thrale, abounds with inaccuracies; and those who are fond of detecting little blunders in great men, may be amply gratified in the perusal of a review of Thrale’s epitaph in the Classical Journal, xii. 6. His Greek epitaph on Goldsmith, is not remarkable in itself, but we will subjoin it, in this place, as a literary curiosity.

[Greek:]
Thon taphon eisoraas thon OLIBARIOIO, koniaen
  Aphrosi mae semnaen, xeine, podessi patei.
Oisi memaele phusis, metron charis, erga palaion,
  Klaiete poiaetaen, istorikon, phusikon.
—ED.

IN STRETHAM CHURCH.

Hie conditur quod reliquum est
HENRICI THRALE,

Qui res seu civiles, seu domesticas, ita egit,
Ut vitam illi longiorem multi optarent;
Ita sacras,
Ut quam brevem esset habiturus praescire videretur;
Simplex, apertus, sibique semper similis,
Nihil ostentavit aut arte fictum, aut cura
elaboratum.
In senatu, regi patriaeque
Fideliter studuit,
Vulgi obstrepentis contemptor animosus;
Domi, inter mille mercaturae negotia,
Literarum elegantiam minime neglexit.
Amicis, quocunque modo laborantibus,
Consiliis, auctoritate, muneribus, adfuit.
Inter familiares, comites, convivas, hospites,
Tam facili fuit morum suavitate
Ut omnium animos ad se alliceret;
Tam felici sermonis libertate,
Ut nulli adulatus, omnibus placeret.
Natus 1724. Obijt 1781.
Consortes tumuli habet Rodolphum, patrem, strenuum
fortemque virum, et Henricum, filium unicum, quem
spei parentum mors inopiua decennem proripuit.
Ita
Domus felix et opulenta quam erexit
Avus, auxitque pater, cum nepote decidit.
Abi, Viator,
Et, vicibus rerum humanarum perspectis,
Aeternitatem cogita!

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POEMATA

MESSIA [a].

Ex alieno ingenio poeta, ex suo tantum versificator.
SCALIG. Poet.

Tollite concentum, Solymaeae tollite nymphae,
Nil mortale loquor; coelum mihi carminis alta
Materies; poscunt gravius coelestia plectrum.
Muscosi fontes, sylvestria tecta, valete,
Aonidesque deae, et mendacis somnia Pindi:
Tu, mihi, qui flamma movisti pectora sancti
Siderea Isaiae, dignos accende furores!
  Immatura calens rapitur per secula vates
Sic orsus—Qualis rerum mihi nascitur ordo!
Virgo! virgo parit! Felix radicibus arbor
Jessaeis surgit, mulcentesque sethera flores
Coelestes lambunt animae, ramisque columba,
Nuncia sacra Dei, plaudentibus insidet alis.
Nectareos rores, alimentaque mitia coelum
Praebeat, et tacite foecundos irriget imbres.
Hue, foedat quos lepra, urit quos febris, adeste,
Dia salutares spirant medicamina rami;
Hic requies fessis: non sacra sacvit in umbra
Vis boreae gelida, aut rapidi violeutia solis.
Irrita vanescent priscae vestigia fraudis,
Justitiaeque manus, pretio intemerata, bilancem
Attollet reducis; bellis praetendet olivas
Compositis pax alma suas, terrasque revisens
Sedatas niveo virtus lucebit amictu.—
Volvantur celeres anni! lux purpuret ortum
Expectata diu! naturae claustra refringens,
Nascere, magne puer! tibi primas, ecce, corollas
Deproperat tellus, fundit tibi munera, quicquid
Carpit Arabs, hortis quicquid frondescit Eois;
Altius, en! Lebanon gaudentia culmina tollit;
En! summo exultant nutantes vertice sylvae:
Mittit aromaticas vallis Saronica nubes,
Et juga Carmeli recreant fragrantia coelum.
Deserti laeta mollescunt aspera voce:
Auditur Deus! ecce Deus! reboantia circum
Saxa sonant, Deus! ecce Deus! deflectitur aether,

Demissumque Deum tellus capit; ardua cedrus,
Gloria sylvarum, dominum inclinata salutet:
Surgite convalles, tumidi subsidite montes!
Sternite saxa viam, rapidi discedite fluctus;
En! quem turba diu cecinerunt enthea, vates,
En! salvator adest; vultus agnoscite, caeci,
Divinos, surdos sacra vox permulceat aures.
Ille cutim spissam visus hebetare vetabit,
Reclusisque oculis infundet amabile lumen;
Obstrictasque diu linguas in carmina solvet.
Ille vias vocis pandet, flexusque liquentis
Harmoniae purgata novos mirabitur auris.
Accrescunt teneris tactu nova robora nervis:
Consuetus fulcro innixus reptare bacilli
Nunc saltu capreas, nunc cursu provocat euros.
Non planctus, non moesta sonant suspiria; pectus
Singultans mulcet, lachrymantes tergit ocellos.
Vincla coercebunt luctantem adamantina mortem,
Aeternoque orci dominator vuluere languens
Invalidi raptos sceptri plorabit honores.
Ut, qua dulce strepunt scatebrse, qua lasta virescunt
Pascua, qua blandum spirat purissimus aer,

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Pastor agit pecudes, teneros modo suscipit agnos,
Et gremio fotis selectas porrigit herbas,
Amissas modo quserit oves, revocatque vagantes;
Fidus adest custos, seu nox furat humida nimbis,
Sive dies medius morieutia torreat arva.
Postera sic pastor divinus secla beabit,
Et curas felix patrias testabitur orbis.
Non ultra infestis concurrent agmina signis,
Hostiles oculis flammas jaculantia torvis;
Non litui accendent bellum, non campus ahenis
Triste coruscabit radiis; dabit hasta recusa
Vomerem, et in falcem rigidus curvabitur ensis.
Atria, pacis opus, surgent, finemque caduci
Natus ad optatum perducet coepta parentis.
Qui duxit sulcos, illi teret area messem,
Et serae texent vites umbracula proli.
Attoniti dumeta vident inculta coloni
Suave rubere rosis, sitientesque inter arenas
Garrula mirantur salientis murmura rivi.
Per saxa, ignivomi nuper spelaea draconis,
Canna viret, juncique tremit variabilis umbra.
Horruit implexo qua vallis sente, figurae
Surgit amans abies teretis, buxique sequaces
Artificis frondent dextrae; palmisque rubeta
Aspera, odoratae cedunt mala gramiua myrto.
Per valles sociata lupo lasciviet agna,
Cumque leone petet tutus praesepe juvencus.
Florea mansuetae petulantes vincula tigri
Per ludum pueri injicient, et fessa colubri
Membra viatoris recreabunt frigore linguae.
Serpentes teneris nil jam lethale micantes
Tractabit palmis infans, motusque trisulcae
Bidebit linguae innocuos, squamasque virentes
Aureaque admirans rutilantis fulgura cristae.
Indue reginam, turritae frontis honores
Tolle Salema sacros, quam circum gloria pennas
Explicat, incinctam radiatae luce tiaras!
En! formosa tibi spatiosa per atria proles
Ordinibus surgit densis, vitamque requirit
Impatiens, lenteque fluentes increpat annos.

Ecce peregrinis fervent tua limina turbis;
Barbarus, en! clarum divino lumine templum
Ingreditur, cultuque tuo mansuescere gaudet.
Cinnameos cumulos, Nabathaei munera veris,
Ecce! cremant genibus tritae regalibus arae.
Solis Ophyraeis crudum tibi montibus aurum
Maturant radii; tibi balsama sudat Idume.
Aetheris en! portas sacro fulgore micantes
Coelicolae pandunt, torrentis aurea lucis
Flumina prorumpunt; non posthac sole rubescet
India nascenti, placidaeve argentea noctis
Luna vices revehet; radios pater ipse diei
Proferet archetypos; coelestis gaudia lucis
Ipso fonte bibes, quae circumfusa beatam
Regiam inundabit, nullis cessura tenebris.
Littora deficiens arentia deseret aequor;
Sidera fumabunt, diro labefaeta tremore
Saxa cadent, solidique liquescent robora montis:
Tu secura tamen confusa elementa videbis,
Laetaque Messia semper dominabere rege,
Pollicitis firmata Dei, stabilita ruinis.

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[a] This translation has been severely criticised by Dr. Warton, in his edition of Pope, vol. i. p. 105, 8vo. 1797. It certainly contains some expressions that are not classical. Let it be remembered, however, that it was a college exercise, performed with great rapidity, and was, at first, praised, beyond all suspicion of defect—This translation was first published in a Miscellany of Poems by several hands. Published by J. Husbands, A.M. fellow of Pembroke college, Oxon. 8vo. Oxford, 1731. Of Johnson's production, Mr. Husbands says, in his preface, "The translation of Mr. Pope's Messiah was delivered to his tutor as a college exercise, by Mr. Johnson, a commoner of Pembroke college in Oxford, and 'tis hoped will be no discredit to the excellent original." Mr. Husbands died in the following year.

[Jan. 20, 21, 1773.]
Vitae qui varias vices
Rerum perpetuus temperat arbiter,
Laeto cedere lumini
Noctis tristitiam qui gelidae jubet,
Acri sanguine turgidos,
Obductosque oculos nubibus humidis
Sanari voluit meos;
Et me, cuncta beaus cui nocuit dies,
Luci reddidit et mihi.
Qua te laude, Deus, qua prece prosequar?
Sacri discipulis libri
Te semper studiis utilibus colam:
Grates, summe pater, tuis
Recte qui fruitur muneribus, dedit.

[Dec. 25, 1779.]
Nunc dies Christo memoranda nato
Fulsit, in pectus mihi fonte purum
Gaudium sacro fluat, et benigni
Gratia coeli!

Christe, da tutam trepido quietem,
Christe, spem praesta stabilem timenti;
Da fidem certam, precibusque fidis
Annue, Christe.

[In lecto, die passionis, Apr. 13, 1781.]
Summe Deus, qui semper amas quodcunque creasti;
Judice quo, scelerum est poenituisse salus:

Da veteres noxas animo sic flere novato,
  Per Christum ut veniam sit reperire mihi.

[In lecto, Dec. 25, 1782.]
Spe non inani confugis,
Peccator, ad latus meum;
Quod poscis, hand unquam tibi
Negabitur solatium.

(Nocte, inter 16 et 17 Junii, 1783[a])
Summe pater, quodcunque tuum[b] de corpore Numen[c]
Hoc statuat[d], precibus[e] Christus adesse velit:
Ingenio parcas, nee sit mihi culpa rogasse[f],
Qua solum potero parte, placere[g] tibi.

[a] The night, above referred to by Dr. Johnson, was that, in which a paralytic stroke had deprived him of his voice; and, in the anxiety he felt, lest it should, likewise, have impaired his understanding, he composed the above lines, and said, concerning them, that he knew, at the time, that they were not good, but then, that he deemed his discerning this to be sufficient for quieting the anxiety before mentioned, as it showed him, that his power of judging was not diminished.
[b] Al. tuae.
[c] Al. leges.
[d] Al. statuant.
[e] Al. votis.
[f] Al. precari.
[g] Al. litare.

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[Cal. Jan. in lecto, ante lucem, 1784.]
Summe dator vitae, naturae aeterne magister,
  Causarum series quo moderante fluit,
Respice quem subiget senium, morbique seniles,
  Quem terret vitae meta propinqua suae,
Respice inutiliter lapsi quem poenitet aevi;
  Recte ut poeniteat, respice, magne parens.

Pater benigne, summa semper lenitas,
Crimine gravatam plurimo mentem leva:
Concede veram poenitentiam, precor,
Concede agendam legibus vitam tuis.
Sacri vagantes luminis gressus face
Rege, et tuere; quae nocent pellens procul:
Veniam petenti, summe, da veniam, pater;
Veniaeque sancta pacis adde gaudia:
Sceleris ut expers, omni et vacuus metu,
Te, mente pura, mente tranquilla colam,
Mihi dona morte haec impetret Christus sua.

[Jan. 18, 1784.]
Summe pater, puro collustra lumine pectus,
  Anxietas noceat ne tenebrosa mihi.
In me sparsa manu virtutum semina larga
  Sic ale, proveniat messis ut ampla boni.
Noctes atque dies animo spes laeta recurset;
  Certa mihi sancto flagret amore fides;
Certa vetat dubitare fides, spes laeta timere;
  Velle vetet cuiquam non bene sanctus amor.
Da, ne sint permissa, pater, mihi praemia frustra,
  Et colere, et leges semper amare tuas.
Haec mihi, quo gentes, quo secula, Christe, piasti,
  Sanguine, precanti promereare tuo!

[Feb. 27, 1784.]
Mens mea, quid quereris? veniet tibi mollior hora,
  In summo ut videas numine laeta patrem;
Divinam insontes iram placavit Iesus;
  Nunc est pro poena poenituisse reis.

CHRISTIANUS PERFECTUS.

Qui cupit in sanctos, Christo cogente, referri,
Abstergat mundi labem, nec gaudia carnis
Captans, nec fastu tumidus, semperque futuro
Instet, et evellens terroris spicula corde,
Suspiciat tandem clementem in numine patrem.
  Huic quoque, nec genti nec sectae noxius ulli,
Sit sacer orbis amor, miseris qui semper adesse
Gestiat, et, nullo pietatis limite clausus,
Cunctorum ignoscat vitiis, pictate fruatur.
Ardeat huic toto sacer ignis pectore, possit
Ut vitam, poscat si res, impendere vero.
  Cura placere Deo sit prima, sit ultima; sanctae
Irruptum vitae cupiat servare tenorem;
Et sibi, delirans quanquam et peccator in horas
Displiceat, servet tutum sub pectore rectum:
Nec natet, et nunc has partes, nunc eligat illas,
Nec dubitet quem dicat herum, sed, totus in uno,
Se fidum addicat Christo, mortalia temnens.
  Sed timeat semper, caveatque ante omnia, turbae
Ne stolidae similis, leges sibi segreget audax
Quas servare velit, leges quas lentus omittat,
Plenum opus effugiens, aptans juga mollia collo,
Sponte sua demens; nihilum decedere summae
Vult Deus, at qui cuncta dedit tibi, cuncta reposcit.
Denique perpetuo contendit in ardua nisu,
Auxilioque Dei fretus, jam mente serena
Pergit, et imperiis sentit se dulcibus actum.
Paulatim mores, animum, vitamque refingit,
Effigiemque Dei, quantum servare licebit,
Induit, et, terris major, coelestia spirat.

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Aeterne rerum conditor,
Salutis aeternae dator;
Felicitatis sedibus
Qui nec scelestos exigis,
Quoscumque scelerum poenitet;
Da, Christe, poenitentiam,
Veniamque, Christe, da mihi;
Aegrum trahenti spiritum
Succurre praesens corpori;
Multo gravatam crimine
Mentem benignus alleva.

Luce collustret mihi pectus alma,
Pellat et tristes animi tenebras,
Nec sinat semper tremere ac dolere,
Gratia Christi.

Me pater tandem reducem benigno
Summus amplexu foveat, beato
Me gregi sanctus socium beatum
Spiritus addat.

JEJUNIUM ET CIBUS.

Serviat ut menti corpus jejunia serva,
Ut mens utatur corpore, sume cibos.

AD URBANUM[a], 1738.
Urbane, nullis fesse laboribus,
Urbane, nullis victe calumniis,
  Cui fronte sertum in erudita
    Perpetuo viret, et virebit;
Quid moliatur gens imitantium,
Quid et minetur, solicitus parum,
  Vacare solis perge musis,
    Juxta animo, studiisque foelix.
Linguae procacis plumbea spicula,
Fidens, superbo frange silentio;
  Victrix per obstantes catervas
    Sedulitas animosa tendet.
Intende nervos fortis, inanibus
Risurus olim nisibus emuli;
  Intende jam nervos, habebis

Participes opera Camoenas.
Non ulla musis pagina gratior,
Quam quae severis ludicra jungere
Novit, fatigatamque nugis
Utilibus recreare mentem.
Texente nymphis serta Lycoride,
Rosae ruborem sic viola adjuvat
Immista, sic Iris refulget
Aethereis variata fucis.

[a] See Gent. Mag. vol. viii. p. 156; and see also the Introduction to vol. liv.

IN RIVUM A MOLA STOANA LICHFELDIAE DIFFLUENTEM.

Errat adhuc vitreus per prata virentia rivus,
Quo toties lavi membra tenella puer;
Hic delusa rudi frustrabar brachia motu,
Dum docuit, blanda voce, natare pater.
Fecerunt rami latebras, tenebrisque diurnis
Pendula secretas abdidit arbor aquas.
Nunc veteres duris periere securibus umbrae,
Longinquisque oculis nuda lavacra patent.
Lympha, tamen, cursus agit indefessa perennis,
Tectaque qua fluxit, nunc et aperta fluit.
Quid ferat externi velox, quid deterat aetas,
Tu quoque securus res age, Nise, tuas.

[Greek: GNOTHI SEAUTON][a] [Post Lexicon Anglicanum auctum et emendatum.]

Lexicon ad finem longo luctamine tandem
Scaliger ut duxit, tenuis pertaesus opellae,
Vile indignatus studium, nugasque molestas
Ingemit exosus, scribendaque lexica mandat
Damnatis, poenam pro poenis omnibus unam.
Ille quidem recte, sublimis, doctus et acer,
Quem decuit majora sequi, majoribus aptum,
Qui veterum modo facta ducum, modo carmina vatum,
Gesserat, et quicquid virtus, sapientia quicquid
Dixerat, imperiique vices, coelique meatus,

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Ingentemque animo seclorum volveret orbem.
  Fallimur exemplis; temere sibi turba scholarum
Ima tuas credit permitti, Scaliger, iras.
Quisque suum norit modulum; tibi, prime virorum,
Ut studiis sperem, aut ausim par esse querelis,
Non mihi sorte datum; lenti seu sanguinis obsint
Frigora, seu nimium longo jacuisse veterno,
Sive mihi mentem dederit natura minorem.
  Te sterili functum cura, vocumque salebris
Tuto eluctatum, spatiis sapientia dia
Excipit aethereis, ars omnis plaudit amico,
Linguarumque omni terra discordia concors
Multiplici reducem circumsonat ore magistrum.
  Me, pensi immunis cum jam mihi reddor, inertis
Desidiae sors dura manet, graviorque labore
Tristis et atra quies, et tardae taedia vitae.
Nascuntur curis curae, vexatque dolorum
Importuna cohors, vacuae mala somnia mentis.
Nunc clamosa juvant nocturnae gaudia mensae,
Nunc loca sola placent; frustra te, somne, recumbens,
Alme voco, impatiens noctis, metuensque diei.
Omnia percurro trepidus, circum omnia lustro,
Si qua usquam pateat melioris semita vitae,
Nec quid again invenio; meditatus grandia, cogor
Notior ipse mihi fieri, incultumque fateri
Pectus, et ingenium vano se robore jactans.
Ingenium, nisi materiem doctrina ministrat,
Cessat inops rerum, ut torpet, si marmoris absit
Copia, Phidiaci foecunda potentia coeli.
Quicquid agam, quocunque ferar, conatibus obstat
Res angusta domi, et macrae penuria mentis.
  Non rationis opes animus, nunc parta recensens
Conspicit aggestas, et se miratur in illis,
Nec sibi de gaza praesens quod postulat usus
Summus adesse jubet celsa dominator ab arce;
Non, operum serie seriem dum computat aevi,
Praeteritis fruitur, laetos aut sumit honores
Ipse sui judex, actae bene munera vitae;
Sed sua regna videns, loca nocte silentia late
Horret, ubi vanae species, umbraeque fugaces,

Et rerum volitant rarae per inane figurae.
  Quid faciam? tenebrisne pigram damnare senectam
Restat? an accingar studiis gravioribus audax?
Aut, hoc si nimium est, tandem nova lexica poscam?

[a] For a translation of this poem, see Murphy's Essay on the Life and
    Genius of Dr. Johnson, prefixed to the present volume.

AD THOMAM LAURENCE, MEDICUM DOCTISSIMUM,

Cum filium peregre agentem desiderio nimis tristi prosequeretur.

Fateris ergo, quod populus solet
Crepare vecors, nil sapientiam
  Prodesse vitae, literasque
    In dubiis dare terga rebus.

Tu, queis laborat sors hominum, mala
Nec vincis acer, nee pateris pius;
  Te mille succorum potentem
    Destituit medicina mentis.

Per caeca noctis taedia turbidae,
Pigrae per horas lucis inutiles,
  Torpesque, languescisque, curis
    Solicitus nimis heu! paternis.

Tandem dolori plus satis est datum,
Exsurge fortis, nunc animis opus,
  Te, docta, Laurenti, vetustas,
    Te medici revocant labores.

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Permitte summo quicquid habes patri,
Permitte fidens; et muliebribus,
  Amice, majorem querelis
    Redde tuis, tibi redde, mentem.

IN THEATRO, MARCH 8, 1771.

Tertii verso quater orbe lustri,
Quid theatrales tibi, Crispe, pompae?
Quam decet canos male litteratos
                Sera voluptas!

Tene mulceri fidibus canoris?
Tene cantorum modulis stupere?
Tene per pictas, oculo elegante,
                Currere formas?

Inter aequales, sine felle liber,
Codices, veri studiosus, inter
Rectius vives. Sua quisque carpat
                Gaudia gratus.

Lusibus gaudet puer otiosis,
Luxus oblectat juvenem theatri,
At seni fluxo sapienter uti
                Tempore restat.

INSULA KENNETHI, INTER HEBRIDAS.

Parva quidem regio, sed religione priorum
  Clara, Caledonias panditur inter aquas.
Voce ubi Cennethus populos domuisse feroces
  Dicitur, et vanos dedocuisse deos.
Huc ego delatus placido per caerulea cursu,
  Scire locus volui quid daret iste novi.
Illic Leniades humili regnabat in aula,
  Leniades, magnis nobilitatus avis.
Una duas cepit casa cum genitore puellas,
  Quas amor undarum crederet esse deas.
Nec tamen inculti gelidis latuere sub antris,
  Accola Danubii qualia saevus habet.
Mollia non desunt vacuae solatia vitae,

Sive libros poscant otia, sive lyram.
Fulserat ilia dies, legis qua docta supernae
  Spes hominum et curas gens procul esse jubet.
Ut precibus justas avertat numinis iras,
  Et summi accendat pectus amore boni.
Ponte inter strepitus non sacri munera cultus
  Cessarunt, pietas hic quoque cura fuit:
Nil opus est aeris sacra de turre sonantis
  Admonitu, ipsa suas nunciat hora vices.
Quid, quod sacrifici versavit foemina libros.
  Sint pro legitimis pura labella sacris—
Quo vagor ulterius? quod ubique requiritur hic est;
  Hic secura quies, hic et honestus amor.

SKIA.

Ponti profundis clausa recessibus,
Strepens procellis, rupibus obsita,
Quam grata defesso virentem,
Skia, sinum nebulosa pandis!

His cura, credo, sedibus exulat;
His blanda certe pax habitat locis;
  Non ira, non moeror quietis
    Insidias meditatur horis.

At non cavata rupe latescere,
Menti nec aegrae montibus aviis
  Prodest vagari, nec frementes
    In specula numerare fluctus.

Humana virtus non sibi sufficit;
Datur nec aequum cuique animum sibi
  Parare posse, utcunque jactet
    Grandiloquus nimis alta Zeno.

Exaestuantis pectoris impetum,
Rex summe, solus tu regis, arbiter;
  Mentisque, te tollente, fluctus;
    Te, resident, moderante fluctus.

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ODE DE SKIA INSULA.

Permeo terras, ubi nuda rupes
Saxeas miscet nebulis ruinas,
Torva ubi rident steriles coloni
    Rura labores.

Pervagor gentes hominum ferorum,
Vita ubi nullo decorata cultu
Squallet informis, tugurique fumis
    Foeda latescit.

Inter erroris salebrosa longi,
Inter ignotae strepitus loquelae,
Quot modis, mecum, quid agat, requiro,
    Thralia dulcis?

Seu viri curas pia nupta mulcet,
Seu fovet mater sobolem benigna,
Sive cum libris novitate pascit
    Sedula mentem.

Sit memor nostri, fideique solvat
Fida mercedem, meritoque blandum
Thraliae discant resonare nomen
    Littora Skiae.

SPES.

Apr. 16, 1783.

Hora sic peragit citata cursum;
Sic diem sequitur dies fugacem!
Spes novas nova lux parit, secunda
Spondens omnia credulis homullis;
Spes ludit stolidas, metuque caeco
Lux angit, miseros ludens homullos.

VERSUS COLLARI CAPRAE DOMINI BANKS INSCRIBENDI.

Perpetui, ambita bis terra, praemia lactis
  Haec habet, altrici capra secunda Jovis.

AD FOEMINAM QUANDAM GENEROSAM QUAE LIBERTATIS CAUSAE IN SERMONE PATROCINATA FUERAT.

Liber ut esse velim, suasisti, pulchra Maria:
  Ut maneam liber, pulchra Maria, vale.

JACTURA TEMPORIS.

Hora perit furtim laetis, mens temporis aegra
  Pigritiam incusat, nec minus hora perit.

Quas navis recipit, quantum sit pondus aquarum,
   Dimidrum tanti ponderis intret onus.

Quot vox missa pedes abit, horae parte secunda?
   Undecies centum denos quater adde duosque.

[Greek: Eis BIRCHION][a]

[Greek:]
Eiden Alaetheiae proaen chairousa graphonta
  Haeroon te bious Birchion, aede sophon
Kai bion, eipen, hotan rhipsaes thanatoio belessi,
  Sou pote grapsomenon Birchion allon echois.

[a] The rev. Dr. Thomas Birch, author of the History of the Royal Society, and other works of note.

[Greek:] Eis to taes ELISSAES peri ton oneiron ainigma.[a]
Tae kallous dunamei ti telos; Zeus panta dedoken
  Kupridi, und' autou skaeptra memaele theo.
Aek Dios estin Onap, theios pot' egrapsen Homaeros,
  Alla tod' eis thnaetous Kupris epempsen onar
Zeus mounos phlogoenti poleis ekperse kerauno,
  Ommasi lampra Dios Kupris oista pherei.

[a] When Johnson had composed this Greek epigram to Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, he said, in a letter to Cave, "I think she ought to be celebrated in as many different languages as Louis le grand." His admiration of her learning was so great, that when he wished to

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praise the acquirements of any one excessively, he remarked that, he knew as much Greek almost as Mrs. Carter. The verses in Elizae Aenigma are addressed to the same excellent and accomplished lady. It is now nearly an insult to add, that she translated Epictetus, and contributed Nos. 44 and 100, to the Rambler. See Boswell, i. iii. and iv. and preface to Rambler, ii.—ED.

IN ELIZAE AENIGMA.

Quis formae modus imperio? Venus arrogat audax
  Omnia, nec curae sunt sua sceptra Jovi.
Ab Jove Maeonides descendere somnia narrat:
  Haec veniunt Cypriae somnia missa Deae.
Jupiter unus erat, qui stravit fulmine gentes;
  Nunc armant Veneris lumina tela Jovis.

[a]O! Qui benignus crimina ignoscis, pater,
  Facilisque semper confitenti ades reo,
Aurem faventem precibus O! praebe meis;
  Scelerum catena me laborantem grave
Aeterna tandem liberet clementia,
  Ut summa laus sit, summa Christo gloria.

Per vitae tenebras rerumque incerta vagantem
  Numine praesenti me tueare, pater!
Me ducat lux sancta, Deus, lux sancta sequatur;
  Usque regat gressus gratia fida meos.
Sic peragam tua jussa libens, accinctus ad omne
  Mandatum vivam, sic moriarque tibi.

Me, pater omnipotens, de puro respice coelo,
  Quem moestum et timidum crimina dira gravant;
Da veniam pacemque mihi, da, mente serena,
  Ut tibi quae placeant, omnia promptus agam.
Solvi, quo Christus cunctis delicta redemit,
  Et pro me pretium, tu patiare, pater.

[a] This and the three following articles are metrical versions of collects in the liturgy; the first, of that, beginning, “O God,

whose nature and property"; the second and third of the collects for the seventeenth and twenty-first Sundays after Trinity; and the fourth, of the first collect in the communion service.

[Dec. 5, 1784.][a]
Summe Deus, cui caeca patent penetralia cordis;
  Quem nulla anxietas, nulla cupido fugit;
Quem nil vafrities peccantum subdola celat;
  Omnia qui spectans, omnia ubique regis;
Mentibus afflatu terrenas ejice sordes
  Divino, sanctus regnet ut intus amor:
Eloquiumque potens linguis torpentious affer,
  Ut tibi laus omni semper ab ore sonet:
Sanguine quo gentes, quo secula cuncta piavit,
  Haec nobis Christus promeruisse velit!

[a] The day on which he received the sacrament for the last time; and eight days before his decease.

PSALMUS CXVII.

Anni qua volucris ducitur orbita,
Patrem coelicolum perpetuo colunt
  Quo vis sanguine cretae
    Gentes undique carmine.

Patrem, cujus amor blandior in dies
Mortales miseros servat, alit, fovet,
  Omnes undique gentes,
    Sancto dicite carmine.

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[a]Seu te saeva fames, levitas sive improba fecit,
  Musca, meae comitem, participemque dapis,
Pone metum, rostrum fidens immitte culullo,
  Nam licet, et toto prolue laeta mero.
Tu, quamcunque tibi velox indulserit annus,
  Carpe diem; fugit, heu, non revocanda dies!
Quae nos blanda comes, quae nos perducat eodem,
  Volvitur hora mihi, volvitur hora tibi!
Una quidem, sic fata volunt, tibi vivitur aestas,
  Eheu, quid decies plus mihi sexta dedit!
Olim praeteritae numeranti tempora vitae,
  Sexaginta annis non minor unus erit.

[a] The above is a version of the song, “Busy, curious, thirsty fly.”

[b]Habeo, dedi quod alteri;
Habuique, quod dedi mihi;
Sed quod reliqui, perdidi.

[b] These lines are a version of three sentences that are said, in the manuscript, to be “On the monument of John of Doncaster;” and which are as follow:

What I gave, that I have;
What I spent, that I had;
What I left, that I lost.

[a]E WALTONI PISCATORE PERFECTO EXCERPTUM.

Nunc, per gramina fusi,
Densa fronde salicti,
Dum defenditur imber,
Molles ducimus horas.
Hic, dum debita morti
Paulum vita moratur,
Nunc rescire priora,
Nunc instare futuris,
Nunc summi prece sancta
Patris numen adire est.
Quicquid quraeitur ultra,
Caeco ducit amore,
Vel spe ludit inani,
Luctus mox pariturum.

[a] These lines are a translation of part of a song in the Complete Angler of Isaac Walton, written by John Chalkhill, a friend of Spenser, and a good poet in his time. They are but part of the last stanza, which, that the reader may have it entire, is here given at length:

If the sun's excessive heat
  Make our bodies swelter,
To an osier hedge we get
  For a friendly shelter!
    Where in a dike,
    Perch or pike,
    Roach or dace,
    We do chase,
Bleak or gudgeon,
    Without grudging,
      We are still contented.
Or we sometimes pass an hour
  Under a green willow,
That defends us from a shower,
  Making earth our pillow;
    Where we may
    Think and pray,
    Before death
    Stops our breath:
    Other joys
    Are but toys,
      And to be lamented.

[a]Quisquis iter tendis, vitreas qua lucidus undas
Speluncae late Thamesis praetendit opacae;
Marmorea trepidant qua lentae in fornice guttae,
Crystallisque latex fractus scintillat acutis;
Gemmaque, luxuriae nondum famulata nitenti
Splendit, et incoquitur tectum sine fraude metallum;
Ingredere O! rerum pura cole mente parentem;
Auriferasque auri metuens scrutare cavernas.
Ingredere! Egeriae sacrum en tibi panditur antrum!
Hic, in se totum, longe per opaca futuri
Temporis, Henricum rapuit vis vivida mentis:
Hic pia Vindamius traxit suspiria, in ipsa
Morte memor patriae; hic Marmonti pectore prima
Coelestis fido caluerunt semina flammae.
Temnere opes, pretium sceleris, patriamque tueri
Fortis, ades; tibi, sponte, patet venerabile limen.

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[a] The above lines are a version of Pope's verses on his own grotto, which begin, "Thou, who shall stop where Thames' translucent wave."

GRAECORTUM EPIGRAMMATUM VERSIONES METRICAE.

Pag. 2. Brodaei edit. Bas. ann. 1549.
Non Argos pugilem, non me Messana creavit;
Patria Sparta mihi est, patria clara virum.
Arte valent isti, mihi robo revivere solo est,
Convenit ut natis, inclyta Sparta, tuis.

Br. 2.
Quandoquidem passim nulla ratione feruntur,
Cuncta cinis, cuncta et ludicra, cuncta nihil.

Br. 5.
Pectore qui duro, crudos de vite racemos,
Venturi exsecuit vascula prima meri,
Labraque constrictus, semesos, jamque terendos
Sub pedibus, populo praetereunte, jacit.
Supplicium huic, quoniam crescentia gaudia laesit,
Det Bacchus, dederat quale, Lycurge, tibi.
Hae poterant uvae laeto convivia cantu
Mulcere, aut pectus triste levare malis.

Br. 8.
Fert humeris claudum validis per compita caecus,
Hic oculos socio commodat, ille pedes.

Br. 10.
Qui, mutare vias ausus terraeque marisque,
Trajecit montes nauta, fretumque pedes,
Xerxi, tercentum Spartae Mars obstitit acris
Militibus; terris sit pelagoque pudor!

Br. 11.
Sit tibi, Calliope, Parnassum, cura, tenenti,
Alter ut adsit Homerus, adest etenim alter Achilles.

Br. 18.
Ad musas Venus haec: Veneri parete, puellae,
In vos ne missus spicula tendat amor.

Haec musae ad Venerem: sic Marti, diva, mineris,
Hue nunquam volitat debilis iste puer.

Br. 19.
Prospera sors nec te strepitoso turbine tollat,
Nec menti injiciat sordida cura jugum;
Nam vita incertis incerta impellitur auris,
Omnesque in partes tracta, retracta fluit;
Firma manet virtus; virtuti innitere, tutus
Per fluctus vitae sic tibi cursus erit.

Br. 24.
Hora bonis quasi nunc instet suprema fruaris,
Plura ut victurus secula, parce bonis:
Divitiis, utrinque cavens, qui tempore parcit,
Tempore divitiis utitur, ille sapit.

Br. 24.
Nunquam jugera messibus onusta, aut
Quos Gyges cumulos habebat auri;
Quod vitae satis est, peto, Macrine,
Mi, nequid nimis, est nimis probatum.

Br. 24.
Non opto aut precibus posco ditescere, paucis
Sit contenta mihi vita, dolore carens.

Br. 24
Recta ad pauperiem tendit, cui corpora cordi est
Multa alere, et multas aedificare domos.

Br. 24.
Tu neque dulce putes alienae accumbere mensae;
Nec probrosa avidae grata sit offa gulae;
Nec ficto fletu, fictis solvere cachinnis,
Arridens domino, collacrymansque tuo;
Laetior hand tecum, tecum neque tristior unquam,
Sed Miliae ridens, atque dolens Miliae.

Br. 26.
Nil non mortale est mortalibus; omne quod est hie
Praetereunt, aut hos praeterit omne bonum.

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Br. 26.
Democrite, invisas homines majore cachinno;
Plus tibi ridendum secula nostra dabunt.
Heraclite, fluat lacrymarum crebrior imber;
Vita hominum nunc plus quod misereris habet.
Interea dubito; tecum me causa nec ulla
Ridere, aut tecum me lacrymare jubet.

Br. 26.
Elige iter vitae, ut possis: rixisque, dolisque,
Perstrepit omne forum; cura molesta domi est;
Rura labor lassat; mare mille pericula terrent;
Verte solum, fient causa timoris opes;
Paupertas misera est; multae, cum conjuge, lites
Tecta ineunt; coelebs omnia solus ages.
Proles aucta gravat, rapta orbat; caeca juventae est
Virtus; canities cauta vigore caret.
Ergo optent homines, aut nunquam in luminis oras
Venisse, aut visa luce repente mori.

Elige iter vitae, ut mavis: prudenua, lausque,
  Permeat omne forum; vita quieta domi est;
Rus ornat natura; levat maris aspera lucrum,
  Verte solum, donat plena crumena decus;
Pauperies latitat; cum conjuge, gaudia multa
  Tecta ineunt; coelebs impediere minus;
Mulcet amor prolis, sopor est sine prole profundus;
  Praecellit juvenis vi, pietate senex.
Nemo optet, nunquam venisse in luminis oras,
  Aut periisse; scatet vita benigna bonis.

Br. 27.
Vita omnis scena est ludusque: aut ludere disce
Seria seponens, aut mala dura pati.

Br. 27.
Quae, sine morte, fuga est vitae, quam turba malorum
Non vitanda gravem, non toleranda facit?
Dulcia dat natura quidem, mare, sidera, terras,
Lunaque quas, et sol, itque reditque vias.
Terror inest aliis, moerorque, et siquid habebis,
Forte, boni, ultrices experiere vices.

Br. 27.
Terram adii nudus, de terra nudus abibo.
Quid labor efficiet? non, nisi nudus, ero.

Br. 27.
Natus eram lacrymans, lacrymans e luce recedo:
Sunt quibus a lacrymis vix vacat ulla dies.
Tale hominum genus est, infirmum, triste, misellum,
Quod mors in cineres solvit, et abdit humo.

Br. 29.
Quisquis adit lectos, elata uxore, secundos,
Naufragus iratas ille retentat aquas.

Br. 30.
Foelix ante alios nullius debitor aeris;
Hunc sequitur coelebs; tertius, orbe, venis.
Nee male res cessit, subito si funere sponsam,
Didatus magna dote, recondis humo.
His sapiens lectis, Epicurum quaerere frustra
Quales sint monades, qua fit inane, sinas.

Br. 31.
Optarit quicunque senex sibi longius aevum,
Dignus, qui multa in lustra senescat, erit.
Cum procul est, optat, cum venit, quisque senectam,
Incusat, semper spe meliora videt.

Br. 46.
Omnis vita nimis brevis est felicibus, una
Nox miseris longi temporis instar habet.

Br. 55.
Gratia ter grata est velox, sin forte moretur,
Gratia vix restat nomine digna suo.

Br. 56.
Seu prece poscatur, seu non, da, Jupiter, omne,
Magne, bonum; omne malum, et poscentibus, abnue nobis.

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Br. 60.
Me, cane vitato, canis excipit alter; eodem
In me animo tellus gignit et unda feras,
Nec mirum; restat lepori conscendere coelum,
Sidereus tamen hie territat, ecce canis!

Br. 70.
Telluri arboribus ver frondens, sidera coelo,
Graeciae et urbs, urbi est ista propago, decus.

Br. 75.
Impia facta patrans, homines fortasse latebis,
Non poteris, meditans prava, latere deos.

Br. 75.
Antiope satyrum, Danae aurum, Europa juvencum,
Et cycnum fecit Leda petita, Jovem.

Br. 92.
Aevi sat novi quam sim brevis; astra tuenti,
Per certas; stabili lege, voluta vices,
Tangitur haud pedibus tellus: conviva deorum
Expleor ambrosiis, exhilarorque cibis.

Br. 96.
Quod nimium est sit ineptum, hinc, ut dixere priores,
Et melli nimio fellis amaror inest.

Br. 103.
Puppe gubernatrix sedisti, audacia, prima
Divitiis acuens aspera corda virum;
Sola rates struis infidas, et dulcis amorem
Lucri ulciscendum mox nece sola doces.
Aurea secla hominum, quorum spectandus ocellis
E longinquo itidem pontus et orcus erat.

Br. 126.
Ditescis, credo, quid restat? quicquid habebis
In tumulum tecum, morte jubente, trahes?
Divitias cumulas, pereuntes negligis horas;
Incrementa aevi non cumulare potes.

Br. 120.
Mater adulantum, prolesque, pecunia, curae,
Teque frui timer est, teque carere dolor.

Br. 126.
Me miserum sors omnis habet; florentibus annis,
Pauper eram, nummis diffluit area senis;
Queis uti poteram quondam, fortuna negavit,
Queis uti nequeo, nunc mihi praebet, opes.

Br. 127.
Mnemosyne, ut Sappho, mellita voce, canentem
Audiit, irata est, ne nova musa foret.

Br. 152.
Cum tacet indoctus, sapientior esse videtur,
Et morbus tegitur, dum premit ora pudor.

Br. 155.
Nunc huic, nunc aliis cedens, cui farra Menippus
Credit, Achaemenidae nuper agellus eram.
Quod nulli proprium versat fortuna, putabat
Ille suum stolidus, nunc putat ille suum.

Br. 156.
Non fortuna sibi te gratum tollit in altum;
At docet, exemplo, vis sibi quanta, tuo.

Br. 162.
Hic, aurum ut reperit, laqueum abjicit; alter ut aurum
Non reperit, nectit quem reperit, laqueum.

Br. 167.
Vive tuo ex ammo: vario rumore loquetur
De te plebs audax, hic bene, et ille male.

Br. 168.
Vitae rosa brevis est; properans si carpere nolis,
Quaerenti obveniet mox sine flore rubus.

Br. 170.
Pulicibus morsus, restincta lampade, stultus
Exclamat: nunc me cernere desinitis.

Br. 202,
Mendotum pinxit Diodorus, et exit imago,
Praeter Menodotura, nullius absimilis.

Br. 205.
Haud lavit Phido, haud tetigit, mihi febre calenti
In mentem ut venit nominis, interii.

Br. 210.
Nycticorax cantat lethale; sed ipsa, canenti
Demophilo auscultans, Nycticorax moritur.

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Br. 212.
Hermem deorum nuncium, pennis levem,
Quo rege gaudent Arcades, furem boum,
Hujus palestrae qui vigil custos stetit,
Clam nocte tollit Aulus, et ridens ait:
Praestat magistro saepe discipulus suo.

Br. 223.
Qui jacet hic servus vixit: nunc, lumine cassus,
Dario magno non minus ille potest.

Br. 227.
Funus Alexandri mentitur fama; fidesque
Si Phoebo, victor nescit obire diem.

Br. 241.
Nauta, quis hoc jaceat, ne percontere, sepulchro,
Eveniat tantum mitior unda tibi!

Br. 256.
Cur opulentus eges? tua cuncta in foenore ponis:
Sic aliis dives, tu tibi pauper agis.

Br. 262.
Qui pascis barbam, si crescis mente, Platoni,
Hirce, parem nitido te tua barba facit.

Br. 266.
Clarus Ioannes, reginae affinis, ab alto
Sanguine Anastasii; cuncta sepulta jacent:
Et pius, et recti cultor: non illa jacere
Dicam; stat virtus non subigenda neci.

Br. 267.
Cunctiparens tellus, salve, levis esto pusillo
Lysigeni, fuerat non gravis ille tibi.

Br. 285.
Naufragus hic jaceo; contra, jacet ecce colonus!
Idem orcus terras, sic, pelagoque subest.

Br. 301.
Quid salvere jubes me, pessime? Corripe gressus;
Est mihi quod non te rideo, plena salus.

Br. 304.
Et ferus est Timon sub terris; janitor orci,
Cerbere, te morsu ne petat ille, cave.

Br. 307.
Vitam a terdecimo sextus mihi finiet annus,
Astra mathematicos si modo vera docent.
Sufficit hoc votis, flos hic pulcherrimus aevi est,
Et senium triplex Nestoris urna capit.

Br. 322.
Zosima, quae solo fuit olim corpore serva,
Corpore nunc etiam libera facta fuit.

Br. 326.
Exiguum en! Priami monumentum; hand ille meretur
Quale, sed hostiles, quale dedere manus.

Br. 326.
Hector dat gladium Ajaci, dat balteum et Ajax
Hectori, et exitio munus utrique fuit.

Br. 344.
Ut vis, ponte minax, modo tres discesseris ulnas
Ingemina fluctus, ingeminaque sonum.

Br. 344.
Naufragus hic jaceo, fidens tamen utere velis;
Tutum aliis aequor, me pereunte, fuit.

Br. 398.
Heraclitus ego; indoctae ne laedite liuguae
Subtile ingenium, quaero, capaxque mei;
Unus homo mihi pro soxcentis, turba popelli
Pro nullo, clamo nunc tumulatus idem.

Br. 399.
Ambraciota, vale lux alma, Cleombrotus infit,
Et saltu e muro ditis opaca petit:
Triste nihil passus, animi at de sorte Platonis
Scripta legens, sola vivere mente cupit.

Br. 399.
Servus, Epictetus, mutilato corpore, vixi,
Pauperieque Irus, curaque summa deum.

Br. 445.
Unde hic Praxiteles? nudam vidistis, Adoni,
Et Pari, et Anchisa, non alius, Venerem.

Br. 451.
Sufflato accendis quisquis carbone lucernam,
Corde meo accendens; ardeo totus ego.

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Br. 486.
Jupiter hoc templum, ut, siquando relinquit Olympum,
Atthide non alius desit Olympus, habet.

Br. 487.
Civis et externus grati; domus hospita nescit
Quaerere, quis, cujus, quis pater, unde venis.

POMPEII.

Br. 487.
Cum fugere haud possit, fractis victoria pennis
Te manet, imperii, Roma, perenne decus.

Br. 488.
Latrones, alibi locupletum quaerite tecta,
Assidet huic, custos, strenua pauperies.

Fortunae malim adversae tolerare procellas;
  Quam domini ingentis ferre supercilium.

En, Sexto, Sexti meditatur imago, silente;
  Orator statua est, statuaeque orator imago.

Pulchra est virgiuitas intacta, at vita periret,
  Omnes si vellent virginitate frui;
Nequitiam fugiens, servata contrahe lege
  Conjugium, ut pro te des hominem patriae.

Fert humeris, venerabile onus, Cythereius heros
  Per Trojae flammas, densaque tela, patrem:
Clamat et Argivis, vetuli, ne tangite; vita
  Exiguum est Marti, sed mihi grande, lucrum.

Forma animos hominum capit, at, si gratia desit,
  Non tenet; esca natat pulchra, sed hamus abest,

Cogitat aut loquitur nil vir, nil cogitat uxor,
  Felici thalamo non, puto, rixa strepit.

Buccina disjecit Thebarum moenia, struxit
  Quae lyra, quam sibi non concinit harmonia!

Mente senes olim juvenis, Faustine, premebas,
  Nunc juvenum terres robore corda senex.

Laevum at utrumque decus, juveni quod praebuit olim
  Turba senum, juvenes nunc tribuere seni.

Exceptae hospitio, musae tribuere libellos
  Herodoto, hospitii praemia, quaeque suum.

Stella mea, observans stellas, dii me aethera faxint
  Multis ut te oculis sim potis aspicere.

Clara Cheroneae soboles, Plutarche, dicavit
  Hanc statuam ingenio, Roma benigna, tuo.
Das bene collatos, quos Roma et Graecia jactat,
  Ad divos, paribus passibus, ire duces;
Sed similem, Plutarche, tuae describere vitam
  Non poteras, regio non tulit ulla parem.

Dat tibi Pythagoram pictor; quod ni ipse tacere
  Pythagoras mallet, vocem habuisset opus.

Prolem Hippi, et sua qua meliorem secula nullum
  Videre, Archidicen, haec tumulavit humus;
Quam, regum sobolem, nuptam, matrem, atque sororem
  Fecerunt nulli sors titulique gravem.

Cecropidis gravis hic ponor, Martique dicatus,
  Quo tua signantur gesta, Philippe, lapis.
Spreta jacet Marathon, jacet et Salaminia laurus,
  Omnia dum Macedum gloria et arma premunt.
Sint Demosthenica ut jurata cadavera voce,
  Stabo illis qui sunt, quique fuere, gravis.

Floribus in pratis, legi quos ipse, coronam
  Contextam variis, do, Rhodoclea, tibi:
Hic anemone humet, confert narcissus odores
  Cum violis; spirant lilia mista rosis.
His redimita comas, mores depone superbos,
  Haec peritura nitent; tu peritura nites!

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Murem Asclepiades sub tecto ut vidit avarus,
  Quid tibi, mus, mecum, dixit, amice, tibi?
Mus blandum ridens, respondit, pelle timorem:
  Hic, bone vir, sedem, nori alimenta, peto.

Saepe tuum in tumulum lacrymarum decidit imber,
  Quem fundit blando junctus amore dolor;
Charus enim cunctis, tanquam, dum vita manebat,
  Cuique esses natus, cuique sodalis, eras.
Heu quam dura preces sprevit, quam surda querelas
  Parca, juventutem non miserata tuam!

Arti ignis lucem tribui, tamen artis et ignis
  Nunc ope, supplicii vivit imago mei.
Gratia nulla hominum mentes tenet, ista Promethei
  Munera muneribus, si retulere fabri.

Illa triumphatrix Graium consueta procorum
  Ante suas agmen Lais habere fores,
Hoc Veneri speculum; nolo me cernere qualis
  Sum nunc, nec possum cernere qualis eram.

Crethida fabellas dulces garrire peritam
  Prosequitur lacrymis filia moesta Sami:
Blandam lanifici sociam sine fine loquacem,
  Quam tenet hic, cunctas quae manet, alta quies.

Dicite, Causidici, gelido nunc marmore magni
  Mugitum tumulus comprimit Amphiloci.

Si forsan tumulum quo conditur Eumarus aufers,
  Nil lucri facies; ossa habet et cinerem.

EPICTETI.

Me, rex deorum, tuque, due, necessitas,
Quo, lege vestra, vita me feret mea.
Sequar libenter, sin reluctari velim,
Fiam scelestus, nec tamen minus sequar.

E THEOCRITO.

Poeta, lector, hic quiescit Hipponax,
Si sis scelestus, praeteri, procul, marmor:
At te bonum si noris, et bonis natum,
Tutum hic sedile, et si placet, sopor tutus.

EUR. MED. 193—203.

Non immerito culpanda venit
Proavum vecors insipientia,
Qui convivia, lautasque dapes,
Hilarare suis jussere modis
Cantum, vitae dulce levamen.
At nemo feras iras hominum
Domibus claris exitiales,
Voce aut fidibus pellere docuit;
Queis tamen aptam ferre medelam
Utile cunctis hoc opus esset;
Namque, ubi mensas onerant epulae,
Quorsum dulcis luxuria soni?
Sat laetitia sine subsidiis,
Pectora molli mulcet dubiae
Copia coenae.

[Greek:] Tois Araes brotoloighos enhi ptolemoisi memaene, Kahi toios Paphiaen plaesen eroti thean.

The above is a version of a Latin epigram on the famous John duke of Marlborough, by the abbe Salvini, which is as follows:

Haud alio vultu fremuit Mars acer in armis:
Haud alio Cypriam percutit ore deam.

The duke was, it seems, remarkably handsome in his person, to which the second line has reference.

SEPTEM AETATES.

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Prima parit terras aetas; siccatque secunda;
Evocat Abramum dein tertia; quarta relinquit
Aegyptum; templo Solomonis quinta supersit;
Cyrum sexta timet; laetatur septima Christo.
[a]His Tempelmanni numeris descripseris orbem,
[b]Cum sex ceiituriis Judaeo millia septem.
Myrias[c] AEgypto cessit his septima pingui.
Myrias adsciscit sibi nonagesima septem
Imperium qua Turca[d] ferox exercet iniquum.
  Undecies binas decadas et millia septem
Sortitur[e] Pelopis tellus quae nomine gaudet.
  Myriadas decies septem numerare jubebit
Pastor Arabs: decies octo sibi Persa requirit.
Myriades sibi pulchra duas, duo millia poscit
Parthenope. [f]Novies vult tellus mille Sicana.
[g]Papa suo regit imperio ter millia quinque.
Cum sex centuriis numerat sex millia Tuscus[h].
Centuria Ligures[i] augent duo millia quarta.
Centuriae octavam decadem addit Lucca[j] secundae.
Ut dicas, spatiis quam latis imperet orbi
[k]Russia, myriadas ter denas adde trecentis.
[l]Sardiniam cum sexcentis sex millia complent.
  Cum sexagenis, dum plura recluserit aetas,
Myriadas ter mille homini dat terra[m] colendas.
  Vult sibi vicenas millesima myrias addi,
Vicenis quinas, Asiam[n] metata celebrem.
  Se quinquagenis octingentesima jungit
Myrias, ut menti pateat tota Africa[o] doctae.
  Myriadas septem decies Europa[p] ducentis
Et quadragenis quoque ter tria millia jungit.
  Myriadas denas dat, quinque et millia, sexque
Centurias, et tres decades Europa Britannis[q].
  Ter tria myriadi conjungit millia quartae,
Centuriae quartae decades quinque[r] Anglia nectit.
  Millia myriadi septem foecunda secundae
Et quadragenis decades quinque addit Ierne[s].
  Quingentis quadragenis socialis adauget
Millia Belga[t] novem.
  Ter sex centurias Hollandia jactat opima.
Undecimum Camber vult septem millibus addi.

[a] To the above lines, (which are unfinished, and can, therefore, be only offered as a fragment,) in the doctor’s manuscript, are

prefixed the words “Geographia Metrica.” As we are referred, in the first of the verses, to Templeman, for having furnished the numerical computations that are the subject of them, his work has been, accordingly, consulted, the title of which is, a new Survey of the Globe; and which professes to give an accurate mensuration of all the empires, kingdoms, and other divisions thereof, in the square miles that they respectively contain. On comparison of the several numbers in these verses, with those set down by Templeman, it appears that nearly half of them are precisely the same; the rest are not quite so exactly done.—For the convenience of the reader, it has been thought right to subjoin each number, as it stands in Templeman’s works, to that in Dr. Johnson’s verses which refers to

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it.
[b] In this first article that is versified, there is an accurate conformity in Dr. Johnson's number to Templeman's; who sets down the square miles of Palestine at 7,600.
[c] The square miles of Egypt are, in Templeman, 140,700.
[d] The whole Turkish empire, in Templeman, is computed at 960,057 square miles.
[e] In the four following articles, the numbers in Templeman and in Johnson's verses are alike.—We find, accordingly, the Morea, in Templeman, to be set down at 7,220 square miles.—Arabia, at 700,000.—Persia, at 800,000.—and Naples, at 22,000.
[f] Sicily, in Templeman, is put down at 9,400.
[g] The pope's dominions, at 14,868.
[h] Tuscany, at 6,640.
[i] Genoa, in Templeman, as in Johnson likewise, is set down at 2,400.
[j] Lucca, at 286.
[k] The Russian empire, in the 29th plate of Templeman, is set down at 3,303,485 square miles.
[l] Sardinia, in Templeman, as likewise in Johnson, 6,600.
[m] The habitable world, in Templeman, is computed, in square miles, at 30,666,806 square miles.
[n] Asia, at 10,257,487.
[o] Africa, at 8,506,208.
[p] Europe, at 2,749,349.
[q] The British dominions, at 105,634.
[r] England, as likewise in Johnson's expression of the number, at 49,450.
[s] Ireland, at 27,457.
[t] In the three remaining instances, which make the whole that Dr. Johnson appears to have rendered into Latin verse, we find the numbers exactly agreeing with those of Templeman, who makes the square miles of the United Provinces, 9540—of the province of Holland, 1800—and of Wales, 7011.

TRANSLATION OF DRYDEN'S EPIGRAM ON MILTON.

Quos laudat vates, Graecus, Romanus, et Anglus,
Tres tria temporibus secla dedere suis.

Sublime ingenium Graecus; Romanus habebat
  Carmen grande sonans; Anglus utrumque tulit.
Nil majus natura capit: clarare priores
  Quae potuere duos tertius unus habet.

EPILOGUE TO THE CARMEN SAECULARE OF HORACE; PERFORMED AT FREEMASONS' HALL.

Quae fausta Romae dixit Horatius,
Haec fausta vobis dicimus, Angliae
  Opes, triumphos, et subacti
    Imperium pelagi precantes.

  Such strains as, mingled with the lyre,
Could Rome with future greatness fire,
Ye sons of England, deign to hear,
Nor think our wishes less sincere.
  May ye the varied blessings share
Of plenteous peace and prosp'rous war;
And o'er the globe extend your reign,
Unbounded masters of the main!

TRANSLATION OF A WELSH EPITAPH (IN HERBERT'S TRAVELS) ON PRINCE MADOCK.

Inclytus hic haeres magni requiescit Oeni,
  Confessas tantum mente, manuque, patrem;
Servilem tuti cultum contempsit agelli,
Et petiit terras, per freta longa, novas.

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THE HISTORY
OF
RASSELAS, PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.

PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS.

The following incomparable tale was published in 1759; and the early familiarity with eastern manners, which Johnson derived from his translation of father Lobo's travels into Abissinia, may be presumed to have led him to fix his opening scene in that country; while Rassela Christos, the general of sultan Sequed, mentioned in that work, may have suggested the name of his speculative prince. Rasselas was written in the evenings of a single week, and sent to the press, in portions, with the amiable view of defraying the funeral expenses of the author's aged mother, and discharging her few remaining debts. The sum, however, which he received for it, does not seem large, to those who know its subsequent popularity. None of his works has been more widely circulated; and the admiration, which it has attracted, in almost every country of Europe, proves, that, with all its depression and sadness, it does utter a voice, that meets with an assenting answer in the hearts of all who have tried life, and found its emptiness. Johnson's view of our lot on earth was always gloomy, and the circumstances, under which Rasselas was composed, were calculated to add a deepened tinge of melancholy to its speculations on human folly, misery, or malignity. Many of the subjects discussed, are known to have been those which had agitated Johnson's mind. Among them is the question, whether the departed ever revisit the places that knew them on earth, and how far they may take an interest in the welfare of those, over whom they watched, when here. We shall elsewhere have to contemplate the moralist, standing on the border of his mother's grave, and asking, with anxious agony, whether that dark bourn, once passed, terminated for ever the cares of maternity and love[a]. The frivolous and the proud, who think not, or acknowledge not, that there are secrets, in both matter and mind, of which their philosophy has not dreamed, may smile at what they may, in their derision, term such weak and idle inquiries. But on them, the most powerful minds that ever illuminated this world, have fastened, with an intense curiosity; and, owning their fears, or their ignorance, have not dared to disavow their belief[b].

It is not to be denied, that Rasselas displays life, as one unvaried series of disappointments, and leaves the mind, at its close, in painful depression. This effect has been considered an evil, and regarded even as similar to that produced by the doctrines of Voltaire, Bolingbroke, and Rousseau, who combined every thing venerable on earth with ridicule, treated virtue and vice, with equal contemptuous indifference, and laid bare, with cruel mockery, the vanity of all mortal wishes, prospects, and pursuits. Their motive, for all this, we need not pause, in this place, to examine. But a distinction may be made between

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the melancholy of the heart, and the melancholy of the mind: while the latter is sceptical, sour, and misanthropic, the former is passionate, tender, and religious. Those who are under the influence of the one, become inactive, morose, or heedless: detecting the follies of the wisest and the frailties of the best, they scoff at the very name of virtue; they spurn, as visionary and weak, every attempt to meliorate man's condition, and from their conviction of the earthward tendency of his mind, they bound his destinies by this narrow world and its concerns. But those whose hearts are penetrated with a feeling for human infirmity and sorrow, are benevolent and active; considering man, as the victim of sin, and woe, and death, for a cause which reason cannot unfold, but which religion promises to terminate, they sooth the short-lived disappointments of life, by pointing to a loftier and more lasting state. Candide is the book of the one party, Rasselas of the other. They appeared nearly together; they exhibit the same picture of change, and misery, and crime. But the one demoralized a continent, and gave birth to lust, and rapine, and bloodshed; the other has blessed many a heart, and gladdened the vale of sorrow, with many a rill of pure and living water. Voltaire may be likened to the venomous toad of eastern allegory, which extracts a deadly poison from that sunbeam which bears health, and light, and life to all beside: the philosopher, in Rasselas, like some holy and aged man, who has well nigh run his course, in recounting the toils and perils of his pilgrimage, may sadden the young heart, and crush the fond hopes of inexperience; but, while he wounds, he presents the antidote and the balm, and tells, where promises will be realized, and hopes will no more be disappointed. We have ventured to detain our readers thus long from Rasselas itself, because, from its similar view of life with the sceptical school, many well-intentioned men have apprehended, its effects might be the same. We have, therefore, attempted briefly to distinguish the sources whence these different writings have issued, and, we trust, we have pointed out their remoteness from each other. And we do not dwell on the subject, at greater length, because Johnson's writings, in various parts, will require our attention on this particular head. To be restless and weary of the dull details and incomplete enjoyments of life, is common to all lofty minds. Frederick of Prussia sought, in the bosom of a cold philosophy, to chill every generous impulse, and each warm aspiration after immortality; but he painfully felt, how inefficient was grandeur, or power, to fill the heart, and plaintively exclaimed to Maupertuis, "Que notre vie est peu de chose;" all is vanity. The philosophy of Rasselas, however, though it pronounces on the unsatisfactory nature of all human enjoyments, and though its perusal may check the worldling in his mirth, and bring down the mighty in his pride, does

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not, with the philosophic conqueror, sullenly despair, but gently sooths the mourner, by the prospect of a final recompense and repose. Its pages inculcate the same lesson, as those of the Rambler, but “the precept, which is tedious in a formal essay, may acquire attractions in a tale, and the sober charms of truth be divested of their austerity by the graces of innocent fiction[c].” We may observe, in conclusion, that the abrupt termination of Rasselas, so left, according to sir John Hawkins, by its author, to admit of continuation, and its unbroken gloom, induced Miss E. Cornelia Knight to present to the public a tale, entitled Dinarbas, to exhibit the fairer view of life.

FOOTNOTES
[a] See Idler, No. 41, and his letter to Mr. Elphinstone, on the death of his mother.
[b] Aristot. Ethic. Nich. lib. i. c. 10, 11. In Barrow’s sermon on the “the least credulous or fanciful of men.”
[c] See Drake’s Speculator, 1790, No. 1.

THE HISTORY

OF

RASSELAS, PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.

CHAP. I.

DESCRIPTION OF A PALACE IN A VALLEY.

Ye, who listen, with credulity, to the whispers of fancy, and pursue, with eagerness, the phantoms of hope; who expect, that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow; attend to the history of Rasselas, prince of Abissinia.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperour, in whose dominions the father of waters begins his course; whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over half the world the harvests of Egypt.

According to the custom, which has descended, from age to age, among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abissinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

The place, which the wisdom, or policy, of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abissinan princes, was a spacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara, surrounded, on

every side, by mountains, of which the summits overhang the middle part. The only passage, by which it could be entered, was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it has been long disputed, whether it was the work of nature, or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by a thick wood, and the mouth, which opened into the valley, was closed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy, that no man could, without the help of engines, open or shut them.

From the mountains, on every side, rivulets descended, that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle, inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl, whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream, which entered a dark cleft of the mountain, on the northern side, and fell, with dreadful noise, from precipice to precipice, till it was heard no more.

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The sides of the mountains were covered with trees; the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices from the rocks; and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the grass, or browse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey, by the mountains which confined them. On one part, were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures; on another, all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns; the sprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the subtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together, the blessings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.

The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessaries of life; and all delights and superfluities were added, at the annual visit which the emperour paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of musick; and during eight days every one, that resided in the valley, was required to propose whatever might contribute to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity; the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers showed their activity before the princes, in hope that they should pass their lives in this blissful captivity, to which those only were admitted, whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight, which this retirement afforded, that they, to whom it was new, always desired, that it might be perpetual; and, as those, on whom the iron gate had once closed, were never suffered to return, the effect of long experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new schemes of delight, and new competitors for imprisonment.

The palace stood on an eminence, raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into many squares or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to the rank of those for whom they were designed. The roofs were turned into arches of massy stone, joined by a cement that grew harder by time, and the building stood, from century to century, deriding the solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, without need of reparation.

This house, which was so large, as to be fully known to none, but some ancient officers, who successively inherited the secrets of the place, was built, as if suspicion herself had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and secret passage, every square had a communication with the rest, either from the upper stories, by private galleries, or, by subterranean passages, from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had reposited their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed, but in the utmost exigencies of the kingdom; and recorded their accumulations in a book, which was itself concealed in a tower not entered, but by the emperour, attended by the prince, who stood next in succession.

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CHAP. II.

THE DISCONTENT OP RASSELAS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY.

Here the sons and daughters of Abissinia, lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose, attended by all that were skilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the senses can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and slept in the fortresses of security. Every art was practised, to make them pleased with their own condition. The sages, who instructed them, told them of nothing but the miseries of publick life, and described all beyond the mountains, as regions of calamity, where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man.

To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with songs, the subject of which was the happy valley. Their appetites were excited, by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments, and revelry and merriment was the business of every hour, from the dawn of morning, to the close of even.

These methods were, generally, successful; few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds, but passed their lives in full conviction, that they had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow, and pitied those, whom fate had excluded from this seat of tranquillity, as the sport of chance, and the slaves of misery.

Thus, they rose in the morning, and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves, all but Rasselas, who, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, began to withdraw himself from their pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks, and silent meditation. He often sat before tables, covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him: he rose abruptly in the midst of the song, and hastily retired beyond the sound of musick. His attendants observed the change, and endeavoured to renew his love of pleasure: he neglected their officiousness, repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day, on the banks of rivulets, sheltered with trees; where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes.

This singularity of his humour made him much observed. One of the sages, in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having, for some time, fixed his eyes upon the goats that were browsing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own. “What,” said he, “makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation? Every beast, that strays beside me, has the same corporal necessities with myself: he is hungry, and crops the grass, he is thirsty and drinks the stream, his thirst and hunger are appeased,

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he is satisfied and sleeps: he rises again and is hungry, he is again fed, and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty, like him, but when thirst and hunger cease, I am not at rest; I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, satisfied with fulness. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy; I long again to be hungry, that I may again quicken my attention. The birds peck the berries, or the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they sit, in seeming happiness, on the branches, and waste their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I, likewise, can call the lutanist and the singer, but the sounds, that pleased me yesterday, weary me to-day, and will grow yet more wearisome to-morrow. I can discover within me no power of perception, which is not glutted with its proper pleasure, yet I do not feel myself delighted. Man surely has some latent sense, for which this place affords no gratification; or he has some desires, distinct from sense, which must be satisfied, before he can be happy."

After this, he lifted up his head, and seeing the moon rising, walked towards the palace. As he passed through the fields, and saw the animals around him, "Ye," said he, "are happy, and need not envy me, that walk thus among you, burdened with myself; nor do I, ye gentle beings, envy your felicity; for it is not the felicity of man. I have many distresses, from which ye are free; I fear pain, when I do not feel it; I sometimes shrink at evils recollected, and sometimes start at evils anticipated: surely the equity of providence has balanced peculiar sufferings with peculiar enjoyments."

With observations like these, the prince amused himself, as he returned, uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look, that discovered him to feel some complacence in his own perspicacity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life, from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled, cheerfully, in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find, that his heart was lightened.

CHAP. III.

THE WANTS OF HIM THAT WANTS NOTHING.

On the next day, his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference, which the prince, having long considered him, as one whose intellects were exhausted, was not very willing to afford: "Why," said he, "does this man thus obtrude upon me? shall I be never suffered to forget those lectures, which pleased, only while they were new, and to become new again, must be forgotten?" He then walked into the wood, and composed himself to his usual meditations, when, before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was, at first, prompted, by his impatience, to go hastily away; but, being unwilling to offend a

man, whom he had once reverenced, and still loved, he invited him to sit down with him on the bank.

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The old man, thus encouraged, began to lament the change, which had been lately observed in the prince, and to inquire, why he so often retired from the pleasures of the palace, to loneliness and silence. “I fly from pleasure,” said the prince, “because pleasure has ceased to please; I am lonely, because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud, with my presence, the happiness of others.”

“You, sir,” said the sage, “are the first who has complained of misery in the happy valley. I hope to convince you, that your complaints have no real cause. You are here in full possession of all that the emperour of Abissinia can bestow; here is neither labour to be endured, nor danger to be dreaded, yet here is all that labour or danger can procure or purchase. Look round, and tell me which of your wants is without supply: if you want nothing, how are you unhappy?”

“That I want nothing,” said the prince, “or that I know not what I want, is the cause of my complaint; if I had any known want, I should have a certain wish; that wish would excite endeavour, and I should not then repine to see the sun move so slowly towards the western mountain, or lament when the day breaks, and sleep will no longer hide me from myself. When I see the kids and the lambs chasing one another, I fancy, that. I should be happy, if I had something to pursue. But, possessing all that I can want, I find one day and one hour exactly like another, except that the latter is still more tedious than the former. Let your experience inform me, how the day may now seem as short as in my childhood, while nature was yet fresh, and every moment showed me what I never had observed before. I have already enjoyed too much; give me something to desire.”

The old man was surprised at this new species of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent. “Sir,” said he, “if you had seen the miseries of the world, you would know how to value your present state.” “Now,” said the prince, “you have given me something to desire; I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness.”

CHAP. IV.

THE PRINCE CONTINUES TO GRIEVE AND MUSE.

At this time the sound of musick proclaimed the hour of repast, and the conversation was concluded. The old man went away, sufficiently discontented, to find that his reasonings had produced the only conclusion which they were intended to prevent. But, in the decline of life, shame and grief are of short duration; whether it be, that we bear easily what we have borne long, or that, finding ourselves in age less regarded, we less regard others; or that we look with slight regard upon afflictions, to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider space, could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promised him, because he considered, that in a long time much must be endured; he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many years much might be done.

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This first beam of hope, that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lustre of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing something, though he knew not yet, with distinctness, either end or means.

He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but, considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, which he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be busy in all schemes of diversion, and endeavoured to make others pleased with the state, of which he himself was weary. But pleasures never can be so multiplied or continued, as not to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could spend, without suspicion, in solitary thought. The load of life was much lightened: he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he supposed the frequency of his presence necessary to the success of his purposes; he retired gladly to privacy, because he had now a subject of thought.

His chief amusement was to picture to himself that world which he had never seen; to place himself in various conditions; to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild adventures: but his benevolence always terminated his projects in the relief of distress, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppression, and the diffusion of happiness.

Thus passed twenty months of the life of Rasselas. He busied himself so intensely in visionary bustle, that he forgot his real solitude, and, amidst hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to consider, by what means he should mingle with mankind.

One day, as he was sitting on a bank, he feigned to himself an orphan virgin, robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him, for restitution and redress. So strongly was the image impressed upon his mind, that he started up in the maid's defence, and ran forward to seize the plunderer, with all the eagerness of real pursuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt: Rasselas could not catch the fugitive with his utmost efforts; but, resolving to weary, by perseverance, him whom he could not surpass in speed, he pressed on till the foot of the mountain stopped his course.

Here he recollected himself, and smiled at his own useless impetuosity. Then, raising his eyes to the mountain, "This," said he, "is the fatal obstacle that hinders, at once, the enjoyment of pleasure, and the exercise of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wishes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which, yet, I never have attempted to surmount!"

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Struck with this reflection, he sat down to muse; and remembered, that, since he first resolved to escape from his confinement, the sun had passed twice over him in his annual course. He now felt a degree of regret, with which he had never been before acquainted. He considered, how much might have been done in the time which had passed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. “In life,” said he, “is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or imbecility of age. We are long, before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have mused away the four and twentieth part. What I have lost was certain, for I have certainly possessed it; but of twenty months to come, who can assure me?”

The consciousness of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himself. “The rest of my time,” said he, “has been lost, by the crime or folly of my ancestors, and the absurd institutions of my country; I remember it with disgust, yet without remorse: but the months that have passed, since new light darted into my soul, since I formed a scheme of reasonable felicity, have been squandered by my own fault. I have lost that which can never be restored: I have seen the sun rise and set for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven: in this time, the birds have left the nest of their mother, and committed themselves to the woods and to the skies: the kid has forsaken the teat, and learned, by degrees, to climb the rocks, in quest of independent sustenance. I only have made no advances, but am still helpless and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admonished me of the flux of life; the stream, that rolled before my feet, upbraided my inactivity. I sat feasting on intellectual luxury, regardless alike of the examples of the earth, and the instructions of the planets. Twenty months are passed; who shall restore them?”

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind; he passed four months, in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves, and was awakened to more vigorous exertion, by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Rasselas reproached himself, that he had not discovered it, having not known, or not considered, how many useful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to distant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He, for a few hours, regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the valley of happiness.

CHAP. V.

THE PRINCE MEDITATES HIS ESCAPE.

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He now found, that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature, which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none, that once had passed it, were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an eagle in a grate. He passed week after week in clambering the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open; for it was not only secured with all the power of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels, and was, by its position, exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged; and, looking down, at a time when the sun shone strongly upon its mouth, he discovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop any body of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected; but, having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless searches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away: in the morning he rose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements, which beguiled his labour, and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals, and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight; rejoicing that his endeavours, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible inquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated; he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways of men. His wish still continued, but his hope grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search, by new toils, for interstices which he knew could not be found; yet determined to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer.

CHAP. VI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF FLYING.

Among the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanick powers, who had contrived many engines, both of use and recreation. By a wheel, which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulet, that ran through

it, gave a constant motion; and instruments of soft musick were placed at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

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This artist was, sometimes, visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come, when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in building a sailing chariot: he saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and, with expressions of great esteem, solicited its completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanick sciences can perform. I have been long of opinion, that instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains: having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet resolved to inquire further, before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment. "I am afraid," said he to the artist, "that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish, than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him: the birds have the air, and man and beasts the earth."—"So," replied the mechanist, "fishes have the water, in which, yet, beasts can swim by nature, and men by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly: to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be, necessarily, upborne by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it, faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

"But the exercise of swimming," said the prince, "is very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied; I am afraid, the act of flying will be yet more violent, and wings will be of no great use, unless we can fly further than we can swim."

"The labour of rising from the ground," said the artist, "will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestick fowls; but as we mount higher, the earth's attraction, and the body's gravity, will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region, where the man will float in the air without any tendency to fall; no care will then be necessary but to move forwards, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth, and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and presenting to him, successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendent spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts! To survey, with equal security, the marts of trade, and the fields of battle; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty, and lulled by peace! How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all its passage; pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature, from one extremity of the earth to the other!"

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“All this,” said the prince, “is much to be desired; but I am afraid, that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told, that respiration is difficult upon lofty mountains, yet, from these precipices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall; therefore, I suspect, that from any height, where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent.”

“Nothing,” replied the artist, “will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. If you will favour my project, I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find the folding continuity of the bat’s wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model, I shall begin my task tomorrow, and in a year, expect to tower into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art shall not be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves.”

“Why,” said Rasselas, “should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindness that he has received.”

“If men were all virtuous,” returned the artist, “I should, with great alacrity, teach them all to fly. But what would be the security of the good, if the bad could, at pleasure, invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, nor mountains, nor seas, could afford any security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light, at once, with irresistible violence, upon the capital of a fruitful region, that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happiness, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations, that swarm on the coast of the southern sea.”

The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work, from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances, to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain, that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finished, and, on a morning appointed, the maker appeared, furnished for flight, on a little promontory: he waved his pinions awhile, to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and, in an instant, dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terrour and vexation.[a]

[a] See Rambler, No. 199, and note.

CHAP. VII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A MAN OF LEARNING.

The prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event, only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his design to leave the happy valley by the first opportunity.

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His imagination was now at a stand; he had no prospect of entering into the world; and, notwithstanding all his endeavours to support himself, discontent, by degrees, preyed upon him, and he began again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which, in these countries, is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer, and with more violence, than had been ever known: the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to discharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence, on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pastures, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestick amusements, and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed, upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time; then entering into familiar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skilfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement, from childhood, had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance, and loved his curiosity, and entertained him, from day to day, with novelty and instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together, the prince commanded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to close his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAP. VIII.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC.

The close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was, therefore, midnight before the musick ceased, and the princesses retired. Rasselas then called for his companion, and required him to begin the story of his life.

“Sir,” said Imlac, “my history will not be long; the life, that is devoted to knowledge, passes silently away, and is very little diversified by events. To talk in publick, to think in solitude, to read and hear, to inquire, and answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terrour, and is neither known nor valued but by men like himself.

“I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Africk and the ports of the Red sea. He was honest, frugal, and diligent, but of mean sentiments, and narrow comprehension; he desired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, lest he should be spoiled by the governours of the province.”

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“Surely,” said the prince, “my father must be negligent of his charge, if any man, in his dominions, dares take that which belongs to another. Does he not know, that kings are accountable for injustice permitted, as well as done? If I were emperour, not the meanest of my subjects should be oppressed with impunity. My blood boils, when I am told that a merchant durst not enjoy his honest gains, for fear of losing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governour, who robbed the people, that I may declare his crimes to the emperour.”

“Sir,” said Imlac, “your ardour is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come, when you will acquit your father, and, perhaps, hear with less impatience of the governour. Oppression is, in the Abissinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated; but no form of government has been yet discovered, by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination supposes power on one part, and subjection on the other; and if power be in the hands of men, it will, sometimes, be abused. The vigilance of the supreme magistrate may do much, but much will still remain undone. He can never know all the crimes that are committed, and can seldom punish all that he knows.”

“This,” said the prince, “I do not understand, but I had rather hear thee than dispute. Continue thy narration.”

“My father,” proceeded Imlac, “originally intended that I should have no other education, than such as might qualify me for commerce; and, discovering in me great strength of memory, and quickness of apprehension, often declared his hope, that I should be, some time, the richest man in Abissinia.”

“Why,” said the prince, “did thy father desire the increase of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durst discover or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy veracity, yet inconsistencies cannot both be true.”

“Inconsistencies,” answered Imlac, “cannot both be right, but, imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diversity is not inconsistency. My father might expect a time of greater security. However, some desire is necessary to keep life in motion, and he, whose real wants are supplied, must admit those of fancy.”

“This,” said the prince, “I can, in some measure, conceive. I repent that I interrupted thee.”

“With this hope,” proceeded Imlac, “he sent me to school; but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleasure of intelligence and the pride of invention, I began, silently, to despise riches, and determined to disappoint the purpose of my father, whose grossness of conception raised my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderness would expose me to the fatigue of travel, in which time I had been instructed, by successive masters, in all the literature of my native country. As every

hour taught me something new, I lived in a continual course of gratifications; but, as I advanced towards manhood, I lost much of the reverence with which I had been used to look on my instructers; because, when the lesson was ended, I did not find them wiser or better than common men.

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“At length my father resolved to initiate me in commerce, and, opening one of his subterranean treasuries, counted out ten thousand pieces of gold. This, young man, said he, is the stock with which you must negotiate. I began with less than the fifth part, and you see how diligence and parsimony have increased it. This is your own, to waste or to improve. If you squander it by negligence or caprice, you must wait for my death, before you will be rich: if, in four years, you double your stock, we will thenceforward let subordination cease, and live together as friends and partners; for he shall always be equal with me, who is equally skilled in the art of growing rich.

“We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of cheap goods, and travelled to the shore of the Red sea. When I cast my eye on the expanse of waters, my heart bounded like that of a prisoner escaped. I felt an unextinguishable curiosity kindle in my mind, and resolved to snatch this opportunity of seeing the manners of other nations, and of learning sciences unknown in Abissinia.

“I remembered that my father had obliged me to the improvement of my stock, not by a promise, which I ought not to violate, but by a penalty, which I was at liberty to incur; and, therefore, determined to gratify my predominant desire, and, by drinking at the fountains of knowledge, to quench the thirst of curiosity.

“As I was supposed to trade without connexion with my father, it was easy for me to become acquainted with the master of a ship, and procure a passage to some other country. I had no motives of choice to regulate my voyage; it was sufficient for me, that, wherever I wandered, I should see a country, which I had not seen before. I, therefore, entered a ship bound for Surat, having left a letter for my father, declaring my intention.

CHAP. IX.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

“When I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me with pleasing terrour, and, thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze round for ever without satiety; but, in a short time, I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity, where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted, for awhile, whether all my future pleasures would not end like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet, surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and valleys, deserts and cities; it is inhabited by men of different customs and contrary opinions; and I may hope to find variety in life, though I should miss it in nature.

“With this thought I quieted my mind, and amused myself during the voyage, sometimes by learning from the sailors the art of navigation, which I have never practised, and

sometimes by forming schemes for my conduct in different situations, in not one of which I have been ever placed.

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“I was almost weary of my naval amusements, when we landed safely at Surat. I secured my money, and, purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and, by my inquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice, whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn, at the usual expense, the art of fraud. They exposed me to the theft of servants, and the exaction of officers, and saw me plundered, upon false pretences, without any advantage to themselves, but that of rejoicing in the superiority of their own knowledge.”

“Stop a moment,” said the prince. “Is there such depravity in man, as that he should injure another, without benefit to himself? I can easily conceive, that all are pleased with superiority: but your ignorance was merely accidental, which, being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reason to applaud themselves; and the knowledge which they had, and which you wanted, they might as effectually have shown by warning, as betraying you.”

“Pride,” said Imlac, “is seldom delicate; it will please itself with very mean advantages; and envy feels not its own happiness, but when it may be compared with the misery of others. They were my enemies, because they grieved to think me rich; and my oppressors, because they delighted to find me weak.”

“Proceed,” said the prince: “I do not doubt of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to mistaken motives.”

“In this company,” said Imlac, “I arrived at Agra, the capital of Indostan, the city in which the great mogul commonly resides. I applied myself to the language of the country, and, in a few months, was able to converse with the learned men; some of whom I found morose and reserved, and others easy and communicative; some were unwilling to teach another what they had, with difficulty, learned themselves; and some showed, that the end of their studies was to gain the dignity of instructing.

“To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myself so much, that I was presented to the emperour as a man of uncommon knowledge. The emperour asked me many questions concerning my country and my travels; and though I cannot now recollect any thing that he uttered above the power of a common man, he dismissed me astonished at his wisdom, and enamoured of his goodness.

“My credit was now so high, that the merchants, with whom I had travelled, applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the court. I was surprised at their confidence of solicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and showed no tokens of shame or sorrow.

“They then urged their request with the offer of a bribe; but what I would not do for kindness, I would not do for money; and refused them, not because they had injured me, but because I would not enable them to injure others; for I knew they would have made use of my credit to cheat those who should buy their wares.

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“Having resided at Agra till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Persia, where I saw many remains of ancient magnificence, and observed many new accommodations of life. The Persians are a nation eminently social, and their assemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking characters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

“From Persia I passed into Arabia, where I saw a nation at once pastoral and warlike; who live without any settled habitation; whose only wealth is their flocks and herds; and who have yet carried on, through all ages, an hereditary war with all mankind, though they neither covet nor envy their possessions.”

CHAP. X.

IMLAC’S HISTORY CONTINUED. A DISSERTATION UPON POETRY.

“Wherever I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration, somewhat approaching to that which man would pay to the angelick nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that, in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the best: whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by consent, which it received by accident at first: or whether, as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, which are always the same, the first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them, but transcription of the same events, and new combinations of the same images. Whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed, that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers of art: that the first excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

“I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat, by memory, the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca. But I soon found, that no man was ever great by imitation. My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors: I could never describe what I had not seen; I could not hope to move those with delight or terrour, whose interest and opinions I did not understand.

“Being now resolved to be a poet, I saw every thing with a new purpose; my sphere of attention was suddenly magnified: no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley. I observed, with equal care, the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the

mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds. To a poet,

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nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination: he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast, or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety; for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he, who knows most, will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

“All the appearances of nature I was, therefore, careful to study, and every country, which I have surveyed, has contributed something to my poetical powers.”

“In so wide a survey,” said the prince, “you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived till now, within the circuit of these mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something, which I had never beheld before, or never heeded.”

“The business of a poet,” said Imlac, “is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances: he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit, in his portraits of nature, such prominent and striking features, as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for those characteristicks which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.

“But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted, likewise, with all the modes of life. His character requires, that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition; observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind, as they are modified by various institutions, and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same; he must, therefore, content himself with the slow progress of his name; contemn the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write, as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself, as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations; as a being superiour to time and place.

“His labour is not yet at an end: he must know many languages and many sciences; and, that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarize to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony.”

CHAP. XI.

IMLAC'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED. A HINT ON PILGRIMAGE.

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Imlac now felt the enthusiastick fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profession, when the prince cried out: "Enough! thou hast convinced me, that no human being can ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration."

"To be a poet," said Imlac, "is, indeed, very difficult." "So difficult," returned the prince, "that I will, at present, hear no more of his labours. Tell me whither you went, when you had seen Persia."

"From Persia," said the poet, "I travelled through Syria, and for three years resided in Palestine, where I conversed with great numbers of the northern and western nations of Europe; the nations which are now in possession of all power and all knowledge; whose armies are irresistible, and whose fleets command the remotest parts of the globe. When I compared these men with the natives of our own kingdom, and those that surround us, they appeared almost another order of beings. In their countries it is difficult to wish for any thing that may not be obtained: a thousand arts, of which we never heard, are continually labouring for their convenience and pleasure; and whatever their own climate has denied them is supplied by their commerce."

"By what means," said the prince, "are the Europeans thus powerful, or why, since they can so easily visit Asia and Africa, for trade or conquest, cannot the Asiaticks and Africans invade their coasts, plant colonies in their ports, and give laws to their natural princes? The same wind that carries them back would bring us thither."

"They are more powerful, sir, than we," answered Imlac, "because they are wiser; knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can be given, but the unsearchable will of the supreme being."

"When," said the prince, with a sigh, "shall I be able to visit Palestine, and mingle with this mighty confluence of nations? Till that happy moment shall arrive, let me fill up the time with such representations as thou canst give me. I am not ignorant of the motive that assembles such numbers in that place, and cannot but consider it as the centre of wisdom and piety, to which the best and wisest men of every land must be continually resorting."

"There are some nations," said Imlac, "that send few visitants to Palestine; for many numerous and learned sects in Europe concur to censure pilgrimage, as superstitious, or deride it as ridiculous."

"You know," said the prince, "how little my life has made me acquainted with diversity of opinions; it will be too long to hear the arguments on both sides; you, that have considered them, tell me the result."

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“Pilgrimage,” said Imlac, “like many other acts of piety, may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed. Long journeys, in search of truth, are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevitably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with stronger impressions of the event, curiosity of the same kind may naturally dispose us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning; and, I believe, no man surveys those awful scenes without some confirmation of holy resolutions. That the supreme being may be more easily propitiated in one place than in another, is the dream of idle superstition; but that some places may operate upon our own minds in an uncommon manner, is an opinion which hourly experience will justify[a]. He who supposes that his vices may be more successfully combated in Palestine, will, perhaps, find himself mistaken, yet he may go thither without folly; he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned, dishonours, at once, his reason and religion.”

“These,” said the prince, “are European distinctions. I will consider them another time. What have you found to be the effect of knowledge? Are those nations happier than we?”

“There is so much infelicity,” said the poet, “in the world, that scarce any man has leisure, from his own distresses, to estimate the comparative happiness of others. Knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleasure, as is confessed by the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be produced; it is a vacuity, in which the soul sits motionless and torpid, for want of attraction; and, without knowing why, we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we forget. I am, therefore, inclined to conclude, that, if nothing counteracts the natural consequence of learning, we grow more happy, as our minds take a wider range.

“In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we shall find many advantages on the side of the Europeans. They cure wounds and diseases, with which we languish and perish. We suffer inclemencies of weather, which they can obviate. They have engines for the despatch of many laborious works, which we must perform by manual industry. There is such communication between distant places, that one friend can hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy removes all publick inconveniencies: they have roads cut through their mountains, and bridges laid upon their rivers. And, if we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are more commodious, and their possessions are more secure.”

“They are surely happy,” said the prince, “who have all these conveniencies, of which I envy none so much as the facility with which separated friends interchange their thoughts.”

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“The Europeans,” answered Imlac, “are less unhappy than we, but they are not happy. Human life is everywhere a state, in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed.”

[a] See Idler, No. 33, and note: and read, in Dr. Clarke’s travels, the effect produced on his mind by the distant prospect of the Holy City, and by the habitual reverence of his guides. The passage exemplifies the sublime in narrative. See his Travels in Greece, Egypt, and the Holy Land, part ii. sect. i. 8vo. ed. vol. iv. p. 288.—Ed.

CHAP. XII.

THE STORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

“I am not yet willing,” said the prince, “to suppose, that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; nor can believe but that, if I had the choice of life, I should be able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no man, and should provoke no resentment: I would relieve every distress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude. I would choose my friends among the wise, and my wife among the virtuous; and, therefore, should be in no danger from treachery or unkindness. My children should, by my care, be learned and pious, and would repay to my age what their childhood had received. What would dare to molest him, who might call, on every side, to thousands enriched by his bounty, or assisted by his power? And why should not life glide quietly away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear, by their effects, to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them, and pursue our journey.”

“From Palestine,” said Imlac, “I passed through many regions of Asia; in the more civilized kingdoms, as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains, as a pilgrim. At last, I began to long for my native country, that I might repose, after my travels and fatigues, in the places where I had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions, with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myself those with whom I had sported away the gay hours of dawning life, sitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and listening to my counsels.

“When this thought had taken possession of my mind, I considered every moment as wasted, which did not bring me nearer to Abissinia. I hastened into Egypt, and, notwithstanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations; some brought thither by the love of knowledge, some by the hope of gain, and many by the desire of living, after their own manner, without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes: for in a city, populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain, at the same time, the gratifications of society, and the secrecy of solitude.

“From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red sea, passing along the coast, till I arrived at the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myself to a caravan, and reentered my native country.

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“I now expected the caresses of my kinsmen, and the congratulations of my friends, and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had set upon riches, would own, with gladness and pride, a son, who was able to add to the felicity and honour of the nation. But I was soon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to some other provinces. Of my companions, the greater part was in the grave; of the rest, some could, with difficulty, remember me, and some considered me, as one corrupted by foreign manners.

“A man, used to vicissitudes, is not easily dejected. I forgot, after a time, my disappointment, and endeavoured to recommend myself to the nobles of the kingdom; they admitted me to their tables, heard my story, and dismissed me. I opened a school, and was prohibited to teach. I then resolved to sit down in the quiet of domestick life, and addressed a lady that was fond of my conversation, but rejected my suit, because my father was a merchant.

“Wearied, at last, with solicitation and repulses, I resolved to hide myself for ever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion or caprice of others. I waited for the time, when the gate of the happy valley should open, that I might bid farewell to hope and fear: the day came; my performance was distinguished with favour, and I resigned myself with joy to perpetual confinement.”

“Hast thou here found happiness at last?” said Rasselas. “Tell me, without reserve; art thou content with thy condition? or, dost thou wish to be again wandering and inquiring? All the inhabitants of this valley celebrate their lot, and, at the annual visit of the emperour, invite others to partake of their felicity.”

“Great prince,” said Imlac, “I shall speak the truth; I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest, because I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollection of the accidents of my past life. Yet all this ends in the sorrowful consideration, that my acquirements are now useless, and that none of my pleasures can be again enjoyed. The rest, whose minds have no impression but of the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions, or sit stupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy.”

“What passions can infest those,” said the prince, “who have no rivals? We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments.”

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“There may be community,” said Imlac, “of material possessions, but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen, that one will please more than another; he that knows himself despised will always be envious; and still more envious and malevolent, if he is condemned to live in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations, by which they allure others to a state which they feel to be wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless misery. They are weary of themselves, and of each other, and expect to find relief in new companions. They envy the liberty which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly see all mankind imprisoned like themselves.

“From this crime, however, I am wholly free. No man can say that he is wretched by my persuasion. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission to captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger.”

“My dear Imlac,” said the prince, “I will open to thee my whole heart. I have long meditated an escape from the happy valley. I have examined the mountains on every side, but find myself insuperably barred: teach me the way to break my prison; thou shalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my sole director in the CHOICE OF LIFE.”

“Sir,” answered the poet, “your escape will be difficult, and, perhaps, you may soon repent your curiosity. The world, which you figure to yourself smooth and quiet as the lake in the valley, you will find a sea foaming with tempests, and boiling with whirlpools; you will be sometimes overwhelmed by the waves of violence, and sometimes dashed against the rocks of treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, competitions and anxieties, you will wish, a thousand times, for these seats of quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear.”

“Do not seek to deter me from my purpose,” said the prince: “I am impatient to see what thou hast seen; and, since thou art thyself weary of the valley, it is evident that thy former state was better than this. Whatever be the consequence of my experiment, I am resolved to judge, with mine own eyes, of the various conditions of men, and then to make, deliberately, my CHOICE OF LIFE.

“I am afraid,” said Imlac, “you are hindered by stronger restraints than my persuasions; yet, if your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill.”

CHAP. XIII.

RASSELAS DISCOVERS THE MEANS OF ESCAPE.

The prince now dismissed his favourite to rest, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable questions for the morning.

Much of his uneasiness was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whose experience could assist him in his designs. His heart was no longer condemned to swell with silent vexation. He thought that even the happy valley might be endured, with such a companion, and that, if they could range the world together, he should have nothing further to desire.

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In a few days the water was discharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together, to converse, without the notice of the rest. The prince, whose thoughts were always on the wing, as he passed by the gate, said, with a countenance of sorrow, “Why art thou so strong, and why is man so weak?”

“Man is not weak,” answered his companion; “knowledge is more than equivalent to force. The master of mechanicks laughs at strength. I can burst the gate, but cannot do it secretly. Some other expedient must be tried.”

As they were walking on the side of the mountain, they observed that the conies, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken shelter among the bushes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards, in an oblique line. “It has been the opinion of antiquity,” said Imlac, “that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals; let us, therefore, not think ourselves degraded by learning from the cony. We may escape, by piercing the mountain in the same direction. We will begin, where the summit hangs over the middle part, and labour upwards, till we shall issue up beyond the prominence.”

The eyes of the prince, when he heard this proposal, sparkled with joy. The execution was easy, and the success certain.

No time was now lost. They hastened, early in the morning, to choose a place proper for their mine. They clambered, with great fatigue, among crags and brambles, and returned without having discovered any part that favoured their design. The second and the third day were spent in the same manner, and with the same frustration. But, on the fourth, they found a small cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they resolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured instruments proper to hew stone and remove earth, and they fell to their work on the next day with more eagerness than vigour. They were presently exhausted by their efforts, and sat down to pant upon the grass. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be discouraged. “Sir,” said his companion, “practice will enable us to continue our labour for a longer time; mark, however, how far we have advanced, and you will find, that our toil will sometime have an end. Great works are performed, not by strength, but perseverance: yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigour three hours a day, will pass, in seven years, a space equal to the circumference of the globe.”

They returned to their work day after day, and, in a short time, found a fissure in the rock, which enabled them to pass far with very little obstruction. This Rasselas considered as a good omen. “Do not disturb your mind,” said Imlac, “with other hopes or fears than reason may suggest; if you are pleased with prognosticks of good, you will be terrified, likewise, with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to superstition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen, it is a cause of

success. This is one of those pleasing surprises which often happen to active resolution. Many tilings, difficult to design, prove easy to performance."

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CHAP. XIV.

RASSELAS AND IMLAC RECEIVE AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

They had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their toil with the approach of liberty, when the prince, coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah, standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started, and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity, and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

“Do not imagine,” said the princess, “that I came hither, as a spy: I had long observed, from my window, that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point, but I did not suppose you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank; nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since, then, not suspicion, but fondness, has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not less desirous of knowing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me. You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following.”

The prince, who loved Nekayah, above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved, that he had lost an opportunity of showing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was, therefore, agreed, that she should leave the valley with them; and that, in the mean time, she should watch, lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labour was at an end; they saw light beyond the prominence, and, issuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleasures of travel, and, in thought, was already transported beyond his father’s dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his escape, had less expectation of pleasure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Rasselas was so much delighted with a wider horizon, that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister, that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAP. XV.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LEAVE THE VALLEY, AND SEE MANY WONDERS.

The prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich, whenever they came into a place of commerce, which, by Imlac's direction, they hid in their clothes, and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princess was followed only by a single favourite, who did not know whither she was going.

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They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and, seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves, as in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity. They stopped and trembled. “I am almost afraid,” said the princess, “to begin a journey, of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immense plain, where I may be approached, on every side, by men whom I never saw.” The prince felt nearly the same emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrours, and encouraged them to proceed; but the princess continued irresolute, till she had been, imperceptibly, drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field, who set milk and fruits before them. The princess wondered, that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread with delicacies; but, being faint and hungry, she drank the milk, and eat the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavour than the produce of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journeys, being all unaccustomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing that, though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration, which his companions expressed at the diversity of manners, stations, and employments.

Their dress was such, as might not bring upon them the suspicion of having any thing to conceal; yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed; and the princess was frightened, because those that came into her presence did not prostrate themselves before her. Imlac was forced to observe them with great vigilance, lest they should betray their rank by their unusual behaviour, and detained them several weeks in the first village, to accustom them to the sight of common mortals.

By degrees, the royal wanderers were taught to understand that they had, for a time, laid aside their dignity, and were to expect only such regard, as liberality and courtesy could procure. And Imlac having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedness of the commercial race, brought them down to the seacoast.

The prince and his sister, to whom every thing was new, were gratified equally at all places, and, therefore, remained, for some months, at the port, without any inclination to pass further. Imlac was content with their stay, because he did not think it safe to expose them, unpractised in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At last he began to fear, lest they should be discovered, and proposed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretensions to judge for themselves, and referred the whole scheme to his direction. He, therefore, took passage in a ship to Suez; and,

when the time came, with great difficulty, prevailed on the princess to enter the vessel. They had a quick and prosperous voyage, and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

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CHAP. XVI.

THEY ENTER CAIRO, AND FIND EVERY MAN HAPPY.

As they approached the city, which filled the strangers with astonishment, “This,” said Imlac to the prince, “is the place where travellers and merchants assemble from all the corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character, and every occupation. Commerce is here honourable: I will act as a merchant, and you shall live as strangers, who have no other end of travel than curiosity; it will soon be observed that we are rich; our reputation will procure us access to all whom we shall desire to know; you will see all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourself, at leisure, to make your CHOICE OF LIFE.”

They now entered the town, stunned by the noise, and offended by the crowds. Instruction had not yet so prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to see themselves pass, undistinguished, along the street, and met, by the lowest of the people, without reverence or notice. The princess could not, at first, bear the thought of being levelled with the vulgar, and, for some days, continued in her chamber, where she was served by her favourite, Pekuah, as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who understood traffick, sold part of the jewels the next day, and hired a house, which he adorned with such magnificence, that he was immediately considered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeness attracted many acquaintance, and his generosity made him courted by many dependants. His table was crowded by men of every nation, who all admired his knowledge, and solicited his favour. His companions, not being able to mix in the conversation, could make no discovery of their ignorance or surprise, and were gradually initiated in the world, as they gained knowledge of the language.

The prince had, by frequent lectures, been taught the use and nature of money; but the ladies could not, for a long time, comprehend what the merchants did with small pieces of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should be received as equivalent to the necessaries of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had any thing uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince, being now able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his CHOICE OF LIFE.

For some time, he thought choice needless, because all appeared, to him, equally happy. Wherever he went he met gaiety and kindness, and heard the song of joy, or the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe, that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence; “and who then,” says he, “will be suffered to be wretched?”

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Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience, till one day, having sat awhile silent, “I know not,” said the prince, “what can be the reason, that I am more unhappy than any of our friends. I see them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court; I live in the crowds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company, as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness.”

“Every man,” said Imlac, “may, by examining his own mind, guess what passes in the minds of others: when you feel that your own gaiety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced, that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it possessed by others, to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself. In the assembly, where you passed the last night, there appeared such sprightliness of air, and volatility of fancy, as might have suited beings of a higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions, inaccessible to care or sorrow; yet, believe me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment, when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny of reflection.”

“This” said the prince, “may be true of others, since it is true of me; yet, whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the CHOICE OF LIFE.”

“The causes of good and evil,” answered Imlac, “are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents, which cannot be foreseen, that he, who would fix his condition upon incontestable reasons of preference, must live and die inquiring and deliberating.”

“But surely,” said Rasselas, “the wise men, to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode of life for themselves, which they thought most likely to make them happy.”

“Very few,” said the poet, “live by choice. Every man is placed in his present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly cooperate; and, therefore, you will rarely meet one, who does not think the lot of his neighbour better than his own.”

“I am pleased to think,” said the prince, “that my birth has given me, at least, one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I have here the world before me; I will review it at leisure: surely happiness is somewhere to be found.”

CHAP. XVII.

THE PRINCE ASSOCIATES WITH YOUNG MEN OF SPIRIT AND GAIETY.

Rasselas rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. “Youth,” cried he, “is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men, whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments.”

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To such societies he was readily admitted, but a few days brought him back, weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images; their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was, at once, wild and mean; they laughed at order and at law, but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

The prince soon concluded, that he should never be happy in a course of life, of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonable being to act without a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. “Happiness,” said he, “must be something solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty.”

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness and courtesy, that he could not leave them, without warning and remonstrance. “My friends,” said he “I have seriously considered our manners and our prospects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest. The first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks, never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable. Let us consider, that youth is of no long duration, and that, in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop, while to stop is in our power: let us live as men who are sometime to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health, only by the maladies which riot has produced.”

They stared awhile, in silence, one upon another, and, at last, drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intentions kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horrour of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity, and pursued his search.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A WISE AND HAPPY MAN.

As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building, which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter: he followed the stream of people, and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage, raised above the rest, who discoursed, with great energy, on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment, and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion,

usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason, their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting; and fancy to a meteor, of bright but transitory lustre, irregular in its motion, and delusive in its direction.

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He then communicated the various precepts given, from time to time, for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief; but walks on calmly through the tumults, or privacies of life, as the sun pursues alike his course through the calm or the stormy sky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents, to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhorted his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience; concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in every one's power.

Rasselas listened to him, with the veneration due to the instructions of a superiour being, and, waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found," said the prince, at his return to Imlac, "a man who can teach all that is necessary to be known; who, from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. He speaks, and attention watches his lips. He reasons, and conviction closes his periods. This man shall be my future guide: I will learn his doctrines, and imitate his life."

"Be not too hasty," said Imlac, "to trust, or to admire the teachers of morality: they discourse, like angels, but they live, like men."

Rasselas, who could not conceive, how any man could reason so forcibly, without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way, by a piece of gold, to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher, in a room half-darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you are come at a time when all human friendship is useless; what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever. My views, my purposes, my hopes are at an end: I am now a lonely being, disunited from society."

"Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised: we know that death is always near, and it should, therefore, always be expected." "Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you then forgot the precepts," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against calamity? Consider, that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are

always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? Of what effect are they now, but to tell me, that my daughter will not be restored?"

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The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away, convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAP. XIX.

A GLIMPSE OF PASTORAL LIFE.

He was still eager upon the same inquiry: and having heard of a hermit, that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, resolved to visit his retreat, and inquire, whether that felicity, which publick life could not afford, was to be found in solitude; and whether a man, whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of shunning evils, or enduring them?

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him, and, after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. “This,” said the poet, “is the life which has been often celebrated for its innocence and quiet; let us pass the heat of the day among the shepherds’ tents, and know, whether all our searches are not to terminate in pastoral simplicity.”

The proposal pleased them, and they induced the shepherds, by small presents and familiar questions, to tell their opinion of their own state: they were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident, that their hearts were cankered with discontent; that they considered themselves, as condemned to labour for the luxury of the rich, and looked up, with stupid malevolence, toward those that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she would never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, and that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more specimens of rustick happiness; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous; and was yet in doubt, whether life had any thing that could be justly preferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. She hoped, that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers, planted by her own hand, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and listen, without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the shade.

CHAP. XX.

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

On the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for shelter. At a small distance, they saw a thick wood, which they no sooner entered,

than they perceived that they were approaching the habitations of men. The shrubs were diligently cut away to open walks, where the shades were darkest; the boughs of opposite trees were artificially interwoven; seats of flowery turf were raised in vacant spaces, and a rivulet, that wantoned along the side of a winding path, had its banks sometimes opened into small basins, and its streams sometimes obstructed by little mounds of stone, heaped together to increase its murmurs.

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They passed slowly through the wood, delighted with such unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other with conjecturing, what, or who, he could be, that, in those rude and unfrequented regions, had leisure and art for such harmless luxury.

As they advanced, they heard the sound of musick, and saw youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and, going still further, beheld a stately palace, built upon a hill, surrounded with woods. The laws of eastern hospitality allowed them to enter, and the master welcomed them, like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was skilful enough in appearances, soon to discern that they were no common guests, and spread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught his attention, and the lofty courtesy of the princess excited his respect. When they offered to depart, he entreated their stay, and was the next day still more unwilling to dismiss them than before. They were easily persuaded to stop, and civility grew up, in time, to freedom and confidence.

The prince now saw all the domesticks cheerful, and all the face of nature smiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope that he should find here what he was seeking; but when he was congratulating the master upon his possessions, he answered, with a sigh: “My condition has, indeed, the appearance of happiness, but appearances are delusive. My prosperity puts my life in danger; the bassa of Egypt is my enemy, incensed only by my wealth and popularity. I have been, hitherto, protected against him by the princes of the country; but, as the favour of the great is uncertain, I know not, how soon my defenders may be persuaded to share the plunder with the bassa. I have sent my treasures into a distant country, and, upon the first alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot in my mansion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted.”

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile; and the princess was so much disturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation, that she retired to her apartment. They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.

CHAP. XXI.

THE HAPPINESS OF SOLITUDE. THE HERMIT’S HISTORY.

They came, on the third day, by the direction of the peasants, to the hermit’s cell: it was a cavern, in the side of a mountain, over-shadowed with palm-trees; at such a distance from the cataract, that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, such as composed the mind to pensive meditation, especially when it was assisted by the wind whistling among the branches. The first rude essay of nature had been so much improved by human labour, that the cave contained several apartments, appropriated to

different uses, and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkness or tempests happened to overtake.

The hermit sat on a bench at the door, to enjoy the coolness of the evening. On one side lay a book, with pens and papers, on the other, mechanical instruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princess observed, that he had not the countenance of a man that had found, or could teach the way to happiness.

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They saluted him with great respect, which he repaid, like a man not unaccustomed to the forms of courts. “My children,” said he, “if you have lost your way, you shall be willingly supplied with such conveniencies, for the night, as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit’s cell.”

They thanked him, and, entering, were pleased with the neatness and regularity of the place. The hermit set flesh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His discourse was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented of her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: “I do not now wonder that your reputation is so far extended; we have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden, in the CHOICE OF LIFE.”

“To him that lives well,” answered the hermit, “every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice, than to remove from all apparent evil.”

“He will remove most certainly from evil,” said the prince, “who shall devote himself to that solitude, which you have recommended by your example.”

“I have, indeed, lived fifteen years in solitude,” said the hermit, “but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised, by degrees, to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries, at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferment of a younger officer, and feeling, that my vigour was beginning to decay, I was resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and, therefore, chose it for my final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all that I was likely to want.

“For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced, like a tempest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbour, being delighted with the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war to stillness and repose. When the pleasure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grow in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that inquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been, for some time, unsettled and distracted; my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me, because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think, that I could not secure myself from vice, but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect, that I was rather impelled by resentment, than led by devotion, into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly, and I lament, that I have lost so much, and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want, likewise, the counsel and conversation of the good. I have been long comparing the evils with the

advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout."

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They heard his resolution with surprise, but, after a short pause, offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure, which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

CHAP. XXII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE, LED ACCORDING TO NATURE.

Rasselas went often to an assembly of learned men, who met, at stated times, to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued, till neither controvertist remembered, upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them; every one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life, which he had so deliberately chosen, and so laudably followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion, that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehemence, pronounced him a hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labour of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion of duty. Others readily allowed, that there was a time, when the claims of the publick were satisfied, and when a man might properly sequester himself, to review his life, and purify his heart. One, who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely, that the hermit would, in a few years, go back to his retreat, and, perhaps, if shame did not restrain, or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world: “For the hope of happiness,” said he “is so strongly impressed, that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of the present state, whatever it may be, we feel, and are forced to confess, the misery; yet, when the same state is again at a distance, imagination paints it as desirable. But the time will surely come, when desire will be no longer our torment, and no man shall be wretched, but by his own fault.”

“This,” said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, “is the present condition of a wise man. The time is already come, when none are wretched, but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle, than to inquire after happiness, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law, with which every heart is originally impressed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire;

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he will receive and reject with equability of temper; and act or suffer, as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other men may amuse themselves with subtile definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wise by easier means; let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove; let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct; they obey their guide, and are happy. Let us, therefore, at length, cease to dispute, and learn to live; throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they, who utter them, with so much pride and pomp, do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim: That deviation from nature is deviation from happiness."

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence. "Sir," said the prince, with great modesty, "as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse: I doubt not the truth of a position, which a man so learned has, so confidently, advanced. Let me only know, what it is to live according to nature."

"When I find young men so humble and so docile," said the philosopher, "I can deny them no information which my studies have enabled me to afford. To live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to cooperate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages whom he should understand less, as he heard him longer. He, therefore, bowed, and was silent, and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up and departed, with the air of a man that had cooperated with the present system.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE PRINCE AND HIS SISTER DIVIDE BETWEEN THEM THE WORK OF OBSERVATION.

Rasselas returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness, he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments, and further inquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He, therefore, discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been, hitherto, frustrated, he might succeed at last.

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“We have, hitherto,” said she, “known but little of the world: we have never yet been either great or mean. In our own country, though we had royalty, we had no power; and, in this, we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestick peace. Imlac favours not our search, lest we should, in time, find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us: you shall try what is to be found in the splendour of courts, and I will range the shades of humbler life. Perhaps command and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford most opportunities of doing good: or, perhaps, what this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune, too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress.”

CHAP. XXIV.

THE PRINCE EXAMINES THE HAPPINESS OF HIGH STATIONS.

Rasselas applauded the design, and appeared, next day, with a splendid retinue at the court of the bassa. He was soon distinguished for his magnificence, and admitted as a prince, whose curiosity had brought him from distant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent conversation with the bassa himself.

He was, at first, inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition, whom all approached with reverence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts, to a whole kingdom. “There can be no pleasure,” said he, “equal to that of feeling, at once, the joy of thousands, all made happy by wise administration. Yet, since by the law of subordination, this sublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is, surely, reasonable to think, that there is some satisfaction more popular and accessible; and that millions can hardly be subjected to the will of a single man, only to fill his particular breast with incommunicable content.”

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no solution of the difficulty. But, as presents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man, who stood high in employment, hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those, who surrounded the bassa, were sent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived, the bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

“What are we now to think of the prerogatives of power?” said Rasselas to his sister: “is it without any efficacy to good? or, is the subordinate degree only dangerous, and the supreme safe and glorious? Is the sultan the only happy man in his dominions? or, is the sultan himself subject to the torments of suspicion, and the dread of enemies?”

In a short time the second bassa was deposed. The sultan, that had advanced him, was murdered by the janizaries, and his successour had other views, and different favourites.

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CHAP. XXV.

THE PRINCESS PURSUES HER INQUIRY WITH MORE DILIGENCE THAN SUCCESS.

The princess, in the mean time, insinuated herself into many families; for there are few doors, through which liberality, joined with good-humour, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houses were airy and cheerful, but Nekayah had been too long accustomed to the conversation of Imlac and her brother, to be much pleased with childish levity, and prattle, which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wishes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleasures, poor as they were, could not be preserved pure, but were imbittered by petty competitions, and worthless emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which solicitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers, like themselves, and many fancied that they were in love, when, in truth, they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on sense or virtue, and, therefore, seldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was transient; every thing floated in their mind, unconnected with the past or future; so that one desire easily gave way to another, as a second stone, cast into the water, effaces and confounds the circles of the first.

With these girls she played, as with inoffensive animals, and found them proud of her countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpose was to examine more deeply, and her affability easily persuaded the hearts that were swelling with sorrow, to discharge their secrets in her ear: and those, whom hope flattered, or prosperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleasures.

The princess and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private summer house, on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that flowed before her. “Answer,” said she, “great father of waters, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me, if thou waterest, through all thy course, a single habitation from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint?”

“You are then,” said Rasselas, “not more successful in private houses, than I have been in courts.” “I have, since the last partition of our provinces,” said the princess, “enabled myself to enter familiarly into many families, where there was the fairest show of prosperity and peace, and know not one house that is not haunted by some fury, that destroys their quiet.

“I did not seek ease among the poor, because I concluded that, there, it could not be found. But I saw many poor, whom I had supposed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances; it is often concealed in splendour, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest; they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow.

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“This, however, was an evil, which, though frequent, I saw with less pain, because I could relieve it. Yet some have refused my bounties; more offended with my quickness to detect their wants, than pleased with my readiness to succour them: and others, whose exigencies compelled them to admit my kindness, have never been able to forgive their benefactress. Many, however, have been sincerely grateful, without the ostentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favours.”

CHAP. XXVI.

THE PRINCESS CONTINUES HER REMARKS UPON PRIVATE LIFE.

Nekayah, perceiving her brother’s attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

“In families, where there is, or is not, poverty, there is commonly discord: if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a great family, a family, likewise, is a little kingdom, torn with factions, and exposed to revolutions. An unpractised observer expects the love of parents and children to be constant and equal; but this kindness seldom continues beyond the years of infancy; in a short time the children become rivals to their parents. Benefits are allayed by reproaches, and gratitude debased by envy.

“Parents and children seldom act in concert: each child endeavours to appropriate the esteem, or fondness of the parents; and the parents, with yet less temptation, betray each other to their children; thus some place their confidence in the father, and some in the mother, and, by degrees, the house is filled with artifices and feuds.

“The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite, by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and experience, without crime or folly on either side. The colours of life, in youth and age, appear different, as the face of nature, in spring and winter. And how can children credit the assertions of parents, which their own eyes show them to be false?

“Few parents act in such a manner, as much to enforce their maxims, by the credit of their lives. The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression: the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigour, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man deifies prudence: the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man, who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and, therefore, acts with openness and candour: but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and, too often, allured to practise it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age. Thus parents and children, for the greatest part, live on to love less and less: and, if those whom nature has thus closely united are the torments of each other, where shall we look for tenderness and consolation?”

“Surely,” said the prince, “you must have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance: I am unwilling to believe, that the most tender of all relations is thus impeded, in its effects, by natural necessity.”

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“Domestick discord,” answered she, “is not inevitably and fatally necessary; but yet it is not easily avoided. We seldom see that a whole family is virtuous: the good and evil cannot well agree: and the evil can yet less agree with one another: even the virtuous fall, sometimes, to variance, when their virtues are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general, those parents have most reverence who most deserve it: for he that lives well cannot be despised.

“Many other evils infest private life. Some are the slaves of servants, whom they have trusted with their affairs. Some are kept in continual anxiety, by the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot please, and dare not offend. Some husbands are imperious, and some wives perverse: and, as it is always more easy to do evil than good, though the wisdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miserable.”

“If such be the general effect of marriage,” said the prince, “I shall, for the future, think it dangerous to connect my interest with that of another, lest I should be unhappy by my partner’s fault.”

“I have met,” said the princess, “with many who live single for that reason; but I never found that their prudence ought to raise envy. They dream away their time without friendship, without fondness, and are driven to rid themselves of the day, for which they have no use, by childish amusements, or vitious delights. They act as beings under the constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with censure. They are peevish at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their business and their pleasure to disturb that society, which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting sympathy; to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude: it is not retreat, but exclusion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures.”

“What then is to be done?” said Rasselas; “the more we inquire, the less we can resolve. Surely he is most likely to please himself, that has no other inclination to regard.”

CHAP. XXVII.

DISQUISITION UPON GREATNESS.

The conversation had a short pause. The prince, having considered his sister’s observations, told her that she had surveyed life with prejudice, and supposed misery where she did not find it. “Your narrative,” says he, “throws yet a darker gloom upon the prospects of futurity: the predictions of Imlac were but faint sketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced, that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur, or of power: that her presence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conquest. It

is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity, or miscarriage from chance; whoever has many to please or to govern, must use the ministry of many agents, some of whom will be wicked, and some ignorant; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one, he will offend another: those that are not favoured will think themselves injured; and, since favours can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

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“The discontent,” said the princess, “which is thus unreasonable, I hope, that I shall always have spirit to despise, and you power to repress.”

“Discontent,” answered Rasselas, “will not always be without reason under the most just and vigilant administration of publick affairs. None, however attentive, can always discover that merit, which indigence or faction may happen to obscure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet, he that sees inferiour desert advanced above him, will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice; and, indeed, it can scarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to persist, for ever, in the fixed and inexorable justice of distribution; he will sometimes indulge his own affections, and sometimes those of his favourites; he will permit some to please him who can never serve him; he will discover in those whom he loves, qualities which, in reality, they do not possess; and to those, from whom he receives pleasure, he will, in his turn, endeavour to give it. Thus will recommendations sometimes prevail, which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

“He that has much to do will do something wrong, and, of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and, if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet, when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.

“The highest stations cannot, therefore, hope to be the abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to seats of humble privacy, and placid obscurity. For what can hinder the satisfaction, or intercept the expectations of him, whose abilities are adequate to his employments; who sees, with his own eyes, the whole circuit of his influence; who chooses, by his own knowledge, all whom he trusts; and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do, but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous and to be happy.”

“Whether perfect happiness would be procured by perfect goodness,” said Nekayah, “this world will never afford an opportunity of deciding. But this, at least, may be maintained, that we do not always find visible happiness, in proportion to visible virtue. All natural, and almost all political evils, are incident alike to the bad and good; they are confounded in the misery of a famine, and not much distinguished in the fury of a faction; they sink together in a tempest, and are driven together from their country by invaders. All that virtue can afford is quietness of conscience, a steady prospect of a happier state; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience; but remember, that patience must suppose pain.

CHAP. XXVIII.

RASSELAS AND NEKAYAH CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION.

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“Dear princess,” said Rasselas, “you fall into the common errours of exaggeratory declamation, by producing, in a familiar disquisition, examples of national calamities, and scenes of extensive misery, which are found in books, rather than in the world, and which, as they are horrid, are ordained to be rare. Let us not imagine evils which we do not feel, nor injure life by misrepresentations; I cannot bear that querulous eloquence, which threatens every city with a siege, like that of Jerusalem, that makes famine attend on every flight of locusts, and suspends pestilence on the wing of every blast that issues from the south.

“On necessary and inevitable evils, which overwhelm kingdoms at once, all disputation is vain: when they happen they must be endured. But it is evident, that these bursts of universal distress are more dreaded than felt; thousands, and ten thousands, flourish in youth, and wither in age, without the knowledge of any other than domestick evils, and share the same pleasures and vexations, whether their kings are mild or cruel, whether the armies of their country pursue their enemies, or retreat before them. While courts are disturbed with intestine competitions, and ambassadours are negotiating in foreign countries, the smith still plies his anvil, and the husbandman drives his plough forward; the necessaries of life are required and obtained; and the successive business of the seasons continues to make its wonted revolutions.

“Let us cease to consider what, perhaps, may never happen, and what, when it shall happen, will laugh at human speculation. We will not endeavour to modify the motions of the elements, or to fix the destiny of kingdoms. It is our business to consider what beings, like us, may perform; each labouring for his own happiness, by promoting, within his circle, however narrow, the happiness of others.

“Marriage is evidently the dictate of nature; men and women are made to be companions of each other; and, therefore, I cannot be persuaded, but that marriage is one of the means of happiness.”

“I know not,” said the princess, “whether marriage be more than one of the innumerable modes of human misery. When I see, and reckon, the various forms of connubial infelicity, the unexpected causes of lasting discord, the diversities of temper, the oppositions of opinion, the rude collisions of contrary desire, where both are urged by violent impulses, the obstinate contests of disagreeable virtues, where both are supported by consciousness of good intention, I am, sometimes, disposed to think, with the severer casuists of most nations, that marriage is rather permitted than approved, and that none, but by the instigation of a passion, too much indulged, entangle themselves with indissoluble compacts.”

“You seem to forget,” replied Rasselas, “that you have, even now, represented celibacy, as less happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot both be worst. Thus it happens, when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually destroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth.”

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“I did not expect,” answered the princess, “to hear that imputed to falsehood, which is the consequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare, with exactness, objects, vast in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we see, or conceive, the whole at once, we readily note the discriminations, and decide the preference: but of two systems, of which neither can be surveyed, by any human being, in its full compass of magnitude, and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder, that, judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other, as either presses on my memory or fancy? We differ from ourselves, just as we differ from each other, when we see only part of the question, as in the multifarious relations of politicks and morality; but when we perceive the whole at once, as in numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and none ever varies his opinion.”

“Let us not add,” said the prince, “to the other evils of life, the bitterness of controversy, nor endeavour to vie with each other in subtilties of argument. We are employed in a search, of which both are equally to enjoy the success, or suffer by the miscarriage. It is, therefore, fit that we assist each other. You, surely, conclude too hastily from the infelicity of marriage against its institution: will not the misery of life prove equally, that life cannot be the gift of heaven? The world must be peopled by marriage, or peopled without it.”

“How the world is to be peopled,” returned Nekayah, “is not my care, and needs not be yours. I see no danger that the present generation should omit to leave successours behind them: we are not now inquiring for the world, but for ourselves.”

CHAP. XXIX.

THE DEBATE ON MARRIAGE CONTINUED.

“The good of the whole,” says Rasselas, “is the same with the good of all its parts. If marriage be best for mankind, it must be evidently best for individuals, or a permanent and necessary duty must be the cause of evil, and some must be inevitably sacrificed to the convenience of others. In the estimate, which you have made of the two states, it appears, that the incommodities of a single life are, in a great measure, necessary and certain, but those of the conjugal state, accidental and avoidable.

“I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cause of general complaint. What can be expected, but disappointment and repentance, from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of desire, without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment?

“Such is the common process of marriage. A youth and maiden, meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and

dream of one another. Having little to divert attention, or diversify thought, they find themselves uneasy, when they are apart, and, therefore, conclude that they shall be happy together. They marry, and discover what nothing but voluntary blindness before had concealed; they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

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“From those early marriages proceeds, likewise, the rivalry of parents and children; the son is eager to enjoy the world, before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room, at once, for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom, before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other.

“Surely all these evils may be avoided, by that deliberation and delay, which prudence prescribes to irrevocable choice. In the variety and jollity of youthful pleasures, life may be well enough supported, without the help of a partner. Longer time will increase experience, and wider views will allow better opportunities of inquiry and selection: one advantage, at least, will be certain; the parents will be visibly older than their children.”

“What reason cannot collect,” said Nekayah, “and what experiment has not yet taught, can be known only from the report of others. I have been told, that late marriages are not eminently happy. This is a question too important to be neglected, and I have often proposed it to those, whose accuracy of remark, and comprehensiveness of knowledge, made their suffrages worthy of regard. They have generally determined, that it is dangerous for a man and woman to suspend their fate upon each other, at a time, when opinions are fixed, and habits are established; when friendships have been contracted on both sides; when life has been planned into method, and the mind has long enjoyed the contemplation of its own prospects.

“It is scarcely possible that two, travelling through the world, under the conduct of chance, should have been both directed to the same path, and it will not often happen, that either will quit the track which custom has made pleasing. When the desultory levity of youth has settled into regularity, it is soon succeeded by pride, ashamed to yield, or obstinacy, delighting to contend. And, even though mutual esteem produces mutual desire to please, time itself, as it modifies unchangeably the external mien, determines, likewise, the direction of the passions, and gives an inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long customs are not easily broken: he that attempts to change the course of his own life, very often labours in vain; and how shall we do that for others, which we are seldom able to do for ourselves!”

“But, surely,” interposed the prince, “you suppose the chief motive of choice forgotten or neglected. Whenever I shall seek a wife, it shall be my first question, whether she be willing to be led by reason.”

“Thus it is,” said Nekayah, “that philosophers are deceived. There are a thousand familiar disputes, which reason can never decide; questions that elude investigation, and make logick ridiculous; cases where something must be done, and where little can be said. Consider the state of mankind, and inquire how few can be supposed to act, upon any occasions, whether small or great, with all the reasons of action present to their minds. Wretched would be the pair, above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason, every morning, all the minute detail of a domestick day.

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“Those who marry at an advanced age, will, probably, escape the encroachments of their children; but, in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian’s mercy; or, if that should not happen, they must, at least, go out of the world, before they see those whom they love best, either wise or great.

“From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope; and they lose, without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilitudes by long cohabitation, as soft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their surfaces to each other.

“I believe it will be found, that those who marry late, are best pleased with their children, and those who marry early with their partners.”

“The union of these two affections,” said Rasselas, “would produce all that could be wished. Perhaps there is a time, when marriage might unite them, a time neither too early for the father, nor too late for the husband.”

“Every hour,” answered the princess, “confirms my prejudice in favour of the position, so often uttered by the mouth of Imlac: ’That nature sets her gifts on the right hand and on the left.’ Those conditions, which flatter hope and attract desire, are so constituted, that, as we approach one, we recede from another. There are goods so opposed, that we cannot seize both, but, by too much prudence, may pass between them, at too great a distance to reach either. This is often the fate of long consideration; he does nothing, who endeavours to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. Of the blessings set before you make your choice, and be content. No man can taste the fruits of autumn, while he is delighting his scent with the flowers of the spring; no man can, at the same time, fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile.”

CHAP. XXX.

IMLAC ENTERS, AND CHANGES THE CONVERSATION.

Here Imlac entered, and interrupted them. “Imlac,” said Rasselas, “I have been taking from the princess the dismal history of private life, and am almost discouraged from further search.”

“It seems to me,” said Imlac, “that, while you are making the choice of life, you neglect to live. You wander about a single city, which, however large and diversified, can now afford few novelties, and forget that you are in a country, famous among the earliest monarchies for the power and wisdom of its inhabitants; a country, where the sciences

first dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which the arts cannot be traced of civil society or domestick life.

“The old Egyptians have left behind them monuments of industry and power, before which all European magnificence is confessed to fade away. The ruins of their architecture are the schools of modern builders; and, from the wonders which time has spared, we may conjecture, though uncertainly, what it has destroyed.”

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“My curiosity,” said Rasselas, “does not very strongly lead me to survey piles of stone, or mounds of earth; my business is with man. I came hither not to measure fragments of temples, or trace choked aqueducts, but to look upon the various scenes of the present world.”

“The things that are now before us,” said the princess, “require attention, and deserve it. What have I to do with the heroes or the monuments of ancient times? with times which never can return, and heroes, whose form of life was different, from all that the present condition of mankind requires or allows?”

“To know any thing,” returned the poet, “we must know its effects; to see men, we must see their works, that we may learn what reason has dictated, or passion has incited, and find what are the most powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the present we must oppose it to the past; for all judgment is comparative, and of the future nothing can be known. The truth is, that no mind is much employed upon the present: recollection and anticipation fill up almost all our moments. Our passions are joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. Of joy and grief, the past is the object, and the future of hope and fear; even love and hatred respect the past, for the cause must have been before the effect.

“The present state of things is the consequence of the former, and it is natural to inquire, what were the sources of the good that we enjoy, or the evil that we suffer. If we act only for ourselves, to neglect the study of history is not prudent: if we are intrusted with the care of others, it is not just. Ignorance, when it is voluntary, is criminal; and he may properly be charged with evil, who refused to learn how he might prevent it.

“There is no part of history so generally useful, as that which relates the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings, the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are peculiarly the business of princes, the useful or elegant arts are not to be neglected; those who have kingdoms to govern, have understandings to cultivate.

“Example is always more efficacious than precept. A soldier is formed in war, and a painter must copy pictures. In this, contemplative life has the advantage: great actions are seldom seen, but the labours of art are always at hand, for those who desire to know what art has been able to perform.

“When the eye or the imagination is struck with an uncommon work, the next transition of an active mind is to the means by which it was performed. Here begins the true use of such contemplation; we enlarge our comprehension by new ideas, and, perhaps, recover some art lost to mankind, or learn what is less perfectly known in our own

country. At least, we compare our own with former times, and either rejoice at our improvements, or, what is the first motion towards good, discover our defects."

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“I am willing,” said the prince, “to see all that can deserve my search.” “And I,” said the princess, “shall rejoice to learn something of the manners of antiquity.”

“The most pompous monument of Egyptian greatness, and one of the most bulky works of manual industry,” said Imlac, “are the pyramids; fabricks raised, before the time of history, and of which the earliest narratives afford us only uncertain traditions. Of these, the greatest is still standing, very little injured by time.”

“Let us visit them to-morrow,” said Nekayah. “I have often heard of the pyramids, and shall not rest, till I have seen them, within and without, with my own eyes.”

CHAP. XXXI.

THEY VISIT THE PYRAMIDS.

The resolution being thus taken, they set out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being resolved to stay among the pyramids, till their curiosity was fully satisfied. They travelled gently, turned aside to every thing remarkable, stopped, from time to time, and conversed with the inhabitants, and observed the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and cultivated nature.

When they came to the great pyramid, they were astonished at the extent of the base, and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidal form was chosen for a fabrick, intended to coextend its duration with that of the world: he showed, that its gradual diminution gave it such stability, as defeated all the common attacks of the elements, and could scarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themselves, the least resistible of natural violence. A concussion that should shatter the pyramid, would threaten the dissolution of the continent.

They measured all its dimensions, and pitched their tents at its foot. Next day they prepared to enter its interiour apartments, and, having hired the common guides, climbed up to the first passage, when the favourite of the princess, looking into the cavity, stepped back and trembled. “Pekuah,” said the princess, “of what art thou afraid?” “Of the narrow entrance,” answered the lady, “and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not enter a place which must, surely, be inhabited by unquiet souls. The original possessours of these dreadful vaults will start up before us, and, perhaps, shut us in for ever[a].” She spoke, and threw her arms round the neck of her mistress.

“If all your fear be of apparitions,” said the prince, “I will promise you safety: there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be seen no more.”

“That the dead are seen no more,” said Imlac, “I will not undertake to maintain, against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and

believed. This opinion, which perhaps, prevails, as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth: those that never heard of one another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence; and some, who deny it with their tongues, confess it by their fears".[b]

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“Yet I do not mean to add new terrours to those which have already seized upon Pekuah. There can be no reason, why spectres should haunt the pyramid more than other places, or why they should have power or will to hurt innocence and purity. Our entrance is no violation of their privileges; we can take nothing from them, how then can we offend them?”

“My dear Pekuah,” said the princess, “I will always go before you, and Imlac shall follow you. Remember that you are the companion of the princess of Abissinia.”

“If the princess is pleased that her servant should die,” returned the lady, “let her command some death less dreadful than enclosure in this horrid cavern. You know, I dare not disobey you: I must go, if you command me; but, if I once enter, I never shall come back.”

The princess saw that her fear was too strong for expostulation or reproof, and, embracing her, told her, that she should stay in the tent, till their return. Pekuah was yet not satisfied, but entreated the princess not to pursue so dreadful a purpose, as that of entering the rececess of the pyramid. “Though I cannot teach courage,” said Nekayah, “I must not learn cowardice; nor leave, at last, undone what I came hither only to do.”

[a] It may not be unacceptable to our readers, to quote, in this place, a stanza, from an Ode to Horror in the Student, ii. 313. It alludes to the story of a French gentleman, who, going into the catacombs, not far from Cairo, with some Arab guides, was there robbed by them, and left; a huge stone being placed over the entrance.

What felt the Gallic, traveller,
When far in Arab desert, drear,
He found within the catacomb,
Alive, the terrors of a tomb?
While many a mummy, through the shade,
In hieroglyphic stole arrayed,
Seem’d to uprear the mystic head,
And trace the gloom with ghostly tread;
Thou heard’st him pour the stifled groan,
Horror! his soul was all thy own! ED.

[b] See Hibbert’s Philosophy of Apparitions. It is to be regretted, that Coleridge has never yet gratified the wish he professed to feel, in the first volume of his Friend, p. 246, to devote an entire work to the subject of dreams, visions, ghosts, witchcraft, &c; in it we should have had the satisfaction of tracing the workings of a most vivid imagination, analyzed by the most discriminating judgment. See Barrow’s sermon on the being of God, proved from supernatural effects. We need scarcely request the reader to bear in mind, that

Barrow was a mathematician, and one of the most severe of reasoners.—ED.

CHAP. XXXII.

THEY ENTER THE PYRAMID.

Pekuah descended to the tents, and the rest entered the pyramid: they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest, in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been reposited. They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers, to rest awhile before they attempted to return.

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“We have now,” said Imlac, “gratified our minds with an exact view of the greatest work of man, except the wall of China.

“Of the wall it is very easy to assign the motive. It secured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incursions of barbarians, whose unskilfulness in arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who, from time to time, poured in upon the habitations of peaceful commerce, as vultures descend upon domestick fowl. Their celerity and fierceness, made the wall necessary, and their ignorance made it efficacious.

“But, for the pyramids, no reason has ever been given adequate to the cost and labour of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been reposited, at far less expense, with equal security. It seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination, which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy, must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use, till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

“I consider this mighty structure, as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king, whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another. Whoever thou art, that, not content with a moderate condition, imaginest happiness in royal magnificence, and dreamest that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty, with perpetual gratifications, survey the pyramids, and confess thy folly!”

CHAP. XXXIII.

THE PRINCESS MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED MISFORTUNE.

They rose up, and returned through the cavity, at which they had entered, and the princess prepared for her favourite a long narrative of dark labyrinths, and costly rooms, and of the different impressions, which the varieties of the way had made upon her. But, when they came to their train, they found every one silent and dejected: the men discovered shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in the tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. “You had scarcely entered into the pyramid,” said one of the attendants, “when a troop of Arabs rushed upon us; we were too few to resist them, and too slow to escape. They were

about to search the tents, set us on our camels, and drive us along before them, when the approach of some Turkish horsemen put them to flight; but they seized the lady Pekuah with her two maids, and carried them away: the Turks are now pursuing them by our instigation, but, I fear, they will not be able to overtake them."

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The princess was overpowered with surprise and grief. Rasselas, in the first heat of his resentment, ordered his servants to follow him, and prepared to pursue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. “Sir,” said Imlac, “what can you hope from violence or valour? the Arabs are mounted on horses trained to battle and retreat; we have only beasts of burden. By leaving our present station we may lose the princess, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah.”

In a short time, the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rasselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion, that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for, perhaps, they would have killed their captives, rather than have resigned them.

CHAP. XXXIV.

THEY RETURN TO CAIRO WITHOUT PEKUAH.

There was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. They returned to Cairo, repenting of their curiosity, censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness, which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients, by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something for her recovery, though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her, by telling her, that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happiness in the world, for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped, that some good would befall her, wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend, who might supply her place.

The princess made them no answer, and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favourite was lost.

Next day the prince presented, to the bassa, a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The bassa threatened to punish the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them, nor, indeed, could any account or description be given, by which he might direct the pursuit.

It soon appeared, that nothing would be done by authority. Governours, being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set themselves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently forget the request, when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavoured to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular

correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey, and came back no more; some were liberally paid for accounts which a few days discovered to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While she was doing something, she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested; when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was despatched to a different quarter.

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Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes, which they had endeavoured to raise in each other, grew more languid, and the princess, when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance, by which she permitted her favourite to stay behind her. “Had not my fondness,” said she, “lessened my authority, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrours. She ought to have feared me more than spectres. A severe look would have overpowered her; a peremptory command would have compelled obedience. Why did foolish indulgence prevail upon me? Why did I not speak, and refuse to hear?”

“Great princess,” said Imlac, “do not reproach yourself for your virtue, or consider that as blamable by which evil has accidentally been caused. Your tenderness for the timidity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we commit the event to him, by whose laws our actions are governed, and who will suffer none to be finally punished for obedience. When, in prospect of some good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules prescribed us, we withdraw from the direction of superiour wisdom, and take all consequences upon ourselves. Man cannot so far know the connexion of causes and events, as that he may venture to do wrong, in order to do right. When we pursue our end by lawful means, we may always console our miscarriage by the hope of future recompense. When we consult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the settled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by success, because we cannot escape the consciousness of our fault; but, if we miscarry, the disappointment is irremediably imbittered. How comfortless is the sorrow of him, who feels, at once, the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity, which guilt has brought upon him?

“Consider, princess, what would have been your condition, if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and, being compelled to stay in the tents, had been carried away; or how would you have borne the thought, if you had forced her into the pyramid, and she had died before you in agonies of terrour?”

“Had either happened,” said Nekayah, “I could not have endured life till now: I should have been tortured to madness by the remembrance of such cruelty, or must have pined away in abhorrence of myself.”

“This, at least,” said Imlac, “is the present reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky consequence can oblige us to repent it.”

CHAP. XXXV.

THE PRINCESS LANGUISHES FOR WANT OF PEKUAH.

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Nekayah, being thus reconciled to herself, found, that no evil is insupportable, but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was, from that time, delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat, from morning to evening, recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah; treasured up, with care, every trifle on which Pekuah had set an accidental value, and which might recall to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her, whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end, than to conjecture, on any occasion, what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women, by whom she was attended, knew nothing of her real condition, and, therefore, she could not talk to them, but with caution and reserve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great care to collect notions which she had no convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavoured first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them, and procured masters, to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambition of excellence. And her mind, though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was, every morning, earnestly enjoined to renew his inquiries, and was asked, every night, whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till, not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. “You are not,” said she, “to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose, that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsuccessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence; I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud, by adventitious grief, the short gleams of gaiety which life allows us? or who, that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another?

“The time is at hand, when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah: my search after happiness is now at an end. I am resolved to retire from the world, with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude, without any other care than to compose my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a constant succession of innocent occupations, till, with a mind purified from all earthly desires, I shall enter into that state, to which all are hastening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendship of Pekuah.”

“Do not entangle your mind,” said Imlac, “by irrevocable determinations, nor increase the burden of life by a voluntary accumulation of misery: the weariness of retirement will continue or increase, when the loss of Pekuah is forgotten. That you have been deprived of one pleasure, is no very good reason for rejection of the rest.”

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“Since Pekuah was taken from me,” said the princess, “I have no pleasure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or trust has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happiness. We may, perhaps, allow that what satisfaction this world can afford, must arise from the conjunction of wealth, knowledge, and goodness. Wealth is nothing, but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing, but as it is communicated: they must, therefore, be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them? Goodness affords the only comfort, which can be enjoyed without a partner, and goodness may be practised in retirement.”

“How far solitude may admit goodness, or advance it, I shall not,” replied Imlac, “dispute at present. Remember the confession of the pious hermit. You will wish to return into the world, when the image of your companion has left your thoughts.” “That time,” said Nekayah, “will never come. The generous frankness, the modest obsequiousness, and the faithful secrecy of my dear Pekuah, will always be more missed, as I shall live longer to see vice and folly.”

“The state of a mind, oppressed with a sudden calamity,” said Imlac, “is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new-created earth, who, when the first night came upon them, supposed that day would never return. When the clouds of sorrow gather over us, we see nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be dispelled; yet a new day succeeded to the night, and sorrow is never long without a dawn of ease. But they who restrain themselves from receiving comfort, do as the savages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds, like our bodies, are in continual flux; something is hourly lost, and something acquired. To lose much, at once, is inconvenient to either, but, while the vital powers remain uninjured, nature will find the means of reparation. Distance has the same effect on the mind, as on the eye, and, while we glide along the stream of time, whatever we leave behind us, is always lessening, and that which we approach increasing in magnitude. Do not suffer life to stagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion: commit yourself again to the current of the world; Pekuah will vanish by degrees; you will meet, in your way, some other favourite, or learn to diffuse yourself in general conversation.”

“At least,” said the prince, “do not despair before all remedies have been tried; the inquiry after the unfortunate lady is still continued, and shall be carried on with yet greater diligence, on condition that you will promise to wait a year for the event, without any unalterable resolution.”

Nekayah thought this a reasonable demand, and made the promise to her brother, who had been advised, by Imlac, to require it. Imlac had, indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah, but he supposed, that, if he could secure the interval of a year, the princess would be then in no danger of a cloister.

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CHAP. XXXVI.

PEKUAH IS STILL REMEMBERED. THE PROGRESS OF SORROW.

Nekayah, seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favourite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began, imperceptibly, to return to common cares, and common pleasures. She rejoiced, without her own consent, at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself, with indignation, in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her, whom yet she resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and, for some weeks, retired constantly, at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen, and her countenance clouded. By degrees, she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to less occasions; sometimes forgot what she was, indeed, afraid to remember, and, at last, wholly released herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was yet not diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She, therefore, solicited Imlac never to desist from inquiry, and to leave no art of intelligence untried, that, at least, she might have the comfort of knowing, that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. “Yet, what,” said she, “is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such, that happiness itself is the cause of misery? Why should we endeavour to attain that, of which the possession cannot be secured? I shall, henceforward, fear to yield my heart to excellence, however bright, or to fondness, however tender, lest I should lose again what I have lost in Pekuah.”

CHAP. XXXVII.

THE PRINCESS HEARS NEWS OF PEKUAH.

In seven months, one of the messengers, who had been sent away, upon the day when the promise was drawn from the princess, returned, after many unsuccessful rambles, from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hands of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle, or fortress, on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her, with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in ecstasies when she heard that her favourite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying, for a moment, Pekuah’s happiness or her own, but entreated her brother to

send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac, being consulted, was not very confident of the veracity of the relater, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain, at once, the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab, by going into his district, and could not expect that the rover would so much expose himself as to come into the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the bassa.

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It is difficult to negotiate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose, that Pekuah should be conducted, by ten horsemen, to the monastery of St. Anthony, which is situated in the deserts of upper Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransome should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery; and, when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desirous to go with them; but neither his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality, with great exactness, to those who put themselves into his power, and, in a few days, brought Pekuah, with her maids, by easy journeys, to the place appointed, where, receiving the stipulated price, he restored her, with great respect, to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo, beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favourite embraced each other with transport, too violent to be expressed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderness in secret, and exchange professions of kindness and gratitude. After a few hours, they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the presence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the history of her adventures.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE LADY PEKUAH.

"At what time, and in what manner I was forced away," said Pekuah, "your servants have told you. The suddenness of the event struck me with surprise, and I was, at first, rather stupified, than agitated with any passion of either fear or sorrow. My confusion was increased by the speed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it seemed, soon despaired to overtake us, or were afraid of those whom they made a show of menacing.

"When the Arabs saw themselves out of danger, they slackened their course, and, as I was less harassed by external violence, I began to feel more uneasiness in my mind. After some time, we stopped near a spring, shaded with trees, in a pleasant meadow, where we were set upon the ground, and offered such refreshments, as our masters were partaking. I was suffered to sit, with my maids, apart from the rest, and none attempted to comfort or insult us. Here I first began to feel the full weight of my misery. The girls sat weeping in silence, and, from time to time, looked on me for succour. I knew not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and savages, and had no reason to suppose, that their pity was more than their justice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardour of desire, or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kissed my maids, and endeavoured to pacify them, by remarking,

that we were yet treated with decency, and that, since we were now carried beyond pursuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

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“When we were to be set again on horseback, my maids clung round me, and refused to be parted, but I commanded them not to irritate those who had us in their power. We travelled, the remaining part of the day, through an unfrequented and pathless country, and came, by moonlight, to the side of a hill, where the rest of the troop was stationed. Their tents were pitched, and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed, as a man much beloved by his dependants.

“We were received into a large tent, where we found women, who had attended their husbands in the expedition. They set before us the supper, which they had provided, and I ate rather to encourage my maids than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away, they spread the carpets for repose. I was weary, and hoped to find, in sleep, that remission of distress which nature seldom denies. Ordering myself, therefore, to be undressed, I observed that the women looked submissively attended. When my upper vest was taken off, they were, apparently, struck with the splendour of my clothes, and one of them timorously laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and, in a short time, came back with another woman, who seemed to be of higher rank and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the usual act of reverence, and, taking me by the hand, placed me in a smaller tent, spread with finer carpets, where I spent the night quietly with my maids.

“In the morning, as I was sitting on the grass, the chief of the troop came towards me. I rose up to receive him, and he bowed with great respect. ‘Illustrious lady,’ said he, ’my fortune is better than I had presumed to hope; I am told, by my women, that I have a princess in my camp.’ ‘Sir,’ answered I, ’your women have deceived themselves and you; I am not a princess, but an unhappy stranger, who intended soon to have left this country, in which I am now to be imprisoned for ever.’ ‘Whoever, or whencesoever, you are,’ returned the Arab, ’your dress, and that of your servants, show your rank to be high, and your wealth to be great. Why should you, who can so easily procure your ransome, think yourself in danger of perpetual captivity? The purpose of my incursions is to increase my riches, or, more properly, to gather tribute. The sons of Ishmael are the natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent, which is usurped by late invaders, and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take, by the sword, what is denied to justice. The violence of war admits no distinction: the lance that is lifted at guilt and power, will, sometimes, fall on innocence and gentleness.’

“‘How little,’ said I, ’did I expect that yesterday it should have fallen upon me!’

“‘Misfortunes,’ answered the Arab, ’should always be expected. If the eye of hostility could learn reverence or pity, excellence, like yours, had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction spread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be disconsolate: I am not one of the lawless and cruel rovers of the desert; I know the rules of civil life: I will fix your ransome, give a passport to your messenger, and perform my stipulation, with nice punctuality.’

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“You will easily believe, that I was pleased with his courtesy: and, finding, that his predominant passion was desire of money, I began now to think my danger less, for I knew that no sum would be thought too great for the release of Pekuah. I told him, that he should have no reason to charge me with ingratitude, if I was used with kindness, and that any ransome, which could be expected for a maid of common rank, would be paid; but that he must not persist to rate me as a princess. He said he would consider what he should demand, and then, smiling, bowed and retired.

“Soon after the women came about me, each contending to be more officious than the other, and my maids, themselves, were served with reverence. We travelled onwards by short journeys. On the fourth day the chief told me, that my ransome must be two hundred ounces of gold; which I not only promised him, but told him, that I would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honourably treated.

“I never knew the power of gold before. From that time, I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer, or shorter, as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I chose to rest. We now had camels, and other conveniencies for travel; my own women were always at my side, and I amused myself with observing the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices, with which these deserted countries appear to have been, in some distant age, lavishly embellished.

“The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the stars, or the compass, and had marked, in his erratick expeditions, such places as are most worthy the notice of a passenger. He observed to me, that buildings are always best preserved in places little frequented, and difficult of access: for, when once a country declines from its primitive splendour, the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls supply stones more easily than quarries, and palaces and temples will be demolished, to make stables of granite, and cottages of porphyry.

CHAP. XXXIX.

THE ADVENTURES OF PEKUAH CONTINUED.

“We wandered about, in this manner, for some weeks, whether, as our chief pretended, for my gratification, or, as I rather suspected, for some convenience of his own. I endeavoured to appear contented, where sullenness and resentment would have been of no use, and that endeavour conduced much to the calmness of my mind; but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amusements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their mistress, set their minds at ease, from the time when they saw me treated with respect, and gave themselves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue, without solicitude or sorrow. I was pleased with their pleasure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had lost much of its terrour, since I found that the Arab ranged the country merely to get

riches. Avarice is an uniform and tractable vice: other intellectual distempers are different in different constitutions of mind; that which sooths the pride of one, will offend the pride of another; but to the favour of the covetous, there is a ready way: bring money, and nothing is denied.

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“At last we came to the dwelling of our chief, a strong and spacious house, built with stone, in an island of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropick. ‘Lady,’ said the Arab, ’you shall rest, after your journey, a few weeks, in this place, where you are to consider yourself as sovereign. My occupation is war; I have, therefore, chosen this obscure residence, from which I can issue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpursued. You may now repose in security: here are few pleasures, but here is no danger.’ He then led me into the inner apartments, and seating me on the richest couch, bowed to the ground. His women, who considered me as a rival, looked on me with malignity; but, being soon informed that I was a great lady, detained only for my ransome, they began to vie with each other in obsequiousness and reverence.

“Being again comforted with new assurances of speedy liberty, I was, for some days, diverted from impatience by the novelty of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great distance, and afforded a view of many windings of the stream. In the day, I wandered from one place to another, as the course of the sun varied the splendour of the prospect, and saw many things which I had never seen before. The crocodiles and river-horses, are common in this unpeopled region, and I often looked upon them with terrour, though I knew that they could not hurt me. For some time I expected to see mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have stationed in the Nile, but no such beings ever appeared, and the Arab, when I inquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

“At night the Arab always attended me to a tower, set apart for celestial observations, where he endeavoured to teach me the names and courses of the stars. I had no great inclination to this study, but an appearance of attention was necessary to please my instructer, who valued himself for his skill; and, in a little while, I found some employment requisite to beguile the tediousness of time, which was to be passed always amidst the same objects. I was weary of looking in the morning, on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening. I, therefore, was, at last, willing to observe the stars, rather than do nothing, but could not always compose my thoughts, and was very often thinking on Nekayah, when others imagined me contemplating the sky. Soon after the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleasure was to talk with my maids, about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happiness that we should all enjoy at the end of our captivity.”

“There were women in your Arab’s fortress,” said the princess, “why did you not make them your companions, enjoy their conversation, and partake their diversions’? In a place, where they found business or amusement, why should you alone sit corroded with idle melancholy? or, why could not you bear, for a few months, that condition to which they were condemned for life?”

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“The diversions of the women,” answered Pekuah, “were only childish play, by which the mind, accustomed to stronger operations, could not be kept busy. I could do all which they delighted in doing by powers merely sensitive, while my intellectual faculties were flown to Cairo. They ran, from room to room, as a bird hops, from wire to wire, in his cage. They danced for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in a meadow. One sometimes pretended to be hurt, that the rest might be alarmed; or hid herself, that another might seek her. Part of their time passed in watching the progress of light bodies, that floated on the river, and part, in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the sky.

“Their business was only needlework in which I and my maids, sometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will easily straggle from the fingers, nor will you suspect that captivity and absence from Nekayah could receive solace from silken flowers.

“Nor was much satisfaction to be hoped from their conversation: for of what could they be expected to talk? They had seen nothing; for they had lived, from early youth, in that narrow spot: of what they had not seen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no ideas but of the few things that were within their view, and had hardly names for any thing but their clothes and their food. As I bore a superiour character, I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amused me to hear the complaints of each against the rest, I might have been often detained by long stories; but the motives of their animosity were so small, that I could not listen without intercepting the tale.”

“How,” said Rasselas, “can the Arab, whom you represented as a man of more than common accomplishments, take any pleasure in his seraglio, when it is filled only with women like these? Are they exquisitely beautiful?”

“They do not,” said Pekuah, “want that unaffecting and ignoble beauty, which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought, or dignity of virtue. But to a man, like the Arab, such beauty was only a flower, casually plucked, and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him, he looked on them with inattentive superiority: when they vied for his regard, he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take nothing from the tediousness of life; as they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude; he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman, who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard, of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted, not so much to delight him, as to pain a rival. That which he gave, and they received, as love, was only a careless distribution of superfluous time, such love as man can bestow upon that which he despises, such as has neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow.”

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“You have reason, lady, to think yourself happy,” said Imlac, “that you have been thus easily dismissed. How could a mind, hungry for knowledge, be willing, in an intellectual famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah’s conversation?”

“I am inclined to believe,” answered Pekuah, “that he was, for sometime, in suspense; for, notwithstanding his promise, whenever I proposed to despatch a messenger to Cairo, he found some excuse for delay. While I was detained in his house, he made many incursions into the neighbouring countries, and, perhaps, he would have refused to discharge me, had his plunder been equal to his wishes. He returned always courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear my observations, and endeavoured to advance my acquaintance with the stars. When I importuned him to send away my letters, he soothed me with professions of honour and sincerity; and, when I could be no longer decently denied, put his troop again in motion, and left me to govern in his absence. I was much afflicted by this studied procrastination, and was sometimes afraid, that I should be forgotten; that you would leave Cairo, and I must end my days in an island of the Nile.

“I grew, at last, hopeless and dejected, and cared so little to entertain him, that he, for awhile, more frequently talked with my maids. That he should fall in love with them, or with me, might have been equally fatal, and I was not much pleased with the growing friendship. My anxiety was not long; for, as I recovered some degree of cheerfulness, he returned to me, and I could not forbear to despise my former uneasiness.

“He still delayed to send for my ransome, and would, perhaps, never have determined, had not your agent found his way to him. The gold, which he would not fetch, he could not reject, when it was offered. He hastened to prepare for our journey hither, like a man delivered from the pain of an intestine conflict. I took leave of my companions in the house, who dismissed me with cold indifference.”

Nekayah, having heard her favourite’s relation, rose and embraced her, and Rasselas gave her a hundred ounces of gold, which she presented to the Arab for the fifty that were promised.

CHAP. XL.

THE HISTORY OF A MAN OF LEARNING.

They returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at finding themselves together, that none of them went much abroad. The prince began to love learning, and, one day, declared to Imlac, that he intended to devote himself to science, and pass the rest of his days in literary solitude.

“Before you make your final choice,” answered Imlac, “you ought to examine its hazards, and converse with some of those who are grown old in the company of

themselves. I have just left the observatory of one of the most learned astronomers in the world, who has spent forty years in unwearied attention to the motions and appearances of the celestial bodies, and has drawn out his soul in endless calculations.

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He admits a few friends, once a month, to hear his deductions, and enjoy his discoveries. I was introduced, as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas, and fluent conversation, are commonly welcome to those whose thoughts have been long fixed upon a single point, and who find the images of other things stealing away. I delighted him with my remarks; he smiled at the narrative of my travels, and was glad to forget the constellations, and descend, for a moment, into the lower world.

“On the next day of vacation I renewed my visit, and was so fortunate as to please him again. He relaxed, from that time, the severity of his rule, and permitted me to enter at my own choice. I found him always busy, and always glad to be relieved. As each knew much which the other was desirous of learning, we exchanged our notions with great delight. I perceived that I had, every day, more of his confidence, and always found new cause of admiration in the profundity of his mind. His comprehension is vast, his memory capacious and retentive, his discourse is methodical, and his expression clear.

“His integrity and benevolence are equal to his learning. His deepest researches, and most favourite studies, are willingly interrupted for any opportunity of doing good, by his counsel or his riches. To his closest retreat, at his most busy moments, all are admitted that want his assistance: ’For, though I exclude idleness and pleasure, I will never,’ says he, bar my doors against charity. To man is permitted the contemplation of the skies, but the practice of virtue is commanded.’”

“Surely,” said the princess, “this man is happy.”

“I visited him,” said Imlac, “with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamoured of his conversation: he was sublime without haughtiness, courteous without formality, and communicative without ostentation. I was, at first, great princess, of your opinion; thought him the happiest of mankind; and often congratulated him on the blessing that he enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing with indifference but the praises of his condition, to which he always returned a general answer, and diverted the conversation to some other topick.

“Amidst this willingness to be pleased, and labour to please, I had, quickly, reason to imagine, that some painful sentiment pressed upon his mind. He often looked up earnestly towards the sun, and let his voice fall in the midst of his discourse. He would sometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me, in silence, with the air of a man, who longed to speak what he was yet resolved to suppress. He would often send for me, with vehement injunctions of haste, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to say. And sometimes, when I was leaving him, would call me back, pause a few moments, and then dismiss me.”

CHAP. XLI.

THE ASTRONOMER DISCOVERS THE CAUSE OF HIS UNEASINESS.

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“At last the time came, when the secret burst his reserve. We were sitting together, last night, in the turret of his house, watching the emersion of a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest clouded the sky, and disappointed our observation. We sat awhile silent in the dark, and then he addressed himself to me in these words: ’Imlac, I have long considered thy friendship as the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity, without knowledge, is weak and useless; and knowledge, without integrity, is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust—benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office, which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice, in the hour of imbecility and pain, to devolve it upon thee.’

“I thought myself honoured by this testimony, and protested, that whatever could conduce to his happiness, would add likewise to mine.

“’Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not, without difficulty, credit. I have possessed, for five years, the regulation of weather, and the distribution of the seasons: the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed, from tropick to tropick, by my direction; the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command; I have restrained the rage of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervours of the crab. The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have, hitherto, refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial tempests, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have administered this great office with exact justice, and made, to the different nations of the earth, an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine. What must have been the misery of half the globe, if I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator!’

CHAP. XLII.

THE OPINION OF THE ASTRONOMER IS EXPLAINED AND JUSTIFIED.

“I suppose he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt, for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus:

“’Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for I am, probably, the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem this distinction a reward or punishment; since I have possessed it, I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitted vigilance.’

“How long, sir, said I, has this great office been in your hands?”

“’About ten years ago,’ said he, ’my daily observations of the changes of the sky, led me to consider, whether, if I had the power of the seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened on my mind, and I sat,

days and nights, in imaginary dominion, pouring, upon this country and that, the showers of fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.

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“’One day, as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt, in my mind, a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination, I commanded rain to fall, and, by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found, that the clouds had listened to my lips.’

“Might not some other cause,” said I, “produce this concurrence? the Nile does not always rise on the same day.

“’Do not believe,’ said he, with impatience, ’that such objections could escape me: I reasoned long against my own conviction, and laboured against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret, but to a man like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible, and the incredible from the false.’

“Why, sir,” said I, “do you call that incredible, which you know, or think you know, to be true?

“’Because,’ said he, ’I cannot prove it by any external evidence; and I know, too well, the laws of demonstration, to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conscious of its force. I, therefore, shall not attempt to gain credit by disputation. It is sufficient, that I feel this power, that I have long possessed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is short, the infirmities of age increase upon me, and the time will soon come, when the regulator of the year must mingle with the dust. The care of appointing a successour has long disturbed me; the night and the day have been spent in comparisons of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none so worthy as thyself.’

CHAP. XLIII.

THE ASTRONOMER LEAVES IMLAC HIS DIRECTIONS.

“’Hear, therefore, what I shall impart, with attention, such as the welfare of the world requires. If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must be the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat!—Hear me, therefore, with attention.

“’I have diligently considered the position of the earth and sun, and formed innumerable schemes, in which I changed their situation. I have sometimes turned aside the axis of the earth, and sometimes varied the ecliptick of the sun: but I have found it impossible to make a disposition, by which the world may be advantaged; what one region gains, another loses by an imaginable alteration, even without considering the distant parts of the solar system, with which ye are unacquainted. Do not, therefore, in thy

administration of the year, indulge thy pride by innovation; do not please thyself with thinking, that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages, by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame. Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient.'

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“I promised, that when I possessed the power, I would use it with inflexible integrity; and he dismissed me, pressing my hand. ‘My heart,’ said he, ’will be now at rest, and my benevolence will no more destroy my quiet: I have found a man of wisdom and virtue, to whom I can cheerfully bequeath the inheritance of the sun.’”

The prince heard this narration with very serious regard; but the princess smiled, and Pekuah convulsed herself with laughter. “Ladies,” said Imlac, “to mock the heaviest of human afflictions, is neither charitable nor wise. Few can attain this man’s knowledge, and few practise his virtues; but all may suffer his calamity. Of the uncertainties of our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason.”

The princess was recollected, and the favourite was abashed. Rasselas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought such maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted.

CHAP. XLIV.

THE DANGEROUS PREVALENCE OF IMAGINATION.

“Disorders of intellect,” answered Imlac, “happen much more often than superficial observers will easily believe. Perhaps, if we speak with rigorous exactness, no human mind is in its right state[a]. There is no man, whose imagination does not, sometimes, predominate over his reason, who can regulate his attention wholly by his will, and whose ideas will come and go at his command. No man will be found, in whose mind airy notions do not, sometimes, tyrannize, and force him to hope or fear beyond the limits of sober probability. All power of fancy over reason, is a degree of insanity; but, while this power is such as we can control and repress, it is not visible to others, nor considered as any deprivation of the mental faculties: it is not pronounced madness, but when it becomes ungovernable, and apparently influences speech or action.

“To indulge the power of fiction, and send imagination out upon the wing, is often the sport of those who delight too much in silent speculation. When we are alone we are not always busy; the labour of excogitation is too violent to last long; the ardour of inquiry will, sometimes, give way to idleness or satiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him, must find pleasure in his own thoughts, and must conceive himself what he is not; for who is pleased with what he is? He then expatiates in boundless futurity, and culls, from all imaginable conditions, that which, for the present moment, he should most desire; amuses his desires with impossible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all combinations, and riots in delights, which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot bestow.

“In time, some particular train of ideas fixes the attention; all other intellectual gratifications are rejected; the mind, in weariness or leisure, recurs constantly to the

favourite conception, and feasts on the luscious falsehood, whenever she is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees, the reign of fancy is confirmed; she grows first imperious, and in time despotick. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

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“This, sir, is one of the dangers of solitude, which the hermit has confessed not always to promote goodness, and the astronomer’s misery has proved to be not always propitious to wisdom.”

“I will no more,” said the favourite, “imagine myself the queen of Abissinia. I have often spent the hours, which the princess gave to my own disposal, in adjusting ceremonies, and regulating the court; I have repressed the pride of the powerful, and granted the petitions of the poor; I have built new palaces in more happy situations, planted groves upon the tops of mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty, till, when the princess entered, I had almost forgotten to bow down before her.”

“And I,” said the princess, “will not allow myself any more to play the shepherdess in my waking dreams. I have often soothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of pastoral employments, till I have, in my chamber, heard the winds whistle, and the sheep bleat: sometimes freed the lamb entangled in the thicket, and, sometimes, with my crook, encountered the wolf. I have a dress like that of the village maids, which I put on to help my imagination, and a pipe, on which I play softly, and suppose myself followed by my flocks.”

“I will confess,” said the prince, “an indulgence of fantastick delight more dangerous than yours. I have frequently endeavoured to image the possibility of a perfect government, by which all wrong should be restrained, all vice reformed, and all the subjects preserved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable schemes of reformation, and dictated many useful regulations and salutary edicts. This has been the sport, and sometimes the labour, of my solitude; and I start, when I think, with how little anguish I once supposed the death of my father and my brothers.”

“Such,” said Imlac, “are the effects of visionary schemes; when we first form them, we know them to be absurd, but familiarize them by degrees, and, in time, lose sight of their folly.”

[a] See Traite Medico-philosophique sur l’Alienation Mentale, par Pinel. Dr. Willis defined, in remarkable accordance with this case in Rasselas, insanity to be the tendency of a mind to cherish one idea, or one set of ideas, to the exclusion of others. —ED.

CHAP. XLV.

THEY DISCOURSE WITH AN OLD MAN.

The evening was now far past, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw, at a small distance, an old man, whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages. “Yonder,” said he, “is one whose years have calmed his passions, but not

clouded his reason: let us close the disquisitions of the night, by inquiring, what are his sentiments of his own state, that we may know whether youth alone is to struggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

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Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled awhile, as acquaintance that had unexpectedly met one another. The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his company. He was pleased to find himself not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's request, entered with them. They placed him in the seat of honour, and set wine and conserves before him. "Sir," said the princess, "an evening walk must give, to a man of learning, like you, pleasures which ignorance and youth can hardly conceive. You know the qualities and the causes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the planets perform their revolutions. Every thing must supply you with contemplation, and renew the consciousness of your own dignity."

"Lady," answered he, "let the gay and the vigorous expect pleasure in their excursions; it is enough that age can obtain ease. To me, the world has lost its novelty: I look round, and see what I remember to have seen in happier days. I rest against a tree, and consider, that in the same shade I once disputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile, with a friend who is now silent in the grave. I cast my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think, with pain, on the vicissitudes of life. I have ceased to take much delight in physical truth; for what have I to do with those things which I am soon to leave?"

"You may, at least, recreate yourself," said Imlac, "with the recollection of an honourable and useful life, and enjoy the praise which all agree to give you."

"Praise," said the sage, with a sigh, "is, to an old man, an empty sound. I have neither mother to be delighted with the reputation of her son, nor wife to partake the honours of her husband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance; for I cannot extend my interest beyond myself. Youth is delighted with applause, because it is considered, as the earnest of some future good, and because the prospect of life is far extended; but to me, who am now declining to decrepitude, there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet less to be hoped from their affection or esteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give me nothing. Riches would now be useless, and high employment would be pain. My retrospect of life recalls to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time squandered upon trifles, and more lost in idleness and vacancy. I leave many great designs unattempted, and many great attempts unfinished. My mind is burdened with no heavy crime, and, therefore, I compose myself to tranquillity; endeavour to abstract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which, though reason knows them to be vain, still try to keep their old possession of the heart; expect, with serene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay; and hope to possess, in a better state, that happiness, which here I could not find, and that virtue, which here I have not attained."

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He rose and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The prince consoled himself with remarking, that it was not reasonable to be disappointed by this account; for age had never been considered as the season of felicity, and, if it was possible to be easy in decline and weakness, it was likely that the days of vigour and alacrity might be happy; that the noon of life might be bright, if the evening could be calm.

The princess suspected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repress the expectations of those, who had newly entered the world. She had seen the possessours of estates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleasure no longer than they could confine it to themselves.

Pekuah conjectured, that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection: or else supposed that he had been unfortunate, and was, therefore, discontented: "For nothing," said she, "is more common than to call our own condition, the condition of life."

Imlac, who had no desire to see them depressed, smiled at the comforts which they could so readily procure to themselves, and remembered, that, at the same age, he was equally confident of unmingled prosperity, and equally fertile of consolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itself would too soon impress. The princess and her lady retired; the madness of the astronomer hung on their minds, and they desired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning, the rising of the sun.

CHAP. XLVI.

THE PRINCESS AND PEKUAH VISIT THE ASTRONOMER.

The princess and Pekuah having talked in private of Imlac's astronomer, thought his character at once so amiable and so strange, that they could not be satisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requested to find the means of bringing them together.

This was somewhat difficult; the philosopher had never received any visits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans, who followed the manners of their own countries, and many, from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refused, and several schemes were proposed for the accomplishment of their design. It was proposed to introduce them as strangers in distress, to whom the sage was always accessible; but, after some deliberation, it appeared, that by this artifice, no acquaintance could be formed, for their conversation would be short, and they could not decently importune him often. "This," said Rasselas, "is true; but I have yet a stronger objection against the misrepresentation of your state. I have always considered it as treason against the great republick of

human nature, to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him, whether on great or little occasions. All imposture weakens confidence,

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and chills benevolence. When the sage finds that you are not what you seemed, he will feel the resentment natural to a man who, conscious of great abilities, discovers that he has been tricked by understandings meaner than his own, and, perhaps, the distrust, which he can never afterwards wholly lay aside, may stop the voice of counsel, and close the hand of charity; and where will you find the power of restoring his benefactions to mankind, or his peace to himself?"

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curiosity would subside; but, next day, Pekuah told him, she had now found an honest pretence for a visit to the astronomer, for she would solicit permission to continue, under him, the studies in which she had been initiated by the Arab, and the princess might go with her, either as a fellow-student, or because a woman could not decently come alone. "I am afraid," said Imlac, "that he will be soon weary of your company: men, advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art, and I am not certain that even of the elements, as he will deliver them, connected with inferences, and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditress." "That," said Pekuah, "must be my care: I ask of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it, and, by concurring always with his opinions, I shall make him think it greater than it is."

The astronomer, in pursuance of this resolution, was told, that a foreign lady, travelling in search of knowledge, had heard of his reputation, and was desirous to become his scholar. The uncommonness of the proposal raised, at once, his surprise and curiosity; and when, after a short deliberation, he consented to admit her, he could not stay, without impatience, till the next day.

The ladies dressed themselves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the astronomer, who was pleased to see himself approached with respect by persons of so splendid an appearance. In the exchange of the first civilities, he was timorous and bashful; but, when the talk became regular, he recollected his powers, and justified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah, what could have turned her inclination toward astronomy, he received from her a history of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time passed in the Arab's island. She told her tale with ease and elegance, and her conversation took possession of his heart. The discourse was then turned to astronomy; Pekuah displayed what she knew: he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to desist from a study, which she had so happily begun.

They came again and again, and were, every time, more welcome than before. The sage endeavoured to amuse them, that they might prolong their visits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of solicitude vanished by degrees, as he forced himself to entertain them, and he grieved, when he was left, at their departure, to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

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The princess and her favourite had now watched his lips for several months, and could not catch a single word, from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatural commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration; but he easily eluded all their attacks, and on which side soever they pressed him, escaped from them to some other topick.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began, gradually, to delight in sublunary pleasures. He came early, and departed late; laboured to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance; excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance; and, when they made any excursion of pleasure, or inquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom, the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger; and, lest he should draw any false hopes from the civilities which he received, discovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey; and required his opinion on the CHOICE OF LIFE.

“Of the various conditions which the world spreads before you, which you shall prefer,” said the sage, “I am not able to instruct you. I can only tell, that I have chosen wrong. I have passed my time in study, without experience; in the attainment of sciences, which can, for the most part, be but remotely useful to mankind. I have purchased knowledge at the expense of all the common comforts of life: I have missed the endearing elegance of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestick tenderness. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other students, they have been accompanied with fear, disquiet, and scrupulosity; but, even of these prerogatives, whatever they were, I have, since my thoughts have been diversified by more intercourse with the world, begun to question the reality. When I have been, for a few days, lost in pleasing dissipation, I am always tempted to think that my inquiries have ended in errour, and that I have suffered much, and suffered it in vain.”

Imlac was delighted to find that the sage’s understanding was breaking through its mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets, till he should forget his task of ruling them, and reason should recover its original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and pleasures: his respect kept him attentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done; the day was spent in making observations which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

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The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. "If I am accidentally left alone for a few hours," said he, "my inveterate persuasion rushes upon my soul, and my thoughts are chained down by some irresistible violence; but they are soon disentangled by the prince's conversation, and instantaneously released at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man habitually afraid of spectres, who is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which harassed him in the dark; yet, if his lamp be extinguished, feels again the terrours which he knows, that when it is light he shall feel no more. But I am sometimes afraid, lest I indulge my quiet by criminal negligence, and voluntarily forget the great charge with which I am intrusted. If I favour myself in a known errour, or am determined, by my own ease, in a doubtful question of this importance, how dreadful is my crime!"

"No disease of the imagination," answered Imlac, "is so difficult of cure, as that which is complicated with the dread of guilt: fancy and conscience then act interchangeably upon us, and so often shift their places, that the illusions of one are not distinguished from the dictates of the other. If fancy presents images not moral or religious, the mind drives them away when they give it pain, but when melancholick notions take the form of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without opposition, because we are afraid to exclude or banish them. For this reason, the superstitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy almost always superstitious.

"But do not let the suggestions of timidity overpower your better reason: the danger of neglect can be but as the probability of the obligation, which, when you consider it with freedom, you find very little, and that little growing every day less. Open your heart to the influence of the light, which, from time to time, breaks in upon you: when scruples importune you, which you, in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not stand to parley, but fly to business or to Pekuah, and keep this thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the mass of humanity, and have neither such virtue nor vice, as that you should be singled out for supernatural favours or afflictions."

CHAP. XLVII.

THE PRINCE ENTERS, AND BRINGS A NEW TOPICK.

"All this," said the astronomer, "I have often thought, but my reason has been so long subjugated by an uncontroulable and overwhelming idea, that it durst not confide in its own decisions. I now see how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chimeras to prey upon me in secret; but melancholy shrinks from communication, and I never found a man before, to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who are not easily deceived, and

can have no motive or purpose to deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace."

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“Your learning and virtue,” said Imlac, “may justly give you hopes.”

Rasselas then entered with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired, whether they had contrived any new diversion for the next day? “Such,” said Nekayah, “is the state of life, that none are happy, but by the anticipation of change: the change itself is nothing: when we have made it, the next wish is to change again. The world is not yet exhausted; let me see something to-morrow, which I never saw before.”

“Variety,” said Rasselas, “is so necessary to content, that even the happy valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience, when I saw the monks of St. Anthony support, without complaint, a life not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship.”

“Those men,” answered Imlac, “are less wretched in their silent convent, than the Abissinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labour supplies them with necessaries; it, therefore, cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and reminds them of its approach, while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed; one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful, because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity.”

“Do you think,” said Nekayah, “that the monastick rule is a more holy and less imperfect state than any other? May not he equally hope for future happiness, who converses openly with mankind, who succours the distressed by his charity, instructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes, by his industry, to the general system of life: even though he should omit some of the mortifications which are practised in the cloister, and allow himself such harmless delights, as his condition may place within his reach.”

“This,” said Imlac, “is a question which has long divided the wise, and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world, is better than he that lives well in a monastery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to stem the temptations of publick life; and, if he cannot conquer, he may properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have, likewise, little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain. And many are dismissed, by age and disease, from the more laborious duties of society. In monasteries, the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something so congenial to the mind of man, that, perhaps, there is scarcely one that does not propose to close his life in pious abstraction with a few associates, serious as himself.”

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“Such,” said Pekuah, “has often been my wish; and I have heard the princess declare, that she should not willingly die in a crowd.”

“The liberty of using harmless pleasures,” proceeded Imlac, “will not be disputed; but it is still to be examined, what pleasures are harmless. The evil of any pleasure that Nekayah can image, is not in the act itself, but in its consequences. Pleasure, in itself harmless, may become mischievous, by endearing to us a state which we know to be transient and probatory, and withdrawing our thoughts from that, of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itself, nor has any other use, but that it disengages us from the allurements of sense. In the state of future perfection, to which we all aspire, there will be pleasure without danger, and security without restraint.”

The princess was silent, and Rasselas, turning to the astronomer, asked him, whether he could not delay her retreat, by showing her something which she had not seen before.

“Your curiosity,” said the sage, “has been so general, and your pursuit of knowledge so vigorous, that novelties are not now very easily to be found; but what you can no longer procure from the living, may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the catacombs, or the ancient repositories, in which the bodies of the earliest generations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption.”

“I know not,” said Rasselas, “what pleasure the sight of the catacombs can afford; but, since nothing else offers, I am resolved to view them, and shall place this with many other things which I have done, because I would do something.”

They hired a guard of horsemen, and the next day visited the catacombs. When they were about to descend into the sepulchral caves, “Pekuah,” said the princess, “we are now again invading the habitations of the dead: I know that you will stay behind; let me find you safe when I return.” “No, I will not be left,” answered Pekuah; “I will go down between you and the prince.”

They then all descended, and roved, with wonder, through the labyrinth of subterraneous passages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either side.

CHAP. XLVIII.

IMLAC DISCOURSES ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

“What reason,” said the prince, “can be given, why the Egyptians should thus expensively preserve those carcasses which some nations consume with fire, others lay

to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their sight, as soon as decent rites can be performed?”

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“The original of ancient customs,” said Imlac “is commonly unknown; for the practice often continues when the cause has ceased; and, concerning superstitious ceremonies, it is vain to conjecture; for what reason did not dictate, reason cannot explain. I have long believed that the practice of embalming arose only from tenderness to the remains of relations or friends; and to this opinion I am more inclined, because it seems impossible that this care should have been general: had all the dead been embalmed, their repositories must, in time, have been more spacious than the dwellings of the living. I suppose only the rich or honourable were secured from corruption, and the rest left to the course of nature.

“But it is commonly supposed, that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and, therefore, tried this method of eluding death.”

“Could the wise Egyptians,” said Nekayah, “think so grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive its separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?”

“The Egyptians would, doubtless, think erroneously,” said the astronomer, “in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the soul is still disputed, amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge; some yet say, that it may be material, who, nevertheless, believe it to be immortal.”

“Some,” answered Imlac, “have, indeed, said, that the soul is material, but I can scarcely believe that any man has thought it, who knew how to think; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

“It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, density, bulk, motion, and direction of motion: to which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed? To be round or square, to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly one way or another, are modes of material existence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification, but all the modifications which it can admit, are equally unconnected with cogitative powers.”

“But the materialists,” said the astronomer, “urge, that matter may have qualities, with which we are unacquainted.”

“He who will determine,” returned Imlac, “against that which he knows, because there may be something, which he knows not; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless; and, if this conviction

cannot be opposed but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being, not omniscient, can arrive at certainty."

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“Yet let us not,” said the astronomer, “too arrogantly limit the creator’s power.”

“It is no limitation of omnipotence,” replied the poet, “to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another; that the same proposition cannot be, at once, true and false; that the same number cannot be even and odd; that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation.”

“I know not,” said Nekayah, “any great use of this question. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?”

“Of immateriality,” said Imlac, “our ideas are negative, and, therefore, obscure. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration, as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay: whatever perishes is destroyed by the solution of its contexture, and separation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and, therefore, admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired.”

“I know not,” said Rasselas, “how to conceive any thing without extension; what is extended must have parts, and you allow, that whatever has parts may be destroyed.”

“Consider your own conceptions,” replied Imlac, “and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk: yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid, than that the pyramid itself is standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea suffer laceration? As is the effect, such is the cause: as thought, such is the power that thinks; a power impassive and indiscerptible.”

“But the being,” said Nekayah, “whom I fear to name, the being which made the soul, can destroy it.”

“He, surely, can destroy it,” answered Imlac, “since, however unperishable, it receives from a superiour nature its power of duration. That it will not perish by any inherent cause of decay, or principle of corruption, may be shown by philosophy; but philosophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by him that made it, we must humbly learn from higher authority.”

The whole assembly stood, awhile, silent and collected. “Let us return,” said Rasselas, “from this scene of mortality. How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die; that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on for ever. Those that lie here, stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state: they were, perhaps, snatched away, while they were busy, like us, in the choice of life.”

“To me,” said the princess, “the choice of life is become less important; I hope, hereafter, to think only on the choice of eternity.”

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They then hastened out of the caverns, and, under the protection of their guard, returned to Cairo.

CHAP. XLIX.

THIS CONCLUSION, IN WHICH NOTHING IS CONCLUDED.

It was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the catacombs the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region, being under water, gave them no invitation to any excursions, and, being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life, which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness, which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order: she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some unvariable state.

The princess thought, that, of all sublunary things, knowledge was the best: she desired, first, to learn all sciences, and then purposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside; that, by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom, and raise up, fur the next age, models of prudence, and patterns of piety.

The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person, and see all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominion, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along the stream of life, without directing their course to any particular port. Of these wishes, that they had formed, they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated awhile what was to be done, and resolved, when the inundation should cease, to return to Abissinia.

LETTERS.

I.—To MR. JAMES ELPHINSTON.

Sept. 25th, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—You have, as I find by every kind of evidence, lost an excellent mother; and I hope you will not think me incapable of partaking of your grief. I have a mother, now eighty-two years of age, whom, therefore, I must soon lose, unless it please God

that she rather should mourn for me. I read the letters in which you relate your mother's death to Mrs. Strahan, and think I do myself honour, when I tell you that I read them with tears; but tears are neither to you, nor to me, of any farther use, when once the tribute of nature has been paid. The business of life summons us away from useless grief, and calls us to the exercise of those virtues, of which we are lamenting our deprivation.

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The greatest benefit which one friend can confer upon another, is to guard and excite and elevate his virtues. This your mother will still perform, if you diligently preserve the memory of her life, and of her death: a life, so far as I can learn, useful, wise, and innocent; and a death, resigned, peaceful, and holy. I cannot forbear to mention, that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope, that you may increase her happiness, by obeying her precepts; and that she may, in her present state, look, with pleasure, upon every act of virtue, to which her instructions or example have contributed. Whether this be more than a pleasing dream, or a just opinion of separate spirits, is, indeed, of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God: yet, surely, there is something pleasing in the belief, that our separation from those, whom we love, is merely corporeal; and it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship, if it can be made probable, that that union, which has received the divine approbation, shall continue to eternity.

There is one expedient, by which you may, in some degree, continue her presence. If you write down minutely what you remember of her from your earliest years, you will read it with great pleasure, and receive from it many hints of soothing recollection, when time shall remove her yet farther from you, and your grief shall be matured to veneration. To this, however painful for the present, I cannot but advise you, as to a source of comfort and satisfaction in the time to come; for all comfort and all satisfaction is sincerely wished you by,

Dear sir,
Your most obliged, most obedient,
And most humble servant,
SAM. JOHNSON.

II.—To MRS. THRALE.

London, Aug. 13, 1765.

MADAM,—If you have really so good an opinion of me as you express, it will not be necessary to inform you how unwillingly I miss the opportunity of coming to Brighthelmstone in Mr. Thrale's company; or, since I cannot do what I wish first, how eagerly I shall catch the second degree of pleasure, by coming to you and him, as soon as I can dismiss my work from my hands.

I am afraid to make promises, even to myself; but I hope that the week after the next will be the end of my present business. When business is done, what remains but pleasure? and where should pleasure be sought, but under Mrs. Thrale's influence?

Do not blame me for a delay by which I must suffer so much, and by which I suffer alone. If you cannot think I am good, pray think I am mending, and that in time I may deserve to be, dear madam, your, &c.

III.—To MRS. THRALE.

Lichfield, July 20, 1767.

Madam,—Though I have been away so much longer than I purposed or expected, I have found nothing that withdraws my affections from the friends whom I left behind, or which makes me less desirous of reposing at that place, which your kindness and Mr. Thrale's allows me to call my home.

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Miss Lucy[a] is more kind and civil than I expected, and has raised my esteem by many excellencies, very noble and resplendent, though a little discoloured by hoary virginity. Every thing else recalls to my remembrance years, in which I proposed what, I am afraid, I have not done, and promised myself pleasure which I have not found. But complaint can be of no use; and why then should I depress your hopes by my lamentations? I suppose it is the condition of humanity to design what never will be done, and to hope what never will be obtained. But, among the vain hopes, let me not number the hope which I have, of being long, dear madam, your, &c.

[a] Miss Lucy Porter, daughter to Dr. Johnson's wife, by a former husband.

IV.—TO THE SAME.

Lichfield, August 14, 1769.

MADAM,—I set out on Thursday morning, and found my companion, to whom I was very much a stranger, more agreeable than I expected. We went cheerfully forward, and passed the night at Coventry. We came in late, and went out early; and, therefore, I did not send for my cousin Tom: but I design to make him some amends for the omission.

Next day we came early to Lucy, who was, I believe, glad to see us. She had saved her best gooseberries upon the tree for me; and, as Steele says, "I was neither too proud nor too wise" to gather them. I have rambled a very little "inter fontes et flumina nota," but I am not yet well. They have cut down the trees in George lane. Evelyn, in his book of Forest Trees, tells us of wicked men that cut down trees, and never prospered afterwards; yet nothing has deterred these audacious aldermen from violating the Hamadryads of George lane. As an impartial traveller, I must however tell, that, in Stow street, where I left a draw-well, I have found a pump; but the lading-well, in this ill fated George lane, lies shamefully neglected.

I am going to-day, or to-morrow, to Ashbourne; but I am at a loss how I shall get back in time to London. Here are only chance coaches, so that there is no certainty of a place. If I do not come, let it not hinder your journey. I can be but a few days behind you; and I will follow in the Brighthelmstone coach. But I hope to come.

I took care to tell Miss Porter, that I have got another Lucy. I hope she is well. Tell Mrs. Salusbury that I beg her stay at Streatham, for little Lucy's sake. I am, &c.

V.—To MRS. THRALE.

Lichfield, July 11, 1770.

MADAM,—Since my last letter, nothing extraordinary has happened. Rheumatism, which has been very troublesome, is grown better. I have not yet seen Dr. Taylor, and July runs fast away. I shall not have much time for him, if he delays much longer to come or send. Mr. Green, the apothecary, has found a book, which tells who paid levies in our parish, and how much they paid, above a hundred years ago.

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Do you not think we study this book hard? Nothing is like going to the bottom of things. Many families, that paid the parish-rates, are now extinct, like the race of Hercules: “Pulvis et umbra sumus.” What is nearest us, touches us most. The passions rise higher at domestick, than at imperial, tragedies. I am not wholly unaffected by the revolutions of Sadler street; nor can forbear to mourn a little when old names vanish away, and new come into their place.

Do not imagine, madam, that I wrote this letter for the sake of these philosophical meditations; for when I began it, I had neither Mr. Green, nor his book, in my thoughts; but was resolved to write, and did not know what I had to send, but my respects to Mrs. Salusbury, and Mr. Thrale, and Harry, and the Misses. I am, dearest madam, your, &c.

VI.—To MRS. THRALE.

Ashbourne, July 23, 1770.

DEAREST MADAM,—There had not been so long an interval between my two last letters, but that, when I came hither, I did not at first understand the hours of the post.

I have seen the great bull; and very great he is. I have seen, likewise, his heir apparent, who promises to inherit all the bulk, and all the virtues, of his sire. I have seen the man who offered a hundred guineas for the young bull, while he was yet little better than a calf. Matlock, I am afraid, I shall not see, but I purpose to see Dovedale; and, after all this seeing, I hope to see you. I am, &c.

VII.—TO THE SAME.

Ashbourne, July 3, 1771.

DEAR MADAM,—Last Saturday I came to Ashbourne; the dangers or the pleasures of the journey I have, at present, no disposition to recount; else might I paint the beauties of my native plains; might I tell of the “smiles of nature, and the charms of art;” else might I relate, how I crossed the Staffordshire canal, one of the great efforts of human labour, and human contrivance, which, from the bridge on which I viewed it, passed away on either side, and loses itself in distant regions, uniting waters that nature had divided, and dividing lands which nature had united. I might tell how these reflections fermented in my mind, till the chaise stopped at Ashbourne, at Ashbourne in the Peak. Let not the barren name of the Peak terrify you; I have never wanted strawberries and cream. The great bull has no disease but age. I hope, in time, to be like the great bull; and hope you will be like him, too, a hundred years hence. I am, &c.

VIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

Ashbourne, July 10, 1771.

DEAREST MADAM,—I am obliged to my friend Harry, for his remembrance, but think it a little hard that I hear nothing from Miss.

There has been a man here to-day to take a farm. After some talk, he went to see the bull, and said, that he had seen a bigger. Do you think he is likely to get the farm?

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Toujours strawberries and cream.

Dr. Taylor is much better, and my rheumatism is less painful. Let me hear, in return, as much good of you and of Mrs. Salusbury. You despise the Dog and Duck: things that are at hand are always slighted. I remember that Dr. Grevil, of Gloucester, sent for that water when his wife was in the same danger; but he lived near Malvern, and you live near the Dog and Duck. Thus, in difficult cases, we naturally trust most what we least know.

Why Bromefield, supposing that a lotion can do good, should despise laurel-water, in comparison with his own receipt, I do not see; and see, still less, why he should laugh at that which Wall thinks efficacious. I am afraid philosophy will not warrant much hope in a lotion.

Be pleased to make my compliments from Mrs. Salusbury to Susy. I am, &c.

IX.—To THE SAME.

October 31, 1772.

MADAM,—Though I am just informed, that, by some accidental negligence, the letter, which I wrote on Thursday, was not given to the post, yet I cannot refuse myself the gratification of writing again to my mistress; not that I have any thing to tell, but that, by showing how much I am employed upon you, I hope to keep you from forgetting me.

Doctor Taylor asked me, this morning, on what I was thinking; and I was thinking on Lucy. I hope Lucy is a good girl. But she cannot yet be so good as Queeney. I have got nothing yet for Queeney's cabinet.

I hope dear Mrs. Salusbury grows no worse. I wish any thing could be found that would make her better. You must remember her admonition, and bustle in the brewhouse. When I come, you may expect to have your hands full with all of us.

Our bulls and cows are all well, but we yet hate the man that had seen a bigger bull. Our deer have died, but many are left. Our waterfall, at the garden, makes a great roaring this wet weather.

And so no more at present from, madam, your, &c.

X.—To MRS. THRALE.

November 23, 1772.

DEAR MADAM,—I am sorry that none of your letters bring better news of the poor dear lady. I hope her pain is not great. To have a disease confessedly incurable, and apparently mortal, is a very heavy affliction; and it is still more grievous, when pain is added to despair.

Every thing else in your letter pleased me very well, except that when I come I entreat I may not be flattered, as your letters flatter me. You have read of heroes and princes ruined by flattery, and, I question, if any of them had a flatterer so dangerous as you. Pray keep strictly to your character of governess.

I cannot yet get well; my nights are flatulent and unquiet, but my days are tolerably easy, and Taylor says, that I look much better than when I came hither. You will see when I come, and I can take your word.

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Our house affords no revolutions. The great bull is well. But I write, not merely to think on you, for I do that without writing, but to keep you a little thinking on me. I perceive that I have taken a broken piece of paper, but that is not the greatest fault that you must forgive in, madam, your, &c.

XI.—To MRS. THRALE.

November 27, 1772.

DEAR MADAM,—If you are so kind as to write to me on Saturday, the day on which you will receive this, I shall have it before I leave Ashbourne. I am to go to Lichfield on Wednesday, and purpose to find my way to London, through Birmingham and Oxford.

I was yesterday at Chatsworth. It is a very fine house. I wish you had been with me to see it; for then, as we are apt to want matter of talk, we should have gained something new to talk on. They complimented me with playing the fountain, and opening the cascade. But I am of my friend's opinion, that when one has seen the ocean, cascades are but little things.

I am in hope of a letter to-day from you or Queeney, but the post has made some blunder, and the packet is not yet distributed. I wish it may bring me a little good of you all. I am, &c.

XII.—To THE SAME.

Tuesday, Jan. 26, 1773.

MADAM,—The inequalities of human life have always employed the meditation of deep thinkers, and I cannot forbear to reflect on the difference between your condition and my own. You live upon mock-turtle, and stewed rumps of beef; I dined, yesterday, upon crumpets. You sit with parish officers, caressing and caressed, the idol of the table, and the wonder of the day. I pine in the solitude of sickness, not bad enough to be pitied, and not well enough to be endured. You sleep away the night, and laugh, or scold away the day. I cough and grumble, and grumble and cough. Last night was very tedious, and this day makes no promises of much ease. However, I have this day put on my shoe, and hope that gout is gone. I shall have only the cough to contend with, and I doubt whether I shall get rid of that without change of place. I caught cold in the coach as I went away, and am disordered by very little things. Is it accident or age? I am, dearest madam, &c.

XIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

March 17, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,—To tell you that I am sorry, both for the poor lady and for you, is useless. I cannot help either of you. The weakness of mind is, perhaps, only a casual interruption or intermission of the attention, such as we all suffer when some weighty care or urgent calamity has possession of the mind. She will compose herself. She is unwilling to die, and the first conviction of approaching death raised great perturbation. I think she has but very lately thought death close at hand. She will compose herself to do that as well as she can, which must, at last, be done. May she not want the divine assistance!

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You, madam, will have a great loss; a greater than is common in the loss of a parent. Fill your mind with hope of her happiness, and turn your thoughts first to him who gives and takes away, in whose presence the living and dead are standing together. Then remember, that when this mournful duty is paid, others yet remain of equal obligation, and, we may hope, of less painful performance. Grief is a species of idleness, and the necessity of attention to the present preserves us, by the merciful disposition of providence, from being lacerated and devoured by sorrow for the past. You must think on your husband and your children, and do what this dear lady has done for you.

Not to come to town while the great struggle continues is, undoubtedly, well resolved. But do not harass yourself into danger; you owe the care of your health to all that love you, at least to all whom it is your duty to love. You cannot give such a mother too much, if you do not give her what belongs to another. I am, &c.

XIV.—To MRS. THRALE.

April 27, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,—Hope is more pleasing than fear, but not less fallacious; you know, when you do not try to deceive yourself, that the disease, which at last is to destroy, must be gradually growing worse, and that it is vain to wish for more than, that the descent to death may be slow and easy. In this wish I join with you, and hope it will be granted. Dear, dear lady, whenever she is lost she will be missed, and whenever she is remembered she will be lamented. Is it a good or an evil to me, that she now loves me? It is surely a good; for you will love me better, and we shall have a new principle of concord; and I shall be happier with honest sorrow, than with sullen indifference: and far happier still than with counterfeited sympathy.

I am reasoning upon a principle very far from certain, a confidence of survivance. You or I, or both, may be called into the presence of the supreme judge before her. I have lived a life of which I do not like the review. Surely I shall, in time, live better.

I sat down with an intention to write high compliments; but my thoughts have taken another course, and some other time must now serve to tell you with what other emotions, benevolence, and fidelity, I am, &c.

XV.—To THE SAME.

May 17, 1773.

MADAM,—Never imagine that your letters are long; they are always too short for my curiosity. I do not know that I was ever content with a single perusal.

Of dear Mrs. Salusbury I never expect much better news than you send me; *de pis en pis* is the natural and certain course of her dreadful malady. I am content, when it leaves her ease enough for the exercise of her mind. Why should Mr. **** suppose, that what I took the liberty of suggesting, was concerted with you? He does not know how much I revolve his affairs, and how honestly I desire his prosperity. I hope he has let the hint take some hold of his mind.

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Your declaration to Miss **** is more general than my opinions allow. I think an unlimited promise of acting by the opinion of another so wrong, that nothing, or hardly anything, can make it right. All unnecessary vows are folly, because they suppose a prescience of the future which has not been given us. They are, I think, a crime, because they resign that life to chance which God has given us to be regulated by reason; and superinduce a kind of fatality, from which it is the great privilege of our nature to be free. Unlimited obedience is due only to the universal father of heaven and earth. My parents may be mad and foolish; may be wicked and malicious; may be erroneously religious, or absurdly scrupulous. I am not bound to compliance with mandates, either positive or negative, which either religion condemns, or reason rejects. There wanders about the world a wild notion, which extends over marriage more than over any other transaction. If Miss **** followed a trade, would it be said, that she was bound, in conscience, to give or refuse credit at her father's choice? And is not marriage a thing in which she is more interested, and has, therefore, more right of choice? When I may suffer for my own crimes, when I may be sued for my own debts, I may judge, by parity of reason, for my own happiness. The parent's moral right can arise only from his kindness, and his civil right only from his money.

Conscience cannot dictate obedience to the wicked, or compliance with the foolish; and of interest mere prudence is the judge.

If the daughter is bound without a promise, she promises nothing; and if she is not bound, she promises too much.

What is meant by tying up money in trade I do not understand No money is so little tied, as that which is employed in trade. Mr. ****, perhaps, only means, that in consideration of money to be advanced, he will oblige his son to be a trader. This is reasonable enough. Upon ten thousand pounds, diligently occupied, they may live in great plenty and splendour, without the mischiefs of idleness.

I can write a long letter, as well as my mistress; and shall be glad that my long letters may be as welcome as hers.

My nights are grown again very uneasy and troublesome. I know not that the country will mend them; but I hope your company will mend my days. Though I cannot now expect much attention, and would not wish for more than can be spared from the poor dear lady, yet I shall see you and hear you every now and then; and to see and hear you, is always to hear wit, and to see virtue.

I shall I hope, see you to-morrow, and a little on the two next days; and with that little I must, for the present, try to be contented. I am, &c.

XVI.—To MRS. THRALE.

August 12, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,—We left London on Friday, the 6th, not very early, and travelled, without any memorable accident, through a country which I had seen before. In the evening I was not well, and was forced to stop at Stilton, one stage short of Stamford, where we intended to have lodged.

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On the 7th we passed through Stamford and Grantham, and dined at Newark, where I had only time to observe, that the market-place was uncommonly spacious and neat. In London, we should call it a square, though the sides were neither straight nor parallel. We came, at night, to Doncaster, and went to church in the morning, where Chambers found the monument of Robert of Doncaster, who says on his stone something like this: —What I gave, that I have; what I spent, that I had; what I left, that I lost.—So saith Robert of Doncaster, who reigned in the world sixty-seven years, and all that time lived not one. Here we were invited to dinner, and, therefore, made no great haste away.

We reached York, however, that night; I was much disordered with old complaints. Next morning we saw the minster, an edifice of loftiness and elegance, equal to the highest hopes of architecture. I remember nothing, but the dome of St. Paul's, that can be compared with the middle walk. The chapter-house is a circular building, very stately, but, I think, excelled by the chapter-house of Lincoln.

I then went to see the ruins of the abbey, which are almost vanished, and I remember nothing of them distinct. The next visit was to the gaol, which they call the castle; a fabrick built lately, such is terrestrial mutability, out of the materials of the ruined abbey. The under gaoler was very officious to show his fetters, in which there was no contrivance. The head gaoler came in, and seeing me look, I suppose, fatigued, offered me wine, and, when I went away, would not suffer his servant to take money. The gaol is accounted the best in the kingdom, and you find the gaoler deserving of his dignity.

We dined at York, and went on to Northallerton, a place of which I know nothing, but that it afforded us a lodging on Monday night, and about two hundred and seventy years ago gave birth to Roger Ascham.

Next morning we changed our horses at Darlington, where Mr. Cornelius Harrison, a cousin-german of mine, was perpetual curate. He was the only one of my relations who ever rose in fortune above penury, or in character above neglect.

The church is built crosswise, with a fine spire, and might invite a traveller to survey it; but I, perhaps, wanted vigour, and thought I wanted time.

The next stage brought us to Durham, a place of which Mr. Thrale bade me take particular notice. The bishop's palace has the appearance of an old feudal castle, built upon an eminence, and looking down upon the river, upon which was formerly thrown a drawbridge, as I suppose, to be raised at night, lest the Scots should pass it.

The cathedral has a massiness and solidity, such as I have seen in no other place; it rather awes than pleases, as it strikes with a kind of gigantick dignity, and aspires to no other praise than that of rocky solidity and indeterminate duration. I had none of my friends resident, and, therefore, saw but little. The library is mean and scanty.

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At Durham, beside all expectation, I met an old friend: Miss Fordyce is married there to a physician. We met, I think, with honest kindness on both sides. I thought her much decayed, and having since heard that the banker had involved her husband in his extensive ruin, I cannot forbear to think, that I saw in her withered features more impression of sorrow than that of time—

"Qua terra patet, sera regnat Erinnys."

He that wanders about the world sees new forms of human misery, and if he chances to meet an old friend, meets a face darkened with troubles.

On Tuesday night we came hither; yesterday I took some care of myself, and to-day I am *quite polite*. I have been taking a view of all that could be shown me, and find that all very near to nothing. You have often heard me complain of finding myself disappointed by books of travels; I am afraid travel itself will end likewise in disappointment. One town, one country, is very like another: civilized nations have the same customs, and barbarous nations have the same nature: there are, indeed, minute discriminations both of places and manners, which, perhaps, are not wanting of curiosity, but which a traveller seldom stays long enough to investigate and compare. The dull utterly neglect them; the acute see a little, and supply the rest with fancy and conjecture.

I shall set out again to-morrow; but I shall not, I am afraid, see Alnwick, for Dr. Percy is not there. I hope to lodge to-morrow night at Berwick, and the next at Edinburgh, where I shall direct Mr. Drummond, bookseller at Ossian's head, to take care of my letters.

I hope the little dears are all well, and that my dear master and mistress may go somewhither; but, wherever you go, do not forget, madam, your most humble servant.

I am pretty well.

August 15.

Thus far I had written at Newcastle. I forgot to send it. I am now at Edinburgh; and have been this day running about. I run pretty well.

XVII.—To MRS. THRALE.

Edinburgh, August 17, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,—On the 13th, I left Newcastle, and, in the afternoon, came to Alnwick, where we were treated with great civility by the duke: I went through the apartments, walked on the wall, and climbed the towers. That night we lay at Belford, and, on the next night, came to Edinburgh. On Sunday (15th) I went to the English chapel. After

dinner, Dr. Robertson came in, and promised to show me the place. On Monday I saw their publick buildings: the cathedral, which I told Robertson I wished to see, because it had once been a church; the courts of justice, the parliament-house, the advocates' library, the repository of records, the college, and its library, and the palace, particularly the old tower, where the king of Scotland seized David Rizzio in the queen's presence. Most of their buildings are very mean; and the whole town bears some resemblance to the old part of Birmingham.

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Boswell has very handsome and spacious rooms, level with the ground, on one side of the house, and, on the other, four stories high.

At dinner, on Monday, were the dutchess of Douglas, an old lady, who talks broad Scotch with a paralytick voice, and is scarcely understood by her own countrymen; the lord chief baron, sir Adolphus Oughton, and many more. At supper there was such a conflux of company, that I could scarcely support the tumult. I have never been well in the whole journey, and am very easily disordered.

This morning I saw, at breakfast, Dr. Blacklock, the blind poet, who does not remember to have seen light, and is read to, by a poor scholar, in Latin, Greek, and French. He was, originally, a poor scholar himself. I looked on him with reverence. Tomorrow our journey begins; I know not when I shall write again. I am but poorly. I am, &c.

XVIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

Bamff, August 25, 1773.

Dear Madam,—It has so happened, that, though I am perpetually thinking on you, I could seldom find opportunity to write; I have, in fourteen days, sent only one letter; you must consider the fatigues of travel, and the difficulties encountered in a strange country.

August 18th. I passed, with Boswell, the frith of Forth, and began our journey; in the passage we observed an island, which I persuaded my companions to survey. We found it a rock somewhat troublesome to climb, about a mile long, and half a mile broad; in the middle were the ruins of an old fort, which had, on one of the stones,—“Maria Re. 1564.” It had been only a blockhouse, one story high. I measured two apartments, of which the walls were entire, and found them twenty-seven feet long, and twenty-three broad. The rock had some grass and many thistles; both cows and sheep were grazing. There was a spring of water. The name is Inchkeith. Look on your maps. This visit took about an hour. We pleased ourselves with being in a country all our own, and then went back to the boat, and landed at Kinghorn, a mean town; and, travelling through Kirkaldie, a very long town, meanly built, and Cowpar, which I could not see, because it was night, we came late to St. Andrew’s, the most ancient of the Scotch universities, and once the see of the primate of Scotland. The inn was full; but lodgings were provided for us at the house of the professor of rhetorick, a man of elegant manners, who showed us, in the morning, the poor remains of a stately cathedral, demolished in Knox’s reformation, and now only to be imagined, by tracing its foundation, and contemplating the little ruins that are left. Here was once a religious house. Two of the vaults or cellars of the sub-prior are even yet entire. In one of them lives an old woman, who claims an hereditary residence in it, boasting that her husband

was the sixth tenant of this gloomy mansion, in a lineal descent, and claims, by her marriage with this lord of the

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cavern, an alliance with the Bruces. Mr. Boswell staid awhile to interrogate her, because he understood her language; she told him, that she and her cat lived together; that she had two sons somewhere, who might, perhaps, be dead; that, when there were quality in the town, notice was taken of her, and that now she was neglected, but did not trouble them. Her habitation contained all that she had; her turf, for fire, was laid in one place, and her balls of coal-dust in another, but her bed seemed to be clean. Boswell asked her, if she never heard any noises; but she could tell him of nothing supernatural, though she often wandered in the night among the graves and ruins; only she had, sometimes, notice, by dreams, of the death of her relations. We then viewed the remains of a castle, on the margin of the sea, in which the archbishops resided, and in which cardinal Beatoun was killed.

The professors, who happened to be readout in the vacation, made a publick dinner, and treated us very kindly and respectfully. They showed us their colleges, in one of which there is a library that, for luminousness and elegance, may vie, at least, with the new edifice at Streatham. But learning seems not to prosper among them; one of their colleges has been lately alienated, and one of their churches lately deserted. An experiment was made of planting a shrubbery in the church, but it did not thrive.

Why the place should thus fall to decay, I know not; for education, such as is here to be had, is sufficiently cheap. The term, or, as they call it, their session, lasts seven months in the year, which the students of the highest rank and greatest expense, may pass here for twenty pounds, in which are included board, lodging, books, and the continual instruction of three professors.

20th. We left St. Andrew's, well satisfied with our reception, and, crossing the frith of Tay, came to Dundee, a dirty, despicable town. We passed, afterwards, through Aberbrothick, famous once for an abbey, of which there are only a few fragments left; but those fragments testify that the fabrick was once of great extent, and of stupendous magnificence. Two of the towers are yet standing, though shattered; into one of them Boswell climbed, but found the stairs broken: the way into the other we did not see, and had not time to search; I believe it might be ascended, but the top, I think, is open.

We lay at Montrose, a neat place, with a spacious area for the market, and an elegant town-house.

21st. We travelled towards Aberdeen, another university, and, in the way, dined at lord Monboddo's, the Scotch judge, who has lately written a strange book about the origin of language, in which he traces monkeys up to men, and says that, in some countries, the human species have tails like other beasts. He inquired for these long-tailed men of Banks, and was not well pleased, that they had not been found in all his peregrination. He talked nothing of this to me, and I hope we parted friends; for we agreed pretty well,

only we disputed in adjusting the claims of merit between a shopkeeper of London, and a savage of the American wildernesses. Our opinions were, I think, maintained, on both sides, without full conviction: Monboddo declared boldly for the savage; and I, perhaps, for that reason, sided with the citizen.

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We came late to Aberdeen, where I found my dear mistress's letter, and learned that all our little people were happily recovered of the measles. Every part of your letter was pleasing.

There are two cities of the name of Aberdeen: the old town, built about a mile inland, once the see of a bishop, which contains the king's college, and the remains of the cathedral; and the new town, which stands, for the sake of trade, upon a frith or arm of the sea, so that ships rest against the quay.

The two cities have their separate magistrates; and the two colleges are, in effect, two universities, which confer degrees independently of each other.

New Aberdeen is a large town, built almost wholly of that granite which is used for the new pavement in London, which, hard as it is, they square with very little difficulty. Here I first saw the women in plaids. The plaid makes, at once, a hood and cloak, without cutting or sewing, merely by the manner of drawing the opposite sides over the shoulders. The maids, at the inns, run over the house barefoot; and children, not dressed in rags, go without shoes or stockings. Shoes are, indeed, not yet in universal use; they came late into this country. One of the professors told us, as we were mentioning a fort, built by Cromwell, that the country owed much of its present industry to Cromwell's soldiers. They taught us, said he, to raise cabbage, and make shoes. How they lived without shoes may yet be seen; but, in the passage through villages, it seems to him, that surveys their gardens, that when they had not cabbage, they had nothing.

Education is here of the same price as at St. Andrew's, only the session is but from the 1st of November to the 1st of April. The academical buildings seem rather to advance than decline. They showed their libraries, which were not very splendid, but some manuscripts were so exquisitely penned, that I wished my dear mistress to have seen them. I had an unexpected pleasure, by finding an old acquaintance, now professor of physick, in the king's college: we were, on both sides, glad of the interview, having not seen, nor, perhaps, thought on one another, for many years; but we had no emulation, nor had either of us risen to the other's envy, and our old kindness was easily renewed. I hope we shall never try the effect of so long an absence, and that I shall always be, madam your, &c.

XIX.—To MRS. THRALE.

Inverness, August 28, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,—August 23rd, I had the honour of attending the lord provost of Aberdeen, and was presented with the freedom of the city, not in a gold box, but in good Latin. Let me pay Scotland one just praise! there was no officer gaping for a fee; this

could have been said of no city on the English side of the Tweed. I wore my patent of freedom, *pro more*, in my hat, from the new town to the old, about a mile. I then dined with my friend,

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the professor of physick, at his house, and saw the king's college. Boswell was very angry, that the Aberdeen professors would not talk. When I was at the English church, in Aberdeen, I happened to be espied by lady Di. Middleton, whom I had sometime seen in London; she told what she had seen to Mr. Boyd, lord Errol's brother, who wrote us an invitation to lord Errol's house, called Slane's castle We went thither on the next day, (24th of August,) and found a house, not old, except but one tower, built on the margin of the sea, upon a rock, scarce accessible from the sea; at one corner, a tower makes a perpendicular continuation of the lateral surface of the rock, so that it is impracticable to walk round; the house inclosed a square court, and on all sides within the court is a piazza, or gallery, two stories high. We came in, as we were invited to dinner, and, after dinner, offered to go; but lady Errol sent us word by Mr. Boyd, that if we went before lord Errol came home, we must never be forgiven, and ordered out the coach to show us two curiosities. We were first conducted, by Mr. Boyd, to Dunbuys, or the yellow rock. Dunbuys is a rock, consisting of two protuberances, each, perhaps, one hundred yards round, joined together by a narrow neck, and separated from the land by a very narrow channel or gully. These rocks are the haunts of seafowl, whose clang, though this is not their season, we heard at a distance. The eggs and the young are gathered here, in great numbers, at the time of breeding. There is a bird here, called a coot, which, though not much bigger than a duck, lays a larger egg than a goose. We went then to see the Buller, or Bouilloir, of Buchan: Buchan is the name of the district, and the Buller is a small creek, or gulf, into which the sea flows through an arch of the rock. We walked round it, and saw it black, at a great depth. It has its name from the violent ebullition of the water, when high winds or high tides drive it up the arch into the basin. Walking a little farther, I spied some boats, and told my companions that we would go into the Buller and examine it. There was no danger; all was calm; we went through the arch, and found ourselves in a narrow gulf, surrounded by craggy rocks, of height not stupendous, but, to a mediterranean visitor, uncommon. On each side was a cave, of which the fisherman knew not the extent, in which smugglers hide their goods, and sometimes parties of pleasure take a dinner. I am, &c.

XX.—To MRS. THRALE.

Skie, September 6, 1773.

DEAREST MADAM,—I am now looking on the sea, from a house of sir Alexander Macdonald, in the isle of Skie. Little did I once think of seeing this region of obscurity, and little did you once expect a salutation from this verge of European life. I have now the pleasure of going where nobody goes, and seeing what nobody sees. Our design is to visit several of the smaller islands, and then pass over to the south-west of Scotland.

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I returned from the sight of Buller's Buchan to lord Errol's, and, having seen his library, had, for a time, only to look upon the sea, which rolled between us and Norway. Next morning, August 25th, we continued our journey through a country not uncultivated, but so denuded of its woods, that, in all this journey, I had not travelled a hundred yards between hedges, or seen five trees fit for the carpenter. A few small plantations may be found, but I believe scarcely any thirty years old; at least, they are all posterior to the union. This day we dined with a country-gentleman, who has in his grounds the remains of a Druid's temple, which, when it is complete, is nothing more than a circle, or double circle, of stones, placed at equal distances, with a flat stone, perhaps an altar, at a certain point, and a stone, taller than the rest, at the opposite point. The tall stone is erected, I think, at the south. Of these circles, there are many in all the unfrequented parts of the island. The inhabitants of these parts respect them as memorials of the sculpture of some illustrious person. Here I saw a few trees. We lay at Bamff.

August 26th. We dined at Elgin, where we saw the ruins of a noble cathedral; the chapter-house is yet standing. A great part of Elgin is built with small piazzas to the lower story. We went on to Foris, over the heath where Macbeth met the witches, but had no adventure; only in the way we saw, for the first time, some houses with fruit-trees about them. The improvements of the Scotch are for immediate profit; they do not yet think it quite worth their while to plant what will not produce something to be eaten, or sold, in a very little time. We rested at Foris.

A very great proportion of the people are barefoot; shoes are not yet considered as necessaries of life. It is still the custom to send out the sons of gentlemen without them into the streets and ways. There are more beggars than I have ever seen in England; they beg, if not silently, yet very modestly.

Next day we came to Nairn, a miserable town, but a royal burgh, of which the chief annual magistrate is styled lord provost. In the neighbourhood we saw the castle of the old thane of Cawdor. There is one ancient tower, with its battlements and winding stairs, yet remaining; the rest of the house is, though not modern, of later erection.

On the 28th we went to Fort George, which is accounted the most regular fortification in the island. The major of artillery walked with us round the walls, and showed us the principles upon which every part was constructed, and the way in which it could be defended. We dined with the governour, sir Eyre Coote, and his officers. It was a very pleasant and instructive day; but nothing puts my honoured mistress out of my mind.

At night we came to Inverness, the last considerable town in the north, where we staid all the next day, for it was Sunday, and saw the ruins of what is called Macbeth's castle. It never was a large house, but was strongly situated. From Inverness we were to travel on horseback.

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August 30th. We set out with four horses. We had two highlanders to run by us, who were active, officious, civil, and hardy. Our journey was, for many miles, along a military way, made upon the banks of Lough Ness, a water about eighteen miles long, but not, I think, half a mile broad. Our horses were not bad, and the way was very pleasant; the rock, out of which the road was cut, was covered with birch-trees, fern, and heath. The lake below was beating its bank by a gentle wind, and the rocks beyond the water, on the right, stood sometimes horrid, and wild, and sometimes opened into a kind of bay, in which there was a spot of cultivated ground, yellow with corn. In one part of the way we had trees on both sides, for, perhaps, half a mile. Such a length of shade, perhaps Scotland cannot show in any other place.

You are not to suppose, that here are to be any more towns or inns. We came to a cottage, which they call the General's Hut, where we alighted to dine, and had eggs and bacon, and mutton, with wine, rum, and whiskey. I had water.

At a bridge over the river, which runs into the Ness the rocks rise on three sides, with a direction almost perpendicular, to a great height; they are, in part, covered with trees, and exhibit a kind of dreadful magnificence:—standing like the barriers of nature, placed to keep different orders of being in perpetual separation. Near this bridge is the fall of Fiers, a famous cataract, of which, by clambering over the rocks, we obtained a view. The water was low, and, therefore, we had only the pleasure of knowing that rain would make it, at once, pleasing and formidable; there will then be a mighty flood, foaming along a rocky channel, frequently obstructed by protuberances, and exasperated by reverberation, at last precipitated with a sudden descent, and lost in the depth of a gloomy chasm.

We came, somewhat late, to Fort Augustus, where the lieutenant-governour met us beyond the gates, and apologized that, at that hour, he could not, by the rules of a garrison, admit us, otherwise than at a narrow door, which only one can enter at a time. We were well entertained and well lodged, and, next morning, after having viewed the fort, we pursued our journey.

Our way now lay over the mountains, which are not to be passed by climbing them directly, but by traversing; so that, as we went forward, we saw our baggage following us below, in a direction exactly contrary. There is, in these ways, much labour, but little danger, and, perhaps, other places, of which very terrifick representations are made, are not, in themselves, more formidable. These roads have all been made by hewing the rock away with pickaxes, or bursting it with gunpowder. The stones, so separated, are often piled loose, as a wall by the wayside. We saw an inscription, importing the year in which one of the regiments made two thousand yards of the road eastward.

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After tedious travel of some hours, we came to what, I believe, we must call a village, a place where there were three huts built of turf; at one of which we were to have our dinner and our bed, for we could not reach any better place that night. This place is called Enoch in Glenmorrison. The house, in which we lodged, was distinguished by a chimney, the rest had only a hole for the smoke. Here we had eggs, and mutton, and a chicken, and a sausage, and rum. In the afternoon tea was made by a very decent girl in a printed linen: she engaged me so much, that I made her a present of Cocker's arithmetick. I am, &c.

XXI.—To MRS. THRALE.

Skie, Sept. 14,1773.

DEAREST MADAM,—The post, which comes but once a week into these parts, is so soon to go, that I have not time to go on where I left off in my last letter. I have been several days in the island of Raarsa, and am now again in the isle of Skie, but at the other end of it.

Skie is almost equally divided between the two great families of Macdonald and Macleod, other proprietors having only small districts. The two great lords do not know, within twenty square miles, the contents of their own territories.

—kept up but ill the reputation of highland hospitality; we are now with Macleod, quite at the other end of the island, where there is a fine young gentleman and fine ladies. The ladies are studying Erse. I have a cold, and am miserably deaf, and am troublesome to lady Macleod; I force her to speak loud, but she will seldom speak loud enough.

Raarsa is an island about fifteen miles long and two broad, under the dominion of one gentleman, who has three sons and ten daughters; the eldest is the beauty of this part of the world, and has been polished at Edinburgh: they sing and dance, and, without expense, have upon their table most of what sea, air, or earth can afford. I intended to have written about Raarsa, but the post will not wait longer than while I send my compliments to my dear master and little mistresses. I am, &c.

XXII.—To MRS. THRALE.

Skie, Sept. 21, 1773.

DEAREST MADAM,—I am so vexed at the necessity of sending yesterday so short a letter, that I purpose to get a long letter beforehand, by writing something every day, which I may the more easily do, as a cold makes me now too deaf to take the usual pleasure in conversation. Lady Macleod is very good to me; and the place, at which we now are, is equal, in strength of situation, in the wildness of the adjacent country, and in

the plenty and elegance of the domestick entertainment, to a castle in Gothick romances. The sea, with a little island, is before us; cascades play within view. Close to the house is the formidable skeleton of an old castle, probably Danish; and the whole mass of building stands upon a protuberance of rock, inaccessible till of late, but by a pair of stairs on the seaside, and secure, in ancient times, against any enemy that was likely to invade the kingdom of Skie.

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Macleod has offered me an island; if it were not too far off, I should hardly refuse it: my island would be pleasanter than Brighthelmstone, if you and my master could come to it; but I cannot think it pleasant to live quite alone,

"Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis."

That I should be elated, by the dominion of an island to forgetfulness of my friends at Streatham, I cannot believe, and I hope never to deserve that they should be willing to forget me.

It has happened, that I have been often recognised in my journey, where I did not expect it. At Aberdeen, I found one of my acquaintance professor of physick: turning aside to dine with a country-gentleman, I was owned, at table, by one who had seen me at a philosophical lecture: at Macdonald's I was claimed by a naturalist, who wanders about the islands to pick up curiosities: and I had once, in London, attracted the notice of lady Macleod. I will now go on with my account.

The highland girl made tea, and looked and talked not inelegantly; her father was by no means an ignorant or a weak man; there were books in the cottage, among which were some volumes of Prideaux's Connexion: this man's conversation we were glad of while we staid. He had been out, as they call it, in forty-five, and still retained his old opinions. He was going to America, because his rent was raised beyond what he thought himself able to pay.

At night our beds were made, but we had some difficulty in persuading ourselves to lie down in them, though we had put on our own sheets; at last we ventured, and I slept very soundly in the vale of Glenmorrison, amidst the rocks and mountains. Next morning our landlord liked us so well, that he walked some miles with us for our company, through a country so wild and barren, that the proprietor does not, with all his pressure upon his tenants, raise more than four hundred pounds a year for near one hundred square miles, or sixty thousand acres. He let us know, that he had forty head of black cattle, a hundred goats, and a hundred sheep, upon a farm that he remembered let at five pounds a year, but for which he now paid twenty. He told us some stories of their march into England. At last, he left us, and we went forward, winding among mountains, sometimes green and sometimes naked, commonly so steep, as not easily to be climbed by the greatest vigour and activity: our way was often crossed by little rivulets, and we were entertained with small streams trickling from the rocks, which, after heavy rains, must be tremendous torrents.

About noon we came to a small glen, so they call a valley, which, compared with other places, appeared rich and fertile; here our guides desired us to stop, that the horses might graze, for the journey was very laborious, and no more grass would be found. We made no difficulty of compliance, and I sat down to take notes on a green bank, with a small stream running at my feet, in the midst of savage solitude, with

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mountains before me, and, on either hand, covered with heath. I looked around me, and wondered, that I was not more affected, but the mind is not at all times equally ready to be put in motion; if my mistress, and master, and Queeney had been there, we should have produced some reflections among us, either poetical or philosophical; for though “solitude be the nurse of woe,” conversation is often the parent of remarks and discoveries.

In about an hour we remounted, and pursued our journey. The lake, by which we had travelled for some time, ended in a river, which we passed by a bridge, and came to another glen, with a collection of huts, called Auknashealds; the huts were, generally, built of clods of earth, held together by the intertexture of vegetable fibres, of which earth there are great levels in Scotland, which they call mosses. Moss in Scotland is bog in Ireland, and moss-trooper is bog-trotter; there was, however, one hut built of loose stones, piled up, with great thickness, into a strong, though not solid wall. From this house we obtained some great pails of milk, and having brought bread with us, we were liberally regaled. The inhabitants, a very coarse tribe, ignorant of any language but Erse, gathered so fast about us, that, if we had not had highlanders with us, they might have caused more alarm than pleasure; they are called the clan of Macrae.

We had been told, that nothing gratified the highlanders so much as snuff and tobacco, and had, accordingly, stored ourselves with both at Fort Augustus. Boswell opened his treasure, and gave them each a piece of tobacco roll. We had more bread than we could eat for the present, and were more liberal than provident. Boswell cut it in slices, and gave them an opportunity of tasting wheaten bread, for the first time. I then got some half-pence for a shilling, and made up the deficiencies of Boswell’s distribution, who had given some money among the children. We then directed, that the mistress of the stone-house should be asked, what we must pay her. She, who, perhaps, had never before sold any thing but cattle, knew not, I believe, well what to ask, and referred herself to us: we obliged her to make some demand, and one of the Highlanders settled the account with her at a shilling. One of the men advised her, with the cunning that clowns never can be without, to ask more; but she said that a shilling was enough. We gave her half-a-crown, and she offered part of it again. The Macraes were so well pleased with our behaviour, that they declared it the best day they had seen, since the time of the old laird of Macleod, who, I suppose, like us, stopped in their valley, as he was travelling to Skie.

We were mentioning this view of the highlander’s life at Macdonald’s, and mentioning the Macraes, with some degree of pity, when a highland lady informed us, that we might spare our tenderness, for she doubted not but the woman, who supplied us with milk, was mistress of thirteen or fourteen milch cows.

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I cannot forbear to interrupt my narrative. Boswell, with some of his troublesome kindness, has informed this family, and reminded me, that the 18th of September is my birthday. The return of my birthday, if I remember it, fills me with thoughts which it seems to be the general care of humanity to escape. I can now look back upon threescore and four years, in which little has been done, and little has been enjoyed; a life, diversified by misery, spent part in the sluggishness of penury, and part under the violence of pain, in gloomy discontent, or importunate distress. But, perhaps, I am better than I should have been, if I had been less afflicted. With this I will try to be content.

In proportion as there is less pleasure in retrospective considerations, the mind is more disposed to wander forward into futurity; but, at sixty-four, what promises, however liberal, of imaginary good can futurity venture to make? yet something will be always promised, and some promises will be always credited. I am hoping, and I am praying, that I may live better in the time to come, whether long or short, than I have yet lived, and, in the solace of that hope, endeavour to repose. Dear Queeney's day is next: I hope she, at sixty-four, will have less to regret.

I will now complain no more, but tell my mistress of my travels.

After we left the Macraes, we travelled on through a country like that which we passed in the morning. The highlands are very uniform, for there is little variety in universal barrenness; the rocks, however, are not all naked, for some have grass on their sides, and birches and alders on their tops, and in the valleys are often broad and clear streams, which have little depth, and commonly run very quick; the channels are made by the violence of the wintry floods; the quickness of the stream is in proportion to the declivity of the descent, and the breadth of the channel makes the water shallow in a dry season.

There are red deer and roe bucks in the mountains, but we found only goats in the road, and had very little entertainment, as we travelled, either for the eye or ear. There are, I fancy, no singing birds in the highlands.

Towards night we came to a very formidable hill, called Rattiken, which we climbed with more difficulty than we had yet experienced, and, at last, came to Glanelg, a place on the seaside, opposite to Skie. We were, by this time, weary and disgusted, nor was our humour much mended by our inn, which, though it was built of lime and slate, the highlander's description of a house, which he thinks magnificent, had neither wine, bread, eggs, nor any thing that we could eat or drink. When we were taken up stairs, a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed, where one of us was to lie. Boswell blustered, but nothing could be got. At last, a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who heard of our arrival, sent us rum and white sugar. Boswell was now provided for, in part, and the landlord

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prepared some mutton chops, which we could not eat, and killed two hens, of which Boswell made his servant broil a limb; with what effect I know not. We had a lemon and a piece of bread, which supplied me with my supper. When the repast was ended, we began to deliberate upon bed: Mrs. Boswell had warned us, that we should *catch something*, and had given us *sheets*, for our *security*, for—and—, she said, came back from Skie, so scratching themselves. I thought sheets a slender defence against the confederacy with which we were threatened, and, by this time, our Highlanders had found a place, where they could get some hay: I ordered hay to be laid thick upon the bed, and slept upon it in my great coat: Boswell laid sheets upon his bed, and reposed in linen, like a gentleman. The horses were turned out to grass, with a man to watch them. The hill Rattiken, and the inn at Glanelg, were the only things of which we, or travellers yet more delicate, could find any pretensions to complain.

Sept. 2nd. I rose, rustling from the hay, and went to tea, which I forget, whether we found or brought. We saw the isle of Skie before us, darkening the horizon with its rocky coast. A boat was procured, and we lanched into one of the straits of the Atlantick ocean. We had a passage of about twelve miles to the point where—resided, having come from his seat in the middle of the island, to a small house on the shore, as we believe, that he might, with less reproach, entertain us meanly. If he aspired to meanness, his retrograde ambition was completely gratified, but he did not succeed equally in escaping reproach. He had no cook, nor, I suppose, much provision, nor had the lady the common decencies of her tea-table; we picked up our sugar with our fingers. Boswell was very angry, and reproached him with his improper parsimony; I did not much reflect upon the conduct of a man with whom I was not likely to converse as long at any other time.

You will now expect that I should give you some account of the isle of Skie, of which, though I have been twelve days upon it, I have little to say. It is an island, perhaps, fifty miles long, so much indented by inlets of the sea, that there is no part of it removed from the water more than six miles. No part, that I have seen, is plain; you are always climbing or descending, and every step is upon rock or mire. A walk upon ploughed ground in England is a dance upon carpets, compared to the toilsome drudgery of wandering in Skie. There is neither town nor village in the island, nor have I seen any house but Macleod's, that is not much below your habitation at Brighthelmstone. In the mountains there are stags and roe bucks, but no hares, and few rabbits; nor have I seen any thing that interested me, as a zoologist, except an otter, bigger than I thought an otter could have been.

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You are, perhaps, imagining that I am withdrawing from the gay and the busy world, into regions of peace and pastoral felicity, and am enjoying the relicks of the golden age; that I am surveying nature's magnificence from a mountain, or remarking her minuter beauties on the flowery bank of a winding rivulet; that I am invigorating myself in the sunshine, or delighting my imagination with being hidden from the invasion of human evils and human passions, in the darkness of a thicket; that I am busy in gathering shells and pebbles on the shore, or contemplative on a rock, from which I look upon the water, and consider how many waves are rolling between me and Streatham.

The use of travelling is to regulate imagination by reality, and, instead of thinking how things may be, to see them as they are. Here are mountains which I should once have climbed; but to climb steeps is now very laborious, and to descend them, dangerous; and I am now content with knowing, that, by scrambling up a rock, I shall only see other rocks, and a wider circuit of barren desolation. Of streams, we have here a sufficient number; but they murmur not upon pebbles, but upon rocks. Of flowers, if Chloris herself were here, I could present her only with the bloom of heath. Of lawns and thickets, he must read that would know them, for here is little sun, and no shade. On the sea I look from my window, but am not much tempted to the shore; for since I came to this island, almost every breath of air has been a storm, and, what is worse, a storm with all its severity, but without its magnificence, for the sea is here so broken into channels, that there is not a sufficient volume of water either for lofty surges, or a loud roar.

On Sept. 6th, we left—to visit Raarsa, the island which I have already mentioned. We were to cross part of Skie on horseback; a mode of travelling very uncomfortable, for the road is so narrow, where any road can be found, that only one can go, and so craggy, that the attention can never be remitted; it allows, therefore, neither the gaiety of conversation, nor the laxity of solitude; nor has it, in itself, the amusement of much variety, as it affords only all the possible transpositions of bog, rock, and rivulet. Twelve miles, by computation, make a reasonable journey for a day.

At night we came to a tenant's house, of the first rank of tenants, where we were entertained better than at the landlord's. There were books, both English and Latin. Company gathered about us, and we heard some talk of the second sight, and some talk of the events of forty-five; a year which will not soon be forgotten among the islanders. The next day we were confined by a storm. The company, I think, increased, and our entertainment was not only hospitable, but elegant. At night, a minister's sister, in very fine brocade, sung Erse songs; I wished to know the meaning; but the highlanders are not much used to scholastick questions, and no translations could be obtained.

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Next day, Sept. 8th, the weather allowed us to depart; a good boat was provided us, and we went to Raarsa, under the conduct of Mr. Malcolm Macleod, a gentleman who conducted prince Charles through the mountains in his distresses. The prince, he says, was more active than himself; they were, at least, one night without any shelter.

The wind blew enough to give the boat a kind of dancing agitation, and, in about three or four hours, we arrived at Raarsa, where we were met by the laird, and his friends, upon the shore. Raarsa, for such is his title, is master of two islands; upon the smaller of which, called Rona, he has only flocks and herds. Rona gives title to his eldest son. The money which he raises annually by rent from all his dominions, which contain, at least, fifty thousand acres, is not believed to exceed two hundred and fifty pounds; but, as he keeps a large farm in his own hands, he sells, every year, great numbers of cattle, which add to his revenue, and his table is furnished from the farm and from the sea, with very little expense, except for those things this country does not produce, and of those he is very liberal. The wine circulates vigorously; and the tea, chocolate, and coffee, however they are got, are always at hand. I am, &c.

We are this morning trying to get out of Skie.

XXIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

Skie, Sept. 24, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,—I am still in Skie. Do you remember the song,

"Every island is a prison,
Strongly guarded by the sea."

We have, at one time, no boat, and, at another, may have too much wind; but, of our reception here, we have no reason to complain. We are now with colonel Macleod, in a more pleasant place than I thought Skie could afford. Now to the narrative.

We were received at Raarsa on the seaside, and after clambering, with some difficulty, over the rocks, a labour which the traveller, wherever he reposes himself on land, must, in these islands, be contented to endure; we were introduced into the house, which one of the company called the court of Raarsa, with politeness, which not the court of Versailles could have thought defective. The house is not large, though we were told, in our passage, that it had eleven fine rooms, nor magnificently furnished; but our utensils were, most commonly, silver. We went up into a dining-room, about as large as your blue room, where we had something given us to eat, and tea and coffee.

Raarsa himself is a man of no inelegant appearance, and of manners uncommonly refined. Lady Raarsa makes no very sublime appearance for a sovereign, but is a good housewife, and a very prudent and diligent conductress of her family. Miss Flora

Macleod is a celebrated beauty; has been admired at Edinburgh; dresses her head very high; and has manners so lady-like, that I wish her head-dress was lower. The rest of the nine girls are all pretty; the youngest is between Queeney and Lucy. The youngest boy, of four years old, runs barefoot, and wandered with us over the rocks to see a mill: I believe he would walk on that rough ground, without shoes, ten miles in a day.

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The laird of Raarsa has sometimes disputed the chieftainry of the clan with Macleod of Skie, but, being much inferiour in extent of possessions, has, I suppose, been forced to desist. Raarsa, and its provinces, have descended to its present possessour, through a succession of four hundred years, without any increase or diminution. It was, indeed, lately in danger of forfeiture, but the old laird joined some prudence with his zeal, and when prince Charles landed in Scotland, made over his estate to this son, the present laird, and led one hundred men of Raarsa into the field, with officers of his own family. Eighty-six only came back after the last battle. The prince was hidden, in his distress, two nights at Raarsa, and the king's troops burnt the whole country, and killed some of the cattle.

You may guess at the opinions that prevail in this country; they are, however, content with fighting for their king; they do not drink for him. We had no foolish healths. At night, unexpectedly to us, who were strangers, the carpet was taken up; the fiddler of the family came up, and a very vigorous and general dance was begun. As I told you, we were two and thirty at supper; there were full as many dancers; for, though all who supped did not dance, some danced of the young people who did not sup. Raarsa himself danced with his children, and old Malcolm, in his fillibeg, was as nimble, as when he led the prince over the mountains. When they had danced themselves weary, two tables were spread, and, I suppose, at least twenty dishes were upon them. In this country, some preparations of milk are always served up at supper, and sometimes, in the place of tarts, at dinner. The table was not coarsely heaped, but, at once, plentiful and elegant. They do not pretend to make a loaf; there are only cakes, commonly of oats or barley, but they made me very nice cakes of wheat flour. I always sat at the left hand of lady Raarsa; and young Macleod of Skie, the chieftain of the clan, sat on the right.

After supper, a young lady, who was visiting, sung Erse songs, in which lady Raarsa joined, prettily enough, but not gracefully; the young ladies sustained the chorus better. They are very little used to be asked questions, and not well prepared with answers. When one of the songs was over, I asked the princess, that sat next to me, "What is that about?" I question if she conceived that I did not understand it. "For the entertainment of the company," said she. "But, madam, what is the meaning of it?" "It is a love song." This was all the intelligence that I could obtain; nor have I been able to procure the translation of a single line of Erse.

At twelve it was bed-time. I had a chamber to myself, which, in eleven rooms to forty people, was more than my share. How the company and the family were distributed, is not easy to tell. Macleod, the chieftain, and Boswell, and I, had all single chambers, on the first floor. There remained eight rooms only, for, at least, seven and thirty lodgers. I suppose they put up temporary beds in the dining-room, where they stowed all the young ladies. There was a room above stairs with six beds, in which they put ten men. The rest in my next.

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XXIV.—To MRS. THRALE.

Ostich in Skie, Sept. 30, 1773.

DEAREST MADAM,—I am still confined in Skie. We were unskilful travellers, and imagined that the sea was an open road, which we could pass at pleasure; but we have now learned, with some pain, that we may still wait, for a long time, the caprices of the equinoctial winds, and sit reading or writing, as I now do, while the tempest is rolling the sea, or roaring in the mountains. I am now no longer pleased with the delay; you can hear from me but seldom, and I cannot at all hear from you. It comes into my mind, that some evil may happen, or that I might be of use while I am away. But these thoughts are vain; the wind is violent and adverse, and our boat cannot yet come. I must content myself with writing to you, and hoping that you will sometime receive my letter. Now to my narrative.

Sept. 9th. Having passed the night as is usual, I rose, and found the dining-room full of company; we feasted and talked, and when the evening came it brought musick and dancing. Young Macleod, the great proprietor of Skie, and head of his clan, was very distinguishable; a young man of nineteen, bred awhile at St. Andrew's, and afterwards at Oxford, a pupil of G. Strahan. He is a young man of a mind, as much advanced as I have ever known; very elegant of manners, and very graceful in his person. He has the full spirit of a feudal chief; and I was very ready to accept his invitation to Dunvegan. All Raarsa's children are beautiful. The ladies, all, except the eldest, are in the morning dressed in their hair. The true highlander never wears more than a riband on her head, till she is married.

On the third day Boswell went out, with old Malcolm, to see a ruined castle, which he found less entire than was promised, but he saw the country. I did not go, for the castle was, perhaps, ten miles off, and there is no riding at Raarsa, the whole island being rock or mountain, from which the cattle often fall, and are destroyed. It is very barren, and maintains, as near as I could collect, about seven hundred inhabitants, perhaps ten to a square mile. In these countries you are not to suppose that you shall find villages or inclosures. The traveller wanders through a naked desert, gratified sometimes, but rarely, with the sight of cows, and now and then finds a heap of loose stones and turf, in a cavity between rocks, where a being, born with all those powers which education expands, and all those sensations which culture refines, is condemned to shelter itself from the wind and rain. Philosophers there are, who try to make themselves believe, that this life is happy; but they believe it only while they are saying it, and never yet produced conviction in a single mind; he whom want of words or images sunk into silence still thought, as he thought before, that privation of pleasure can never please, and that content is not to be much envied, when it has no other principle than ignorance of good.

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This gloomy tranquillity, which some may call fortitude, and others, wisdom, was, I believe, for a long time, to be very frequently found in these dens of poverty; every man was content to live like his neighbours, and, never wandering from home, saw no mode of life preferable to his own, except at the house of the laird, or the laird's nearest relations, whom he considered as a superiour order of beings, to whose luxuries or honours he had no pretensions. But the end of this reverence and submission seems now approaching; the highlanders have learned, that there are countries less bleak and barren than their own, where, instead of working for the laird, every man will till his own ground, and eat the produce of his own labour. Great numbers have been induced, by this discovery, to go, every year, for some time past, to America. Macdonald and Macleod, of Skie, have lost many tenants and many labourers; but Raarsa has not yet been forsaken by a single inhabitant.

Rona is yet more rocky and barren than Raarsa, and, though it contains, perhaps, four thousand acres, is possessed only by a herd of cattle and the keepers.

I find myself not very able to walk upon the mountains, but one day I went out to see the walls, yet standing, of an ancient chapel. In almost every island the superstitious votaries of the Romish church erected places of worship, in which the drones of convents, or cathedrals, performed the holy offices; but, by the active zeal of protestant devotion, almost all of them have sunk into ruin. The chapel at Raarsa is now only considered as the burying-place of the family, and, I suppose, of the whole island.

We would now have gone away, and left room for others to enjoy the pleasures of this little court; but the wind detained us till the 12th, when, though it was Sunday, we thought it proper to snatch the opportunity of a calm day. Raarsa accompanied us in his six-oared boat, which, he said, was his coach and six. It is, indeed, the vehicle in which the ladies take the air, and pay their visits, but they have taken very little care for accommodations. There is no way, in or out of the boat, for a woman, but by being carried; and in the boat thus dignified with a pompous name, there is no seat, but an occasional bundle of straw. Thus we left Raarsa; the seat of plenty, civility, and cheerfulness.

We dined at a publick house at Port Re; so called, because one of the Scottish kings landed there, in a progress through the western isles. Raarsa paid the reckoning privately. We then got on horseback, and, by a short, but very tedious journey, came to Kingsburgh, at which the same king lodged, after he landed. Here I had the honour of saluting the far-famed Miss Flora Macdonald, who conducted the prince, dressed as her maid, through the English forces, from the island of Lewes; and, when she came to Skie, dined with the English officers, and left her maid below. She must then have been a very young lady; she is now

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not old; of a pleasing person, and elegant behaviour. She told me, that she thought herself honoured by my visit; and, I am sure, that whatever regard she bestowed on me was liberally repaid. “If thou likest her opinions, thou wilt praise her virtue.” She was carried to London, but dismissed without a trial, and came down with Malcolm Macleod, against whom sufficient evidence could not be procured. She and her husband are poor, and are going to try their fortune in America:

“Sic rerum volvitur orbis.”

At Kingsburgh we were very liberally feasted, and I slept in the bed in which the prince reposed in his distress; the sheets which he used were never put to any meaner offices, but were wrapped up by the lady of the house, and at last, according to her desire, were laid round her in her grave. These are not whigs.

On the 13th, travelling partly on horseback, where we could not row, and partly on foot, where we could not ride, we came to Dunvegan, which I have described already. Here, though poor Macleod had been left by his grandfather overwhelmed with debts, we had another exhibition of feudal hospitality. There were two stags in the house, and venison came to the table every day in its various forms. Macleod, besides his estate in Skie, larger, I suppose, than some English counties, is proprietor of nine inhabited isles; and, of his islands uninhabited, I doubt if he very exactly knows the number. I told him that he was a mighty monarch. Such dominions fill an Englishman with envious wonder; but, when he surveys the naked mountains, and treads the quaking moor, and wanders over the wild regions of gloomy barrenness, his wonder may continue, but his envy ceases. The unprofitableness of these vast domains can be conceived only by the means of positive instances. The heir of Col, an island not far distant, has lately told me, how wealthy he should be, if he could let Rum, another of his islands, for twopence halfpenny an acre; and Macleod has an estate, which the surveyor reports to contain eighty thousand acres, rented at six hundred pounds a year.

While we were at Dunvegan, the wind was high, and the rain violent, so that we were not able to put forth a boat to fish in the sea, or to visit the adjacent islands, which may be seen from the house; but we filled up the time, as we could, sometimes by talk, sometimes by reading. I have never wanted books in the isle of Skie.

We were invited one day by the laird and lady of Muck, one of the western islands, two miles long, and three quarters of a mile high. He has half his island in his own culture, and upon the other half live one hundred and fifty dependants, who not only live upon the product, but export corn sufficient for the payment of their rent.

Lady Macleod has a son and four daughters; they have lived long in England, and have the language and manners of English ladies. We lived with them very easily. The

hospitality of this remote region is like that of the golden age. We have found ourselves treated, at every house, as if we came to confer a benefit.

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We were eight days at Dunvegan, but we took the first opportunity which the weather afforded, after the first days, of going away, and, on the 21st, went to Ulinish, where we were well entertained, and wandered a little after curiosities. In the afternoon, an interval of calm sunshine courted us out, to see a cave on the shore, famous for its echo. When we went into the boat, one of our companions was asked, in Erse, by the boatmen, who they were, that came with him. He gave us characters, I suppose, to our advantage, and was asked, in the spirit of the highlands, whether I could recite a long series of ancestors. The boatmen said, as I perceived afterwards, that they heard the cry of an English ghost. This, Boswell says, disturbed him. We came to the cave, and, clambering up the rocks, came to an arch, open at one end, one hundred and eighty feet long, thirty broad, in the broadest part, and about thirty high. There was no echo: such is the fidelity of report; but I saw, what I had never seen before, muscles and whilks, in their natural state. There was another arch in the rock, open at both ends.

September 23rd. We removed to Talisker, a house occupied by Mr. Macleod, a lieutenant colonel in the Dutch service. Talisker has been long in the possession of gentlemen, and, therefore, has a garden well cultivated, and, what is here very rare, is shaded by trees; a place where the imagination is more amused cannot easily be found. The mountains about it are of great height, with waterfalls succeeding one another so fast, that as one ceases to be heard, another begins. Between the mountains there is a small valley, extending to the sea, which is not far off, beating upon a coast, very difficult of access.

Two nights before our arrival, two boats were driven upon this coast by the tempest; one of them had a pilot that knew the passage; the second followed, but a third missed the true course, and was driven forward, with great danger of being forced into the vast ocean, but, however, gained, at last, some other island. The crews crept to Talisker, almost lifeless with wet, cold, fatigue, and terrour, but the lady took care of them. She is a woman of more than common qualifications; having travelled with her husband, she speaks four languages.

You find, that all the islanders, even in these recesses of life, are not barbarous. One of the ministers, who has adhered to us almost all the time, is an excellent scholar. We have now with us the young laird of Col, who is heir, perhaps, to two hundred square miles of land. He has first studied at Aberdeen, and afterwards gone to Hertfordshire, to learn agriculture, being much impressed with desire of improvement; he, likewise, has the notions of a chief, and keeps a piper. At Macleod's the bagpipe always played, while we were dining.

Col has undertaken, by permission of the waves and wind, to carry us about several of the islands, with which he is acquainted enough to show us whatever curious is given by nature, or left by antiquity; but we grew afraid of deviating from our way home, lest we should be shut up for months upon some little protuberance of rock, that just appears above the sea, and, perhaps, is scarcely marked upon a map.

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You remember the doge of Genoa, who being asked, what struck him most at the French court, answered, “myself.” I cannot think many things here more likely to affect the fancy, than to see Johnson ending his sixty-fourth year in the wilderness of the Hebrides. But now I am here, it will gratify me very little to return without seeing, or doing my best to see, what those places afford. I have a desire to instruct myself in the whole system of pastoral life, but I know not whether I shall be able to perfect the idea. However, I have many pictures in my mind, which I could not have had without this journey, and should have passed it with great pleasure, had you, and master, and Queeney, been in the party. We should have excited the attention, and enlarged the observation of each other, and obtained many pleasing topicks of future conversation. As it is, I travel with my mind too much at home, and, perhaps, miss many things worthy of observation, or pass them with transient notice; so that the images, for want of that reimpression which discussion and comparison produce, easily fade away; but I keep a book of remarks, and Boswell writes a regular journal of our travels, which, I think, contains as much of what I say and do, as of all other occurrences together; “for such a faithful chronicler as Griffith.”

I hope, dearest madam, you are equally careful to reposit proper memorials of all that happens to you and your family, and then, when we meet, we shall tell our stories. I wish you had gone this summer, in your usual splendour, to Brighthelmstone.

Mr. Thrale probably wonders, how I live all this time without sending to him for money. Travelling in Scotland is dear enough, dearer, in proportion to what the country affords, than in England, but residence in the isles is unexpensive. Company is, I think, considered as a supply of pleasure, and a relief of that tediousness of life which is felt in every place, elegant or rude. Of wine and punch they are very liberal, for they get them cheap; but as there is no custom-house on the island, they can hardly be considered as smugglers. Their punch is made without lemons, or any substitute.

Their tables are very plentiful; but a very nice man would not be pampered. As they have no meat but as they kill it, they are obliged to live, while it lasts, upon the same flesh. They kill a sheep, and set mutton boiled and roast on the table together. They have fish, both of the sea and of the brooks; but they can hardly conceive that it requires any sauce. To sauce, in general, they are strangers: now and then butter is melted, but I dare not always take, lest I should offend by disliking it. Barley broth is a constant dish, and is made well in every house. A stranger, if he is prudent, will secure his share, for it is not certain that he will be able to eat any thing else.

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Their meat, being often newly killed, is very tough, and, as nothing is sufficiently subdued by the fire, is not easily to be eaten. Carving is here a very laborious employment, for the knives are never whetted. Table knives are not of long subsistence in the highlands: every man, while arms were a regular part of dress, had his knife and fork appendant to his dirk. Knives they now lay upon the table, but the handles are apt to show that they have been in other hands, and the blades have neither brightness nor edge.

Of silver, there is no want, and it will last long, for it is never cleaned. They are a nation just rising from barbarity: long contented with necessaries, now somewhat studious of convenience, but not yet arrived at delicate discriminations. Their linen is, however, both clean and fine. Bread, such as we mean by that name, I have never seen in the isle of Skie. They have ovens, for they bake their pies; but they never ferment their meal, nor mould a loaf. Cakes of oats and barley are brought to the table, but I believe wheat is reserved for strangers. They are commonly too hard for me, and, therefore, I take potatoes to my meat, and am sure to find them on almost every table.

They retain so much of the pastoral life, that some preparation of milk is commonly one of the dishes, both at dinner and supper. Tea is always drunk at the usual times; but, in the morning, the table is polluted with a plate of slices of strong cheese. This is peculiar to the highlands; at Edinburgh there are always honey and sweetmeats on the morning tea-table.

Strong liquors they seem to love. Every man, perhaps, woman, begins the day with a dram; and the punch is made both at dinner and supper.

They have neither wood nor coal for fuel, but burn peat or turf in their chimneys. It is dug out of the moors or mosses, and makes a strong and lasting fire, not always very sweet, and somewhat apt to smoke the pot.

The houses of inferiour gentlemen are very small, and every room serves many purposes. In the bed-rooms, perhaps, are laid up stores of different kinds; and the parlour of the day is a bed-room at night. In the room which I inhabited last, about fourteen feet square, there were three chests of drawers, a long chest for larger clothes, two closet-cupboards, and the bed. Their rooms are commonly dirty, of which they seem to have little sensibility, and if they had more, clean floors would be difficultly kept, where the first step from the door is into the dirt. They are very much inclined to carpets, and seldom fail to lay down something under their feet, better or worse, as they happen to be furnished.

The highland dress, being forbidden by law, is very little used; sometimes it may be seen, but the English traveller is struck with nothing so much as the *nudite des pieds* of the common people.

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Skie is the greatest island, or the greatest but one, among the Hebrides. Of the soil, I have already given some account: it is generally barren, but some spots are not wholly unfruitful. The gardens have apples and pears, cherries, strawberries, raspberries, currants, and gooseberries, but all the fruit, that I have seen, is small. They attempt to sow nothing but oats and barley. Oats constitute the bread-corn of the place. Their harvest is about the beginning of October; and, being so late, is very much subject to disappointments from the rains that follow the equinox. This year has been particularly disastrous. Their rainy season lasts from autumn to spring. They have seldom very hard frosts; nor was it ever known that a lake was covered with ice strong enough to bear a skater. The sea round them is always open. The snow falls, but soon melts; only in 1771, they had a cold spring, in which the island was so long covered with it, that many beasts, both wild and domestick, perished, and the whole country was reduced to distress, from which I know not if it is even yet recovered.

The animals here are not remarkably small; perhaps they recruit their breed from the mainland. The cows are sometimes without horns. The horned and unhorned cattle are not accidental variations, but different species: they will, however, breed together.

October 3rd. The wind is now changed, and if we snatch the moment of opportunity, an escape from this island is become practicable; I have no reason to complain of my reception, yet I long to be again at home.

You and my master may, perhaps, expect, after this description of Skie, some account of myself. My eye is, I am afraid, not fully recovered; my ears are not mended; my nerves seem to grow weaker, and I have been otherwise not as well as I sometimes am, but think myself, lately, better. This climate, perhaps, is not within my degree of healthy latitude.

Thus I have given my most honoured mistress the story of me and my little ramble. We are now going to some other isle, to what we know not; the wind will tell us. I am, &c.

XXV.—To MRS. THRALE.

Mull, Oct. 15, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,—Though I have written to Mr. Thrale, yet having a little more time than was promised me, I would not suffer the messenger to go without some token of my duty to my mistress, who, I suppose, expects the usual tribute of intelligence, a tribute which I am not very able to pay.

October 3rd. After having been detained, by storms, many days in Skie, we left it, as we thought, with a fair wind; but a violent gust, which Bos. had a great mind to call a tempest, forced us into Col, an obscure island; on which

—“nulla campis Arbor aestiva recreatur aura.”

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There is literally no tree upon the island, part of it is a sandy waste, over which it would be really dangerous to travel in dry weather, and with a high wind. It seems to be little more than one continued rock, covered, from space to space, with a thin layer of earth. It is, however, according to the highland notion, very populous, and life is improved beyond the manners of Skie; for the huts are collected into little villages, and every one has a small garden of roots and cabbage. The laird has a new house built by his uncle, and an old castle inhabited by his ancestors. The young laird entertained us very liberally; he is heir, perhaps, to three hundred square miles of land, which, at ten shillings an acre, would bring him ninety-six thousand pounds a year. He is desirous of improving the agriculture of his country; and, in imitation of the czar, travelled for improvement, and worked, with his own hands, upon a farm in Hertfordshire, in the neighbourhood of your uncle, sir Thomas Salusbury. He talks of doing useful things, and has introduced turnips for winter fodder. He has made a small essay towards a road.

Col is but a barren place. Description has here few opportunities of spreading her colours. The difference of day and night is the only vicissitude. The succession of sunshine to rain, or of calms to tempests, we have not known; wind and rain have been our only weather.

At last, after about nine days, we hired a sloop; and having lain in it all night, with such accommodations as these miserable vessels can afford, were landed yesterday on the isle of Mull; from which we expect an easy passage into Scotland. I am sick in a ship, but recover by lying down.

I have not good health; I do not find that travelling much helps me. My nights are flatulent, though not in the utmost degree, and I have a weakness in my knees, which makes me very unable to walk. Pray, dear madam, let me have a long letter. I am, &c.

XXVI.—To MRS. THRALE.

Inverary, Oct. 24, 1773.

HONOURED MISTRESS,—My last letters to you, and my dear master, were written from Mull, the third island of the Hebrides in extent. There is no post, and I took the opportunity of a gentleman’s passage to the mainland.

In Mull we were confined two days by the weather; on the third we got on horseback, and, after a journey, difficult and tedious, over rocks naked, and valleys untracked, through a country of barrenness and solitude, we came, almost in the dark, to the seaside, weary and dejected, having met with nothing but water falling from the mountains that could raise any image of delight. Our company was the young laird of Col, and his servant. Col made every Maclean open his house, where he came, and

supply us with horses, when we departed; but the horses of this country are small, and I was not mounted to my wish.

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At the seaside we found the ferryboat departed; if it had been where it was expected, the wind was against us, and the hour was late, nor was it very desirable to cross the sea, in darkness, with a small boat. The captain of a sloop, that had been driven thither by the storms, saw our distress, and, as we were hesitating and deliberating, sent his boat, which, by Col's order, transported us to the isle of Ulva. We were introduced to Mr. Macquarry, the head of a small clan, whose ancestors have reigned in Ulva beyond memory, but who has reduced himself, by his negligence and folly, to the necessity of selling this venerable patrimony.

On the next morning we passed the strait to Inch Kenneth, an island about a mile in length, and less than half a mile broad; in which Kenneth, a Scottish saint, established a small clerical college, of which the chapel walls are still standing. At this place I beheld a scene, which I wish you, and my master, and Queeney had partaken.

The only family on the island is that of sir Allan, the chief of the ancient and numerous clan of Maclean; the clan which claims the second place, yielding only to Macdonald in the line of battle. Sir Allan, a chieftain, a baronet, and a soldier, inhabits, in this insulated desert, a thatched hut, with no chambers. Young Col, who owns him as his chief, and whose cousin was his lady, had, I believe, given him some notice of our visit; he received us with the soldier's frankness, and the gentleman's elegance, and introduced us to his daughters, two young ladies, who have not wanted education suitable to their birth, and who, in their cottage, neither forgot their dignity, nor affected to remember it. Do not you wish to have been with us?

Sir Allan's affairs are in disorder, by the fault of his ancestors: and, while he forms some scheme for retrieving them, he has retreated hither.

When our salutations were over, he showed us the island. We walked, uncovered, into the chapel, and saw, in the reverend ruin, the effects of precipitate reformation. The floor is covered with ancient grave-stones, of which the inscriptions are not now legible; and without, some of the chief families still continue the right of sepulture. The altar is not yet quite demolished; beside it, on the right side, is a bass-relief of the virgin with her child, and an angel hovering over her. On the other side still stands a hand-bell, which, though it has no clapper, neither presbyterian bigotry, nor barbarian wantonness, has yet taken away. The chapel is thirty-eight feet long, and eighteen broad. Boswell, who is very pious, went into it at night, to perform his devotions, but came back, in haste, for fear of spectres. Near the chapel is a fountain, to which the water, remarkably pure, is conveyed from a distant hill, through pipes laid by the Romish clergy, which still perform the office of conveyance, though they have never been repaired, since popery was suppressed.

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We soon after went in to dinner, and wanted neither the comforts nor the elegancies of life. There were several dishes, and variety of liquors. The servants live in another cottage; in which, I suppose, the meat is dressed.

Towards evening, sir Allan told us, that Sunday never passed over him, like another day. One of the ladies read, and read very well, the evening service;—and paradise was opened in the wild.

Next day, 18th, we went and wandered among the rocks on the shore, while the boat was busy in catching oysters, of which there is a great bed. Oysters lie upon the sand, one, I think, sticking to another, and cockles are found a few inches under the sand.

We then went in the boat to Sondiland, a little island very near. We found it a wild rock, of about ten acres; part naked, part covered with sand, out of which we picked shells; and part clothed with a thin layer of mould, on the grass of which a few sheep are sometimes fed. We then came back and dined. I passed part of the afternoon in reading, and in the evening one of the ladies played on her harpsichord, and Boswell and Col danced a reel with the other.

On the 19th, we persuaded sir Allan to lanch his boat again, and go with us to Icolmkill, where the first great preacher of Christianity to the Scots built a church, and settled a monastery. In our way we stopped to examine a very uncommon cave on the coast of Mull. We had some difficulty to make our way over the vast masses of broken rocks that lie before the entrance, and at the mouth were embarrassed with stones, which the sea had accumulated, as at Brighthelmstone; but, as we advanced, we reached a floor of soft sand, and, as we left the light behind us, walked along a very spacious cavity, vaulted over head with an arch almost regular, by which a mountain was sustained, at least a very lofty rock. From this magnificent cavern, went a narrow passage to the right hand, which we entered with a candle; and though it was obstructed with great stones, clambered over them to a second expansion of the cave, in which there lies a great square stone, which might serve as a table. The air here was very warm, but not oppressive, and the flame of the candle continued pyramidal. The cave goes onward to an unknown extent, but we were now one hundred and sixty yards under ground; we had but one candle, and had never heard of any that went farther and came back; we, therefore, thought it prudent to return.

Going forward in our boat, we came to a cluster of rocks, black and horrid, which sir Allan chose for the place where he would eat his dinner. We climbed till we got seats. The stores were opened, and the repast taken.

We then entered the boat again; the night came upon us; the wind rose; the sea swelled; and Boswell desired to be set on dry ground: we, however, pursued our navigation, and passed by several little islands in the silent solemnity of faint moonshine, seeing little, and hearing only the wind and the water. At last, we reached

the island, the venerable seat of ancient sanctity; where secret piety reposed, and where falling greatness was reposited. The island has no house of entertainment, and we manfully made our bed in a farmer's barn. The description I hope to give you another time. I am, &c.

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XXVII.—To MRS. THRALE.

Edinburgh, Nov. 12, 1773.

DEAREST MADAM,—Among the possibilities of evil, which my imagination suggested at this distance, I missed that which has really happened. I never had much hope of a will in your favour, but was willing to believe that no will would have been made. The event is now irrevocable; it remains only to bear it. Not to wish it had been different, is impossible; but as the wish is painful without use, it is not prudent, perhaps, not lawful, to indulge it. As life, and vigour of mind, and sprightliness of imagination, and flexibility of attention, are given us for valuable and useful purposes, we must not think ourselves at liberty to squander life, to enervate intellectual strength, to cloud our thoughts, or fix our attention, when, by all this expense, we know that no good can be produced. Be alone as little as you can; when you are alone, do not suffer your thoughts to dwell on what you might have done, to prevent this disappointment. You, perhaps, could not have done what you imagine, or might have done it without effect. But even to think in the most reasonable manner, is, for the present, not so useful, as not to think. Remit yourself solemnly into the hands of God, and then turn your mind upon the business and amusements which lie before you. “All is best,” says Chene, “as it has been, excepting the errours of our own free will.” Burton concludes his long book upon Melancholy, with this important precept: “Be not solitary; be not idle.” Remember Chene’s position, and observe Burton’s precept.

We came hither on the ninth of this month. I long to come under your care, but, for some days, cannot decently get away. They congratulate our return, as if we had been with Phipps, or Banks; I am ashamed of their salutations.

I have been able to collect very little for Queeney’s cabinet; but she will not want toys now, she is so well employed. I wish her success; and am not without some thought of becoming her schoolfellow. I have got an Italian Rasselas.

Surely my dear Lucy will recover; I wish, I could do her good. I love her very much; and should love another godchild, if I might have the honour of standing to the next baby. I am, &c.

XXVIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

Edinburgh, Nov. 18, 1773.

MY DEAREST MISTRESS,—This is the last letter that I shall write; while you are reading it, I shall be coming home.

I congratulate you upon your boy; but you must not think that I will love him, all at once, as well as I love Harry; for Harry, you know, is so rational. I shall love him by degrees.

Poor, pretty, dear Lucy! Can nothing do her good? I am sorry to lose her. But, if she must be taken from us, let us resign her, with confidence, into the hands of him who knows, and who only knows, what is best both for us and her.

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Do not suffer yourself to be dejected. Resolution and diligence will supply all that is wanting, and all that is lost. But if your health should be impaired, I know not where to find a substitute. I shall have no mistress; Mr. Thrale will have no wife; and the little flock will have no mother.

I long to be home, and have taken a place in the coach for Monday; I hope, therefore, to be in London on Friday, the 26th, in the evening. Please to let Mrs. Williams know. I am, &c.

XXIX.—To THE SAME.

Lichfield, June 23, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,—Now I hope you are thinking: Shall I have a letter to-day from Lichfield? Something of a letter you will have; how else can I expect that you should write? and the morning, on which I should miss a letter, would be a morning of uneasiness, notwithstanding all that would be said or done by the sisters of Stowhill, who do and say whatever good they can. They give me good words, and cherries, and strawberries. Lady ****, and her mother and sister, were visiting there yesterday, and Lady —— took her tea before her mother.

Mrs. Cobb is to come to Miss Porter's this afternoon. Miss A—comes little near me. Mr. Langley, of Ashbourne, was here to-day, in his way to Birmingham, and every body talks of you.

The ladies of the Amicable society are to walk, in a few days, from the townhall to the cathedral, in procession, to hear a sermon. They walk in linen gowns, and each has a stick, with an acorn; but for the acorn they could give no reason, till I told them of the civick crown.

I have just had your sweet letter, and am glad that you are to be at the regatta. You know how little I love to have you left out of any shining part of life. You have every right to distinction, and should, therefore, be distinguished. You will see a show with philosophick superiority, and, therefore, may see it safely. It is easy to talk of sitting at home, contented, when others are seeing, or making shows. But, not to have been where it is supposed, and seldom supposed falsely, that all would go if they could; to be able to say nothing, when every one is talking; to have no opinion, when every one is judging; to hear exclamations of rapture, without power to depress; to listen to falsehoods, without right to contradict, is, after all, a state of temporary inferiority, in which the mind is rather hardened by stubbornness, than supported by fortitude. If the world be worth winning, let us enjoy it; if it is to be despised, let us despise it by conviction. But the world is not to be despised, but as it is compared with something better. Company is, in itself, better than solitude, and pleasure better than indolence:

“Ex nihilo nihil fit,” says the moral, as well as the natural, philosopher. By doing nothing, and by knowing nothing, no power of doing good can be obtained. He must mingle with the world, that desires to be useful. Every new scene

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impresses new ideas, enriches the imagination, and enlarges the power of reason, by new topicks of comparison. You, that have seen the regatta, will have images, which we, who miss it, must want; and no intellectual images are without use. But, when you are in this scene of splendour and gaiety, do not let one of your fits of negligence steal upon you. “Hoc age,” is the great rule, whether you are serious or merry; whether you are stating the expenses of your family, learning science, or duty, from a folio, or floating on the Thames in a fancied dress. Of the whole entertainment, let me not hear so copious, nor so true an account, from any body as from you. I am, dearest madam, your, &c.

XXX.—To MRS. THRALE.

Ashbourne.

DEAR MADAM,—I am sure I write and write, and every letter that comes from you charges me with not writing. Since I wrote to Queeney I have written twice to you, on the 6th and the 9th: be pleased to let me know whether you have them, or have them not. That of the 6th you should regularly have had on the 8th, yet your letter of the 9th seems not to mention it; all this puzzles me.

Poor dear ****! He only grows dull, because he is sickly; age has not yet begun to impair him; nor is he such a chameleon as to take immediately the colour of his company. When you see him again you will find him reanimated. Most men have their bright and their cloudy days; at least they have days when they put their powers into action, and days when they suffer them to repose.

Fourteen thousand pounds make a sum sufficient for the establishment of a family, and which, in whatever flow of riches or confidence of prosperity, deserves to be very seriously considered. I hope a great part of it has paid debts, and no small part bought land. As for gravelling, and walling, and digging, though I am not much delighted with them, yet something, indeed much, must be allowed to every man’s taste. He that is growing rich has a right to enjoy part of the growth his own way. I hope to range in the walk, and row upon the water, and devour fruit from the wall.

Dr. Taylor wants to be gardening. He means to buy a piece of ground in the neighbourhood, and surround it with a wall, and build a gardener’s house upon it, and have fruit, and be happy. Much happiness it will not bring him; but what can he do better? If I had money enough, what would I do? Perhaps, if you and master did not hold me, I might go to Cairo, and down the Red sea to Bengal, and take a ramble in India. Would this be better than building and planting? It would surely give more variety

to the eye, and more amplitude to the mind. Half fourteen thousand would send me out to see other forms of existence, and bring me back to describe them.

I answer this the day on which I had yours of the 9th, that is on the 11th. Let me know when it comes. I am, &c.

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XXXI.—To MRS. THRALE.

Lichfield, August 2, 1775.

MADAM,—I dined to-day at Stowhill, and am come away to write my letter. Never, surely, was I such a writer before. Do you keep my letters? I am not of your opinion, that I shall not like to read them hereafter; for though there is in them not much history of mind, or anything else, they will, I hope, always be, in some degree, the records of a pure and blameless friendship, and, in some hours of languor and sadness, may revive the memory of more cheerful times.

Why you should suppose yourself not desirous hereafter to read the history of your own mind, I do not see. Twelve years, on which you now look, as on a vast expanse of life, will, probably, be passed over uniformly and smoothly, with very little perception of your progress, and with very few remarks upon the way. The accumulation of knowledge, which you promise to yourself, by which the future is to look back upon the present, with the superiority of manhood to infancy, will, perhaps, never be attempted, or never will be made; and you will find, as millions have found before you, that forty-five has made little sensible addition to thirty-three.

As the body, after a certain time, gains no increase of height, and little of strength, there is, likewise, a period, though more variable by external causes, when the mind commonly attains its stationary point, and very little advances its powers of reflection, judgment, and ratiocination. The body may acquire new modes of motion, or new dexterities of mechanick operations, but its original strength receives not improvement: the mind may be stored with new languages, or new sciences, but its power of thinking remains nearly the same, and, unless it attains new subjects of meditation, it commonly produces thoughts of the same force and the same extent, at very distant intervals of life; as the tree, unless a foreign fruit be ingrafted, gives, year after year, productions of the same form, and the same flavour.

By intellectual force, or strength of thought, is meant the degree of power which the mind possesses of surveying the subject of meditation, with its circuit of concomitants, and its train of dependence.

Of this power, which all observe to be very different in different minds, part seems the gift of nature, and part the acquisition of experience. When the powers of nature have attained their intended energy, they can be no more advanced. The shrub can never become a tree. And it is not unreasonable to suppose, that they are, before the middle of life, in their full vigour.

Nothing then remains but practice and experience; and, perhaps, why they do so little, may be worth inquiry.

But I have just now looked, and find it so late, that I will inquire against the next post night. I am, &c.

XXXII.—To MRS. THRALE.

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Lichfield, Augusts, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,—Instead of forty reasons for my return, one is sufficient, —that you wish for my company. I purpose to write no more till you see me. The ladies at Stowhill and Greenhill are unanimously of opinion, that it will be best to take a post chaise, and not to be troubled with the vexations of a common carriage. I will venture to suppose the ladies at Streatham to be of the same mind.

You will now expect to be told, why you will not be so much wiser, as you expect, when you have lived twelve years longer.

It is said, and said truly, that experience is the best teacher; and it is supposed, that, as life is lengthened, experience is increased. But a closer inspection of human life will discover, that time often passes without any incident which can much enlarge knowledge, or ratify judgment. When we are young we learn much, because we are universally ignorant; we observe every thing, because every thing is new. But, after some years, the occurrences of daily life are exhausted; one day passes like another, in the same scene of appearances, in the same course of transactions: we have to do what we have often done, and what we do not try, because we do not wish to do much better; we are told what we already know, and, therefore, what repetition cannot make us know with greater certainty.

He that has early learned much, perhaps, seldom makes, with regard to life and manners, much addition to his knowledge; not only, because, as more is known, there is less to learn, but because a mind, stored with images and principles, turns inwards for its own entertainment, and is employed in settling those ideas, which run into confusion, and in recollecting those which are stealing away; practices by which wisdom may be kept, but not gained. The merchant, who was at first busy in acquiring money, ceases to grow richer, from the time when he makes it his business only to count it.

Those who have families, or employments, are engaged in business of little difficulty, but of great importance, requiring rather assiduity of practice than subtilty of speculation, occupying the attention with images too bulky for refinement, and too obvious for research. The right is already known: what remains is only to follow it. Daily business adds no more to wisdom, than daily lesson to the learning of the teacher. But of how few lives does not stated duty claim the greater part!

Far the greater part of human minds never endeavour their own improvement. Opinions, once received from instruction, or settled by whatever accident, are seldom recalled to examination; having been once supposed to be right, they are never discovered to be erroneous, for no application is made of any thing that time may present, either to shake or to confirm them. From this acquiescence in preconceptions none are wholly free; between fear of uncertainty, and dislike of labour, every one rests

while he might yet go forward; and they that were wise at thirty-three, are very little wiser at forty-five.

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Of this speculation you are, perhaps, tired, and would rather hear of Sophy. I hope, before this comes, that her head will be easier, and your head less filled with fears and troubles, which you know are to be indulged only to prevent evil, not to increase it.

Your uneasiness about Sophy is, probably, unnecessary, and, at worst, your own children are healthful, and your affairs prosperous. Unmingled good cannot be expected; but, as we may lawfully gather all the good within our reach, we may be allowed to lament after that which we lose. I hope your losses are at an end, and that, as far as the condition of our present existence permits, your remaining life will be happy. I am, &c.

XXXIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

Lichfield, March 25, 1776.

DEAR MADAM,—This letter will not, I hope, reach you many days before me; in a distress which can be so little relieved, nothing remains for a friend, but to come and partake it.

Poor, dear, sweet little boy! When I read the letter this day to Mrs. Aston, she said, “such a death is the next to translation.” Yet, however I may convince myself of this, the tears are in my eyes, and yet I could not love him as you loved him, nor reckon upon him for a future comfort, as you and his father reckoned upon him.

He is gone, and we are going! We could not have enjoyed him long, and shall not long be separated from him. He has, probably, escaped many such pangs as you are now feeling.

Nothing remains, but that, with humble confidence we resign ourselves to almighty goodness, and fall down, without irreverent murmurs, before the sovereign distributer of good and evil, with hope, that though sorrow endureth for a night, yet joy may come in the morning.

I have known you, madam, too long to think that you want any arguments for submission to the supreme will; nor can my consolation have any effect, but that of showing that I wish to comfort you. What can be done, you must do for yourself. Remember first, that your child is happy; and then, that he is safe, not only from the ills of this world, but from those more formidable dangers which extend their mischief to eternity. You have brought into the world a rational being; have seen him happy during the little life that has been granted him; and can have no doubt but that his happiness is now permanent and immutable.

When you have obtained, by prayer, such tranquillity as nature will admit, force your attention, as you can, upon your accustomed duties and accustomed entertainments.

You can do no more for our dear boy, but you must not, therefore, think less on those whom your attention may make fitter for the place to which he is gone. I am, dearest, dearest madam, your most affectionate humble servant.

XXXIV.—To MRS. THRALE.

Sept. 6, 1777.

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DEAREST LADY,—It is true, that I have loitered, and, what is worse, loitered with very little pleasure. The time has run away, as most time runs, without account, without use, and without memorial. But, to say this of a few weeks, though not pleasing, might be borne; but what ought to be the regret of him who, in a few days, will have so nearly the same to say of sixty-eight years? But complaint is vain.

If you have nothing to say from the neighbourhood of the metropolis, what can occur to me, in little cities and petty towns; in places which we have both seen, and of which no description is wanted? I have left part of the company with which you dined here, to come and write this letter, in which I have nothing to tell, but that my nights are very tedious. I cannot persuade myself to forbear trying something.

As you have now little to do, I suppose you are pretty diligent at the Thraliana; and a very curious collection posterity will find it. Do not remit the practice of writing down occurrences as they arise, of whatever kind, and be very punctual in annexing the dates. Chronology, you know, is the eye of history; and every man's life is of importance to himself. Do not omit painful casualties, or unpleasing passages; they make the variegation of existence; and there are many transactions, of which I will not promise, with Aeneas, "et haec olim meminisse juvabit;" yet that remembrance which is not pleasant, may be useful. There is, however, an intemperate attention to slight circumstances, which is to be avoided, lest a great part of life be spent in writing the history of the rest. Every day, perhaps, has something to be noted; but in a settled and uniform course, few days can have much.

Why do I write all this, which I had no thought of when I began! The Thraliana drove it all into my head. It deserves, however, an hour's reflection, to consider how, with the least loss of time, the loss of what we wish to retain may be prevented.

Do not neglect to write to me, for when a post comes empty, I am really disappointed.

Boswell, I believe, will meet me here. I am, dearest lady, your, &c.

XXXV.—To MRS. THRALE.

Lichfield, October 3, 1777,

DEAR MADAM,—This is the last time that I shall write, in this excursion, from this place. To-morrow I shall be, I hope, at Birmingham; from which place I shall do my best to find the nearest way home. I come home, I think, worse than I went; and do not like the state of my health. But, "vive hodie," make the most of life. I hope to get better, and —sweep the cobwebs. But I have sad nights. Mrs. Aston has sent me to Mr. Greene, to be cured.

Did you see Foote at Brighthelmstone?—Did you think he would so soon be gone?—-Life, says Falstaff, is a shuttle. He was a fine fellow in his way; and the world is really impoverished by his sinking glories. Murphy ought to write his life, at least, to give the world a Footeiana. Now, will any of his contemporaries bewail him? Will genius change *his sex* to weep? I would really have his life written with diligence.

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It will be proper for me to work pretty diligently now for some time. I hope to get through, though so many weeks have passed. Little lives and little criticisms may serve.

Having been in the country so long, with very little to detain me, I am rather glad to look homewards. I am, &c.

XXXVI.—To MRS. THRALE.

October 13, 1777.

DEAR MADAM,—Yet I do love to hear from you: such pretty, kind letters as you send. But it gives me great delight to find that my master misses me, I begin to wish myself with you more than I should do, if I were wanted less. It is a good thing to stay away, till one's company is desired, but not so good to stay, after it is desired.

You know I have some work to do. I did not set to it very soon; and if I should go up to London with nothing done, what would be said, but that I was—who can tell what? I, therefore, stay till I can bring up something to stop their mouths, and then—

Though I am still at Ashbourne, I receive your dear letters, that come to Lichfield, and you continue that direction, for I think to get thither as soon as I can.

One of the does died yesterday, and I am afraid her fawn will be starved; I wish Miss Thrale had it to nurse; but the doctor is now all for cattle, and minds very little either does or hens.

How did you and your aunt part? Did you turn her out of doors, to begin your journey? or did she leave you by her usual shortness of visits? I love to know how you go on.

I cannot but think on your kindness and my master's. Life has, upon the whole, fallen short, very short, of my early expectation; but the acquisition of such a friendship, at an age, when new friendships are seldom acquired, is something better than the general course of things gives man a right to expect. I think on it with great delight: I am not very apt to be delighted. I am, &c.

XXXVII.—To MRS. THRALE.

Lichfield, October 27, 1777.

DEAR MADAM,—You talk of writing and writing, as if you had all the writing to yourself. If our correspondence were printed, I am sure posterity, for posterity is always the author's favourite, would say that I am a good writer too.—"Anch'io sono pittore." To sit down so often with nothing to say; to say something so often, almost without

consciousness of saying, and without any remembrance of having said, is a power of which I will not violate my modesty by boasting, but I do not believe that every body has it.

Some, when they write to their friends, are all affection; some are wise and sententious; some strain their powers for efforts of gaiety; some write news, and some write secrets; but to make a letter without affection, without wisdom, without gaiety, without news, and without a secret, is, doubtless, the great epistolick art.

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In a man's letters, you know, madam, his soul lies naked, his letters are only the mirror of his breast; whatever passes within him, is shown, undisguised, in its natural process; nothing is inverted, nothing distorted: you see systems in their elements; you discover actions in their motives.

Of this great truth, sounded by the knowing to the ignorant, and so echoed by the ignorant to the knowing, what evidence have you now before you? Is not my soul laid open in these veracious pages? Do not you see me reduced to my first principles? This is the pleasure of corresponding with a friend, where doubt and distrust have no place, and every thing is said as it is thought. The original idea is laid down in its simple purity, and all the supervenient conceptions are spread over it, "stratum super stratum," as they happen to be formed. These are the letters by which souls are united, and by which minds, naturally in unison, move each other, as they are moved themselves. I know, dearest lady, that in the perusal of this, such is the consanguinity of our intellects, you will be touched, as I am touched. I have, indeed, concealed nothing from you, nor do I expect ever to repent of having thus opened my heart. I am, &c.

XXXVIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

November 10, 1777.

DEAR MADAM,—And so, supposing that I might come to town, and neglect to give you notice, or thinking some other strange thought, but certainly thinking wrong, you fall to writing about me to Tom Davies, as if he could tell you anything that I would not have you know. As soon as I came hither, I let you know of my arrival; and the consequence is, that I am summoned to Brighthelmstone, through storms, and cold, and dirt, and all the hardships of wintry journeys. You know my natural dread of all those evils; yet, to show my master an example of compliance, and to let you know how much I long to see you, and to boast how little I give way to disease, my purpose is to be with you on Friday.

I am sorry for poor Nezzy, and hope she will, in time, be better; I hope the same for myself. The rejuvenescency of Mr. Scrase gives us both reason to hope, and, therefore, both of us rejoice in his recovery. I wish him well, besides, as a friend to my master.

I am just come home from not seeing my lord mayor's show, but I might have seen, at least, part of it. But I saw Miss Wesley and her brothers; she sends her compliments. Mrs. Williams is come home, I think, a very little better.

Every body was an enemy to that wig.—We will burn it, and get drunk; for what is joy without drink? Wagers are laid in the city about our success, which is yet, as the French call it, problematical. Well—but, seriously, I think, I shall be glad to see you in your own

hair; but do not take too much time in combing, and twisting, and papering, and unpapering, and curling, and frizling, and powdering,

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and getting out the powder, with all the other operations required in the cultivation of a head of hair; yet let it be combed, at least, once in three months on the quarterday.—I could wish it might be combed once at least, in six weeks; if I were to indulge my wishes but what are wishes without hopes, I should fancy the operation performed—one knows not when one has enough—perhaps, every morning. I am, dearest lady, your, &c.

XXXIX.—To MRS. THRALE.

Ashbourne, June 14, 1779.

DEAR MADAM,—Your account of Mr. Thrale's illness is very terrible; but when I remember that he seems to have it peculiar to his constitution, that, whatever distemper he has, he always has his head affected, I am less frighted. The seizure was, I think, not apoplectical but hysterical, and, therefore, not dangerous to life. I would have you, however, consult such physicians as you think you can best trust. Broomfield seems to have done well and, by his practice, appears not to suspect an apoplexy. This is a solid and fundamental comfort. I remember Dr. Marsigli, an Italian physician, whose seizure was more violent than Mr. Thrale's, for he fell down helpless, but his case was not considered as of much danger, and he went safe home, and is now a professor at Padua. His fit was considered as only hysterical.

I hope sir Philip, who franked your letter, comforts you as well as Mr. Seward. If I can comfort you, I will come to you; but I hope you are now no longer in want of any help to be happy. I am, &c.

The doctor sends his compliments; he is one of the people that are growing old.

XL.—To MRS. THRALE.

Ashbourne, June 14, 1779.

DEAR MADAM,—How near we are all to extreme danger. We are merry or sad, or busy or idle, and forget that death is hovering over us. You are a dear lady for writing again. The case, as you now describe it, is worse than I conceived it, when I read your first letter. It is still, however, not apoplectick, but seems to have something worse than hysterical—a tendency to a palsy, which, I hope, however, is now over. I am glad that you have Heberden, and hope we are all safer. I am the more alarmed by this violent seizure, as I can impute it to no wrong practices, or intemperance of any kind, and, therefore, know not how any defence or preservative can be obtained. Mr. Thrale has, certainly, less exercise than when he followed the foxes; but he is very far from

unwieldiness or inactivity, and further still from any vitious or dangerous excess. I fancy, however, he will do well to ride more.

Do, dear madam, let me know, every post, how he goes on. Such sudden violence is very dreadful; we know not by what it is let loose upon us, nor by what its effects are limited.

If my coming can either assist or divert, or be useful to any purpose, let me but know: I will soon be with you. Mrs. Kennedy, Queeney's Baucis, ended, last week, a long life of disease and poverty. She had been married about fifty years.

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Dr. Taylor is not much amiss, but always complaining. I am, &c.

XLI.—To MR. THRALE.

Lichfield, June 23, 1779.

DEAR SIR,—To show how well I think of your health, I have sent you a hundred pounds, to keep for me. It will come within one day of quarterday, and that day you must give me. I came by it in a very uncommon manner, and would not confound it with the rest.

My wicked mistress talks as if she thought it possible for me to be indifferent or negligent about your health or hers. If I could have done any good, I had not delayed an hour to come to you; and I will come very soon, to try if my advice can be of any use, or my company of any entertainment.

What can be done, you must do for yourself: do not let any uneasy thought settle in your mind. Cheerfulness and exercise are your great remedies. Nothing is, for the present, worth your anxiety. “Vivite laeti” is one of the great rules of health. I believe it will be good to ride often, but never to weariness, for weariness is, itself, a temporary resolution of the nerves, and is, therefore, to be avoided. Labour is exercise continued to fatigue—exercise is labour used only, while it produces pleasure.

Above all, keep your mind quiet: do not think with earnestness even of your health; but think on such things as may please without too much agitation; among which, I hope, is, dear sir, your, &c.

XLII.—To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,—On Sunday I dined with poor Lawrence, who is deafer than ever. When he was told that Dr. Moisy visited Mr. Thrale, he inquired for what? and said there was nothing to be done, which nature would not do for herself. On Sunday evening, I was at Mrs. Vesy’s, and there was inquiry about my master, but I told them all good. There was Dr. Bernard of Eton, and we made a noise all the evening; and there was Pepys, and Wraxal, till I drove him away. And I have no loss of my mistress, who laughs, and frisks, and frolicks it all the long day, and never thinks of poor Colin.

If Mr. Thrale will but continue to mend, we shall, I hope, come together again, and do as good things as ever we did; but, perhaps, you will be made too proud to heed me, and yet, as I have often told you, it will not be easy for you to find such another.

Queeney has been a good girl, and wrote me a letter; if Burney said she would write, she told you a fib. She writes nothing to me. She can write home fast enough. I have a

good mind not to let her know that Dr. Bernard, to whom I had recommended her novel, speaks of it with great commendation, and that the copy which she lent me, has been read by Dr. Lawrence three times over. And yet what a gipsy it is. She no more minds me than if I were a Brangton. Pray speak to Queeney to write again.

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I have had a cold and a cough, and taken opium, and think I am better. We have had very cold weather; bad riding weather for my master, but he will surmount it all. Did Mrs. Browne make any reply to your comparison of business with solitude, or did you quite down her? I am much pleased to think that Mrs. Cotton thinks me worth a frame, and a place upon her wall; her kindness was hardly within my hope, but time does wonderful things. All my fear is, that if I should come again, my print would be taken down. I fear I shall never hold it.

Who dines with you? Do you see Dr. Woodward, or Dr. Harrington? Do you go to the house where they write for the myrtle? You are at all places of high resort, and bring home hearts by dozens; while I am seeking for something to say about men, of whom I know nothing, but their verses, and, sometimes, very little of them. Now I have begun, however, I do not despair of making an end. Mr. Nichols holds, that Addison is the most taking of all that I have done. I doubt they will not be done, before you come away.

Now you think yourself the first writer in the world for a letter about nothing. Can you write such a letter as this? So miscellaneous, with such noble disdain of regularity, like Shakespeare's works; such graceful negligence of transition, like the ancient enthusiasts? The pure voice of nature and of friendship. Now, of whom shall I proceed to speak? Of whom but Mrs. Montague? Having mentioned Shakespeare and nature, does not the name of Montague force itself upon me? Such were the transitions of the ancients, which now seem abrupt, because the intermediate idea is lost to modern understandings. I wish her name had connected itself with friendship; but, ah, Colin, thy hopes are in vain! One thing, however, is left me, I have still to complain; but I hope I shall not complain much, while you have any kindness for me. I am, dearest, and dearest madam, your, &c.

London, April, 11, 1780.

XLIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM,—Mr. Thrale never will live abstinently, till he can persuade himself to abstain by rule. I lived on potatoes on Friday, and on spinage to-day; but I have had, I am afraid, too many dinners of late. I took physick too both days, and hope to fast to-morrow. When he comes home, we will shame him, and Jebb shall scold him into regularity. I am glad, however, that he is always one of the company, and that my dear Queeney is again another. Encourage, as you can, the musical girl.

Nothing is more common than mutual dislike, where mutual approbation is particularly expected. There is often on both sides a vigilance, not over-benevolent; and as attention is strongly excited, so that nothing drops unheeded, any difference in taste or opinion, and some difference, where there is no restraint, will commonly appear, immediately generates dislike.

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Never let criticisms operate upon your face, or your mind; it is very rarely that an author is hurt by his criticks. The blaze of reputation cannot be blown out, but it often dies in the socket; a very few names may be considered as perpetual lamps, that shine unconsumed. From the author of Fitzosborne's Letters, I cannot think myself in much danger. I met him only once, about thirty years ago, and, in some small dispute, reduced him to whistle; having not seen him since, that is the last impression. Poor Moore, the fabulist, was one of the company.

Mrs. Montague's long stay, against her own inclination, is very convenient. You would, by your own confession, want a companion; and she is "par pluribus," conversing with her you may "find variety in one."

At Mrs. Ord's I met one Mrs. B—, a travelled lady, of great spirit, and some consciousness of her own abilities. We had a contest of gallantry, an hour long, so much to the diversion of the company, that at Ramsay's, last night, in a crowded room, they would have pitted us again. There were Smelt, and the bishop of St. Asaph, who comes to every place; and lord Monboddo, and sir Joshua, and ladies out of tale.

The exhibition, how will you do either to see or not to see! The exhibition is eminently splendid. There is contour, and keeping, and grace, and expression, and all the varieties of artificial excellence. The apartments were truly very noble. The pictures, for the sake of a skylight, are at the top of the house; there we dined, and I sat over against the archbishop of York. See how I live, when I am not under petticoat government. I am, &c.

London, May 1, 1780.

XLIV.—To MRS. THRALE.

London, June 9, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,—To the question, Who was impressed with consternation? it may, with great truth, be answered, that every body was impressed, for nobody was sure of his safety.

On Friday, the good protestants met in St. George's fields, at the summons of lord George Gordon, and marching to Westminster, insulted the lords and commons, who all bore it with great tameness. At night, the outrages began, by the demolition of the mass-house by Lincoln's inn.

An exact journal of a week's defiance of government, I cannot give you. On Monday, Mr. Strahan, who had been insulted, spoke to lord Mansfield, who had, I think been insulted too, of the licentiousness of the populace; and his lordship treated it, as a very slight irregularity. On Tuesday night, they pulled down Fielding's house and burnt his

goods in the street. They had gutted, on Monday sir George Saville's house, but the building was saved. On Tuesday evening, leaving Fielding's ruins, they went to Newgate, to demand their companions, who had been seized, demolishing the chapel. The keeper could not release them, but by the mayor's permission, which he went to ask; at his return, he found all the prisoners released, and Newgate in a blaze. They then went to Bloomsbury, and fastened upon lord Mansfield's house which they pulled down; and as for his goods, they totally burnt them. They have since gone to Caen wood, but a guard was there before them. They plundered some papists, I think, and burnt a mass-house in Moorfields the same night.

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On Wednesday, I walked with Dr. Scott, to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing As I went by, the protestants were plundering the Sessions house at the Old Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in full security, without sentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place. On Wednesday they broke open the Fleet, and the King's Bench, and the Marshalsea, and Wood street Counter, and Clerkenwell Bridewell, and released all the prisoners.

At night, they set fire to the Fleet, and to the King's Bench, and I know not how many other places; and one might see the glare of conflagration fill the sky from many parts. The sight was dreadful. Some people were threatened; Mr. Strahan advised me to take care of myself. Such a time of terrour you have been happy in not seeing.

The king said, in council, that the magistrates had not done their duty, but that he would do his own; and a proclamation was published, directing us to keep our servants within doors, as the peace was now to be preserved by force. The soldiers were sent out to different parts, and the town is now at quiet.

What has happened at your house, you will know; the harm is only a few butts of beer; and I think you may be sure that the danger is over. There is a body of soldiers at St. Margaret's hill.

Of Mr. Tyson I know nothing, nor can guess to what he can allude; but I know that a young fellow of little more than seventy is naturally an unresisted conqueror of hearts.

Pray tell Mr. Thrale that I live here and have no fruit, and if he does not interpose, am not likely to have much; but, I think, he might as well give me a little, as give all to the gardener.

Pray make my compliments to Queeney and Burney. I am, &c.

XLV.—To MRS. THRALE.

June 10, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,—You have, ere now, heard and read enough to convince you, that we have had something to suffer, and something to fear, and, therefore, I think it necessary to quiet the solicitude which you undoubtedly feel, by telling you that our calamities and terrours are now at an end. The soldiers are stationed so as to be every where within call; there is no longer any body of rioters, and the individuals are hunted to their holes, and led to prison; the streets are safe and quiet: lord George was last night sent to the Tower. Mr. John Wilkes was, this day, with a party of soldiers, in my neighbourhood, to seize the publisher of a seditious paper. Every body walks, and eats, and sleeps in

security. But the history of the last week would fill you with amazement: it is without any modern example.

Several chapels have been destroyed, and several inoffensive papists have been plundered, but the high sport was to burn the gaols. This was a good rabble trick. The debtors and the criminals were all set at liberty; but, of the criminals, as has always happened, many are already retaken, and two pirates have surrendered themselves, and it is expected that they will be pardoned.

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Government now acts again with its proper force; and we are all again under the protection of the king and the law. I thought that it would be agreeable to you and my master, to have my testimony to the publick security; and that you would sleep more quietly, when I told you, that you are safe. I am, dearest lady, your, &c.

XLVI.—To MRS. THRALE.

London, April 5, 1781.

DEAREST MADAM,—Of your injunctions, to pray for you, and write to you, I hope to leave neither unobserved; and I hope to find you willing, in a short time, to alleviate your trouble by some other exercise of the mind. I am not without my part of the calamity. No death, since that of my wife, has ever oppressed me like this. But let us remember, that we are in the hands of him who knows when to give and when to take away; who will look upon us, with mercy, through all our variations of existence, and who invites us to call on him in the day of trouble. Call upon him in this great revolution of life, and call with confidence. You will then find comfort for the past, and support for the future. He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give you another mode of happiness as a mother, and, at last, the happiness of losing all temporal cares, in the thoughts of an eternity in heaven.

I do not exhort you to reason yourself into tranquillity. We must first pray, and then labour; first implore the blessing of God, and use those means which he puts into our hands. Cultivated ground has few weeds; a mind, occupied by lawful business, has little room for useless regret.

We read the will to-day; but I will not fill my first letter with any other account, than that, with all my zeal for your advantage, I am satisfied; and, that the other executors, more used to consider property than I, commended it for wisdom and equity. Yet, why should I not tell you, that you have five hundred pounds for your immediate expenses, and two thousand pounds a year, with both the houses, and all the goods.

Let us pray for one another, that the time, whether long or short, that shall yet be granted us, may be well spent; and, that, when this life, which, at the longest, is very short, shall come to an end, a better may begin, which shall never end. I am, dearest madam, your, &c.

XLVII.—To MRS. THRALE.

April 7, 1781.

DEAR MADAM,—I hope you begin to find your mind grow clearer. My part of the loss hangs upon me. I have lost a friend of boundless kindness, at an age when it is very unlikely that I should find another.

If you think change of place likely to relieve you, there is no reason why you should not go to Bath; the distances are unequal, but with regard to practice and business they are the same. It is a day's journey from either place; and the post is more expeditious and certain to Bath. Consult only your own inclination, for there is really no other principle of choice. God direct and bless you.

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Mr. C—has offered Mr. P—money, but it was not wanted. I hope we shall all do all we can to make you less unhappy, and you must do all you can for yourself. What we, or what you can do, will, for a time, be but little; yet, certainly, that calamity which may be considered as doomed to fall inevitably on half mankind, is not finally without alleviation.

It is something for me, that, as I have not the decrepitude, I have not the callousness of old age. I hope, in time, to be less affected. I am, &c.

XLVIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

London, April 9, 1781.

DEAR MADAM,—That you are gradually recovering your tranquillity is the effect to be humbly expected from trust in God. Do not represent life as darker than it is. Your loss has been very great, but you retain more than almost any other can hope to possess. You are high in the opinion of mankind; you have children, from whom much pleasure may be expected; and that you will find many friends you have no reason to doubt. Of my friendship, be it worth more or less, I hope you think yourself certain, without much art or care. It will not be easy for me to repay the benefits that I have received; but I hope to be always ready at your call. Our sorrow has different effects; you are withdrawn into solitude, and I am driven into company. I am afraid of thinking what I have lost. I never had such a friend before. Let me have your prayers and those of my dear Queeney.

The prudence and resolution of your design to return so soon to your business and your duty, deserves great praise; I shall communicate it, on Wednesday, to the other executors. Be pleased to let me know, whether you would have me come to Streatham to receive you, or stay here till the next day. I am, &c.

XLIX.—To THE SAME.

Bolt court, Fleet street, June 19, 1783.

DEAR MADAM,—I am sitting down, in no cheerful solitude, to write a narrative, which would once have affected you with tenderness and sorrow, but which you will, perhaps, pass over now with a careless glance of frigid indifference. For this diminution of regard, however, I know not whether I ought to blame you, who may have reasons which I cannot know; and I do not blame myself, who have, for a great part of human life, done you what good I could, and have never done you evil.

I have been disordered in the usual way, and had been relieved, by the usual methods, by opium and catharticks, but had rather lessened my dose of opium.

On Monday, the 16th, I sat for my picture, and walked a considerable way, with little inconvenience. In the afternoon and evening, I felt myself light and easy, and began to plan schemes of life. Thus I went to bed, and, in a short time, waked and sat up, as has been long my custom, when I felt a confusion and indistinctness in my head, which lasted, I suppose, about half a minute; I was alarmed, and prayed God, that, however he might afflict my body, he would spare my understanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verse. The lines were not very good, but I knew them not to be very good: I made them easily, and concluded myself to be unimpaired in my faculties.

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Soon after, I perceived that I had suffered a paralytick stroke, and that my speech was taken from me. I had no pain, and so little dejection, in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered that, perhaps, death itself, when it should come, would excite less horrour than seems now to attend it.

In order to rouse the vocal organs, I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myself into violent motion, and, I think, repeated it; but all was vain. I then went to bed, and, strange as it may seem, I think, slept. When I saw light, it was time to contrive what I should do. Though God stopped my speech, he left me my hand: I enjoyed a mercy, which was not granted to my dear friend Lawrence, who now, perhaps, overlooks me, as I am writing, and rejoices that I have what he wanted. My first note was, necessarily, to my servant, who came in talking, and could not immediately comprehend, why he should read what I put into his hands.

I then wrote a card to Mr. Allen, that I might have a discreet friend at hand, to act as occasion should require. In penning this note, I had some difficulty; my hand, I knew not how nor why, made wrong letters. I then wrote to Dr. Taylor, to come to me, and bring Dr. Heberden, and I sent to Dr. Brocklesby, who is my neighbour. My physicians are very friendly and very disinterested, and give me great hopes, but you may imagine my situation. I have so far recovered my vocal powers, as to repeat the Lord's prayer, with no very imperfect articulation. My memory, I hope, yet remains as it was; but such an attack produces solicitude for the safety of every faculty.

How this will be received by you, I know not. I hope you will sympathize with me; but, perhaps,

"My mistress, gracious, mild, and good,
Cries: Is he dumb? 'Tis time he shou'd."

But can this be possible? I hope it cannot. I hope that what, when I could speak, I spoke of you, and to you, will be, in a sober and serious hour, remembered by you; and, surely, it cannot be remembered but with some degree of kindness. I have loved you with virtuous affection; I have honoured you with sincere esteem. Let not all our endearments be forgotten, but let me have, in this great distress, your pity and your prayers. You see, I yet turn to you with my complaints, as a settled and unalienable friend; do not, do not drive me from you, for I have not deserved either neglect or hatred.

To the girls, who do not write often, for Susy has written only once, and Miss Thrale owes me a letter, I earnestly recommend, as their guardian and friend, that they remember their creator in the days of their youth.

I suppose, you may wish to know, how my disease is treated by the physicians. They put a blister upon my back, and two from my ear to my throat, one on a side. The blister

on the back has done little, and those on the throat have not risen. I bullied and bounced, (it sticks to our last sand,) and compelled the apothecary to make his salve according to the Edinburgh dispensatory, that it might adhere better. I have two on now of my own prescription. They, likewise, give me salt of hartshorn, which I take with no great confidence, but I am satisfied that what can be done, is done for me.

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O God! give me comfort and confidence in thee; forgive my sins; and, if it be thy good pleasure, relieve my diseases, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

I am almost ashamed of this querulous letter; but now it is written, let it go. I am, &c.

L.—To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,—Among those that have inquired after me, sir Philip is one; and Dr. Burney was one of those who came to see me. I have had no reason to complain of indifference or neglect. Dick Burney is come home five inches taller.

Yesterday, in the evening, I went to church, and have been to-day to see the great burning-glass, which does more than was ever done before, by the transmission of the rays, but is not equal in power to those which reflect them. It wastes a diamond placed in the focus, but causes no diminution of pure gold. Of the rubies, exposed to its action, one was made more vivid, the other paler. To see the glass, I climbed up stairs to the garret, and then up a ladder to the leads, and talked to the artist rather too long; for my voice, though clear and distinct for a little while, soon tires and falters. The organs of speech are yet very feeble, but will, I hope, be, by the mercy of God, finally restored: at present, like any other weak limb, they can endure but little labour at once. Would you not have been very sorry for me, when I could scarcely speak?

Fresh cantharides were this morning applied to my head, and are to be continued some time longer. If they play me no treacherous tricks, they give me very little pain.

Let me have your kindness and your prayers; and think on me, as on a man, who, for a very great portion of your life has done you all the good he could, and desires still to be considered, madam, your, &c.

LI.—To MRS. THRALE.

London, July 1, 1783.

DEAREST MADAM,—This morning I took the air by a ride to Hampstead, and this afternoon I dined with the club. But fresh cantharides were this day applied to my head.

Mr. Cator called on me to-day, and told me, that he had invited you back to Streatham. I showed the unfitness of your return thither, till the neighbourhood should have lost its habits of depredation, and he seemed to be satisfied. He invited me, very kindly and cordially, to try the air of Beckenham; and pleased me very much by his affectionate attention to Miss Vesy. There is much good in his character, and much usefulness in his knowledge.

Queeney seems now to have forgotten me. Of the different appearance of the hills and valleys an account may, perhaps, be given, without the supposition of any prodigy! If she had been out, and the evening was breezy, the exhalations would rise from the low grounds very copiously; and the wind that swept and cleared the hills, would only, by its cold, condense the vapours of the sheltered valleys.

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Murphy is just gone from me; he visits me very kindly, and I have no unkindness to complain of.

I am sorry that sir Philip's request was not treated with more respect, nor can I imagine what has put them so much out of humour; I hope their business is prosperous.

I hope that I recover by degrees, but my nights are restless; and you will suppose the nervous system to be somewhat enfeebled. I am, madam, your, &c.

LII.—To MRS. THRALE.

London, October 9, 1783.

Two nights ago, Mr. Burke sat with me a long time; he seems much pleased with his journey. We had both seen Stonehenge this summer, for the first time. I told him that the view had enabled me to confute two opinions which have been advanced about it. One, that the materials are not natural stones, but an artificial composition, hardened by time. This notion is as old as Camden's time; and has this strong argument to support it, that stone of that species is nowhere to be found. The other opinion, advanced by Dr. Charlton, is, that it was erected by the Danes.

Mr. Bowles made me observe, that the transverse stones were fixed on the perpendicular supporters by a knob, formed on the top of the upright stone, which entered into a hollow, cut in the crossing stone. This is a proof, that the enormous edifice was raised by a people who had not yet the knowledge of mortar; which cannot be supposed of the Danes, who came hither in ships, and were not ignorant, certainly, of the arts of life. This proves, likewise, the stones not to be factitious; for they that could mould such durable masses, could do much more than make mortar, and could have continued the transverse from the upright part with the same paste.

You have, doubtless, seen Stonehenge; and if you have not, I should think it a hard task to make an adequate description.

It is, in my opinion, to be referred to the earliest habitation of the island, as a druidical monument of, at least, two thousand years; probably the most ancient work of man, upon the island. Salisbury cathedral, and its neighbour Stonehenge, are two eminent monuments of art and rudeness, and may show the first essay, and the last perfection in architecture.

I have not yet settled my thoughts about the generation of light air, which I, indeed, once saw produced, but I was at the height of my great complaint. I have made inquiry, and shall soon be able to tell you how to fill a balloon. I am, madam, your, &c.

LIII.—To MRS. THRALE.

London, Dec. 27, 1783.

DEAR MADAM,—The wearisome solitude of the long evenings did, indeed, suggest to me the convenience of a club in my neighbourhood, but I have been hindered from attending it by want of breath. If I can complete the scheme, you shall have the names and the regulations.

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The time of the year, for I hope the fault is rather in the weather than in me, has been very hard upon me. The muscles of my breast are much convulsed. Dr. Heberden recommends opiates, of which I have such horrour, that I do not think of them but *in extremis*. I was, however, driven to them, last night, for refuge, and, having taken the usual quantity, durst not go to bed, for fear of that uneasiness to which a supine posture exposes me, but rested all night in a chair, with much relief, and have been, to-day, more warm, active, and cheerful.

You have more than once wondered at my complaint of solitude, when you hear that I am crowded with visits. "Inopem me copia fecit." Visitors are no proper companions in the chamber of sickness. They come, when I could sleep or read, they stay till I am weary, they force me to attend, when my mind calls for relaxation, and to speak, when my powers will hardly actuate my tongue. The amusements and consolations of languor and depression are conferred by familiar and domestick companions, which can be visited or called at will, and can, occasionally, be quitted or dismissed, who do not obstruct accommodation by ceremony, or destroy indolence by awakening effort.

Such society I had with Levet and Williams; such I had where—I am never likely to have it more.

I wish, dear lady, to you and my dear girls, many a cheerful and pious Christmas. I am, your, &c.

LIV.—To MRS. Piozzi.

London, July 8, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,—What you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been injurious to me; I, therefore, breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere.

I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world, for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness, I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.

Do not think slightly of the advice which I now presume to offer. Prevail upon Mr. Piozzi to settle in England; you may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with more security; your rank will be higher, and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail all my reasons; but every argument of prudence and interest is for England, and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy.

I am afraid, however, that my counsel is vain, yet I have eased my heart by giving it.

When queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the archbishop of St. Andrew's, attempting to dissuade her, attended on her journey; and when they came to the irremeable stream, that separated the two kingdoms, walked by her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her bridle, and with earnestness, proportioned to her danger and his own affection, pressed her to return. The queen went forward.—If the parallel reaches thus far, may it go no farther.—The tears stand in my eyes.

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I am going into Derbyshire, and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection, your, &c.

END OF VOL. I.