

Poetical Works of Johnson, Parnell, Gray, and Smollett eBook

Poetical Works of Johnson, Parnell, Gray, and Smollett by Samuel Johnson

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JOHNSON'S POEMS.

The Life of Samuel Johnson

London: a Poem in imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal, 1738

The Vanity of Human Wishes. In imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal

Prologues:—

Prologue Spoken by Mr Garrick, at the Opening of the Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane, 1747

Prologue Spoken by Mr Garrick before the 'Masque of Comus', acted for the benefit of Milton's Grand-daughter

Prologue to Goldsmith's Comedy of 'The Good-Natured Man', 1769

Prologue to the Comedy of 'A Word to the Wise,' spoken by Mr Hull

Odes:—

Spring

Midsummer

Autumn

Winter

Miscellaneous:—

The Winter's Walk

To Miss ***** on her giving the Author a Gold and Silk Network
Purse of her own Weaving

Epigram on George *ii.* and Colley Cibber, Esq.

Stella in Mourning

To Stella

Verses Written at the Request of a Gentleman to whom a Lady had
given a Sprig of Myrtle

To Lady Firebrace, at Bury Assizes

To Lyce, an Elderly Lady

On the Death of Mr Robert Levett, a Practiser in Physic

Epitaph on Claude Phillips, an Itinerant Musician

Epitaph on Sir Thomas Hanmer, Bart.

On the Death of Stephen Grey, F.R.S., the Electrician

To Miss Hickman, Playing on the Spinnet

Paraphrase of Proverbs, chap. iv. verses 6-11

Horace, Lib. iv. Ode vii. Translated

On Seeing a Bust of Mrs Montague

Anacreon, Ode Ninth

Lines Written in Ridicule of certain Poems published in 1777

Parody of a Translation from the 'Medea' of Euripides



Burlesque on the Modern Versification of Ancient Legendary Tales:
an Impromptu

Epitaph for Mr Hogarth

Translation of the Two First Stanzas of the Song 'Rio Verde,
Rio Verde', printed in Bishop Percy's 'Reliques of Ancient
English Poetry': an Impromptu

To Mrs Thrale, on her Completing her Thirty-Fifth Year: a
Impromptu

Impromptu Translation of an Air in the 'Clemenza de Tito' of
Metastasia, beginning 'Deh! se Piacermi Vuoi'

Lines Written under a Print representing Persons Skaiting

Translation of a Speech of Aquileio in the 'Adriano' of Metastasio,
beginning, 'Tu Che in Corte Invecchiasti'

Impromptu on Hearing Miss Thrale Consulting with a Friend about a
Gown and Hat she was inclined to Wear

Translation of Virgil, Pastoral I

Translation of Horace, Book i. Ode xxii.

Translation of Horace, Book ii. Ode ix.

Translation of part of the Dialogue between Hector and
Andromache.—From the Sixth Book of Homer's Iliad

To Miss * * * * on her Playing upon a Harpsichord in a Room hung
with Flower-Pieces of her own Painting

Evening: an Ode. To Stella

To the Same

To a Friend

To a Young Lady, on her Birthday

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Epilogue intended to have been Spoken by a Lady who was to personate 'The Ghost of Hermione'
The Young Author
Friendship: an Ode. Printed in the Gentleman's Magazine, 1743
Imitation of the Style of Percy
One and Twenty

Parnell's poems.

The Life and Poetry of Thomas Parnell
Hesiod; or, the Rise of Woman
Song
Song
Song
Anacreontic
Anacreontic
A Fairy Tale, in the Ancient English Style
To Mr Pope
Health: an Eclogue
The Flies: an Eclogue
An Elegy to an Old Beauty
The Book-Worm
An Allegory on Man
An Imitation of some French Verses
A Night-Piece on Death
A Hymn to Contentment
The Hermit

Gray's poems.

The Life and Poetry of Thomas Gray

Odes:—

I. On the Spring
ii. On the Death of a Favorite Cat
III. On a distant Prospect of Eton College
iv. To Adversity
V. The Progress of Poesy
VI. The Bard
vii. The Fatal Sisters



- VIII. The Descent of Odin
- ix. The Death of Hoel
- X. The Triumph of Owen
- XI. For Music

Miscellaneous:—

- A Long Story
- Elegy written in a Country Churchyard
- Epitaph on Mrs Jane Clarke
- Stanzas, suggested by a View of the Seat and Ruins at Kingsgate,
in Kent, 1766
- Translation from Statius
- Gray on himself

Smollett's poems.

- The Life of Tobias Smollett
- Advice: a Satire
- Reproof: a Satire
- The Tears of Scotland. Written in the year 1746
- Verses on a Young Lady playing on a Harpsichord and Singing
- Love Elegy, in imitation of Tibullus
- Burlesque Ode
- Ode to Mirth
- Ode to Sleep
- Ode to Leven Water
- Ode to Blue-Eyed Ann
- Ode to Independence
- Songs

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

Samuel Johnson.

THE LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON.

We feel considerable trepidation in beginning a life of Johnson, not so much on account of the magnitude of the man—for in Milton, and one or two others, we have already met his match—but on account of the fact that the field has been so thoroughly exhausted by former writers. It is in the shadow of Boswell, the best of all biographers, and not in that of Johnson, that we feel ourselves at present cowering. Yet we must try to give a rapid account of the leading incidents in Johnson's life, as well as a short estimate of his vast, rugged genius.

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Samuel Johnson was born at Lichfield, Staffordshire, on the 18th of September 1709, and was baptized the same day. His father was Michael Johnson, a bookseller and stationer, and his mother, Sarah Ford. Samuel was the first-born of the family. Nathaniel, who died in his twenty-fifth year, was the second and the last. Johnson very early began to manifest both his peculiar prejudices and his peculiar powers. When a mere child, we see him in Lichfield Cathedral, perched on his father's shoulders, gazing at Sacheverel, the famous Tory preacher. We hear him, about the same time, roaring to his mother, who had given him, a minute before, a collect in the Common Prayer-Book to get by heart as his day's task,—“Mother, I can say it already!” His first teacher, Dame Oliver, a widow, thought him, as she well might, the best scholar she ever had. From her he passed into the hands of one Tom Brown, an original, who once published a spelling-book, and dedicated it “to the Universe!”—without permission, we presume. He began to learn Latin first with a Mr Hawkins, and then with a Mr Hunter, head-master of Lichfield,—a petty tyrant, although a good scholar, under whom, to use Gay's language, Johnson was

“Lash'd into Latin by the tingling rod.”

At the age of fifteen, he was transferred to Stourbridge school, and to the care of a Mr Wentworth, who “taught him a great deal.” There he remained twelve months, at the close of which he returned home, and for two years lived in his father's house, in comparative idleness, loitering in the fields, and reading much, but desultorily. In 1728, being flattered with some promises of aid from a Shropshire gentleman, named Corbet, which were never fulfilled, he went to Oxford, and was entered as a commoner in Pembroke College. His father accompanied and introduced him to Dr Adams, and to Jorden, who became his tutor, recommending his son as a good scholar and a poet. Under Jorden's care, however, he did little except translate Pope's “Messiah” into Latin verse,—a task which he performed with great rapidity, and so well, that Pope warmly commended it when he saw it printed in a miscellany of poems. About this time, the hypochondriac affection, which rendered Johnson's long life a long disease, began to manifest itself. In the vacation of 1729, he was seized with the darkest despondency, which he tried to alleviate by violent exercise and other means, but in vain. It seems to have left him during a fit of indignation at Dr Swinfen (a physician at Lichfield, who, struck by the elegant Latinity of an account of his malady, which the sufferer had put into his hands, showed it in all directions), but continued to recur at frequent intervals till the close of his life. His malady was undoubtedly of a maniacal cast, resembling Cowper's, but subdued by superior strength of will—a Bucephalus, which it required all the power of a Johnson to back and bridle. In his early days, he had been piously inclined, but after his ninth year, fell into a state of indifference to religion. This continued till he met, at Oxford, Law's “Serious Call,” which, he says, “overmatched” and compelled him to consider the subject with earnestness. And whatever, in after years, were the errors of his life, he never, from that hour, ceased to have a solemn sense of the verities of the Christian religion.

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At Oxford, he paid little attention to his regular tasks, but read, or rather devoured, all the books he could lay his hands on, and began to display his unrivalled conversational powers, being often seen “lounging about the college gates, with a circle of young students around him, whom he was entertaining with wit, keeping from their studies, and sometimes rousing to rebellion against the college discipline.” He was, at this time, so miserably poor, that his shoes were worn to tatters, and his feet appeared through them, to the scandal of the Christ-Church men, when he occasionally visited their college. Some compassionate individual laid a new pair at his door, which he tossed away with indignation. At last,—his debts increasing, his supplies diminishing, and his father becoming bankrupt,—he was, in autumn 1731, compelled to leave college without a degree. In the December of the same year his father died.

Perhaps there was not now in broad Britain a person apparently more helpless and hopeless than this tall, half-blind, half-mad, and wholly miserable lad, with ragged shoes, and no degree, left suddenly fatherless in Lichfield. But he had a number of warm friends in his native place, such as Captain Garrick, father of the actor, and Gilbert Walmsley, Registrar of the Ecclesiastical Court, who would not suffer him to starve outright. He had learning and genius; and he had, moreover, under all his indolence and all his melancholy, an indomitable resolution, which needed only to be roused to make all obstacles melt before it. He knew that he was great and strong, and would yet struggle into recognition. At first, however, nothing offered save the post of usher in a school at Market-Bosworth, which he occupied long enough to learn to loathe the occupation with all his heart and soul, and mind and strength, but which he soon resigned, and was again idle. He was invited next to spend some time with Mr Hector, an early friend, who was residing in Birmingham. Here he became acquainted with one Porter, a mercer, whose widow he afterwards married. Here, too, he executed his first literary work,—a translation of Lobo’s “Voyage to Abyssinia,” which was published in 1735, and for which he received the munificent sum of five guineas! He had previously, without success, issued proposals for an edition of the Latin poems of Politian; and, with a similar result, offered the service of his pen to Edward Cave, the editor and publisher of the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, to which he afterwards became a leading contributor.

Shortly after this, Porter dying, Johnson married the widow—a lady more distinguished for sense, and particularly for *the* sense to appreciate his talents, than for personal charms, and who was twice her husband’s age. It does not seem to have been a very happy match, although, probably, both parties loved each other better than they imagined. He was now assisted by his wife’s portion, which amounted to L800, and opened a private academy at

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Echal, near Lichfield, but obtained only three pupils,—a Mr Offely, who died early, the celebrated David Garrick, and his brother George. At the end of a year and a half, disgusted alike with the duties of the office, and with his want of success in their discharge, Johnson left for London, with David Garrick for his companion, and reached it with one letter of introduction from Gilbert Walmsley, three acts of the tragedy of “Irene,” and (according to his fellow-traveller) threepence-halfpenny in his pocket!

To London he had probably looked as to the great mart of genius, but at first he met with mortifying disappointment. He made one influential friend, however, in an officer named Henry Hervey, of whom he said, “He was a vicious man, but very kind to me; were you to call a dog Hervey, I shall love him.” In summer he came back to Lichfield, where he stayed three months, and finished his tragedy. He returned to London in autumn, along with his wife, and tried, but in vain, to get “Irene” presented on the stage. This did not happen till 1749, when his old pupil David Garrick had become manager of Drury Lane Theatre.

In March 1738, he began to contribute to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, a magazine he had long admired, and the original printing-place of which—St John's Gate—he “beheld with reverence” when he first passed it. Amidst the variety of his contributions, the most remarkable were his “Debates in the Senate of Lilliput”—vigorous paraphrases of the parliamentary discussions—of which Johnson finding the mere skeleton given him by the reporters, was at the pains of clothing it with the flesh and blood of his own powerful diction. In May of the same year appeared his noble imitation of Juvenal, “London,” which at once made him famous. After it had been rejected by several publishers, it was bought by Dodsley for ten guineas. It came out the same morning with Pope's satire, entitled “1738,” and excited a much greater sensation. The buzzing question ran, “What great unknown genius can this be?” The poem went to a second edition in a week; and Pope himself, who had read it with pleasure, when told that its author was an obscure man named Johnson, replied, “He will soon be *deterre*.”

Famous as he had now become, he continued poor; and tired to death of slaving for the booksellers, he applied, through the influence of Pope and Lord Gower, to procure a degree from Dublin, that it might aid him in his application for a school at Appleby, in Leicestershire. In this, however, he failed, and had to persevere for many years more in the ill-paid drudgery of authorship—meditating a translation of “Father Paul's History,” which was never executed—writing in the *Gentleman's Magazine* lives of Boeerhaave and Father Paul, &c., &c., &c.—and published separately “Marmor Norfolciense,” a disguised invective against Sir Robert Walpole, the obnoxious premier of the day. About this time he became intimate with the notorious

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Richard Savage, and with him spent too many of his private hours. Both were poor, both proud, both patriotic, both at that time lovers of pleasure, and they became for a season inseparable; often perambulating the streets all night, engaged now, we fear, in low revels, and now in high talk, and sometimes determined to stand by their country when they could stand by nothing else. Yet, if Savage for a season corrupted Johnson, he also communicated to him much information, and at last left himself in legacy, as one of the best subjects to one of the greatest masters of moral anatomy. In 1744, Johnson rolled off from his powerful pen, with as much ease as a thick oak a thunder-shower, the sounding sentences which compose the “Life of Savage,” and which shall for ever perpetuate the memory and the tale of that “unlucky rascal.” It is a wasp preserved in the richest amber. The whole reads like one sentence, and is generally read at one sitting. Sir Joshua Reynolds, meeting it in a country inn, began to read it while standing with his arm leaning on a chimney-piece, and was not able to lay it aside till he had finished it, when he found his arm totally benumbed. In 1745, Johnson issued proposals for a new edition of Shakspeare, but laid them aside for a time, owing to the great expectations entertained of the edition then promised by Warburton.

For several years, except a few trifles in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, and his famous “Prologue delivered at the Opening of Drury Lane Theatre,” he seems to have written nothing. But in 1745 appeared the prospectus of his most laborious undertaking, the “English Dictionary.” This continued his principal occupation for some years, and, as Boswell truly observes, “served to relieve his constitutional melancholy by the steady, yet not oppressive, employment it secured him.” In its unity, too, and gigantic size, the task seemed fitted for the powers of so strong a man; and although he says he dismissed it at last with “frigid tranquillity,” he had no doubt felt its influence during the time to be at once that of a protecting guardian and of an inspiring genius. In 1749, he published his “Vanity of Human Wishes,” for which he received the sum of fifteen guineas,—a miserable recompense for a poem which Byron pronounces “sublime,” and which is as true as it is magnificent in thought, and terse in language. In the same year, Garrick had “Irene” acted, but it was “damned” the first night, although it dragged on heavily for eight nights more. When the author was asked how he felt at its ill-success, he replied, “Like the Monument!” How different from Addison, walking restlessly, and perspiring with anxiety behind the scenes, while the fate of “Cato” was hanging in the balance!

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In 1750 he began his “Rambler,” and carried it on with only tolerable success till 1752. The world has long ago made up its mind on the merits and defects of this periodical, its masculine thought and energetic diction, alternating with disguised common-place and (as he would have said himself) “turgescient tameness”—its critical and fictitious papers, often so rich in fancy, and felicitous in expression, mixed with others which exhibit “bulk without spirit vast,” and are chiefly remarkable for their bold, bad innovations on that English tongue of which the author was piling up the standard Dictionary. Many have dwelt severely on Johnson’s inequalities, without attending to their cause; that was unquestionably the “body of death” which hung so heavily upon his system, and rendered writing at times a positive torment. Let his fastidious critics remember that he never spent a single day, of which he could say that he was entirely well, and free from pain, and that his spirits were often so depressed, that he was more than once seen on his knees, praying God to preserve his understanding.

A great calamity now visited his household. This was the death of his wife. She expired on the 17th of March 1752. She had been married to him sixteen years; and notwithstanding the difference of age, and other causes of disagreement, he seems to have loved her with sincerity, and to have lamented her death with deep and long-continued sorrow. He relaxed not, however, an instant in his literary labours, continued the preparation of his Dictionary, and contributed a few lively and vigorous papers to the “Adventurer”—a paper, edited by Dr Hawkesworth, a writer of some talent, who did his best to tower up to the measure and stature of the “Rambler.”

During this time Johnson was filling his house with a colony of poor dependants,—such as Mrs Anna Williams, a soured female poetaster; and Levet, a tenth-rate medical peripatetic, who, as well as Hodge, the great lexicographer’s cat, and Francis Barber, his black servant, now share in his immortality,—besides becoming acquainted with such men of eminence as Reynolds, the inimitable painter; Bennet Langton, the amiable and excellent country-gentleman; and Beauclerk, the smart and witty “man about town.” In 1755 (exactly a hundred years ago), Johnson chastised Lord Chesterfield for his mean, finessing conduct to him about his Dictionary, in a letter unparalleled, unless in “Junius,” for its noble and condensed scorn,—a scorn which “burns froze,” cold performing the effect of fire—and which reached that callous Lord, under the sevenfold shield of his conceit and conventionalism; visited Oxford, and was presented by acclamation with that degree of M.A. which he had left twenty-four years before without receiving; and, in fine, issued his Dictionary, the work of eight years, and which, undoubtedly, is the truest monument of his talent, industry, and general capacity, if not of the richness of his invention,

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or of the strength of his genius. He had obtained for it only the sum of L1575, which was all spent in the progress of the work; and he was compelled again to become a contributor to the periodical press, writing copiously and characteristically to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the *Universal Visitor*, and the *Literary Magazine*. In 1756, he was arrested for a debt of L5, 18s., but was relieved by Richardson, the novelist. In the same year he resumed his intention of an edition of Shakspeare, of which he issued proposals, and which he promised to finish in little more than a year, although nine years were to elapse ere it saw the light. In 1758, he began the "Idler," which reached the 103d No., and was considered lighter and more agreeable than the "Rambler." He has seldom written anything so powerful as his fable of "The Vultures." In 1759, his mother died, at the age of ninety,—an event which deeply affected him. Soon after this, and to defray the expenses of her funeral, he wrote his brilliant tale of "Rasselas," in the evenings of a single week,—a rare feat of readiness and rapid power, reminding one of Byron writing the "Corsair" in a fortnight, and of Sir Walter Scott finishing "Guy Mannering" in three weeks. There are perhaps more invention and more fancy in "Rasselas" than in any of his works, although a gloom, partly the shadow of his mother's death, and partly springing from his own temperament, rests too heavily on its pages. He received one hundred guineas for the copyright. In 1762, the Earl of Bute, both as a reward for past services, and as a prepayment of future, bestowed on him a pension of L300 for life. This raised a clamour against him, which he treated with silent contempt.

In 1763 occurred what was really a most important event in Johnson's life,—his acquaintance with Boswell,—who attached himself to him with a devotion reminding one more of the canine species than of man, sacrificed to him much of his time, his feelings, his very individuality, and became qualified to write a biography, in which fulness, interest, minute detail, and dramatic skill have never been equalled or approached. In 1764, Johnson founded the celebrated "Literary Club,"—perhaps the most remarkable cluster of distinguished men that ever existed; and in 1765 he was created LL.D. by Trinity College, Dublin. In 1765, too, he published his "Shakspeare;" and he became intimate with the Thrales,—the husband being a great brewer in Southwark; the wife, a lady of literary tastes, better known as Madame Piozzi, the author of "Anecdotes of Dr Johnson;" both distinguished for their attachment to him. He was often domesticated in their house for months together. In 1767 he had an interview with George III., in the library of the Queen's house; which, because Johnson preserved his self-possession, and talked with his usual precision and power, has been recounted by Boswell as if it had been a conversation with an apostle or an angel.

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In 1770 he did some work for his pension in a pamphlet entitled the “False Alarm,” defending the conduct of the Ministry in the case of the Middlesex election. In 1771 he wrote another political pamphlet, entitled “Thoughts on the late Transactions respecting Falklands’ Islands;” and five years later appeared “Taxation no Tyranny,”—an elaborate defence of the American war. Johnson was too dogmatic, and too fiercely passionate for a good political writer; and these productions added nothing to his fame, and increased the number of his enemies.

In 1773 he fulfilled his long-cherished purpose of visiting Scotland and the Hebrides, the story of which trip he told afterwards in his usual rotund and massive style, and which was recounted with far more liveliness and verisimilitude by Boswell. In 1774 he lost Goldsmith, who had long been his friend, whom he had counselled, rebuked, assisted, loved, and laughed at, and at whose death he was deeply grieved. In 1775, the publication of his “Tour to the Hebrides” brought him in collision with the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, and especially with James Macpherson, to whom Johnson sent a letter which crushed him like a catapult. Macpherson, as well as Rob Roy, was only strong on his native heath, and off it was no match for old Sam, whose prejudices, passions, and gigantic powers, combined to make him altogether irresistible in a literary duel. The same year, the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws; and in the close of it, he paid a visit, along with the Thrales, to Paris.

In 1776 nothing remarkable occurred in his history, unless it were the interview which Boswell so admirably manoeuvred to bring about between him and Jack Wilkes. Everybody remembers how well the bear and the monkey for the time agreed, and how both turned round to snub the spaniel, who had been the medium of their introduction to each other.

In 1777 he was requested by the London booksellers to prefix prefaces to the “English Poets,” part of which was issued the next year, and the rest in 1780 and 1781, as the “Lives of English Poets.” This work has generally been regarded as Johnson’s masterpiece. It nowhere, indeed, displays so much of the creative, the inventive, the poetical, as his “Rasselas,” and many of his smaller tales and fictions. Its judgments, too, have been often and justly controverted. The book is, undoubtedly, a storehouse of his prejudices, as well as of his wisdom. Its treatment of Milton, the man, for instance, is insufferably insolent, although ample justice is done to Milton, the poet of the “Paradise Lost.” Some poetasters he has overpraised, and some true but minor poets he has thrust down too far in the scale. But the work, as a whole, is full of inextinguishable life, and has passages verging on the eloquence and power of genius. A piece of stern, sober, yet broad and animated composition, rather careless in dates, and rather cursory in many of its criticisms, it displays unequalled force of thought, and pointed vigour of style, and when taken in connexion with the age of the author

(seventy), is altogether marvellous. Truly there were “giants in those days,” and this was a Briareus.

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For the details of his later life, his conversations, growing weakness, little journeys, unconquerable love of literature, &c., we must refer our readers to Boswell's teeming narrative. In 1783, he had a stroke of palsy, which deprived him for a time of speech. That returned to him, however, but a complication of complaints, including asthma, sciatica, and dropsy, began gradually to undermine his powerful frame. He continued to the last to cherish the prospect of a tour to Italy, but never accomplished his purpose. Death had all along been his great object of dread, and its fast approaches were regarded with unmitigated terror. "Cut deeper," he cried to the physicians who were operating on his limbs; "cut deeper; I don't care for pain, but I fear death." He fixed all his dying hope upon the Cross, and recommended Clarke's Sermons as fullest on the doctrine of a Propitiation. He spoke of the Bible and of the Sabbath with the warmest feelings of belief and respect. At last, on the 13th day of December 1784, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, this great, good man, whose fears had subsided, and who had become as a little child, fell asleep in Jesus. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, on Monday, December 20th, and his funeral was attended by the most distinguished men of the day.

Perhaps no literary man ever exerted, during his lifetime, the same personal influence as Samuel Johnson. Shelley used to call Byron the "Byronic Energy," from a sense of his exceeding power. The author of "Rasselas" was the "Johnsonian Energy;" and the demon within him, if not so ethereal and terrible as Byron's, was far more massive, equally strong, and in conversation, at least, much more ready to do his work. First-rate conversation generally springs from a desire to shine, or from the effort of a full mind to relieve itself, or from exuberant animal spirits, or from deep-seated misery. In Johnson it sprang from a combination of all these causes. He went to conversation as to an arena—his mind was richly-stored, even to overflowing—in company his spirits uniformly rose—and yet there was always at his heart a burden of wretchedness, seeking solace, not in silence, but in speech. Hence, with the exception of Burke, no one ever matched him in talk; and Burke, we imagine, although profounder in thought, more varied in learning, and more brilliant in imagination, seldom fairly pitted himself against Johnson. He was a younger man, and held the sage in too much reverence to encounter him often with any deliberate and determined purpose of contest. He frequently touched the shield of the general challenger, not with the sharp, but with the butt-end of his lance. He said, on one occasion, when asked why he had not talked more in Johnson's company, "Oh! it is enough for me to have rung the bell to him!"

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In all Johnson's works you see the traces of the triumphant conversationalist—of one who has met with few to contradict, and scarcely one to rival him. Hence the dogmatic strength and certainty, and hence, too, the one-sidedness and limitation of much of his writings. He does not “allow for the wind.” He seems to anticipate no reply, and to defy all criticism. One is tempted to quote the words of Solomon, “He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.” No such searching seems ever to have entered into Johnson's apprehensions. His sentences roll forth like the laws of the Medes and Persians; his praise alights with the authoritativeness of a sun-burst on a mountain; summit; and when he blames, he seems to add, like an ancient doomster, the words, “I pronounce for doom.” With Burke, it was very different. Accustomed to parliamentary debate in its vicissitudes and interchange—gifted, too, with a prophetic insight into coming objections, which “cast their shadows before,” and with an almost diseased subtlety of thinking, he binds up his answers to opponents with every thesis he propounds; and his paragraphs sometimes remind you of the plan of generals in great emergencies, putting foot soldiers on the same saddles with cavalry—they seem to *ride double*.

This is not the place, nor have we room, to dilate on Johnson's obvious merits and faults—his straight-forward sincerity—his strong manly sense—the masterly force with which he grasps all his subjects—the measured fervour of his style—the precision and vivacity of his shorter sentences—the grand swell and sonorousness of his longer; on his frequent monotony—his *sesquipedalia verba*—the “timorous meaning” which sometimes lurks under his “boldest words;” or on the deep *chiaroscuro* which discolours all his pictures of man, nature, society, and human life. We have now only to speak of his poetry. That is, unfortunately, small in amount, although its quality is so excellent as to excite keen regret that he had not, as he once intended, written many more pieces in the style of “London,” and the “Vanity of Human Wishes.” In these, the model of his mere manner is Pope, although coloured by Juvenal, his Latin original; but the matter and spirit are intensely his own. In “London,” satire seems swelling out of itself into something stronger and statelier—it is the apotheosis of that kind of poetry. You see in it a mind purer and sterner than Dryden's, or Pope's, or Churchill's, or even Juvenal's; “doing well to be angry” with a degenerate age, and a false, cowardly country, of which he deems himself unworthy to be a citizen. If there is rather too much of the *saeva indignatio*, which Swift speaks of as lacerating his heart, it is a nobler and less selfish ire than his, and the language and verse which it inspires are full of the very soul of dignity. In the “Vanity of Human Wishes,” he becomes one of those “hunters whose game

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is man" (to use the language of Soame Jenyns, in that essay on "The Origin of Evil," which Johnson, in the *Literary Review*, so mercilessly lashed); and from assailing premiers, parliaments, and the vices of London and England, he passes, in a very solemn spirit, to expose the vain hopes, wishes, and efforts of humanity at large. Parts of this poem are written more in sorrow than in anger, and parts more in anger than in sorrow. The portraits of Wolsey, Bacon, and Charles the Twelfth, are admirable in their execution, and in their adaptation to the argument of the piece; and the last paragraph, for truth and masculine energy is unsurpassed, we believe, in the whole compass of ethical poetry. We are far from assenting to the statement we once heard ably and elaborately advocated, "that there had been no *strong* poetry in Britain since the two satires of Johnson;" and we are still further from classing their author with the Shakspeares, Miltons, Wordsworths, and Coleridges of song; but we are nevertheless prepared, not only for the sake of these two satires, of his prologue, and of some other pieces in verse, but on account of the general spirit of much of his prose, to pronounce him potentially, if not actually, a great poet.

* * * * *

JOHNSON'S POEMS.

LONDON:

A POEM IN IMITATION OF THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL, 1738.

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

—JUVENAL.

Though grief and fondness in my breast rebel
When injured Thales^[1] bids the town farewell,
Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend;
I praise the hermit, but regret the friend;
Resolved, 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.

For who would leave, unbribed, Hibernia's land,
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand? 10
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.

While Thales waits the wherry that contains
Of dissipated wealth the small remains, 20
On Thames's bank in silent thought we stood,
Where Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood;
Struck with the seat that gave Eliza^[2] 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. 30



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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 neighbouring town.
Since worth, he cries, in these degenerate days,
Wants e'en the cheap reward of empty praise;
In those cursed walls, devote to vice and gain,
Since unrewarded science toils in vain;
Since hope but soothes to double my distress,
And every moment leaves my little less; 40
While yet my steady steps no staff sustains,
And life, still vigorous, 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 Powers indulgent! give;
Let—live here, for—has learn'd to live. 50
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 pirates[3] in the face of day;
With slavish tenets taint our poison'd youth,
And lend a lie the confidence of truth.
Let such raise palaces, and manors buy,
Collect a tax, or farm a lottery;
With warbling eunuchs fill our silenced stage,
And lull to servitude a thoughtless age. 60
Heroes, proceed! what bounds your pride shall hold?
What check restrain your thirst of power 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 given,
When public crimes inflame the wrath of Heaven.
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; 70
A statesman's logic unconvinced can hear,
And dare to slumber o'er the Gazetteer;[4]



Despise a fool in half his pension dress'd,
And strive in vain to laugh at Clodio's jest?

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 rustic tongue
Ne'er knew to puzzle right, or varnish wrong, 80
Spurn'd as a beggar, dreaded as a spy,
Live unregarded, unlamented die.

For what but social guilt the friend endears?
Who shares Orgilio's crimes, his fortune shares.
But thou, should tempting villany present
All Marlborough hoarded, or all Villiers spent,
Turn from the glittering 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. 90



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The cheated nation's happy favourites see!
Mark whom the great caress, who frown on me!
London, the needy villain's general 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—
I cannot bear a French metropolis.

Illustrious Edward! from the realms of day,
The land of heroes and of saints survey; 100
Nor hope the British lineaments to trace,
The rustic grandeur, or the surly grace;
But lost in thoughtless ease and empty show,
Behold the warrior dwindled to a beau;
Sense, freedom, piety, refin'd away,
Of France the mimic, 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 politics import; 110
Obsequious, artful, voluble, and gay,
On Britain's fond credulity they prey.
No gainful trade their industry can 'scape.
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.
Ah! what avails it that, from slavery 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; 120
If the gull'd conqueror receives the chain,
And flattery prevails, when arms are vain?

Studious to please, and ready to submit,
The supple Gaul was born a parasite:
Still to his interest true where'er he goes,
Wit, bravery, worth, his lavish tongue bestows;
In every face a thousand graces shine,
From every tongue flows harmony divine.
These arts in vain our rugged natives try,
Strain out, with faltering diffidence, a lie, 130
And get a kick for awkward flattery.



Besides, with justice, this discerning age
Admires their wondrous talents for the stage:
Well may they venture on the mimic's art,
Who play from morn to night a borrow'd part;
Practised their master's notions to embrace,
Repeat his maxims, and reflect his face;
With every wild absurdity comply,
And view its object with another's eye;
To shake with laughter ere the jest they hear, 140
To pour at will the counterfeited tear;
And as their patron hints the cold or heat,
To shake in dog-days, in December sweat.

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, every vice adore,
Your taste in snuff, your judgment in a whore,
Can Balbo's eloquence applaud, and swear 150
He gropes his breeches with a monarch's air.

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For arts like these preferr'd, admired, caress'd,
They first invade your table, then your breast;
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.

By numbers here from shame and censure free,
All crimes are safe, but hated poverty.
This, only this, the rigid law pursues, 160
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 various taunt a thousand ways.
Of all the griefs that harass the distress'd,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest;
Fate never wounds more deep the generous heart,
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart.

Has Heaven reserved, in pity to the poor, 170
No pathless waste or undiscover'd shore;
No secret island in the boundless main;
No peaceful desert yet unclaim'd by Spain?[5]
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
And bear Oppression's insolence no more.
This mournful truth is every where confess'd,
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 implored, 180
The groom retails the favours of his lord.

But hark! the affrighted crowd's tumultuous cries
Roll through the streets, and thunder to the skies:
Raised from some pleasing dream of wealth and power,
Some pompous palace, or some blissful bower,
Aghast you start, and scarce with aching sight
Sustain the approaching fire's tremendous light;
Swift from pursuing horrors take your way,
And leave your little ALL to flames a prey;
Then through the world a wretched vagrant roam, 190
For where can starving merit find a home?
In vain your mournful narrative disclose,



While all neglect, and most insult your woes.
Should Heaven's just bolts Orgilio's wealth confound,
And spread his flaming palace on the ground,
Swift o'er the land the dismal rumour flies,
And public mournings pacify the skies;
The laureate tribe in venal verse relate,
How Virtue wars with persecuting Fate;
With well-feign'd gratitude the pension'd band 200
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,
Orgilio sees the golden pile aspire,
And hopes from angry Heaven another fire.



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Could'st thou resign the park and play, content, 210
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;
And, while thy grounds a cheap repast afford,
Despise the dainties of a venal lord:
There every bush with Nature's music rings, 220
There every breeze bears health upon its wings;
On all thy hours Security shall smile,
And bless thine evening walk and morning toil.

Prepare for death, if here at night you roam,
And sign your will before you sup from home.
Some fiery fop, with new commission vain,
Who sleeps on brambles till he kills his man;
Some frolic drunkard, reeling from a feast,
Provokes a broil, and stabs you for a jest.
Yet e'en these heroes, mischievously gay, 230
Lords of the street, and terrors of the way;
Flush'd as they are with folly, youth, and wine,
Their prudent insults to the poor confine;
Afar they mark the flambeaux's bright approach,
And shun the shining train, and golden coach.

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 murderer bursts the faithless bar;
Invades the sacred hour of silent rest, 240
And leaves, unseen, a dagger in your breast.

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 support the sinking land,
Lest ropes be wanting in the tempting spring
To rig another convoy for the king.[6]

A single jail, in Alfred's golden reign,
Could half the nation's criminals contain;

Fair Justice then, without constraint adored, 250
Held high the steady scale, but sheathed the sword;
No spies were paid, no special juries known,
Blest age! but, ah! how different from our own!

Much could I add—but see the boat at hand,
The tide retiring, calls me from the land:
Farewell!—When, youth, and health, and fortune spent
Thou fliest for refuge to the wilds of Kent;
And, tired like me with follies and with crimes,
In angry numbers warn'st succeeding times,
Then shall thy friend, nor thou refuse his aid, 260
Still foe to vice, forsake his Cambrian shade;
In Virtue's cause once more exert his rage,
Thy satire point, and animate thy page.

[Footnote 1: 'Thales:' supposed to refer to Savage, who intended to retire to Wales about this time, and who accomplished his purpose soon after.]

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[Footnote 2: 'Eliza:' Queen Elizabeth.]

[Footnote 3: 'Pirates:' the piracies of the Spaniards were openly defended in Parliament.]

[Footnote 4: 'Gazetteer:' the then ministerial paper.]

[Footnote 5: 'Unclaimed by Spain:' Spain was said then to be claiming some of our American provinces.]

[Footnote 6: 'The king:' the nation was discontented at the visits made by the king to Hanover.]

* * * * *

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES.

IN IMITATION OF THE TENTH SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

Let 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 wavering man, betray'd by venturous pride,
To tread the dreary paths without a guide,
As treacherous phantoms in the mist delude,
Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good; 10
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 every wish the 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 powerful breath,
And restless fire precipitates on death! 20

But, scarce observed, the knowing and the bold
Fall in the general massacre of gold;
Wide-wasting pest! that rages unconfined,
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind



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 history tell, where rival kings command,
And dubious title shakes the maddened land, 30
When statutes glean the refuse of the sword,
How much more safe the vassal than the lord:
Low skulks the hind beneath the reach of power,
And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tower;
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,
Though Confiscation's vultures hover round.

The needy traveller, serene and gay,
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
Does envy seize thee? Crush the upbraiding joy,
Increase his riches, and his peace destroy— 40
Now fears in dire vicissitude invade,
The rustling brake alarms, and quivering shade;
Nor light nor darkness brings his pain relief,
One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.
Yet still one general cry the sky assails,
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales;
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,
The insidious rival, and the gaping heir.



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Once more, Democritus! arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth; 50
See motley life in modern trappings dress'd,
And feed with varied fools the eternal jest:
Thou who could'st laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece:
Where wealth, unloved, 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 favourites made no change of laws,
And senates heard before they judg'd a cause; 60
How wouldst 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 philosophic 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 every glance on human kind. 70
How just that scorn, e'er yet thy voice declare,
Search every state, and canvass every prayer.

Unnumber'd suppliants crowd Preferment's gate,
Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;
Delusive Fortune hears the incessant call,
They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.
On every 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; 80
For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,
To growing wealth the dedicator flies;
From every room descends the painted face,
That hung the bright Palladium of the place;
And smoked in kitchens, or in auctions sold,
To better features yields the frame of gold;
For now no more we trace in every line
Heroic worth, benevolence divine:
The form distorted justifies the fall,
And detestation rids the indignant wall. 90

But will not Britain hear the last appeal,
Sign her foes' doom, or guard her favourites' zeal?
Through Freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,
Degrading nobles, and controlling 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! 100
To him the church, the realm, their powers consign,
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine;
Turn'd by his nod, the stream of honour flows,
His smile alone security bestows:

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Still to new heights his restless wishes tower;
Claim leads to claim, and power advances power;
Till conquest unresisted ceased to please,
And rights submitted, left him none to seize.
At length his sovereign frowns—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate; 110
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 glittering plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liveried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.
Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings. 120

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,
The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?
For why did Wolsey, near the steep of Fate,
On weak foundations raise the enormous weight?
Why but to sink beneath Misfortune's blow,
With louder ruin, to the gulphs below!
What gave great Villiers to the assassin's knife,
And fix'd disease on Harley's closing life? 130
What murder'd Wentworth, and what exiled Hyde,
By kings protected, and to kings allied?
What but their wish indulged, in courts to shine,
And power too great to keep, or to resign!

When first the college rolls receive his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;
Resistless burns the fever of renown,
Caught from the strong contagion of the gown:
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,
And Bacon's^[1] mansion trembles o'er his head. 140
Are these thy views? Proceed, illustrious youth,
And Virtue guard thee to the throne of Truth!



Yet, should thy soul indulge the generous heat,
Till captive Science yields her last retreat;
Should Reason guide thee with her brightest ray,
And pour on misty Doubt resistless day;
Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,
Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;
Should tempting Novelty thy cell refrain,
And Sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain; 150
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 reversed for thee:
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause a while from learning, to be wise;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail. 160
See nations, slowly wise, and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,
Hear Lydiat's^[2] life, and Galileo's end.



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Nor deem, when Learning her last prize bestows,
The glittering eminence exempt from foes;
See, when the vulgar 'scapes, despised or awed,
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
From meaner minds though smaller fines content,
The plunder'd palace, or sequester'd rent, 170
Mark'd out by dangerous 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.

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; 180
For such in distant lands the Britons shine,
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine;
This power 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 mortgaged '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. 190

On what foundation stands the warrior'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;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their powers combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign; 200
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain:
'Think nothing gain'd,' he cries, 'till nought remain,
On Moscow's walls till Gothic 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 realms of Frost;
He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay;
Hide, blushing Glory! hide Pultowa's day: 210
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;
Condemn'd a needy suppliant to wait,
While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.
But did not Chance at length her error 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 destined to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand; 220
He left the name at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

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All times their scenes of pompous woe afford,
From Persia's tyrant to Bavaria's lord.
In gay hostility, and barbarous pride,
With half mankind embattled at his side,
Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
And starves exhausted regions in his way;
Attendant Flattery counts his myriads o'er,
Till counted myriads soothe his pride no more; 230
Fresh praise is tried, till madness fires his mind,
The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind;
New powers are claim'd, new powers 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;
The insulted sea with humbler thoughts he gains,
A single skiff to speed his flight remains;
The encumber'd oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast
Through purple billows and a floating host. 240
The bold Bavarian,[3] in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Caesarean power,
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,
With all the sons of ravage, crowd the war; 250
The baffled prince, in Honour's flattering bloom,
Of hasty greatness finds the fatal doom,
His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,
And steals to death from anguish and from shame.

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: 260
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flower;
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,
Diffuse the tuneful lenitives of pain:
No sounds, alas! would touch the impervious ear,
Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus near: 270
Nor lute nor lyre his feeble powers attend,
Nor sweeter music of a virtuous friend;
But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,
Perversely grave, or positively wrong;
The still returning tale, and lingering jest,
Perplex the fawning niece and pamper'd guest;
While growing hopes scarce awe the gathering 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, 280
Improve his heady rage with treacherous skill,
And mould his passions till they make his will.



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Unnumber'd maladies his joints invade,
Lay siege to life, and press the dire blockade;
But unextinguish'd Avarice 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. 290

But grant, the virtues of a temperate prime
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime—
An age that melts with unperceived decay,
And glides in modest innocence away,
Whose peaceful day Benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating Conscience cheers;
The general favourite as the general friend:
Such age there is, and who shall wish its end?

Yet e'en on this her load Misfortune flings,
To press the weary minutes' flagging wings; 300
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 withering life away;
New forms arise, and different views engage,
Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage,
Till pitying Nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace. 310

But few there are whom hours like these await,
Who set unclouded in the gulphs of Fate.
From Lydia's monarch^[4] 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 Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driveller and a show.

The teeming mother, anxious for her race,
Begs for each birth the fortune of a face: 320
Yet Vane^[5] could tell what ills from beauty spring;
And Sedley^[6] cursed the form that pleased 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 frolic, 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?
The rival batters, and the lover mines.
With distant voice neglected Virtue calls,
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls;
Tired with contempt, she quits the slippery 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 superior plied—
To Interest, Prudence; and to Flattery, Pride. 340
Here Beauty falls betray'd, despised, distress'd,
And hissing Infamy proclaims the rest.

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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 Heaven may hear, nor deem Religion vain. 350
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice;
Safe in His power, whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious prayer,
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,
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resign'd; 360
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat:
These goods for man the laws of Heaven ordain,
These goods He grants, who grants the power to gain;
With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

[Footnote 1: 'Bacon:' Friar, whose study was to fall when a wiser man than he entered it]

[Footnote 2: 'Lydiat:' a learned divine, who spent many of his days in prison for debt; he lived in Charles the First's time.]

[Footnote 3: 'Bavarian:' Charles Albert, who aspired to the empire of Austria against Maria Theresa—but was baffled.]

[Footnote 4: 'Lydia's monarch:' Croesus.]

[Footnote 5: Vane: 'Lady Vane, a celebrated courtesan; her memoirs are in 'Peregrine Pickle.']

[Footnote 6: 'Sedley:' mistress of James II.]

* * * * *

PROLOGUE

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

When Learning's triumph o'er her barbarous foes
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakspeare rose;
Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new:
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toil'd after him in vain;
His powerful 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; 10
His studious patience and laborious art,
By regular approach essay'd the heart:
Cold Approbation gave the lingering bays,
For those who durst not censure, scarce could praise;
A mortal born, he met the general doom,
But left, like Egypt's kings, a lasting tomb.

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The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,
Nor wish'd for Jonson's art, or Shakspeare's flame.
Themselves they studied; as they felt, they writ:
Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit. 20
Vice always found a sympathetic friend;
They pleased their age, and did not aim to mend.
Yet bards like these aspired to lasting praise,
And proudly hoped to pimp in future days.
Their cause was general, 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 refined,
For years the power of Tragedy declined; 30
From bard to bard the frigid caution crept,
Till Declamation roar'd, whilst 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 joyous day,
And Pantomime and Song confirm'd her sway.

But who the coming changes can presage,
And mark the future periods of the Stage? 40
Perhaps if skill could distant times explore,
New Behns,[1] new Dufseys, yet remain in store;
Perhaps where Lear has raved, and Hamlet died,
On flying cars new sorcerers may ride;
Perhaps (for who can guess the effects of chance?)
Here Hunt[2] may box, or Mahomet[3] may dance.
Hard is his lot that, here by Fortune placed,
Must watch the wild vicissitudes of Taste;
With every meteor of Caprice must play,
And chase the new-blown bubbles of the day. 50
Ah! let not Censure term our fate our choice,
The Stage but echoes back the public 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; 60
Bid scenic Virtue form the rising age,
And Truth diffuse her radiance from Stage.

[Footnote 1: 'Behn:' Afra, a popular but obscure novelist and play-wright.]

[Footnote 2: 'Hunt:' a famous stage-boxer.]

[Footnote 3: 'Mahomet:' a rope-dancer.]

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PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR GARRICK BEFORE THE 'MASQUE OF COMUS,'
ACTED FOR THE BENEFIT OF MILTON'S GRANDDAUGHTER.

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Ye patriot crowds, who burn for England's fame!
Ye nymphs, whose bosoms beat at Milton's name,
Whose generous zeal, unbought by flattering 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 Public Rage;
Let Study, worn with virtue's fruitless lore,
Behold this theatre, and grieve no more. 10
This night, distinguish'd by your smiles, shall tell
That never Briton can in vain excel:
The slightest 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 towering name; 20
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 threatening o'er her slow decay.
What though she shine with no Miltonian fire,
No favouring Muse her morning dreams inspire?
Yet softer claims the melting heart engage,
Her youth laborious, and her blameless age; 30
Hers the mild merits of domestic life,
The patient sufferer, and the faithful wife.
Thus graced 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.

* * * * *

PROLOGUE

TO GOLDSMITH'S COMEDY OF 'THE GOOD-NATURED MAN,' 1769.

Press'd by the load of life, the weary mind
Surveys the general toil of human kind;
With cool submission joins the labouring train,
And social sorrow loses half its pain.
Our anxious bard without complaint may share
This bustling season's epidemic care;
Like Caesar's pilot, dignified by Fate,
Toss'd in one common storm with all the great;
Distress'd alike the statesman and the wit,
When one the borough courts, and one the pit. 10
The busy candidates for power 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.
Unchecked, on both loud rabbles vent their rage,
As mongrels bay the lion in a cage.
The 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. 20

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'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 the electing tribe,
The bard may supplicate, but cannot bribe.
Yet, judged 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. 30

* * * * *

PROLOGUE

TO THE COMEDY OF 'A WORD TO THE WISE,' SPOKEN BY
MR HULL.

This night presents a play which public rage,
Or right, or wrong, once hooted from the stage;
From zeal or malice now no more we dread,
For English vengeance wars not with the dead.
A generous 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
The oblivious grave's inviolable shade. 10
Let one great payment every 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 dream, or empty sound. 20
Yet then shall calm Reflection bless the night
When liberal Pity dignified delight;
When Pleasure fired her torch at Virtue's flame,
And Mirth was Bounty with an humbler name.

* * * * *

SPRING.

- 1 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.
- 2 Now o'er the rural kingdom roves
Soft Pleasure with her laughing train;
Love warbles in the vocal groves,
And Vegetation paints the plain.
- 3 Unhappy! whom to beds of pain
Arthritic tyranny consigns;
Whom smiling Nature courts in vain,
Though Rapture sings, and Beauty shines.
- 4 Yet though my limbs disease invades,
Her wings Imagination tries,
And bears me to the peaceful shades
Where ——'s humble turrets rise.
- 5 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.
- 6 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.



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7 From false caresses, causeless strife,
Wild hope, vain fear, alike removed,
Here let me learn the use of life,
When best enjoy'd—when most improved.

8 Teach me, thou venerable bower!
Cool Meditation's quiet seat,
The generous scorn of venal power,
The silent grandeur of retreat.

9 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.

10 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!

* * * * *

MIDSUMMER.

1 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.

2 Come, gentle Eve! the friend of Care,
Come, Cynthia, lovely queen of night!
Refresh me with a cooling breeze,
And cheer me with a lambent light.

3 Lay me where, o'er the verdant ground,
Her living carpet Nature spreads;
Where the green bower, with roses crown'd,
In showers its fragrant foliage sheds.

4 Improve the peaceful hour with wine;
Let music die along the grove;
Around the bowl let myrtles twine,
And every strain be tuned to love.



5 Come, Stella, queen of all my heart!
Come, born to fill its vast desires!
Thy looks perpetual joys impart,
Thy voice perpetual love inspires.

6 While, all my wish and thine complete,
By turns we languish and we burn,
Let sighing gales our sighs repeat,
Our murmurs, murmuring brooks return.

7 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.

* * * * *

AUTUMN.

1 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.

2 'Twas Spring, 'twas Summer, all was gay;
Now Autumn bends a cloudy brow;
The flowers of Spring are swept away,
And Summer fruits desert the bough.

3 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.

4 The fields, that waved with golden grain,
As russet heaths are wild and bare;
Not moist with dew, but drench'd in rain,
Nor Health, nor Pleasure wanders there.

5 No more, while through the midnight shade,
Beneath the moon's pale orb I stray,
Soft pleasing woes my heart invade,
As Progne[1] pours the melting lay.



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6 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.

7 Vain wish! me Fate compels to bear
The downward season's iron reign,
Compels to breathe polluted air,
And shiver on a blasted plain.

8 What bliss to life can Autumn yield,
If glooms, and showers, and storms prevail,
And Ceres flies the naked field,
And flowers, and fruits, and Phoebus fail?

9 Oh! what remains, what lingers yet,
To cheer me in the darkening hour?
The grape remains! the friend of wit,
In love and mirth of mighty power.

10 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.

11 Still, still the jocund strain shall flow,
The pulse with vigorous rapture beat;
My Stella with new charms shall glow,
And every bliss in wine shall meet.

[Footnote 1: 'Progne:' the nightingale.]

* * * * *

EPIGRAM

ON GEORGE II. AND COLLEY CIBBER, ESQ.

Augustus still survives in Maro's strain,
And Spenser's verse prolongs Eliza's reign;
Great George's acts let tuneful Cibber sing,
For Nature form'd the poet for the king.

* * * * *



STELLA IN MOURNING.

When lately Stella's form display'd
The beauties of the gay brocade,
The nymphs, who found their power 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 prayer;
But brighten'd by the sable dress,
As Virtue rises in distress,
Since Stella still extends her reign,
Ah! how shall Envy soothe her pain?
The 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.

- 1 Not the soft sighs of vernal gales,
The fragrance of the flowery 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.

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* * * * *

VERSES

WRITTEN AT THE BEQUEST OF A GENTLEMAN TO WHOM A
LADY HAD GIVEN A SPRIG OF MYRTLE.

What hopes, what terrors, does this gift create,
Ambiguous emblem of uncertain fate!
The myrtle (ensign of supreme command,
Consign'd to Venus by Melissa's hand),
Not less capricious than a reigning fair,
Oft favours, oft rejects a lover's prayer.
In myrtle shades oft sings the happy swain,
In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain.
The myrtle crowns the happy lovers' heads,
The 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 sprig, as you shall fix its doom,
Adorn Philander's head, or grace his tomb.

* * * * *

TO LADY FIREBRACE,[1]

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.

[Footnote 1: 'Lady Firebrace:' daughter of P. Bacon, Ipswich, married three times—to Philip Evers, Esq., to Sir Corbell Firebrace, and to William Campbell, uncle of the Duke of Argyle.]

* * * * *

TO LYCE,

AN ELDERLY LADY.



- 1 Ye Nymphs whom starry rays invest,
By flattering poets given,
Who shine, by lavish lovers dress'd,
In all the pomp of Heaven.
- 2 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.
- 3 Her silver locks display the moon,
Her brows a cloudy show,
Striped rainbows round her eyes are seen,
And showers from either flow.
- 4 Her teeth the night with darkness dyes;
She's starr'd with pimples o'er;
Her tongue like nimble lightning plies,
And can with thunder roar,
- 5 But some Zelinda, while I sing,
Denies my Lyce shines;
And all the pens of Cupid's wing
Attack my gentle lines.
- 6 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 LEVETT,
A PRACTISER IN PHYSIC.

- 1 Condemned to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
Our social comforts drop away.
- 2 Well tried through many a varying year,
See Levett to the grave descend;
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.



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- 3 Yet still he fills Affection's eye,
Obscurely wise and coarsely kind;
Nor, letter'd Arrogance, deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined.
- 4 When fainting Nature call'd for aid,
And hovering Death prepared the blow,
His vigorous remedy display'd
The power of Art without the show.
- 5 In Misery's darkest cavern known,
His useful care was ever nigh;
Where hopeless Anguish pour'd his groan,
And lonely Want retired to die.
- 6 No summons, mock'd by chill delay;
No petty gain, disdain'd by pride;
The modest wants of every day,
The toil of every day supplied.
- 7 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,
- 8 The busy day—the peaceful night,
Unfelt, unclouded, glided by;
His frame was firm—his powers were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.
- 9 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.

* * * * *

EPITAPH ON CLAUDE PHILLIPS,[1]

AN ITINERANT MUSICIAN.

Phillips! whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty power and hapless love,
Rest here; distress'd by poverty no more,
Find here that calm thou gav'st so oft before;

Sleep undisturb'd within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine.

[Footnote 1: 'Claude Phillips:' a Welsh travelling fiddler, greatly admired.]

* * * * *

EPITAPH

ON SIR THOMAS HANMER, BART.

Thou who survey'st these walls with curious eye,
Pause at this tomb where Hanmer's ashes lie;
His various worth through varied life attend, 3
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 every ear, and gain'd on every heart.

Thus early wise, the endanger'd realm to aid,
His country call'd him from the studious shade; 10
In life's first bloom his public toils began,
At once commenced the senator and man.

In business dexterous, weighty in debate,
Thrice ten long years he labour'd for the state;
In every speech persuasive wisdom flow'd,
In every act refulgent virtue glow'd:
Suspended faction ceased 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. 20
Illustrious age! how bright thy glories shone,
While Hanmer fill'd the chair—and Anne the throne!

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Then when dark arts obscured 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 temperate zeal and wise anxiety; 30
Nor e'er from Virtue's paths was lured aside,
To pluck the flowers of pleasure, or of pride;
Her gifts despised, Corruption blush'd and fled,
And Fame pursued 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 retired, and honest mirth.
To rural grandeur, and domestic worth:
Delighted still to please mankind, or mend,
The patriot's fire yet sparkled in the friend. 40

Calm Conscience then his former life survey'd,
And recollected toils endear'd the shade,
Till Nature call'd him to her general doom,
And Virtue's sorrow dignified his tomb.

* * * * *

ON THE DEATH OF STEPHEN GREY, F.R.S.,
THE ELECTRICIAN.

Long hast thou borne the burden of the day;
Thy task is ended, venerable Grey!
No more shall Art thy dexterous hand require,
To break the sleep of elemental fire;
To rouse the power that actuates Nature's frame,
The momentaneous shock, the electric flame;
The flame which first, weak pupil to thy lore,
I saw, condemn'd, alas! to see no more.

Now, hoary sage! pursue thy happy flight;
With swifter motion, haste to purer light, 10
Where Bacon waits, with Newton and with Boyle,



To hail thy genius and applaud thy toil;
Where intuition breathes through time and space,
And mocks Experiment's successive race;
Sees tardy Science toil at Nature's laws,
And wonders how the effect obscures the cause.

Yet not to deep research or happy guess,
Is show'd the life of hope, the death of peace;
Unbless'd the man whom philosophic rage
Shall tempt to lose the Christian in the Sage: 20
Not Art, but Goodness, pour'd the sacred ray
That cheer'd the parting hours of humble Grey.

* * * * *

TO MISS HICKMAN,

PLAYING ON THE SPINNET.

Bright Stella! form'd for universal reign,
Too well you know to keep the slaves you gain:
When in your eyes resistless lightnings play,
Awed into love our conquer'd hearts obey,
And yield reluctant to despotic sway:
But when your music soothes the raging pain,
We bid propitious Heaven 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 fired the Grecian king: 10
 Unbounded projects labouring in his mind,
 He pants for room, in one poor world confined.
 Thus waked to rage, by Music's dreadful power,
 He bids the sword destroy, the flame devour.
 Had Stella's gentler touches moved 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. 20

* * * * *

PARAPHRASE

OF PROVERBS, CHAP. IV. VERSES 6-11.

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard!"

Turn on the prudent ant thy heedless 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 a 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 unchain thy powers? 10
 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.

* * * * *

HORACE,

LIB. IV. ODE VII. TRANSLATED.



The snow, dissolved, 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 sovereign ray; 10
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. 20
Not you, Torquatus, boast of Rome,
When Minos once has fix'd 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.

* * * * *



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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 breathed an added grace,
And on its basis would have been enroll'd,
'This is Minerva, cast in Virtue's mould.'

* * * * *

ANACREON, ODE NINTH.

Lovely courier of the sky!
Whence and whither dost thou fly?
Scattering, 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;
Graced with all that charms the heart,
Blushing nature, smiling art. 10
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; 20
But the liberal grant in vain
Tempt 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: 30



Now the generous 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 frolic tire,
Drop asleep upon his lyre. 40
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 pye.

* * * * *

LINES

WRITTEN IN RIDICULE OF CERTAIN POEMS PUBLISHED
IN 1777.

Wheresoe'er I turn my view,
All is strange, yet nothing new;
Endless labour all along,
Endless labour to be wrong;
Phrase that time has 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.

- 1 Err shall they not, who resolute explore
Time's gloomy backward with judicious eyes;
And, scanning right the practices of yore,
Shall deem our hoar progenitors unwise.
- 2 They to the dome where smoke with curling play
Announced the dinner to the regions round,
Summon'd the singer blithe, and harper gay,
And aided wine with dulcet-streaming sound.



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3 The better use of notes, or sweet or shrill,
By quivering string or modulated wind,
Trumpet or lyre—to their harsh bosoms chill,
Admission ne'er had sought, or could not find.

4 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.

5 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 music's soothing power.

* * * * *

BURLESQUE

ON THE MODERN VERSIFICATION 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.

* * * * *

EPITAPH FOR MR HOGARTH.

The hand of him here torpid lies,
That drew the essential form of grace;
Here closed in death the attentive eyes,
That saw the manners in the face.

* * * * *

TRANSLATION

OF THE TWO FIRST 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.

* * * * *

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; 10
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 DE 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 every generous mind;
He who still expects deceit,
Only teaches how to cheat.

* * * * *

LINES

WRITTEN UNDER A PRINT REPRESENTING PERSONS SKAITING.



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O'er crackling ice, o'er gulfs profound,
With nimble glide the skaters play;
O'er treacherous Pleasure's flowery ground
Thus lightly skim, and haste away.

* * * * *

TRANSLATION

OF A SPEECH OF AQUILEIO IN THE 'ADRIANO' OF METASTASIO, BEGINNING, 'TU
CHE IN CORTE INVECCHIASTI.'

Grown old in courts, thou art not surely one
Who keeps the rigid rules of ancient honour:
Well skill'd to soothe 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 discountenanced Virtue from the throne
That leave the blame of rigour to the prince, 10
And of his every gift usurp the merit;
That hide in seeming zeal a wicked purpose,
And only build upon each other's ruin.

* * * * *

IMPROMPTU

ON HEARING MISS THRALE CONSULTING WITH A FRIEND ABOUT A GOWN AND
HAT SHE WAS INCLINED TO WEAR.

Wear the gown, and wear the hat,
Snatch thy pleasures while they last;
Hadst thou nine lives, like a cat,
Soon those nine lives would be past.

* * * * *

TRANSLATION OF VIRGIL.

PASTORAL I.



Mileboeus. Now, Tityrus, you supine and careless laid,
Play on your pipe beneath yon beechen shade;
While wretched we about the world must roam,
And leave our pleasing fields, and native home;
Here at your ease you sing your amorous flame,
And the wood rings with Amaryllis' name.

Tityrus. Those blessings, friend, a deity bestow'd,
For I shall never think him less than god;
Oft on his altars shall my firstlings lie,
Their blood the consecrated stones shall dye: 10
He gave my flocks to graze the flowery meads,
And me to tune at ease the unequal reeds.

Mileboeus. My admiration only I express'd,
(No spark of envy harbours in my breast),
That when confusion o'er the country reigns,
To you alone this happy state remains.
Here I, though faint myself, must drive my goats,
Far from their ancient fields and humble cots.
This scarce I lead, who left on yonder rock
Two tender kids, the hopes of all the flock. 20
Had we not been perverse and careless grown,
This dire event by omens was foreshown;
Our trees were blasted by the thunder stroke,
And left-hand crows, from an old hollow oak,
Foretold the coming evil by their dismal croak.

* * * * *

TRANSLATION OF HORACE.

BOOK I. ODE XXII.



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- 1 The man, my friend, whose conscious heart
With virtue's sacred ardour glows,
Nor taints with death the envenom'd dart,
Nor needs the guard of Moorish bows:
- 2 Though Scythia's icy cliffs he treads,
Or horrid Afric's faithless sands;
Or where the famed Hydaspes spreads
His liquid wealth o'er barbarous lands.
- 3 For while, by Chloee's image charm'd,
Too far in Sabine woods I stray'd;
Me singing, careless and unarm'd,
A grisly wolf surprised, and fled.
- 4 No savage more portentous stain'd
Apulia's spacious wilds with gore;
None fiercer Juba's thirsty land,
Dire nurse of raging lions, bore.
- 5 Place me where no soft summer gale
Among the quivering branches sighs;
Where clouds condensed for ever veil
With horrid gloom the frowning skies:
- 6 Place me beneath the burning line,
A clime denied to human race;
I'll sing of Chloee's charms divine,
Her heavenly voice, and beauteous face.

* * * * *

TRANSLATION OF HORACE.

BOOK II. ODE IX.

- 1 Clouds do not always veil the skies,
Nor showers immerse the verdant plain;
Nor do the billows always rise,
Or storms afflict the ruffled main.
- 2 Nor, Valgius, on the Armenian shores
Do the chain'd waters always freeze;



Not always furious Boreas roars,
Or bends with violent force the trees.

3 But you are ever drown'd in tears,
For Mystes dead you ever mourn;
No setting Sol can ease your cares,
But finds you sad at his return.

4 The wise, experienced Grecian sage
Mourn'd not Antilochus so long;
Nor did King Priam's hoary age
So much lament his slaughter'd son.

5 Leave off, at length, these woman's sighs,
Augustus' numerous trophies sing;
Repeat that prince's victories,
To whom all nations tribute bring.

6 Niphates rolls an humbler wave,
At length the undaunted Scythian yields,
Content to live the Romans' slave,
And scarce forsakes his native fields.

* * * * *

TRANSLATION

OF PART OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE.—FROM
THE SIXTH BOOK OF HOMER'S ILIAD.

She ceased: then godlike Hector answer'd kind,
(His various plumage sporting in the wind):
That post, and all the rest, shall be my care;
But shall I then forsake the unfinish'd war?
How would the Trojans brand great Hector's name,
And one base action sully all my fame,
Acquired by wounds and battles bravely fought!
Oh! how my soul abhors so mean a thought!

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Long have I learn'd to slight this fleeting breath,
And view with cheerful eyes approaching death. 10
The inexorable Sisters have decreed
That Priam's house and Priam's self shall bleed:
The day shall come, in which proud Troy shall yield,
And spread its smoking ruins o'er the field;
Yet Hecuba's, nor Priam's hoary age,
Whose blood shall quench some Grecian's thirsty rage,
Nor my brave brothers that have bit the ground,
Their souls dismiss'd through many a ghastly wound,
Can in my bosom half that grief create,
As the sad thought of your impending fate; 20
When some proud Grecian dame shall tasks impose,
Mimic your tears, and ridicule your woes:
Beneath Hyperia's waters shall you sweat,
And, fainting, scarce support the liquid weight:
Then shall some Argive loud insulting cry,
Behold the wife of Hector, guard of Troy!
Tears, at my name, shall drown those beauteous eyes,
And that fair bosom heave with rising sighs:
Before that day, by some brave hero's hand,
May I lie slain, and spurn the bloody sand! 30

* * * * *

TO MISS * * * *

ON HER PLAYING UPON A HARPSICHORD IN A ROOM HUNG WITH FLOWER-
PIECES OF HER OWN PAINTING.

When Stella strikes the tuneful string,
In scenes of imitated Spring,
Where beauty lavishes her powers
On beds of never-fading flowers,
And pleasure propagates around
Each charm of modulated sound;
Ah! think not, in the dangerous hour,
The nymph fictitious as the flower,
But shun, rash youth! the gay alcove,
Nor tempt the snares of wily love. 10



When charms thus press on every sense,
What thought of flight or of defence?
Deceitful hope or 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.

But on those regions of delight
Might truth intrude with daring flight, 20
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 dyes,
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, 30
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 music teach the nobler art,
To tune the regulated heart.

* * * * *

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EVENING: AN ODE.

TO STELLA.

Evening 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 chequer'd, lonely grove,
Hears, and keeps thy secrets, Love.
Stella, thither let us stray
Lightly o'er the dewy way! 10
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,
Evening's silent hours employ,
Silence best, and conscious shades,
Please the hearts that love invades; 20
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, 10
If her chintz 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— 20
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.

No more thus brooding o'er yon heap,
With Avarice painful vigils keep;
Still unenjoy'd the present store,
Still endless sighs are breathed for more.
Oh! quit the shadow, catch the prize,
Which not all India's treasure buys!
To purchase Heaven, 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? 10
No; all that's worth a wish—a thought,
Fair Virtue gives unbribed, unbought.
Cease, then, on trash thy hopes to bind,
Let nobler views engage thy mind.

With Science tread the wondrous way,
Or learn the Muse's moral lay;
In social hours indulge thy soul,
Where Mirth and Temperance mix the bowl;
To virtuous love resign thy breast,
And be, by blessing beauty, blest. 20



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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, in Stella, and content;
And scorn, oh! let that scorn be thine,
Mere things of clay, that dig the mine!

* * * * *

TO A YOUNG LADY,

ON HER BIRTHDAY.

This tributary verse receive, my fair,
Warm with an ardent lover's fondest prayer.
May this returning day for ever find
Thy form more lovely, more adorn'd thy mind;
All pains, all cares, may favouring Heaven remove,
All but the sweet solitudes of love!
May powerful Nature join with grateful Art,
To point each glance, and force it to the heart!
Oh then, when conquer'd crowds confess thy sway,
When even proud Wealth and prouder Wit obey, 10
My fair, be mindful of the mighty trust,
Alas! 'tis hard for beauty to be just!
Those sovereign charms with strictest care employ;
Nor give the generous pain, the worthless joy:
With his own form acquaint the forward fool,
Shown in the faithful glass of Ridicule;
Teach mimic Censure her own faults to find,
No more let coquettes to themselves be blind,
So shall Belinda's charms improve mankind.

* * * * *

EPILOGUE

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SPOKEN BY A LADY WHO WAS TO PERSONATE 'THE GHOST OF HERMIONE.'



Ye blooming train, who give despair or joy,
Bless with a smile, or with a frown destroy;
In whose fair cheeks destructive Cupids wait,
And with unerring shafts distribute fate;
Whose snowy breasts, whose animated eyes,
Each youth admires, though each admirer dies;
Whilst you deride their pangs in barbarous play,
Unpitying see them weep, and hear them pray,
And unrelenting sport ten thousand lives away:
For you, ye fair! I quit the gloomy plains, 10
Where sable Night in all her horror reigns;
No fragrant bowers, no delightful glades,
Receive the unhappy ghosts of scornful maids.
For kind, for tender nymphs, the myrtle blooms,
And weaves her bending boughs in pleasing glooms;
Perennial roses deck each purple vale,
And scents ambrosial breathe in every gale;
Far hence are banish'd vapours, spleen, and tears,
Tea, scandal, ivory teeth, and languid airs;
No pug, nor favourite Cupid there enjoys 20
The balmy kiss for which poor Thyrsis dies;
Form'd to delight, they use no foreign arms,
No torturing whalebones pinch them into charms;
No conscious blushes there their cheeks inflame,
For those who feel no guilt can know no shame;
Unfaded still their former charms they

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show,

Around them pleasures wait, and joys for ever new.
But cruel virgins meet severer fates;
Expell'd and exiled from the blissful seats,
To dismal realms, and regions void of peace, 30
Where furies ever howl, and serpents hiss,
O'er the sad plains perpetual tempests sigh,
And poisonous vapours, blackening all the sky,
With livid hue the fairest face o'ercast,
And every beauty withers at the blast:
Where'er they fly, their lovers' ghosts pursue,
Inflicting all those ills which once they knew;
Vexation, fury, jealousy, despair,
Vex every eye, and every bosom tear;
Their foul deformities by all descried, 40
No maid to flatter, and no paint to hide.
Then melt, ye fair, while crowds around you sigh,
Nor let disdain sit lowering in your eye;
With pity soften every awful grace,
And beauty smile auspicious in each face
To ease their pain exert your milder power;
So shall you guiltless reign, and all mankind adore.

* * * * *

THE YOUNG AUTHOR.

When first the peasant, long inclined to roam,
Forsakes his rural sports and peaceful home,
Pleased with the scene the smiling ocean yields,
He scorns the verdant meads and flowery fields:
Then dances jocund o'er the watery way,
While the breeze whispers, and the streamers play:
Unbounded prospects in his bosom roll,
And future millions lift his rising soul;
In blissful dreams he digs the golden mine,
And raptured sees the new-found ruby shine. 10
Joys insincere! thick clouds invade the skies,
Loud roar the billows, high the waves arise;
Sickening with fear, he longs to view the shore,
And vows to trust the faithless deep no more.
So the young author, panting after fame,

And the long honours of a lasting name,
Intrusts his happiness to human kind,
More false, more cruel than the seas or wind!

Toil on, dull crowd! in ecstasies he cries,
For wealth or title, perishable prize; 20
While I those transitory blessings scorn,
Secure of praise from ages yet unborn.
This thought once form'd, all counsel comes too late,
He flies to press, and hurries on his fate;
Swiftly he sees the imagined laurels spread,
And feels the unfading wreath surround his head.
Warn'd by another's fate, vain youth be wise,
Those dreams were Settle's^[1] once, and Ogilby's!^[2]
The pamphlet spreads, incessant hisses rise,
To some retreat the baffled writer flies, 30
Where no sour critics snarl, no sneers molest,
Safe from the tart lampoon, and stinging jest;
There begs of Heaven a less distinguish'd lot—
Glad to be hid, and proud to be forgot.

[Footnote 1: 'Settle;' see Life of Dryden.]

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[Footnote 2: 'Ogilby:' a poor translator.]

* * * * *

FRIENDSHIP: AN ODE.

PRINTED IN THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, 1743.

- 1 Friendship, peculiar boon of Heaven,
The noble mind's delight and pride—
To men and angels only given,
To all the lower world denied!
- 2 While love, unknown among the blest,
Parent of thousand wild desires,
The savage and the human breast
Torments alike with raging fires;
- 3 With bright, but oft destructive gleam,
Alike o'er all his lightnings fly;
Thy lambent glories only beam
Around the favourites of the sky.
- 4 Thy gentle flows of guiltless joys,
On fools and villains ne'er descend;
In vain for thee the tyrant sighs,
And hugs a flatterer for a friend.
- 5 Directress of the brave and just,
Oh, guide us through life's darksome way!
And let the tortures of mistrust
On selfish bosoms only prey.
- 6 Nor shall thine ardours cease to glow,
When souls to peaceful climes remove:
What raised our virtue here below,
Shall aid our happiness above.

* * * * *

IMITATION OF THE STYLE OF[1] * * *

- 1 Hermit hoar, in solemn cell
Wearing out life's evening gray,



Strike thy bosom, sage, and tell
What is bliss, and which the way.

2 Thus I spoke, and speaking sigh'd,
Scarce repress'd the starting tear,
When the hoary sage replied,
'Come, my lad, and drink some beer.'

* * * * *

ONE AND TWENTY.

1 Long-expected one-and-twenty,
Lingering year, at length is flown:
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great * * *, are now your own.

2 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.

3 Call the Betsies, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

4 All that prey on vice and folly
Joy to see their quarry fly:
There the gamester, light and jolly;
There the lender, grave and sly.

5 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.

6 When the bonny blade carouses,
Pockets full, and spirits high—
What are acres? what are houses?
Only dirt, or wet, or dry.

7 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.

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[Footnote 1: Supposed to be Percy.]

* * * * *

END OF JOHNSON'S POEMS.

* * * * *

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

THOMAS PARNELL.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

ROBERT EARL OF OXFORD AND EARL MORTIMER.

Such were the notes thy once-loved poet sung,
Till Death untimely stopp'd his tuneful tongue.
Oh, just beheld, and lost! admired, and mourn'd!
With softest manners, gentlest arts adorn'd,
Blest in each science, blest in every strain,
Dear to the Muse, to Harley dear—in vain!

For him, thou oft hast bid the world attend,
Fond to forget the statesman in the friend;
For Swift and him, despised the farce of state,
The sober follies of the wise and great;
Dexterous the craving, fawning crowd to quit,
And pleased to 'scape from flattery to wit.

Absent or dead, still let a friend be dear,
(A sigh the absent claims—the dead, a tear)
Recall those nights that closed thy toilsome days,
Still hear thy Parnell in his living lays:
Who careless, now, of interest, fame, or fate,
Perhaps forgets that Oxford e'er was great;
Or deeming meanest what we greatest call,
Beholds thee glorious only in thy fall.

And sure if ought below the seats divine
Can touch immortals, 'tis a soul like thine:
A soul supreme, in each hard instance tried,



Above all pain, all anger, and all pride,
The rage of power, the blast of public breath,
The lust of lucre, and the dread of death.

In vain to deserts thy retreat is made;
The Muse attends thee to the silent shade:
'Tis hers, the brave man's latest steps to trace,
Re-judge his acts, and dignify disgrace.
When Interest calls off all her sneaking train,
When all the obliged desert, and all the vain,
She waits; or, to the scaffold, or the cell,
When the last lingering friend has bid farewell.
Even now she shades thy evening walk with bays,
(No hireling she, no prostitute to praise)
Even now, observant of the parting ray,
Eyes the calm sunset of thy various day,
Through fortune's cloud one truly great can see,
Nor fears to tell that MORTIMER is he.

September 25, 1721. A. POPE.

THE LIFE AND POETRY OF THOMAS PARNELL.

Parnell is the third in a trio of poetical clergymen whose names have immediately succeeded each other in this edition. Bowles, Churchill, and Parnell were all clergymen, and all poets; but in other respects differed materially from each other. In Bowles, the clerical and the poetical characters were on the whole well attuned and harmonised. In Churchill, they came to an open rupture. In Parnell, they were neither ruptured nor reconciled, but maintained an ambiguous relation, till his premature death settled the moot point for ever.

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The life of this poet has been written by Goldsmith, by Johnson, by the Rev. John Mitford, and others; but, after all, very little is known about him. Thomas Parnell was the descendant of an ancient family, which had been settled for some hundreds of years at Congleton, Cheshire. His father, whose name also was Thomas, took the side of the Commonwealth, and at the Restoration went over to Ireland, where he purchased a considerable property. This, along with his estate in Cheshire, devolved to the poet. His father had a second son, John, whose descendants were created baronets. The late Sir Henry Parnell, for some years the respected member of Parliament for the town of Dundee, where we now write, was the great-great-grandson of the poet's father. Parnell was born in Dublin, in the year 1679. He was sent to a school taught by one Dr Jones. Here he is said to have distinguished himself by the readiness and retentiveness of his memory; often performing the task allotted for days in a few hours, and being able to repeat forty lines in any book of poems, after the first reading. It is a proof of the prematurity of his powers, that he entered Trinity College, Dublin, at the age of thirteen, where his compositions attracted attention from the extent of classical lore which they discovered. He took the degree of M.A. in 1700; and the same year (through a dispensation on account of being under age) was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Deny. Three years after, he was ordained priest; and in 1705, he was made Archdeacon of Clogher, by Sir George Ashe, bishop of that see. So soon as he received the archdeanery, he married Miss Ann Minchin, who is described as a young lady of great beauty, and of an amiable character, by whom he had two sons, who died young, and a daughter, who long survived both her parents.

Up to the triumph of the Tories, at the end of Queen Anne's reign, Parnell appears to have been, like his father, a keen Whig. He was at that time, however, induced, for motives which his biographers call obscure, but which to us seem obvious enough, on the well-known principle of the popularity of the rising sun, to change his party; and he was hailed by the Tories as a valuable accession to their ranks. This proves that his talents were even then known; a fact corroborated by Johnson's statement, that while he was waiting in the outer-room at Lord Oxford's levee, the prime minister, when told he was there, went out, at the persuasion of Swift, with his treasurer's staff in his hand, and saluted him in the most flattering manner. He became, either before or immediately after this, intimate with Pope, Swift, Gay, and the rest of that brilliant set, who all appear to have loved him for his social qualities, to have admired his genius, and to have pitied his infirmities. He was a member of the Scriblerus Club, and contributed some trifles to their transactions. He was, at the same time, intimate with Addison and Steele, and wrote a few papers in

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the “Spectator.” To Pope, he was of essential service, assisting him in his notes to the “Iliad,” being, what Pope was not, a good Greek scholar. He wrote a life of Homer, which was prefixed to the Translation, although stiff in style, and fabulous in statement. He gratified Pope’s malicious spirit still more by writing, under the guise of a “Life of Zoilus,” a bitter attack on Dennis—the great object of the poet’s fear and mortal abhorrence. For these and other services, Pope rewarded him, after his usual manner, with large offerings of that sweet and suffocating incense, by which he delighted, now to gain his enemies, and now to gratify his friends. With Gay, also, Parnell was intimate; and the latter, himself independent by his fortune, is said to have bestowed on this needy and improvident genius the price of the copyright of his works.

Parnell first visited London in 1706; and from that period till his death, scarcely a year elapsed without his spending some time in the metropolis. He seems to have had as intense a relish of London life as Johnson and Boswell exhibited in the next age. So soon as he had collected his rents, he hied to the capital, and there enjoyed himself to the top of his bent. He jested with the Scriblerus Club. He quaffed now and then with Lord Oxford. He varied his round of amusements by occasional professional exhibitions in the pulpits of Southwark and elsewhere,—made, we fear, more from a desire to display himself, than to benefit his hearers. Still his sermons were popular; and he entertained at one time the hope,—a hope blasted by the death of Queen Anne,—of being preferred to a city charge. So soon as each London furlough was expired, he returned to Ireland, jaded and dispirited, and there took delight in nursing his melancholy; in pining for the amusements of the metropolis; in shunning and sneering at the society around him; and in abusing his native bogs and his fellow-countrymen in verse. This was not manly, far less Christian conduct. He ought to have drowned his recollections of London in active duty, or in diligent study; and if he found society coarse or corrupt, he should have set himself to refine and to purify it. But he seems to have been a lazy, luxurious person—his life a round of selfish rapture and selfish anguish,—in fact, ruined by his independent fortune. Had he been a poorer, he had probably been a happier man. He was not, moreover, of that self-contained cast of character, which can live on its own resources, create its own world, and say, “My mind to me a kingdom is.”

In 1712 he lost his wife, with whom he appears to have lived as happily as his morbid temperament and mortified feelings would permit. This blow deepened his melancholy, and drove him, it is said, to an excessive and habitual use of wine. In the same year we find him in London, brought out once more under the “special patronage” of Dean Swift, who had quite a penchant for Parnell, and who wished, through

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his side, to mortify certain persons in Ireland, who did not appreciate, he says, the Archdeacon; and who, we suspect, besides, did not thoroughly appreciate the Dean. Swift, partly in pity for the “poor lad,” as he calls him, whom he saw to be in such imminent danger of losing caste and character, and partly in the true patronising spirit, introduced Parnell to Lord Bolingbroke, who received him kindly, entertained him at dinner, and encouraged him in his poetical studies. The Dean’s patronage, however, was of little avail in this matter to the protege; Bolingbroke, a man of many promises, and few performances, did nothing for him. The consequences of dissipation began, at this time, too, to appear in Parnell’s constitution; and we find Swift saying of him, “His head is out of order, like mine, but more constant, poor boy.” It was perhaps to this period that Pope referred, when he told Spence, “Parnell is a great follower of drams, and strangely open and scandalous in his debaucheries.” If so, his bad habits seem to have sprung as much from disappointment and discontent as from taste.

Yet Swift continued his friend, and it was at his instance that, in 1713, Archbishop King presented Parnell with a prebend. In 1714, his hope of London promotion died with Queen Anne; but in 1716, the same generous Archbishop bestowed on him the vicarage of Finglass, in the diocese of Dublin, worth L400 a-year. This preferment, however, the poet did not live long to enjoy,—dying at Chester, in July 1717, on his way to Ireland, aged thirty-eight years. His estates passed to his nephew, Sir John Parnell. He had, in the course of his life, composed a great deal of poetry; much of it, indeed, *invita* Minerva. After his death, Pope collected the best pieces, and published them, with a dedication to Lord Oxford. Goldsmith, in his edition, added two or three; and other editors, a good many poems, of which we have only inserted one, deeming the rest unworthy of his memory. In 1788 a volume was published, entitled, “The Posthumous Works of Dr T. Parnell, containing poems moral and divine.” These, however, attracted little attention, being mostly rubbish. Johnson says of them, “I know not whence they came, nor have ever inquired whither they are going.” It is said that the present representative of the Parnell family preserves a mass of unpublished poems from the pen of his relative. We trust that he will long and religiously refrain from disturbing their MS. slumbers.

The whole tenor of Parnell’s history convinces us that he was an easy-tempered, kind-hearted, yet querulous and self-indulgent man, who had no higher motive or object than to gratify himself. His very ambition aspired not to very lofty altitudes. His utmost wish was to attain a metropolitan pulpit, where he could have added the reputation of a popular preacher to that of being the *protege* of Swift, and the pet of the Scriblerus Club. The character of his poetry is in keeping with the temperament of

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the man. It is slipshod, easy, and pleasing. If the distinguishing quality of poetry be to give pleasure, then Parnell is a poet. You never thrill under his power, but you read him with a quiet, constant, subdued gratification. If never eminently original, he has the art of enunciating common-places with felicity and grace. The stories he relates are almost all old, but his manner of telling them is new. His thoughts and images are mostly selected from his common-place book; but he utters them with such a natural ease of manner, that you are tempted to think them his own. He knows the compass of his poetical powers, and never attempts anything very lofty or arduous. His “Allegory on Man,”—pronounced by Johnson his best,—seems rather a laborious than a fortunate effusion. His “Hymn to Contentment” is animated, as the subject required, by a kind of sober rapture. His “Faery Tale” is a good imitation of that old style of composition. His “Hesiod” catches the classical tone and spirit with considerable success. His “Flies,” and “Elegy to the Old Beauty,” are ingenious trifles. His “Nightpiece on Death” has fine touches, but is slight for such a theme, and must not be named beside Blair’s “Grave,” and Gray’s “Elegy written in a Country Churchyard.” His translations we have, in accordance with the plan of this edition, omitted—and, indeed, they are little loss. His “Bookworm,” &c., are adaptations from Beza and other foreign authors. By far his most popular poem is the “Hermit.” In it he tells a tale that had been told in Arabic, French, and English, for the tenth time; and in that tenth edition tells it so well, that the public have thanked him for it as for an original work. Of course, the story not being Parnell’s, it is not his fault that it casts no light upon the dread problems of Providence it professed to explain. But the incidents are recorded with ease and liveliness; the characters are rapidly depicted, and strikingly contrasted; and many touches of true poetry occur. How vivid this couplet, for instance—

“Slow creaking turns the door with jealous care,
And half he welcomes in the shivering pair!”

How picturesque the following—

“A fresher green the smiling leaves display,
And, *glittering as they tremble*, cheer the day!”

The description of the unveiled angel approaches the sublime—

“Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair;
Celestial odours breathe through purpled air;
And wings, whose colours glitter’d on the day,
Wide at his back, their gradual plumes display.
The form ethereal bursts upon his sight,
And moves in all the majesty of light.”

A passage of similar brilliance occurs in “Piety, or the Vision”—

“A sudden splendour seem’d to kindle day; A breeze came breathing in; a sweet perfume, *Blown from eternal gardens*, fill’d the room, And in a void of blue, that clouds invest, Appear’d a daughter of the realms of rest.”

Such passages themselves are enough to prove Parnell a true poet.

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PARNELL'S POEMS.

HESIOD; OR, THE RISE OF WOMAN.

What ancient times, those times we fancy wise,
Have left on long record of woman's rise,
What morals teach it, and what fables hide,
What author wrote it, how that author died,—
All these I sing. In Greece they framed the tale;
(In Greece, 'twas thought a woman might be frail);
Ye modern beauties! where the poet drew
His softest pencil, think he dreamt of you;
And warn'd by him, ye wanton pens, beware
How Heaven's concern'd to vindicate the fair. 10
The case was Hesiod's; he the fable writ—
Some think with meaning—some, with idle wit:
Perhaps 'tis either, as the ladies please;
I waive the contest, and commence the lays.

In days of yore, no matter where or when,
'Twas ere the low creation swarm'd with men,
That one Prometheus, sprung of heavenly birth
(Our author's song can witness), lived on earth.
He carved the turf to mould a manly frame,
And stole from Jove his animating flame. 20
The sly contrivance o'er Olympus ran,
When thus the Monarch of the Stars began:
'Oh versed in arts! whose daring thoughts aspire
To kindle clay with never-dying fire!
Enjoy thy glory past, that gift was thine;
The next thy creature meets, be fairly mine:
And such a gift, a vengeance so design'd,
As suits the counsel of a God to find;
A pleasing bosom cheat, a specious ill,
Which, felt, they curse, yet covet still to feel.' 30

He said, and Vulcan straight the sire commands
To temper mortar with ethereal hands;
In such a shape to mould a rising fair,
As virgin-goddesses are proud to wear;
To make her eyes with diamond-water shine,
And form her organs for a voice divine.



'Twas thus the sire ordain'd; the power obey'd;
And work'd, and wonder'd at the work he made;
The fairest, softest, sweetest frame beneath,
Now made to seem, now more than seem, to breathe. 40

As Vulcan ends, the cheerful queen of charms
Clasp'd the new-panting creature in her arms;
From that embrace a fine complexion spread,
Where mingled whiteness glow'd with softer red.
Then in a kiss she breathed her various arts,
Of trifling prettily with wounded hearts;
A mind for love, but still a changing mind;
The lisp affected, and the glance design'd;
The sweet confusing blush, the secret wink,
The gentle-swimming walk, the courteous sink, 50
The stare for strangeness fit, for scorn the frown,
For decent yielding, looks declining down,
The practised languish, where well-feign'd desire
Would own its melting in a mutual fire;
Gay smiles to comfort; April showers to move;
And all the nature, all the art, of love.



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Gold-sceptred Juno next exalts the fair;
Her touch endows her with imperious air,
Self-valuing fancy, highly-crested pride,
Strong sovereign will, and some desire to chide: 60
For which an eloquence, that aims to vex,
With native tropes of anger arms the sex.

Minerva, skilful goddess, train'd the maid
To twirl the spindle by the twisting thread,
To fix the loom, instruct the reeds to part,
Cross the long weft, and close the web with art:
An useful gift; but what profuse expense,
What world of fashions, took its rise from hence!

Young Hermes next, a close-contriving god,
Her brows encircled with his serpent rod; 70
Then plots, and fair excuses, fill'd her brain,
The views of breaking amorous vows for gain,
The price of favours, the designing arts
That aim at riches in contempt of hearts;
And for a comfort in the marriage life,
The little, pilfering temper of a wife.

Full on the fair his beams Apollo flung,
And fond persuasion tipp'd her easy tongue;
He gave her words, where oily flattery lays
The pleasing colours of the art of praise; 80
And wit, to scandal exquisitely prone,
Which frets another's spleen to cure its own.

Those sacred virgins whom the bards revere,
Tuned all her voice, and shed a sweetness there,
To make her sense with double charms abound,
Or make her lively nonsense please by sound.

To dress the maid, the decent Graces brought
A robe in all the dyes of beauty wrought,
And placed their boxes o'er a rich brocade
Where pictured loves on every cover play'd; 90
Then spread those implements that Vulcan's art
Had framed to merit Cytherea's heart;
The wire to curl, the close-indented comb,
To call the locks that lightly wander, home;



And chief, the mirror, where the ravish'd maid
Beholds and loves her own reflected shade.

Fair Flora lent her stores, the purpled hours
Confined her tresses with a wreath of flowers;
Within the wreath arose a radiant crown;
A veil pellucid hung depending down; 100
Back roll'd her azure veil with serpent fold,
The purpled border deck'd the flower with gold.
Her robe (which, closely by the girdle braced,
Reveal'd the beauties of a slender waist)
Flow'd to the feet; to copy Venus' air,
When Venus' statues have a robe to wear.

The new-sprung creature finish'd thus for harms,
Adjusts her habit, practises her charms,
With blushes glows, or shines with lively smiles,
Confirms her will, or recollects her wiles: 110
Then conscious of her worth, with easy pace
Glides by the glass, and, turning, views her face.

A finer flax than what they wrought before,
Through Time's deep cave the sister Fates explore,
Then fix the loom, their fingers nimbly weave,
And thus their toil prophetic songs deceive:

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'Flow from the rock, my flax! and swiftly flow,
Pursue thy thread, the spindle runs below.
A creature fond and changing, fair and vain,
The creature Woman, rises now to reign. 120
New beauty blooms, a beauty form'd to fly;
New love begins, a love produced to die;
New parts distress the troubled scenes of life,
The fondling mistress, and the ruling wife.
Men, born to labour, all with pains provide;
Women have time to sacrifice to pride:
They want the care of man, their want they know,
And dress to please with heart-alluring show,
The show prevailing, for the sway contend,
And make a servant where they meet a friend. 130

Thus in a thousand wax-erected forts
A loitering race the painful bee supports,
From sun to sun, from bank to bank he flies,
With honey loads his bag, with wax his thighs,
Fly where he will, at home the race remain,
Prune the silk dress, and murmuring eat the gain.

Yet here and there we grant a gentle bride,
Whose temper betters by the father's side;
Unlike the rest, that double human care,
Fond to relieve, or resolute to share: 140
Happy the man whom thus his stars advance!
The curse is general, but the blessing chance.'

Thus sung the Sisters, while the gods admire
Their beauteous creature, made for man, in ire;
The young Pandora she, whom all contend
To make too perfect not to gain her end:
Then bid the winds that fly to breathe the spring,
Return to bear her on a gentle wing;
With wafting airs the winds obsequious blow,
And land the shining vengeance safe below. 150
A golden coffer in her hand she bore,
(The present treacherous, but the bearer more)
'Twas fraught with pangs; for Jove ordain'd above,
That gold should aid, and pangs attend on love.

Her gay descent the man perceived afar,
Wondering he ran to catch the falling star;



But so surprised, as none but he can tell,
Who loved so quickly, and who loved so well.
O'er all his veins the wandering passion burns,
He calls her nymph, and every nymph by turns. 160
Her form to lovely Venus he prefers,
Or swears that Venus must be such as hers.
She, proud to rule, yet strangely framed to tease,
Neglects his offers while her airs she plays,
Shoots scornful glances from the bended frown,
In brisk disorder trips it up and down,
Then hums a careless tune to lay the storm,
And sits and blushes, smiles, and yields in form.

'Now take what Jove design'd, (she softly cried,)
This box thy portion, and myself thy bride:' 170
Fired with the prospect of the double charms,
He snatch'd the box, and bride, with eager arms.

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Unhappy man! to whom so bright she shone,
The fatal gift, her tempting self, unknown!
The winds were silent, all the waves asleep,
And heaven was traced upon the flattering deep;
But whilst he looks, unmindful of a storm,
And thinks the water wears a stable form,
What dreadful din around his ears shall rise!
What frowns confuse his picture of the skies! 180

At first the creature Man was framed alone,
Lord of himself, and all the world his own.
For him the Nymphs in green forsook the woods,
For him the Nymphs in blue forsook the floods;
In vain the Satyrs rage, the Tritons rave;
They bore him heroes in the secret cave.
No care destroy'd, no sick disorder prey'd,
No bending age his sprightly form decay'd,
No wars were known, no females heard to rage,
And poets tell us, 'twas a golden age. 190

When woman came, those ills the box confined
Burst furious out, and poison'd all the wind,

From point to point, from pole to pole they flew,
Spread as they went, and in the progress grew:
The Nymphs, regretting, left the mortal race,
And, altering Nature, wore a sickly face:
New terms of folly rose, new states of care;
New plagues to suffer, and to please, the fair!
The days of whining, and of wild intrigues,
Commenced, or finish'd, with the breach of leagues; 200
The mean designs of well-dissembled love;
The sordid matches never join'd above;
Abroad, the labour, and at home the noise,
(Man's double sufferings for domestic joys)
The curse of jealousy; expense, and strife;
Divorce, the public brand of shameful life;
The rival's sword; the qualm that takes the fair;
Disdain for passion, passion in despair—
These, and a thousand yet unnamed, we find;
Ah, fear the thousand yet unnamed behind! 210

Thus on Parnassus tuneful Hesiod sung,
The mountain echoed, and the valley rung,



The sacred groves a fix'd attention show,
The crystal Helicon forbore to flow,
The sky grew bright, and (if his verse be true)
The Muses came to give the laurel too.
But what avail'd the verdant prize of wit,
If Love swore vengeance for the tales he writ?
Ye fair offended, hear your friend relate
What heavy judgment proved the writer's fate, 220
Though when it happen'd, no relation clears;
'Tis thought in five, or five and twenty years.

Where, dark and silent, with a twisted shade
The neighbouring woods a native arbour made,
There oft a tender pair for amorous play
Retiring, toy'd the ravish'd hours away;
A Locrian youth, the gentle Troilus he,
A fair Milesian, kind Evanthe she:
But swelling Nature, in a fatal hour,
Betray'd the secrets of the conscious bower; 230
The dire disgrace her brothers count their own,
And track her steps, to make its author known.



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It chanced one evening, ('twas the lover's day)
Conceal'd in brakes the jealous kindred lay;
When Hesiod, wandering, mused along the plain,
And fix'd his seat where Love had fix'd the scene:
A strong suspicion straight possess'd their mind,
(For poets ever were a gentle kind.)
But when Evanthe near the passage stood,
Flung back a doubtful look, and shot the wood, 240
'Now take (at once they cry) thy due reward!'
And, urged with erring rage, assault the bard.
His corpse the sea received. The dolphins bore
('Twas all the gods would do) the corpse to shore.

Methinks I view the dead with pitying eyes,
And see the dreams of ancient wisdom rise;
I see the Muses round the body cry,
But hear a Cupid loudly laughing by;
He wheels his arrow with insulting hand,
And thus inscribes the moral on the sand: 250
'Here Hesiod lies: ye future bards beware
How far your moral tales incense the fair:
Unloved, unloving, 'twas his fate to bleed;
Without his quiver Cupid caused the deed:
He judged this turn of malice justly due,
And Hesiod died for joys he never knew.'

* * * * *

SONG.

1 When thy beauty appears,
In its graces and airs,
All bright as an angel new dropt from the sky;
At distance I gaze, and am awed by my fears,
So strangely you dazzle my eye!

2 But when without art,
Your kind thoughts you impart,
When your love runs in blushes through every vein;
When it darts from your eyes, when it pants in your heart,
Then I know you're a woman again.

3 There's a passion and pride
In our sex (she replied),



And thus (might I gratify both) I would do:
Still an angel appear to each lover beside,
But still be a woman to you.

* * * * *

SONG.

1 Thyrsis, a young and amorous swain,
Saw two, the beauties of the plain;
Who both his heart subdue:
Gay Caelia's eyes were dazzling fair,
Sabina's easy shape and air
With softer magic drew.

2 He haunts the stream, he haunts the grove,
Lives in a fond romance of love,
And seems for each to die;
Till each, a little spiteful grown,
Sabina Caelia's shape ran down,
And she Sabina's eye.

3 Their envy made the shepherd find
Those eyes, which love could only blind;
So set the lover free:
No more he haunts the grove or stream,
Or with a true-love knot and name
Engraves a wounded tree.

4 Ah, Caelia! (sly Sabina cried)
Though neither love, we're both denied;
Now, to support the sex's pride,
Let either fix the dart.
Poor girl! (says Caelia) say no more;
For should the swain but one adore,
That spite which broke his chains before,
Would break the other's heart.



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SONG.

1 My days have been so wondrous free,
The little birds that fly
With careless ease from tree to tree,
Were but as bless'd as I.

2 Ask gliding waters, if a tear
Of mine increased their stream?
Or ask the flying gales, if e'er
I lent one sigh to them?

3 But now my former days retire,
And I'm by beauty caught,
The tender chains of sweet desire
Are fix'd upon my thought.

4 Ye nightingales! ye twisting pines!
Ye swains that haunt the grove!
Ye gentle echoes! breezy winds!
Ye close retreats of lore!

5 With all of Nature, all of Art,
Assist the dear design;
Oh teach a young, unpractised heart
To make my Nancy mine.

6 The very thought of change I hate,
As much as of despair;
Nor ever covet to be great,
Unless it be for her.

7 'Tis true, the passion in my mind
Is mix'd with soft distress;
Yet while the fair I love is kind,
I cannot wish it less.

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ANACREONTIC.

When Spring came on with fresh delight,
To cheer the soul, and charm the sight,



While easy breezes, softer rain,
And warmer suns salute the plain;
'Twas then, in yonder piny grove,
That Nature went to meet with Love.

Green was her robe, and green her wreath,
Where'er she trod, 'twas green beneath;
Where'er she turn'd, the pulses beat
With new recruits of genial heat; 10
And in her train the birds appear,
To match for all the coming year.

Raised on a bank, where daisies grew,
And violets intermix'd a blue,
She finds the boy she went to find;
A thousand pleasures wait behind,
Aside a thousand arrows lie,
But all, unfeather'd, wait to fly.

When they met, the dame and boy,
Dancing graces, idle joy, 20
Wanton smiles, and airy play,
Conspired to make the scene be gay;
Love pair'd the birds through all the grove,
And Nature bid them sing to Love,
Sitting, hopping, fluttering sing,
And pay their tribute from the wing,
To fledge the shafts that idly lie,
And, yet unfeather'd, wait to fly.

'Tis thus, when Spring renews the blood,
They meet in every trembling wood, 30
And thrice they make the plumes agree,
And every dart they mount with three,
And every dart can boast a kind,
Which suits each proper turn of mind.

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From the towering eagle's plume
The generous hearts accept their doom;
Shot by the peacock's painted eye
The vain and airy lovers die:
For careful dames and frugal men,
The shafts are speckled by the hen: 40
The pies and parrots deck the darts,
When prattling wins the panting hearts:
When from the voice the passions spring,
The warbling finch affords a wing:
Together, by the sparrow stung,
Down fall the wanton and the young:
And fledged by geese the weapons fly,
When others love they know not why.

All this (as late I chanced to rove)
I learn'd in yonder waving grove. 50
And see, says Love, who call'd me near,
How much I deal with Nature here;
How both support a proper part,
She gives the feather, I the dart:
Then cease for souls averse to sigh,
If Nature cross ye, so do I;
My weapon there unfeather'd flies,
And shakes and shuffles through the skies.
But if the mutual charms I find
By which she links you, mind to mind, 60
They wing my shafts, I poise the darts,
And strike from both, through both your hearts.

* * * * *

ANACREONTIC.

1 Gay Bacchus liking Estcourt's[1] wine,
A noble meal bespoke us;
And for the guests that were to dine,
Brought Comus, Love, and Jocus.

2 The god near Cupid drew his chair,
Near Comus, Jocus placed;
For wine makes Love forget its care,
And Mirth exalts a feast.



- 3 The more to please the sprightly god,
Each sweet engaging Grace
Put on some clothes to come abroad,
And took a waiter's place.
- 4 Then Cupid named at every glass
A lady of the sky;
While Bacchus swore he'd drink the lass,
And did it bumper-high.
- 5 Fat Comus toss'd his brimmers o'er,
And always got the most;
Jocus took care to fill him more,
Whene'er he miss'd the toast.
- 6 They call'd, and drank at every touch;
He fill'd, and drank again;
And if the gods can take too much,
'Tis said they did so then.
- 7 Gay Bacchus little Cupid stung,
By reckoning his deceits;
And Cupid mock'd his stammering tongue,
With all his staggering gaits:
- 8 And Jocus droll'd on Comus' ways,
And tales without a jest;
While Comus call'd his witty plays
But waggeries at best.
- 9 Such talk soon set 'em all at odds;
And, had I Homer's pen,
I'd sing ye, how they drank like gods,
And how they fought like men.
- 10 To part the fray, the Graces fly,
Who make 'em soon agree;
Nay, had the Furies selves been nigh,
They still were three to three.



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- 11 Bacchus appeased, raised Cupid up,
And gave him back his bow;
But kept some darts to stir the cup
Where sack and sugar flow.
- 12 Jocus took Comus' rosy crown,
And gaily wore the prize,
And thrice, in mirth, he push'd him down,
As thrice he strove to rise.
- 13 Then Cupid sought the myrtle grove,
Where Venus did recline;
And Venus close embracing Love,
They join'd to rail at wine.
- 14 And Comus loudly cursing wit,
Roll'd off to some retreat,
Where boon companions gravely sit
In fat unwieldy state.
- 15 Bacchus and Jocus, still behind,
For one fresh glass prepare;
They kiss, and are exceeding kind,
And vow to be sincere.
- 16 But part in time, whoever hear
This our instructive song;
For though such friendships may be dear,
They can't continue long.

[Footnote 1: 'Estcourt:' Dick, a comedian and keeper of the Bumper Tavern—a companion of Addison, Steele, and the rest.]

* * * * *

A FAIRY TALE,

IN THE ANCIENT ENGLISH STYLE.

- 1 In Britain's isle and Arthur's days,
When midnight Faeries danced the maze,
Lived Edwin of the green;
Edwin, I wis, a gentle youth,
Endow'd with courage, sense, and truth,
Though badly shaped he been.



2 His mountain back mote well be said
To measure heighth against his head,
And lift itself above:
Yet spite of all that Nature did
To make his uncouth form forbid,
This creature dared to love.

3 He felt the charms of Edith's eyes,
Nor wanted hope to gain the prize,
Could ladies look within;
But one Sir Topaz dress'd with art,
And, if a shape could win a heart,
He had a shape to win.

4 Edwin (if right I read my song)
With slighted passion paced along,
All in the moony light:
'Twas near an old enchanted court,
Where sportive Faeries made resort
To revel out the night.

5 His heart was drear, his hope was cross'd,
'Twas late, 'twas farr, the path was lost
That reach'd the neighbour-town;
With weary steps he quits the shades,
Resolved, the darkling dome he treads,
And drops his limbs adown.

6 But scant he lays him on the floor,
When hollow winds remove the door,
A trembling rocks the ground:
And (well I ween to count aright)
At once an hundred tapers light
On all the walls around.

7 Now sounding tongues assail his ear,
Now sounding feet approachen near,
And now the sounds increase:
And from the corner where he lay
He sees a train, profusely gay,
Come pranking o'er the place.



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8 But trust me, gentles! never yet
Was dight a masquing half so neat,
Or half so rich before;
The country lent the sweet perfumes,
The sea the pearl, the sky the plumes,
The town its silken store.

9 Now whilst he gazed, a gallant dress'd
In flaunting robes above the rest,
With awful accent cried:
What mortal of a wretched mind,
Whose sighs infect the balmy wind,
Has here presumed to hide?

10 At this the swain, whose venturous soul
No fears of magic art control,
Advanced in open sight:
Nor have I cause of dread, he said,
Who view, by no presumption led,
Your revels of the night.

11 'Twas grief, for scorn of faithful love,
Which made my steps unweeting rove
Amid the nightly dew.
'Tis well, the gallant cries again,
We Faeries never injure men
Who dare to tell us true.

12 Exalt thy love-dejected heart,
Be mine the task, or e'er we part,
To make thee grief resign;
Now take the pleasure of thy chaunce;
Whilst I with Mab my partner daunce,
Be little Mable thine.

13 He spoke, and all a-sudden there
Light music floats in wanton air;
The monarch leads the queen:
The rest their Faerie partners found,
And Mable trimly tripp'd the ground
With Edwin of the green.

14 The dauncing past, the board was laid,
And siker such a feast was made



As heart and lip desire;
Withouten hands the dishes fly,
The glasses—with a wish come nigh,
And with a wish retire.

15 But now, to please the Faerie King,
Full every deal, they laugh and sing,
And antic feats devise;
Some wind and tumble like an ape,
And other some transmute their shape
In Edwin's wondering eyes.

16 Till one at last that Robin bight,
(Renown'd for pinching maids by night)
Has hent him up aloof;
And full against the beam he flung,
Where by the back the youth he hung
To spraul unneath the roof.

17 From thence, Reverse my charm, he cries,
And let it fairly now suffice
The gambol has been shown.
But Oberon answers with a smile,
Content thee, Edwin, for a while,
The vantage is thine own.

18 Here ended all the phantom-play;
They smelt the fresh approach of day,
And heard a cock to crow;
The whirling wind that bore the crowd
Has clapp'd the door, and whistled loud,
To warn them all to go.

19 Then screaming all at once they fly,
And all at once the tapers die,
Poor Edwin falls to floor;
Forlorn his state, and dark the place,
Was never wight in sike a case
Through all the land before.

20 But soon as Dan Apollo rose,
Full jolly creature home he goes,
He feels his back the less;
His honest tongue and steady mind
Had rid him of the lump behind
Which made him want success.



21 With lusty livelyhed he talks,
He seems a-dauncing as he walks,
His story soon took wind;
And beauteous Edith sees the youth,
Endow'd with courage, sense, and truth,
Without a bunch behind.



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22 The story told, Sir Topaz moved,
The youth of Edith erst approved,
To see the revel scene:
At close of eve he leaves his home,
And wends to find the ruin'd dome
All on the gloomy plain.

23 As there he bides, it so befell,
The wind came rustling down a dell,
A shaking seized the wall:
Up spring the tapers as before,
The Faeries bragly foot the floor,
And music fills the hall.

24 But, certes, sorely sunk with woe
Sir Topaz sees the elfin show,
His spirits in him die:
When Oberon cries, A man is near,
A mortal passion, cleeped fear,
Hang's flagging in the sky.

25 With that Sir Topaz, hapless youth!
In accents faltering aye for ruth,
Entreats them pity graunt;
For als he been a mister wight
Betray'd by wandering in the night
To tread the circled haunt.

26 Ah, losel vile! (at once they roar)
And little skill'd of Faerie lore,
Thy cause to come we know:
Now has thy kestrel courage fell;
And Faeries, since a lie you tell,
Are free to work thee woe.

27 Then Will, who bears the wispy fire,
To trail the swains among the mire,
The caitiff upward flung;
There like a tortoise in a shop
He dangled from the chamber-top,
Where whilom Edwin hung.

28 The revel now proceeds apace,
Deftly they frisk it o'er the place,



They sit, they drink, and eat;
The time with frolic mirth beguile,
And poor Sir Topaz hangs the while,
Till all the rout retreat.

29 By this the stars began to wink,
They shriek, they fly, the tapers sink,
And down ydrops the knight.
For never spell by Faerie laid
With strong enchantment bound a glade
Beyond the length of night.

30 Chill, dark, alone, adreed he lay,
Till up the welkin rose the day,
Then deem'd the dole was o'er;
But wot ye well his harder lot?
His seely back the bunch has got
Which Edwin lost afore.

31 This tale a Sybil-nurse aread;
She softly stroked my youngling head,
And when the tale was done,
Thus some are born, my son, (she cries,)
With base impediments to rise,
And some are born with none.

32 But virtue can itself advance
To what the favourite fools of chance
By fortune seem'd design'd;
Virtue can gain the odds of Fate,
And from itself shake off the weight
Upon the unworthy mind.

* * * * *

TO MR POPE.

To praise, yet still with due respect to praise,
A bard triumphant in immortal bays,
The learn'd to show, the sensible commend,
Yet still preserve the province of the friend,
What life, what vigour, must the lines require,
What music tune them, what affection fire!

Oh! might thy genius in my bosom shine,
Thou shouldst not fail of numbers worthy thine;
The brightest ancients might at once agree
To sing within my lays, and sing of thee. 10

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Horace himself would own thou dost excel
In candid arts, to play the critic well.

Ovid himself might wish to sing the dame
Whom Windsor Forest sees a gliding stream;
On silver feet, with annual osier crown'd,
She runs for ever through poetic ground.

How flame the glories of Belinda's hair,
Made by thy Muse the envy of the fair!
Less shone the tresses Egypt's princess^[1] wore,
Which sweet Callimachus so sung before; 20
Here courtly trifles set the world at odds,
Belles war with beaux, and whims descend for gods,
The new machines in names of ridicule,
Mock the grave frenzy of the chymic fool.
But know, ye fair, a point conceal'd with art,
The Sylphs and Gnomes are but a woman's heart:
The Graces stand in sight; a Satyr train
Peep o'er their heads, and laugh behind the scene.

In Fame's fair temple, o'er the boldest wits
Enshrined on high the sacred Virgil sits, 30
And sits in measures, such as Virgil's Muse
To place thee near him might be fond to choose.
How might he tune the alternate reed with thee,
Perhaps a Strephon thou, a Daphnis he,
While some old Damon, o'er the vulgar wise,
Thinks he deserves, and thou deserv'st the prize!
Rapt with the thought, my fancy seeks the plains,
And turns me shepherd while I hear the strains.
Indulgent nurse of every tender gale,
Parent of flowerets, old Arcadia, hail! 40
Here in the cool my limbs at ease I spread,
Here let thy poplars whisper o'er my head,
Still slide thy waters soft among the trees,
Thy aspens quiver in a breathing breeze,
Smile all thy valleys in eternal spring,
Be hush'd, ye winds! while Pope and Virgil sing.

In English lays, and all sublimely great,
Thy Homer warms with all his ancient heat;
He shines in council, thunders in the fight,
And flames with every sense of great delight. 50



Long has that poet reign'd, and long unknown,
Like monarchs sparkling on a distant throne,
In all the majesty of Greek retired,
Himself unknown, his mighty name admired;
His language failing, wrapp'd him round with night,
Thine, raised by thee, recalls the work to light.
So wealthy mines, that ages long before
Fed the large realms around with golden ore,
When choked by sinking banks, no more appear,
And shepherds only say, The mines were here: 60
Should some rich youth (if Nature warm his heart,
And all his projects stand inform'd with Art)
Here clear the caves, there ope the leading vein;
The mines, detected, flame with gold again.

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How vast, how copious are thy new designs!
How every music varies in thy lines!
Still as I read, I feel my bosom beat,
And rise in raptures by another's heat.
Thus in the wood, when summer dress'd the days,
When Windsor lent us tuneful hours of ease, 70
Our ears the lark, the thrush, the turtle blest,
And Philomela sweetest o'er the rest:
The shades resound with song—oh softly tread!
While a whole season warbles round my head.

This to my friend—and when a friend inspires,
My silent harp its master's hand requires,
Shakes off the dust, and makes these rocks resound;
For fortune placed me in unfertile ground,
Far from the joys that with my soul agree,
From wit, from learning—far, oh far from thee! 80
Here moss-grown trees expand the smallest leaf,
Here half an acre's corn is half a sheaf;
Here hills with naked heads the tempest meet,
Rocks at their side, and torrents at their feet,
Or lazy lakes, unconscious of a flood,
Whose dull brown Naiads ever sleep in mud.

Yet here Content can dwell, and Learned Ease,
A friend delight me, and an author please;
Even here I sing, while Pope supplies the theme,
Show my own love, though not increase his fame. 90

[Footnote 1: 'Egypt's princess:' Cleopatra.]

* * * * *

HEALTH: AN ECLOGUE.

Now early shepherds o'er the meadow pass,
And print long footsteps in the glittering grass,
The cows neglectful of their pasture stand,
By turns obsequious to the milker's hand,
When Damon softly trode the shaven lawn,
Damon a youth from city cares withdrawn;
Long was the pleasing walk he wander'd through,
A cover'd harbour closed the distant view;



There rests the youth, and while the feather'd throng
Raise their wild music, thus contrives a song. 10

Here wafted o'er by mild Etesian air,
Thou country Goddess, beauteous Health, repair!
Here let my breast through quivering trees inhale
Thy rosy blessings with the morning gale.
What are the fields, or flowers, or all I see?
Ah! tasteless all, if not enjoy'd with thee.

Joy to my soul! I feel the Goddess nigh,
The face of Nature cheers as well as I;
O'er the flat green refreshing breezes run,
The smiling daisies blow beneath the sun, 20
The brooks run purling down with silver waves,
The planted lanes rejoice with dancing leaves,
The chirping birds from all the compass rove
To tempt the tuneful echoes of the grove:
High sunny summits, deeply shaded dales,
Thick mossy banks, and flowery winding vales,
With various prospect gratify the sight,
And scatter fix'd attention in delight.



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Come, country Goddess, come! nor thou suffice,
But bring thy mountain sister, Exercise! 30
Call'd by thy lovely voice, she turns her pace,
Her winding horn proclaims the finish'd chase;
She mounts the rocks, she skims the level plain,
Dogs, hawks, and horses crowd her early train;
Her hardy face repels the tanning wind,
And lines and meshes loosely float behind.
All these as means of toil the feeble see,
But these are helps to pleasure join'd with thee.

Let Sloth lie softening till high noon in down,
Or lolling fan her in the sultry town, 40
Unnerved with rest, and turn her own disease,
Or foster others in luxurious ease:
I mount the courser, call the deep-mouth'd hounds;
The fox unkennell'd, flies to covert grounds;
I lead where stags through tangled thickets tread,
And shake the saplings with their branching head;
I make the falcons wing their airy way,
And soar to seize, or stooping strike their prey:
To snare the fish I fix the luring bait;
To wound the fowl I load the gun with fate. 50
'Tis thus through change of exercise I range,
And strength and pleasure rise from every change.
Here beauteous for all the year remain;
When the next comes, I'll charm thee thus again.

Oh come, thou Goddess of my rural song,
And bring thy daughter, calm Content, along!
Dame of the ruddy cheek and laughing eye,
From whose bright presence clouds of sorrow fly:
For her I mow my walks, I plait my bowers,
Clip my low hedges, and support my flowers; 60
To welcome her, this summer seat I dress'd,
And here I court her when she comes to rest;
When she from exercise to learned ease
Shall change again, and teach the change to please.

Now friends conversing my soft hours refine,
And Tully's Tusculum revives in mine:
Now to grave books I bid the mind retreat,
And such as make me rather good than great;
Or o'er the works of easy Fancy rove,



Where flutes and innocence amuse the grove: 70
The native bard that on Sicilian plains
First sung the lowly manners of the swains;
Or Maro's Muse, that in the fairest light
Paints rural prospects and the charms of sight;
These soft amusements bring Content along,
And Fancy, void of sorrow, turns to song.
Here beauteous Health for all the year remain;
When the next comes, I'll charm thee thus again.

* * * * *

THE FLIES: AN ECLOGUE.

When the river cows for coolness stand.
And sheep for breezes seek the lofty land,
A youth whom AEsop taught that every tree,
Each bird and insect, spoke as well as he,
Walk'd calmly musing in a shaded way,
Where flowering hawthorn broke the sunny ray,
And thus instructs his moral pen to draw
A scene that obvious in the field he saw.



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Near a low ditch, where shallow waters meet,
Which never learn'd to glide with liquid feet, 10
Whose Naiads never prattle as they play,
But screen'd with hedges slumber out the day,
There stands a slender fern's aspiring shade,
Whose answering branches, regularly laid,
Put forth their answering boughs, and proudly rise
Three storeys upward in the nether skies.

For shelter here, to shun the noonday heat,
An airy nation of the flies retreat;
Some in soft air their silken pinions ply,
And some from bough to bough delighted fly, 20
Some rise, and circling light to perch again;
A pleasing murmur hums along the plain.
So, when a stage invites to pageant shows,
(If great and small are like) appear the beaux;
In boxes some with spruce pretension sit,
Some change from seat to seat within the pit,
Some roam the scenes, or turning cease to roam;
Preluding music fills the lofty dome.
When thus a fly (if what a fly can say
Deserves attention) raised the rural lay:

Where late Amintor made a nymph a bride, 30
Joyful I flew by young Favonia's side,
Who, mindless of the feasting, went to sip
The balmy pleasure of the shepherd's lip;
I saw the wanton where I stoop'd to sup,
And half resolved to drown me in the cup;
Till, brush'd by careless hands, she soar'd above:
Cease, beauty, cease to vex a tender love!

Thus ends the youth, the buzzing meadow rung,
And thus the rival of his music sung: 40

When suns by thousands shone in orbs of dew,
I, wafted soft, with Zephyretta flew;
Saw the clean pail, and sought the milky cheer,
While little Daphne seized my roving dear.
Wretch that I was! I might have warn'd the dame,
Yet sate indulging as the danger came,
But the kind huntress left her free to soar:
Ah! guard, ye lovers, guard a mistress more!



Thus from the fern, whose high projecting arms,
The fleeting nation bent with dusky swarms, 50
The swains their love in easy music breathe,
When tongues and tumult stun the field beneath,
Black ants in teams come darkening all the road;
Some call to march, and some to lift the load;
They strain, they labour with incessant pains,
Press'd by the cumbrous weight of single grains.
The flies, struck silent, gaze with wonder down:
The busy burghers reach their earthy town,
Where lay the burdens of a wintry store,
And thence, unwearied, part in search of more. 60
Yet one grave sage a moment's space attends,
And the small city's loftiest point ascends,
Wipes the salt dew that trickles down his face,
And thus harangues them with the gravest grace



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Ye foolish nurslings of the summer air!
These gentle tunes and whining songs forbear,
Your trees and whispering breeze, your grove and love,
Your Cupid's quiver, and his mother's dove;
Let bards to business bend their vigorous wing,
And sing but seldom, if they love to sing: 70
Else, when the flowerets of the season fail,
And this your ferny shade forsakes the vale,
Though one would save ye, not one grain of wheat
Should pay such songster's idling at my gate.

He ceased: the flies, incorrigibly vain,
Heard the mayor's speech, and fell to sing again.

* * * * *

AN ELEGY TO AN OLD BEAUTY.

In vain, poor nymph, to please our youthful sight
You sleep in cream and frontlets all the night,
Your face with patches soil, with paint repair,
Dress with gay gowns, and shade with foreign hair.
If truth in spite of manners must be told,
Why, really, fifty-five is something old.

Once you were young; or one, whose life's so long,
She might have borne my mother, tells me wrong.
And once, (since Envy's dead before you die)
The women own, you play'd a sparkling eye, 10
Taught the light foot a modish little trip,
And pouted with the prettiest purple lip.

To some new charmer are the roses fled,
Which blew, to damask all thy cheek with red;
Youth calls the graces there to fix their reign,
And airs by thousands fill their easy train.
So parting Summer bids her flowery prime
Attend the Sun to dress some foreign clime,
While withering seasons in succession, here,
Strip the gay gardens, and deform the Year. 20

But thou (since Nature bids) the world resign,
'Tis now thy daughter's daughter's time to shine.
With more address, (or such as pleases more)



She runs her female exercises o'er,
Unfurls or closes, raps or turns the fan,
And smiles, or blushes at the creature Man.
With quicker life, as gilded coaches pass,
In sideling courtesy she drops the glass.
With better strength, on visit-days she bears
To mount her fifty flights of ample stairs. 30
Her mien, her shape, her temper, eyes and tongue,
Are sure to conquer—for the rogue is young;
And all that's madly wild, or oddly gay,
We call it only pretty Fanny's way.

Let Time that makes you homely, make you sage,
The sphere of wisdom is the sphere of age.
'Tis true, when beauty dawns with early fire,
And hears the flattering tongues of soft desire,
If not from virtue, from its gravest ways
The soul with pleasing avocation strays. 40
But beauty gone, 'tis easier to be wise;
As harpers better by the loss of eyes.



Page 62

Henceforth retire, reduce your roving airs,
Haunt less the plays, and more the public prayers,
Reject the Mechlin head, and gold brocade,
Go pray, in sober Norwich crape array'd.
Thy pendant diamonds let thy Fanny take,
Their trembling lustre shows how much you shake;
Or bid her wear thy necklace row'd with pearl,
You'll find your Fanny an obedient girl. 50
So, for the rest, with less incumbrance hung,
You walk through life, unmingled with the young;
And view the shade and substance as you pass
With joint endeavour trifling at the glass,
Or Folly dress'd, and rambling all her days,
To meet her counterpart, and grow by praise:
Yet still sedate yourself, and gravely plain,
You neither fret, nor envy at the vain.

'Twas thus, if man with woman we compare,
The wise Athenian cross'd a glittering fair; 60
Unmoved by tongues and sights, he walk'd the place,
Through tape, toys, tinsel, gimp, perfume, and lace;
Then bends from Mars's hill his awful eyes,
And 'What a world I never want!' he cries;
But cries unheard: for Folly will be free.
So parts the buzzing gaudy crowd, and he:
As careless he for them, as they for him;
He wrapt in wisdom, and they whirl'd by whim

* * * * *

THE BOOK-WORM.

Come hither, boy, we'll hunt to-day
The book-worm, ravening beast of prey!
Produced by parent Earth, at odds
(As Fame reports it) with the gods.
Him frantic Hunger wildly drives
Against a thousand authors' lives:
Through all the fields of Wit he flies;
Dreadful his head with clustering eyes,
With horns without, and tusks within,
And scales to serve him for a skin. 10
Observe him nearly, lest he climb
To wound the bards of ancient time,



Or down the vale of Fancy go,
To tear some modern wretch below:
On every corner fix thine eye,
Or, ten to one, he slips thee by.

See where his teeth a passage eat:
We'll rouse him from the deep retreat.
But who the shelter's forced to give?
'Tis sacred Virgil, as I live! 20
From leaf to leaf, from song to song,
He draws the tadpole form along,
He mounts the gilded edge before,
He's up, he scuds the cover o'er,
He turns, he doubles, there he pass'd,
And here we have him, caught at last.

Insatiate brute, whose teeth abuse
The sweetest servants of the Muse!
—Nay, never offer to deny,
I took thee in the act to fly— 30
His roses nipp'd in every page,
My poor Anacreon mourns thy rage.
By thee my Ovid wounded lies;
By thee my Lesbia's sparrow dies:
Thy rabid teeth have half destroy'd
The work of love in Biddy Floyd;
They rent Belinda's locks away,
And spoil'd the Blouzelind of Gay.
For all, for every single deed,
Relentless Justice bids thee bleed. 40
Then fall a victim to the Nine,
Myself the priest, my desk the shrine.



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Bring Homer, Virgil, Tasso near,
To pile a sacred altar here;
Hold, boy, thy hand outruns thy wit,
You reach'd the plays that Dennis writ;
You reach'd me Philips' rustic strain;
Pray take your mortal bards again.

Come, bind the victim,—there he lies,
And here between his numerous eyes 50
This venerable dust I lay,
From manuscripts just swept away.

The goblet in my hand I take
(For the libation's yet to make),
A health to poets! all their days
May they have bread, as well as praise;
Sense may they seek, and less engage
In papers fill'd with party rage.
But if their riches spoil their vein,
Ye Muses! make them poor again. 60

Now bring the weapon, yonder blade,
With which my tuneful pens are made.
I strike the scales that arm thee round,
And twice and thrice I print the wound;
The sacred altar floats with red;
And now he dies, and now he's dead.

How like the son of Jove I stand,
This Hydra stretch'd beneath my hand!
Lay bare the monster's entrails here,
To see what dangers threat the year: 70
Ye gods! what sonnets on a wench!
What lean translations out of French!
'Tis plain, this lobe is so unsound,
S— prints before the months go round.

But hold, before I close the scene,
The sacred altar should be clean.
Oh, had I Shadwell's^[1] second bays,
Or, Tate!^[2] thy pert and humble lays!
(Ye pair, forgive me, when I vow
I never miss'd your works till now)
I'd tear the leaves to wipe the shrine, 80



(That only way you please the Nine)
But since I chance to want these two,
I'll make the songs of Durfey[3] do.

Rent from the corpse, on yonder pin
I hang the scales that braced it in;
I hang my studious morning gown,
And write my own inscription down.

'This trophy from the Python won,
This robe, in which the deed was done, 90
These, Parnell glorying in the feat,
Hung on these shelves, the Muses' seat.
Here Ignorance and Hunger found
Large realms of wit to ravage round;
Here Ignorance and Hunger fell—
Two foes in one I sent to hell.
Ye poets, who my labours see,
Come share the triumph all with me!
Ye critics, born to vex the Muse,
Go mourn the grand ally you lose!' 100

[Footnote 1: 'Shadwell:' Dryden's rival.]

[Footnote 2: 'Tate:' Nahum. See Life of Dryden.]

[Footnote 3: 'Durfey:' the well-known wit of the time.]

* * * * *

AN ALLEGORY ON MAN.

A thoughtful being, long and spare,
Our race of mortals call him Care;
(Were Homer living, well he knew
What name the gods have call'd him too)
With fine mechanic genius wrought,
And loved to work, though no one bought.

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This being, by a model bred
In Jove's eternal sable head,
Contrived a shape, empower'd to breathe,
And be the worldling here beneath. 10

The Man rose staring, like a stake,
Wondering to see himself awake!
Then look'd so wise, before he knew
The business he was made to do,
That, pleased to see with what a grace
He gravely show'd his forward face,
Jove talk'd of breeding him on high,
An under-something of the sky.

But e'er he gave the mighty nod,
Which ever binds a poet's god, 20
(For which his curls ambrosial shake,
And mother Earth's obliged to quake:)
He saw old mother Earth arise,
She stood confess'd before his eyes;
But not with what we read she wore,
A castle for a crown, before;
Nor with long streets and longer roads
Dangling behind her, like commodes:
As yet with wreaths alone she dress'd,
And trail'd a landscape-painted vest. 30
Then thrice she raised, (as Ovid said)
And thrice she bow'd her weighty head.

Her honours made, Great Jove, she cried,
This thing was fashion'd from my side;
His hands, his heart, his head are mine;
Then what hast thou to call him thine?

Nay, rather ask, the monarch said,
What boots his hand, his heart, his head?
Were what I gave removed away,
Thy parts an idle shape of clay. 40

Halves, more than halves! cried honest Care;
Your pleas would make your titles fair,
You claim the body, you the soul,
But I who join'd them, claim the whole.



Thus with the gods debate began,
On such a trivial cause as Man.
And can celestial tempers rage?
(Quoth Virgil in a later age.)

As thus they wrangled, Time came by;
(There's none that paint him such as I, 50
For what the fabling ancients sung
Makes Saturn old, when Time was young.)
As yet his winters had not shed
Their silver honours on his head;
He just had got his pinions free
From his old sire Eternity.
A serpent girdled round he wore,
The tail within the mouth before;
By which our almanacs are clear
That learned Egypt meant the year. 60
A staff he carried, where on high
A glass was fix'd to measure by,
As amber boxes made a show
For heads of canes an age ago.
His vest, for day and night, was pied,
A bending sickle arm'd his side,
And Spring's new months his train adorn;
The other Seasons were unborn.

Known by the gods, as near he draws,
They make him umpire of the cause. 70
O'er a low trunk his arm he laid,
(Where since his Hours a dial made;)
Then, leaning, heard the nice debate,
And thus pronounced the words of Fate:

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Since Body from the parent Earth,
And Soul from Jove received a birth,
Return they where they first began;
But since their union makes the Man,
Till Jove and Earth shall part these two,
To Care, who join'd them, Man is due. 80

He said, and sprung with swift career
To trace a circle for the year,
Where ever since the Seasons wheel,
And tread on one another's heel.

'Tis well, said Jove, and for consent
Thundering he shook the firmament;
Our umpire Time shall have his way,
With Care I let the creature stay:
Let business vex him, avarice blind,
Let doubt and knowledge rack his mind, 90
Let error act, opinion speak,
And want afflict, and sickness break,
And anger burn, dejection chill,
And joy distract, and sorrow kill,
Till, arm'd by Care, and taught to mow,
Time draws the long destructive blow;
And wasted Man, whose quick decay,
Comes hurrying on before his day,
Shall only find, by this decree,
The Soul flies sooner back to me. 100

* * * * *

AN IMITATION OF SOME FRENCH VERSES.

Relentless Time! destroying power
Whom stone and brass obey,
Who giv'st to every flying hour
To work some new decay;
Unheard, unheeded, and unseen,
Thy secret saps prevail,
And ruin Man, a nice machine
By Nature form'd to fail.
My change arrives; the change I meet,
Before I thought it nigh. 10
My spring, my years of pleasure fleet,



And all their beauties die.
In age I search, and only find
A poor unfruitful gain,
Grave Wisdom stalking slow behind,
Oppress'd with loads of pain.
My ignorance could once beguile,
And fancied joys inspire;
My errors cherish'd hope to smile
On newly-born desire. 20
But now experience shows the bliss,
For which I fondly sought,
Not worth the long impatient wish,
And ardour of the thought.
My youth met Fortune fair array'd;
In all her pomp she shone,
And might perhaps have well essay'd
To make her gifts my own:
But when I saw the blessings shower
On some unworthy mind, 30
I left the chase, and own'd the power
Was justly painted blind.
I pass'd the glories which adorn
The splendid courts of kings,
And while the persons moved my scorn.
I rose to scorn the things.
My manhood felt a vigorous fire,
By love increased the more;
But years with coming years conspire
To break the chains I wore. 40
In weakness safe, the sex I see
With idle lustre shine;

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For what are all their joys to me,
Which cannot now be mine?
But hold—I feel my gout decrease,
My troubles laid to rest,
And truths which would disturb my peace,
Are painful truths at best.
Vainly the time I have to roll
In sad reflection flies; 50
Ye fondling passions of my soul!
Ye sweet deceits! arise.
I wisely change the scene within,
To things that used to please;
In pain, philosophy is spleen,
In health, 'tis only ease.

* * * * *

A NIGHT-PIECE ON DEATH.

By the blue taper's trembling light,
No more I waste the wakeful night,
Intent with endless view to pore
The schoolmen and the sages o'er:
Their books from wisdom widely stray,
Or point at best the longest way.
I'll seek a readier path, and go
Where wisdom's surely taught below.

How deep yon azure dyes the sky,
Where orbs of gold unnumber'd lie, 10
While through their ranks in silver pride
The nether crescent seems to glide!
The slumbering breeze forgets to breathe,
The lake is smooth and clear beneath,
Where once again the spangled show
Descends to meet our eyes below.
The grounds which on the right aspire,
In dimness from the view retire:
The left presents a place of graves,
Whose wall the silent water laves. 20



That steeple guides thy doubtful sight,
Among the livid gleams of night.
There pass, with melancholy state,
By all the solemn heaps of fate,
And think, as softly-sad you tread
Above the venerable dead,
'Time was, like thee they life possess'd,
And time shall be, that thou shalt rest.'

Those graves, with bending osier bound,
That nameless heave the crumbled ground, 30
Quick to the glancing thought disclose
Where Toil and Poverty repose.

The flat smooth stones that bear a name,
The chisel's slender help to fame,
Which, e'er our set of friends decay,
Their frequent steps may wear away,
A middle race of mortals own,
Men half-ambitious, all unknown.

The marble tombs that rise on high,
Whose dead in vaulted arches lie, 40
Whose pillars swell with sculptured stones,
Arms, angels, epitaphs, and bones;—
These (all the poor remains of state)
Adorn the rich, or praise the great;
Who while on earth in fame they live,
Are senseless of the fame they give.

Ha! while I gaze, pale Cynthia fades,
The bursting earth unveils the shades!
All slow, and wan, and wrapp'd with shrouds,
They rise in visionary crowds, 50
And all with sober accent cry,
'Think, mortal, what it is to die!'



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Now from yon black and funeral yew,
That bathes the charnal-house with dew,
Methinks I hear a voice begin;
(Ye ravens, cease your croaking din,
Ye tolling clocks, no time resound
O'er the long lake and midnight ground!)
It sends a peal of hollow groans,
Thus speaking from among the bones: 60

'When men my scythe and darts supply,
How great a king of fears am I!
They view me like the last of things:
They make, and then they dread, my stings.
Fools! if you less provoked your fears,
No more my spectre-form appears.
Death's but a path that must be trod,
If man would ever pass to God:
A port of calms, a state of ease
From the rough rage of swelling seas. 70

Why, then, thy flowing sable stoles,
Deep pendent cypress, mourning poles,
Loose scarfs to fall athwart thy weeds,
Long palls, drawn hearses, cover'd steeds,
And plumes of black, that, as they tread,
Nod o'er the 'scutcheons of the dead?

Nor can the parted body know,
Nor wants the soul these forms of woe:
As men who long in prison dwell,
With lamps that glimmer round the cell, 80
Whene'er their suffering years are run,
Spring forth to greet the glittering sun:
Such joy, though far transcending sense,
Have pious souls at parting hence.
On earth, and in the body placed,
A few, and evil years, they waste:
But when their chains are cast aside,
See the glad scene unfolding wide,
Clap the glad wing and tower away,
And mingle with the blaze of day!' 90

* * * * *



A HYMN TO CONTENTMENT.

Lovely, lasting peace of mind!
Sweet delight of human kind!
Heavenly born, and bred on high,
To crown the favourites of the sky
With more of happiness below,
Than victors in a triumph know!
Whither, oh! whither art thou fled,
To lay thy meek, contented head?
What happy region dost thou please
To make the seat of calm and ease? 10

Ambition searches all its sphere
Of pomp and state, to meet thee there.
Increasing Avarice would find
Thy presence in its gold enshrined.
The bold adventurer ploughs his way,
Through rocks amidst the foaming sea,
To gain thy love; and then perceives
Thou wert not in the rocks and waves.
The silent heart which grief assails,
Treads soft and lonesome o'er the vales, 20
Sees daisies open, rivers run,
And seeks (as I have vainly done)
Amusing thought; but learns to know
That Solitude's the nurse of Woe.
No real happiness is found
In trailing purple o'er the ground;
Or in a soul exalted high,
To range the circuit of the sky,
Converse with stars above, and know
All Nature in its forms below; 30
The rest it seeks, in seeking dies,
And doubts at last for knowledge rise.



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Lovely, lasting peace appear!
This world itself, if thou art here,
Is once again with Eden bless'd,
And Man contains it in his breast.

'Twas thus, as under shade I stood,
I sung my wishes to the wood,
And, lost in thought, no more perceived
The branches whisper as they waved: 40
It seem'd as all the quiet place
Confess'd the presence of the Grace,
When thus she spoke:—'Go, rule thy will;
Bid thy wild passions all be still;
Know God—and bring thy heart to know
The joys which from Religion flow:
Then every Grace shall prove its guest,
And I'll be there to crown the rest.'

Oh! by yonder mossy seat,
In my hours of sweet retreat; 50
Might I thus my soul employ,
With sense of gratitude and joy!
Raised as ancient prophets were,
In heavenly vision, praise, and prayer;
Pleasing all men, hurting none,
Pleased and bless'd with God alone:
Then, while the gardens take my sight
With all the colours of delight;
While silver waters glide along,
To please my ear, and court my song: 60
I'll lift my voice, and tune my string,
And Thee, Great Source of Nature! sing.

The sun, that walks his airy way,
To light the world, and give the day;
The moon, that shines with borrow'd light;
The stars, that gild the gloomy night;
The seas, that roll unnumber'd waves;
The wood, that spreads its shady leaves;
The field, whose ears conceal the grain,
The yellow treasure of the plain;— 70
All of these, and all I see,
Should be sung, and sung by me:



They speak their Maker as they can,
But want, and ask, the tongue of man.

Go, search among your idle dreams,
Your busy, or your vain extremes;
And find a life of equal bliss,
Or own the next begun in this!

* * * * *

THE HERMIT.

Far in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age a reverend hermit grew;
The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruits, his drink the crystal well:
Remote from man, with God he pass'd the days,
Prayer all his business, all his pleasure praise.

A life so sacred, such serene repose,
Seem'd heaven itself, till one suggestion rose:
That vice should triumph, virtue vice obey,
This sprung some doubt of Providence's sway; 10
His hopes no more a certain prospect boast,
And all the tenor of his soul is lost:
So when a smooth expanse receives impress'd
Calm Nature's image on its watery breast,
Down bend the banks, the trees depending grow,
And skies beneath with answering colours glow:
But if a stone the gentle scene divide,
Swift ruffling circles curl on every side,
And glimmering fragments of a broken sun,
Banks, trees, and skies, in thick disorder run. 20



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To clear this doubt, to know the world by sight,
To find if books or swains report it right,
(For yet by swains alone the world he knew,
Whose feet came wandering o'er the nightly dew)
He quits his cell; the pilgrim-staff he bore,
And fix'd the scallop in his hat before;
Then with the sun a rising journey went,
Sedate to think, and watching each event.

The morn was wasted in the pathless grass,
And long and lonesome was the wild to pass; 30
But when the southern sun had warm'd the day,
A youth came posting o'er a crossing way;
His raiment decent, his complexion fair,
And soft in graceful ringlets waved his hair.
Then near approaching, 'Father, hail!' he cried,
'And hail, my Son!' the reverend sire replied;
Words follow'd words, from question answer flow'd,
And talk of various kind deceived the road.
Till each with other pleased, and loth to part,
While in their age they differ, join in heart: 40
Thus stands an aged elm in ivy bound,
Thus youthful ivy clasps an elm around.

Now sunk the sun; the closing hour of day
Came onward, mantled o'er with sober gray;
Nature in silence bid the world repose;
When near the road a stately palace rose:
There by the moon through ranks of trees they pass,
Whose verdure crown'd their sloping sides of grass.
It chanced the noble master of the dome,
Still made his house the wandering stranger's home: 50
Yet still the kindness, from a thirst of praise,
Proved the vain flourish of expensive ease.
The pair arrive: the liveried servants wait;
Their lord receives them at the pompous gate;
The table groans with costly piles of food,
And all is more than hospitably good;
Then led to rest, the day's long toil they drown,
Deep sunk in sleep, and silk, and heaps of down.

At length 'tis morn, and at the dawn of day,
Along the wide canals the Zephyrs play; 60
Fresh o'er the gay parterres the breezes creep,



And shake the neighbouring wood to banish sleep.
Up rise the guests, obedient to the call;
An early banquet deck'd the splendid hall;
Rich luscious wine a golden goblet graced,
Which the kind master forced the guests to taste.
Then pleased and thankful, from the porch they go,
And, but the landlord, none had cause of woe;
His cup was vanish'd—for in secret guise
The younger guest purloin'd the glittering prize. 70

As one who spies a serpent in his way,
Glistening and basking in the summer ray,
Disorder'd stops to shun the danger near,
Then walks with faintness on, and looks with fear:
So seem'd the sire, when, far upon the road,
The shining spoil his wily partner show'd.
He stopp'd with silence, walk'd with trembling heart,
And much he wish'd, but durst not ask to part:
Murmuring he lifts his eyes, and thinks it hard,
That generous actions meet a base reward. 80

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While thus they pass, the sun his glory shrouds,
The changing skies hang out their sable clouds;
A sound in air presaged approaching rain,
And beasts to cover scud across the plain.
Warn'd by the signs, the wandering pair retreat,
To seek for shelter at a neighbouring seat.
'Twas built with turrets, on a rising ground,
And strong, and large, and unimproved around;
Its owner's temper, timorous and severe,
Unkind and griping, caused a desert there. 90

As near the miser's heavy doors they drew,
Fierce rising gusts with sudden fury blew;
The nimble lightning, mix'd with showers, began,
And o'er their heads loud-rolling thunder ran.
Here long they knock, but knock or call in vain,
Driven by the wind, and batter'd by the rain.
At length some pity warm'd the master's breast,
('Twas then his threshold first received a guest)
Slow creaking turns the door with jealous care,
And half he welcomes in the shivering pair; 100
One frugal faggot lights the naked walls,
And Nature's fervour through their limbs recalls:
Bread of the coarsest sort, with eager[1] wine,
(Each hardly granted) served them both to dine;
And when the tempest first appear'd to cease,
A ready warning bid them part in peace.

With still remark the pondering hermit view'd,
In one so rich, a life so poor and rude;
And why should such, (within himself he cried,)
Lock the lost wealth a thousand want beside? 110
But what new marks of wonder soon took place,
In every settling feature of his face,
When from his vest the young companion bore
That cup, the generous landlord own'd before,
And paid profusely with the precious bowl
The stinted kindness of this churlish soul!

But now the clouds in airy tumult fly,
The sun emerging opes an azure sky;
A fresher green the smelling leaves display,
And glittering as they tremble, cheer the day: 120



The weather courts them from the poor retreat,
And the glad master bolts the wary gate.

While hence they walk, the pilgrim's bosom wrought
With all the travail of uncertain thought;
His partner's acts without their cause appear,
'Twas there a vice, and seem'd a madness here:
Detesting that, and pitying this, he goes,
Lost and confounded with the various shows.

Now night's dim shades again involve the sky;
Again the wanderers want a place to lie, 130
Again they search, and find a lodging nigh.
The soil improved around, the mansion neat,
And neither poorly low, nor idly great:
It seem'd to speak its master's turn of mind,
Content, and not for praise, but virtue kind.

Hither the walkers turn with weary feet,
Then bliss the mansion, and the master greet:
Their greeting fair bestow'd, with modest guise,
The courteous master hears, and thus replies:



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'Without a vain, without a grudging heart, 140
To Him who gives us all, I yield a part;
From Him you come, for Him accept it here,
A frank and sober, more than costly cheer.'

He spoke, and bid the welcome table spread,
Then talk'd of virtue till the time of bed,
When the grave household round his hall repair,
Warn'd by a bell, and close the hours with prayer.

At length the world, renew'd by calm repose,
Was strong for toil, the dappled morn arose;
Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept, 150
Near the closed cradle where an infant slept,
And writhed his neck: the landlord's little pride—
Oh, strange return!—grew black, and gasp'd, and died.
Horror of horrors! what! his only son!
How look'd our hermit when the fact was done?
Not hell, though hell's black jaws in sunder part,
And breathe blue fire, could more assault his heart.

Confused, and struck with silence at the deed,
He flies, but, trembling, fails to fly with speed.
His steps the youth pursues; the country lay 160
Perplex'd with roads, a servant show'd the way:
A river cross'd the path; the passage o'er
Was nice to find; the servant trode before;
Long arms of oaks an open bridge supplied,
And deep the waves beneath the bending glide.
The youth, who seem'd to watch a time to sin,
Approach'd the careless guide, and thrust him in;
Plunging he falls, and rising lifts his head,
Then flashing turns, and sinks among the dead.

Wild sparkling rage inflames the father's eyes, 170
He bursts the bands of fear, and madly cries:
'Detested wretch!'—But scarce his speech began,
When the strange partner seem'd no longer man:
His youthful face grew more serenely sweet;
His robe turn'd white, and flow'd upon his feet;
Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair;
Celestial odours breathe through purpled air;
And wings, whose colours glitter'd on the day,
Wide at his back their gradual plumes display;

The form ethereal bursts upon his sight, 180
And moves in all the majesty of light.

Though loud at first the pilgrim's passion grew,
Sudden he gazed, and wist not what to do;
Surprise in secret chains his word suspends,
And in a calm his settling temper ends.
But silence here the beauteous angel broke,
The voice of music ravish'd as he spoke:

'Thy prayer, thy praise, thy life to vice unknown,
In sweet memorial rise before the throne:
These charms, success in our bright region find, 190
And force an angel down, to calm thy mind;
For this commission'd, I forsook the sky—
Nay, cease to kneel—thy fellow-servant I!

'Then know the truth of government divine,
And let these scruples be no longer thine.

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'The Maker justly claims that world He made,
In this the right of Providence is laid;
Its sacred majesty through all depends
On using second means to work His ends:
'Tis thus, withdrawn in state from human eye, 200
The power exerts His attributes on high,
Your actions uses, not controls your will,
And bids the doubting sons of men "be still!"

'What strange events can strike with more surprise,
Than those which lately struck thy wondering eyes?
Yet, taught by these, confess the Almighty just,
And where you can't unriddle, learn to trust!

'The great, vain man, who fared on costly food,
Whose life was too luxurious to be good;
Who made his ivory stands with goblets shine, 210
And forced his guests to morning draughts of wine,
Has, with the cup, the graceless custom lost,
And still he welcomes, but with less of cost.

'The mean, suspicious wretch, whose bolted door,
Ne'er moved in duty to the wandering poor;
With him I left the cup, to teach his mind
That Heaven can bless, if mortals will be kind.
Conscious of wanting worth, he views the bowl,
And feels compassion touch his grateful soul.
Thus artists melt the sullen ore of lead, 220
With heaping coals of fire upon its head;
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And, loose from dross, the silver runs below.

'Long had our pious friend in virtue trod,
But now the child half-wean'd his heart from God;
Child of his age, for him he lived in pain,
And measured back his steps to earth again.
To what excesses had his dotage run?
But God, to save the father, took the son.
To all but thee, in fits he seem'd to go, 230
And 'twas my ministry to deal the blow.
The poor fond parent, humbled in the dust,
Now owns in tears the punishment was just.

'But how had all his fortune felt a wrack,
Had that false servant sped in safety back?
This night his treasured heaps he meant to steal,
And what a fund of charity would fail!

'Thus Heaven instructs thy mind: this trial o'er,
Depart in peace, resign'd, and sin no more.'

On sounding pinions here the youth withdrew 240
The sage stood wondering as the seraph flew.
Thus look'd Elisha, when, to mount on high,
His master took the chariot of the sky;
The fiery pomp ascending left the view;
The prophet gazed, and wish'd to follow too.

The bending hermit here a prayer begun,
'Lord! as in heaven, on earth Thy will be done.'
Then gladly turning, sought his ancient place,
And pass'd a life of piety and peace.

[Footnote 1: 'Eager:' i. e., sharp and sour.]

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END OF PARNELL'S POEMS.

* * * * *

THE LIFE AND POEMS

OF

THOMAS GRAY.

How dearly, at one time, and how cheaply at another, does Genius purchase immortal fame! Here a Milton

“Scorns delights, and lives laborious days,”

that he may, through sufferings, sorrows, and the strainings of a long life, pile up a large and lofty poem;—and there a Gray, in the intervals of other studies, produces a few short but exquisite verses, which become instantly and for ever popular, and render his name as dear to many, if not dearer, than that of the sublimer bard; for there are probably thousands who would prefer to have written the “Elegy written in a Country Churchyard,” instead of the “Paradise Lost.”

Thomas Gray was born in Cornhill, London, on the 26th December 1716. His father was Mr Philip Gray, a respectable scrivener, and his mother's name was Dorothy Antrobus. Gray was the fifth of twelve children, and the only one that survived. His life was saved in infancy by his mother, who, during a paroxysm which attacked her son, opened a vein with her own hand. This, and many other acts of maternal tenderness, rendered her memory unspeakably dear to the poet, who seldom mentioned her, after her death, “without a sigh.” He was sent to study at Eton College, the happy days spent in which he has so beautifully commemorated in his “Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College.” It added to his comfort here that his maternal uncle, Mr Antrobus, was an assistant-teacher. From Eton he passed to Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he was admitted as a pensioner in 1734, in the nineteenth year of his age. He had at Eton become intimate with Horace Walpole and with Richard West, a young man of high promise, who died early. It is worth noticing that, during his residence both at Eton and Cambridge, he was supported entirely out of the separate industry of his mother, his father refusing him all aid.

At Cambridge, Gray studied very hard, attending less to mathematics than to classical literature, modern languages, history, and poetry. He aspired to be a universally accomplished as well as a minutely learned man. His compositions, from 1734 to 1738, were translations from Italian into Latin and English, and one or two small pieces of original verse. In September 1738, he returned to his father's house, and remained there for six months, doing little except carrying on a correspondence he had begun at

Cambridge with West and other friends. Correspondence, from the first and to the last, was the best OUTCOME of Gray's mind—he felt himself most at home in it; and, next to Cowper's, his letters are the most delightful in the English language.

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He had intended to study law, but was diverted from his purpose by Horace Walpole, who invited him to take in his Company the “grand tour.” To no Briton, since Milton, could travel have been more congenial or more instructive than to Gray. He that would travel to advantage must first have travelled in mind all the countries he visits, and must be learned in their literature, their politics, their scenery, and their antiquities, ere ever he sets a foot upon their shores. To Italy and France, Gray went as to favourite studies, not as to relaxations; and spent his time in observing their famous scenes with the eye of a poet—cataloguing their paintings in the spirit of a connoisseur—perfecting his knowledge of their languages—examining minutely the principles of their architecture and music—comparing their present aspect with the old classical descriptions; and writing home an elegant epistolary account of all his sights, and all his speculations. He saw Paris—visited Geneva—passed to Florence—hurried to Rome on the tidings of Pope Clement XII’s death, to see the installation of his successor—stood beside the cataracts of Tivoli and Terni, and might have seen in both, emblems of his own genius, which, like them, was beautiful and powerful, but artificial—took a rapid run to Naples, and was charmed beyond expression with its bay, its climate, and its fruitage—and was one of the first English travellers to visit Herculaneum, discovered only the year before (1739), and to wonder at that strange and solemn rehearsal of the resurrection exhibited in its streets. From Naples he returned to Florence, where he continued eleven months, and began a Latin poem, “De Principiis Cogitandi.” He then, on the 24th of April 1741, set off with Walpole for Bologna and Reggio. At this latter place occurred the celebrated quarrel between the two travellers. The causes and circumstances of this are involved in considerable obscurity. Dissimilarity of tastes and habits was probably at the bottom of it. Gray was an enthusiastic scholar; Walpole was then a gay and giddy voluptuary, although predestined to sour down into the most cold-blooded and cynical of gossips. They parted at Reggio, to meet only once afterwards at Strawberry Hill, where Gray long after visited Walpole at his own invitation, but told him frankly he never could be on the same terms of friendship again. Left now to pursue his journey alone, he went to Venice, and thence came back through Padua and Milan to France. On his way between Turin and Lyons, he turned aside to see again the noble mountainous scenery surrounding the Grande Chartreuse in Dauphine; and in the album kept by the fathers wrote his Alcaic Ode, testifying to his admiration of a scene where, he says, “every precipice and cliff was pregnant, with religion and poetry.”

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Two months after his return to England, his father died, somewhat impoverished by improvidence. Gray, thinking himself too poor to study the law, sent his mother and a maiden sister to reside at Stoke, near Windsor, and retired to Peterhouse, Cambridge, where he resumed his classical and poetical pursuits. To West, who by this time was declining in health, he sent part of “Agrippina,” a tragedy he had commenced. West objected to the length and prosiness of Agrippina’s speeches. These were afterwards altered by Mason, in accordance with West’s suggestions; but Gray was discouraged, and has left “Agrippina” a Torso. The subject was unpleasing. To have treated adequately the character of Nero, would have required more than the genius of Gray; and the language of the fragment is distinguished rather by rhetorical burnish than by poetical spirit and heat. We have not thought it necessary to reprint it, nor several besides of the fragmentary and inferior productions of this poet, which Mason, too, thought proper to omit.

Gray now plunged into the *mare magnum* of classical literature. With greater energy and exclusiveness than before, he read Thucydides, Theocritus, and Anacreon; he translated parts of Propertius, and he wrote a heroic epistle in Latin, after the manner of Ovid, and a Greek epigram. This last he communicated to West, who was now in Hertfordshire, waiting the approach of the Angel of Death. To the same dear friend he sent his “Ode to Spring,” which he had written under his mother’s roof at Stoke. He was too late. West was dead before it arrived. This amiable and gifted person, who was thought by many superior in natural genius to his friend, and whose name is for ever connected with that of Gray, expired on the 1st of June 1742, and now reposes in the chancel of Hatfield Church. We strongly suspect that it was he whom Gray had in his eye in the close of his “Elegy.”

Autumn has often been thought propitious to genius, especially when its tender sun-light is still further sweetened and saddened by the joy of grief. In the autumn of this year, Gray, who was peculiarly susceptible to skiey influences, wrote some of his best poetry—his “Hymn to Adversity,” his “Distant Prospect of Eton College,” and commenced his “Elegy written in a Country Churchyard.” A Sonnet in English, and the Apostrophe which opens the fourth book of his “De Principiis Cogitandi,” bore testimony to his esteem for the character and his regret for the premature loss of Richard West.

To Cambridge Gray seems to have had little attachment; but partly from the smallness of his income, and partly from the access he had to its libraries, he was found there to the last, constantly complaining, and always continuing, like the *statue* of a murmurer. In the winter of 1742 he was admitted Bachelor of Civil Law; and in acknowledgment of the honour of the admission, began an “Address to Ignorance,” which it is no great loss to his fame that he never finished. Hazlitt completed what appears to have been Gray’s design in that admirable and searching paper of his, entitled, “The Ignorance of the Learned,” in which he shows how ill mere learning supplies the want of common sense and practical knowledge, as well as of talent and genius.

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In 1744, through the intervention of a lady, the difference between Walpole and Gray was so far made up, that they resumed their correspondence, although never their intimacy. About this time he got acquainted with Mason, then a scholar in St John's College, who became a minor Boswell to a minor Johnson; although he used liberties with Gray's correspondence and poetry, such as Boswell never durst have attempted with his idol. Mason had first introduced himself to Gray by showing him some MS. poetry. With the famous Dr Conyers Middleton, too, he became intimate, and lived to lament his death.

In 1747, Dodsley published for him his "Ode to Eton College," the first of Gray's productions which appeared in print. It excited no notice whatever. Walpole wished him to publish his poems in conjunction with the remains of West; but this he declined, on account of want of materials—perhaps also feeling the great superiority of his own poetry. At Walpole's request, however, he wrote an ode on the death of his favourite cat!

Greek became now his constant study. He read its more recondite authors, such as Pausanias, Athenaeus, Pindar, Lysias, and AEschylus, with great care, and commenced the preparation of a Table of Greek Chronology, on a very minute and elaborate scale.

In 1749 he lost his aunt, Mrs Antrobus, and her death, which he felt as a heavy affliction, led him to complete his "Elegy," which he sent to Walpole, who handed it about in MS., to the great delight of those who were privileged to peruse it. When published, it sold rapidly, and continues still the most popular of his poems.

In March 1753, his beloved and revered mother died, and he erected over her dust a monument, with an inscription testifying to the strength of his filial love and sorrow. In 1755 he finished his "Ode on the Progress of Poetry," and in the same year began his "Bard." All his poems, however short, were most laboriously composed, written and rewritten, subjected, in whole or in part, to the criticism of his friends, and, according to their verdict, either published, or left fragments, or consigned to the flames. About this time he begins, in his letters, to complain of depression of spirits, of severe attacks of the gout, of sleepless nights, feverish mornings, and heavy days. He was now, and during the rest of his life, to pay the penalty of a lettered indolence and studious sloth, of a neglected body and an over-cultivated mind. The accident, it is said, of seeing a blind Welsh harper performing on a harp, excited him to finish his "Bard," which in MS. appears to have divided the opinion of his friends, as it still does that of the critics.

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In 1758 Gray left Peterhouse, owing to some real or imaginary offence, and removed to Pembroke Hall, where he was surrounded by his old and intimate friends. The next year he carried his two Odes to London, as carefully as if they had been two Epics. Walpole says that he “snatched them out of Dodsley’s hands, and made them ‘the first-fruits of his own press at Strawberry Hill,’ where a thousand copies were printed. When published, they attracted much attention, but did not gain universal applause. Obscurity was the principal charge brought against them. Their friends, however, including Warburton, Hurd, Mason, and Garrick, were vehement in their admiration, and loud in their encomiums. In this year Colley Cibber, the laureate, died, and the office was offered to Gray, with the peculiar and highly honourable condition, that he was to hold it as a sinecure. The poet, however, refused, on the ground, as he tells Mason, that the office had ‘hitherto humbled its possessor.’”

In 1758, he composed, for his amusement, a “Catalogue of the Antiquities, Houses, &c., in England and Wales,” which was, after his death, printed and distributed by Mason among his friends.

The next year the British Museum was opened (15th January 1759), and Gray went to London to read and transcribe the MSS. collected there from the Harleian and Cottoman libraries. During his residence in the capital, appeared two odes to “Obscurity” and “Oblivion,” in ridicule of his lyrics, from the pens of Colman and Lloyd, full of spirited satire, which failed, however, to disturb the poet’s equanimity. Like many fastidious writers, he was more afraid of his own taste, and of the strictures of good-natured friends, than of the attacks of foes. In 1762 he applied for the Professorship of Modern History, vacant by the death of Turner; but it was given to Brochet, the tutor of Sir James Lowther.

In 1765 he took a tour to Scotland, and saw many of its more interesting points——Stirling, Loch Tay, the Pass of Killierankie, and Glammis Castle, where he met Beattie. He wrote a very entertaining account of the journey, in his letters to his friends. He was offered an LL.D. by the College of Aberdeen; but out of respect to his own University, declined the honour. In 1767 he added his “Imitations of Welsh and Norwegian Poetry” to his other productions. Sir Walter Scott tells us, that when Gray’s poems reached the Orkney and Shetland Isles, and when the “Fatal Sisters” was repeated by a clergyman to some of the old inhabitants, they remembered having sung it all in its native language to him years before. In 1768, the Professorship of Modern History falling again vacant by Mr Brochet’s death, the Duke of Grafton instantly bestowed it on Gray, who, out of gratitude, wrote an ode on the installation of his patron to the Chancellorship of Cambridge University. He went from witnessing this ceremony to the Lakes of Cumberland, and kept an interesting journal of his

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tour to that then little known and most enchanting region. In 1770, he visited Wales; but owing probably to poor health, has left no notes of his journey. In May the next year, his health became worse, his spirits more depressed, an incurable cough preyed on his lungs; he resigned his Professorship, and shortly after removed to London. There he rallied a little, and returned to Cambridge, where, on the 24th of July, he was seized with a severe attack of gout in the stomach. Of this he expired on the 30th, in the 55th year of his age, without any apparent fear of death. He was buried by the side of his mother, in the churchyard of Stoke. A monument was erected by Mason to his memory, in Westminster Abbey.

Gray was a brilliant bookworm. In private he was a quiet, abstracted, dreaming scholar, although in the company of a few friends he could become convivial and witty. His heart, however, was always in his study. His portrait gives you the impression of great fastidiousness, and almost feminine delicacy of face, as well as of considerable self-esteem. His face has more of the critic than of the poet. His learning and accomplishments have been equalled perhaps by no poet since Milton. He knew the Classics, the Northern Scalds, the Italian poets and historians, the French novelists, Architecture, Zoology, Painting, Sculpture, Botany, Music, and Antiquities. But he liked better, he said, to read than to write. You figure him always lounging with a volume in his hand, on a sofa, and crying out, "Be mine to read eternal novels of Marivaux and Crebillon." Against his moral character there exists no imputation; and notwithstanding a sneering hint of Walpole's, his religious creed seems to have been orthodox.

With all his learning and genius, he has done little. His letters and poems remind you of a few scattered leaves, surviving the conflagration of the Alexandrian library. The very popularity of the scraps which such a writer leaves, secures the torments of Tantalus to his numerous admirers in all after ages. His letters, in their grace, freedom, minuteness of detail, occasional playfulness, delicious *asides* of gossip, and easy vigour of description, are more worthy of his powers, as a whole, than his poetry. The poetic fragments he has left are rarely of such merit as to excite any wish that they had been finished. His genius, although true and exquisite, was limited in its range, and hidebound in its movements. You see his genius, like a child, always casting a look of terror round on its older companion and guardian—his taste. Like Campbell, "he often spreads his wings grandly, but shrinks back timidly to his perch again, and seems afraid of the shadow of his own fame." Within his own range, however, he is as strong as he is delicate and refined. His two principal Odes have, as we hinted, divided much the opinion of critics. Dr Johnson has assailed them in his worst style of captious and word-catching criticism. Now, that there is much smoke around their fire, we grant. But we argue that there is genuine fire amidst their smoke,—first, from the fact that so many of their lines, such as,

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"The bloom of young Desire, and purple light of Love;"
"The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye;"
"Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves;"
"Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air;"
"Beneath the good how far, but far above the great"
"High-born Hoel's harp, and soft Llewellyn's lay,"

are so often and admiringly quoted; and because, secondly, we can trace the influence of the "Progress of Poetry," and of the "Bard," on much of the higher song that has succeeded,—on the poetry of Bowles, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Campbell, and Shelley. Gray was not a sun shining in his strength, but he was the morning star, prognosticating the coming of a warmer and brighter poetic day.

He that can see no merit in the "Ode on the Distant Prospect of Eton College," can surely never have been a boy. The boy's heart beats in its every line, and yet all the experiences of boyhood are seen and shown in the sober light of those

"Years which bring the philosophic mind."

Here lies the complex charm of the poem. The unthinking gaiety of boyhood, its light sports, its airy gladness, its springy motions, the "tears forgot as soon as shed," the "sunshine of the breast" of that delightful period—are contrasted with the still and often sombre reflection, the grave joys, the carking cares, the stern concentrated passions, the serious pastimes, the spare but sullen and burning tears, the sad smiles of manhood; and contrasted by one who is realising both with equal vividness and intensity—because he is in age a man, and in memory and imagination an Eton schoolboy still. The breezes of boyhood return and blow on a head on which gray hairs are beginning "here and there" to whiten; and he cries—

"I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As, waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring."

Dr Johnson makes a peculiarly poor and unworthy objection to the next stanza of the poem. Speaking of the address to the Thames—

"Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race;"

he says, "Father Thames has no better means of knowing than himself." He should have left this objection to those wretched *mechanical* critics who abound in the present day. He forgot that in his own "Rasselas" he had invoked the Nile, as the great "Father of waters," to tell, if, in any of the provinces through which he rolled, he did not hear the language of distress. Critics, like liars, should have good memories.

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His remark that the “Prospect of Eton College” suggests nothing to Gray which every beholder does not equally think and feel, is, in reality, a compliment to the simplicity and naturalness of the strain. Common thought and feeling crystalised, is the staple of much of our best poetry. Gray says in a poetical way, what every one might have thought and felt, but no one but he could have so beautifully expressed. To the spirited translations from the Norse and Welsh, the only objection urged by Dr Johnson is, that their “language is unlike the language of other poets”—an objection which would tell still more powerfully against Milton, Collins, and Young, not to speak of the “chartered libertines” of our more modern song. But a running growl of prejudice is heard in every sentence of Gray’s Life by Johnson, and tends far more to injure the critic than the poet.

In his “Elegy written in a Country Churchyard,” Gray has caught, concentrated, and turned into a fine essence, the substance of a thousand meditations among the tombs. One of its highest points of merit, conceded by Dr Johnson, is essentially the same with which he had found fault in the “Ode to Eton College.” “The poem abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo.” Everything is in intense keeping. The images are few, but striking; the language is severely simple; the thought is at once obvious and original, at once clear and profound, and many of the couplets seem carefully and consciously chiselled for immortality, to become mottoes for every churchyard in the kingdom, and to “teach the rustic moralist to die,” while the country remains beautiful, and while death continues to inspire fear. And with what daring felicity of genius does the author introduce, ere the close, a living but anonymous figure amidst the company of the silent dead, and contrive to unite the interest of a personal story, the charm of a mystery, and the solemnity of a moral meditation, into one fine whole! We know of but one objection of much weight to this exquisite elegy. There is scarcely the faintest or most faltering allusion to the doctrine of the resurrection. Death has it all his own way in this citadel of his power. The poet never points his finger to the distant horizon, where life and immortality are beginning to colour the clouds with the promise of the eternal morning. The elegy might almost have been written by a Pagan. In this point, Beattie, in his “Hermit,” has much the advantage of his friend Gray; for *his* eye is anointed to behold a blessed vision, and his voice is strengthened thus to sing—

“On the pale cheek of Death smiles and roses are blending,
And Beauty immortal awakes from the tomb.”

Nevertheless, had Gray been known, not for his scholarship, not for his taste, not for his letters and minor poems, not for his reputed powers and unrivalled accomplishments, but solely for this elegy—had only it and his mere name survived, it alone would have entitled him to rank with Britain’s best poets.



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* * * * *

GRAY'S POEMS.

ODES.

I.—ON THE SPRING.

1. Lo! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of Spring:
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool Zephyrs through the clear blue sky
Their gather'd fragrance fling.
2. Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader, browner shade.
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'ercanopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little, are the proud,
How indigent the great!
3. Still is the toiling hand of Care;
The panting herds repose:
Yet hark! how through the peopled air
The busy murmur glows!
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring,
And float amid the liquid noon;
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily gilded trim,
Quick glancing to the sun.
4. To Contemplation's sober eye,
Such is the race of Man,



And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began.
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter through life's little day,
In Fortune's varying colours dress'd;
Brush'd by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chill'd by Age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

5. Methinks I hear, in accents low,
The sportive kind reply,
Poor Moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown,
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic while 'tis May.

* * * * *

II.—ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT,
DROWNED IN A CHINA TUB OF GOLD FISHES.

1. 'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow,
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.
2. Her conscious tail her joy declared;
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw, and purr'd applause.

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3. Still had she gazed, but,' midst the tide,
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream;
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue,
Through richest purple, to the view
Betray'd a golden gleam.
4. The hapless nymph with wonder saw;
A whisker first, and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretch'd in vain to reach the prize:
What female heart can gold despise?
What cat's averse to fish?
5. Presumptuous maid! with looks intent,
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between:
(Maligant Fate sat by and smiled,)
The slippery verge her feet beguiled;
She tumbled headlong in.
6. Eight times emerging from the flood,
She mew'd to every watery god
Some speedy aid to send.
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd,
Nor cruel Tom or Susan heard:
A favourite has no friend!
7. From hence, ye beauties! undeceived,
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold:
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes,
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize,
Nor all that glisters gold.

* * * * *

III—ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.

[Greek: Anthropos ikanae profasis eis to dustuchein]

MENANDER.



- 1 Ye distant spires! ye antique towers!
That crown the watery glade
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's (1) holy shade;
And ye that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way:
- 2 Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah, fields beloved in vain!
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As, waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.
- 3 Say, father Thames! for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race,
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace,
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthrall?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?



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4 While some, on earnest business bent,
 Their murmuring labours ply,
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint,
 To sweeten liberty:
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
 And unknown regions dare descry;
Still as they run they look behind.
They hear a voice in every wind,
 And snatch a fearful joy.

5 Gay Hope is theirs, by Fancy fed,
 Less pleasing when possess'd;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
 The sunshine of the breast;
Theirs buxom health of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
 And lively cheer, of vigour born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
 That fly the approach of morn.

6 Alas! regardless of their doom,
 The little victims play;
No sense have they of ills to come,
 Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see how all around them wait,
The ministers of human fate,
 And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah! show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murderous band!
 Ah! tell them they are men!

7 These shall the fury Passions tear,
 The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
 And Shame that skulks behind;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy, with rankling teeth,
 That inly gnaws the secret heart;
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged, comfortless Despair,
 And Sorrow's piercing dart.



8 Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning infamy:
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen Remorse, with blood defiled,
And moody Madness, laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

9 Lo! in the vale of years beneath,
A grisly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every labouring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage;
Lo! Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

10 To each his sufferings; all are men
Condemn'd alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
The unfeeling for his own.
Yet ah! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise—
No more; where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.

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[Footnote: (1) 'Henry:' King Henry VI., founder of the College.]

* * * * *

IV.—HYMN TO ADVERSITY.

[Greek:

Zaena ...

Ton phronein brotous odosanta, to pathei mathos
phenta kurios echein.

AESCH. AG. 167.]

1 Daughter of Jove, relentless Power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and torturing hour
The bad affright, afflict the best!
Bound in thy adamantine chain,
The proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

2 When first thy Sire to send on earth,
Virtue, his darling child, design'd,
To thee he gave the heavenly birth,
And bade to form her infant mind:
Stern rugged nurse! thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore;
What sorrow was thou badest her know,
And from her own she learn'd to melt at others' woe.

3 Scared at thy frown, terrific fly
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
And leave us leisure to be good.
Light they disperse; and with them go
The summer friend, the flattering foe;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

4 Wisdom, in sable garb array'd,
Immersed in rapturous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid!



With leaden eye, that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend;
Warm Charity, the general friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

5 Oh! gently on thy suppliant's head,
Dread Goddess! lay thy chastening hand,
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
Nor circled with the vengeful band:
(As by the impious thou art seen),
With thundering voice and threatening mien,
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty.

6 Thy form benign, O Goddess! wear,
Thy milder influence impart,
Thy philosophic train be there,
To soften, not to wound, my heart:
The generous spark extinct revive;
Teach me to love and to forgive;
Exact my own defects to scan;
What others are to feel, and know myself a Man.

* * * * *

V.—THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

PINDARIC.

ADVERTISEMENT.—When the author first published this and the following ode, he was advised, even by his friends, to subjoin some few explanatory notes, but had too much respect for the understanding of his readers to take that liberty.

[Greek:

Phonanta sunetoisin es
De to pan hermaeneon
Chatizei.—

PINDAR, *Olymp.* ii.]



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I.—1.

Awake, Aeolian lyre! awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings;
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take;
The laughing flowers, that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales and Ceres' golden reign;
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

I.—2.

Oh! Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting Shell! the sullen Cares
And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curbed the fury of his car,
And dropp'd his thirsty lance at thy command:
Perching on the sceptred hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing:
Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak and lightnings of his eye.

I.—3.

Thee the voice, the dance obey,
Temper'd to thy warbled lay:
O'er India's velvet green
The rosy-crowned Loves are seen,
On Cytherea's day,
With antic Sports and blue-eyed Pleasures
Frisking light in frolic measures:
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet;
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow-melting strains their Queen's approach declare



Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay;
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

II.—1.

Man's feeble race what life await!
Labour and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate!
The fond complaint, my Song! disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky,
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

II.—2.

In climes beyond the Solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight-gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode;
And oft beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers, wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the Goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
The unconquerable mind, and freedom's holy flame.



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II.—3.

Woods that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles that crown the AEgean deep,
Fields that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Meander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep, I
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute but to the voice of Anguish?
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around;
Every shade and hallow'd fountain
Murmur'd deep a solemn sound,
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains:
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, O Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III.—1.

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
To him the mighty Mother did unveil
Her awful face; the dauntless child
Stretch'd forth his little arms, and smiled.
This pencil take (she said) whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year;
Thine, too, these golden keys, immortal Boy!
This can unlock the gates of Joy,
Of Horror that, and thrilling Pears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic Tears.

III.—2.

Nor second He that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy;
The secrets of the abyss to spy,
He pass'd the flaming bounds of place and time:
The living throne, the sapphire-blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,



Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers^[1] of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed and long-resounding pace.

III.—3.

Hark! his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe and words that burn;
But ah! 'tis heard no more.
O lyre divine! what dying spirit^[2]
Wakes thee now? though he inherit
Nor the pride nor ample pinion
That the Theban eagle^[3] bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air,
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray
With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun;
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the good how far—but far above the great.

[Footnote 1: 'Coursers:' the heroic rhymes.]

[Footnote 2: 'Dying spirit:' Cowley.]

[Footnote 3: 'Theban eagle:' Pindar.]

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VI—THE BARD.

PINDARIC.

ADVERTISEMENT.—The following ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales, that Edward I., when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the bards that fell into his hands to be put to death.

I.—1.

'Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait;
Though fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm nor hauberk's[1] twisted mail,
Nor even thy virtues, Tyrant! shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears;
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!
Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array:
Stout Glo'ster[2] stood aghast in speechless trance:
To arms! cried Mortimer,[3] and couch'd his quivering lance.

I.—2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood;
(Loose his beard and hoary hair,
Stream'd like a meteor to the troubled air,
And with a master's hand and prophet's fire
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre:
'Hark how each giant oak and desert cave
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, O King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I.—3.



'Cold is Cadwallo's tongue
That hush'd the stormy main;
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains! ye moan in vain
Modrid, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topp'd head.
On dreary Arvon's shore[4] they lie,
Smear'd with gore and ghastly pale;
Far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail;
The famish'd eagle screams and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art!
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries—
No more I weep. They do not sleep:
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit; they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

II.—1.

"Weave the warp and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race:
Give ample room and verge enough
The characters of Hell to trace.
Mark the year and mark the night
When Severn shall re-echo with affright

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The shrieks of death through Berkley's roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonising king![5]
She-wolf of France,[6] with unrelenting fangs
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee[7] be born who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of Heaven. What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

II.—2.

"Mighty Victor, mighty Lord,
Low on his funeral couch[8] he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye afford
A tear to grace his obsequies!
Is the sable warrior[9] fled?
Thy son is gone; he rests among the dead.
The swarm that in thy noontide beam were born,
Gone to salute the rising morn:
Fair laughs the morn,[10] and soft the Zephyr blows,
While, proudly riding o'er the azure realm,
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm,
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

II.—3.

"Fill high the sparkling bowl,[11]
The rich repast prepare;
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast.
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon the baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,[12]
Lance to lance and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way;
Ye Towers of Julius![13] London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,



Revere his consort's[14] faith, his father's[15] fame,
And spare the meek usurper's[16] holy head.
Above, below, the Rose of snow,[17]
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread;
The bristled Boar[18] in infant gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade;
Now, Brothers! bending o'er the accursed loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III.—I.

"Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof; the thread is spun:)
Half of thy heart[19] we consecrate;
(The web is wove; the work is done.)"
'Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unblest'd, unpitied, here to mourn,
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height,
Descending slow, their glittering skirts unroll!
Visions of glory! spare my aching sight!
Ye unborn ages crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur[20] we bewail:
All hail, ye genuine Kings![21] Britannia's issue, hail!

III.—2.

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'Girt with many a baron bold,
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
And gorgeous dames and statesmen old
In bearded majesty appear;
In the midst a form divine,
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line,
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,[22]
Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air!
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin,[23] hear!
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and, soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of Heaven her many-colour'd wings.

III.—3.

'The verse adorn again,
Fierce War and faithful Love,
And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction dress'd.
In buskin'd measures move
Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A voice[24] as of the cherub-choir
Gales from blooming Eden bear,
And distant warblings[25] lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond, impious man! think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me: with joy I see
The different doom our Fates assign;
Be thine despair and sceptred care;
To triumph and to die are mine.'
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height,
Deep in the roaring tide, he plunged to endless night.

[Footnote 1: 'Hauberk:' the hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion.]

[Footnote 2: 'Stout Glo'ster:' Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, son-in-law to King Edward.]

[Footnote 3: 'Mortimer:' Edmond de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore. They both were Lords Marchers, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the King in this expedition.]

[Footnote 4: 'Arvon's shore:' the shores of Caernarvonshire, opposite to the isle of Anglesey.]

[Footnote 5: 'King:' Edward II., cruelly butchered in Berkley Castle.]

[Footnote 6: 'She-wolf of France:' Isabel of France, Edward II.'s adulterous queen.]

[Footnote 7: 'From thee:' triumphs of Edward III. in France.]

[Footnote 8: 'Funeral couch:' death of that king, abandoned by his children, and even robbed in his last moments by his courtiers and his mistress.]

[Footnote 9: 'Sable warrior:' Edward the Black Prince, dead some time before his father.]

[Footnote 10: 'Fair laughs the morn:' magnificence of Richard II.'s reign; see Froissard, and other contemporary writers.]

[Footnote 11: 'Sparkling bowl:' Richard II. was starved to death; the story of his assassination by Sir Piers of Exon is of much later date.]

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[Footnote 12: 'Battle bray:' ruinous civil wars of York and Lancaster.]

[Footnote 13: 'Towers of Julius:' Henry VI., George Duke of Clarence, Edward V., Richard Duke of York, &c., believed to be murdered secretly in the Tower of London; the oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Caesar.]

[Footnote 14: 'Consort:' Margaret of Anjou.]

[Footnote 15: 'Father:' Henry V.]

[Footnote 16: 'Usurper:' Henry VI., very near being canonised; the line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the crown.]

[Footnote 17: 'Rose of snow:' the White and Red Roses, devices of York and Lancaster.]

[Footnote 18: 'Boar:' the silver Boar was the badge of Richard III., whence he was usually known in his own time by the name of The Boar.]

[Footnote 19: 'Half of thy heart:' Eleanor of Castile, Edward's wife, died a few years after the conquest of Wales.]

[Footnote 20: 'Long-lost Arthur:' it was the common belief of the Welsh nation, that King Arthur was still alive in Fairyland, and should return again to reign over Britain.]

[Footnote 21: 'Genuine kings:' both Merlin and Taliessin had prophesied that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island, which seemed to be accomplished in the House of Tudor.]

[Footnote 22; 'Awe-commanding face:' Queen Elizabeth.]

[Footnote 23: 'Taliessin:' chief of the Bards, flourished in the sixth century; his works are still preserved, and his memory held in high veneration, among his countrymen.]

[Footnote 24: 'A voice:' Milton.]

[Footnote 25: 'Warblings:' the succession of poets after Milton's time.]

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VII.—THE FATAL SISTERS.

FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.[1]

'Vitt er orpit
Fyrir valfalli.'

ADVERTISEMENT.—The author once had thoughts (in concert with a friend) of giving a history of English poetry. In the introduction to it he meant to have produced some specimens of the style that reigned in ancient times among the neighbouring nations, or those who had subdued the greater part of this island, and were our progenitors: the following three imitations made a part of them. He afterwards dropped his design; especially after he had heard that it was already in the hands of a person[2] well qualified to do it justice both by his taste and his researches into antiquity.

PREFACE.—In the eleventh century, Sigurd, Earl of the Orkney Islands, went with a fleet of ships, and a considerable body of troops, into Ireland, to the assistance of Sigtryg with the Silken Beard, who was then making war on his father-in-law, Brian, King of Dublin. The Earl and all his forces were cut to pieces, and Sigtryg was in danger of a total defeat; but the enemy had a greater loss by the death of Brian, their king, who fell in the action. On Christmas-day

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(the day of the battle) a native of Caithness, in Scotland, saw, at a distance, a number of persons on horseback riding full speed towards a hill, and seeming to enter into it. Curiosity led him to follow them, till, looking through an opening in the rocks, he saw twelve gigantic figures,[3] resembling women: they were all employed about a loom; and as they wove they sung the following dreadful song, which, when they had finished, they tore the web into twelve pieces, and each taking her portion, galloped six to the north, and as many to the south.

- 1 Now the storm begins to lower,
 (Haste, the loom of Hell prepare!)
 Iron-sleet of arrowy shower
 Hurtles in the darken'd air.
- 2 Glittering lances are the loom
 Where the dusky warp we strain,
 Weaving many a soldier's doom,
 Orkney's woe and Randver's bane.
- 3 See the grisly texture grow,
 ('Tis of human entrails made,)
 And the weights that play below,
 Each a gasping warrior's head.
- 4 Shafts for shuttles, dipp'd in gore,
 Shoot the trembling cords along:
 Sword, that once a monarch bore,
 Keep the tissue close and strong.
- 5 Mista, black, terrific maid!
 Sangrida and Hilda see,
 Join the wayward work to aid:
 'Tis the woof of victory.
- 6 Ere the ruddy sun be set,
 Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,
 Blade with clattering buckler meet,
 Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.
- 7 (Weave the crimson web of war)
 Let us go, and let us fly,
 Where our friends the conflict share,
 Where they triumph, where they die.



8 As the paths of Fate we tread,
Wading through th' ensanguined field,
Gondula and Geira spread
O'er the youthful king your shield.

9 We the reins to Slaughter give,
Ours to kill and ours to spare:
Spite of danger he shall live;
(Weave the crimson web of war.)

10 They whom once the desert beach
Pent within its bleak domain,
Soon their ample sway shall stretch
O'er the plenty of the plain.

11 Low the dauntless earl is laid,
Gored with many a gaping wound:
Fate demands a nobler head;
Soon a king shall bite the ground.

12 Long his loss shall Eirin[4] weep,
Ne'er again his likeness see;
Long her strains in sorrow steep,
Strains of immortality!

13 Horror covers all the heath,
Clouds of carnage blot the sun:
Sisters! weave the web of death:
Sisters! cease; the work is done.

14 Hail the task and hail the hands!
Songs of joy and triumph sing!
Joy to the victorious bands,
Triumph to the younger king!

15 Mortal! thou that hear'st the tale,
Learn the tenor of our song;
Scotland! through each winding vale
Far and wide the notes prolong.

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16 Sisters! hence with spurs of speed;
Each her thundering falchion wield;
Each bestride her sable steed:
Hurry, hurry, to the field.

[Footnote 1: 'Norse tongue:' to be found in the Orcades of Thormodus Torfaeus, Hafniae, 1697, folio; and also in Bartholinus.]

[Footnote 2: 'Person:' Percy, author of 'Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.']

[Footnote 3: 'Figures:' the Valkyriur were female divinities, servants of Odin (or Woden) in the Gothic mythology. Their name signifies 'Choosers of the Slain.' They were mounted on swift horses, with drawn swords in their hands, and in the throng of battle selected such as were destined to slaughter, and conducted them to Valkalla, (the Hall of Odin, or Paradise of the Brave), where they attended the banquet, and served the departed heroes with horns of mead and ale.]

[Footnote 4: 'Eirin:' Ireland.]

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VIII.—THE DESCENT OF ODIN.

FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.[1]

'Upreis Odinn
Allda gautr.'

Uprose the King of Men with speed,
And saddled straight his coal-black steed;
Down the yawning steep he rode
That leads to Hela's[2] drear abode.
Him the Dog of Darkness spied;
His shaggy throat he open'd wide,
While from his jaws, with carnage fill'd,
Foam and human gore distill'd:
Hoarse he bays with hideous din,
Eyes that glow and fangs that grin, 10
And long pursues with fruitless yell
The Father of the powerful spell.
Onward still his way he takes,
—The groaning earth beneath him shakes,—
Till full before his fearless eyes
The portals nine of Hell arise.



Right against the eastern gate,
By the moss-grown pile he sate,
Where long of yore to sleep was laid
The dust of the prophetic maid. 20
Facing to the northern clime,
Thrice he traced the Runic rhyme,
Thrice pronounced, in accents dread,
The thrilling verse that wakes the dead,
Till from out the hollow ground
Slowly breathed a sullen sound.

Proph. What call unknown, what charms presume
To break the quiet of the tomb?
Who thus afflicts my troubled sprite,
And drags me from the realms of Night? 30
Long on these mouldering bones have beat
The winter's snow, the summer's heat,
The drenching dews and driving rain!
Let me, let me sleep again.
Who is he, with voice unblest,
That calls me from the bed of rest?

Odin. A traveller, to thee unknown,
Is he that calls, a warrior's son.
Thou the deeds of light shalt know;
Tell me what is done below, 40
For whom yon glittering board is spread;
Dress'd for whom yon golden bed?



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Proph. Mantling in the goblet see
The pure beverage of the bee,
O'er it hangs the shield of gold;
'Tis the drink of Balder bold:
Balder's head to death is given;
Pain can reach the sons of Heaven!
Unwilling I my lips uncloze;
Leave me, leave me to repose. 50

Odin. Once again my call obey:
Prophetess! arise, and say,
What dangers Odin's child await,
Who the author of his fate?

Proph. In Hoder's hand the hero's doom;
His brother sends him to the tomb.
Now my weary lips I close;
Leave me, leave me to repose.

Odin. Prophetess! my spell obey;
Once again arise, and say, 60
Who the avenger of his guilt,
By whom shall Hoder's blood be spilt?

Proph. In the caverns of the west,
By Odin's fierce embrace compress'd,
A wondrous boy shall Rinda bear,
Who ne'er shall comb his raven hair,
Nor wash his visage in the stream,
Nor see the sun's departing beam,
Till he on Hoder's corse shall smile,
Flaming on the funeral pile. 70
Now my weary lips I close;
Leave me, leave me to repose.

Odin. Yet a while my call obey:
Prophetess! awake, and say,
What virgins these, in speechless woe,
That bend to earth their solemn brow,
That their flaxen tresses tear,
And snowy veils that float in air?
Tell we whence their sorrows rose,
Then I leave thee to repose. 80



Proph. Ha! no traveller art thou;
King of Men, I know thee now;
Mightiest of a mighty line—

Odin. No boding maid of skill divine
Art thou, no prophetess of good,
But mother of the giant-brood!

Proph. Hie thee hence, and boast at home,
That never shall inquirer come
To break my iron-sleep again,
Till Lok[3] has burst his tenfold chain; 90
Never till substantial Night
Has re-assumed her ancient right;
Till, wrapp'd in flames, in ruin hurl'd,
Sinks the fabric of the world.

[Footnote 1: 'Norse Tongue:' to be found in Bartholinus, De Causis Contemnendae Mortis: Hafniae, 1689, quarto.]

[Footnote 2: 'Hela:' Niflheimr, the hell of the Gothic nations, consisted of nine worlds, to which were devoted all such as died of sickness, old age, or by any other means than in battle: over it presided Hela, the goddess of Death.]

[Footnote 3: 'Lok:' is the evil being, who continues in chains till the twilight of the gods approaches, when he shall break his bonds; the human race, the stars, and sun, shall disappear, the earth sink in the seas, and fire consume the skies: even Odin himself, and his kindred deities, shall perish.]

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IX.—THE DEATH OF HOEL.[1]

Had I but the torrent's might,
With headlong rage, and wild affright,
Upon Deira's[2] squadrons hurl'd,
To rush and sweep them from the world!
Too, too secure in youthful pride,
By them my friend, my Hoel, died,
Great Cian's son; of Madoc old
He ask'd no heaps of hoarded gold;
Alone in Nature's wealth array'd,
He ask'd and had the lovely maid. 10

To Cattræth's[3] vale, in glittering row,
Twice two hundred warriors go;
Every warrior's manly neck
Chains of regal honour deck,
Wreath'd in many a golden link:
From the golden cup they drink
Nectar that the bees produce,
Or the grape's ecstatic juice.
Flush'd with mirth and hope they burn:
But none from Cattræth's vale return, 20
Save Aeron brave and Conan strong,
—Bursting through the bloody throng—
And I, the meanest of them all,
That live to weep and sing their fall.

[Footnote 1: 'Hoel:' from the Welsh of Aneurim, styled 'The Monarch of the Bards.' He flourished about the time of Taliessin, A.D. 570. This ode is extracted from the Gododin.]

[Footnote 2: 'Deira:' a kingdom including the five northernmost counties of England.]

[Footnote 3: 'Cattræth:' a great battle lost by the ancient Britons.]

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X.—THE TRIUMPH OF OWEN:

A FRAGMENT FROM THE WELSH.

ADVERTISEMENT.—Owen succeeded his father Griffin in the Principality of North Wales, A.D. 1120: this battle was near forty years afterwards.

Owen's praise demands my song,
Owen swift, and Owen strong,
Fairest flower of Roderick's stem,
Gwyneth's^[1] shield and Britain's gem.
He nor heaps his brooded stores,
Nor on all profusely pours;
Lord of every regal art,
Liberal hand and open heart.

Big with hosts of mighty name,
Squadrons three against him came; 10
This the force of Eirin hiding;
Side by side as proudly riding
On her shadow long and gay
Lochlin^[2] ploughs the watery way;
There the Norman sails afar
Catch the winds and join the war;
Black and huge, along they sweep,
Burthens of the angry deep.

Dauntless on his native sands
The Dragon son^[3] of Mona stands; 20
In glittering arms and glory dress'd,
High he rears his ruby crest;
There the thundering strokes begin,
There the press and there the din:
Talymalfra's rocky shore
Echoing to the battle's roar!
Check'd by the torrent-tide of blood,
Backward Meniai rolls his flood;
While, heap'd his master's

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feet around,
Prostrate warriors gnaw the ground. 30
Where his glowing eye-balls turn,
Thousand banners round him burn;
Where he points his purple spear,
Hasty, hasty rout is there;
Marking, with indignant eye,
Fear to stop and Shame to fly:
There Confusion, Terror's child,
Conflict fierce, and Ruin wild,
Agony, that pants for breath,
Despair and honourable Death. 40

[Footnote 1: 'Gwyneth:' North Wales.]

[Footnote 2: 'Lochlin:' Denmark.]

[Footnote 3: 'Dragon son:' the Red Dragon is the device of Cadwalladar, which all his descendants bore on their banners.]

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XI.—FOR MUSIC.[1]

I.

'Hence, avaunt! ('tis holy ground,)
Comus and his midnight crew,
And Ignorance, with looks profound,
And dreaming Sloth, of pallid hue,
Mad Sedition's cry profane,
Servitude that hugs her chain,
Nor in these consecrated bowers,
Let painted Flattery hide her serpent-train in flowers;

CHORUS.

Nor Envy base, nor creeping Gain,
Dare the Muse's walk to stain, 10
While bright-eyed Science watches round:
Hence, away! 'tis holy ground.'

II.



From yonder realms of empyrean day
Bursts on my ear the indignant lay;
There sit the sainted sage, the bard divine,
The few whom Genius gave to shine
Through every unborn age and undiscover'd clime.
Rapt in celestial transport they,
Yet hither oft a glance from high
They send of tender sympathy, 20
To bless the place where on their opening soul
First the genuine ardour stole.
'Twas Milton struck the deep-toned shell,
And, as the choral warblings round him swell,
Meek Newton's self bends from his state sublime,
And nods his hoary head, and listens to the rhyme.

III.

Ye brown o'er-arching groves!
That Contemplation loves,
Where willowy Camus lingers with delight;
Oft at the blush of dawn 30
I trod your level lawn,
Oft wooed the gleam of Cynthia, silver-bright,
In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,
With Freedom by my side, and soft-eyed Melancholy.

IV.

But hark! the portals sound, and pacing forth,
With solemn steps and slow,
High potentates, and dames of royal birth,
And mitred fathers, in long orders go:
Great Edward,[2] with the Lilies on his brow
From haughty Gallia torn, 40
And sad Chatillon,[3] on her bridal morn,
That wept her bleeding love, and princely Clare,[4]
And Anjou's heroine,[5] and the paler Rose,[6]

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The rival of her crown, and of her woes,
And either Henry[7] there,
The murder'd saint, and the majestic lord
That broke the bonds of Rome,—
(Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,
Their human passions now no more,
Save Charity, that glows beyond the tomb,) 50
All that on Granta's fruitful plain
Rich streams of regal bounty pour'd,
And bade those awful fanes and turrets rise,
To hail their Fitzroy's festal morning come;
And thus they speak in soft accord
The liquid language of the skies:

V.

'What is grandeur, what is power?
Heavier toil, superior pain,
What the bright reward we gain?
The grateful memory of the good. 60
Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
The bee's collected treasures sweet,
Sweet Music's melting fall, but sweeter yet
The still small voice of Gratitude.'

VI.

Foremost, and leaning from her golden cloud,
The venerable Margaret[8] see!
'Welcome, my noble son!' she cries aloud,
'To this thy kindred train, and me:
Pleased, in thy lineaments we trace
A Tudor's[9] fire, a Beaufort's grace. 70
Thy liberal heart, thy judging eye,
The flower unheeded shall descry,
And bid it round Heaven's altars shed
The fragrance of its blushing head;
Shall raise from earth the latent gem
To glitter on the diadem.

VII.

'Lo! Granta waits to lead her blooming band;
Not obvious, not obtrusive, she
No vulgar praise, no venal incense flings;
Nor dares with courtly tongue refined 80
Profane thy inborn royalty of mind:
She reveres herself and thee.
With modest pride, to grace thy youthful brow,
The laureate wreath^[10] that Cecil wore she brings,
And to thy just, thy gentle hand
Submits the fasces of her sway;
While spirits blest above, and men below,
Join with glad voice the loud symphonious lay.

VIII.

'Through the wild waves, as they roar,
With watchful eye, and dauntless mien, 90
Thy steady course of honour keep,
Nor fear the rock, nor seek the shore:
The Star of Brunswick smiles serene,
And gilds the horrors of the deep.'

[Footnote 1: 'Music:' performed in the Senate-house, Cambridge, July 1, 1769, at the installation of his Grace, Augustus Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, Chancellor of the University.]

[Footnote 2: 'Great Edward.' Edward III., who added the Fleur-de-lis of France to the arms of England. He founded Trinity College.]

[Footnote 3: 'Chatillon:' Mary de Valentia, Countess of Pembroke, daughter of Guy de Chatillon, Comte de St Paul, in France, who lost her husband on the day of his marriage. She was the foundress of Pembroke College or Hall, under the name of Aula Marias de Valentia.]

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[Footnote 4; 'Clare:' Elizabeth de Burg, Countess of Clare, was wife of John de Burg, son and heir of the Earl of Ulster, and daughter of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, by Joan of Acres, daughter of Edward I.; hence the poet gives her the epithet of 'princely.' She founded Clare Hall.]

[Footnote 5: 'Anjou's heroine:' Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry VI., foundress of Queen's College.]

[Footnote 6: 'Rose:' Elizabeth Widville, wife of Henry IV. She added to the foundation of Margaret of Anjou.]

[Footnote 7: 'Either Henry:' Henry VI. and Henry VII., the former the founder of King's, the latter the greatest benefactor to Trinity College.]

[Footnote 8: 'Margaret:' Countess of Richmond and Derby, the mother of Henry VII., foundress of St John's and Christ's Colleges.]

[Footnote 9: 'Tudor:' the Countess was a Beaufort, and married to a Tudor; hence the application of this line to the Duke of Grafton, who claimed descent from both these families.]

[Footnote 10: 'Wreath:' Lord Treasurer Burleigh was Chancellor of the University in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.]

* * * * *

MISCELLANEOUS.

A LONG STORY.

ADVERTISEMENT.—Gray's 'Elegy,' previous to its publication, was handed about in MS., and had, amongst other admirers, the Lady Cobham, who resided in the mansion-house at Stoke-Pogeis. The performance inducing her to wish for the author's acquaintance, Lady Schaub and Miss Speed, then at her house, undertook to introduce her to it. These two ladies waited upon the author at his aunt's solitary habitation, where he at that time resided, and not finding him at home, they left a card behind them. Mr Gray, surprised at such a compliment, returned the visit; and as the beginning of this intercourse bore some appearance of romance, he gave the humorous and lively account of it which the 'Long Story' contains.

1 In Britain's isle, no matter where,
An ancient pile of building[1] stands:
The Huntingdons and Hattons there
Employ'd the power of fairy hands,



- 2 To raise the ceiling's fretted height,
Each pannel in achievements clothing,
Rich windows that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing.
- 3 Full oft within the spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
My grave Lord-Keeper[2] led the brawls:
The seal and maces danced before him.
- 4 His bushy beard and shoe-strings green,
His high-crown'd hat and satin doublet,
Moved the stout heart of England's Queen,
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.
- 5 What, in the very first beginning,
Shame of the versifying tribe!
Your history whither are you spinning?
Can you do nothing but describe?



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- 6 A house there is (and that's enough)
From whence one fatal morning issues
A brace of warriors, not in buff,
But rustling in their silks and tissues.
- 7 The first came *cap-a-pie* from France,
Her conquering destiny fulfilling,
Whom meaner beauties eye askance,
And vainly ape her art of killing.
- 8 The other Amazon kind Heaven
Had arm'd with spirit, wit, and satire;
But Cobham had the polish given,
And tipp'd her arrows with good nature.
- 9 To celebrate her eyes, her air—
Coarse panegyrics would but tease her;
Melissa is her *nom de guerre*;
Alas! who would not wish to please her!
- 10 With bonnet blue and capuchine,
And aprons long, they hid their armour;
And veil'd their weapons, bright and keen,
In pity to the country farmer.
- 11 Fame, in the shape of Mr P—t,
(By this time all the parish know it),
Had told that thereabouts there lurk'd
A wicked imp they call a Poet,
- 12 Who prowl'd the country far and near,
Bewitch'd the children of the peasants,
Dried up the cows, and lamed the deer,
And suck'd the eggs, and kill'd the pheasants.
- 13 My Lady heard their joint petition,
Swore by her coronet and ermine,
She'd issue out her high commission
To rid the manor of such vermin.
- 14 The heroines undertook the task;
Through lanes unknown, o'er stiles they ventured,
Rapp'd at the door, nor stay'd to ask,
But bounce into the parlour enter'd.



- 15 The trembling family they daunt;
They flirt, they sing, they laugh, they tattle,
Rummage his mother, pinch his aunt,
And up-stairs in a whirlwind rattle.
- 16 Each hole and cupboard they explore,
Each creek and cranny of his chamber,
Run hurry-scurry round the floor,
And o'er the bed and tester clamber;
- 17 Into the drawers and china pry,
Papers and books, a huge imbroglio!
Under a tea-cup he might lie,
Or creased like dog's-ears in a folio!
- 18 On the first marching of the troops,
The Muses, hopeless of his pardon,
Convey'd him underneath their hoops
To a small closet in the garden.
- 19 So Rumour says; (who will believe?)
But that they left the door a-jar,
Where safe, and laughing in his sleeve,
He heard the distant din of war.
- 20 Short was his joy: he little knew
The power of magic was no fable;
Out of the window, whisk! they flew,
But left a spell upon the table.
- 21 The words too eager to unriddle,
The Poet felt a strange disorder;
Transparent birdlime form'd the middle,
And chains invisible the border.



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- 22 So cunning was the apparatus,
The powerful pothooks did so move him,
That will-he, nill-he, to the great house
He went as if the devil drove him.
- 23 Yet on his way (no sign of grace,
For folks in fear are apt to pray)
To Phoebus he preferr'd his case,
And begg'd his aid that dreadful day.
- 24 The godhead would have back'd his quarrel:
But with a blush, on recollection,
Own'd that his quiver and his laurel
'Gainst four such eyes were no protection.
- 25 The court was set, the culprit there;
Forth from their gloomy mansions creeping,
The Lady Janes and Joans repair,
And from the gallery stand peeping:
- 26 Such as in silence of the night
Come sweep along some winding entry,
(Styack[3] has often seen the sight)
Or at the chapel-door stand sentry;
- 27 In peaked hoods and mantles tarnish'd,
Sour visages enough to scare ye,
High dames of honour once that garnish'd
The drawing-room of fierce Queen Mary!
- 28 The peeress comes: the audience stare,
And doff their hats with due submission;
She curtsies, as she takes her chair,
To all the people of condition.
- 29 The Bard with many an artless fib
Had in imagination fenced him,
Disproved the arguments of Squib,[4]
And all that Grooms[5] could urge against him.
- 30 But soon his rhetoric forsook him,
When he the solemn hall had seen;
A sudden fit of ague shook him;
He stood as mute as poor Maclean.[6]



- 31 Yet something he was heard to mutter,
How in the park, beneath an old tree,
(Without design to hurt the butter,
Or any malice to the poultry,)
- 32 He once or twice had penn'd a sonnet,
Yet hoped that he might save his bacon;
Numbers would give their oaths upon it,
He ne'er was for a conjuror taken.
- 33 The ghostly prudes, with haggard[7] face,
Already had condemn'd the sinner:
My Lady rose, and with a grace—
She smiled, and bid him come to dinner,
- 34 'Jesu-Maria! Madam Bridget,
Why, what can the Viscountess mean?'
Cried the square hoods, in woeful fidget;
'The times are alter'd quite and clean!
- 35 'Decorum's turn'd to mere civility!
Her air and all her manners show it:
Commend me to her affability!
Speak to a commoner and poet!

[Here 500 stanzas are lost.]

- 36 And so God save our noble king,
And guard us from long-winded lubbers,
That to eternity would sing,
And keep my lady from her rubbers.

[Footnote 1: 'Pile of building:' the mansion-house at Stoke-Pogeis, then in the possession of Viscountess Cobham. The style of building which we now call Queen Elizabeth's, is here admirably described, both with regard to its beauties and defects; and the third and fourth stanzas delineate the fantastic manners of her time with equal truth and humour. The house formerly belonged to the Earls of Huntingdon and the family of Hatton.]

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[Footnote 2: 'Lord-Keeper:' Sir Christopher Hatton, promoted by Queen Elizabeth for his graceful person and fine dancing. Brawls were a sort of a figure-dance then in vogue.]

[Footnote 3: 'Styack:' the house-keeper.]

[Footnote 4: 'Squib:' the steward.']

[Footnote 5: 'Grooms:' of the chamber.]

[Footnote 6: 'Maclean:' a famous highwayman, hanged the week before.]

[Footnote 7: 'Hagged:' i. e., the face of a witch or hag.]

* * * * *

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

- 1 The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.
- 2 Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:
- 3 Save that, from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.
- 4 Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.
- 5 The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.



6 For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees, the envied kiss to share.

7 Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

8 Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

9 The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

10 Nor you, ye Proud! impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where, through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

11 Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?



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- 12 Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.
- 13 But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of Time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.
- 14 Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.
- 15 Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.
- 16 The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,
- 17 Their lot forbade; nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of Mercy on mankind,
- 18 The struggling pangs of conscious Truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous Shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.
- 19 Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,[1]
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.
- 20 Yet e'en these bones, from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.



21 Their name, their years, spelt by the unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply,
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

22 For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

23 On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

24 For thee, who, mindful of the unhonour'd dead,
Dost in those lines their artless tale relate,
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

25 Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
'Oft have we seen him, at the peep of dawn,
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

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26 'There, at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic root so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

27 'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies, he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful, wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

28 'One morn I miss'd him on the accustom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;
Another came, nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood, was he:

29 'The next, with dirges due, in sad array,
Slow through the churchway-path we saw him borne:
Approach, and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn:'[2]

THE EPITAPH.

30 Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown:
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

31 Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to misery all he had—a tear;
He gain'd from Heaven—'twas all he wish'd—a friend.

32 No further seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

[Footnote 1: This part of the elegy differs from the first copy. The following stanza was excluded with the other alterations:—

Hark! how the sacred calm, that breathes around,
Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease,
In still small accents whispering from the ground
A grateful earnest of eternal peace.]

[Footnote 2: In early editions, the following stanza occurred:—

There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen, are showers of violets found;
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.]

* * * * *

EPITAPH ON MRS JANE CLARKE.[1]

Lo! where this silent marble weeps,
A friend, a wife, a mother sleeps;
A heart, within whose sacred cell
The peaceful Virtues loved to dwell:
Affection warm, and faith sincere,
And soft humanity were there.
In agony, in death resign'd,
She felt the wound she left behind.
Her infant image here below
Sits smiling on a father's woe:
Whom what awaits while yet he strays
Along the lonely vale of days?
A pang, to secret sorrow dear,
A sigh, an unavailing tear,
Till time shall every grief remove
With life, with memory, and with love.

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[Footnote 1: 'Mrs Jane Clarke' this lady, the wife of Dr Clarke, physician at Epsom, died April 27, 1757, and is buried in the church of Beckenham, Kent.]

* * * * *

STANZAS,

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW OF THE SEAT AND RUINS AT
KINGSGATE, IN KENT, 1766.

- 1 Old, and abandon'd by each venal friend,
Here Holland took the pious resolution,
To smuggle a few years, and strive to mend
A broken character and constitution.
- 2 On this congenial spot he fix'd his choice;
Earl Goodwin trembled for his neighbouring sand;
Here sea-gulls scream, and cormorants rejoice,
And mariners, though shipwreck'd, fear to land.
- 3 Here reign the blustering North, and blasting East,
No tree is heard to whisper, bird to sing;
Yet Nature could not furnish out the feast,
Art he invokes new terrors still to bring.
- 4 Now mouldering fanes and battlements arise,
Turrets and arches nodding to their fall,
Unpeopled monasteries delude our eyes,
And mimic desolation covers all.
- 5 'Ah!' said the sighing peer, 'had Bute been true,
Nor C—'s, nor B—d's promises been vain,
Far other scenes than this had graced our view,
And realised the horrors which we feign.
- 6 'Purged by the sword, and purified by fire,
Then had we seen proud London's hated walls:
Owls should have hooted in St Peter's choir,
And foxes stunk and litter'd in St Paul's.'

* * * * *

TRANSLATION FROM STATIUS.



Third in the labours of the disc came on,
With sturdy step and slow, Hippomedon;
Artful and strong he poised the well-known weight,
By Phlegyas warn'd, and fired by Mnestheus' fate,
That to avoid and this to emulate.
His vigorous arm he tried before he flung,
Braced all his nerves, and every sinew strung,
Then with a tempest's whirl and wary eye
Pursued his cast, and hurl'd the orb on high;
The orb on high, tenacious of its course, 10
True to the mighty arm that gave it force,
Far overleaps all bound, and joys to see
Its ancient lord secure of victory:
The theatre's green height and woody wall
Tremble ere it precipitates its fall;
The ponderous mass sinks in the cleaving ground,
While vales and woods and echoing hills rebound.
As when, from Aetna's smoking summit broke,
The eyeless Cyclops heaved the craggy rock,
Where Ocean frets beneath the dashing oar, 20
And parting surges round the vessel roar;
'Twas there he aim'd the meditated harm,
And scarce Ulysses 'scaped his giant arm.
A tiger's pride the victor bore away,
With native spots and artful labour gay,
A shining border round the margin roll'd,
And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold.

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CAMBRIDGE, May 8, 1736.

* * * * *

GRAY ON HIMSELF.

Too poor for a bribe, and too proud to importune,
He had not the method of making a fortune;
Could love and could hate, so was thought something odd;
No very great wit, he believed in a God;
A post or a pension he did not desire,
But left church and state to Charles Townshend and Squire.

* * * * *

END OF GRAY'S POEMS.

* * * * *

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

TOBIAS SMOLLETT.

THE

LIFE OF TOBIAS SMOLLETT.

The combination of a great writer and a small poet, in one and the same person, is not uncommon. With not a few, while other, and severer branches of study are the laborious task of the day, poetry is the slipshod amusement of the evening. Dr Parr calls Johnson *probabilis poeta*—words which seem to convey the notion that the author of “The Rambler,” who was great on other fields, was in that of poetry only respectable. This term is more applicable to Smollett, whose poems discover only in part those keen, vigorous, and original powers which enabled him to indite “Roderick Random” and “Humphrey Clinker.” Yet the author of “Independence,” and “The Tears of Scotland,” must not be excluded from the list of British poets—an honour to which much even of his prose has richly entitled him.

The incidents in Smollett's history are not very numerous, and some of them are narrated, under faint disguises, with inimitable vivacity and *vraisemblance* in his own fictions. Tobias George Smollett was born in Dalquhurn House, near the village of

Renton, Dumbartonshire, in 1721. His father, a younger son of Sir James Smollett of Bonhill, having died early, the education of the poet devolved on his grandfather. The scenery of his native place was well calculated to inspire his early genius. It is one of the most beautiful regions in Scotland. A fine hollow vale, pervaded by the river Leven, and surrounded by rich woodlands and bold hills, stretches up from Dumbarton, with its double peaks and ancient castle, to the magnificent Loch Lomond; and in one of the loops of this winding vale was the great novelist born and bred. He called his native region, in "Humphrey Clinker," the "Arcadia of Scotland," and has sung the Leven in one of his small poems. He was sent to the Grammar School of Dumbarton, and thence to Glasgow College. He was subsequently placed apprentice to one M. Gordon, a medical practitioner in Glasgow; and from thence, according to some of his biographers, he proceeded to study medicine in Edinburgh. When he was about nineteen years of age, his grandfather expired, without having made any provision for him; and he was compelled,

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in 1739, to repair to London, carrying with him a tragedy entitled "The Regicide,"—the subject being the assassination of James the First of Scotland,—which he had written the year before, and which he in vain sought to get presented at the theatres. He had letters of introduction to some eminent literary characters, who, however, either could not or would not do anything for him; and he found no better situation than that of surgeon's mate in an eighty-gun ship. He continued in the navy for six or seven years, and was present at the disastrous siege of Carthage, in 1741, which he has described in a Compendium of Voyages he compiled in 1756, and with still more vigour in "Roderick Random." His long acquaintance with the sea furnished ample materials for his genius, although it did not improve his opinion of human nature. Disgusted with the service, he quitted it in the West Indies, and lived for some time in Jamaica. Here he became acquainted with Miss Lascelles, a beautiful lady whom he afterwards married. She sat for the portrait of Narcissa, in "Roderick Random."

In 1746 he returned to England. He found the country ringing with indignation at the cruelties inflicted by Cumberland on the Highland rebels, and he caught and crystalised the prevalent emotion in his spirited lyric, "The Tears of Scotland." He published the same year his "Advice,"—a satirical poem upon things in general, and the public men of the day in particular. He wrote also an opera entitled "Alceste" for Covent Garden; but owing to a dispute with the manager, it was neither acted nor printed. In 1747 he produced "Reproof," the second part of "Advice,"—a poem which breathes the same manly indignation at the abuses, evils, and public charlatans of the day. This year also he married Miss Lascelles, by whom he expected a fortune of three thousand pounds. This sum, however, was never fully realised; and his generous housekeeping, and the expenses of a litigation to which he was compelled, in connection with Miss Lascelles' money, embarrassed his circumstances, and, much to the advantage of the world, drove him to literature. In 1748, he gave to the world his novel of "Roderick Random,"—counted by many the masterpiece of his genius. It brought him in both fame and emolument. In 1749 he published, by subscription, his unfortunate tragedy, "The Regicide." In 1750 he went to Paris, and shortly after wrote his "Adventures of Peregrine Pickle," including the memoirs of the notorious Lady Vane—the substance of which he got from herself, and which added greatly to the popularity of the work. Notwithstanding the success he met with as a novelist, he was anxious to prosecute his original profession of medicine; and having procured from a foreign university the degree of M.D., he commenced to practise physic in Chelsea, but without success. He wrote, however, an essay "On the External Use of Water," in which he seems to have partly anticipated the method of the cold-water cure.

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In 1753 he published his “Adventures of Count Fathom;” and, two years later, encouraged by a liberal subscription, he issued a translation of “Don Quixote,” in two quarto volumes. While this work was printing, he went down to Scotland, visited his old scenes and old companions, and was received everywhere with enthusiasm. The most striking incident, however, in this journey was his interview with his mother, then residing in Scotston, near Peebles. He was introduced to her as a stranger gentleman from the West Indies; and, in order to retain his incognita, he endeavoured to maintain a serious and frowning countenance. While his mother, however, continued to regard him steadfastly, he could not forbear smiling; and she instantly sprang from her seat, threw her arms round his neck, and cried out, “Ah, my son, I have found you at last! Your old roguish smile has betrayed you.”

Returning to England, he resumed his literary avocations. He became the editor of the *Critical Review*—an office, of all others, least fitted to his testy and irritable temperament. This was in 1756. He next published the “Compendium of Voyages,” in seven volumes, 12mo. In 1757 he wrote a popular afterpiece, entitled “The Reprisals; or, the Tars of England;” and in 1758 appeared his “Complete History of England,” in four volumes, quarto,—a work said to have been compiled in the almost incredibly short time of fourteen months. It became instantly popular, although distinguished by no real historical quality, except a clear and lively style.

An attack on Admiral Knowles in the *Critical Review* greatly incensed the Admiral; and when he prosecuted the journal, Smollett stepped forward and avowed himself the author. He was sentenced to a fine of £100, and to three months’ imprisonment. During his confinement in King’s Bench, he composed the “Adventures of Sir Lancelot Greaves,” which appeared first in detached numbers of the *British Magazine*, and was afterwards published separately in 1762. About this time, his busy pen was also occupied with histories of France, Italy, Germany, &c., and a continuation of his English History—all compilations—and some of them exceedingly unworthy of his genius. He became an ardent friend and supporter of Lord Bute, and started *The Briton*, a weekly paper, in his defence; which gave rise to the *North Briton*, by Wilkes. In our Life of Churchill, we have recounted his quarrel with that poet, and the chastisement inflicted on Smollett in “The Apology to the Critical Reviewers.”

In 1763 he lost his only daughter, a girl of fifteen. This event threw him into deep despondency, and seriously affected his health. He went to France and Italy for two years; and on his return, in 1766, published two volumes of Travels—full of querulous and captious remarks—for which Sterne satirised him, under the name of Smelfungus. The same year he again visited Scotland. In 1767 he published

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his “Adventures of an Atom,”—a political romance, displaying, under Japanese names, the different parties of Great Britain. A recurrence of ill health drove him back to Italy in 1770. At Monte Nuovo, near Leghorn, he wrote his delightful “Humphrey Clinker.” This was his last work. He died at Leghorn on the 21st October 1771, in the fifty-first year of his age. His widow erected a plain monument to his memory, with an inscription by Dr Armstrong. In 1774 a Tuscan monument was erected on the banks of the Leven by his cousin, James Smollett, Esq., of Bonhill. As his wife was left in poor circumstances, the tragedy of “Venice Preserved” was acted at Edinburgh for her benefit, and the money remitted to Italy.

Smollett, for variety of powers, and indefatigable industry, has seldom been surpassed. He was a politician, a poet, a physician, a historian, a translator, a writer of travels, a dramatist, a novelist, a writer on medical subjects, and a miscellaneous author. It is only, however, as a novelist and a poet that he has any claims to the admiration of posterity. His history survives solely because it is usually bound up with Hume’s. His translation of “Don Quixote” has been eclipsed by after and more accurate versions. His “Tour to Italy” is a succession of asthmatic gasps and groans. His “Regicide”, and other plays, are entirely forgotten. So also are his critical, medical, political, and miscellaneous effusions.

In fiction he is undoubtedly a great original. He had no model, and has had no imitator. His qualities as a novel-writer are rapidity of narrative, variety of incident, ease of style, graphic description, and an exquisite eye for the humours, peculiarities, and absurdities of character and life. In language he is generally careless, but whenever a great occasion occurs, he rises to meet it, and writes with dignity, correctness, and power. His sea-characters, such as Bowling, and his characters of low-life, such as Strap, have never been excelled. His tone of morals is always low, and often offensively coarse. In wit, constructiveness, and general style, he is inferior to Fielding; but surpasses him in interest, ease, variety, and humour, “Roderick Random” is the most popular and bustling of his tales. “Peregrine Pickle” is the filthiest and least agreeable; its humours are forced and exaggerated, and the sea-characters seem caricatures of those in “Roderick Random;” just as Norna of the Fitful Head, and Magdalene Graeme, are caricatures of Meg Merriless. “Sir Lancelot Greaves” is a tissue of trash, redeemed only here and there by traits of humour. “The Adventures of an Atom” we never read. “Humphrey Clinker” is the most delightful novel, with the exception of the Waverley series, in the English language. “Ferdinand, Count Fathom,” contains much that is disgusting, but parts of it surpass all the rest in originality and profundity. We refer especially to the description of the pretended English

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Squire in Paris, who *bubbles* the great *bubbler* of the tale; to Count Fathom's address to Britain, when he reaches her shores,—a piece of exquisite mock-heroic irony; to the narrative of the seduction in the west of England; and to the matchless robber-scene in the forest,—a passage in which one knows not whether more to admire the thrilling interest of the incidents, or the eloquence and power of the language. It is a scene which Scott has never surpassed, nor, except in the cliff-scene in the "Antiquary," and, perhaps, the barn-scene in the "Heart of Midlothian," ever equalled.

Smollett's poetry need not detain us long. In his twin satires, "Advice" and "Reproof," you see rather the will to wound than the power to strike. There are neither the burnished compression, and polished, pointed malice of Pope, nor the gigantic force and vehement fury of Churchill. His "Tears of Scotland" is not thoroughly finished, but has some delicate and beautiful strokes. "Leven Water" is sweet and murmuring as that stream itself. His "Ode to Independence," as we have said elsewhere, "should have been written by Burns. How that poet's lips must have watered, as he repeated the line

'Lord of the lion-heart and eagle-eye,'

and remembered he was not their author! He said he would have given ten pounds to have written 'Donochthead'—he would have given ten times ten, if, poor fellow! he had had them, to have written the 'Ode to Independence'—although, in his 'Vision of Liberty,' he has matched Smollett on his own ground." Grander lines than the one we have quoted above, and than the following—

"A goddess violated brought thee forth,"

are not to be found in literature. Round this last one, the whole ode seems to turn as on a pivot, and it alone had been sufficient to stamp Smollett a man of lofty poetic genius.

SMOLLETT'S POEMS

ADVICE: A SATIRE.

—Sed podice levi
Caeduntur tumidae, medico ridente, mariscae.
O procures! censore opus est, an haruspice nobis?

JUVENAL.



——Nam quis
Peccandi finem posuit sibi? quando recepit
Ejectum semel atterita de fronte ruborem?

Ibid.

POET.

Enough, enough; all this we knew before;
'Tis infamous, I grant it, to be poor:
And who, so much to sense and glory lost,
Will hug the curse that not one joy can boast?
From the pale hag, oh! could I once break loose,
Divorced, all hell should not re-tie the noose!
Not with more care shall H— avoid his wife,
Nor Cope[1] fly swifter, lashing for his life,
Than I to leave the meagre fiend behind.

FRIEND.

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Exert your talents; Nature, ever kind, 10
Enough for happiness bestows on all;
'Tis Sloth or Pride that finds her gifts too small.
Why sleeps the Muse?—is there no room for praise,
When such bright constellations blaze?
When sage Newcastle[2], abstinently great,
Neglects his food to cater for the state;
And Grafton[3], towering Atlas of the throne,
So well rewards a genius like his own:
Granville and Bath[4] illustrious, need I name,
For sober dignity, and spotless fame; 20
Or Pitt, the unshaken Abdiel yet unsung:
Thy candour, Chomdeley! and thy truth, O Younge!

POET.

The advice is good; the question only, whether These names and virtues ever dwelt together? But what of that? the more the bard shall claim, Who can create as well as cherish fame. But one thing more,—how loud must I repeat, To rouse the engaged attention of the great,—Amused, perhaps, with C—'s prolific hum[5], Or rapt amidst the transports of a drum;[6] 30 While the grim porter watches every door, Stern foe to tradesmen, poets, and the poor, The Hesperian dragon not more fierce and fell, Nor the gaunt growling janitor of Hell? Even Atticus (so wills the voice of Fate) Enshrines in clouded majesty his state; Nor to the adoring crowd vouchsafes regard, Though priests adore, and every priest a bard. Shall I then follow with the venal tribe, And on the threshold the base mongrel bribe? 40 Bribe him to feast my mute imploring eye With some proud lord, who smiles a gracious lie! A lie to captivate my heedless youth, Degrade my talents, and debauch my truth; While, fool'd with hope, revolves my joyless day, And friends, and fame, and fortune, fleet away; Till, scandal, indigence, and scorn my lot, The dreary jail entombs me, where I rot! Is there, ye varnish'd ruffians of the state! Not one among the millions whom ye cheat, 50 Who, while he totters on the brink of woe, Dares, ere he falls, attempt the avenging blow,—A steady blow, his languid soul to feast, And rid his country of one curse at least?

FRIEND.

What! turn assassin?

POET.

Let the assassin bleed:
My fearless verse shall justify the deed.
'Tis he who lures the unpractised mind astray,
Then leaves the wretch, to misery a prey;

Perverts the race of Virtue just begun,
And stabs the Public in her ruin'd son. 60

FRIEND.

Heavens! how you rail; the man's consumed by spite!
If Lockman's fate^[7] attends you when you write,
Let prudence more propitious arts inspire;
The lower still you crawl, you'll climb the higher.
Go then, with every supple virtue stored,
And thrive, the favour'd valet of my lord.
Is that denied? a boon more humble crave.

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And minister to him who serves a slave;
Be sure you fasten on promotion's scale,
Even if you seize some footman by the tail: 70
The ascent is easy, and the prospect clear,
From the smirch'd scullion to the embroider'd peer.
The ambitious drudge preferr'd, postilion rides,
Advanced again, the chair benighted guides;
Here doom'd, if Nature strung his sinewy frame,
The slave, perhaps, of some insatiate dame;
But if, exempted from the Herculean toil,
A fairer field awaits him, rich with spoil,
There shall he shine, with mingling honours bright,
His master's pathic, pimp, and parasite; 80
Then strut a captain, if his wish be war,
And grasp, in hope, a truncheon and a star:
Or if the sweets of peace his soul allure,
Bask at his ease, in some warm sinecure;
His fate in consul, clerk, or agent vary,
Or cross the seas, an envoy's secretary;
Composed of falsehood, ignorance, and pride,
A prostrate sycophant shall rise a Lloyd;
And, won from kennels to the impure embrace,
Accomplish'd Warren triumph o'er disgrace. 90

POET.

Eternal infamy his name surround,
Who planted first that vice on British ground!
A vice that, spite of sense and nature, reigns,
And poisons genial love, and manhood stains!
Pollio! the pride of science and its shame,
The Muse weeps o'er thee, while she brands thy name!
Abhorrent views that prostituted groom,
The indecent grotto, or polluted dome!
There only may the spurious passion glow,
Where not one laurel decks the caitiff's brow, 100
Obscene with crimes avow'd, of every dye,
Corruption, lust, oppression, perjury.
Let Chardin[8], with a chaplet round his head,
The taste of Maro and Anacreon plead,



'Sir, Flaccus knew to live as well as write,
And kept, like me, two boys array'd in white;
Worthy to feel that appetite of fame
Which rivals Horace only in his shame!
Let Isis^[9] wail in murmurs as she runs,
Her tempting fathers, and her yielding sons; 110
While dulness screens the failings of the Church,
Nor leaves one sliding Rabbi in the lurch:
Far other raptures let the breast contain,
Where heaven-born taste and emulation reign.

FRIEND.

Shall not a thousand virtues, then, atone us
In thy strict censure for the breach of one?
If Bubo keeps a catamite or whore,
His bounty feeds the beggar at his door:
And though no mortal credits Curio's word,
A score of lacqueys fatten at his board: 120
To Christian meekness sacrifice thy spleen,
And strive thy neighbour's weaknesses to screen.

POET.



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Scorn'd be the bard, and wither'd all his fame,
Who wounds a brother weeping o'er his shame!
But if an impious wretch, with frantic pride,
Throws honour, truth, and decency aside;
If not by reason awed, nor check'd by fears,
He counts his glories from the stains he bears,
The indignant Muse to Virtue's aid shall rise,
And fix the brand of infamy on vice. 130
What if, aroused at his imperious call,
An hundred footsteps echo through his hall,
And, on high columns rear'd, his lofty dome
Proclaims the united art of Greece and Rome.
What though whole hecatombs his crew regale,
And each dependant slumbers o'er his ale,
While the remains, through mouths unnumber'd pass'd,
Indulge the beggar and the dogs at last:
Say, friend, is it benevolence of soul,
Or pompous vanity, that prompts the whole? 140
These sons of sloth, who by profusion thrive,
His pride inveigled from the public hive:
And numbers pine in solitary woe,
Who furnish'd out this phantasy of show.
When silent misery assail'd his eyes,
Did e'er his throbbing bosom sympathise?
Or his extensive charity pervade
To those who languish in the barren shade,
Where oft, by want and modesty suppress'd,
The bootless talent warms the lonely breast? 150
No! petrified by dulness and disdain,
Beyond the feeling of another's pain,
The tear of pity ne'er bedew'd his eye,
Nor his lewd bosom felt the social sigh!

FRIEND.

Alike to thee his virtue or his vice,
If his hand liberal owns thy merit's price.

POET.

Sooner in hopeless anguish would I mourn,
Than owe my fortune to the man I scorn!
What new resource?

FRIEND.

A thousand yet remain,
That bloom with honours, or that teem with gain: 160
These arts—are they beneath—beyond thy care?
Devote thy studies to the auspicious fair:
Of truth divested, let thy tongue supply
The hinted slander, and the whisper'd lie;
All merit mock, all qualities depress,
Save those that grace the excelling patroness;
Trophies to her on others' follies raise,
And, heard with joy, by defamation praise;
To this collect each faculty of face,
And every feat perform of sly grimace; 170
Let the grave sneer sarcastic speak thee shrewd;
The smutty joke ridiculously lewd;
And the loud laugh, through all its changes rung,
Applaud the abortive sallies of her tongue;
Enroll'd a member in the sacred list,
Soon shalt thou sharp in company at whist;
Her midnight rites and revels regulate,
Priest of her love, and demon of her hate.

POET.

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But say, what recompense for all this waste
Of honour, truth, attention, time, and taste? 180
To shine, confess'd, her zany and her tool,
And fall by what I rose—low ridicule?
Again shall Handel raise his laurell'd brow,
Again shall harmony with rapture glow;
The spells dissolve, the combination breaks,
And Punch no longer Frasi's rival squeaks:
Lo! Russell[10] falls a sacrifice to whim,
And starts amazed, in Newgate, from his dream:
With trembling hands implores their promised aid,
And sees their favour like a vision fade! 190
Is this, ye faithless Syrens!—this the joy
To which your smiles the unwary wretch decoy?
Naked and shackled, on the pavement prone,
His mangled flesh devouring from the bone;
Rage in his heart, distraction in his eye,
Behold, inhuman hags! your minion lie!
Behold his gay career to ruin run,
By you seduced, abandon'd, and undone!
Rather in garret pent, secure from harm,
My Muse with murders shall the town alarm; 200
Or plunge in politics with patriot zeal,
And snarl like Guthrie[11] for the public weal,
Than crawl an insect in a beldame's power,
And dread the crush of caprice every hour!

FRIEND.

'Tis well; enjoy that petulance of style,
And, like the envious adder, lick the file:
What, though success will not attend on all?
Who bravely dares must sometimes risk a fall.
Behold the bounteous board of Fortune spread;
Each weakness, vice, and folly yields thee bread, 210
Would'st thou with prudent condescension strive
On the long settled terms of life to thrive.

POET.

What! join the crew that pilfer one another,
Betray my friend, and persecute my brother;
Turn usurer, o'er cent. per cent. to brood,
Or quack, to feed like fleas on human blood?



FRIEND.

Or if thy soul can brook the gilded curse,
Some changeling heiress steal—

POET.

Why not a purse?
Two things I dread—my conscience and the law.

FRIEND.

How? dread a mumbling bear without a claw? 220
Nor this, nor that, is standard right or wrong,
Till minted by the mercenary tongue;
And what is conscience but a fiend of strife,
That chills the joys, and damps the scenes of life,
The wayward child of Vanity and Fear,
The peevish dam of Poverty and Care?
Unnumber'd woes engender in the breast
That entertains the rude, ungrateful guest.

POET.

Hail, sacred power! my glory and my guide!
Fair source of mental peace, whate'er betide! 230
Safe in thy shelter, let disaster roll
Eternal hurricanes around my soul:
My soul serene amidst the storms shall reign,
And smile to see their fury burst in vain!

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FRIEND.

Too coy to flatter, and too proud to serve,
Thine be the joyless dignity to starve.

POET.

No;—thanks to discord, war shall be my friend;
And mortal rage heroic courage lend
To pierce the gleaming squadron of the foe,
And win renown by some distinguish'd blow. 240

FRIEND.

Renown! ay, do—unkennel the whole pack
Of military cowards on thy back.
What difference, say, 'twixt him who bravely stood,
And him who sought the bosom of the wood?[12]
Envenom'd calumny the first shall brand;
The last enjoy a ribbon and command.

POET.

If such be life, its wretches I deplore,
And long to quit the inhospitable shore.

[Footnote 1: 'Cope': a general famous for an expeditious retreat, though not quite so deliberate as that of the ten thousand Greeks from Persia; having unfortunately forgot to bring his army along with him.]

[Footnote 2: 'Newcastle:' alluding to the philosophical contempt which this great personage manifested for the sensual delights of the stomach.]

[Footnote 3: 'Grafton': this noble peer, remarkable for sublimity of parts, by virtue of his office (Lord Chamberlain) conferred the laureate on Colley Cibber, Esq., a delectable bard, whose character has already employed, together with his own, the greatest pens of the age.]

[Footnote 4: 'Granville and Bath': two noblemen famous in their day for nothing more than their fortitude in bearing the scorn and reproach of their country.]

[Footnote 5: 'Prolific hum': this alludes to a phenomenon, not more strange than true, —the person here meant having actually laid upwards of forty eggs, as several physicians and fellows of the Royal Society can attest: one of whom, we hear, has

undertaken the incubation, and will no doubt favour the world with an account of his success.]

[Footnote 6: 'Drum': this is a riotous assembly of fashionable people, of both sexes, at a private house, consisting of some hundreds: not unaptly styled a drum, from the noise and emptiness of the entertainment. There are also drum-major, rout, tempest, and hurricane, differing only in degrees of multitude and uproar, as the significant name of each declares.]

[Footnote 7: 'Lockman's fate': to be little read, and less approved.]

[Footnote 8: 'Chardin': this genial knight wore at his own banquet a garland of flowers, in imitation of the ancients; and kept two rosy boys robed in white, for the entertainment of his guests.]

[Footnote 9: 'Isis': in allusion to the unnatural orgies said to be solemnised on the banks of this river; particularly at one place, where a much greater sanctity of morals and taste might be expected.]

[Footnote 10: 'Russell:' a famous mimic and singer, ruined by the patronage of certain ladies of quality.]

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[Footnote 11: 'Guthrie:' a scribbler of all work in that age.]

[Footnote 12: 'Bosom of the wood:' this last line relates to the behaviour of the Hanoverian general in the battle of Dettingen.]

* * * * *

REPROOF: A SATIRE.

POET.

Howe'er I turn, or wheresoe'er I tread,
This giddy world still rattles round my head!
I pant for silence e'en in this retreat—
Good Heaven! what demon thunders at the gate?

FRIEND.

In vain you strive, in this sequester'd nook,
To shroud you from an injured friend's rebuke.

POET.

An injured friend! who challenges the name?
If you, what title justifies the claim?
Did e'er your heart o'er my affliction grieve,
Your interest prop me, or your praise relieve? 10
Or could my wants my soul so far subdue,
That in distress she crawl'd for aid to you?
But let us grant the indulgence e'er so strong;
Display without reserve the imagined wrong:
Among your kindred have I kindled strife,
Deflower'd your daughter, or debauch'd your wife;
Traduced your credit, bubbled you at game;
Or soil'd with infamous reproach your name?

FRIEND.

No: but your cynic vanity (you'll own)
Exposed my private counsel to the town. 20

POET.

Such fair advice 'twere pity sure to lose:
I grant I printed it for public use.



FRIEND.

Yes, season'd with your own remarks between,
Inflamed with so much virulence of spleen
That the mild town (to give the devil his due)
Ascribed the whole performance to a Jew.

POET.

Jews, Turks, or Pagans—hallow'd be the mouth
That teems with moral zeal and dauntless truth!
Prove that my partial strain adopts one lie,
No penitent more mortified than I; 30
Not e'en the wretch in shackles doom'd to groan,
Beneath the inhuman scoffs of Williamson.[1]

FRIEND.

Hold—let us see this boasted self-denial—
The vanquish'd knight[2] has triumph'd in his trial.

POET.

What then?

FRIEND.

 Your own sarcastic verse unsay,
That brands him as a trembling runaway.

POET.

With all my soul;—the imputed charge rehearse;
I'll own my error and expunge my verse.
Come, come, howe'er the day was lost or won,
The world allows the race was fairly run. 40
But, lest the truth too naked should appear,
A robe of fable shall the goddess wear:
When sheep were subject to the lion's reign,
E'er man acquired dominion o'er the plain,
Voracious wolves, fierce rushing from the rocks,
Devour'd without control the unguarded flocks;

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The sufferers, crowding round the royal cave,
Their monarch's pity and protection crave:
Not that they wanted valour, force, or arms,
To shield their lambs from danger and alarms; 50
A thousand rams, the champions of the fold,
In strength of horn and patriot virtue bold,
Engaged in firm association stood,
Their lives devoted to the public good:
A warlike chieftain was their sole request,
To marshal, guide, instruct, and rule the rest.
Their prayer was heard, and, by consent of all,
A courtier ape appointed general.
He went, he led; arranged the battle stood,
The savage foe came pouring like a flood; 60
Then Pug, aghast, fled swifter than the wind,
Nor deign'd in threescore miles to look behind,
While every band fled orders bleat in vain,
And fall in slaughter'd heaps upon the plain.
The scared baboon, (to cut the matter short)
With all his speed, could not outrun report;
And, to appease the clamours of the nation,
'Twas fit his case should stand examination.

The board was named—each worthy took his place,
All senior members of the horned race; 70
The wedder, goat, ram, elk, and ox were there,
And a grave hoary stag possess'd the chair.
The inquiry past, each in his turn began
The culprit's conduct variously to scan.
At length the sage uprear'd his awful crest,
And, pausing, thus his fellow chiefs address'd:
'If age, that from this head its honours stole,
Hath not impair'd the functions of my soul,
But sacred wisdom, with experience bought,
While this weak frame decays, matures my thought, 80
The important issue of this grand debate
May furnish precedent for your own fate,
Should ever fortune call you to repel
The shaggy foe, so desperate and fell.
'Tis plain, you say, his excellence Sir Ape



From the dire field accomplish'd an escape;
Alas! our fellow subjects ne'er had bled,
If every ram that fell like him had fled;
Certes, those sheep were rather mad than brave,
Which scorn'd the example their wise leader gave. 90
Let us then every vulgar hint disdain,
And from our brother's laurel wash the stain.'
The admiring court applauds the president,
And Pug was clear'd by general consent.

FRIEND.

There needs no magic to divine your scope,
Mark'd, as you are, a flagrant misanthrope:
Sworn foe to good and bad, to great and small,
Thy rankling pen produces nought but gall:
Let virtue struggle, or let glory shine,
Thy verse affords not one approving line. 100

POET.

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Hail, sacred themes! the Muse's chief delight!
Oh, bring the darling objects to my sight!
My breast with elevated thought shall glow,
My fancy brighten, and my numbers flow!
The Aonian grove with rapture would I tread,
To crop unfading wreaths for William's head,
But that my strain, unheard amidst the throng,
Must yield to Lockman's ode, and Hambury's song.
Nor would the enamour'd Muse neglect to pay
To Stanhope's^[3] worth the tributary lay, 110
The soul unstain'd, the sense sublime to paint,
A people's patron, pride, and ornament,
Did not his virtues eternised remain
The boasted theme of Pope's immortal strain.
Not e'en the pleasing task is left to raise
A grateful monument to Barnard's praise,
Else should the venerable patriot stand
The unshaken pillar of a sinking land.
The gladdening prospect let me still pursue,
And bring fair Virtue's triumph to the view; 120
Alike to me, by fortune blest or not,
From soaring Cobham to the melting Scot.^[4]
But, lo! a swarm of harpies intervene,
To ravage, mangle, and pollute the scene!
Gorged with our plunder, yet still gaunt for spoil,
Rapacious Gideon fastens on our isle;
Insatiate Lascelles, and the fiend Vaneck,
Rise on our ruins, and enjoy the wreck;
While griping Jasper glories in his prize,
Wrung from the widow's tears and orphan's cries. 130

FRIEND.

Relapsed again! strange tendency to rail!
I fear'd this meekness would not long prevail.

POET.

You deem it rancour, then? Look round and see
What vices flourish still unpruned by me:
Corruption, roll'd in a triumphant car,
Displays his burnish'd front and glittering star,
Nor heeds the public scorn, or transient curse,
Unknown alike to honour and remorse.



Behold the leering belle, caress'd by all,
Adorn each private feast and public ball, 140
Where peers attentive listen and adore,
And not one matron shuns the titled whore.
At Peter's obsequies^[5] I sung no dirge;
Nor has my satire yet supplied a scourge
For the vile tribes of usurers and bites,
Who sneak at Jonathan's, and swear at White's.
Each low pursuit, and slighter folly, bred
Within the selfish heart and hollow head,
Thrives uncontroll'd, and blossoms o'er the land,
Nor feels the rigour of my chastening hand. 150
While Codrus shivers o'er his bags of gold,
By famine wither'd, and benumb'd by cold,
I mark his haggard eyes with frenzy roll,
And feast upon the terrors of his soul;
The wrecks of war, the perils of the deep,
That curse with hideous dreams the caitiff's sleep;
Insolvent debtors, thieves, and civil strife,
Which daily persecute his wretched life,

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With all the horrors of prophetic dread,
That rack his bosom while the mail is read. 160
Safe from the road, untainted by the school,
A judge by birth, by destiny a fool,
While the young lordling struts in native pride,
His party-colour'd tutor by his side,
Pleased, let me own the pious mother's care,
Who to the brawny sire commits her heir.
Fraught with the spirit of a Gothic monk,
Let Rich, with dulness and devotion drunk,
Enjoy the peal so barbarous and loud,
While his brain spews new monsters to the crowd; 170
I see with joy the vaticide deplore
A hell-denouncing priest and ... whore;
Let every polish'd dame and genial lord,
Employ the social chair and venal board;
Debauch'd from sense, let doubtful meanings run,
The vague conundrum, and the prurient pun,
While the vain fop, with apish grin, regards
The giggling minx half-choked behind her cards:
These, and a thousand idle pranks, I deem
The motley spawn of Ignorance and Whim. 180
Let Pride conceive, and Folly propagate,
The fashion still adopts the spurious brat:
Nothing so strange that fashion cannot tame;
By this, dishonour ceases to be shame:
This weans from blushes lewd Tyrawley's face,
Gives Hawley[6] praise, and Ingoldsby disgrace,
From Mead to Thomson shifts the palm at once,
A meddling, prating, blundering, busy dunce!
And may, should taste a little more decline,
Transform the nation to a herd of swine. 190

FRIEND.

The fatal period hastens on apace.
Nor will thy verse the obscene event disgrace;
Thy flowers of poetry, that smell so strong,
The keenest appetites have loathed the song,
Condemn'd by Clark, Banks, Barrowby, and Chitty,



And all the crop-ear'd critics of the city:
While sagely neutral sits thy silent friend,
Alike averse to censure or commend.

POET.

Peace to the gentle soul that could deny
His invoked voice to fill the cry! 200
And let me still the sentiment disdain
Of him who never speaks but to arraign,
The sneering son of Calumny and Scorn,
Whom neither arts, nor sense, nor soul adorn;
Or his, who, to maintain a critic's rank,
Though conscious of his own internal blank,
His want of taste unwilling to betray,
'Twixt sense and nonsense hesitates all day,
With brow contracted hears each passage read,
And often hums, and shakes his empty head, 210
Until some oracle adored pronounce
The passive bard a poet or a dunce;
Then in loud clamour echoes back the word,
'Tis bold, insipid—soaring, or absurd.
These, and the unnumber'd shoals of smaller fry,
That nibble round, I pity and defy.

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[Footnote 1: 'Williamson:' governor of the Tower.]

[Footnote 2: 'Vanquished knight:' Sir John Cope.]

[Footnote 3: 'Stanhope:' the Earl of Chesterfield.]

[Footnote 4; 'Scot, Gideon,' &c.: forgotten contractors, money-lenders, &c.]

[Footnote 5: 'Peter's obsequies:' Peter Waters, Esq.]

[Footnote 6: 'Hawley:' discomfited at Falkirk in 1746.]

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THE TEARS OF SCOTLAND.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1746.

1 Mourn, hapless Caledonia! mourn
Thy banish'd peace, thy laurels torn!
Thy sons, for valour long renown'd,
Lie slaughter'd on their native ground;
Thy hospitable roofs no more
Invite the stranger to the door;
In smoky ruins sunk they lie,
The monuments of cruelty.

2 The wretched owner sees afar
His all become the prey of war;
Bethinks him of his babes and wife,
Then smites his breast, and curses life.
Thy swains are famish'd on the rocks,
Where once they fed their wanton flocks:
Thy ravish'd virgins shriek in vain;
Thy infants perish on the plain.

3 What boots it, then, in every clime,
Through the wide-spreading waste of Time,
Thy martial glory, crown'd with praise,
Still shone with undiminish'd blaze?
Thy towering spirit now is broke,
Thy neck is bended to the yoke.
What foreign arms could never quell,
By civil rage and rancour fell.



4 The rural pipe and merry lay
No more shall cheer the happy day:
No social scenes of gay delight
Beguile the dreary winter night.
No strains but those of sorrow flow,
And nought be heard but sounds of woe,
While the pale phantoms of the slain
Glide nightly o'er the silent plain.

5 Oh! baneful cause, oh! fatal morn,
Accursed to ages yet unborn!
The sons against their father stood,
The parent shed his children's blood.
Yet, when the rage of battle ceased,
The victor's soul was not appeased:
The naked and forlorn must feel
Devouring flames, and murdering steel!

6 The pious mother, doom'd to death,
Forsaken wanders o'er the heath,
The bleak wind whistles round her head,
Her helpless orphans cry for bread;
Bereft of shelter, food, and friend,
She views the shades of night descend,
And, stretch'd beneath the inclement skies,
Weeps o'er her tender babes, and dies.

7 While the warm blood bedews my veins,
And unimpair'd remembrance reigns,
Resentment of my country's fate,
Within my filial breast shall beat;
And, spite of her insulting foe,
My sympathising verse shall flow:
Mourn, hapless Caledonia! mourn
Thy banish'd peace, thy laurels torn!



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VERSES ON A YOUNG LADY

PLAYING ON A HARPSICHORD AND SINGING.

1 When Sappho struck the quivering wire,
The throbbing breast was all on fire;
And when she raised the vocal lay,
The captive soul was charm'd away!

2 But had the nymph possess'd with these
Thy softer, chaster power to please,
Thy beauteous air of sprightly youth,
Thy native smiles of artless truth—

3 The worm of grief had never prey'd
On the forsaken love-sick maid;
Nor had she mourn'd a hapless flame,
Nor dash'd on rocks her tender frame.

* * * * *

LOVE ELEGY.

IN IMITATION OF TIBULLUS.

1 Where now are all my flattering dreams of joy?
Monimia, give my soul her wonted rest;
Since first thy beauty fix'd my roving eye,
Heart-gnawing cares corrode my pensive breast.

2 Let happy lovers fly where pleasures call,
With festive songs beguile the fleeting hour;
Lead beauty through the mazes of the ball,
Or press her, wanton, in Love's roseate bower.

3 For me, no more I'll range the empurpled mead,
Where shepherds pipe, and virgins dance around,
Nor wander through the woodbine's fragrant shade,
To hear the music of the grove resound.

4 I'll seek some lonely church, or dreary hall,
Where fancy paints the glimmering taper blue,



Where damps hang mouldering on the ivied wall,
And sheeted ghosts drink up the midnight dew:

5 There, leagued with hopeless anguish and despair,
A while in silence o'er my fate repine:
Then with a long farewell to love and care,
To kindred dust my weary limbs consign.

6 Wilt thou, Monimia, shed a gracious tear
On the cold grave where all my sorrows rest?
Strew vernal flowers, applaud my love sincere,
And bid the turf lie easy on my breast?

* * * * *

BURLESQUE ODE.[1]

Where wast thou, wittol Ward, when hapless fate
From these weak arms mine aged grannam tore?
These pious arms essay'd too late
To drive the dismal phantom from the door.
Could not thy healing drop, illustrious quack,
Could not thy salutary pill prolong her days,
For whom so oft to Marybone, alack!
Thy sorrels dragg'd thee, through the worst of ways?
Oil-dropping Twickenham did not then detain
Thy steps, though tended by the Cambrian maids; 10
Nor the sweet environs of Drury Lane;
Nor dusty Pimlico's embowering shades;
Nor Whitehall, by the river's bank,
Beset with rowers dank;
Nor where the Exchange pours forth its tawny sons;
Nor where, to mix with offal, soil, and

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blood,
Steep Snowhill rolls the sable flood;
Nor where the Mint's contaminated kennel runs:
Ill doth it now beseem,
That thou should'st doze and dream, 20
When Death in mortal armour came,
And struck with ruthless dart the gentle dame.
Her liberal hand and sympathising breast
The brute creation kindly bless'd;
Where'er she trod, grimalkin purr'd around,
The squeaking pigs her bounty own'd;
Nor to the waddling duck or gabbling goose
Did she glad sustenance refuse;
The strutting cock she daily fed,
And turkey with his snout so red; 30
Of chickens careful as the pious hen,
Nor did she overlook the tom-tit or the wren,
While red-breast hopp'd before her in the hall,
As if she common mother were of all.

For my distracted mind,
What comfort can I find;
O best of grannams! thou art dead and gone,
And I am left behind to weep and moan,
To sing thy dirge in sad and funeral lay,
Oh! woe is me! alack! and well a-day! 40

[Footnote 1: Smollett, imagining himself ill-treated by Lord Lyttelton, wrote the above burlesque on that nobleman's Monody on the death of his lady.]

* * * * *

ODE TO MIRTH.

Parent of joy! heart-easing Mirth!
Whether of Venus or Aurora born,
Yet Goddess sure of heavenly birth,
Visit benign a son of grief forlorn:
Thy glittering colours gay,
Around him, Mirth, display,
And o'er his raptured sense
Diffuse thy living influence:



So shall each hill, in purer green array'd,
And flower adorn'd in new-born beauty glow, 10
The grove shall smooth the horrors of the shade,
And streams in murmurs shall forget to flow.
Shine, Goddess! shine with unremitted ray,
And gild (a second sun) with brighter beam our day.
Labour with thee forgets his pain,
And aged Poverty can smile with thee;
If thou be nigh, Grief's hate is vain,
And weak the uplifted arm of Tyranny.
The morning opes on high
His universal eye, 20
And on the world doth pour
His glories in a golden shower;
Lo! Darkness trembling 'fore the hostile ray,
Shrinks to the cavern deep and wood forlorn:
The brood obscene that own her gloomy sway
Troop in her rear, and fly the approaching morn;
Pale shivering ghosts that dread the all-cheering light,
Quick as the lightning's flash glide to sepulchral night.
But whence the gladdening beam
That pours his purple stream 30

* * * * *

ODE TO SLEEP.



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Soft Sleep, profoundly pleasing power,
Sweet patron of the peaceful hour!
Oh, listen from thy calm abode,
And hither wave thy magic rod;
Extend thy silent, soothing sway,
And charm the canker care away:
Whether thou lov'st to glide along,
Attended by an airy throng
Of gentle dreams and smiles of joy,
Such as adorn the wanton boy; 10
Or to the monarch's fancy bring
Delights that better suit a king,
The glittering host, the groaning plain,
The clang of arms, and victor's train;
Or should a milder vision please,
Present the happy scenes of peace,
Plump Autumn, blushing all around,
Rich Industry, with toil embrown'd,
Content, with brow serenely gay,
And genial Art's refulgent ray. 20

* * * * *

ODE TO LEVEN WATER.

On Leven's banks, while free to rove,
And tune the rural pipe to love,
I envied not the happiest swain
That ever trod the Arcadian plain.

Pure stream, in whose transparent wave
My youthful limbs I wont to lave,
No torrents stain thy limpid source;
No rocks impede thy dimpling course,
That sweetly warbles o'er its bed,
With white, round, polish'd pebbles spread; 10
While, lightly poised, the scaly brood
In myriads cleave thy crystal flood;
The springing trout, in speckled pride,
The salmon, monarch of the tide,
The ruthless pike, intent on war,
The silver eel, and mottled par.
Devolving from thy parent lake,
A charming maze thy waters make,



By bowers of birch, and groves of pine,
And edges flower'd with eglantine. 20

Still on thy banks, so gaily green,
May numerous herds and flocks be seen,
And lasses, chanting o'er the pail,
And shepherds, piping in the dale,
And ancient faith, that knows no guile,
And Industry, embrown'd with toil,
And hearts resolved, and hands prepared,
The blessings they enjoy to guard.

* * * * *

ODE TO BLUE-EYED ANN.

1 When the rough north forgets to howl,
And ocean's billows cease to roll;
When Lybian sands are bound in frost,
And cold to Nova-Zembla's lost;
When heavenly bodies cease to move,
My blue-eyed Ann I'll cease to love!

2 No more shall flowers the meads adorn,
Nor sweetness deck the rosy thorn,
Nor swelling buds proclaim the spring,
Nor parching heats the dog-star bring,
Nor laughing lilies paint the grove,
When blue-eyed Ann I cease to love.

3 No more shall joy in hope be found,
Nor pleasures dance their frolic round,
Nor love's light god inhabit earth,
Nor beauty give the passion birth,
Nor heat to summer sunshine cleave,
When blue-eyed Nanny I deceive.



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4 When rolling seasons cease to change,
Inconstancy forgets to range;
When lavish May no more shall bloom,
Nor gardens yield a rich perfume;
When Nature from her sphere shall start,
I'll tear my Nanny from my heart.

* * * * *

ODE TO INDEPENDENCE.

STROPHE.

Thy spirit, Independence! let me share,
Lord of the lion-heart and eagle-eye;
Thy steps I follow with my bosom bare,
Nor heed the storm that howls along the sky.
Deep in the frozen regions of the north,
A goddess violated brought thee forth,
Immortal Liberty, whose look sublime,
Hath bleach'd the tyrant's cheek in every varying clime.
What time the iron-hearted Gaul,
With frantic Superstition for his guide, 10
Arm'd with the dagger and the pall,
The sons of Woden to the field defied;
The ruthless hag, by Weser's flood,
In Heaven's name urged the infernal blow,
And red the stream began to flow:
The vanquished were baptised with blood![1]

ANTISTROPHE.

The Saxon prince in horror fled
From altars stain'd with human gore;
And Liberty his routed legions led
In safety to the bleak Norwegian shore. 20
There in a cave asleep she lay,
Lull'd by the hoarse resounding main;
When a bold savage pass'd that way,
Impell'd by destiny, his name Disdain.

Of ample front the portly chief appear'd:
The hunted bear supplied a shaggy vest;
The drifted snow hung on his yellow beard,



And his broad shoulders braved the furious blast.
He stopp'd; he gazed; his bosom glow'd,
And deeply felt the impression of her charms; 30
He seized the advantage Fate allow'd,
And straight compress'd her in his vigorous arms.

STROPHE.

The curlew scream'd, the Tritons blew
Their shells to celebrate the ravish'd rite;
Old Time exulted as he flew,
And Independence saw the light;
The light he saw in Albion's happy plains,
Where, under cover of a flowering thorn,
While Philomel renew'd her warbled strains,
The auspicious fruit of stolen embrace was born. 40
The mountain Dyriads seized with joy
The smiling infant to their charge consign'd;
The Doric Muse caress'd the favourite boy;
The hermit Wisdom stored his opening mind:
As rolling years matured his age,
He flourish'd bold and sinewy as his sire;
While the mild passions in his breast assuage
The fiercer flames of his maternal fire.

ANTISTROPHE.

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Accomplish'd thus he wing'd his way,
And zealous roved from pole to pole, 50
The rolls of right eternal to display,
And warm with patriot thoughts the aspiring soul;
On desert isles 'twas he that raised
Those spires that gild the Adriatic wave,[2]
Where Tyranny beheld, amazed,
Fair Freedom's temple where he mark'd her grave:
He steel'd the blunt Batavian's arms
To burst the Iberian's double chain;
And cities rear'd, and planted farms,
Won from the skirts of Neptune's wide domain.[3] 60
He with the generous rustics sate
On Uri's rocks[4] in close divan;
And wing'd that arrow sure as fate,
Which ascertain'd the sacred rights of man.

STROPHE.

Arabia's scorching sands he cross'd,
Where blasted Nature pants supine,
Conductor of her tribes adust
To Freedom's adamant shrine;
And many a Tartar horde forlorn, aghast,
He snatch'd from under fell Oppression's wing, 70
And taught amidst the dreary waste
The all-cheering hymns of liberty to sing.
He virtue finds, like precious ore,
Diffused through every baser mould;
E'en now he stands on Calvi's rocky shore,[5]
And turns the dross of Corsica to gold.
He, guardian Genius! taught my youth
Pomp's tinsel livery to despise;
My lips, by him chastised to truth,
Ne'er paid that homage which my heart denies. 80

ANTISTROPHE.

Those sculptured halls my feet shall never tread,
Where varnish'd Vice and Vanity, combined
To dazzle and seduce, their banners spread,
And forge vile shackles for the freeborn mind;
While Insolence his wrinkled front uprears,
And all the flowers of spurious Fancy blow;



And Title his ill-woven chaplet wears,
Full often wreath'd around the miscreant's brow;
Where ever-dimpling Falsehood, pert and vain,
Presents her cup of stale Profession's froth; 90
And pale Disease, with all his bloated train,
Torments the sons of gluttony and sloth.

STROPHE.

In Fortune's car behold that minion ride,
With either India's glittering spoils oppress'd;
So moves the sumpter-mule in harness'd pride,
That bears the treasure which he cannot taste.
For him let venal bards disgrace the bay,
And hireling minstrels wake the tinkling string;
Her sensual snares let faithless Pleasure lay;
And jingling bells fantastic Folly ring; 100
Disquiet, doubt, and dread shall intervene,
And Nature, still to all her feelings just,
In vengeance hang a damp on every scene,
Shook from the baneful pinions of Disgust.

ANTISTROPHE.

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Nature I'll court in her sequester'd haunts,
By mountain, meadow, streamlet, grove, or cell,
Where the poised lark his evening ditty chaunts,
And Health, and Peace, and Contemplation dwell.
There Study shall with Solitude recline,
And Friendship pledge me to his fellow swains, 110
And Toil and Temperance sedately twine
The slender cord that fluttering life sustains;
And fearless Poverty shall guard the door,
And Taste unspoil'd the frugal table spread,
And Industry supply the humble store,
And Sleep unbribed his dews refreshing shed;
White-mantled Innocence, ethereal sprite!
Shall chase far off the goblins of the night,
And Independence o'er the day preside,
Propitious power! my patron and my pride! 120

[Footnote 1: 'Baptised with blood:' Charlemagne obliged four thousand Saxon prisoners to embrace the Christian religion, and immediately after they were baptized, ordered their throats to be cut. Their prince, Vitikind, fled for shelter to Gotrick, king of Denmark.]

[Footnote 2: 'Adriatic wave:' although Venice was built a considerable time before the era here assigned for the birth of Independence, the republic had not yet attained to any great degree of power and splendour.]

[Footnote 3: 'Neptune's wide domain:' the Low Countries, and their revolt from Spain, are here alluded to.]

[Footnote 4: 'Uri's rocks:' alluding to the known story of William Tell and his associates.]

[Footnote 5: 'Calvi's rocky shore:' the noble stand made by Paschal Paoli, and his associates, against the usurpations of the French king.]

* * * * *

SONG.

1 While with fond rapture and amaze,
On thy transcendent charms I gaze,
My cautious soul essays in vain
Her peace and freedom to maintain:



Yet let that blooming form divine,
Where grace and harmony combine,
Those eyes, like genial orbs that move,
Dispensing gladness, joy, and love,
In all their pomp assail my view,
Intent my bosom to subdue,
My breast, by wary maxims steel'd,
Not all those charms shall force to yield.

2 But when, invoked to Beauty's aid,
I see the enlighten'd soul display'd;
That soul so sensibly sedate
Amid the storms of froward fate,
Thy genius active, strong, and clear,
Thy wit sublime, though not severe,
The social ardour, void of art,
That glows within thy candid heart;
My spirits, sense, and strength decay,
My resolution dies away,
And, every faculty oppress'd,
Almighty Love invades my breast!

* * * * *

SONG.

1 To fix her!—'twere a task as vain
To count the April drops of rain,
To sow in Afric's barren soil,
Or tempests hold within a toil.



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2 I know it, friend, she's light as air,
False as the fowler's artful snare,
Inconstant as the passing wind,
As winter's dreary frost unkind.

3 She's such a miser, too, in love,
Its joys she'll neither share nor prove,
Though hundreds of gallants await
From her victorious eyes their fate.

4 Blushing at such inglorious reign,
I sometimes strive to break her chain,
My reason summon to my aid,
Resolved no more to be betray'd.

5 Ah! friend, 'tis but a short-lived trance,
Dispell'd by one enchanting glance;
She need but look, and, I confess,
Those looks completely curse or bless.

6 So soft, so elegant, so fair,
Sure something more than human's there;
I must submit, for strife is vain,
'Twas Destiny that forged the chain.

* * * * *

SONG.

1 Let the nymph still avoid and be deaf to the swain,
Who in transports of passion affects to complain;
For his rage, not his love, in that frenzy is shown,
And the blast that blows loudest is soon overblown.

2 But the shepherd whom Cupid has pierced to the heart,
Will submissive adore, and rejoice in the smart;
Or in plaintive, soft murmurs his bosom-felt woe,
Like the smooth-gliding current of rivers, will flow.

3 Though silent his tongue, he will plead with his eyes,
And his heart own your sway in a tribute of sighs:
But when he accosts you in meadow or grove,
His tale is all tenderness, rapture, and love.

* * * * *



SONG.

1 From the man whom I love though my heart I disguise,
I will freely describe the wretch I despise;
And if he has sense but to balance a straw,
He will sure take the hint from the picture I draw.

2 A wit without sense, without fancy a beau,
Like a parrot he chatters, and struts like a crow;
A peacock in pride, in grimace a baboon,
In courage a hind, in conceit a Gascon.

3 As a vulture rapacious, in falsehood a fox,
Inconstant as waves, and unfeeling as rocks;
As a tiger ferocious, perverse as a hog,
In mischief an ape, and in fawning a dog.

4 In a word, to sum up all his talents together,
His heart is of lead, and his brain is of feather;
Yet, if he has sense but to balance a straw,
He will sure take the hint from the picture I draw.

* * * * *

SONG.

1 Come listen, ye students of every degree;
I sing of a wit and a tutor *perdie*,
A statesman profound, a critic immense,
In short, a mere jumble of learning and sense;
And yet of his talents though laudably vain,
His own family arts he could never attain.

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2 His father, intending his fortune to build,
In his youth would have taught him the trowel to wield.
But the mortar of discipline never would stick,
For his skull was secured by a facing of brick;
And with all his endeavours of patience and pain,
The skill of his sire he could never attain.

3 His mother, a housewife, neat, artful, and wise,
Renown'd for her delicate biscuit and pies,
Soon alter'd his studies, by flattering his taste,
From the raising of wall to the rearing of paste;
But all her instructions were fruitless and vain,
The pye-making mystery he could ne'er attain.

4 Yet, true to his race, in his labours were seen
A jumble of both their professions, I ween;
For when his own genius he ventured to trust,
His pies seem'd of brick, and his houses of crust;
Then, good Mr Tutor, pray be not so vain,
Since your family arts you could never attain.

END OF SMOLLETT'S POEMS.