The Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland (1753) Volume V. eBook

The Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland (1753) Volume V. by Theodore Watts-Dunton

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LIVES

OF THE

POETS

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EUSTACE BUDGELL, Esq;

was the eldest son of Gilbert Budgell, D.D. of St. Thomas near Exeter, by his first wife Mary, the only daughter of Dr. William Gulston, bishop of Bristol; whose sister Jane married dean Addison, and was mother to the famous Mr. Addison the secretary of state. This family of Budgell is very old, and has been settled, and known in Devonshire above 200 years[1].

Eustace was born about the year 1685, and distinguished himself very soon at school, from whence he was removed early to Christ's Church College in Oxford, where he was entered a gentleman commoner. He staid some years in that university, and afterwards went to London, where, by his father's directions, he was entered of the Inner-Temple, in order to be bred to the Bar, for which his father had always intended him: but instead of the Law, he followed his own inclinations, which carried him to the study of polite literature, and to the company of the genteelest people in town. This proved unlucky; for the father, by degrees, grew uneasy at his son's not getting himself called to the Bar, nor properly applying to the Law, according to his reiterated directions and request; and the son complained of the strictness and insufficiency of his father's allowance, and constantly urged the necessity of his living like a gentleman, and of his spending a great deal of money. During this slay, however, at the Temple, Mr. Budgell made a strict intimacy and friendship with Mr. Addison, who was first cousin to his mother; and this last gentleman being appointed, in the year 1710, secretary to lord Wharton, the lord lieutenant of Ireland, he made an offer to his friend Eustace of going with him as one of the clerks in his office. The proposal being advantageous, and Mr. Budgell being then on bad terms with his father, and absolutely unqualified for the practice of the Law, it was readily accepted. Nevertheless, for fear of his father's disapprobation of it, he never communicated his design to him 'till the very night of his setting out for Ireland, when he wrote him a letter to inform him at once of his resolution and journey. This was in the beginning of April 1710, when he was about twenty five years of age. He had by this time read the classics, the most reputed historians, and all the best French, English, or Italian writers. His apprehension was quick, his imagination fine, and his memory remarkably strong; though his greatest commendations were a very genteel address, a ready wit and an excellent elocution, which shewed him to advantage wherever he

went. There was, notwithstanding, one principal defect in his disposition, and this was an infinite vanity, which gave him so insufferable a presumption, as led him to think that nothing was too much for his capacity, nor any preferment, or favour, beyond his deserts. Mr. Addison's fondness for him perhaps increased this disposition, as he naturally introduced him into all the company he kept, which at that time was the best, and most ingenious in the two kingdoms. In short, they lived and lodged together, and constantly followed the lord lieutenant into England at the same time.

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It was now that Mr. Budgell commenced author, and was partly concerned with Sir Richard Steele and Mr. Addison in writing the Tatler. The Spectators being set on foot in 1710-11, Mr. Budgell had likewise a share in them, as all the papers marked with an X may easily inform the reader, and indeed the eighth volume was composed by Mr. Addison and himself[2], without the assistance of Sir Richard Steele. The speculations of our author were generally liked, and Mr. Addison was frequently complimented upon the ingenuity of his kinsman. About the same time he wrote an epilogue to the Distress'd Mother[3], which had a greater run than any thing of that kind ever had before, and has had this peculiar regard shewn to it since, that now, above thirty years afterwards, it is generally spoke at the representation of that play. Several little epigrams and songs, which have a good deal of wit in them, were also written by Mr. Budgell near this period of time, all which, together with the known affection of Mr. Addison for him, raised his character so much, as to make him be very generally known and talked of.

His father's death in 1711 threw into his hands all the estates of the family, which were about 950 l. a year, although they were left incumbered with some debts, as his father was a man of pride and spirit, kept a coach and six, and always lived beyond his income, notwithstanding his spiritual preferments, and the money he had received with his wives. Dr. Budgell had been twice married, and by his first lady left five children living after him, three of whom were sons, Eustace, our author, Gilbert, a Clergyman, and William, the fellow of New College in Oxford. By his last wife (who was Mrs. Fortescue, mother to the late master of the rolls, and who survived him) he had no issue. Notwithstanding this access of fortune, Mr. Budgell in no wise altered his manner of living; he was at small expence about his person, stuck very close to business, and gave general satisfaction in the discharge of his office.

Upon the laying down of the Spectator, the Guardian was set up, and in this work our author had a hand along with Mr. Addison and Sir Richard Steele. In the preface it is said, those papers marked with an asterisk are by Mr. Budgell.

In the year 1713 he published a very elegant translation of Theophrastus's Characters, which Mr. Addison in the Lover says, 'is the best version extant of any ancient author in the English language.' It was dedicated to the lord Hallifax, who was the greatest patron our author ever had, and with whom he always lived in the greatest intimacy.

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Mr. Budgell having regularly made his progress in the secretary of State's office in Ireland; upon the arrival of his late Majesty in England, was appointed under secretary to Mr. Addison, and chief secretary to the Lords Justices of Ireland. He was made likewise deputy clerk of the council in that kingdom, and soon after chose member of the Irish parliament, where he became a very good speaker. The post of under secretary is reckoned worth 1500 l. a year, and that of deputy clerk to the council 250 l. a year. Mr. Budgell set out for Ireland the 8th of October, 1714, officiated in his place in the privy council the 14th, took possession of the secretary's office, and was immediately admitted secretary to the Lords Justices. In the same year at a public entertainment at the Inns of Court in Dublin, he, with many people of distinction, was made an honorary bencher. At his first entering upon the secretary's place, after the removal of the tories on the accession of his late Majesty, he lay under very great difficulties; all the former clerks of his office refusing to serve, all the books with the form of business being secreted, and every thing thrown into the utmost confusion; yet he surmounted these difficulties with very uncommon resolution, assiduity, and ability, to his great honour and applause.

Within a twelvemonth of his entering upon his employments, the rebellion broke out, and as, for several years (during all the absences of the lord lieutenant) he had discharged the office of secretary of state, and as no transport office at that time subsisted, he was extraordinarily charged with the care of the embarkation, and the providing of shipping (which is generally the province of a field-officer) for all the troops to be transported to Scotland. However, he went through this extensive and unusual complication of business, with great exactness and ability, and with very singular disinterestedness, for he took no extraordinary service money on this account, nor any gratuity, or fees for any of the commissions which passed through his office for the colonels and officers of militia then raising in Ireland. The Lords Justices pressed him to draw up a warrant for a very handsome present, on account of his great zeal, and late extraordinary pains (for he had often sat up whole nights in his office) but he very genteely and firmly refused it.

Mr. Addison, upon becoming principal secretary of state in England in 1717, procured the place of accomptant and comptroller general of the revenue in Ireland for Mr. Budgell, which is worth 400 l. a year, and might have had him for his under secretary, but it was thought more expedient for his Majesty's service, that Mr. Budgell should continue where he was. Our author held these several places until the year 1718, at which time the duke of Bolton was appointed lord lieutenant. His grace carried one Mr. Edward Webster over with him (who had been an under clerk in the Treasury) and made him a privy

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counsellor and his secretary. This gentleman, 'twas said, insisted upon the quartering a friend on the under secretary, which produced a misunderstanding between them; for Mr. Budgell positively declared, he would never submit to any such condition whilst he executed the office, and affected to treat Mr. Webster himself, his education, abilities, and family, with the utmost contempt. He was indiscreet enough, prior to this, to write a lampoon, in which the lord lieutenant was not spared: he would publish it (so fond was he of this brat of his brain) in opposition to Mr. Addison's opinion, who strongly persuaded him to suppress it; as the publication, Mr. Addison said, could neither serve his interest, or reputation. Hence many discontents arose between them, 'till at length the lord lieutenant, in support of his secretary, superseded Mr. Budgell, and very soon after got him removed from the place of accomptant-general. However, upon the first of these removals taking place, and upon some hints being given by his private secretary, captain Guy Dickens (now our minister at Stockholm) that it would not probably be safe for him to remain any longer in Ireland, he immediately entrusted his papers and private concerns to the hands of his brother William, then a clerk in his office, and set out for England. Soon after his arrival he published a pamphlet representing his case, intituled, A Letter to the Lord—— from Eustace Budgell, Esq; Accomptant General of Ireland, and late Secretary to their Excellencies the Lords Justices of that Kingdom; eleven hundred copies of which were sold off in one day, so great was the curiosity of the public in that particular. Afterwards too in the Post-Boy of January 17, 1718-19, he published an Advertisement to justify his character against a report that had been spread to his disadvantage: and he did not scruple to declare in all companies that his life was attempted by his enemies, or otherwise he should have attended his feat in the Irish Parliament. His behaviour, about this time, made many of his friends judge he was become delirious; his passions were certainly exceeding strong, nor were his vanity and jealousy less. Upon his coming to England he had lost no time in waiting upon Mr. Addison, who had resigned the seals, and was retired into the country for the sake of his health; but Mr. Addison found it impossible to stem the tide of opposition, which was every where running against his kinsman, through the influence and power of the duke of Bolton. He therefore disswaded him in the strongest manner from publishing his case, but to no manner of purpose, which made him tell a friend in great anxiety, 'Mr. Budgell was wiser than any man he ever knew, and yet he supposed the world would hardly believe he acted contrary to his advice.' Our author's great and noble friend the lord Hallifax was dead, and my lord Orrery, who held him in the highest esteem, had it not in his power to procure him any redress. However, Mr. Addison had got a promise from lord Sunderland, that as soon as the present clamour was a little abated, he would do something for him.

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Mr. Budgell had held the considerable places of under secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and secretary to the Lords Justices for four years, during which time he had never been absent four days from his office, nor ten miles from Dublin. His application was indefatigable, and his natural spirits capable of carrying him through any difficulty. He had lived always genteelly, but frugally, and had saved a large sum of money, which he now engaged in the South-Sea scheme. During his abode in Ireland, he had collected materials for writing a History of that kingdom, for which he had great advantages, by having an easy recourse to all the public offices; but what is become of it, and whether he ever finished it, we are not certainly informed. It is undoubtedly a considerable loss, because there is no tolerable history of that nation, and because we might have expected a satisfactory account from so pleasing a writer.

He wrote a pamphlet, after he came to England, against the famous Peerage Bill, which was very well received by the public, but highly offended the earl of Sunderland. It was exceedingly cried up by the opposition, and produced some overtures of friendship at the time, from Mr. Robert Walpole, to our author. Mr. Addison's death, in the year 1719, put an end, however, to all his hopes of succeeding at court, where he continued, nevertheless, to make several attempts, but was constantly kept down by the weight of the duke of Bolton. In the September of that year he went into France, through all the strong places in Flanders and Brabant, and all the considerable towns in Holland, and then went to Hanover, from whence he returned with his Majesty's retinue the November following.

But the fatal year of the South-Sea, 1720, ruined our author entirely, for he lost above 20,000 l. in it; however he was very active on that occasion, and made many speeches at the general courts of the South-Sea Company in Merchant-Taylors Hall, and one in particular, which was afterwards printed both in French and English, and run to a third edition. And in 1721 he published a pamphlet with success, called, A Letter to a Friend in the Country, occasioned by a Report that there is a Design still forming by the late Directors of the South-Sea Company, their Agents and Associates, to issue the Receipts of the 3d and 4th Subscriptions at 1000 l. per Cent. and to extort about 10 Millions more from the miserable People of Great Britain; with some Observations on the present State of Affairs both at Home and Abroad. In the same year he published A Letter to Mr. Law upon his Arrival in Great Britain, which run through seven editions very soon. Not long afterwards the duke of Portland, whose fortune had been likewise destroyed by the South-Sea, was appointed governor of Jamaica, upon which he immediately told Mr. Budgell he should go with him as his secretary, and should always live in the same manner with himself, and that he would contrive every method of making the employment profitable and agreeable to him: but his grace did not know how obnoxious our author had rendered himself; for within a few days after this offer's taking air, he was acquainted in form by a secretary of state, that if he thought of Mr. Budgell, the government would appoint another governor in his room.

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After being deprived of this last resource, he tried to get into the next parliament at several places, and spent near 5000 l. in unsuccessful attempts, which compleated his ruin. And from this period he began to behave and live in a very different manner from what he had ever done before; wrote libellous pamphlets against Sir Robert Walpole and the ministry; and did many unjust things with respect to his relations; being distracted in his own private fortune, as, indeed, he was judged to be, in his senses; torturing his invention to find out ways of subsisting and eluding his ill-stars, his pride at the same time working him up to the highest pitches of resentment and indignation against all courts and courtiers.

His younger brother, the fellow of New-College, who had more weight with him than any body, had been a clerk under him in Ireland, and continued still in the office, and who bad fair for rising in it, died in the year 1723, and after that our author seemed to pay no regard to any person. Mr. William Budgell was a man of very good sense, extremely steady in his conduct, and an adept in all calculations and mathematical questions; and had besides great good-nature and easiness of temper.

Our author as I before observed, perplexed his private affairs from this time as much as possible, and engaged in numberless law-suits, which brought him into distresses that attended him to the end of his life.

In 1727 Mr. Budgell had a 1000 l. given him by the late Sarah, duchess dowager of Marlborough, to whose husband (the famous duke of Marlborough) he was a relation by his mother's side, with a view to his getting into parliament. She knew he had a talent for speaking in public, and that he was acquainted with business, and would probably run any lengths against the ministry. However this scheme failed, for he could never get chosen.

In the year 1730 and about that time, he closed in with the writers against the administration, and wrote many papers in the Craftsman. He likewise published a pamphlet, intitled, A Letter to the Craftsman, from E. Budgell, Esq; occasioned by his late presenting an humble complaint against the right honourable Sir Robert Walpole, with a Post-script. This ran to a ninth edition. Near the same time too he wrote a Letter to Cleomenes King of Sparta, from E. Budgell, Esq; being an Answer Paragraph by Paragraph to his Spartan Majesty's Royal Epistle, published some time since in the Daily Courant, with some Account of the Manners and Government of the Antient Greeks and Romans, and Political Reflections thereon. And not long after there came out A State of one of the Author's Cases before the House of Lords, which is generally printed with the Letter to Cleomenes: He likewise published on the same occasion a pamphlet, which he calls Liberty and Property, by E. Budgell, Esq; wherein he complains of the seizure and loss of many valuable papers, and particularly a collection of Letters from Mr. Addison, lord Hallifax, Sir Richard Steele, and other people, which he designed to publish; and soon after he printed a sequel or second part, under the same title.

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The same year he also published his Poem upon his Majesty's Journey to Cambridge and New-market, and dedicated it to the Queen. Another of his performances is a poetical piece, intitled A Letter to his Excellency Ulrick D'Ypres, and C——, in Answer to his excellency's two Epistles in the Daily Courant; with a Word or Two to Mr. Osborn the Hyp Doctor, and C——. These several performances were very well received by the public.

In the year 1733 he began a weekly pamphlet (in the nature of a Magazine, though more judiciously composed) called The Bee, which he continued for about 100 Numbers, that bind into eight Volumes Octavo, but at last by quarrelling with his booksellers, and filling his pamphlet with things entirely relating to himself, he was obliged to drop it. During the progress of this work, Dr. Tindall's death happened, by whose will Mr. Budgell had 2000 l. left him; and the world being surprised at such a gift, immediately imputed it to his making the will himself. This produced a paper-war between him and Mr. Tindall, the continuator of Rapin, by which Mr. Budgell's character considerably suffered; and this occasioned his Bee's being turned into a meer vindication of himself.

It is thought he had some hand in publishing Dr. Tindall's Christianity as old as the Creation; and he often talked of another additional volume on the same subject, but never published it. However he used to enquire very frequently after Dr. Conybear's health (who had been employed by her late majesty to answer the first, and had been rewarded with the deanery of Christ-Church for his pains) saying he hoped Mr. Dean would live a little while longer, that he might have the pleasure of making him a bishop, for he intended very soon to publish the other volume of Tindall which would do the business. Mr. Budgell promised likewise a volume of several curious pieces of Tindall's, that had been committed to his charge, with the life of the doctor; but never fulfilled his promise[4].

During the publication of the Bee a smart pamphlet came out, called A Short History of Prime Ministers, which was generally believed to be written by our author; and in the same year he published A Letter to the Merchants and Tradesmen of London and Bristol, upon their late glorious behaviour against the Excise Law.

After the extinction of the Bee, our author became so involved with law-suits, and so incapable of living in the manner he wished and affected to do, that he was reduced to a very unhappy situation. He got himself call'd to the bar, and attended for some time in the courts of law; but finding it was too late to begin that profession, and too difficult for a man not regularly trained to it, to get into business, he soon quitted it. And at last, after being cast in several of his own suits, and being distressed to the utmost, he determined to make away with himself. He had always thought very loosely of revelation, and latterly became an avowed deist; which, added to his pride, greatly disposed him to this resolution.

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Accordingly within a few days after the loss of his great cause, and his estates being decreed for the satisfaction of his creditors, in the year 1736 he took boat at Somerset-Stairs (after filling his pockets with stones upon the beach) ordered the waterman to shoot the bridge, and whilst the boat was going under it threw himself over-board. Several days before he had been visibly distracted in his mind, and almost mad, which makes such an action the less wonderful.

He was never married, but left one natural daughter behind him, who afterwards took his name, and was lately an actress at Drury-Lane.

It has been said, Mr. Budgell was of opinion, that when life becomes uneasy to support, and is overwhelmed with clouds, and sorrows, that a man has a natural right to take it away, as it is better not to live, than live in pain. The morning before he carried his notion of self-murder into execution, he endeavoured to persuade his daughter to accompany him, which she very wisely refused. His argument to induce her was; life is not worth the holding.—Upon Mr. Budgell's beauroe was found a slip of paper; in which were written these words.

What Cato did, and Addison approv'd[5],
Cannot be wrong.—

Mr. Budgell had undoubtedly strong natural parts, an excellent education, and set out in life with every advantage that a man could wish, being settled in very great and profitable employments, at a very early age, by Mr. Addison: But by excessive vanity and indiscretion, proceeding from a false estimation of his own weight and consequence, he over-stretched himself, and ruined his interest at court, and by the succeeding loss of his fortune in the South-Sea, was reduced too low to make any other head against his enemies. The unjustifiable and dishonourable law-suits he kept alive, in the remaining part of his life, seem to be intirely owing to the same disposition, which could never submit to the living beneath what he had once done, and from that principle he kept a chariot and house in London to the very last.

His end was like that of many other people of spirit, reduced to great streights; for some of the greatest, as well as some of the most infamous men have laid violent hands upon themselves. As an author where he does not speak of himself, and does not give a loose to his vanity, he is a very agreeable and deserving writer; not argumentative or deep, but very ingenious and entertaining, and his stile is peculiarly elegant, so as to deserve being ranked in that respect with Addison's, and is superior to most of the other English writers. His Memoirs of the Orrery Family and the Boyle's, is the most indifferent of his performances; though the translations of Phalaris's Epistles in that work are done with great spirit and beauty.

As to his brothers, the second, Gilbert, was thought a man of deeper learning and better judgment when he was young than our author, but was certainly inferior to him in his

appearance in life; and, ’tis thought, greatly inferior to him in every respect. He was author of a pretty Copy of Verses in the VIIIth Vol. of the Spectators, Numb, 591, which begins thus,

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Conceal, fond man, conceal the mighty smart,
Nor tell Corinna she has fir'd thy heart.

And it is said that it was a repulse from a lady of great fortune, with whom he was desperately in love whilst at Oxford, and to whom he had addressed these lines, that made him disregard himself ever after, neglect his studies, and fall into a habit of drinking. Whatever was the occasion of this last vice it ruined him. A lady had commended and desired to have a copy of his Verses once, and he sent them, with these lines on the first leaf—

Lucretius hence thy maxim I abjure
Nought comes from nought, nothing can nought procure.

If to these lines your approbation's join'd,
Something I'm sure from nothing has been coin'd.

This gentleman died unmarried, a little after his brother Eustace, at Exeter; having lived in a very disreputable manner for some time, and having degenerated into such excessive indolence, that he usually picked up some boy in the streets, and carried him into the coffee-house to read the news-papers to him. He had taken deacon's orders some years before his death, but had always been averse to that kind of life; and therefore became it very ill, and could never be prevailed upon to be a priest.

The third brother William, fellow of New-College in Oxford, died (as I mentioned before) one of the clerks in the Irish secretary of state's office, very young. He had been deputy accomptant general, both to his brother and his successor; and likewise deputy to Mr. Addison, as keeper of the records in Birmingham-Tower. Had he lived, 'tis probable he would have made a considerable figure, being a man of sound sense and learning, with great prudence and honour. His cousin Dr. Downes, then bishop of London-Derry, was his zealous friend, and Dr. Lavington the present bishop of Exeter, his fellow-collegian, was his intimate correspondent. Of the two sisters, the eldest married captain Graves of Thanks, near Saltash in Cornwall, a sea-officer, and died in 1738, leaving some children behind her; and the other is still alive, unmarried. The father Dr. Gilbert Budgell, was esteemed a sensible man, and has published a discourse upon Prayer, and some Sermons[6].

FOOTNOTES:

[1] See Budgell's Letter to Cleomenes. Appendix p. 79.

[2] See The Bee, vol. ii. p. 854.

[3] 'Till then it was usual to discontinue an epilogue after the sixth night. But this was called for by the audience, and continued for

the whole run of this play: Budgell did not scruple to sit in the it, and call for it himself.

[4] Vide Bee, Vol. II. page 1105.

[5] Alluding to Cato's destroying himself.

[6] There is an Epigram of our author's, which I don't remember to have seen published any where, written upon the death of a very fine young lady.

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She was, she is,
(What can theremore be said)
On Earth [the] first,
In Heav'n the second Maid.
[Transcriber's note: Print unclear, word in square bracket assumed.]

See a Song of our author's in Steele's Miscellanies, published in 1714. Page 210.

There is an Epigram of his printed in the same book and in many collections, Upon a Company of bad Dancers to good Music.

How ill the motion with the music suits!
So fiddled Orpheus—and so danc'd the Brutes.

* * * * *

THOMAS TICKELL, Esq.

This Gentleman, well known, to the world by the friendship and intimacy which subsisted between him and Mr. Addison, was the son of the revd. Mr. Richard Tickell, who enjoy'd a considerable preferment in the North of England. Our poet received his education at Queen's-College in Oxford, of which he was a fellow.

While he was at that university, he wrote a beautiful copy of verses addressed to Mr. Addison, on his Opera of Rosamond. These verses contained many elegant compliments to the author, in which he compares his softness to Corelli, and his strength to Virgil[1].

The Opera first Italian masters taught,
Enrich'd with songs, but innocent of thought;
Britannia's learned theatre disdains
Melodious trifles, and enervate strains;
And blushes on her injur'd stage to see,
Nonsense well tun'd with sweet stupidity.

No charms are wanting to thy artful song
Soft as Corelli, and as Virgil strong.

These complimentary lines, a few of which we have now quoted, so effectually recommended him to Mr. Addison, that he held him in esteem ever afterwards; and when he himself was raised to the dignity of secretary of state, he appointed Mr. Tickell his under-secretary. Mr. Addison being obliged to resign on account of his ill-state of health, Mr. Craggs who succeeded him, continued Mr. Tickell in his place, which he held till that gentleman's death. When Mr. Addison was appointed secretary, being a diffident

man, he consulted with his friends about disposing such places as were immediately dependent on him. He communicated to Sir Richard Steele, his design of preferring Mr. Tickell to be his under-secretary, which Sir Richard, who considered him as a petulant man, warmly opposed. He observed that Mr. Tickell was of a temper too enterprising to be governed, and as he had no opinion of his honour, he did not know what might be the consequence, if by insinuation and flattery, or by bolder means, he ever had an opportunity of raising himself. It holds pretty generally true, that diffident people under the appearance of distrusting their own opinions, are frequently positive, and though they pursue their resolutions with trembling, they never fail to pursue them. Mr. Addison had a little of this temper in him. He could not be persuaded to set aside Mr. Tickell, nor even had secrecy enough to conceal from him Sir Richard's opinion. This produced a great animosity between Sir Richard and Mr. Tickell, which subsisted during their lives.

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Mr. Tickell in his life of Addison, prefixed to his own edition of that great man's works, throws out some unmannerly reflexions against Sir Richard, who was at that time in Scotland, as one of the commissioners on the forfeited estates. Upon Sir Richard's return to London, he dedicates to Mr. Congreve, Addison's Comedy, called the Drummer, in which he takes occasion very smartly to retort upon Tickell, and clears himself of the imputation laid to his charge, namely that of valuing himself upon Mr. Addison's papers in the Spectator.

In June 1724 Mr. Tickell was appointed secretary to the Lords Justices in Ireland, a place says Mr. Coxeter, which he held till his death, which happened in the year 1740.

It does not appear that Mr. Tickell was in any respect ungrateful to Mr. Addison, to whom he owed his promotion; on the other hand we find him take every opportunity to celebrate him, which he always performs with so much zeal, and earnestness, that he seems to have retained the most lasting sense of his patron's favours. His poem to the earl of Warwick on the death of Mr. Addison, is very pathetic. He begins it thus,

If dumb too long, the drooping Muse hath stray'd,
And left her debt to Addison unpaid,
Blame not her silence, Warwick, but bemoan,
And judge, O judge, my bosom by your own.
What mourner ever felt poetic fires!
Slow comes the verse, that real woe inspires:
Grief unaffected suits but ill with art,
Or flowing numbers with a bleeding heart.

Mr. Tickell's works are printed in the second volume of the Minor Poets, and he is by far the most considerable writer amongst them. He has a very happy talent in versification, which much exceeds Addison's, and is inferior to few of the English Poets, Mr. Dryden and Pope excepted. The first poem in this collection is addressed to the supposed author of the Spectator.

In the year 1713 Mr. Tickell wrote a poem, called The Prospect of Peace, addressed to his excellency the lord privy-seal; which met with so favourable a reception from the public, as to go thro' six editions. The sentiments in this poem are natural, and obvious, but no way extraordinary. It is an assemblage of pretty notions, poetically expressed; but conducted with no kind of art, and altogether without a plan. The following exordium is one of the most shining parts of the poem.

Far hence be driv'n to Scythia's stormy shore
The drum's harsh music, and the cannon's roar;
Let grim Bellona haunt the lawless plain,
Where Tartar clans, and grizly Cossacks reign;
Let the steel'd Turk be deaf to Matrons cries,

See virgins ravish'd, with relentless eyes,
To death, grey heads, and smiling infants doom.
Nor spare the promise of the pregnant womb:
O'er wafted kingdoms spread his wide command.
The savage lord of an unpeopled land.
Her guiltless glory just Britannia draws
From pure religion, and impartial laws,
To Europe's wounds a mother's aid she brings,
And holds in equal scales the rival kings:
Her gen'rous sons in choicest gifts abound,
Alike in arms, alike in arts renown'd.

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The Royal Progress. This poem is mentioned in the Spectator, in opposition to such performances, as are generally written in a swelling stile, and in which the bombast is mistaken for the sublime. It is meant as a compliment to his late majesty, on his arrival in his British dominions.

An imitation of the Prophesy of Nereus. Horace, Book I. Ode XV.—This was written about the year 1715, and intended as a ridicule upon the enterprize of the earl of Marr; which he prophesies will be crushed by the duke of Argyle.

An Epistle from a Lady in England, to a gentleman at Avignon. Of this piece five editions were sold; it is written in the manner of a Lady to a Gentleman, whose principles obliged him to be an exile with the Royal Wanderer. The great propension of the Jacobites to place confidence in imaginary means; and to construe all extraordinary appearances, into ominous signs of the restoration of their king is very well touched.

Was it for this the sun's whole lustre fail'd,
And sudden midnight o'er the Moon prevail'd!
For this did Heav'n display to mortal eyes
Aerial knights, and combats in the skies!
Was it for this Northumbrian streams look'd red!
And Thames driv'n backwards shew'd his secret bed!

False Auguries! th'insulting victors scorn!
Ev'n our own prodigies against us turn!
O portents constru'd, on our side in vain!
Let never Tory trust eclipse again!
Run clear, ye fountains! be at peace, ye skies;
And Thames, henceforth to thy green borders rise!

An Ode, occasioned by his excellency the earl of Stanhope's Voyage to France.

A Prologue to the University of Oxford.

Thoughts occasioned by the sight of an original picture of King Charles the 1st, taken at the time of his Trial.

A Fragment of a Poem, on Hunting.

A Description of the Phoenix, from Claudian.

To a Lady; with the Description of the Phoenix.

Part of the Fourth Book of Lucan translated.

The First Book of Homer's Iliad.

Kensington-Gardens.

Several Epistles and Odes.

This translation was published much about the same time with Mr. Pope's. But it will not bear a comparison; and Mr. Tickell cannot receive a greater injury, than to have his verses placed in contradistinction to Pope's. Mr. Melmoth, in his Letters, published under the name of Fitz Osborne, has produced some parallel passages, little to the advantage of Mr. Tickell, who if he fell greatly short of the elegance and beauty of Pope, has yet much exceeded Mr. Congreve, in what he has attempted of Homer.

In the life of Addison, some farther particulars concerning this translation are related; and Sir Richard Steele, in his dedication of the Drummer to Mr. Congreve, gives it as his opinion, that Addison was himself the author.

These translations, published at the same time, were certainly meant as rivals to one another. We cannot convey a more adequate idea of this, than in the words of Mr. Pope, in a Letter to James Craggs, Esq.; dated July the 15th, 1715.

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’Sir,

’They tell me, the busy part of the nation are not more busy about Whig and Tory; than these idle-fellows of the feather, about Mr. Tickell’s and my translation. I (like the Tories) have the town in general, that is, the mob on my side; but it is usual with the smaller part to make up in industry, what they want in number; and that is the case with the little senate of Cato. However, if our principles be well considered, I must appear a brave Whig, and Mr. Tickell a rank Tory. I translated Homer, for the public in general, he to gratify the inordinate desires of one man only. We have, it seems, a great Turk in poetry, who can never bear a brother on the throne; and has his Mutes too, a set of Medlers, Winkers, and Whisperers, whose business ’tis to strangle all other offsprings of wit in their birth. The new translator of Homer, is the humblest slave he has, that is to say, his first minister; let him receive the honours he gives me, but receive them with fear and trembling; let him be proud of the approbation of his absolute lord, I appeal to the people, as my rightful judges, and masters; and if they are not inclined to condemn me, I fear no arbitrary high-flying proceeding, from the Court faction at Button’s. But after all I have said of this great man, there is no rupture between us. We are each of us so civil, and obliging, that neither thinks he’s obliged: And I for my part, treat with him, as we do with the Grand Monarch; who has too many great qualities, not to be respected, though we know he watches any occasion to oppress us.’

Thus we have endeavoured to exhibit an Idea of the writings of Mr. Tickell, a man of a very elegant genius: As there appears no great invention in his works, if he cannot be placed in the first rank of Poets; yet from the beauty of his numbers, and the real poetry which enriched his imagination, he has, at least, an unexceptionable claim to the second.

FOOTNOTE:

[1] Jacob.

* * * * *

Mr. WILLIAM HINCHLIFFE,

was the son of a reputable tradesman of St. Olave’s in Southwark, and was born there May 12, 1692; was educated at a private grammar school with his intimate and ingenious friend Mr. Henry Needler. He made a considerable progress in classical learning, and had a poetical genius. He served an apprenticeship to Mr. Arthur Bettesworth, Bookseller in London, and afterwards followed that business himself near thirty years, under the Royal Exchange, with reputation and credit, having the esteem and friendship of many eminent merchants and gentlemen. In 1718 he married Jane, one of the daughters of Mr. William Leigh, an eminent citizen. Mrs. Hinchliffe was sister of William Leigh, esq; one of his Majesty’s justices of the peace for the county of Surry,

and of the revd. Thomas Leigh, late rector of Heyford in Oxfordshire, by whom he had two sons and three daughters, of which only one son and one daughter are now living. He died September 20, 1742, and was buried in the parish church of St. Margaret's Lothbury, London.

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In 1714 he had the honour to present an Ode to King George I. on his Arrival at Greenwich, which is printed in a Collection of Poems, Amorous, Moral, and Divine, which he published in octavo, 1718, and dedicated them to his friend Mr. Needler.

He published a History of the Rebellion of 1715, and dedicated it to the late Duke of Argyle.

He made himself master of the French tongue by his own application and study; and in 1734 published a Translation of Boulainvillers's Life of Mahomet, which is well esteemed, and dedicated it to his intimate and worthy friend Mr. William Duncombe, Esq;

He was concerned, with others, in the publishing several other ingenious performances, and has left behind him in manuscript, a Translation of the nine first Books of Telemachus in blank Verse, which cost him great labour, but he did not live to finish the remainder.

He is the author of a volume of poems in 8vo, many of which are written with a true poetical spirit.

The INVITATION[1].

1.

O come Lavinia, lovely maid,
  Said Dion, stretch'd at ease,
Beneath the walnut's fragrant shade,
A sweet retreat! by nature made
  With elegance to please.

2.

O leave the court's deceitful glare,
  Loath'd pageantry and pride,
Come taste our solid pleasures here.
Which angels need not blush to share,
  And with bless'd men divide.

3.

What raptures were it in these bow'rs,
  Fair virgin, chaste, and wise,
With thee to lose the learned hours,
And note the beauties in these flowers,
  Conceal'd from vulgar eyes.

4.

For thee my gaudy garden blooms,
  And richly colour'd glows;
Above the pomp of royal rooms,
Or purpled works of Persian looms,
  Proud palaces disclose.

5.

Haste, nymph, nor let me sigh in vain,
  Each grace attends on thee;
Exalt my bliss, and point my strain,
For love and truth are of thy train,
  Content and harmony.

[1] This piece is not in Mr. Hinchliffe's works, but is assuredly his.

* * * * *

MR. MATTHEW CONCANEN.

This gentleman was a native of Ireland, and was bred to the Law. In this profession he seems not to have made any great figure. By some means or other he conceived an aversion to Dr. Swift, for his abuse of whom, the world taxed him with ingratitude. Concanen had once enjoyed some degree of Swift's favour, who was not always very happy in the choice of his companions. He had an opportunity of reading some of the Dr's poems in MS. which it is said he thought fit to appropriate and publish as his own.

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As affairs did not much prosper with him in Ireland, he came over to London, in company with another gentleman, and both commenced writers. These two friends entered into an extraordinary agreement. As the subjects which then attracted the attention of mankind were of a political cast, they were of opinion that no species of writing could so soon recommend them to public notice; and in order to make their trade more profitable, they resolved to espouse different interests; one should oppose, and the other defend the ministry. They determined the side of the question each was to espouse, by tossing up a half-penny, and it fell to the share of Mr. Concanen to defend the ministry, which task he performed with as much ability, as political writers generally discover.

He was for some time, concerned in the British, and London Journals, and a paper called The Speculatist. These periodical pieces are long since buried in neglect, and perhaps would have even sunk into oblivion, had not Mr. Pope, by his satyrical writings, given them a kind of disgraceful immortality. In these Journals he published many scurrilities against Mr. Pope; and in a pamphlet called, The Supplement to the Profound, he used him with great virulence, and little candour. He not only imputed to him Mr. Brome's verses (for which he might indeed seem in some degree accountable, having corrected what that gentleman did) but those of the duke of Buckingham and others. To this rare piece some body humorously perswaded him to take for his motto, De profundis clamavi. He afterwards wrote a paper called The Daily Courant, wherein he shewed much spleen against lord Bolingbroke, and some of his friends. All these provocations excited Mr. Pope to give him a place in his Dunciad. In his second book, l. 287, when he represents the dunces diving in the mud of the Thames for the prize, he speaks thus of Concanen;

True to the bottom see Concanen creep,
A cold, long winded, native of the deep!
If perseverance gain the diver's prize,
Not everlasting Blackmore this denies.

In the year 1725 Mr. Concanen published a volume of poems in 8vo. consisting chiefly of compositions of his own, and some few of other gentlemen; they are addressed to the lord Gage, whom he endeavours artfully to flatter, without offending his modesty. 'I shall begin this Address, says he, by declaring that the opinion I have of a great part of the following verses, is the highest indication of the esteem in which I hold the noble character I present them to. Several of them have authors, whose names do honour to whatever patronage they receive. As to my share of them, since it is too late, after what I have already delivered, to give my opinion of them, I'll say as much as can be said in their favour. I'll affirm that they have one mark of merit, which is your lordship's approbation; and that they are indebted to fortune for two other great advantages, a place in good company, and an honourable protection.'

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The gentlemen, who assisted Concanen in this collection, were Dean Swift, Mr. Parnel, Dr. Delany, Mr. Brown, Mr. Ward, and Mr. Stirling. In this collection there is a poem by Mr. Concanen, called A Match at Football, in three Cantos; written, 'tis said, in imitation of The Rape of the Lock. This performance is far from being despicable; the verification is generally smooth; the design is not ill conceived, and the characters not unnatural. It perhaps would be read with more applause, if The Rape of the Lock did not occur to the mind, and, by forcing a comparison, destroy all the satisfaction in perusing it; as the disproportion is so very considerable. We shall quote a few lines from the beginning of the third canto, by which it will appear that Concanen was not a bad rhimer.

In days of yore a lovely country maid
Rang'd o'er these lands, and thro' these forests stray'd;
Modest her pleasures, matchless was her frame,
Peerless her face, and Sally was her name.
By no frail vows her young desires were bound,
No shepherd yet the way to please her found.
Thoughtless of love the beauteous nymph appear'd,
Nor hop'd its transports, nor its torments fear'd.
But careful fed her flocks, and grac'd the plain,
She lack'd no pleasure, and she felt no pain.
She view'd our motions when we toss'd the ball,
And smil'd to see us take, or ward, a fall;
'Till once our leader chanc'd the nymph to spy,
And drank in poison from her lovely eye.
Now pensive grown, he shunn'd the long-lov'd plains,
His darling pleasures, and his favour'd swains,
Sigh'd in her absence, sigh'd when she was near,
Now big with hope, and now dismay'd with fear;
At length with falt'ring tongue he press'd the dame,
For some returns to his unpity'd flame;
But she disdain'd his suit, despis'd his care,
His form unhandsome, and his bristled hair;
Forward she sprung, and with an eager pace
The god pursu'd, nor fainted in the race;
Swift as the frighted hind the virgin flies,
When the woods ecchoe to the hunters cries:
Swift as the fleetest hound her flight she trac'd,
When o'er the lawns the frighted hind is chac'd;
The winds which sported with her flowing vest
Display'd new charms, and heightened all the rest:
Those charms display'd, increas'd the gods desire,
What cool'd her bosom, set his breast on fire:
With equal speed, for diff'rent ends they move,

Fear lent the virgin wings, the shepherd love:
Panting at length, thus in her fright she pray'd,
Be quick ye pow'rs, and save a wretched maid.
[Protect] my honour, shelter me from shame,
[Beauty] and life with pleasure I disclaim.

[Transcriber's note: print unclear for words in square brackets, therefore words are assumed.]

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Mr. Concanen was also concerned with the late Mr. Roome [Transcriber's note: print unclear, "m" assumed], and a certain eminent senator, in making The Jovial Crew, an old Comedy, into a Ballad Opera; which was performed about the year 1730; and the profits were given entirely to Mr. Concanen. Soon after he was preferred to be attorney-general in Jamaica, a post of considerable eminence, and attended with a very large income. In this island he spent the remaining part of his days, and, we are informed made a tolerable accession of fortune, by marrying a planter's daughter, who surviving him was left in the possession of several hundred pounds a year. She came over to England after his death, and married the honourable Mr. Hamilton.

* * * * *

RICHARD SAVAGE, Esq;

This unhappy gentleman, who led a course of life imbittered with the most severe calamities, was not yet destitute of a friend to close his eyes. It has been remarked of Cowley, who likewise experienced many of the vicissitudes of fortune, that he was happy in the acquaintance of the bishop of Rochester, who performed the last offices which can be paid to a poet, in the elegant Memorial he made of his Life. Though Mr. Savage was as much inferior to Cowley in genius, as in the rectitude of his life, yet, in some respect, he bears a resemblance to that great man. None of the poets have been more honoured in the commemoration of their history, than this gentleman. The life of Mr. Savage was written some years after his death by a gentleman, who knew him intimately, capable to distinguish between his follies, and those good qualities which were often concealed from the bulk of mankind by the abjectness of his condition. From this account[1] we have compiled that which we now present to the reader.

In the year 1697 Anne countess of Macclesfield, having lived for some time on very uneasy terms with her husband, thought a public confession of adultery the most expeditious method of obtaining her liberty, and therefore declared the child with which she then was big was begotten by the earl of Rivers. This circumstance soon produced a separation, which, while the earl of Macclesfield was prosecuting, the countess, on the 10th of January 1697-8, was delivered of our author; and the earl of Rivers, by appearing to consider him as his own, left no room to doubt of her declaration. However strange it may appear, the countess looked upon her son, from his birth, with a kind of resentment and abhorrence. No sooner was her son born, than she discovered a resolution of disowning him, in a short time removed him from her sight, and committed him to the care of a poor woman, whom she directed to educate him as her own, and enjoined her never to inform him of his true parents. Instead of defending his tender years, she took delight to see him struggling with misery, and continued her persecution, from the first hour of his life to the last, with

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an implacable and restless cruelty. His mother, indeed, could not affect others with the same barbarity, and though she, whose tender sollicitudes should have supported him, had launched him into the ocean of life, yet was he not wholly abandoned. The lady Mason, mother to the countess, undertook to transact with the nurse, and superintend the education of the child. She placed him at a grammar school near St. Albans, where he was called by the name of his nurse, without the least intimation that he had a claim to any other. While he was at this school, his father, the earl of Rivers, was seized with a distemper which in a short time put an end to his life. While the earl lay on his death-bed, he thought it his duty to provide for him, amongst his other natural children, and therefore demanded a positive account of him. His mother, who could no longer refuse an answer, determined, at least, to give such, as should deprive him for ever of that happiness which competency affords, and declared him dead; which is, perhaps, the first instance of a falshood invented by a mother, to deprive her son of a provision which was designed him by another. The earl did not imagine that there could exist in nature, a mother that would ruin her son, without enriching herself, and therefore bestowed upon another son six thousand pounds, which he had before in his will bequeathed to Savage. The same cruelty which incited her to intercept this provision intended him, suggested another project, worthy of such a disposition. She endeavoured to rid herself from the danger of being at any time made known to him, by sending him secretly to the American Plantations; but in this contrivance her malice was defeated.

Being still restless in the persecution of her son, she formed another scheme of burying him in poverty and obscurity; and that the state of his life, if not the place of his residence, might keep him for ever at a distance from her, she ordered him to be placed with a Shoemaker in Holbourn, that after the usual time of trial he might become his apprentice. It is generally reported, that this project was, for some time, successful, and that Savage was employed at the awl longer than he was willing to confess; but an unexpected discovery determined him to quit his occupation.

About this time his nurse, who had always treated him as her own son, died; and it was natural for him to take care of those effects, which by her death were, as he imagined, become his own. He therefore went to her house, opened her boxes, examined her papers, and found some letters written to her by the lady Mason, which informed him of his birth, and the reasons for which it was concealed.

He was now no longer satisfied with the employment which had been allotted him, but thought he had a right to share the affluence of his mother, and therefore, without scruple, applied to her as her son, and made use of every art to awake her tenderness, and attract her regard. It was to no purpose that he frequently sollicited her to admit him to see her, she avoided him with the utmost precaution, and ordered him to be excluded from her house, by whomsoever he might be introduced, and what reason soever he might give for entering it.

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Savage was at this time so touched with the discovery of his real mother, that it was his frequent practice to walk in the dark evenings for several hours before her door, in hopes of seeing her by accident.

But all his assiduity was without effect, for he could neither soften her heart, nor open her hand, and while he was endeavouring to rouse the affections of a mother, he was reduced to the miseries of want. In this situation he was obliged to find other means of support, and became by necessity an author.

His first attempt in that province was, a poem against the bishop of Bangor, whose controversy, at that time, engaged the attention of the nation, and furnished the curious with a topic of dispute. Of this performance Mr. Savage was afterwards ashamed, as it was the crude effort of a yet uncultivated genius. He then attempted another kind of writing, and, while but yet eighteen, offered a comedy to the stage, built upon a Spanish plot; which was refused by the players. Upon this he gave it to Mr. Bullock, who, at that time rented the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields of Mr. Rich, and with messieurs Keene, Pack, and others undertook the direction thereof. Mr. Bullock made some slight alterations, and brought it upon the stage, under the title of Woman's a Riddle, but allowed the real author no part of the profit. This occasioned a quarrel between Savage and Bullock; but it ended without bloodshed, though not without high words: Bullock insisted he had a translation of the Spanish play, from whence the plot was taken, given him by the same lady who had bestowed it on Savage.—Which was not improbable, as that whimsical lady had given a copy to several others.

Not discouraged, however, at this repulse, he wrote, two years after, Love in a Veil, another Comedy borrowed likewise from the Spanish, but with little better success than before; for though it was received and acted, yet it appeared so late in the year, that Savage obtained no other advantage from it, than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Wilks, by whom, says the author of his Life, he was pitied, caressed, and relieved. Sir Richard Steele declared in his favour, with that genuine benevolence which constituted his character, promoted his interest with the utmost zeal, and taking all opportunities of recommending him; he asserted, 'that the inhumanity of his mother had given him a right to find every good man his father.' Nor was Mr. Savage admitted into his acquaintance only, but to his confidence and esteem. Sir Richard intended to have established him in some settled scheme of life, and to have contracted a kind of alliance with him, by marrying him to a natural daughter, on whom he intended to bestow a thousand pounds. But Sir Richard conducted his affairs with so little oeconomy, that he was seldom able to raise the sum, which he had offered, and the marriage was consequently delayed. In the mean time he was officiously informed that Mr. Savage had ridiculed him; by which he was so much exasperated that he withdrew the allowance he had paid him, and never afterwards admitted him to his house.

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He was now again abandoned to fortune, without any other friend but Mr. Wilks, a man to whom calamity seldom complained without relief. He naturally took an unfortunate wit into his protection, and not only assisted him in any casual distresses, but continued an equal and steady kindness to the time of his death. By Mr. Wilks's interposition Mr. Savage once obtained of his mother fifty pounds, and a promise of one hundred and fifty more, but it was the fate of this unhappy man, that few promises of any advantage to him were ever performed.

Being thus obliged to depend [Transcriber's note: 'depended' in original] upon Mr. Wilks, he was an assiduous frequenter of the theatres, and, in a short time, the amusements of the stage took such a possession of his mind, that he was never absent from a play in several years.

In the year 1723 Mr. Savage brought another piece on the stage. He made choice of the subject of Sir Thomas Overbury: If the circumstances in which he wrote it be considered, it will afford at once an uncommon proof of strength of genius, and an evenness of mind not to be ruffled. During a considerable part of the time in which he was employed upon this performance, he was without lodging, and often without food; nor had he any other conveniencies for study than the fields, or the street; in which he used to walk, and form his speeches, and afterwards step into a shop, beg for a few moments the use of pen and ink, and write down what he had composed, upon paper which he had picked up by accident.

Mr. Savage had been for some time distinguished by Aaron Hill, Esq; with very particular kindness; and on this occasion it was natural to apply to him, as an author of established reputation. He therefore sent this Tragedy to him, with a few verses, in which he desired his correction. Mr. Hill who was a man of unbounded humanity, and most accomplished politeness, readily complied with his request; and wrote the prologue and epilogue, in which he touches the circumstances [Transcriber's note: 'cirumstances' in original] of the author with great tenderness.

Mr. Savage at last brought his play upon the stage, but not till the chief actors had quitted it, and it was represented by what was then called the summer-company. In this Tragedy Mr. Savage himself performed the part of Sir Thomas Overbury, with so little success, that he always blotted out his name from the list of players, when a copy of his Tragedy was to be shewn to any of his friends. This play however procured him the notice and esteem of many persons of distinction, for some rays of genius glimmered thro' all the mists which poverty and oppression had spread over it. The whole profits of this performance, acted, printed, and dedicated, amounted to about 200 l. But the generosity of Mr. Hill did not end here; he promoted the subscription to his Miscellanies, by a very pathetic representation of the author's sufferings, printed in the Plain-Dealer, a periodical paper written by Mr. Hill. This generous effort in his favour soon produced him seventy-guineas, which were left for him at Button's, by some who commiserated his misfortunes.

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Mr. Hill not only promoted the subscription to the Miscellany, but furnished likewise the greatest part of the poems of which it is composed, and particularly the Happy Man, which he published as a specimen. To this Miscellany he wrote a preface, in which he gives an account of his mother's cruelty, in a very uncommon strain of humour, which the success of his subscriptions probably inspired.

Savage was now advancing in reputation, and though frequently involved in very perplexing necessities, appeared however to be gaining on mankind; when both his fame and his life were endangered, by an event of which it is not yet determined, whether it ought to be mentioned as a crime or a calamity. As this is by far the most interesting circumstance in the life of this unfortunate man, we shall relate the particulars minutely.

On the 20th of November 1727 Mr. Savage came from Richmond, where he had retired, that he might pursue his studies with less interruption, with an intent to discharge a lodging which he had in Westminster; and accidentally meeting two gentlemen of his acquaintance, whose names were Marchant and Gregory, he went in with them to a neighbouring Coffee-House, and sat drinking till it was late. He would willingly have gone to bed in the same house, but there was not room for the whole company, and therefore they agreed to ramble about the streets, and divert themselves with such amusements as should occur till morning. In their walk they happened unluckily to discover light in Robinson's Coffee-House, near Charing-Cross, and went in. Marchant with some rudeness demanded a room, and was told that there was a good fire in the next parlour, which the company were about to leave, being then paying their reckoning. Marchant not satisfied with this answer, rushed into the room, and was followed by his companions. He then petulantly placed himself between the company and the fire; and soon afterwards kicked down the table. This produced a quarrel, swords were drawn on both sides; and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage having wounded likewise a maid that held him, forced his way with Gregory out of the house; but being intimidated, and confus'd, without resolution, whether to fly, or stay, they were taken in a back court by one of the company, and some soldiers, whom he had called to his assistance.

When the day of the trial came on, the court was crowded in a very unusual manner, and the public appeared to interest itself as in a cause of general concern. The witnesses against Mr. Savage and his friends, were the woman who kept the house, which was a house of ill-fame, and her maid, the men who were in the room with Mr. Sinclair, and a woman of the town, who had been drinking with them, and with whom one of them had been seen in bed.

They swore in general, that Marchant gave the provocation, which Savage and Gregory drew their swords to justify; that Savage drew first, that he stabb'd Sinclair, when he was not in a posture of defence, or while Gregory commanded his sword; that after he had given the thrust he turned pale, and would have retired, but that the maid clung

round him, and one of the company endeavoured to detain him, from whom he broke, by cutting the maid on the head.

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Sinclair had declared several times before his death, for he survived that night, that he received his wound from Savage; nor did Savage at his trial deny the fact, but endeavoured partly to extenuate it, by urging the suddenness of the whole action, and the impossibility of any ill design, or premeditated malice, and partly to justify it by the necessity of self-defence, and the hazard of his own life, if he had lost that opportunity of giving the thrust. He observed that neither reason nor law obliged a man to wait for the blow which was threatened, and which if he should suffer, he might never be able to return; that it was always allowable to prevent an assault, and to preserve life, by taking away that of the adversary, by whom it was endangered.

With regard to the violence with which he endeavoured his escape, he declared it was not his design to fly from justice, or decline a trial, but to avoid the expences and severities of a prison, and that he intended to appear at the bar, without compulsion. This defence which took up more than an hour, was heard by the multitude that thronged the court, with the most attentive and respectful silence. Those who thought he ought not to be acquitted, owned that applause could not be refused him; and those who before pitied his misfortunes, now reverenced his abilities.

The witnesses who appeared against him were proved to be persons of such characters as did not entitle them to much credit; a common strumpet, a woman by whom such wretches were entertained, and a man by whom they were supported. The character of Savage was by several persons of distinction asserted to be that of a modest inoffensive man, not inclined to broils, or to insolence, and who had to that time been only known by his misfortunes and his wit.

Had his audience been his judges, he had undoubtedly been acquitted; but Mr. Page, who was then upon the bench, treated him with the most brutal severity, and in summing up the evidence endeavoured to exasperate the jury against him, and misrepresent his defence. This was a provocation, and an insult, which the prisoner could not bear, and therefore Mr. Savage resolutely asserted, that his cause was not candidly explained, and began to recapitulate what he had before said; but the judge having ordered him to be silent, which Savage treated with contempt, he commanded that he should be taken by force from the bar. The jury then heard the opinion of the judge, that good characters were of no weight against positive evidence, though they might turn the scale, where it was doubtful; and that though two men attack each other, the death of either is only manslaughter; but where one is the aggressor, as in the case before them, and in pursuance of his first attack kills the other, the law supposes the action, however sudden, to be malicious. The jury determined, that Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder, and Mr. Marchant who had no sword, only manslaughter.

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Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were conducted back to prison, where they were more closely confined, and loaded with irons of fifty pound weight. Savage had now no hopes of life but from the king's mercy, and can it be believed, that mercy his own mother endeavoured to intercept.

When Savage (as we have already observed) was first made acquainted with the story of his birth, he was so touched with tenderness for his mother, that he earnestly sought an opportunity to see her.

To prejudice the queen against him, she made use of an incident, which was omitted in the order of time, that it might be mentioned together with the purpose it was made to serve.

One evening while he was walking, as was his custom, in the street she inhabited, he saw the door of her house by accident open; he entered it, and finding no persons in the passage to prevent him, went up stairs to salute her. She discovered him before he could enter her chamber, alarmed the family with the most distressful out-cries, and when she had by her screams gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the house that villain, who had forced himself in upon her, and endeavoured to murder her.

This abominable falsehood his mother represented to the queen, or communicated it to some who were base enough to relate it, and so strongly prepossessed her majesty against this unhappy man, that for a long while she rejected all petitions that were offered in his favour.

Thus had Savage perished by the evidence of a bawd, of a strumpet, and of his mother; had not justice and compassion procured him an advocate, of a rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too eminent to be heard without being believed. The story of his sufferings reached the ear of the countess of Hertford, who engaged in his support with the tenderness and humanity peculiar to that amiable lady. She demanded an audience of the queen, and laid before her the whole series of his mother's cruelty, exposed the improbability of her accusation of murder, and pointed out all the circumstances of her unequall'd barbarity.

The interposition of this lady was so successful, that he was soon after admitted to bail, and on the 9th of March 1728, pleaded the king's pardon.[2]

Mr. Savage during his imprisonment, his trial, and the time in which he lay under sentence of death, behaved with great fortitude, and confirmed by his unshaken equality of mind, the esteem of those who before admired him for his abilities. Upon weighing all the circumstances relating to this unfortunate event, it plainly appears that the greatest guilt could not be imputed to Savage. His killing Sinclair, was rather rash than totally

dishonourable, for though Marchant had been the aggressor, who would not procure his friend from being over-powered by numbers?

Some time after he had obtained his liberty, he met in the street the woman of the town that had swore against him: She informed him that she was in distress, and with unparalleled assurance desired him to relieve her. He, instead of insulting her misery, and taking pleasure in the calamity of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury, and changing the only guinea he had, divided it equally between her and himself.

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Compassion seems indeed to have been among the few good qualities possessed by Savage; he never appeared inclined to take the advantage of weakness, to attack the defenceless, or to press upon the falling: Whoever was distressed was certain at last of his good wishes. But when his heart was not softened by the sight of misery, he was obstinate in his resentment, and did not quickly lose the remembrance of an injury. He always harboured the sharpest resentment against judge Page; and a short time before his death, he gratified it in a satire upon that severe magistrate.

When in conversation this unhappy subject was mentioned, Savage appeared neither to consider himself as a murderer, nor as a man wholly free from blood. How much, and how long he regretted it, appeared in a poem published many years afterwards, which the following lines will set in a very striking light.

Is chance a guilt, that my disast'rous heart,
For mischief never meant, must ever smart?
Can self-defence be sin?—Ah! plead no more!
What tho' no purpos'd malice stain'd thee o'er;
Had Heav'n befriended thy unhappy side,
Thou had'st not been provok'd, or thou had'st died.

Far be the guilt of home-shed blood from all,
On whom, unfought, imbroiling dangers fall.
Still the pale dead revives and lives to me,
To me through pity's eye condemn'd to see.
Remembrance veils his rage, but swells his fate,
Griev'd I forgive, and am grown cool too late,

Young and unthoughtful then, who knows one day,
What rip'ning virtues might have made their way?
He might, perhaps, his country's friend have prov'd,
Been gen'rous, happy, candid and belov'd;
He might have sav'd some worth now doom'd to fall,
And I, perchance, in him have murder'd all.

Savage had now obtained his liberty, but was without any settled means of support, and as he had lost all tenderness for his mother, who had thirsted for his blood, he resolved to lampoon her, to extort that pension by satire, which he knew she would never grant upon any principles of honour, or humanity. This expedient proved successful; whether shame still survived, though compassion was extinct, or whether her relations had more delicacy than herself, and imagined that some of the darts which satire might point at her, would glance upon them: Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promise to lay aside the design of exposing his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow him a pension of 200 l. a year.

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This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's life; for some time he had no reason to complain of fortune; his appearance was splendid, his expences large, and his acquaintance extensive. 'He was courted, says the author of his life, by all who endeavoured to be thought men of genius, and caressed by all that valued themselves upon a fine taste. To admire Mr. Savage was a proof of discernment, and to be acquainted with him was a title to poetical reputation. His presence was sufficient to make any place of entertainment popular; and his approbation and example constituted the fashion. So powerful is genius, when it is invested with the glitter of affluence. Men willingly pay to fortune that regard which they owe to merit, and are pleased when they have at once an opportunity of exercising their vanity, and practising their duty. This interval of prosperity furnished him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its highest gradation to its lowest.'

In this gay period of life, when he was surrounded by the affluence of pleasure, 1729, he published the Wanderer, a Moral Poem, of which the design is comprised in these lines.

I fly all public care, all venal strife,
To try the *Still*, compared with *Active Life*.
To prove by these the sons of men may owe,
The fruits of bliss to bursting clouds of woe,
That ev'n calamity by thought refin'd
Inspirits, and adorns the thinking mind.

And more distinctly in the following passage:

By woe the soul to daring actions swells,
By woe in plaintless patience it excells;
From patience prudent, clear experience springs,
And traces knowledge through the course of things.
Thence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, success,
Renown—Whate'er men covet or caress.

This performance was always considered by Mr. Savage as his master-piece; but Mr. Pope, when he asked his opinion of it, told him, that he read it once over, and was not displeased with it, that it gave him more pleasure at the second perusal, and delighted him still more at the third. From a poem so successfully written, it might be reasonably expected that he should have gained considerable advantages; but the case was otherwise; he sold the copy only for ten guineas. That he got so small a price for so finished a poem, was not to be imputed either to the necessity of the writer, or to the avarice of the bookseller. He was a slave to his passions, and being then in the pursuit of some trifling gratification, for which he wanted a supply of money, he sold his poem to the first bidder, and perhaps for the first price which was proposed, and probably would have been content with less, if less had been offered. It was addressed to the earl of

Tyrconnel, not only in the first lines, but in a formal dedication, filled with the highest strains of panegyric. These praises in a short time he found himself inclined to retract, being discarded by the man on whom he had bestowed them, and whom he said, he then discovered, had not deserved them.

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Of this quarrel, lord Tyrconnel and Mr. Savage assigned very different reasons. Lord Tyrconnel charged Savage with the most licentious behaviour, introducing company into his house, and practising with them the most irregular frolics, and committing all the outrages of drunkenness. Lord Tyrconnel farther alledged against Savage, that the books of which he himself had made him a present, were sold or pawned by him, so that he had often the mortification to see them exposed to sale upon stalls.

Savage, it seems, was so accustomed to live by expedients, that affluence could not raise him above them. He often went to the tavern and trusted the payment of his reckoning to the liberality of his company; and frequently of company to whom he was very little known. This conduct indeed, seldom drew him into much inconvenience, or his conversation and address were so pleasing, that few thought the pleasure which they received from him, dearly purchased by paying for his wine. It was his peculiar happiness that he scarcely ever found a stranger, whom he did not leave a friend; but it must likewise be added, that he had not often a friend long, without obliging him to become an enemy.

Mr. Savage on the other hand declared, that lord Tyrconnel quarrelled with him because he would not subtract from his own luxury and extravagance what he had promised to allow him; and that his resentment was only a plea for the violation of his promise: He asserted that he had done nothing which ought to exclude him from that subsistence which he thought not so much a favour as a debt, since it was offered him upon conditions, which he had never broken; and that his only fault was, that he could not be supported upon nothing.

Savage's passions were strong, among which his resentment was not the weakest; and as gratitude was not his constant virtue, we ought not too hastily to give credit to all his prejudice asserts against (his once praised patron) lord Tyrconnel.

During his continuance with the lord Tyrconnel, he wrote the Triumph of Health and Mirth, on the recovery of the lady Tyrconnel, from a languishing illness. This poem is built upon a beautiful fiction. Mirth overwhelmed with sickness for the death of a favourite, takes a flight in quest of her sister Health, whom she finds reclined upon the brow of a lofty mountain, amidst the fragrance of a perpetual spring, and the breezes of the morning sporting about her. Being solicited by her sister Mirth, she readily promises her assistance, flies away in a cloud, and impregnates the waters of Bath with new virtues, by which the sickness of Belinda is relieved.

While Mr. Savage continued in high life, he did not let slip any opportunity to examine whether the merit of the great is magnified or diminished by the medium through which it is contemplated, and whether great men were selected for high stations, or high stations made great men. The result of his observations is not much to the advantage of those in power.

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But the golden aera of Savage's life was now at an end, he was banished the table of lord Tyrconnel, and turned again a-drift upon the world. While he was in prosperity, he did not behave with a moderation likely to procure friends amongst his inferiors. He took an opportunity in the sun-shine of his fortune, to revenge himself of those creatures, who, as they are the worshippers of power, made court to him, whom they had before contemptuously treated. This assuming behaviour of Savage was not altogether unnatural. He had been avoided and despised by those despicable sycophants, who were proud of his acquaintance when railed to eminence. In this case, who would not spurn such mean Beings? His degradation therefore from the condition which he had enjoyed with so much superiority, was considered by many as an occasion of triumph. Those who had courted him without success, had an opportunity to return the contempt they had suffered.

Mean time, Savage was very diligent in exposing the faults of lord Tyrconnel, over whom he obtained at least this advantage, that he drove him first to the practice of outrage and violence; for he was so much provoked by his wit and virulence, that he came with a number of attendants, to beat him at a coffee-house; but it happened that he had left the place a few minutes before: Mr. Savage went next day to repay his visit at his own house, but was prevailed upon by his domestics to retire without insisting upon seeing him.

He now thought himself again at full liberty to expose the cruelty of his mother, and therefore about this time published THE BASTARD, a Poem remarkable for the vivacity in the beginning, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of base birth, and the pathetic sentiments at the close; where he recounts the real calamities which he suffered by the crime of his parents.

The verses which have an immediate relation to those two circumstances, we shall here insert.

In gayer hours, when high my fancy ran,
The Muse exulting thus her lay began.

Bless'd be the Bastard's birth! thro' wond'rous ways,
He shines excentric like a comet's blaze.
No sickly fruit of faint compliance he;
He! stamp'd in nature's mint with extasy!
He lives to build, not boast a gen'rous race,
No tenth transmitter of a foolish face.
His daring hope, no fire's example bounds;
His first-born nights no prejudice confounds.
He, kindling from within requires no flame,
He glories in a bastard's glowing name.
—Nature's unbounded son he stands alone,

His heart unbiass'd, and his mind his own.
—O mother! yet no mother!—'Tis to you
My thanks for such distinguish'd claims are due.
—What had I lost if conjugally kind,
By nature hating, yet by vows confin'd,
You had faint drawn me with a form alone,
A lawful lump of life, by force your own!
—I had been born your dull domestic heir,
Load of your life and motive of your care;
Perhaps been poorly rich and meanly great;
The slave of pomp, a cypher in the state:
Lordly neglectful of a worth unknown,
And slumb'ring in a feat by chance my own,

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After mentioning the death of Sinclair, he goes on thus:

—Where shall my hope find rest?—No mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer;
No father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, and from vice refrain'd.

This poem had extraordinary success, great numbers were immediately dispersed, and editions were multiplied with unusual rapidity.

One circumstance attended the publication, which Savage used to relate with great satisfaction. His mother, to whom the poem with due reverence was inscribed, happened then to be at Bath, where she could not conveniently retire from censure, or conceal herself from observation; and no sooner did the reputation of the poem begin to spread, than she heard it repeated in all places of concourse; nor could she enter the assembly rooms, or cross the walks, without being saluted with some lines from the Bastard. She therefore left Bath with the utmost haste, to shelter herself in the crowds of London. Thus Savage had the satisfaction of finding, that tho' he could not reform, he could yet punish his mother.

Some time after Mr. Savage took a resolution of applying to the queen, that having once given him life, she would enable him to support it, and therefore published a short poem on her birth day, to which he gave the odd title of Volunteer-Laureat. He had not at that time one friend to present his poem at court, yet the Queen, notwithstanding this act of ceremony was wanting, in a few days after publication, sent him a bank note of fifty-pounds, by lord North and Guildford; and her permission to write annually on the same subject, and that he should yearly receive the like present, till something better should be done for him. After this he was permitted to present one of his annual poems to her majesty, and had the honour of kissing her hand.

When the dispute between the bishop of London, and the chancellor, furnished for some time the chief topic of conversation, Mr. Savage who was an enemy to all claims of ecclesiastical power, engaged with his usual zeal against the bishop. In consequence of his aversion to the dominion of superstitious churchmen, he wrote a poem called The Progress of a Divine, in which he conducts a profligate priest thro' all the gradations of wickedness, from a poor curacy in the country, to the highest preferment in the church; and after describing his behaviour in every station, enumerates that this priest thus accomplished, found at last a patron in the bishop of London.

The clergy were universally provoked with this satire, and Savage was censured in the weekly Miscellany, with a severity he did not seem inclined to forget: But a return of invective was not thought a sufficient punishment. The court of King's-Bench was moved against him, and he was obliged to return an answer to a charge of obscenity. It was urged in his defence, that obscenity was only criminal, when it was intended to

promote the practice of vice; but that Mr. Savage had only introduced obscene ideas, with a view of exposing them to detestation, and of amending the age, by shewing the deformity of wickedness. This plea was admitted, and Sir Philip York, now lord Chancellor, who then presided in that court, dismissed the information, with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savage's writings.

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He was still in his usual exigencies, having no certain support, but the pension allowed him from the Queen, which was not sufficient to last him the fourth part of the year. His conduct, with regard to his pension, was very particular. No sooner had he changed the bill, than he vanished from the sight of all his acquaintances, and lay, for some time, out of the reach of his most intimate friends. At length he appeared again pennyless as before, but never informed any person where he had been, nor was his retreat ever discovered. This was his constant practice during the whole time he received his pension. He regularly disappeared, and returned. He indeed affirmed that he retired to study, and that the money supported him in solitude for many months, but his friends declared, that the short time in which it was spent, sufficiently confuted his own account of his conduct.

His perpetual indigence, politeness, and wit, still raised him friends, who were desirous to set him above want, and therefore sollicited Sir Robert Walpole in his favour, but though promises were given, and Mr. Savage trusted, and was trusted, yet these added but one mortification more to the many he had suffered. His hopes of preferment from that statesman; issued in a disappointment; upon which he published a poem in the Gentleman's Magazine, entitled, The Poet's Dependance on a Statesman; in which he complains of the severe usage he met with. But to despair was no part of the character of Savage; when one patronage failed, he had recourse to another. The Prince was now extremely popular, and had very liberally rewarded the merit of some writers, whom Mr. Savage did not think superior to himself; and therefore he resolved to address a poem to him.

For this purpose he made choice of a subject, which could regard only persons of the highest rank, and greatest affluence, and which was therefore proper for a poem intended to procure the patronage of a prince; namely, public spirit, with regard to public works. But having no friend upon whom he could prevail to present it to the Prince, he had no other method of attracting his observation, than by publishing frequent advertisements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous upon other occasions. His poverty still pressing, he lodged as much by accident, as he dined; for he generally lived by chance, eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintance, from which, the meanness of his dress often excluded him, when the politeness, and variety of his conversation, would have been thought a sufficient recompence for his entertainment. Having no lodging, he passed the night often in mean houses, which are set open for any casual wanderers; sometimes in cellars, amongst the riot and filth of the meanest and most profligate of the rabble; and sometimes when he was totally without money, walked about the streets till he was weary, and lay down in the summer upon a bulk, and in the winter, with his associates in poverty, among the ashes of a glass-house.

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In this manner were passed those days and nights, which nature had enabled him to have employed in elevated speculations. On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glass-house, among thieves and beggars, was to be found the author of The Wanderer, the man, whose remarks in life might have assisted the statesman, whose ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moralist, whose eloquence might have influenced senates, and whose delicacy might have polished courts. His distresses, however afflictive, never dejected him. In his lowest sphere he wanted not spirit to assert the natural dignity of wit, and was always ready to repress that insolence, which superiority of fortune incited, and to trample that reputation which rose upon any other basis, than that of merit. He never admitted any gross familiarity, or submitted to be treated otherwise than as an equal.

Once, when he was without lodging, meat, or cloaths, one of his friends, a man indeed not remarkable for moderation in prosperity, left a message, that he desired to see him about nine in the morning. Savage knew that his intention was to assist him, but was very much disgusted, that he should presume to prescribe the hour of his attendance; and therefore rejected his kindness.

The greatest hardships of poverty were to Savage, not the want of lodging, or of food, but the neglect and contempt it drew upon him. He complained that as his affairs grew desperate, he found his reputation for capacity visibly decline; that his opinion in questions of criticism was no longer regarded, when his coat was out of fashion; and that those, who in the interval of his prosperity, were always encouraging him to great undertakings, by encomiums on his genius, and assurances of success, now received any mention of his designs with coldness, and, in short, allowed him to be qualified for no other performance than volunteer-laureat. Yet even this kind of contempt never depressed him, for he always preserved a steady confidence in his own capacity, and believed nothing above his reach, which he should at any time earnestly endeavour to attain.

This life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet embittered in 1738 with new distresses. The death of the Queen deprived him of all the prospects of preferment, with which he had so long entertained his imagination. But even against this calamity there was an expedient at hand. He had taken a resolution of writing a second tragedy upon the story of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which he made a total alteration of the plan, added new incidents, and introduced new characters, so that it was a new tragedy, not a revival of the former. With the profits of this scheme, when finished, he fed his imagination, but proceeded slowly in it, and, probably, only employed himself upon it, when he could find no other amusement. Upon the Queen's death it was expected of him, that he should honour her memory with a funeral panegyric: He was thought culpable for omitting it; but on her birth-day, next year, he gave a proof of the power of genius and judgment. He knew that the track of elegy had been so long beaten, that it was impossible to travel in it, without treading the footsteps of those who had gone

before him, and therefore it was necessary that he might distinguish himself from the herd of encomists, to find out some new walk of funeral panegyric.

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This difficult task he performed in such a manner, that this poem may be justly ranked the best of his own, and amongst the best pieces that the death of Princes has produced. By transferring the mention of her death, to her birth-day, he has formed a happy combination of topics, which any other man would have thought it difficult to connect in one view; but the relation between them appears natural; and it may be justly said, that what no other man could have thought on, now seems scarcely possible for any man to miss. In this poem, when he takes occasion to mention the King, he modestly gives him a hint to continue his pension, which, however, he did not receive at the usual time, and there was some reason to think that it would be discontinued. He did not take those methods of retrieving his interest, which were most likely to succeed, for he went one day to Sir Robert Walpole's levee, and demanded the reason of the distinction that was made between him and the other pensioners of the Queen, with a degree of roughness which, perhaps, determined him to withdraw, what had only been delayed. This last misfortune he bore not only with decency, but cheerfulness, nor was his gaiety clouded, even by this disappointment, though he was, in a short time, reduced to the lowest degree of distress, and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another instance of the insurmountable obstinacy of his spirit. His cloaths were worn out, and he received notice, that at a coffee-house some cloaths and linen were left for him. The person who sent them did not, we believe, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, that he might spare the perplexity of acknowledging the benefit; but though the offer was so far generous, it was made with some neglect of ceremonies, which Mr. Savage so much resented, that he refused the present, and declined to enter the house 'till the cloaths, which were designed for him, were taken away.

His distress was now publicly known, and his friends therefore thought it proper to concert some measures for his relief. The scheme proposed was, that he should retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raised by subscription, on which he was to live privately in a cheap place, without aspiring any more to affluence, or having any farther sollicitude for fame.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from those of his friends; for they proposed that he should continue an exile from London for ever, and spend all the remaining part of his life at Swansea; but he designed only to take the opportunity which their scheme offered him, of retreating for a short time, that he might prepare his play for the stage, and his other works for the press, and then to return to London to exhibit his tragedy, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

After many sollicitations and delays, a subscription was at last raised, which did not amount to fifty pounds a year, though twenty were paid by one gentleman. He was, however, satisfied, and willing to retire, and was convinced that the allowance, though scanty, would be more than sufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid oeconomist.

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Full of these salutary resolutions, he quitted London in 1739. He was furnished with fifteen guineas, and was told, that they would be sufficient, not only for the expence of his journey, but for his support in Wales for some time; and that there remained but little more of the first collection. He promised a strict adherence to his maxims of parsimony, and went away in the stage coach; nor did his friends expect to hear from him, 'till he informed them of his arrival at Swansea. But, when they least expected, arrived a letter dated the 14th day after his departure, in which he sent them word, that he was yet upon the road, and without money, and that he therefore could not proceed without a remittance. They then sent him the money that was in their hands, with which he was enabled to reach Bristol, from whence he was to go to Swansea by water. At Bristol he found an embargo laid upon the shipping, so that he could not immediately obtain a passage, and being therefore obliged to stay there some time, he, with his usual felicity, ingratiated himself with many of the principal inhabitants, was invited to their houses, distinguished at their public feasts, and treated with a regard that gratified his vanity, and therefore easily engaged his affection.

After some stay at Bristol, he retired to Swansea, the place originally proposed for his residence, where he lived about a year very much disatisfied with the diminution of his salary, for the greatest part of the contributors, irritated by Mr. Savage's letters, which they imagined treated them contemptuously, withdrew their subscriptions. At this place, as in every other, he contracted an acquaintance with those who were most distinguished in that country, among whom, he has celebrated Mr. Powel, and Mrs. Jones, by some verses inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine. Here he compleated his tragedy, of which two acts were wanting when he left London, and was desirous of coming to town to bring it on the stage. This design was very warmly opposed, and he was advised by his chief benefactor, who was no other than Mr. Pope, to put it in the hands of Mr. Thomson and Mr. Mallet, that it might be fitted for the stage, and to allow his friends to receive the profits, out of which an annual pension should be paid him. This proposal he rejected with the utmost contempt. He was by no means convinced that the judgment of those to whom he was required to submit, was superior to his own. He was now determined, as he expressed, to be no longer kept in leading-strings, and had no elevated idea of his bounty, who proposed to pension him out of the profits of his own labours. He soon after this quitted Swansea, and, with an intent to return to London, went to Bristol, where a repetition of the kindness which he had formerly found, invited him to stay. He was not only caressed, and treated, but had a collection made for him of about thirty pounds, with which it had been happy if he had immediately departed for London; but he never considered that such proofs of kindness were not often to be expected, and that this ardour of benevolence was, in a great degree, the effect of novelty.

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Another part of his misconduct was, the practice of prolonging his visits to unseasonable hours, and disconcerting all the families into which he was admitted. This was an error in a place of commerce, which all the charms of conversion could not compensate; for what trader would purchase such airy satisfaction, with the loss of solid gain, which must be the consequence of midnight merriment, as those hours which were gained at night were generally lost in the morning? Distress at last stole upon him by imperceptible degrees; his conduct had already wearied some of those who were at first enamoured of his conversation; but he still might have devolved to others, whom he might have entertained with equal success, had not the decay of his cloaths made it no longer consistent with decency to admit him to their tables, or to associate with him in public places. He now began to find every man from home, at whose house he called; and was therefore no longer able to procure the necessaries of life, but wandered about the town, slighted and neglected, in quest of a dinner, which, he did not always obtain. To compleat his misery, he was obliged to withdraw from the small number of friends from whom he had still reason to hope for favours. His custom was to lie in bed the greatest part of the day, and to go out in the dark with the utmost privacy, and after having paid his visit, return again before morning to his lodging, which was in the garret of an obscure inn.

Being thus excluded on one hand, and confined on the other, he suffered the utmost extremities of poverty, and often waited so long, that he was seized with faintness, and had lost his appetite, not being able to bear the smell of meat, ’till the action of his stomach was restored by a cordial.

He continued to bear these severe pressures, ’till the landlady of a coffee-house, to whom he owed about eight pounds, compleated his wretchedness. He was arrested by order of this woman, and conducted to the house of a Sheriff’s Officer, where he remained some time at a great expence, in hopes of finding bail. This expence he was enabled to support by a present from Mr. Nash of Bath, who, upon hearing of his late mis-fortune, sent him five guineas. No friends would contribute to release him from prison at the expence of eight pounds, and therefore he was removed to Newgate. He bore this misfortune with an unshaken fortitude, and indeed the treatment he met with from Mr. Dagg, the keeper of the prison, greatly softened the rigours of his confinement. He was supported by him at his own table, without any certainty of recompence; had a room to himself, to which he could at any time retire from all disturbance; was allowed to stand at the door of the prison, and sometimes taken out into the fields; so that he suffered fewer hardships in the prison, than he had been accustomed to undergo the greatest part of his life. Virtue is undoubtedly most laudable in that state which makes it most difficult; and therefore the humanity of the gaoler certainly deserves this public attestation.

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While Mr. Savage was in prison, he began, and almost finished a satire, which he entitled London and Bristol Delineated; in order to be revenged of those who had had no more generosity for a man, to whom they professed friendship, than to suffer him to languish in a gaol for eight pounds. He had now ceased from corresponding with any of his subscribers, except Mr. Pope, who yet continued to remit him twenty pounds a year, which he had promised, and by whom he expected to be in a very short time enlarged; because he had directed the keeper to enquire after the state of his debts.

However he took care to enter his name according to the forms of the court, that the creditors might be obliged to make him some allowance, if he was continued a prisoner; and when on that occasion he appeared in the Hall, was treated with very unusual respect.

But the resentment of the City was afterwards raised, by some accounts that had been spread of the satire, and he was informed, that some of the Merchants intended to pay the allowance which the law required, and to detain him a prisoner at their own expence. This he treated as an empty menace, and had he not been prevented by death, he would have hastened the publication of the satire, only to shew how much he was superior to their insults.

When he had been six months in prison, he received from Mr. Pope, in whose kindness he had the greatest confidence, and on whose assistance he chiefly depended, a letter that contained a charge of very atrocious ingratitude, drawn up in such terms as sudden resentment dictated. Mr. Savage returned a very solemn protestation of his innocence, but however appeared much disturbed at the accusation. Some days afterwards he was seized with a pain in his back and side, which, as it was not violent, was not suspected to be dangerous; but growing daily more languid and dejected, on the 25th of July he confined himself to his room, and a fever seized his spirits. The symptoms grew every day more formidable, but his condition did not enable him to procure any assistance. The last time the keeper saw him was on July 31, when Savage, seeing him at his bed-side, said, with uncommon earnestness, I have something to say to you, sir, but, after a pause, moved his hand in a melancholy manner, and finding himself unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, said, ’tis gone. The keeper soon after left him, and the next morning he died. He was buried in the church-yard of St. Peter, at the expence of the keeper.

Such were the life and death of this unfortunate poet; a man equally distinguished by his virtues and vices, and, at once, remarkable for his weaknesses and abilities. He was of a middle stature, of a thin habit of body, a long visage, coarse features, and a melancholy aspect; of a grave and manly deportment, a solemn dignity of mien, but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, softened into an engaging easiness of manners. His walk

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was slow, and his voice tremulous and mournful. He was easily excited to smiles, but very seldom provoked to laughter. His judgment was eminently exact, both with regard to writings and to men. The knowledge of life was his chief attainment. He was born rather to bear misfortunes greatly, than to enjoy prosperity with moderation. He discovered an amazing firmness of spirit, in spurning those who presumed to dictate to him in the lowest circumstances of misery; but we never can reconcile the idea of true greatness of mind, with the perpetual inclination Savage discovered to live upon the bounty of his friends. To struggle for independence appears much more laudable, as well as a higher instance of spirit, than to be the pensioner of another.

As Savage had seen so much of the world, and was capable of so deep a penetration into nature, it was strange he could not form some scheme of a livelihood, more honourable than that of a poetical mendicant: his prosecuting any plan of life with diligence, would have thrown more lustre on his character, than, all his works, and have raised our ideas of the greatness of his spirit, much, beyond the conduct we have already seen. If poverty is so great an evil as to expose a man to commit actions, at which he afterwards blushes, to avoid this poverty should be the continual care of every man; and he, who lets slip every opportunity of doing so, is more entitled to admiration than pity, should he bear his sufferings nobly.

Mr. Savage's temper, in consequence of the dominion of his passions, was uncertain and capricious. He was easily engaged, and easily disgusted; but he is accused of retaining his hatred more tenaciously than his benevolence. He was compassionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of humanity; but when he was provoked, and very small offences were sufficient to provoke him, he would prosecute his revenge with the utmost acrimony, 'till his passion had subsided. His friendship was therefore of little value, for he was zealous in the support, or vindication of those whom he loved, yet it was always dangerous to trust him, because he considered himself as discharged by the first quarrel, from all ties of honour and gratitude. He would even betray those secrets, which, in the warmth of confidence, had been imparted to him. His veracity was often questioned, and not without reason. When he loved any man, he suppressed all his faults, and when he had been offended by him, concealed all his virtues. But his characters were generally true, so far as he proceeded, though it cannot be denied, but his partiality might have sometimes the effect of falshood.

In the words of the celebrated writer of his life, from whom, as we observed in the beginning, we have extracted the account here given, we shall conclude this unfortunate person's Memoirs, which were so various as to afford large scope for an able biographer, and which, by this gentleman, have been represented with so great a mastery, and force of penetration, that the Life of Savage, as written by him, is an excellent model for this species of writing.

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’This relation (says he) will not be wholly without its use, if those, who languish under any part of his sufferings, should be enabled to fortify their patience, by reflecting that they feel only those afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or those, who in confidence of superior capacities, or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, shall be reminded that nothing can supply the want of prudence, and that negligence and irregularity long continued, will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.’

FOOTNOTES:
[1] However slightly the author of Savage’s life passes over the less amiable characteristics of that unhappy man; yet we cannot but discover therein, that vanity and ingratitude were the principal ingredients in poor Savage’s composition; nor was his veracity greatly to be depended on. No wonder therefore, if the good-natur’d writer suffer’d his better understanding to be misled, in some accounts relative to the poet we are now speaking of.—Among many, we shall at present only take notice of the following, which makes too conspicuous a figure to pass by entirely unnoticed.

In this life of Savage ’tis related, that Mrs. Oldfield was very fond of Mr. Savage’s conversation, and allowed him an annuity, during her life, of 50 l.—These facts are equally ill-grounded:— There was no foundation for them. That Savage’s misfortunes pleaded for pity, and had the desired effect on Mrs. Oldfield’s compassion, is certain:—-But she so much disliked the man, and disapproved his conduct, that she never admitted him to her conversation, nor suffer’d him to enter her house. She, indeed, often relieved him with such donations, as spoke her generous disposicion.—But this was on the sollicitation of friends, who frequently set his calamities before her in the most piteous light; and from a principle of humanity, she became not a little instrumental in saving his life.

[2] Lord Tyrconnel delivered a petition to his majesty in Savage’s behalf: And Mrs. Oldfield sollicited Sir Robert Walpole on his account. This joint-interest procured him his pardon.

* * * * *

Dr. THOMAS SHERIDAN.

was born in the county of Cavan, where his father kept a public house. A gentleman, who had a regard for his father, and who observed the son gave early indications of genius above the common standard, sent him to the college of Dublin, and contributed towards the finishing his education there. Our poet received very great encouragement upon his setting out in life, and was esteemed a fortunate man. The agreeable humour, and the unreserved pleasantry of his temper, introduced him to the acquaintance, and

established him in the esteem, of the wits of that age. He set up a school in Dublin, which, at one time, was so considerable as to produce an income of a thousand pounds a year, and possessed besides some good livings, and bishops leases, which are extremely lucrative.

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Mr. Sheridan married the daughter of Mr. Macpherson, a Scots gentleman, who served in the wars under King William, and, during the troubles of Ireland, became possessed of a small estate of about 40 l. per annum, called Quilca. This little fortune devolved on Mrs. Sheridan, which enabled her husband to set up a school. Dr. Sheridan, amongst his virtues, could not number oeconomy; on the contrary, he was remarkable for profusion and extravagance, which exposed him to such inconveniences, that he was obliged to mortgage all he had. His school daily declined, and by an act of indiscretion, he was stript of the best living he then enjoyed. On the birth-day of his late Majesty, the Dr. having occasion to preach, chose for his text the following words,

Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

This procured him the name of a Jacobite, or a disaffected person, a circumstance sufficient to ruin him in his ecclesiastical capacity. His friends, who were disposed to think favourably of him, were for softning the epithet of Jacobite into Tory, imputing his choice of that text, rather to whim and humour, than any settled prejudice against his Majesty, or the government; but this unseasonable pleasantry was not so easily passed over, and the Dr. had frequent occasion to repent the choice of his text.

Unhappy Sheridan! he lived to want both money and friends. He spent his money and time merrily among the gay and the great, and was an example, that there are too many who can relish a man's humour, who have not so quick a sense of his misfortunes. The following story should not have been told, were it not true.

In the midst of his misfortunes, when the demands of his creditors obliged him to retirement, he went to dean Swift, and sollicited a lodging for a few days, 'till by a proper composition he might be restored to his freedom. The dean retired early to rest. The Dr. fatigued, but not inclinable to go so soon to bed, sent the servant to the dean, desiring the key of the cellar, that he might have a bottle of wine. The dean, in one of his odd humours, returned for answer, he promised to find him a lodging, but not in wine; and refused to send the key. The Dr. being thunderstruck at this unexpected incivility, the tears burst from his eyes; he quitted the house, and we believe never after repeated the visit.

Dr. Sheridan died in the year 1738, in the 55th year of his age. The following epitaph for him was handed about.

Beneath this marble stone here lies
Poor Tom, more merry much than wise;
Who only liv'd for two great ends,
To spend his cash, and lose his friends:
His darling wife of him bereft,
Is only griev'd—there's nothing left.

When the account of his death was inserted in the papers, it was done in the following particular terms;

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’September 10, died the revd. Dr. Thomas Sheridan of Dublin. He was a great linguist, a most sincere friend, a delightful companion, and the best Schoolmaster in Europe: He took the greatest care of the morals of the young gentlemen, who had the happiness of being bred up under him; and it was remarked, that none of his scholars ever was an Atheist, or a Free-Thinker.’

We cannot more successfully convey to the reader a true idea of Dr. Sheridan, than by the two following quotations from Lord Orrery in his life of Swift, in which he occasionally mentions Swift’s friend.

’Swift was naturally fond of seeing his works in print, and he was encouraged in this fondness by his friend Dr. Sheridan, who had the Cacoethea Scribendi, to the greatest degree, and was continually letting off squibs, rockets, and all sorts of little fire-works from the press; by which means he offended many particular persons, who, although they stood in awe of Swift, held Sheridan at defiance. The truth is, the poor doctor by nature the most peacable, inoffensive man alive, was in a continual state of warfare with the Minor Poets, and they revenged themselves; or, in the style of Mr. Bays, often gave him flash for flash, and singed his feathers. The affection between Theseus and Perithous was not greater than the affection between Swift and Sheridan: But the friendship that cemented the two ancient heroes probably commenced upon motives very different from those which united the two modern divines.’’Dr. Sheridan was a school-master, and in many instances, perfectly well adapted for that station. He was deeply vers’d in the Greek and Roman languages; and in their customs and antiquities. He had that kind of good nature, which absence of mind, indolence of body, and carelessness of fortune produce: And although not over-strict in his own conduct, yet he took care of the morality of his scholars, whom he sent to the university, remarkably well founded in all kind of classical learning, and not ill instructed in the social duties of life. He was slovenly, indigent, and chearful. He knew books much better than men; And he knew the value of money least of all. In this situation, and with this disposition, Swift fattened upon him as upon a prey, with which he intended to regale himself, whenever his appetite should prompt him. Sheridan was therefore certainly within his reach; and the only time he was permitted to go beyond the limits of his chain, was to take possession of a living in the county of Corke, which had been bestowed upon him, by the then lord lieutenant of Ireland, the present earl of Granville. Sheridan, in one fatal moment, or by one fatal text, effected his own ruin. You will find the story told by Swift himself, in the fourth volume of his works [page 289. in a pamphlet intitled a Vindication of his Excellency John Lord Carteret, from the charge of favouring none but Tories, High-Churchmen, and Jacobites.]

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So that here I need only tell you, that this ill-starred, good-natur'd, improvident man returned to Dublin, unhinged from all favour at court, and even banished from the Castle: But still he remained a punster, a quibbler, a fiddler, and a wit. Not a day passed without a rebus, an anagram, or a madrigal. His pen and his fiddle-stick were in continual motion; and yet to little or no purpose, if we may give credit to the following verses, which shall serve as the conclusion of his poetical character.'

With music and poetry equally bless'd[1],
A bard thus Apollo most humbly address'd,
Great author of poetry, music, and light,
Instructed by thee, I both fiddle and write:

Yet unheeded I scrape, or I scribble all day,
My tunes are neglected, my verse flung away.
Thy substantive here, Vice Apollo [2] disdains,
To vouch for my numbers, or list to my strains.
Thy manual sign he refuses to put
To the airs I produce from the pen, or the gut:
Be thou then propitious, great Phoebus, and grant
Belief, or reward to my merit, or want,
Tho' the Dean and Delany [3] transcendently shine,
O! brighten one solo, or sonnet of mine,
Make one work immortal, 'tis all I request;
Apollo look'd pleas'd, and resolving to jest,
Replied—Honest friend, I've consider'd your case.
Nor dislike your unmeaning and innocent face.
Your petition I grant, the boon is not great,
Your works shall continue, and here's the receipt;
On Roundo's[4] hereafter, your fiddle-strings spend.
Write verses in circles, they never shall end.

Dr. Sheridan gained some reputation by his Prose-translation of Persius; to which he added a Collection of the best Notes of the Editors of this intricate Satyrist, who are in the best esteem; together with many judicious Notes of his own. This work was printed in 12mo. for A. Millar, 1739.

One of the volumes of Swift's Miscellanies consists almost entirely of Letters between the Dean and the Dr.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Not a first rate genius, or extraordinary proficient, in either.

[2] Dr. Swift.

[3] Now Dean of Downe.

[4] A Song, or peculiar kind of Poetry, which returns to the beginning of the first verse, and continues in a perpetual rotation.

* * * * *

The Revd. Dr. JONATHAN SWIFT.

When the life of a person, whose wit and genius raised him to an eminence among writers of the first class, is written by one of uncommon abilities:—One possess'd of the power (as Shakespear says) *of looking quite thro' the deeds of men*; we are furnished with one of the highest entertainments a man can enjoy:—Such an author also presents us with a true picture of human nature, which affords us the most ample instruction:—-He discerns

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the passions which play about the heart; and while he is astonished with the high efforts of genius, is at the same time enabled to observe nature as it really is, and how distant from perfection mankind are in this world, even in the most refined state of humanity. Such an intellectual feast they enjoy, who peruse the life of this great author, drawn by the masterly and impartial hand of lord Orrery. We there discern the greatness and weakness of Dean Swift; we discover the patriot, the genius, and the humourist; the peevish master, the ambitious statesman, the implacable enemy, and the warm friend. His mixed qualities and imperfections are there candidly marked: His errors and virtues are so strongly represented, that while we reflect upon his virtues, we forget he had so many failings; and when we consider his errors, we are disposed to think he had fewer virtues. With such candour and impartiality has lord Orrery drawn the portrait of Swift; and, as every biographer ought to do, has shewn us the man as he really was.

Upon this account given by his lordship, is the following chiefly built. It shall be our business to take notice of the most remarkable passages of the life of Swift; to omit no incidents that can be found concerning him, and as our propos'd bounds will not suffer us to enlarge, we shall endeavour to display, with as much conciseness as possible, those particulars which may be most entertaining to the reader.

He was born in Dublin, November the 30th, 1667, and was carried into England soon after his birth, by his nurse, who being obliged to cross the sea, and having a nurse's fondness for the child at her breast, convey'd him ship-board without the knowledge of his mother or relations, and kept him with her at Whitehaven in Cumberland, during her residence about three-years in that place. This extraordinary event made his return seem as if he had been transplanted to Ireland, rather than that he owed his original existence to that soil. But perhaps he tacitly hoped to inspire different nations with a contention for his birth; at least in his angry moods, when he was peevish and provoked at the ingratitude of Ireland, he was frequently heard to say, 'I am not of this vile country, I am an Englishman.' Such an assertion tho' meant figuratively, was often received literally; and the report was still farther propagated by Mr. Pope, who in one of his letters has this expression. 'Tho' one, or two of our friends are gone, since you saw your native country, there remain a few.' But doctor Swift, in his cooler hours, never denied his country: On the contrary he frequently mentioned, and pointed out, the house where he was born.

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The other suggestion concerning the illegitimacy of his birth, is equally false. Sir William Temple was employed as a minister abroad, from the year 1665, to the year 1670; first at Brussels, and afterwards at the Hague, as appears by his correspondence with the earl of Arlington, and other ministers of state. So that Dr. Swift's mother, who never crossed the sea, except from England to Ireland, was out of all possibility of a personal correspondence with Sir William Temple, till some years after her son's birth. Dr. Swift's ancestors were persons of decent and reputable characters. His grand-father was the Revd. Mr. Thomas Swift, vicar of Goodridge, near Ross in Herefordshire. He enjoyed a paternal estate in that county, which is still in possession of his great-grandson, Dean Swift, Esq; He died in the year 1658, leaving five sons, Godwin, Thomas, Dryden, Jonathan, and Adam.

Two of them only, Godwin and Jonathan, left sons. Jonathan married Mrs. Abigail Erick of Leicestershire, by whom he had one daughter and a son. The daughter was born in the first year of Mr. Swift's marriage; but he lived not to see the birth of his son, who was born two months after his death, and became afterwards the famous Dean of St. Patrick's.

The greatest part of Mr. Jonathan Swift's income had depended upon agencies, and other employments of that kind; so that most of his fortune perished with him[1], and the remainder being the only support that his widow could enjoy, the care, tuition, and expence of her two children devolved upon her husband's elder brother, Mr. Godwin Swift, who voluntarily became their guardian, and supplied the loss which they had sustained in a father.

The faculties of the mind appear and shine forth at different ages in different men. The infancy of Dr. Swift pass'd on without any marks of distinction. At six years old he was sent to school at Kilkenny, and about eight years afterwards he was entered a student of Trinity College in Dublin. He lived there in perfect regularity, and under an entire obedience to the statutes; but the moroseness of his temper rendered him very unacceptable to his companions, so that he was little regarded, and less beloved, nor were the academical exercises agreeable to his genius. He held logic and metaphysics in the utmost contempt; and he scarce considered mathematics, and natural philosophy, unless to turn them into ridicule. The studies which he followed were history and poetry. In these he made a great progress, but to all other branches of science, he had given so very little application, that when he appeared as a candidate for the degree of batchelor of arts, he was set aside on account of insufficiency.

'This, says lord Orrery, is a surprising incident in his life, but it is undoubtedly true; and even at last he obtained his admission Speciali Gratia. A phrase which in that university carries with it the utmost marks of reproach. It is a kind of dishonourable degree, and the record of it (notwithstanding Swift's present established character throughout the learned world) must for ever remain against him in the academical register at Dublin.'

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The more early disappointments happen in life, the deeper impression they make upon the heart. Swift was full of indignation at the treatment he received in Dublin; and therefore resolved to pursue his studies at Oxford. However, that he might be admitted Ad Eundem, he was obliged to carry with him the testimonium of his degree. The expression Speciali Gratia is so peculiar to the university of Dublin, that when Mr. Swift exhibited his testimonium at Oxford, the members of the English university concluded, that the words Speciali Grata must signify a degree conferred in reward of extraordinary diligence and learning. It is natural to imagine that he did not try to undeceive them; he was entered in Hart-Hall, now Hartford-College, where he resided till he took his degree of master of arts in the year 1691.

Dr. Swift's uncle, on whom he had placed his chief dependance, dying in the Revolution year, he was supported chiefly by the bounty of Sir William Temple, to whose lady he was a distant relation. Acts of generosity seldom meet with their just applause. Sir William Temple's friendship was immediately construed to proceed from a consciousness that he was the real father of Mr. Swift, otherwise it was thought impossible he could be so uncommonly munificent to a young man, so distantly related to his wife.

'I am not quite certain, (says his noble Biographer) that Swift himself did not acquiesce in the calumny; perhaps like Alexander, he thought the natural son of Jupiter would appear greater than the legitimate son of Philip.'

As soon as Swift quitted the university, he lived with Sir William Temple as his friend, and domestic companion. When he had been about two years in the family of his patron, he contracted a very long, and dangerous illness, by eating an immoderate quantity of fruit. To this surfeit he used to ascribe the giddiness in his head, which, with intermissions sometimes of a longer, and sometimes of a shorter continuance, pursued him till it seemed to compleat its conquest, by rendering him the exact image of one of his own STRULDBRUGGS; a miserable spectacle, devoid of every appearance of human nature, except the outward form.

After Swift had sufficiently recovered to travel, he went into Ireland to try the effects of his native air; and he found so much benefit by the journey, that pursuant to his own inclinations he soon returned into England, and was again most affectionately received by Sir William Temple, whose house was now at Sheen, where he was often visited by King William. Here Swift had frequent opportunities of conversing with that prince; in some of which conversations the king offered to make him a captain of horse: An offer, which in his splenetic dispositions, he always seemed sorry to have refused; but at that time he had resolved within his own mind to take orders, and during his whole life his resolutions, like the decrees of fate, were immoveable. Thus determined, he again went over to Ireland, and immediately inlisted himself under the banner of the church. He was recommended to lord Capel, then Lord-Deputy, who gave him, the first vacancy, a prebend, of which the income was about a hundred pounds a year.

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Swift soon grew weary of a preferment, which to a man of his ambition was far from being sufficiently considerable. He resigned his prebend in favour of a friend, and being sick of solitude he returned to Sheen, were he lived domestically as usual, till the death of Sir William Temple; who besides a legacy in money, left to him the care and trust of publishing his posthumous works.

During Swift's residence with Sir William Temple he became intimately acquainted with a lady, whom he has distinguished, and often celebrated, under the name of Stella. The real name of this lady was Johnson. She was the daughter of Sir William Temple's steward; and the concealed but undoubted wife of doctor Swift. Sir William Temple bequeathed her in his will 1000 l. as an acknowledgment of her father's faithful services. In the year 1716 she was married to doctor Swift, by doctor Ashe, then bishop of Clogher.

The reader must observe, there was a long interval between the commencement of his acquaintance with Stella, and the time of making her his wife, for which (as it appears he was fond of her from the beginning of their intimacy) no other cause can be assigned, but that the same unaccountable humour, which had so long detained him from marrying, prevented him from acknowledging her after she was his wife.

'Stella (says lord Orrery) was a most amiable woman both in mind and person: She had an elevated understanding, with all the delicacy, and softness of her own sex. Her voice, however sweet in itself, was still rendered more harmonious by what she said. Her wit was poignant without severity: Her manners were humane, polite, easy and unreserved.— Wherever she came, she attracted attention and esteem. As virtue was her guide in morality, sincerity was her guide in religion. She was constant, but not ostentatious in her devotions: She was remarkably prudent in her conversation: She had great skill in music; and was perfectly well versed in all the lesser arts that employ a lady's leisure. Her wit allowed her a fund of perpetual cheerfulness within proper limits. She exactly answered the description of Penelope in Homer.

A woman, loveliest of the lovely kind,
In body perfect, and compleat in mind.'

Such was this amiable lady, yet, with all these advantages, she could never prevail on Dr. Swift to acknowledge her openly as his wife. A great genius must tread in unbeaten paths, and deviate from the common road of life; otherwise a diamond of so much lustre might have been publickly produced, although it had been fixed within the collet of matrimony: But that which diminished the value of this inestimable jewel in Swift's eye was the servile state of her father.

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Ambition and pride, the predominant principles which directed all the actions of Swift, conquered reason and justice; and the vanity of boasting such a wife was suppressed by the greater vanity of keeping free from a low alliance. Dr. Swift and Mrs. Johnson continued the same oeconomy of life after marriage, which they had pursued before it. They lived in separate houses; nothing appeared in their behaviour inconsistent in their decorum, and beyond the limits of platonic love. However unaccountable this renunciation of marriage rites might appear to the world, it certainly arose, not from any consciousness of a too near consanguinity between him and Mrs. Johnson, although the general voice of some was willing to make them both the natural children of Sir William Temple. Dr. Swift, (says lord Orrery) was not of that opinion, for the same false pride which induced him to deny the legitimate daughter of an obscure servant, might have prompted him to own the natural daughter of Sir William Temple.[2]

It is natural to imagine, that a woman of Stella's delicacy must repine at such an extraordinary situation. The outward honours she received are as frequently bestowed upon a mistress as a wife; she was absolutely virtuous, and was yet obliged to submit to all the appearances of vice. Inward anxiety affected by degrees the calmness of her mind, and the strength of her body. She died towards the end of January 1727, absolutely destroy'd by the peculiarity of her fate; a fate which perhaps she could not have incurred by an alliance with any other person in the world.

Upon the death of Sir William Temple, Swift came to London, and took the earliest opportunity of delivering a petition to King William, under the claim of a promise made by his majesty to Sir William Temple, that Mr. Swift should have the first vacancy which might happen among the prebends of Westminster or Canterbury. But this promise was either totally forgotten, or the petition which Mr. Swift presented was drowned amidst the clamour of more urgent addresses. From this first disappointment may be dated that bitterness towards kings and courtiers, which is to be found so universally dispersed throughout his works.

After a long and fruitless attendance at Whitehall, Swift reluctantly gave up all thoughts of a settlement in England: Pride prevented him from remaining longer in a state of servility and contempt. He complied therefore with an invitation from the earl of Berkley (appointed one of the Lords Justices in Ireland) to attend him as his chaplain, and private secretary.—Lord Berkley landed near Waterford, and Mr. Swift acted as secretary during the whole journey to Dublin. But another of lord Berkley's attendants, whose name was Bush, had by this time insinuated himself into the earl's favour, and had whispered to his lordship, that the post of secretary was not proper for a clergyman, to whom only church preferments could be suitable or advantageous. Lord Berkley listened perhaps too attentively to these insinuations, and making some slight apology to Mr. Swift, divested him of that office, and bestowed it upon Mr. Bush.

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Here again was another disappointment, and a fresh object of indignation. The treatment was thought injurious, and Swift expressed his sensibility of it in a short but satyrical copy of verses, intitled the Discovery. However, during the government of the Earls of Berkley and Galway, who were jointly Lords Justices of Ireland, two livings, Laracor and Rathbeggan, were given to Mr. Swift. The first of these rectories was worth about 200, and the latter about 60 l. a year; and they were the only church preferments which he enjoyed till he was appointed Dean of St. Patrick's, in the year 1713.

Lord Orrery gives the following instances of his humour and of his pride.

As soon as he had taken possession of his two livings, he went to reside at Laracor, and gave public notice to his parishioners, that he would read prayers on every Wednesday and Friday. Upon the subsequent Wednesday the bell was rung, and the rector attended in his desk, when after having sat some time, and finding the congregation to consist only of himself and his clerk Roger, he began with great composure and gravity; but with a turn peculiar to himself. "*Dearly beloved* Roger, *the scripture moveth you and me in sundry places, &c*." And then proceeded regularly thro' the whole service. This trifling circumstance serves to shew; that he could not resist a vein of humour, whenever he had an opportunity of exerting it.

The following is the instance of his pride. While Swift was chaplain to lord Berkley, his only sister, by the consent and approbation of her uncle and relations, was married to a man in trade, whose fortune, character, and situation were esteemed by all her friends, and suitable to her in every respect.

But the marriage was intirely disagreeable to her brother. It seemed to interrupt those ambitious views he had long since formed: He grew outragious at the thoughts of being brother-in law to a trademan. He utterly refused all reconciliation with his father; nor would he even listen to the entreaties of his mother, who came over to Ireland under the strongest hopes of pacifying his anger; having in every other instance found him a dutiful and obedient son: But his pride was not to be conquered, and Mrs. Swift finding her son inflexible, hastened back to Leicester, where she continued till her death.

During his mother's life time, he scarce ever failed to pay her an annual visit. But his manner of travelling was as singular as any other of his actions. He often went in a waggon, but more frequently walked from Holyhead to Leicester, London, or any other part of England. He generally chose to dine with waggoners, ostlers, and persons of that rank; and he used to lye at night in houses where he found written over the door, Lodgings for a Penny. He delighted in scenes of low life. The vulgar dialect was not only a fund of humour for him; but seems to have been acceptable to his nature, as appears from the many filthy ideas, and indecent expressions found throughout his works.

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A strict residence in a country place was not in the least suitable to the restless temper of Swift. He was perpetually making excursions not only to Dublin, and other places in Ireland, but likewise to London; so rambling a disposition occasioned to him a considerable loss. The rich deanery of Derry became vacant at this time, and was intended for him by lord Berkley, if Dr. King, then bishop of Derry, and afterwards archbishop of Dublin, had not interposed; entreating with great earnestness, that the deanery might be given to some grave and elderly divine, rather than to so young a man 'because (added the bishop) the situation of Derry is in the midst of Presbyterians, and I should be glad of a clergyman, who might be of assistance to me. I have no objection to Mr. Swift. I know him to be a sprightly ingenious young man; but instead of residing, I dare say he will be eternally flying backwards and forwards to London; and therefore I entreat that he may be provided for in some other place.'

Swift was accordingly set aside on account of youth, and from the year 1702, to the change of the ministry in the year 1710, few circumstances of his life can be found sufficiently material to be inserted here. From this last period, 'till the death of Queen Anne, we find him fighting on the side of the Tories, and maintaining their cause in pamphlets, poems, and weekly papers. In one of his letters to Mr. Pope he has this expression, 'I have conversed, in some freedom, with more ministers of state, of all parties, than usually happens to men of my level; and, I confess, in their capacity as ministers I look upon them as a race of people, whose acquaintance no man would court otherwise, than on the score of vanity and ambition.' A man always appears of more consequence to himself, than he is in reality to any other person. Such, perhaps, was the case of Dr. Swift. He knew how useful he was to the administration in general; and in one of his letters he mentions, that the place of historiographer was intended for him; but in this particular he flattered himself; at least, he remained without any preferment 'till the year 1713, when he was made dean of St. Patrick's. In point of power and revenue, such a deanery might be esteemed no inconsiderable promotion; but to an ambitious mind, whose perpetual view was a settlement in England, a dignity in any other country must appear only a profitable and an honourable kind of banishment. It is very probable, that the temper of Swift might occasion his English friends to wish him promoted at a distance. His spirit was ever untractable. The motions of his genius were often irregular. He assumed more of the air of a patron, than of a friend. He affected rather to dictate than advise. He was elated with the appearance of enjoying ministerial confidence. He enjoyed the shadow indeed, but the substance was detained from him. He was employed, not entrusted; and at the same time he imagined himself

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a subtle diver, who dextrously shot down into the profoundest regions of politics, he was suffered only to sound the shallows nearest the shore, and was scarce admitted to descend below the froth at the top. Swift was one of those strange kind of Tories, who lord Bolingbroke, in his letter to Sir William Wyndham, calls the Whimsicals, that is, they were Tories attach'd to the Hanoverian succession. This kind of Tory is so incongruous a creature, that it is a wonder ever such a one existed. Mrs. Pilkington informs us, that Swift had written A Defence of the last Ministers of Queen Anne, from an intention of restoring the Pretender, which Mr. Pope advised him to destroy, as not one word of it was true. Bolingbroke, by far the most accomplished man in that ministry (for Oxford was, in comparison of him, a statesman of no compass) certainly aimed at the restoration of the exiled family, however he might disguise to some people his real intentions, under the masque of being a Hanoverian Tory. This serves to corroberate the observation which lord Orrery makes of Swift: 'that he was employed, not trusted, &c.'

By reflexions of this sort, says lord Orrery, we may account for his disappointment of an English bishopric. A disappointment, which, he imagined, he owed to a joint application, made against him to the Queen, by Dr. Sharp, archbishop of York, and by a lady of the highest rank and character. Archbishop Sharpe, according to Swift's account, had represented him to the Queen as a person, who was no Christian; the great lady had supported the assertion, and the Queen, upon such assurances, had given away the bishopric, contrary to her Majesty's intentions. Swift kept himself, indeed, within some tolerable bounds when he spoke of the Queen; but his indignation knew no limits when he mentioned the archbishop, or the lady.

Most people are fond of a settlement in their native country, but Swift had not much reason to rejoice in the land where his lot had fallen; for upon his arrival in Ireland to take possesion of the deanery, he found the violence of party raging in that kingdom to the highest degree. The common people were taught to consider him as a Jacobite, and they proceeded so far in their detestation, as to throw stones and dirt at him as he passed thro' the streets. The chapter of St. Patrick's, like the rest of the kingdom, received him with great reluctance. They opposed him in every point he proposed. They avoided him as a pestilence, and resisted him as an invader and an enemy to his country. Such was his first reception, as dean of St. Patrick's. Fewer talents, and less firmness must have yielded to so outrageous an opposition. He had seen enough of human nature to be convinced that the passions of low, self-interested minds ebb and flow continually. They love they know not whom, they hate they know not why. They are captivated by words, guided by names, and governed by accidents. But to few the strange revolutions in this world, Dr. Swift,

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who was now the detestion of the Irish rabble, lived to be afterwards the most absolute monarch over them, that ever governed men. His first step was to reduce to reason and obedience his revd. brethren the the chapter of St. Patrick's; in which he succeeded so perfectly, and so speedily, that, in a short time after his arrival, not one member in that body offered to contradict him, even in trifles: on the contrary, they held him in the highest respect and veneration, so that he sat in the Chapter-House, like Jupiter in the Synod of the Gods.

In the beginning of the year 1714 Swift returned to England. He found his great friends, who sat in the seat of power, much disunited among themselves. He saw the Queen declining in her health, and distressed in her situation; while faction was exerting itself, and gathering new strength every day. He exerted the utmost of his skill to unite the ministers, and to cement the apertures of the state: but he found his pains fruitless, his arguments unavailing, and his endeavours, like the stone of Sisyphus, rolling back upon himself. He retired to a friend's house in Berkshire, where he remained 'till the Queen died. So fatal an event terminated all his views in England, and made him return as fast as possible to his deanery in Ireland, oppressed with grief and discontent. His hopes in England were now crushed for ever. As Swift was well known to have been attached to the Queen's last ministry, he met with several indignities from the populace, and, indeed, was equally abused by persons of all ranks and denominations. Such a treatment soured his temper, confined his acquaintance, and added bitterness to his stile.

From the year 1714, 'till he appeared in the year 1720 a champion for Ireland, against Wood's halfpence, his spirit of politics and patriotism was kept almost closely confined within his own breast. Idleness and trifles engrossed too many of his leisure hours; fools and sycophants too much of his conversation. His attendance upon the public service of the church was regular and uninterrupted; and indeed regularity was peculiar to all his actions, even in the meerest trifles. His hours of walking and reading never varied. His motions were guided by his watch, which was so constantly held in his hand, or placed before him on the table, that he seldom deviated many minutes in the revolution of his exercises and employments. In the year 1720 he began to re-assume, in some degree, the character of a political writer. A small pamphlet in defence of the Irish Manufactures was his first essay in Ireland in that kind of writing, and to that pamphlet he owed the turn of the popular tide in his favour. It was entitled, A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture in Clothes and Furniture of Houses, &c. utterly rejecting and renouncing every thing wearable that comes from England. This proposal immediately raised a very violent flame. The Printer was prosecuted, and the prosecution had

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the same effect, which generally attends those kind of measures. It added fuel to flame. But his greatest enemies must confess, that the pamphlet is written in the stile of a man who had the good of his country nearest his heart, who saw her errors, and wished to correct them; who felt her oppressions, and wished to relieve them; and who had a desire to rouze and awaken an indolent nation from a lethargic disposition, that might prove fatal to her constitution. This temporary opposition but increased the stream of his popularity. He was now looked upon in a new light, and was distinguished by the title of THE DEAN, and so high a degree of popularity did he attain, as to become an arbitrator, in disputes of property, amongst his neighbours; nor did any man dare to appeal from his opinion, or murmur at his decrees.

But the popular affection, which the dean had hitherto acquired, may be said not to have been universal, 'till the publication of the Drapier's Letters, which made all ranks, and all professions unanimous in his applause. The occasion of those letters was, a scarcity of copper coin in Ireland, to so great a degree, that, for some time past, the chief manufacturers throughout the kingdom were obliged to pay their workmen in pieces of tin, or in other tokens of suppositious value. Such a method was very disadvantageous to the lower parts of traffic, and was in general an impediment to the commerce of the state. To remedy this evil, the late King granted a patent to one Wood, to coin, during the term of fourteen years, farthings and halfpence in England, for the use of Ireland, to the value of a certain Aim specified. These halfpence and farthings were to be received by those persons, who would voluntarily accept them. But the patent was thought to be of such dangerous consequence to the public, and of such exorbitant advantage to the patentee, that the dean, under the character of M. B. Drapier, wrote a Letter to the People, warning them not to accept Wood's halfpence and farthings, as current coin. This first letter was succeeded by several others to the same purpose, all which are inserted in his works.

At the sound of the Drapier's trumpet, a spirit arose among the people. Persons of all ranks, parties and denominations, were convinced that the admission of Wood's copper must prove fatal to the commonwealth. The Papist, the Fanatic, the Tory, the Whig, all listed themselves volunteers, under the banner of the Drapier, and were all equally zealous to serve the common cause. Much heat, and many fiery speeches against the administration were the consequence of this union; nor had the flames been allayed, notwithstanding threats and proclamations, had not the coin been totally suppressed, and Wood withdrawn his patent. The name of Augustus was not bestowed upon Octavius Caesar with more universal approbation, than the name of the Drapier was bestowed upon the dean. He had no sooner assumed his new cognomen, than he became the idol of the people of

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Ireland, to a degree of devotion, that in the most superstitious country, scarce any idol ever obtained. Libations to his health were poured out as frequent as to the immortal memory of King William. His effigies was painted in every street in Dublin. Acclamations and vows for his prosperity attended his footsteps wherever he passed. He was consulted in all points relating to domestic policy in general, and to the trade of Ireland in particular; but he was more immediately looked upon as the legislator of the Weavers, who frequently came in a body, consisting of 40 or 50 chiefs of their trade, to receive his advice in settling the rates of their manufactures, and the wages of their journeymen. He received their address with less majesty than sternness, and ranging his subjects in a circle round his parlour, spoke as copiously, and with as little difficulty and hesitation, to the several points in which they supplicated his assistance, as if trade had been the only study and employment of his life. When elections were depending for the city of Dublin, many Corporations refused to declare themselves, 'till they had consulted his sentiments and inclinations, which were punctually followed with equal chearfulness and submission.

In this state of power, and popular admiration, he remained 'till he lost his senses; a loss which he seemed to foresee, and prophetically lamented to many of his friends. The total deprivation of his senses came upon him by degrees. In the year 1736 he was seized with a violent fit of giddiness; he was at that time writing a satirical poem, called The Legion Club; but he found the effects of his giddiness so dreadful, that he left the poem unfinished, and never afterwards attempted a composition, either in verse or prose. However, his conversation still remained the same, lively and severe, but his memory gradually grew worse and worse, and as that decreased, he grew every day more fretful and impatient. In the year 1741, his friends found his passions so violent and ungovernable, his memory so decayed, and his reason so depraved, that they took the utmost precautions to keep all strangers from approaching him; for, 'till then, he had not appeared totally incapable of conversation. But early in the year 1742, the small remains of his understanding became entirely confused, and the violence of his rage increased absolutely to a degree of madness. In this miserable state he seemed to be appointed the first inhabitant of his own Hospital; especially as from an outrageous lunatic, he sunk afterwards to a quiet speechless ideot; and dragged out the remainder of his life in that helpless situation. He died towards the latter end of October 1745. The manner of his death was easy, without the least pang, or convulsion; even the rattling of his throat was scarce sufficient to give an alarm to his attendants, 'till within some very little time before he expired. A man in possession of his reason would have wished for

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such a kind dissolution; but Swift was totally insensible of happiness, or pain. He had not even the power or expression of a child, appearing for some years before his death, referred only as an example to mortify human pride, and to reverse that fine description of human nature, which is given us by the inimitable Shakespeare. 'What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a God! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!' Swift's friends often heard him lament the state of childhood and idiotism, to which some of the greatest men of this nation were reduced before their death. He mentioned, as examples within his own time, the duke of Marlborough and lord Somers; and when he cited these melancholy instances, it was always with a heavy sigh, and with gestures that shewed great uneasiness, as if he felt an impulse of what was to happen to him before he died. He left behind him about twelve thousand pounds, inclusive of the specific legacies mentioned in his will, and which may be computed at the sum of twelve hundred pounds, so that the remaining ten thousand eight hundred pounds, is entirely applicable to the Hospital for Idiots and Lunatics; an establishment remarkably generous, as those who receive the benefit, must for ever remain ignorant of their benefactor.

Lord Orerry has observed, that a propension to jocularity and humour is apparent in the last works of Swift. His Will, like all his other writings, is drawn up in his own peculiar manner. Even in so serious a composition, he cannot help indulging himself in leaving legacies, that carry with them an air of raillery and jest. He disposes of his three best hats (his best, his second best, and his third best beaver) with an ironical solemnity, that renders the bequests ridiculous. He bequeaths, 'To Mr. John Grattan a silver-box, to keep in it the tobacco which the said John usually chewed, called pigtail.' But his legacy to Mr. Robert Grattan, is still more extraordinary. 'Item, I bequeath to the Revd. Mr. Robert Grattan, Prebendary of St. Audeon's, my strong box, on condition of his giving the sole use of the said box to his brother, Dr. James Grattan, during the life of the said Doctor, who hath more occasion for it.'

These are so many last expressions of his turn, and way of thinking, and no doubt the persons thus distinguished looked upon these instances as affectionate memorials of his friendship, and tokens of the jocose manner, in which he had treated them during his life-time.

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With regard to Dean Swift's poetical character, the reader will take the following sketch of it in the words of Lord Orrery. 'The poetical performances of Swift (says he) ought to be considered as occasional poems, written either to pleasure[3], or to vex some particular persons. We must not suppose them designed for posterity; if he had cultivated his genius that way, he must certainly have excelled, especially in satire. We see fine sketches in several of his pieces; but he seems more desirous to inform and strengthen his mind, than to indulge the luxuriancy of his imagination. He chuses to discover, and correct errors in the works of others, rather than to illustrate, and add beauties of his own. Like a skilful artist, he is fond of probing wounds to their depth, and of enlarging them to open view. He aims to be severely useful, rather than politely engaging; and as he was either not formed, nor would take pains to excel in poetry, he became in some measure superior to it; and assumed more the air, and manner of a critic than a poet.' Thus far his lordship in his VIth letter, but in his IXth, he adds, when speaking of the Second Volume of Swift's Works, 'He had the nicest ear; he is remarkably chaste, and delicate in his rhimes. A bad rhime appeared to him one of the capital sins of poetry.'

The Dean's poem on his celebrated Vanessa, is number'd among the best of his poetical pieces. Of this lady it will be proper to give some account, as she was a character as singular as Swift himself.

Vanessa's real name was Esther Vanhomrich[4]. She was one of the daughters of Bartholomew Vanhomrich, a Dutch merchant of Amsterdam; who upon the Revolution went into Ireland, and was appointed by king William a commissioner of the revenue. The Dutch merchant, by parsimony and prudence, had collected a fortune of about 16,000 *l*. He bequeathed an equal division of it to his wife, and his four children, of which two were sons, and two were daughters. The sons after the death of their father travelled abroad: The eldest died beyond sea; and the youngest surviving his brother only a short time, the whole patrimony fell to his two sisters, Esther and Mary.

With this encrease of wealth, and with heads and hearts elated by affluence, and unrestrained by fore-sight or discretion, the widow Vanhomrich, and her two daughters, quitted their native country for the more elegant pleasures of the English court. During their residence at London, they lived in a course of prodigality, that stretched itself far beyond the limits of their income, and reduced them to great distress, in the midst of which the mother died, and the two daughters hastened in all secresy back to Ireland, beginning their journey on a Sunday, to avoid the interruption of creditors. Within two years after their arrival in Ireland, Mary the youngest sister died, and the small remains of the shipwreck'd fortune center'd in Vanessa.

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Vanity makes terrible devastations in a female breast: Vanessa was excessively vain. She was fond of dress; impatient to be admired; very romantic in her turn of mind; superior in her own opinion to all her sex; full of pertness, gaiety, and pride; not without some agreeable accomplishments, but far from being either beautiful or genteel: Ambitious at any rate to be esteemed a wit; and with that view always affecting to keep company with wits; a great reader, and a violent admirer of poetry; happy in the thoughts of being reputed Swift's concubine; but still aiming to be his wife. By nature haughty and disdainful, looking with contempt upon her inferiors; and with the smiles of self-approbation upon her equals; but upon Dr. Swift, with the eyes of love: Her love was no doubt founded in vanity.

Though Vanessa had exerted all the arts of her sex, to intangle Swift in matrimony; she was yet unsuccessful. She had lost her reputation, and the narrowness of her income, and coldness of her lover contributed to make her miserable, and to increase the phrensical disposition of her mind. In this melancholly situation she remained several years, during which time Cadenus (Swift) visited her frequently. She often press'd him to marry her: His answers were rather turns of wit, than positive denials; till at last being unable to sustain the weight of misery any longer, she wrote a very tender epistle to him, insisting peremptorily upon a serious answer, and an immediate acceptance, or absolute refusal of her as his wife. His reply was delivered by his own hand. He brought it with him when he made his final visit; and throwing down the letter upon the table with great passion, hastened back to his house, carrying in his countenance the frown of anger, and indignation. Vanessa did not survive many days the letter delivered to her by Swift, but during that short interval she was sufficiently composed, to cancel a will made in his favour, and to make another, wherein she left her fortune (which by a long retirement was in some measure retrieved) to her two executors, Dr. Berkley the late lord bishop of Cloyne, and Mr. Marshal one of the king's Serjeants at law. Thus perished under all the agonies of despair, Mrs. Esther Vanhomrich; a miserable example of an ill-spent life, fantastic wit, visionary schemes, and female weakness.

It is strange that vanity should have so great a prevalence in the female breast, and yet it is certain that to this principle it was owing, that Swift's house was often a seraglio of very virtuous women, who attended him from morning till night, with an obedience, an awe, and an assiduity that are seldom paid to the richest, or the most powerful lovers. These ladies had no doubt a pride in being thought the companions of Swift; but the hours which were spent in his company could not be very pleasant, as his sternness and authority were continually exerted to keep them in awe.

Lord Orrery has informed us, that Swift took every opportunity to expose and ridicule Dryden, for which he imagines there must have been some affront given by that great man to Swift. In this particular we can satisfy the reader from authentic information.

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When Swift was a young man, and not so well acquainted with the world as he afterwards became, he wrote some Pindaric Odes. In this species of composition he succeeded ill; sublimity and fire, the indispensable requisites in a Pindaric Ode not being his talent. As Mr. Dryden was Swift's kinsman, these odes were shewn to him for his approbation, who said to him with an unreserved freedom, and in the candour of a friend, 'Cousin Swift, turn your thoughts some other way, for nature has never formed you for a Pindaric poet.'

Though what Dryden observed, might in some measure be true, and Swift perhaps was conscious that he had not abilities to succeed in that species of writing; yet this honest dissuasive of his kinsman he never forgave. The remembrance of it soured his temper, and heated his passions, whenever Dryden's name was mention'd.

We shall now take a view of Swift in his moral life, the distinction he has obtained in the literary world having rendered all illustrations of his genius needless.

Lord Orrery, throughout his excellent work, from which we have drawn our account of Swift, with his usual marks of candour, has displayed his moral character. In many particulars, the picture he draws of the Dean resembles the portrait of the same person as drawn by Mrs. Pilkington.

'I have beheld him (says his lordship) in all humours and dispositions, and I have formed various speculations from the several weaknesses to which I observed him liable. His capacity, and strength of mind, were undoubtedly equal to any talk whatsoever. His pride, his spirit, or his ambition (call it by what name you please) was boundless; but his views were checked in his younger years, and the anxiety of that disappointment had a sensible effect upon all his actions. He was sour and severe, but not absolutely ill-natur'd. He was sociable only to particular friends, and to them only at particular hours. He knew politeness more than he practiced it. He was a mixture of avarice and generosity; the former was frequently prevalent, the latter seldom appeared unless excited by compassion. He was open to adulation, and would not, or could not, distinguish between low flattery and just applause. His abilities rendered him superior to envy. He was undisguised, and perfectly sincere. I am induced to think that he entered into orders, more from some private and fixed resolution, than from absolute choice: Be that as it may, he performed the duties of the church with great punctuality, and a decent degree of devotion. He read prayers, rather in a strong nervous voice, than in a graceful manner; and although he has been often accused of irreligion, nothing of that kind appeared in his conversation or behaviour. His cast of mind induced him to think and speak more of politics than religion. His perpetual views were directed towards power; and his chief aim was to be removed to England: But when he found himself entirely disappointed, he turned his thoughts to opposition, and became the Patron of Ireland.'

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Mrs. Pilkington has represented him as a tyrant in his family, and has discovered in him a violent propension to be absolute in every company where he was. This disposition, no doubt, made him more feared than loved; but as he had the most unbounded vanity to gratify, he was pleased with the servility and awe with which inferiors approached him. He may be resembled to an eastern monarch, who takes delight in surveying his slaves, trembling at his approach, and kneeling with reverence at his feet.

Had Swift been born to regal honours, he would doubtless have bent the necks of his people to the yoke: As a subject, he was restless and turbulent; and though as lord Orrery says, he was above corruption, yet that virtue was certainly founded on his pride, which disdained every measure, and spurned every effort in which he himself was not the principal.

He was certainly charitable, though it had an unlucky mixture of ostentation in it. One particular act of his charity (not mentioned, except by Mrs. Pilkington, in any account of him yet published) is well worthy of remembrance, praise, and imitation:—He appropriated the sum of five-hundred pounds intirely to the use of poor tradesmen and handicraftsmen, whose honesty and industry, he thought merited assistance, and encouragement: This he lent to them in small loans, as their exigencies required, without any interest; and they repaid him at so much per week, or month, as their different circumstances best enabled them.—To the wealthy let us say—

"Abi tu et fac similiter."

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Lord Orrery, page 6.

[2] The authors of the Monthly Review have justly remarked, that this observation of his lordship's seems premature.

The same public rumour, say they, that made HER Sir William Temple's daughter, made HIM also Sir William's son: Therefore he (Swift) could never with decency, have acknowledged Mrs. Johnson as his wife, while that rumour continued to retain any degree of credit; and if there had been really no foundation for it, surely it might have been no very hard task to obviate its force, by producing the necessary proofs and circumstances of his birth: Yet, we do not find that ever this was done, either by the Dean or his relations.

[3] We are assured, there was one while a misunderstanding subsisting between Swift and Pope: But that worthy gentleman, the late general Dormer (who had a great regard for both) reconciled them, e'er it came to an open rupture:—Though the world might be deprived by the

general's mediation of great matter of entertainment, which the whetted wit of two such men might have afforded; yet his good-nature, and sincere friendship, deserves to be remember'd with honour.—This gentleman Mr. Cibber senior was very intimate with, and once hinted to him, 'He

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was concerned to find he stood so ill in

> the Dean's opinion, whose great parts, wit, genius, &c. he held in the highest estimation; nor could he easily account for the Dean's so frequently appearing his enemy, as he never knowingly had offended him; and regretted the want of an opportunity of being better acquainted with him.'—The general had also a great regard for Mr. Cibber, and wished to bring them together on an agreeable footing:—Why they were not so, came out soon after.—The secret was,—Mr. Pope was angry; [for the long-latent cause, look into Mr. Cibber's letter to Mr. Pope.] Passion and prejudice are not always friends to truth;—and the foam of resentment never rose higher, than when it boil'd and swell'd in Mr. Pope's bosom: No wonder then, that his misrepresentation might make the Dean believe, Mr. Cibber was not unworthy of that satire and raillery (not always just neither, and sometimes solicited) which is not unsparingly thrown on him in the Dean's works:—That this was the case, appears from the following circumstance.

As soon as Mr. Cibber's Apology was first printed, it was immediately carried over to Dublin, and given to Mr. Faulkner (an eminent printer and bookseller there) by a gentleman, who wished to see an edition of it in Ireland; Mr. Faulkner published it, and the success thereof was so great, some thousands thereof were disposed of in a very short time: Just before the intended edition appeared, the Dean (who often visited Mr. Faulkner) coming into the shop, asked, 'What new pieces were likely to come forth?'—-Mr. Faulkner gave Mr. Cibber's Apology to him;—The Dean's curiosity [Transcriber's note: 'curosity' in original] was pretty strong to see a work of that uncommon sort:—In short, he stay'd and dined there; and did not quit the house, or the book, 'till he had read it through: He advised Faulkner, to lose no time in printing it; and said, he would answer for it's success:—He declared, he had not perus'd any thing a long time that had pleas'd him so much; and dwelt long in commendation of it: He added, that he almost envy'd the author the pleasure he must have in writing it;—That he was sorry he had ever said any thing to his disadvantage; and was convinced Cibber had been very much misrepresented to him; nor did he scruple to say, that, as it had been formerly the fashion to abuse Cibber, he had unwarily been drawn into it by Pope, and others. He often, afterwards, spoke in praise of Mr. Cibber, and his writing in general, and of this work in particular.—He afterwards told Mr. Faulkner, he had read Cibber's Apology thro' three times; that he was more and more pleased with it: That the style was not inferior to any English he had ever read: That his words were properly adapted: His similes happy, uncommon, and well chosen: He then in a pleasant manner said—'You must give me this book, which is the first thing I ever begg'd from you.' To this, we may be sure Mr. Faulkner readily consented. Ever after in company, the Dean gave this book a great character.—Let the reader make the application of this true and well known fact.

[4] The name is pronounced Vannumery.

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MRS. CONSTANTIA GRIERSON.

This lady was born in Ireland; and, as Mrs. Barber judiciously remarks, was one of the most extraordinary women that either this age, or perhaps any other, ever produced. She died in the year 1733, at the age of 27, and was allowed long before to be an excellent scholar, not only in Greek and Roman literature, but in history, divinity, philosophy, and mathematics.

Mrs. Grierson (says she) 'gave a proof of her knowledge in the Latin tongue, by her dedication of the Dublin edition of Tacitus to the lord Carteret, and by that of Terence to his son, to whom she likewise wrote a Greek epigram. She wrote several fine poems in English[1], on which she set so little value, that she neglected to leave copies behind her of but very few.

'What makes her character the more remarkable is, that she rose to this eminence of learning merely by the force of her own genius, and continual application. She was not only happy in a fine imagination, a great memory, an excellent understanding, and an exact judgment, but had all these crowned by virtue and piety: she was too learned to be vain, too wise to be conceited, too knowing and too clear-sighted to irreligious.

'If heaven had spared her life, and blessed her with health, which she wanted for some years before her death, there is good reason to think she would have made as great a figure in the learned world, as any of her sex are recorded to have done.

'As her learning and abilities raised her above her own sex, so they left her no room to envy any; on the contrary, her delight was to see others excel. She was always ready to advise and direct those who applied to her, and was herself willing to be advised.

'So little did she value herself upon her uncommon excellences, that it has often recalled to my mind a fine reflexion of a French author, *That great geniuses should be superior to their own abilities.*

'I perswade myself that this short account of so extraordinary a woman, of whom much more might have been said, will not be disagreeable to my readers; nor can I omit what I think is greatly to the lord Carteret's honour, that when he was lord lieutenant of Ireland, he obtained a patent for Mr. Grierson, her husband, to be the King's Printer, and to distinguish and reward her uncommon merit, had her life inserted in it.' Thus far Mrs. Barber. We shall now subjoin Mrs. Pilkington's account of this wonderful genius.

'About two years before this, a young woman (afterwards married to Mr. Grierson) of about eighteen years of age, was brought to my father[2], to be by him instructed in Midwifry: she was mistress of Hebrew[3], Greek, Latin, and French, and understood the

mathematics as well as most men: and what made these extraordinary talents yet more surprizing was, that her parents were poor, illiterate, country

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people: so that her learning appeared like the gift poured out on the apostles, of speaking all languages without the pains of study; or, like the intuitive knowledge of angels: yet inasmuch as the power of miracles is ceased, we must allow she used human means for such great and excellent acquirements. And yet, in a long friendship and familiarity with her, I could never obtain a satisfactory account from her on this head; only she said, she had received some little instruction from the minister of the parish, when she could spare time from her needle-work, to which she was closely kept by her mother. She wrote elegantly both in verse and prose, and some of the most delightful hours I ever passed were in the conversation of this female philosopher.

’My father readily consented to accept of her as a pupil, and gave her a general invitation to his table; so that she and I were seldom asunder. My parents were well pleased with our intimacy, as her piety was not inferior to her learning. Her turn was chiefly to philosophical or divine subjects; yet could her heavenly muse descend from its sublime height to the easy epistolary stile, and suit itself to my then gay disposition[4].

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Mrs. Barber has preserved several specimens of her talent in this way, which are printed with her own poems.

[2] Dr. Van Lewen of Dublin, an eminent physician and man-midwife.

[3] Her knowledge of the Hebrew is not mentioned by Mrs. Barber.

[4] Vide MRS. PILKINGTON’S MEMOIRS, Vol. I.

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MRS. CATHERINE COCKBURN.

The Revd. Dr. Birch, who has prefixed a life of Mrs. Cockburn before the collection he has made of her works, with great truth observes, that it is a justice due to the public, as well as to the memory of Mrs. Cockburn, to premise some account of so extraordinary a person. “Posterity, at least, adds he, will be so sollicitous to know, to whom they will owe the most demonstrative and perspicuous reasonings, upon subjects of eternal importance; and her own sex is entitled to the fullest information about one, who has done such honour to them, and raised our ideas of their intellectual powers, by an example of the greatest extent of understanding and correctness of judgment, united to all the vivacity of imagination. Antiquity, indeed, boasted of its Female Philosophers, whose merits have been drawn forth in an elaborate treatise of Menage[1]. But our own

age and country may without injustice or vanity oppose to those illustrious ladies the defender of Lock and Clark; who, with a genius equal to the most eminent of them, had the superior advantage of cultivating it in the only effectual method of improvement, the study of a real philosophy, and a theology worthy human nature, and its all-perfect author. [Transcriber's note: closing quotes missing from original.]

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She was the daughter of captain David Trotter, a Scots gentleman, and commander of the royal navy in the reign of Charles II. He was highly in favour with that prince, who employed him as commodore in the demolition of Tangier, in the year 1683. Soon after he was sent to convoy the fleet of the Turkey company; when being seized by the plague, then raging at Scanderoon, he died there. His death was an irreparable loss to his family, who were defrauded of all his effects on board his ship, which were very considerable, and of all the money which he had advanced to the seamen, during a long voyage: And to add to this misfortune, the goldsmith, in whose hands the greatest part of his money was lodged, became soon after a bankrupt. These accumulated circumstances of distress exciting the companion of king Charles, the captain's widow was allowed a pension, which ended with that king's life; nor had she any consideration for her losses in the two succeeding reigns. But queen Anne, upon her accession to the throne, granted her an annual pension of twenty pounds.

Captain Trotter at his death, left only two daughters, the youngest of whom, Catherine, our celebrated author, was born in London, August 16, 1679. She gave early marks of her genius, and was not passed her childhood when she surprized a company of her relations and friends with extemporary verses, on an accident which had fallen under her observation in the street. She both learned to write, and made herself mistress of the French language, by her own application and diligence, without any instructor. But she had some assistance in the study of the Latin Grammar and Logic, of which latter she drew up an abstract for her own use. The most serious and important subjects, and especially [Transcriber's note: 'espepecially' in original] those of religion, soon engaged her attention. But not withstanding her education, her intimacy with several families of distinction of the Romish persuasion exposed her, while very young, to impressions in favour of that church, which not being removed by her conferences with some eminent and learned members of the church of England, she followed the dictates of a misguided conscience, and embraced the Romish communion, in which she continued till the year 1707.

She was but 14 years of age, when she wrote a copy of verses upon Mr. Bevil Higgons's sickness and recovery from the small pox, which are printed in our author's second volume. Her next production was a Tragedy called Agnes de Castro, which was acted at the Theatre-royal, in 1695, when she was only in her seventeenth year, and printed in 1696. The reputation of this performance, and the verses which she addressed to Mr. Congreve upon his Mourning Bride, in 1697, were probably the foundation of her acquaintance with that admirable writer.

Her second Tragedy, intitled Fatal Friendship, was acted in 1698, at the new Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. This Tragedy met with great applause, and is still thought the most perfect of her dramatic performances. Among other copies of verses sent to her upon occasion of it, and prefixed to it, was one from an unknown hand, which afterwards appeared to be from the elegant pen of Mr. Hughs, author of the Siege of Damascus [2].

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The death of Mr. Dryden engaged her to join with several other ladies in paying a just tribute to the memory of that great improver of the strength, fulness, and harmony of English verse; and their performances were published together, under the title of the Nine Muses; or Poems written by so many Ladies, upon the Death of the late famous John Dryden, Esq;

Her dramatic talents not being confined to Tragedy, she brought upon the stage, in 1701, a Comedy called Love at a Loss; or most Votes carry it, published in May that year. In the same year she gave the public her third Tragedy, intitled, The Unhappy Penitent, acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. In the dedication to Charles lord Hallifax, she draws the characters of several of the most eminent of her predecessors in tragic poetry, with great judgment and precision. She observes, that Shakespear had all the images of nature present to him, studied her thoroughly, and boldly copied all her various features: and that though he chiefly exerted himself on the more masculine passions, it was the choice of his judgment, not the restraint of his genius; and he seems to have designed those few tender moving scenes, which he has given us, as a proof that he could be every way equally admirable. She allows Dryden to have been the most universal genius which this nation ever bred; but thinks that he did not excel in every part; for though he is distinguished in most of his writings, by greatness and elevation of thought, yet at the same time that he commands our admiration of himself, he little moves our concern for those whom he represents, not being formed for touching the softer passions. On the other hand, Otway, besides his judicious choice of the fable, had a peculiar art to move compassion, which, as it is one of the chief ends of Tragedy, he found most adapted to his genius; and never venturing where that did not lead him, excelled in the pathetic. And had Lee, as she remarks, consulted his strength as well, he might have given us more perfect pieces; but aiming at the sublime, instead of being great, he is extravagant; his stile too swelling; and if we pursue him in his flight, he often carries us out of nature. Had he restrained that vain ambition, and intirely applied himself to describe the softest of the passions (for love, of all the passions, he seems best to have understood, if that be allowed a proper subject for Tragedy) he had certainly had fewer defects.

But poetry and dramatic writing did not so far engross the thoughts of our author, but that she sometimes turned them to subjects of a very different nature; and at an age when few of the other sex were capable of understanding the Essay of Human Understanding, and most of them prejudiced against the novelty of its principles; and though she was at that time engaged in the profession of a religion not very favourable to so rational a philosophy as that of Mr. Lock; yet she had read that incomparable book, with so clear

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a comprehension, and so unbiassed a judgment, that her own conviction of the truth and importance of the notions contained in it, led her to endeavour that of others, by removing some of the objections urged against them. She drew up therefore a Defence of the Essay, against some Remarks which had been published against it in 1667. The author of these remarks was never known to Mr. Lock, who animadverted upon them with some marks of chagrin, at the end of his reply to Stillingfleet, 1697. But after the death of the ingenious Dr. Thomas Burner, master of the Charter-House, it appeared from his papers, that the Remarks were the product of his pen. They were soon followed by second Remarks, printed the same year, in vindication of the first, against Mr. Lock's Answer to them; and in 1699, by Third Remarks, addressed likewise to Mr. Lock. Mrs. Trotter's Defence of the Essay against all these Remarks was finished so early as the beginning of December 1701, when she was but 22 years old. But being more apprehensive of appearing before the great writer whom she defended, than of the public censure, and conscious that the name of a woman would be a prejudice against a work of that nature, she resolved to conceal herself with the utmost care. But her title to the reputation of this piece did not continue long a secret to the world. For Mrs. Burnet, the late wife of Dr. Burnet, bishop of Sarum, a lady of an uncommon degree of knowledge, and whose Method of Devotion, which passed through several editions, is a proof of her exemplary piety, and who, as well as that prelate, honoured our author with a particular friendship, notwithstanding the difference of her religion, being informed that she was engaged in writing, and that it was not poetry, was desirous to know the subject. This Mrs. Trotter could not deny a lady of her merit, in whom she might safely confide, and who, upon being acquainted with it, shewed an equal sollicitude that the author might not be known. But afterwards finding the performance highly approved by the bishop her husband, Mr. Norris of Bemmerton, and Mr. Lock himself; she thought the reasons of secrecy ceased, and discovered the writer; and in June 1707 returned her thanks to Mrs. Trotter, then in London, for her present of the book, in a letter which does as much honour to her own understanding, principles and temper, as to her friend, to whom she addressed it. Dr. Birch has given a copy of this letter.

Mr. Lock likewise was so highly satisfied with the Defence, (which was perhaps the only piece that appeared in favour of his Essay, except one by Mr. Samuel Bold, rector of Steeple in Dorsetshire, 1699) that being in London, he desired Mr. King, afterwards lord high chancellor, to make Mrs. Trotter a visit, and a present of books; and when she had owned herself, he wrote to her a letter of compliment, a copy of which is inserted in these memoirs.

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But while our author continued to shew the world so deep a penetration into subjects of the most difficult and abstract kind, she was still incapable of extricating herself from those subtilties and perplexities of argument, which retained her in the church of Rome. And the sincerity of her attachment to it, in all its outward severities, obliged her to so strict an observance of its fasts, as proved extremely injurious to her health. Upon which Dr. Denton Nicholas, a very ingenious learned physician of her acquaintance, advised her to abate of those rigours of abstinence, as insupportable to a constitution naturally infirm.

She returned to the exercise of her dramatic genius in 1703, and having fixed upon the Revolution of Sweden under Gustavus Erickson (which has been related in prose with so much force and beauty by the Abbe Vertot) for the subject of a Tragedy, she sent the first draught of it to Mr. Congreve, who returned her an answer, which, on account of the just remarks upon the conduct of the drama, well deserves a place here, did it not exceed our proposed bounds, and therefore we must refer the reader to Dr. Birch's account. This Tragedy was acted in 1706, at the Queen's Theatre in the Hay-Market, and was printed in quarto.

By a letter from Mrs. Trotter to her friend George Burnet of Kemnay in Scotland, Esq; then at Geneva, dated February 2, 1703-4, it appears that she then began to entertain more moderate notions of religion, and to abate of her zeal for the church of Rome. Her charitableness and latitude of sentiments seems to have increased a-pace, from the farther examination which she was now probably making into the state of the controversy between the church of Rome and the Protestants; for in another letter to Mr. Burnet, of August 8, 1704, she speaks to the subject of religion, with a spirit of moderation unusual in the communion of which she still professed herself.

'I wish, (says she) there was no distinction of churches; and then I doubt not there would be much more real religion, the name and notion of which I am so sorry to observe confined to the being of some particular community; and the whole of it, I am afraid, placed by most in a zeal of those points, which make the differences between them; from which mistaken zeal, no doubt, have proceeded all the massacres, persecutions, and hatred of their fellow christians, which all churches have been inclined to, when in power. And I believe it is generally true, that those who are most bigotted to a sect, or most rigid and precise in their forms and outward discipline, are most negligent of the moral duties, which certainly are the main end of religion. I have observed this so often, both in private persons and public societies, that I am apt to suspect it every where.'

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The victory at Blenheim, which exercised the pens of Mr. Addison and Mr. John Philips, whose poems on that occasion divided the admiration of the public, tempted Mrs. Trotter to write a copy of verses to the duke of Marlborough, upon his return from his glorious campaign in Germany, December, 1704. But being doubtful with respect to the publication of them, she sent them in manuscript to his grace; and received for answer, that the duke and duchess, and the lord treasurer Godolphin, with several others to whom they were shewn, were greatly pleased with them; and that good judges of poetry had declared, that there were some lines in them superior to any that had been written on the subject. Upon this encouragement she sent the poem to the press.

The high degree of favour with which she was honoured by these illustrious persons, gave her, about this time, hopes of some establishment of her fortune, which had hitherto been extremely narrow and precarious. But though she failed of such an establishment, she succeeded in 1705, in another point, which was a temporary relief to her. This particular appears from one of her letters printed in the second volume; but of what nature or amount this relief was, we do not find.

Her enquiries into the nature of true religion were attended with their natural and usual effects, in opening and enlarging her notions beyond the contracted pale of her own church. For in her letter of the 7th of July 1705, to Mr. Burnet, she says, 'I am zealous to have you agree with me in this one article, that all good christians are of the same religion; a sentiment which I sincerely confess, how little soever it is countenanced by the church of Rome.' And in the latter end of the following year, or the beginning of 1707, her doubts about the Romish religion, which she had so many years professed, having led her to a thorough examination of the grounds of it, by consulting the best books on both sides of the question, and advising with men of the best judgment, the result was a conviction of the falseness of the pretensions of that church, and a return to that of England, to which she adhered during the rest of her life. In the course of this enquiry, the great and leading question concerning A Guide in Controversy, was particularly discussed by her; and the two letters which she wrote upon it, the first to Mr. Bennet, a Romish priest, and the second to Mr. H——, who had procured an answer to that letter from a stranger, Mr. Beimel's indisposition preventing him from returning one, were thought so valuable on account of the strength and perspicuity of reasoning, as well as their conciseness, that she consented to the importunity of her friends, for their publication in June 1707, under the following title, A Discourse concerning a Guide in Controversies; in two Letters: Written to one of the Church Church of Rome, by a Person lately converted from that Communion; a later edition of them being since printed at Edinburgh in 1728 in 8vo.

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Bishop Burnet wrote the preface to them, though without his name to it; and he observes, that they might be of use to such of the Roman Catholics as are perswaded, that those who deny the infallibility of their church, take away all certainty of the Christian religion, or of the authority of the scriptures. This is the main topic of those two letters, and the point was considered by our author as of such importance, that she procured her friend Mrs. Burnet to consult Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Clark upon it, and to show him a paper, which had been put into her hands, urging the difficulties on that article, on the side of the Papists. The sentiments of that great man upon this subject are comprised in a letter from Mrs. Burnet to Mrs. Trotter, of which our editor has given a copy, to which we refer the reader in the 31st page of his account.

In 1708 our author was married to Mr. Cockburn, the son of Dr. Cockburn, an eminent and learned divine of Scotland, at first attached to the court of St. Germains, but obliged to quit it on account of his inflexible adherence to the Protestant religion; then for some time minister of the Episcopal church at Amsterdam, and at last collated to the rectory of Northaw in Middlesex, by Dr. Robinson bishop of London, at the recommendation of Queen Anne. Mr. Cockburn, his son, soon after his marriage with our author, had the donative of Nayland in Sussex, where he settled in the same year 1708; but returned afterwards from thence to London, to be curate of St. Dunstan's in Fleet-street, where he continued 'till the accession of his late majesty to the throne, when falling into a scruple about the oath of abjuration, though he always prayed for the King and Royal Family by name, he was obliged to quit that station, and for ten or twelve years following was reduced to great difficulties in the support of his family; during which time he instructed the youth of the academy in Chancery-Lane, in the Latin tongue. At last, in 1726, by consulting the lord chancellor King and his own father, upon the sense and intent of that oath, and by reading some papers put into his hands, with relation to it, he was reconciled to the taking of it. In consequence of this, being the year following invited to be minister of the Episcopal congregation at Aberdeen in Scotland, he qualified himself conformably to the law, and, on the day of his present Majesty's accession, preached a sermon there on the duty and benefit of praying for the government. This sermon being printed and animadverted upon, he published a reply to the remarks on it, with some papers relating to the oath of abjuration, which have been much esteemed. Soon after his settlement at Aberdeen, the lord chancellor presented him to the living of Long-Horsely, near Morpeth in Northumberland, as a means of enabling him to support and educate his family; for which purpose he was allowed to continue his function at Aberdeen, 'till the negligence and ill-behaviour of the

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curates, whom he employed at Long Horsely, occasioned Dr. Chandler, the late bishop of Durham, to call him to residence on that living, 1737; by which means he was forced to quit his station at Aberdeen, to the no small diminution of his income. He was a man of considerable learning; and besides his sermon abovementioned, and the vindication of it, he published, in the Weekly Miscellany, A Defence of Prime Ministers, in the Character of Joseph; and a Treatise of the Mosaic Design, published since his death.

Mrs. Cockburn, after her marriage, was entirely diverted from her studies for many years, by attending tending upon the duties of a wife and a mother, and by the ordinary cares of an encreasing family, and the additional ones arising from the reduced circumstances of her husband. However, her zeal for Mr. Lock's character and writings drew her again into the public light in 1716, upon this occasion.

Dr. Holdsworth, fellow of St. John's College in Oxford, had preached on Easter-Monday, 1719 20, before that university, a sermon on John v. 28, 29, which he published, professing in his title page to examine and answer the Cavils, False Reasonings, and False Interpretations of Scripture, of Mr. Lock and others, against the Resurrection of the Same Body. This sermon did not reach Mrs. Cockburn's hands 'till some years after; when the perusal of it forced from her some animadversions, which she threw together in the form of a letter to the Dr. and sent to him in May 1724, with a design of suppressing it entirely, if it should have the desired effect upon him. After nine months the Dr. informed her, that he had drawn up a large and particular answer to it, but was unwilling to trust her with his manuscript, 'till she should publish her own. However, after a long time, and much difficulty, she at last obtained the perusal of his answer; but not meeting with that conviction from it, which would have made her give up her cause, she was prevailed on to let the world judge between them, and accordingly published her Letter to Dr. Holdsworth, in January 1726 7, without her name, but said in the title page to be by the author of, A Defence of Mr. Lock's Essay of Human Understanding. The Dr. whose answer to it was already finished, was very expeditious in the publication of it in June 1727, in an 8vo volume, under the title of A Defence of the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the same Body, &c.

Mrs. Cockburn wrote a very particular reply to this, and entitled it, A Vindication of Mr. Lock's Principles, from the injurious Imputations of Dr. Holdsworth. But though it is an admirable performance, and she was extremely desirous of doing justice to Mr. Lock and herself, yet not meeting with any Bookseller willing to undertake, nor herself being able to support the expence of the impression, it continued in manuscript, and was reserved to enrich the collection published after her death.

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Her Remarks upon some Writers in the Controversy concerning the Foundation of Moral Duty and Moral Obligation were begun during the winter of the year 1739, and finished in the following one; for the weakness of her eyes, which had been a complaint of many years standing, not permitting her to use, by candlelight, her needle, which so fully employed her in the summer season, that she read little, and wrote less; she amused herself, during the long winter-evenings, in digesting her thoughts upon the most abstract subjects in morality and metaphysics. They continued in manuscript till 1743, for want of a Bookseller inclined to accept the publication of them, and were introduced to the world in August that year, in The History of the Works of the Learned. Her name did not go with them, but they were Inscribed with the utmost Deference to Alexander Pope, Esq; by an Admirer of his moral Character; for which she shews a remarkable zeal in her letters, whenever she has occasion to mention him. And her high opinion of him in that respect, founded chiefly on his writings, and especially his letters, as well as her admiration of his genius, inspired her with a strong desire of being known to him; for which purpose she drew up a pretty long letter to him about the year 1738: but it was never sent. The strength, clearness, and vivacity shewn in her Remarks upon the most abstract and perplexed questions, immediately raised the curiosity of all good judges about the concealed writer; and their admiration was greatly increased when her sex and advanced age were known. And the worthy Dr. Sharp[3], archdeacon of Northumberland, who had these Remarks in manuscript, and encouraged the publication of them, being convinced by them, that no person was better qualified for a thorough examination of the grounds of morality, entered into a correspondence with her upon that subject. But her ill state of health at last interrupted her prosecution of it; a circumstance to be regretted, since a discussion carried on with so much sagacity and candour on both sides, would, in all probability, have left little difficulty remaining on the question.

Dr. Rutherforth's Essay on the Nature and Obligations of virtue, published in May 1744, soon engaged her thoughts, and notwithstanding the asthmatic disorder, which had seized her many years before, and now left her small intervals of ease, she applied herself to the confutation of that elaborate discourse; and having finished it with a spirit, elegance, and perspicuity equal, if not superior to all her former writings, transmitted her manuscript to Mr. Warburton, who published it in 8vo. with a Preface of his own, in April 1747, under the title of Remarks upon the Principles and Reasonings of Dr. Rutherforth's Essay on the Nature and Obligations of Virtue, in Vindication of the contrary Principles and Reasons inforced in the Writings of the late Dr. Samuel Clark.

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The extensive reputation which this and her former writings had gained her, induced her friends to propose to her, the collecting and publishing them in a body. And upon her consenting to the scheme, which was to be executed by subscription, in order to secure to her the full benefit of the edition, it met with a ready encouragement from all persons of true taste; but though Mrs. Cockburn did not live to discharge the office of editor, yet the public has received the acquisition by her death, of a valuable series of letters, which her own modesty would have restrained her from permitting to see the light. And it were to be wished that these two volumes, conditioned for by the terms of subscription, could have contained all her dramatic writings, of which only one is here published. But as that was impossible, the preference was, upon the maturest deliberation, given to those in prose, as superior in their kind to the most perfect of her poetical, and of more general and lasting use to the world.

The loss of her husband on the 4th of January 1748, in the 71st year of his age, was a severe shock to her; and she did not long survive him, dying on the 11th of May, 1749, in her 71st year, after having long supported a painful disorder, with a resignation to the divine will, which had been the governing principle of her whole life, and her support under the various trials of it. Her memory and understanding continued unimpaired, 'till within a few days of her death. She was interred near her husband and youngest daughter at Long-Horsley, with this short sentence on their tomb:

Let their works praise them in the gates.
Prov. xxxi. 31.

They left only one son, who is clerk of the cheque at Chatham, and two daughters.

Mrs. Cockburn was no less celebrated for her beauty, in her younger days, than for her genius and accomplishments. She was indeed small of stature, but had a remarkable liveliness in her eye, and delicacy of complexion, which continued to her death. Her private character rendered her extremely amiable to those who intimately knew her. Her conversation was always innocent, useful and agreeable, without the least affectation of being thought a wit, and attended with a remarkable modesty and diffidence of herself, and a constant endeavour to adapt her discourse to her company. She was happy in an uncommon evenness and chearfulness of temper. Her disposition was generous and benevolent; and ready upon all occasions to forgive injuries, and bear them, as well as misfortunes, without interrupting her own ease, or that of others, with complaints or reproaches. The pressures of a very contracted fortune were supported by her with calmness and in silence; nor did she ever attempt to improve it among those great personages to whom she was known, by importunities; to which the best minds are most averse, and which her approved merit and established reputation mould have rendered unnecessary.

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The collection now exhibited to the world is, says Dr. Birch, and we entirely agree with him, so incontestable a proof of the superiority of our author's genius, as in a manner supersedes every thing that can be said upon that head. But her abilities as a writer, and the merit of her works, will not have full justice done them, without a due attention to the peculiar circumstances, in which they were produced: her early youth, when she wrote some, her very advanced age, and ill state of health, when she drew up others; the uneasy situation of her fortune, during the whole course of her life; and an interval of near twenty years in the vigour of it, spent in the cares of a family, without the least leisure for reading or contemplation: after which, with a mind so long diverted and incumbered, resuming her studies, she instantly recovered its intire powers, and in the hours of relaxation from her domestic employments, pursued, to their utmost limits, some of the deepest enquiries of which the human mind is capable!

CONTENTS of the First Volume of Mrs. COCKBURN'S Works.

I. A Discourse concerning a Guide in Controversy. First published in 1707, with a preface by bishop Burnet.

II. A Defence of Mr. Lock's Essay of Human Understanding. First published in 1702.

III. A Letter to Dr. Holdsworth, concerning the Resurrection of the same Body. First published in 1726.

IV. A Vindication of Mr. Lock's Christian Principles, from the injurious Imputations of Dr. Holdsworth. Now first published.

V. Remarks upon some Writers in the Controversy, concerning the Foundation of Moral Virtue, and Moral Obligation. With some Thoughts concerning Necessary Existence; the Reality and Infinity of Space; the Extension and Place of Spirits; and on Dr. Watts's Notion of Substance. First published in 1743.

CONTENTS of the Second Volume.

I. Remarks upon Dr. Rutherforth's Essay on the Nature and Obligations of Virtue. First published in the year 1747.

II. Miscellaneous Pieces. Now first printed. Containing a Letter of Advice to her Son. —Sunday's Journal.—On the Usefulness of Schools and Universities.—On the Credibility of the Historical Parts of Scripture. —On Moral Virtue.—Notes on Christianity as old as the Creation.—On the Infallibility of the Church of Rome.—Answer to a Question concerning the Jurisdiction of the Magistrate over the Life of the Subject.—-

Remarks on Mr. Seed's Sermon on Moral Virtue.—Remarks upon an Enquiry into the Origin of Human Appetites and Affections.

III. Letters between Mrs. Cockburn and several of her Friends. These take up the greatest part of the volume.

IV. Letters between the Rev. Dr. Sharp, Archdeacon of Northumberland and Mrs. Cockburn concerning the Foundation of Moral Virtue.

V. Fatal Friendship, a Tragedy.

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VI. Poems on several Occasions. There are very few of these, and what there are, are of little note. Her poetical talent was the smallest and least valuable of our author's literary accomplishments.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Historia Mulierum Philosopharum. 8vo. Lyons. 1690.

[2] Dr. Birch mentions also Mr. Higgons's verses on this occasion, and gives a copy of a complimentary letter to our author, from Mr. George Farquhar.

[3] Author of an excellent pamphlet, entitled, Two Dissertations concerning the Etymology and Scripture-meaning of the Hebrew Words Elohim and Berith. Vide Monthly Review.

* * * * *

AMBROSE PHILLIPS, ESQ;

This Gentleman was descended from a very ancient, and considerable family in the county of Leicester, and received his education in St. John's college Cambridge, where he wrote his Pastorals, a species of excellence, in which he is thought to have remarkably distinguished himself. When Mr. Philips quitted the university, and repaired to the metropolis, he became, as Mr. Jacob phrases it, one of the wits at Buttons; and in consequence of this, contracted an acquaintance with those bright genius's who frequented it; especially Sir Richard Steele, who in the first volume of his Tatler inserts a little poem of this author's dated from Copenhagen, which he calls a winter piece; Sir Richard thus mentions it with honour. 'This is as fine a piece, as we ever had from any of the schools of the most learned painters; such images as these give us a new pleasure in our fight, and fix upon our minds traces of reflexion, which accompany us wherever the like objects occur.'

This short performance which we shall here insert, was reckoned so elegant, by men of taste then living, that Mr. Pope himself, who had a confirmed aversion to Philips, when he affected to despise his other works, always excepted this out of the number.

It is written from Copenhagen, addressed to the Earl of Dorset, and dated the 9th of May 1709.

A WINTER PIECE.

From frozen climes, and endless tracks of snow,
From streams that northern winds forbid to flow;
What present shall the Muse to Dorset bring,
Or how, so near the Pole, attempt to sing?
The hoary winter here conceals from sight,
All pleasing objects that to verse invite.
The hills and dales, and the delightful woods,
The flow'ry plains, and silver streaming floods,
By snow distinguished in bright confusion lie,
And with one dazling waste, fatigue the eye.

No gentle breathing breeze prepares the spring,
No birds within the desart region sing.
The ships unmov'd the boist'rous winds defy,
While rattling chariots o'er the ocean fly.
The vast Leviathan wants room to play,
And spout his waters in the face of day.
The starving wolves along the main sea prowl,
And to the moon in icy valleys howl,
For many a shining league the level main,
Here spreads itself into a glassy plain:
There solid billows of enormous size,
Alps of green ice, in wild disorder rise.

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And yet but lately have I seen ev'n here,
The winter in a lovely dress appear.
Ere yet the clouds let fall the treasur'd snow,
Or winds begun through hazy skies to blow;
At ev'ning a keen eastern breeze arose;
And the descending rain unsully'd froze.
Soon as the silent shades of night withdrew,
The ruddy morn disclos'd at once to view,
The face of nature in a rich disguise,
And brighten'd every object to my eyes:

And ev'ry shrub, and ev'ry blade of grass,
And ev'ry pointed thorn seem'd wrought in glass.
In pearls and rubies rich, the hawthorns show,
While through the ice the crimson berries glow.
The thick sprung reeds, the watry marshes yield,
Seem polish'd lances in a hostile field.
The flag in limpid currents with surprize,
Sees crystal branches on his fore-head rise.
The spreading oak, the beech, and tow'ring pine,
Glaz'd over, in the freezing aether shine.
The frighted birds, the rattling branches shun.
That wave and glitter in the distant sun.

When if a sudden gust of wind arise,
The brittle forest into atoms flies:
The crackling wood beneath the tempest bends,
And in a spangled show'r the prospect ends.
Or, if a southern gale the region warm,
And by degrees unbind the wintry charm,
The traveller, a miry country sees,
And journeys sad beneath the dropping trees.

Like some deluded peasant, Merlin leads
Thro' fragrant bow'rs, and thro' delicious meads;
While here inchanted gardens to him rise,
And airy fabrics there attract his eyes,
His wand'ring feet the magic paths pursue;
And while he thinks the fair illusion true,
The trackless scenes disperse in fluid air,
And woods, and wilds, and thorny ways appear:
A tedious road the weary wretch returns,
And, as he goes, the transient vision mourns.

But it was not enough for Sir Richard to praise this performance of Mr. Philips. He was also an admirer of his Pastorals, which had then obtained a great number of readers: He was about to form a Critical Comparison of Pope's Pastorals, and these of Mr. Philips; and giving in the conclusion, the preference to the latter. Sir Richard's design being communicated to Mr. Pope, who was not a little jealous of his reputation, he took the alarm; and by the most artful and insinuating method defeated his purpose.

The reader cannot be ignorant, that there are several numbers in the Guardian, employed upon Pastoral Poetry, and one in particular, upon the merits of Philips and Pope, in which the latter is found a better versifier; but as a true Arcadian, the preference is given to Philips. That we may be able to convey a perfect idea of the method which Mr. Pope took to prevent the diminution of his reputation, we shall transcribe the particular parts of that paper in the Guardian, Number XL. Monday April the 27th.

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I designed to have troubled the reader with no farther discourses of Pastorals, but being informed that I am taxed of partiality, in not mentioning an author, whose Eclogues are published in the same volume with Mr. Philips's, I shall employ this paper in observations upon him, written in the free spirit of criticism, and without apprehensions of offending that gentleman, whose character it is, that he takes the greatest care of his works before they are published, and has the least concern for them afterwards. I have laid it down as the first rule of Pastoral, that its idea should be taken from the manners of the Golden Age, and the moral formed upon the representation of innocence; 'tis therefore plain, that any deviations from that design, degrade a poem from being true Pastoral.

So easy as Pastoral writing may seem (in the simplicity we have described it) yet it requires great reading, both of the ancients and moderns, to be a master of it. Mr. Philips hath given us manifest proofs of his knowledge of books; it must be confessed his competitor has imitated some single thoughts of the antients well enough, if we consider he had not the happiness of an university education: but he hath dispersed them here and there without that order and method Mr. Philips observes, whose whole third pastoral, is an instance how well he studied the fifth of Virgil, and how judiciously he reduced Virgil's thoughts to the standard of pastoral; and his contention of Colin Clout, and the Nightingale, shews with what exactness he hath imitated Strada. When I remarked it as a principal fault to introduce fruits, and flowers of a foreign growth in descriptions, where the scene lies in our country, I did not design that observation should extend also to animals, or the sensitive life; for Philips hath with great judgment described wolves in England in his first pastoral. Nor would I have a poet slavishly confine himself, (as Mr. Pope hath done) to one particular season of the year, one certain time of the day, and one unbroken scene in each Eclogue. It is plain, Spencer neglected this pedantry, who in his Pastoral of November, mentions the mournful song of the Nightingale.

Sad Philomel, her song in tears doth sleep.

And Mr. Philips by a poetical creation, hath raised up finer beds of flowers, than the most industrious gardener; his roses, lilies, and daffadils, blow in the same season.

But the better to discover the merit of our two cotemporary pastoral writers. I shall endeavour to draw a parallel of them, by placing several of their particular thoughts in the same light; whereby it will be obvious, how much Philips hath the advantage: With what simplicity he introduces two shepherds singing alternately.

HOBB.

Come Rosalind, O come, for without thee
What pleasure can the country have for me?

Come Rosalind, O come; my brinded kine,
My snowy sheep, my farm and all is thine.

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LANG.

Come Rosalind, O come; here shady bowers.
Here are cool fountains, and here springing flowers.
Come Rosalind; here ever let us stay,
And sweetly waste our live-long time away.

Our other pastoral writer in expressing the same thought, deviates into downright poetry.

STREPHON.

In spring the fields, in autumn hills I love,
At morn the plains, at noon the shady grove,
But Delia always; forc'd from Delia's sight,
Nor plains at morn, nor groves at noon delight.

DAPHNE.

Sylvia's like autumn ripe, yet mild as May,
More bright than noon, yet fresh as early day;
Ev'n spring displeases when she shines not here:
But blest with her, 'tis spring throughout the year.

In the first of these authors, two shepherds thus innocently describe the behaviour of their mistresses.

HOBB.

As Marian bath'd, by chance I passed by;
She blush'd, and at me cast a side-long eye:
Then swift beneath, the crystal waves she tried,
Her beauteous form, but all in vain, to hide.

LANG.

As I to cool me bath'd one sultry day,
Fond Lydia lurking in the sedges lay,
The woman laugh'd, and seem'd in haste to fly;
Yet often stopp'd, and often turn'd her eye.

The other modern (who it must be confess'd has a knack at versifying) has it as follows,

STREPHON.

Me gentle Delia beckons from the plain,
Thus, hid in shades, eludes her eager swain;
But feigns a laugh, to see me search around,
And by that laugh the willing fair is found.

DAPHNE.

The sprightly Sylvia trips along the green;
She runs, but hopes she does not run unseen;
While a kind glance, at her pursuer flies,
How much at variance are her feet and eyes.

There is nothing the writers of this kind of poetry are fonder of, than descriptions of pastoral presents.

Philips says thus of a Sheep-hook.

Of season'd elm, where studs of brass appear,
To speak the giver's name, the month, and year;
The hook of polished steel, the handle turn'd,
And richly by the graver's skill adorn'd.

The other of a bowl embossed with figures,

—Where wanton ivy twines,
And swelling clusters bend the curling vines,
Four figures rising from the work appear,
The various seasons of the rolling year;
And what is that which binds the radiant sky,
Where twelve bright signs, in beauteous order lye.

The simplicity of the swain in this place who forgets the name of the Zodiac, is no ill imitation of Virgil; but how much more plainly, and unaffectedly would Philips have dressed this thought in his Doric.

And what that height, which girds the welkin-sheen
Where twelve gay signs in meet array are seen.

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If the reader would indulge his curiosity any farther in the comparison of particulars, he may read the first Pastoral of Philips, with the second of his contemporary, and the fourth and fifth of the former, with the fourth and first of the latter; where several parallel places will occur to every one.

Having now shewn some parts, in which these two writers may be compared, it is a justice I owe to Mr. Philips, to discover those in which no man can compare with him. First, the beautiful rusticity, of which I shall now produce two instances, out of a hundred not yet quoted.

O woeful day! O day of woe, quoth he,
And woeful I, who live the day to see!

That simplicity of diction, the melancholy flowing of the numbers, the solemnity of the sound, and the easy turn of the words, are extremely elegant.

In another Pastoral, a shepherd utters a Dirge, not much inferior to the former in the following lines.

Ah me the while! ah me, the luckless day!
Ah luckless lad, the rather might I say;
Ah silly I! more silly than my sheep,
Which on the flow'ry plains I once did keep.

How he still charms the ear, with his artful repetition of the epithets; and how significant is the last verse! I defy the most common reader to repeat them, without feeling some motions of compassion. In the next place, I shall rank his Proverbs in which I formerly observed he excels: For example,

A rolling stone is ever bare of moss;
And, to their cost, green years old proverbs cross,
—He that late lies down, as late will rise,
And sluggard like, till noon-day snoring lies.
Against ill-luck, all cunning foresight fails;
Whether we sleep or wake, it nought avails.
—Nor fear, from upright sentence wrong,

Lastly, His excellent dialect, which alone might prove him the eldest born of Spencer, and the only true Arcadian, &c.

Thus far the comparison between the merit of Mr. Pope and Mr. Philips, as writers of Pastoral, made by the author of this paper in the Guardian, after the publication of which, the enemies of Pope exulted, as in one particular species of poetry, upon which

he valued himself, he was shewn to be inferior to his contemporary. For some time they enjoyed their triumph; but it turned out at last to their unspeakable mortification.

The paper in which the comparison is inserted, was written by Mr. Pope himself. Nothing could have so effectually defeated the design of diminishing his reputation, as this method, which had a very contrary effect. He laid down some false principles, upon these he reasoned, and by comparing his own and Philips's Pastorals, upon such principles it was no great compliment to the latter, that he wrote more agreeable to notions which are in themselves false.

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The subjects of pastoral are as various as the passions of human nature; nay, it may in some measure partake of every kind of poetry, but with this limitation, that the scene of it ought always to be laid in the country, and the thoughts never contrary to the ideas of those who are bred there. The images are to be drawn from rural life; and provided the language is perspicuous, gentle, and flowing, the sentiments may be as elegant as the country scenes can furnish.—In the particular comparison of passages between Pope and Philips, the former is so much superior, that one cannot help wondering, that Steele could be thus imposed upon, who was in other respects a very quick discerner. Though 'tis not impossible, but that Guardian might go to the press without Sir Richard's seeing it; he not being the only person concern'd in that paper.

The two following lines so much celebrated in this paper, are sufficiently convincing, that the whole criticism is ironical.

Ah! silly I, more silly than my sheep,
Which on the flowr'y plains I once did keep.

Nothing can be much more silly than these lines; and yet the author says, "How he still charms the ear with the artful repetitions of epithets."

SILLY I, MORE SILLY THAN MY SHEEP.

The next work Mr. Philips published after his Pastorals, and which it is said he wrote at the university, was his life of John Williams lord keeper of the great-seal, bishop of Lincoln and archbishop of York, in the reigns of king James and Charles the First, in which are related some remarkable occurrences in those times, both in church and state, with an appendix, giving an account of his benefactions to St. John's college.

Mr. Philips, seems to have made use of archbishop William's life, the better to make known his own state principles, which in the course of that work he had a fair occasion of doing. Bishop Williams was the great opposer of High-Church measures, he was a perpetual antagonist to Laud; and lord Clarendon mentions him in his history with very great decency and respect, when it is considered that they adhered to opposite parties.

Mr. Philips, who early distinguished himself in revolution principles, was concerned with Dr. Boulter, afterwards archbishop of Armagh, the right honourable Richard West, Esq; lord chancellor of Ireland; the revd. Mr. Gilbert Burnet, and the revd. Mr. Henry Stevens, in writing a paper called the Free-Thinker; but they were all published by Mr. Philips, and since re-printed in three volumes in 12mo. In the latter part of the reign of queen Anne, he was secretary to the Hanover Club, a set of noblemen and gentlemen, who associated in honour of that succession. They drank regular toasts to the health of those ladies, who were most zealously attached to the Hanoverian family; upon whom Mr. Philips wrote the following lines,

While these, the chosen beauties of our isle,
Propitious on the cause of freedom smile,
The rash Pretender's hopes we may despise,
And trust Britannia's safety to their eyes.

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After the accession of his late majesty, Mr. Philips was made a justice of peace, and appointed a commissioner of the lottery. But though his circumstances were easy, the state of his mind was not so; he fell under the severe displeasure of Mr. Pope, who has satirized him with his usual keenness.

'Twas said, he used to mention Mr. Pope as an enemy to the government; and that he was the avowed author of a report, very industriously spread, that he had a hand in a paper called The Examiner. The revenge which Mr. Pope took in consequence of this abuse, greatly ruffled the temper of Mr. Philips, who as he was not equal to him in wit, had recourse to another weapon; in the exercise of which no great parts are requisite. He hung up a rod at Button's, with which he resolved to chastise his antagonist, whenever he should come there. But Mr. Pope, who got notice of this design, very prudently declined coming to a place, where in all probability he must have felt the resentment of an enraged author, as much superior to him in bodily strength, as inferior in wit and genius.

When Mr. Philips's friend, Dr. Boulter, rose to be archbishop of Dublin, he went with him into Ireland, where he had considerable preferments; and was a member of the House of Commons there, as representative of the county of Armagh.

Notwithstanding the ridicule which Mr. Philips has drawn upon himself, by his opposition to Pope, and the disadvantageous light his Pastorals appear in, when compared with his; yet, there is good reason to believe, that Mr. Philips was no mean Arcadian: By endeavouring to imitate too servilely the manners and sentiments of vulgar rustics, he has sometimes raised a laugh against him; yet there are in some of his Pastorals a natural simplicity, a true Doric dialect, and very graphical descriptions.

Mr. Gildon, in his compleat Art of Poetry, mentions him with Theocritus and Virgil; but then he defeats the purpose of his compliment, for by carrying the similitude too far, he renders his panegyric hyperbolical.

We shall now consider Mr. Philips as a dramatic writer. The first piece he brought upon the stage, was his Distress'd Mother, translated from the French of Monsieur Racine, but not without such deviations as Mr. Philips thought necessary to heighten the distress; for writing to the heart is a secret which the best of the French poets have not found out. This play was acted first in the year 1711, with every advantage a play could have. Pyrrhus was performed by Mr. Booth, a part in which he acquired great reputation. Orestes was given to Mr. Powel, and Andromache was excellently personated by the inimitable Mrs. Oldfield. Nor was Mrs. Porter beheld in Hermione without admiration. The Distress'd Mother is so often acted, and so frequently read, we shall not trouble the reader with giving any farther account of it.

A modern critic speaking of this play, observes that the distress of Andromache moves an audience more than that of Belvidera, who is as amiable a wife, as Andromache is

an affectionate mother; their circumstances though not similar, are equally interesting, and yet says he, 'the female part of the audience is more disposed to weep for the suffering mother, than the suffering wife.[1]' The reason 'tis imagin'd is this, there are more affectionate mothers in the world than wives.

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Mr. Philips's next dramatic performance was The Briton, a Tragedy; acted 1721. This is built on a very interesting and affecting story, whether founded on real events I cannot determine, but they are admirably fitted to raise the passion peculiar to tragedy. Vanoc Prince of the Cornavians married for his second wife Cartismand, Queen of the Brigantians, a woman of an imperious spirit, who proved a severe step-mother to the King's daughter Gwendolen, betrothed to Yvor, the Prince of the Silurians. The mutual disagreement between Vanoc and his Queen, at last produced her revolt from him. She intrigues with Vellocad, who had been formerly the King's servant, and enters into a league with the Roman tribune, in order to be revenged on her husband. Vanoc fights some successful battles, but his affairs are thrown into the greatest confusion, upon receiving the news that a party of the enemy has carried off the Princess his daughter. She is conducted to the tent of Valens the Roman tribune, who was himself in love with her, but who offered her no violation. He went to Vanoc in the name of Didius the Roman general, to offer terms of peace, but he was rejected with indignation. The scene between Vanoc and Valens is one of the most masterly to be met with in tragedy. Valens returns to his fair charge, while her father prepares for battle, and to rescue his daughter by the force of arms. But Cartismand, who knew that no mercy would be shewn her at the hands of her stern husband, flies to the Princess's tent, and in the violence of her rage stabs her. The King and Yvor enter that instant, but too late to save the beauteous Gwendolen from the blow, who expires in the arms of her betrothed husband, a scene wrought up with the greatest tenderness. When the King reproaches Cartismand for this deed of horror, she answers,

Hadst thou been more forgiving, I had been less cruel.

VANOC

Wickedness! barbarian! monster—
What had she done, alas!—Sweet innocence!
She would have interceded for thy crimes.

CARTISMAND

Too well I knew the purpose of thy soul.—
Didst thou believe I would submit?—resign my crown?—
Or that thou only hadst the power to punish?

VANOC

Yet I will punish;—meditate strange torments!—
Then give thee to the justice of the Gods.

CARTISMAND

Thus Vanoc, do I mock thy treasur'd rage.—
My heart springs forward to the dagger's point.

Vanoc

Quick, wrest it from her!—drag her hence to chains.

CARTISMAND

There needs no second stroke—
Adieu, rash man!—my woes are at an end:—
Thine's but begun;—and lasting as thy life.

Mr. Philips in this play has shewn how well he was acquainted with the stage; he keeps the scene perpetually busy; great designs are carrying on, the incidents rise naturally from one another, and the catastrophe is moving. He has not observed the rules which some critics have established, of distributing poetical justice; for Gwendolen, the most amiable character in the play is the chief sufferer, arising from the indulgence of no irregular passion, nor any guilt of hers.

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The next year Mr. Philips introduced another tragedy on the stage called Humfrey Duke of Gloucester, acted 1721. The plot of this play is founded on history. During the minority of Henry VI. his uncle, the duke of Gloucester, was raised to the dignity of Regent of the Realm. This high station could not but procure him many enemies, amongst whom was the duke of Suffolk, who, in order to restrain his power, and to inspire the mind of young Henry with a love of independence, effected a marriage between that Prince, and Margaret of Anjou, a Lady of the most consummate beauty, and what is very rare amongst her sex, of the most approved courage. This lady entertained an aversion for the duke of Gloucester, because he opposed her marriage with the King, and accordingly resolves upon his ruin.

She draws over to her party cardinal Beaufort, the Regent's uncle, a supercilious proud churchman. They fell upon a very odd scheme to shake the power of Gloucester, and as it is very singular, and absolutely fact, we shall here insert it.

The duke of Gloucester had kept Eleanor Cobham, daughter to the lord Cobham, as his concubine, and after the dissolution of his marriage with the countess of Hainault, he made her his wife; but this did not restore her reputation: she was, however, too young to pass in common repute for a witch, yet was arrested for high treason, founded on a pretended piece of witchcraft, and after doing public penance several days, by sentence of convocation, was condemned to perpetual imprisonment in the Isle of Man, but afterwards removed to Killingworth-castle. The fact charged upon her, was the making an image of wax resembling the King, and treated in such a manner by incantations, and sorceries, as to make him waste away, as the image gradually consumed. John Hume, her chaplain, Thomas Southwell, a canon of St. Stephen's Westminster, Roger Bolingbroke, a clergyman highly esteemed, and eminent for his uncommon learning, and merit, and perhaps on that account, reputed to have great skill in necromancy, and Margery Jourdemain, commonly called The Witch of Eye, were tried as her accomplices, and condemned, the woman to be burnt, the others to be drawn, hanged, and quartered at Tyburn[2]. This hellish contrivance against the wife of the duke of Gloucester, was meant to shake the influence of her husband, which in reality it did, as ignorance and credulity cooperated with his enemies to destroy him. He was arrested for high treason, a charge which could not be supported, and that his enemies might have no further trouble with him, cardinal Beaufort hired assassins to murder him. The poet acknowledges the hints he has taken from the Second Part of Shakespear's Henry VI, and in some scenes has copied several lines from him. In the last scene, that pathetic speech of Eleanor's to Cardinal Beaufort when he was dying in the agonies of remorse and despair, is literally borrowed.

WARWICK

See how the pangs of death work in his features.

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YORK

Disturb him not—let him pass peaceably.

ELEANOR

Lord Cardinal;—if thou think'st of Heaven's bliss
Hold up thy hand;—make signal of that hope.
He dies;—and makes no sign!—

In praise of this tragedy, Mr. Welsted has prefixed a very elegant copy of verses.

Mr. Philips by a way of writing very peculiar, procured to himself the name of Namby Pamby. This was first bestowed on him by Harry Cary, who burlesqued some little pieces of his, in so humorous a manner, that for a long while, Harry's burlesque, passed for Swift's with many; and by others were given to Pope: 'Tis certain, each at first, took it for the other's composition.

In ridicule of this manner, the ingenious Hawkins Brown, Esq; now a Member of Parliament, in his excellent burlesque piece called The Pipe of Tobacco, has written an imitation, in which the resemblance is so great, as not to be distinguished from the original. This gentleman has burlesqued the following eminent authors, by such a close imitation of their turn of verse, that it has not the appearance of a copy, but an original.

SWIFT,

POPE,

THOMSON,

YOUNG,

PHILIPS,

CIBBER.

As a specimen of the delicacy of our author's turn of verification, we shall present the reader with his translation of the following beautiful Ode of Sappho.

Hymn to Venus

1.

O Venus, beauty of the skies,
To whom a thousand temples rise,

Gayly false, in gentle smiles,
Full of love, perplexing wiles;
O Goddess! from my heart remove
The wasting cares and pains of love.

2.

If ever thou hast kindly heard
A song in soft distress preferr'd,
Propitious to my tuneful vow,
O gentle goddess! hear me now.
Descend, thou bright immortal guest!
In all thy radiant charms confess'd.

3.

Thou once did leave almighty Jove,
And all the golden roofs above;
The carr thy wanton sparrows drew,
Hov'ring in air, they lightly flew;
As to my bower they wing'd their way,
I saw their quiv'ring pinions play.

4.

The birds dismiss'd (while you remain)
Bore back their empty car again;
Then you, with looks divinely mild,
In ev'ry heav'nly feature smil'd,
And ask'd what new complaints I made,
And why I call'd you to my aid?

5.

What frenzy in my bosom rag'd,
And by what cure to be asswag'd?
What gentle youth I would allure,
Whom in my artful toils secure?
Who does thy tender heart subdue,
Tell me, my Sappho, tell me who!

6.

Tho' now he shuns my longing arms,
He soon shall court thy slighted charms;
Tho' now thy off'rings he despise,
He soon to thee shall sacrifice;

Tho’ now he freeze, he soon shall burn,
And be thy victim in his turn.

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7.

Celestial visitant once more,
Thy needful presence I implore.
In pity come, and ease my grief,
Bring my distemper'd soul relief,
Favour thy suppliant's hidden fires,
And give me all my heart's desires.

There is another beautiful ode by the same Grecian poetess, rendered into English by Mr. Philips with inexpressible delicacy, quoted in the Spectator, vol. iii,. No. 229.

1.

Blest, as th'immortal Gods is he
The youth who fondly fits by thee,
And hears, and sees thee all the while
Softly speak, and sweetly smile.

2.

'Twas this depriv'd my soul of rest,
And raised such tumults in my breast;
For while I gaz'd, in transport tost,
My breath was gone, my voice was lost.

3.

My bosom glow'd; the subtle flame
Ran quick thro' all my vital frame,
O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung;
My ears with hollow murmurs rung.

4.

In dewy damps my limbs were chill'd;
My blood with gentle horrors thrill'd;
My feeble pulse forgot to play;
I fainted, sunk, and died away.

Mr. Philips having purchased an annuity of 400 l. per annum, for his life, came over to England sometime in the year 1748: But had not his health; and died soon after at his lodgings near Vauxhall.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Vide the ACTOR.

[2] See Cart's History of England, Reign of Henry VI.

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RICHARD MAITLAND, EARL OF LAUDERDALE

This learned nobleman was nephew to John, the great duke of Lauderdale, who was secretary of state to King Charles II for Scotch affairs, and for many years had the government of that kingdom entirely entrusted to him. Whoever is acquainted with history will be at no loss to know, with how little moderation he exercised his power; he ruled his native country with a rod of iron, and was the author of all those disturbances and persecutions which have stained the Annals of Scotland, during that inglorious period.

As the duke of Lauderdale was without issue-male of his own body, he took our author into his protection as his immediate heir, and ordered him to be educated in such a manner as to qualify him for the possession of those great employments his ancestors enjoyed in the state. The improvement of this young nobleman so far exceeded his years, that he was very early admitted into the privy council, and made lord justice clerk, anno 1681. He married the daughter of the earl of Argyle, who was tried for sedition in the state, and confined in the castle of Edinburgh. When Argyle found his fate approaching, he meditated, and effected his escape; and some letters of his being intercepted and decyphered, which had been written to the earl of Lauderdale, his lordship fell under a cloud, and was stript of his preferments. These letters were only of a familiar nature, and contained nothing but domestic business; but a correspondence with a person condemned, was esteemed a sin in politics not to be forgiven, especially by a man of the Duke of York's furious disposition.

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Though the duke of Lauderdale had ordered our author to be educated as his heir, yet he left all his personal estate, which was very great, to another, the young nobleman having, by some means, disobliged him; and as he was of an ungovernable implacable temper, could never again recover his favour[1]. Though the earl of Lauderdale was thus removed from his places by the court, yet he persisted in his loyalty to the Royal Family, and, upon the revolution, followed the fortune of King James II, and some years after died in France, leaving no surviving issue, so that the titles devolved on his younger brother.

While the earl was in exile with his Royal master, he applied his mind to the delights of poetry, and, in his leisure hours, compleated a translation of Virgil's works. Mr. Dryden, in his dedication of the Aeneis, thus mentions it; 'The late earl of Lauderdale, says he, sent me over his new translation of the Aeneis, which he had ended before I engaged in the same design. Neither did I then intend it, but some proposals being afterwards made me by my Bookseller, I desired his lordship's leave that I might accept them, which he freely granted, and I have his letter to shew for that permission. He resolved to have printed his work, which he might have done two years before I could have published mine; and had performed it, if death had not prevented him. But having his manuscript in my hands, I consulted it as often as I doubted of my author's sense; for no man understood Virgil better than that learned nobleman. His friends have yet another, and more correct copy of that translation by them, which if they had pleased to have given the public, the judges might have been convinced that I have not flattered him.'

Lord Lauderdale's friends, some years after the publication of Dryden's Translation, permitted his lordship's to be printed, and, in the late editions of that performance, those lines are marked with inverted commas, which Dryden thought proper to adopt into his version, which are not many; and however closely his lordship may have rendered Virgil, no man can conceive a high opinion of that poet, contemplated through the medium of his Translation.

Dr. Trapp, in his preface to the Aeneis, observes, 'that his lordship's Translation is pretty near to the original, though not so close as its brevity would make one imagine; and it sufficiently appears, that he had a right taste in poetry in general, and the Aeneid in particular. He shews a true spirit, and, in many places, is very beautiful. But we should certainly have seen Virgil far better translated, by a noble hand, had the earl of Lauderdale been the earl of Roscommon, and had the Scottish peer followed all the precepts, and been animated with the genius of the Irish.'

We know of no other poetical compositions of this learned nobleman, and the idea we have received from history of his character, is, that he was in every respect the reverse of his uncle, from whence we may reasonably conclude, that he possessed many virtues, since few statesmen of any age ever were tainted with more vices than the duke of Lauderdale.

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FOOTNOTE:
[1] Crawford's Peerage of Scotland.

* * * * *

DR. JOSEPH TRAPP

This poet was second son to the rev. Mr. Joseph Trapp, rector of Cherington in Gloucestershire, at which place he was born, anno 1679. He received the first rudiments of learning from his father, who instructed him in the languages, and superintended his domestic education. When he was ready for the university he was sent to Oxford, and was many years scholar and fellow of Wadham College, where he took the degree of master of arts. In the year 1708 he was unanimously chosen professor of poetry, being the first of that kind. This institution was founded by Dr. Henry Birkhead, formerly fellow of All-Souls, and the place of lecturer can be held only for ten years.

Dr. Trapp was, in the early part of his life, chaplain to lord Bolingbroke, the father of the famous Bolingbroke, lately deceased. The highest preferment Dr. Trapp ever had in the church, though he was a man of extensive learning, was, the rectory of Harlington, Middlesex, and of the united parishes of Christ-Church, Newgate Street, and St. Leonard's Foster-Lane, with the lectureship of St. Lawrence Jewry, and St. Martin's in the Fields. The Dr's principles were not of that cast, by which promotion could be expected. He was attached to the High-Church interest, and as his temper was not sufficiently pliant to yield to the prevalence of party, perhaps for that very reason, his rising in the church was retarded. A gentleman of learning and genius, when paying a visit to the Dr. took occasion to lament, as there had been lately some considerable alterations made, and men less qualified than he, raised to the mitre, that distinctions should be conferred with so little regard to merit, and wondered that he (the Dr.) had never been promoted to a see. To this the Dr. replied, 'I am thought to have some learning, and some honesty, and these are but indifferent qualifications to enable a man to rise in the church.'

Dr. Trapp's action in the pulpit has been censured by many, as participating too much of the theatrical manner, and having more the air of an itinerant enthusiast, than a grave ecclesiastic. Perhaps it may be true, that his pulpit gesticulations were too violent, yet they bore strong expressions of sincerity, and the side on which he erred, was the most favourable to the audience; as the extreme of over-acting any part, is not half so intolerable as a languid indifference, whether what the preacher is then uttering, is true or false, is worth attention or no. The Dr. being once in company with a person, whose profession was that of a player, took occasion to ask him, 'what was the reason that an actor seemed to feel his part with so much sincerity, and utter it with so much emphasis

and spirit, while a preacher, whose profession is of a higher nature, and whose doctrines are of

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the last importance, remained unaffected, even upon the most solemn occasion, while he stood in the pulpit as the ambassador of God, to teach righteousness to the people?' the player replied, 'I believe no other reason can be given, sir, but that we are sincere in our parts, and the preachers are insincere in theirs.' The Dr. could not but acknowledge the truth of this observation in general, and was often heard to complain of the coldness and unaffected indifference of his brethren in those very points, in which it is their business to be sincere and vehement. Would you move your audience, says an ancient sage, you must yourself be moved; and it is a proposition which holds universally true. Dr. Trapp was of opinion, that the highest doctrines of religion were to be considered as infallibly true, and that it was of more importance to impress them strongly on the minds of the audience, to speak to their hearts, and affect their passions, than to bewilder them in disputation, and lead them through labyrinths of controversy, which can yield, perhaps, but little instruction, can never tend to refine the passions, or elevate the mind. Being of this opinion, and from a strong desire of doing good, Dr. Trapp exerted himself in the pulpit, and strove not only to convince the judgment, but to warm the heart, for if passions are the elements of life, they ought to be devoted to the service of religion, as well as the other faculties, and powers of the soul.

But preaching was not the only method by which, this worthy man promoted the interest of religion; he drew the muses into her service, and that he might work upon the hopes and fears of his readers, he has presented them with four poems, on these important subjects; *Death, Judgment, Heaven*, and *Hell.* The reason of his making choice of those themes on which to write, he very fully explains in his preface. He observes, that however dull, and trite it may be to declaim against the corruption of the age one lives in, yet he presumes it will be allowed by every body, that all manner of wickedness, both in principles and practice, abounds amongst men. 'I have lived (says he) in six reigns, but for about these twenty years last past, the English nation has been, and is so prodigiously debauched, its very nature and genius so changed, that I scarce know it to be the English nation, and am almost a foreigner in my own country. Not only barefaced, impudent, immorality of all kinds, but often professed infidelity and atheism. To slop these overflowings of ungodliness, much has been done in prose, yet not so as to supersede all other endeavours: and therefore the author of these poems was willing to try, whether any good might be done in verse. This manner of conveyance may, perhaps, have some advantage, which the other has not; at least it makes variety, which is something considerable. The four last things are manifestly subjects of the utmost importance. If due reflexions upon Death,

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Judgment, Heaven, and Hell, will not reclaim men from their vices, nothing will. This little work was intended for the use of all, from the greatest to the least. But as it would have been intolerably flat, and insipid to the former, had it been wholly written in a stile level to the capacities of the latter; to obviate inconveniences on both sides, an attempt has been made to entertain the upper class of readers, and, by notes, to explain such passages in divinity, philosophy, history, &c. as might be difficult to the lower. The work (if it may be so called) being partly argumentative, and partly descriptive, it would have been ridiculous, had it been possible to make the first mentioned as poetical as the other. In long pieces of music there is the plain recitativo, as well as the higher, and more musical modulation, and they mutually recommend, and set off each other. But about these matters the writer is little sollicitous, and otherwise, than as they are subservient to the design of doing good.'

A good man would naturally wish, that such generous attempts, in the cause of virtue, were always successful. With the lower class of readers, it is more than probably that these poems may have inspired religious thoughts, have awaked a solemn dread of punishment, kindled a sacred hope of happiness, and fitted the mind for the four last important period[1]; But with readers of a higher taste, they can have but little effect. There is no doctrine placed in a new light, no descriptions are sufficiently emphatical to work upon a sensible mind, and the perpetual flatness of the poetry is very disgustful to a critical reader, especially, as there were so many occasions of rising to an elevated sublimity.

The Dr. has likewise written a Paraphrase on the 104th Psalm, which, though much superior in poetry to his Four Last Things, yet falls greatly short of that excellent version by Mr. Blacklocke, quoted in the Life of Dr. Brady.

Our author has likewise published four volumes of sermons, and a volume of lectures on poetry, written in Latin.

Before we mention his other poetical compositions, we shall consider him as the translator of Virgil, which is the most arduous province he ever undertook. Dr. Trapp, in his preface, after stating the controversy, which has been long held, concerning the genius of Homer and Virgil, to whom the superiority belongs, has informed us, that this work was very far advanced before it was undertaken, having been, for many years, the diversion of his leisure hours at the university, and grew upon him, by insensible degrees, so that a great part of the Aeneis was actually translated, before he had any design of attempting the whole.

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He further informs us, 'that one of the greatest geniuses, and best judges, and critics, our age has produced, Mr. Smith of Christ Church, having seen the first two or three hundred lines of this translation, advised him by all means to go through with it. I said, he laughed at me, replied the Dr. and that I should be the most impudent of mortals to have such a thought. He told me, he was very much in earnest; and asked me why the whole might not be done, in so many years, as well as such a number of lines in so many days? which had no influence upon me, nor did I dream of such an undertaking, 'till being honoured by the university of Oxford with the public office of professor of poetry, which I shall ever gratefully acknowledge, I thought it might not be improper for me to review, and finish this work, which otherwise had certainly been as much neglected by me, as, perhaps, it will now be by every body else.'

As our author has made choice of blank verse, rather than rhime, in order to bear a nearer resemblance to Virgil, he has endeavoured to defend blank verse, against the advocates for rhime, and shew its superiority for any work of length, as it gives the expression a greater compass, or, at least, does not clog and fetter the verse, by which the substance and meaning of a line must often be mutilated, twisted, and sometimes sacrificed for the sake of the rhime.

'Blank verse (says he) is not only more majestic and sublime, but more musical and harmonious. It has more rhime in it, according to the ancient, and true sense of the word, than rhime itself, as it is now used: for, in its original signification, it consists not in the tinkling of vowels and consonants, but in the metrical disposition of words and syllables, and the proper cadence of numbers, which is more agreeable to the ear, without the jingling of like endings, than with it. And, indeed, let a man consult his own ears.

Him th'Almighty pow'r
Hurl'd headlong, flaming from the aetherial sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
In adamantine chains, and penal fire;
Who durst defy th'Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night

To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rowling in the fiery gulph,
Confounded, tho' immortal

Who that hears this, can think it wants rhime to recommend it? or rather does not think it sounds far better without it? We purposely produced a citation, beginning and ending in the middle of a verse, because the privilege of resting on this, or that foot, sometimes one, and sometimes another, and so diversifying the pauses and cadences, is the greatest beauty of blank verse, and perfectly agreeable to the practice of our masters,

the Greeks and Romans. This can be done but rarely in rhime; for if it were frequent, the rhime would be in a manner lost by it; the end of

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almost every verse must be something of a pause; and it is but seldom that a sentence begins in the middle. Though this seems to be the advantage of blank verse over rhime, yet we cannot entirely condemn the use of it, even in a heroic poem; nor absolutely reject that in speculation, which. Mr. Dryden and Mr. Pope have enobled by their practice. We acknowledge too, that in some particular views, what way of writing has the advantage over this. You may pick out mere lines, which, singly considered, look mean and low, from a poem in blank verse, than from one in rhime, supposing them to be in other respects equal. For instance, the following verses out of Milton's Paradise Lost, b. ii.

Of Heav'n were falling, and these elements—
Instinct with fire, and nitre hurried him—

taken singly, look low and mean: but read them in conjunction with others, and then see what a different face will be set upon them.

—Or less than of this frame
Of Heav'n were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The stedfast earth. As last his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight; and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground—
—Had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft. That fury stay'd;
Quench'd in a boggy syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land: night founder'd on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence.

Our author has endeavoured to justify his choice of blank verse, by shewing it less subject to restraints, and capable of greater sublimity than rhime. But tho' this observation may hold true, with respect to elevated and grand subjects, blank verse is by no means capable of so great universality. In satire, in elegy, or in pastoral writing, our language is, it seems, so feebly constituted, as to stand in need of the aid of rhime; and as a proof of this, the reader need only look upon the pastorals of Virgil, as translated by Trapp in blank verse, and compare them with Dryden's in rhime. He will then discern how insipid and fiat the pastorals of the same poet are in one kind of verification, and how excellent and beautiful in another. Let us give one short example to illustrate the truth of this, from the first pastoral of Virgil.

MELIBAEUS.

Beneath the covert of the spreading beech
Thou, Tityrus, repos'd, art warbling o'er,
Upon a slender reed, thy sylvan lays:
We leave our country, and sweet native fields;
We fly our country: careless in the shade,
Thou teachest, Tityrus, the sounding groves
To eccho beauteous Amaryllis' name.

TITYRUS.

O Melibaeus, 'twas a god to us
Indulged this freedom: for to me a god
He shall be ever: from my folds full oft
A tender lamb his altar shall embrue:
He gave my heifers, as thou seest, to roam;
And me permitted on my rural cane
To sport at pleasure, and enjoy my muse,

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TRAPP.

MELIBAEUS.

Beneath the shade which beechen-boughs diffuse,
You, Tityrus, entertain your Silvan muse:
Round the wide world in banishment we roam,
Forc'd from our pleasing fields, and native home:
While stretch'd at ease you sing your happy loves:
And Amaryllis fills the shady groves.

TITYRUS.

These blessings, friend, a deity bestow'd:
For never can I deem him less than God.
The tender firstlings of my woolly breed
Shall on his holy altar often bleed.
He gave my kine to graze the flowry plain:
And to my pipe renew'd the rural strain.

DRYDEN.

Dr. Trapp towards the conclusion of his Preface to the Aeneid, has treated Dryden with less reverence, than might have been expected from a man of his understanding, when speaking of so great a genius. The cause of Trapp's disgust to Dryden, seems to have been this: Dryden had a strong contempt for the priesthood, which we have from his own words,

"Priests of all professions are the same."

and takes every opportunity to mortify the usurping superiority of spiritual tyrants. Trapp, with all his virtues (for I think it appears he possessed many) had yet much of the priest in him, and for that very reason, perhaps, has shewn some resentment to Dryden; but if he has with little candour of criticism treated Mr. Dryden, he has with great servility flattered Mr. Pope; and has insinuated, as if the Palm of Genius were to be yielded to the latter. He observes in general, that where Mr. Dryden shines most, we often see the least of Virgil. To omit many other instances, the description of the Cyclops forging Thunder for Jupiter, and Armour for Aeneas, is elegant and noble to the last degree in the Latin; and it is so to a great degree in the English. But then is the English a translation of the Latin?

Hither the father of the fire by night,
Thro' the brown air precipitates his flight:

On their eternal anvil, here he found
The brethren beating, and the blows go round.

The lines are good, and truely poetical; but the two first are set to render

Hoc tunc ignipotens caelo descendit ab alto.

There is nothing of *caelo ab alto* in the version; nor by *night, brown air*, or *precipitates his sight*, in the original. The two last are put in the room of

Ferrum exercebant vasto Cylopes in antro,
Brontesque, Steropesque, & nudus membra Pyraemon.

Vasto in antro, in the first of these lines, and the last line is entirely left out in the translation. Nor is there any thing of eternal anvils, or *hers he found*, in the original, and the brethren beating, and the blows go round, is but a loose version of *Ferrum exercebant.* Dr. Trapp has allowed, however, that though Mr. Dryden is often distant from the original, yet he sometimes rises to a more excellent height, by throwing out implied graces, which none but so great a poet was capable of. Thus in the 12th book, after the last speech of Saturn,

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Tantum effata, caput glauco contexit amictu,
Multa gemens, & se fluvio Dea condidit also.

She drew a length of sighs, no more she said, But with an azure mantle wrapp'd her head; Then plunged into her stream with deep despair, *And her last sobs came bubbling up in air*.

Though the last line is not expressed in the original, it is yet in some measure implied, and it is in itself so exceedingly beautiful, that the whole passage can never be too much admired. These are excellencies indeed; this is truly Mr. Dryden. The power of truth, no doubt, extorted this confession from the Dr. and notwithstanding many objections may be brought against this performance of Dryden, yet we believe most of our poetical readers upon perusing it, will be of the opinion of Pope, 'that, excepting a few human errors, it is the noblest and most spirited translation in any language.' To whom it may reasonable be asked, has Virgil been most obliged? to Dr. Trapp who has followed his footsteps in every line; has shewn you indeed the design, the characters, contexture, and moral of the poem, that is, has given you Virgil's account of the actions of AEneas, or to Mr. Dryden, who has not only conveyed the general ideas of his author, but has conveyed them with the same majesty and fire, has led you through every battle with trepidation, has soothed you in the tender scenes, and inchanted you with the flowers of poetry? Virgil contemplated thro' the medium of Trapp, appears an accurate writer, and the Aeneid as well conducted fable, but discerned in Dryden's page, he glows as with fire from heaven, and the Aeneid is a continued series of whatever is great, elegant, pathetic, and sublime.

We have already observed, in the Life of Dryden, that it is easier to discern wherein the beauties of poetical composition consist, than to throw out those beauties. Dr. Trapp, in his Praelectiones Poeticae, has shewn how much he was master of every species of poetry; that is, how excellently he understood the structure of a poem; what noble rules he was capable of laying down, and what excellent materials he could afford, for building upon such a foundation, a beautiful fabric. There are few better criticisms in any language, Dryden's dedications and prefaces excepted, than are contained in these lectures. The mind is enlarged by them, takes in a wide range of poetical ideas, and is taught to discover how many amazing requisites are necessary to form a poet. In his introduction to the first lecture, he takes occasion to state a comparison between poetry and painting, and shew how small pretensions the professors of the latter have, to compare themselves with the former. 'The painter indeed (says he) has to do with the passions, but then they are such passions only, as discover themselves in the countenance; but the poet is to do more, he is to trace the rise of those passions, to watch their gradations, to pain their progress, and mark them in the heart in their genuine conflicts; and, continues he, the disproportion between the soul and the body, is not greater than the disproportion between the painter and the poet.

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Dr. Trapp is author of a tragedy called Abramule, or Love and Empire, acted at the New Theatre at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, 1704, dedicated to the Right Honourable the Lady Harriot Godolphin. Scene Constantinople. The story is built upon the dethronement of Mahomet IV.

Our author has likewise written a piece called The Church of England Defended against the False Reasoning of the Church of Rome. Several occasional poems were written by him in English; and there is one Latin poem of his in the Musae Anglicanae. He has translated the Paradise Lost into Latin Verse, with little success, and, as he published it at his own risk, he was a considerable loser. The capital blemish of that work, is, the unharmonious versification, which gives perpetual offence to the ear, neither is the language universally pure.

He died in the month of November 1747, and left behind him the character of a pathetic and instructive preacher, a profound scholar, a discerning critic, a benevolent gentleman, and a pious Christian.

We shall conclude the life of Dr. Trapp with the following verses of Mr. Layng, which are expressive of the Dr's. character as a critic and a poet. The author, after applauding Dryden's version, proceeds thus in favour of Trapp.

Behind we see a younger bard arise,
No vulgar rival in the grand emprize.
Hail! learned Trapp! upon whose brow we find
The poet's bays, and critic's ivy join'd.
Blest saint! to all that's virtuous ever dear,
Thy recent fate demands a friendly tear.
None was more vers'd in all the Roman store,
Or the wide circle of the Grecian lore,
Less happy, from the world recluse too long,
In all the sweeter ornaments of song;
Intent to teach, too careless how to please,
He boasts in strength, whate'er he wants in ease.

FOOTNOTE

[1] By his last Will he ordered a copy of that book to be given to each of his parishioners, that when he could no longer speak to them from the pulpit, he might endeavour to instruct them in his writings.

* * * * *

MR. SAMUEL BOYSE.

This Poet was the son of the Revd. Mr. Joseph Boyse, a Dissenting minister of great eminence in Dublin. Our author's father was a person so much respected by those immediately under his ministerial care, and whoever else had the happiness of his acquaintance, that people of all denominations united in esteeming him, not only for his learning and abilities, but his extensive humanity and undisembled piety.

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The Revd. Gentleman had so much dignity in his manner, that he obtained from the common people the name of bishop Boyse, meant as a compliment to the gracefulness of his person and mien. But though Mr. Boyse was thus reverenced by the multitude, and courted by people of fashion, he never contracted the least air of superciliousness: He was humane and affable in his temper, equally removed from the stiffness of pedantry, and offensive levity. During his ministerial charge at Dublin, he published many sermons, which compose several folio volumes, a few Poems and other Tracts; but what chiefly distinguished him as a writer, was the controversy he carried on with Dr. King, archbishop of Dublin, and author of the Origin of Evil, concerning the office of a scriptural bishop. This controverted point was managed on both sides with great force of argument, and calmness of temper. The bishop asserted that the episcopal right of jurisdiction had its foundation in the New-Testament: Mr. Boyse, consistent with his principles, denied that any ecclesiastical superiority appeared there; and in the opinion of many, Mr. Boyse was more than equal to his antagonist, whom he treated in the course of the controversy, with the greatest candour and good-manners.

It has been reported that Mr. Boyse had two brothers, one a clergyman of the church of England, and the other a cardinal at Rome; but of this circumstance we have no absolute certainty: Be it as it may, he had, however, no brother so much distinguished in the world as himself.

We shall now enter upon the life of our poet, who will appear while we trace it, to have been in every respect the reverse of his father, genius excepted.—

He was born in the year 1708, and received the rudiments of his education in a private school in Dublin. When he was but eighteen years old, his father, who probably intended him for the ministry, sent him to the university of Glasgow, that he might finish his education there. He had not been a year at the university, till he fell in love with one Miss Atchenson, the daughter of a tradesman in that city, and was imprudent enough to interrupt his education, by marrying her, before he had entered into his 20th year.

The natural extravagance of his temper soon exposed him to want, and as he had now the additional charge of a wife, his reduced circumstances obliged him to quit the university, and go over with his wife (who also carried a sister with her) to Dublin; where they relied upon the old gentleman for support. His behaviour in this dependent state, was the very reverse of what it should have been. In place of directing his studies to some useful acquisition, so as to support himself and family, he spent his time in the most abject trifling, and drew many heavy expences upon his father, who had no other means of supporting himself than what his congregation afforded, and a small estate of fourscore pounds a year in Yorkshire.

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Considerations of prudence never entered into the heart of this unhappy young roan, who ran from one excess to another, till an indulgent parent was reduced by his means to very great embarrassments. Young Boyse was of all men the farthest removed from a gentleman; he had no graces of person, and fewer still of conversation. To this cause it was perhaps owing, that his wife, naturally of a very volatile sprightly temper, either grew tired of him, or became enamour'd of variety. It was however abundantly certain, that she pursued intrigues with other men; and what is still more surprising, not without the knowledge of her husband, who had either too abject a spirit to resent it; or was bribed by some lucrative advantage, to which, he had a mind mean enough to stoop. Though never were three people of more libertine characters than young Boyse, his wife, and sister-in-law; yet the two ladies wore such a mask of decency before the old gentleman, that his fondness was never abated. He hoped that time and experience would recover his son from his courses of extravagance; and as he was of an unsuspecting temper, he had not the least jealousy of the real conduct of his daughter-in-law, who grew every day in his favour, and continued to blind him, by the seeming decency of her behaviour, and a performance of those acts of piety, he naturally expected from her. But the old gentleman was deceived in his hopes, for time made no alteration in his son. The estate his father possessed in Yorkshire was sold to discharge his debts; and when the old man lay in his last sickness, he was entirely supported by presents from his congregation, and buried at their expence.

We have no farther account of Mr. Boyse, till we find him soon after his father's death at Edinburgh; but from what motives he went there we cannot now discover. At this place his poetical genius raised him many friends, and some patrons of very great eminence. He published a volume of poems in 1731, to which is subjoined The Tablature of Cebes, and a Letter upon Liberty, inserted in the Dublin Journal 1726; and by these he obtained a very great reputation. They are addressed to the countess of Eglington, a lady of distinguished excellencies, and so much celebrated for her beauty, that it would be difficult for the best panegyrist to be too lavish in her praise. This amiable lady was patroness of all men of wit, and very much distinguished Mr. Boyse, while he resided in that country. She was not however exempt from the lot of humanity, and her conspicuous accomplishments were yet chequered with failings: The chief of which was too high a consciousness of her own charms, which inspired a vanity that sometimes betrayed her into errors.

The following short anecdote was frequently related by Mr. Boyse. The countess one day came into the bed chamber of her youngest daughter, then about 13 years old, while she was dressing at her toilet. The countess observing the assiduity with which the young lady wanted to set off her person to the best advantage, asked her, what she would give to be 'as handsome as her mamma?' To which Miss replied; 'As much as your ladyship would give to be as young as me.' This smart repartee which was at once pungent and witty, very sensibly affected the countess; who for the future was less lavish in praise of her own charms.—

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Upon the death of the viscountess Stormont, Mr. Boyse wrote an Elegy, which was very much applauded by her ladyship's relations. This Elegy he intitled, The Tears of the Muses, as the deceased lady was a woman of the most refined taste in the sciences, and a great admirer of poetry. The lord Stormont was so much pleased with this mark of esteem paid to the memory of his lady, that he ordered a very handsome present to be given to Mr. Boyse, by his attorney at Edinburgh.

Though Mr. Boyse's name was very well known in that city, yet his person was obscure; for as he was altogether unsocial in his temper, he had but few acquaintances, and those of a cast much inferior to himself, and with whom he ought to have been ashamed to associate. It was some time before he could be found out; and lord Stormont's kind intentions had been defeated, if an advertisement had not been published in one of their weekly papers, desiring the author of the Tears of the Muses to call at the house of the attorney[1].

The personal obscurity of Mr. Boyse might perhaps not be altogether owing to his habits of gloominess and retirement. Nothing is more difficult in that city, than to make acquaintances; There are no places where people meet and converse promiscuously: There is a reservedness and gravity in the manner of the inhabitants, which makes a stranger averse to approach them. They naturally love solitude; and are very slow in contracting friendships. They are generous; but it is with a bad grace. They are strangers to affability, and they maintain a haughtiness and an apparent indifference, which deters a man from courting them. They may be said to be hospitable, but not complaisant to strangers: Insincerity and cruelty have no existence amongst them; but if they ought not to be hated, they can never be much loved, for they are incapable of insinuation, and their ignorance of the world makes them unfit for entertaining sensible strangers. They are public-spirited, but torn to pieces by factions. A gloominess in religion renders one part of them very barbarous, and an enthusiasm in politics so transports the genteeler part, that they sacrifice to party almost every consideration of tenderness. Among such a people, a man may long live, little known, and less instructed; for their reservedness renders them uncommunicative, and their excessive haughtiness prevents them from being solicitous of knowledge.

The Scots are far from being a dull nation; they are lovers of pomp and shew; but then there is an eternal stiffness, a kind of affected dignity, which spoils their pleasures. Hence we have the less reason to wonder that Boyse lived obscurely at Edinburgh. His extreme carelesness about his dress was a circumstance very inauspicious to a man who lives in that city. They are such lovers of this kind of decorum, that they will admit of no infringement upon it; and were a man with more wit than Pope, and more philosophy than Newton, to appear at their market place negligent in his apparel, he would be avoided by his acquaintances who would rather risk his displeasure, than the censure of the public, which would not fail to stigmatize them, for assocciating with a man seemingly poor; for they measure poverty, and riches, understanding, or its

opposite, by exterior appearance. They have many virtues, but their not being polished prevents them from shining.

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The notice which Lady Eglington and the lord Stormont took of our poet, recommended him likewise to the patronage of the dutchess of Gordon, who was a lady not only distinguished for her taste; but cultivated a correspondence with some of the most eminent poets then living. The dutchess was so zealous in Mr. Boyse's affairs, and so felicitous to raise him above necessity, that she employed her interest in procuring the promise of a place for him. She gave him a letter, which he was next day to deliver to one of the commissioners of the customs at Edinburgh. It happened that he was then some miles distant from the city, and the morning on which he was to have rode to town with her grace's letter of recommendation proved to be rainy. This slender circumstance was enough to discourage Boyse, who never looked beyond the present moment: He declined going to town on account of the rainy weather, and while he let slip the opportunity, the place was bestowed upon another, which the commissioner declared he kept for some time vacant, in expectation of seeing a person recommended by the dutchess of Gordon.

Of a man of this indolence of temper, this sluggish meanness of spirit, the reader cannot be surprised to find the future conduct consist of a continued serious of blunders, for he who had not spirit to prosecute an advantage put in his hands, will neither bear distress with fortitude, nor struggle to surmount it with resolution.

Boyse at last, having defeated all the kind intentions of his patrons towards him, fell into a contempt and poverty, which obliged him to quit Edinburgh, as his creditors began to sollicit the payment of their debts, with an earnestness not to be trifled with. He communicated his design of going to London to the dutchess of Gordon; who having still a very high opinion of his poetical abilities, gave him a letter of recommendation to Mr. Pope, and obtained another for him to Sir Peter King, the lord chancellor of England. Lord Stormont recommended him to the sollicitor-general his brother, and many other persons of the first fashion.

Upon receiving these letters, he, with great caution, quitted Edinburgh, regretted by none but his creditors, who were so exaggerated as to threaten to prosecute him wherever he should be found. But these menaces were never carried into execution, perhaps from the consideration of his indigence, which afforded no probable prospect of their being paid.

Upon his arrival in London, he went to Twickenham, in order to deliver the dutchess of Gordon's letter to Mr. Pope; but that gentleman not being at home, Mr. Boyse never gave himself the trouble to repeat his visit, nor in all probability would Pope have been over-fond of him; as there was nothing in his conversation which any wife indicated the abilities he possessed. He frequently related, that he was graciously received by Sir Peter King, dined at his table, and partook of his pleasures. But this

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relation, they who knew Mr. Boyse well, never could believe; for he was so abject in his disposition, that he never could look any man in the face whose appearance was better than his own; nor likely had courage to sit at Sir Peter King's table, where every one was probably his superior. He had no power of maintaining the dignity of wit, and though his understanding was very extensive, yet but a few could discover that he had any genius above the common rank. This want of spirit produced the greatest part of his calamities, because he; knew not how to avoid them by any vigorous effort of his mind. He wrote poems, but those, though excellent in their kind, were lost to the world, by being introduced with no advantage. He had so strong a propension to groveling, that his acquaintance were generally of such a cast, as could be of no service to him; and those in higher life he addressed by letters, not having sufficient confidence or politeness to converse familiarly with them; a freedom to which he was intitled by the power of his genius. Thus unfit to support himself in the world, he was exposed to variety of distress, from which he could invent no means of extricating himself, but by writing mendicant letters. It will appear amazing, but impartiality obliges us to relate it, that this man, of so abject a spirit, was voluptuous and luxurious: He had no taste for any thing elegant, and yet was to the last degree expensive. Can it be believed, that often when he had received half a guinea, in consequence of a supplicating letter, he would go into a tavern, order a supper to be prepared, drink of the richest wines, and spend all the money that had just been given him in charity, without having any one to participate the regale with him, and while his wife and child were starving home? This is an instance of base selfishness, for which no name is as yet invented, and except by another poet[2], with some variation of circumstances, was perhaps never practiced by the most sensual epicure.

He had yet some friends, many of the most eminent dissenters, who from a regard to the memory of his father, afforded him supplies from time to time. Mr. Boyse by perpetual applications, at last exhausted their patience; and they were obliged to abandon a man on whom their liberality was ill bestowed, as it produced no other advantage to him, than a few days support, when he returned again with the same necessities.

The epithet of cold has often been given to charity, perhaps with a great deal of truth; but if any thing can warrant us to withhold our charity, it is the consideration that its purposes are prostituted by those on whom it is bestowed.

We have already taken notice of the infidelity of his wife; and now her circumstances were reduced, her virtue did not improve. She fell into a way of life disgraceful to the sex; nor was his behaviour in any degree more moral. They were frequently covered with ignominy, reproaching one another for the acquisition of a disease, which both deserved, because mutually guilty.

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It was about the year 1740, that Mr. Boyse reduced to the last extremity of human wretchedness, had not a shirt, a coat, or any kind of apparel to put on; the sheets in which he lay were carried to the pawnbroker's, and he was obliged to be confined to bed, with no other covering than a blanket. He had little support but what he got by writing letters to his friends in the most abject stile. He was perhaps ashamed to let this instance of distress be known to his friends, which might be the occasion of his remaining six weeks in that situation. During this time he had some employment in writing verses for the Magazines; and whoever had seen him in his study, must have thought the object singular enough. He sat up in bed with the blanket wrapt about him, through which he had cut a hole large enough to admit his arm, and placing the paper upon his knee, scribbled in the best manner he could the verses he was obliged to make: Whatever he got by those, or any of his begging letters, was but just sufficient for the preservation of life. And perhaps he would have remained much longer in this distressful state, had not a compassionate gentleman, upon hearing this circumstance related, ordered his cloaths to be taken out of pawn, and enabled him to appear again abroad.

This six weeks penance one would imagine sufficient to deter him for the future, from suffering himself to be exposed to such distresses; but by a long habit of want it grew familiar to him, and as he had less delicacy than other men, he was perhaps less afflicted with his exterior meanness. For the future, whenever his distresses so press'd, as to induce him to dispose of his shirt, he fell upon an artificial method of supplying one. He cut some white paper in slips, which he tyed round his wrists, and in the same manner supplied his neck. In this plight he frequently appeared abroad, with the additional inconvenience of want of breeches.

He was once sent for in a hurry, to the house of a printer who had employed him to write a poem for his Magazine: Boyse then was without breeches, or waistcoat, but was yet possessed of a coat, which he threw upon him, and in this ridiculous manner went to the printer's house; where he found several women, whom his extraordinary appearance obliged immediately to retire.

He fell upon many strange schemes of raising trifling sums: He sometimes ordered his wife to inform people that he was just expiring, and by this artifice work upon their compassion; and many of his friends were frequently surprised to meet the man in the street to day, to whom they had yesterday sent relief, as to a person on the verge of death. At other times he would propose subscriptions for poems, of which only the beginning and conclusion were written; and by this expedient would relieve some present necessity. But as he seldom was able to put any of his poems to the press, his veracity in this particular suffered a diminution; and indeed in almost every other particular he might justly be suspected; for if he could but gratify an immediate appetite, he cared not at what expence, whether of the reputation, or purse of another.

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About the year 1745 Mr. Boyse's wife died. He was then at Reading, and pretended much concern when he heard of her death.

It was an affectation in Mr. Boyse to appear very fond of a little lap dog which he always carried about with him in his arms, imagining it gave him the air of a man of taste. Boyse, whose circumstances were then too mean to put himself in mourning, was yet resolved that some part of his family should. He step'd into a little shop, purchased half a yard of black ribbon, which he fixed round his dog's neck by way of mourning for the loss of its mistress. But this was not the only ridiculous instance of his behaviour on the death of his wife. Such was the sottishness of this man, that when he was in liquor, he always indulged a dream of his wife's being still alive, and would talk very spightfully of those by whom he suspected she was entertained. This he never mentioned however, except in his cups, which was only as often as he had money to spend. The manner of his becoming intoxicated was very particular. As he had no spirit to keep good company, so he retired to some obscure ale-house, and regaled himself with hot two-penny, which though he drank in very great quantities, yet he had never more than a pennyworth at a time.—Such a practice rendered him so compleatly sottish, that even his abilities, as an author, became sensibly impaired.

We have already mentioned his being at Reading. His business there was to compile a Review of the most material transactions at home and abroad, during the last war; in which he has included a short account of the late rebellion. For this work by which he got some reputation, he was paid by the sheet, a price sufficient to keep him from starving, and that was all. To such distress must that man be driven, who is destitute of prudence to direct the efforts of his genius. In this work Mr. Boyse discovers how capable he was of the most irksome and laborious employment, when he maintained a power over his appetites, and kept himself free from intemperance.

While he remained at Reading, he addressed, by supplicating letters, two Irish noblemen, lord Kenyston, and lord Kingsland, who resided in Berkshire, and received some money from them; he also met with another gentleman there of a benevolent disposition, who, from the knowledge he had of the father, pitied the distresses of the son, and by his interest with some eminent Dissenters in those parts, railed a sufficient sum to cloath him, for the abjectness of his appearance secluded our poet even from the table of his Printer[3].

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Upon his return from Reading, his behaviour was more decent than it had ever been before, and there were some hopes that a reformation, tho' late, would be wrought upon him. He was employed by a Bookseller to translate Fenelon on the Existence of God, during which time he married a second wife, a woman in low circumstances, but well enough adapted to his taste. He began now to live with more regard to his character, and support a better appearance than usual; but while his circumstances were mending, and his irregular appetites losing ground, his health visibly declined: he had the satisfaction, while in this lingering illness, to observe a poem of his, entitled The Deity, recommended by two eminent writers, the ingenious Mr. Fielding, and the rev. Mr. James Harvey, author of The Meditations. The former, in the beginning of his humorous History of Tom Jones, calls it an excellent poem. Mr. Harvey stiles it a pious and instructive piece; and that worthy gentleman, upon hearing that the author was in necessitous circumstances, deposited two guineas in the hands of a trusty person to be given him, whenever his occasions should press. This poem was written some years before Mr. Harvey or Mr. Fielding took any notice of it, but it was lost to the public, as the reputation of the Bookseller consisted in sending into the world abundance of trifles, amongst which, it was considered as one. Mr. Boyse said, that upon its first publication, a gentleman acquainted with Mr. Pope, took occasion to ask that poet, if he was not the author of it, to which Mr. Pope replied, 'that he was not the author, but that there were many lines in it, of which he should not be ashamed.' This Mr. Boyse considered as a very great compliment. The poem indeed abounds with shining lines and elevated sentiments on the several Attributes of the Supreme Being; but then it is without a plan, or any connexion of parts, for it may be read either backwards or forwards, as the reader pleases.

While Mr. Boyse was in this lingering illness, he seemed to have no notion of his approaching end, nor did he expect it, 'till it was almost past the thinking of. His mind, indeed, was often religiously disposed; he frequently talked upon that subject, and, probably suffered a great deal from the remorse of his conscience. The early impressions of his good education were never entirely obliterated, and his whole life was a continued struggle between his will and reason, as he was always violating his duty to the one, while he fell under the subjection of the other. It was in consequence of this war in his mind, that he wrote a beautiful poem called The Recantation.

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In the month of May, 1749, he died in obscure lodgings near Shoe-Lane. An old acquaintance of his endeavoured to collect money to defray the expences of his funeral, so that the scandal of being buried by the parish might be avoided. But his endeavours were in vain, for the persons he sollicited, had been so troubled with applications during the life of this unhappy man, that they refused to contribute any thing towards his funeral. The remains of this son of the muses were, with very little ceremony, hurried away by the parish officers, and thrown amongst common beggars; though with this distinction, that the service of the church was performed over his corpse. Never was an exit more shocking, nor a life spent with less grace, than those of Mr. Boyse, and never were such distinguished abilities given to less purpose. His genius was not confined to poetry only, he had a taste for painting, music and heraldry, with the latter of which he was very well acquainted. His poetical pieces, if collected, would make six moderate volumes. Many of them are featured in the Gentleman's Magazine, marked with the letter Y. and Alceus. Two volumes were published in London, but as they never had any great sale, it will be difficult to find them.

An ode of his in the manner of Spenser, entitled The Olive, was addressed to Sir Robert Walpole, which procured him a present of ten guineas. He translated a poem from the High Dutch of Van Haren, in praise of peace, upon the conclusion of that made at Aix la Chapelle; but the poem which procured him the greatest reputation, was, that upon the Attributes of the Deity, of which we have already taken notice. He was employed by Mr. Ogle to translate some of Chaucer's Tales into modern English, which he performed with great spirit, and received at the rate of three pence a line for his trouble. Mr. Ogle published a complete edition of that old poet's Canterbury Tales Modernized; and Mr. Boyse's name is put to such Tales as were done by him. It had often been urged to Mr. Boyse to turn his thoughts towards the drama, as that was the most profitable kind of poetical writing, and as many a poet of inferior genius to him has raised large contributions on the public by the success of their plays. But Boyse never seemed to relish this proposal, perhaps from a consciousness that he had not spirit to prosecute the arduous task of introducing it on the stage; or that he thought himself unequal to the task.

In the year 1743 Mr. Boyse published without his name, an Ode on the battle of Dettingen, entitled Albion's Triumph; some Stanza's of which we shall give as a specimen of Mr. Boyse's poetry.

STANZA's from ALBION's Triumph.

XIII.

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But how, blest sovereign! shall th'unpractis'd muse
  These recent honours of thy reign rehearse!
How to thy virtues turn her dazzled views,
  Or consecrate thy deeds in equal verse!
Amidst the field of horrors wide display'd,
  How paint the calm[4] that smil'd upon, thy brow!
Or speak that thought which every part surveyed,
  'Directing where the rage of war should glow:'[5]
While watchful angels hover'd round thy head,
And victory on high the palm of glory spread.

XIV.

Nor royal youth reject the artless praise,
  Which due to worth like thine the Muse bestows,
Who with prophetic extasy surveys
  These early wreaths of fame adorn thy brows.
Aspire like Nassau in the glorious strife,
  Keep thy great fires' examples full in eye;
But oh! for Britain's sake, consult a life
  The noblest triumphs are too mean to buy;
And while you purchase glory—bear in mind,
A prince's truest fame is to protect mankind.

XV.

Alike in arts and arms acknowledg'd great,
  Let Stair accept the lays he once could own!
Nor Carteret, thou the column of the state!
  The friend of science! on the labour frown!
Nor shall, unjust to foreign worth, the Muse
  In silence Austria's valiant chiefs conceal;
While Aremberg's heroic line she views,
  And Neiperg's conduct strikes even envy pale:
Names Gallia yet shall further learn to fear,
And Britain, grateful still, shall treasure up as dear!

XIX.

But oh! acknowledg'd victor in the field,
  What thanks, dread sovereign, shall thy toils reward!

Such honours as delivered nations yield,
  Such for thy virtues justly stand prepar'd:
When erst on Oudenarde's decisive plain,
  Before thy youth, the Gaul defeated fled,
The eye of fate[6] foresaw on distant Maine,
  The laurels now that shine around thy head:
Oh should entwin'd with these fresh Olives bloom!
Thy Triumphs then would shame the pride of antient Rome.

XX.

Mean time, while from this fair event we shew
  That British valour happily survives,
And cherish'd by the king's propitious view,
  The rising plant of glory sweetly thrives!
Let all domestic faction learn to cease,
  Till humbled Gaul no more the world alarms:
Till GEORGE procures to Europe solid peace,
  A peace secur'd by his victorious arms:
And binds in iron fetters ear to ear,
Ambition, Rapine, Havock, and Despair,
With all the ghastly fiends of desolating war.

FOOTNOTES:

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[1] A Profession, which in that City is denominated a Writer.

[2] Savage.

[3] During his abode at Reading an accident had like to have put an end to his follies and his life together; for he had the ill-luck to fall from his garret down the whole flight of stairs; but being destined to lengthen out a useless life for some time longer, he escaped with only a severe bruising.

[4] The King gave his orders with the utmost calmness, tho' no body was more expos'd.

[5]
Inspir'd repuls'd battalions to engage,
And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.
Mr. Addison's Campaign.

[6] His Majesty early distinguished himself as a volunteer at the battle of Oudenarde, in 1708.

* * * * *

Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE.

This eminent poet and physician was son of Mr. Robert Blackmore, an Attorney at Law. He received his early education at a private country school, from whence, in the 13th year of his age, he was removed to Westminster, and in a short time after to the university of Oxford, where he continued thirteen years.

In the early period of our author's life he was a Schoolmaster, as appears by a satirical copy of verses Dr. Drake wrote against him, consisting of upwards of forty lines, of which the following are very pungent.

By nature form'd, by want a pedant made,
Blackmore at first set up the whipping trade:
Next quack commenc'd; then fierce with pride he swore,
That tooth-ach, gout, and corns should be no more.
In vain his drugs, as well as birch he tried;
His boys grew blockheads, and his patients died.

Some circumstances concurring, it may be presumed in Sir Richard's favour, he travelled into Italy, and at Padua took his degrees in physic[1].

He gratified his curiosity in visiting France, Germany, and the Low Countries, and after spending a year and a half in this delightful exercise, he returned to England. As Mr. Blackmore had made physic his chief study, so he repaired to London to enter upon the practice of it, and no long after he was chosen fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, by the charter of King James II. Sir Richard had seen too much of foreign slavery to be fond of domestic chains, and therefore early declared himself in favour of the revolution, and espoused those principles upon which it was effected. This zeal, recommended him to King William, and in the year 1697 he was sworn one of his physicians in ordinary. He was honoured by that Prince with a gold medal and chain, was likewise knighted by him, and upon his majesty's death was one of those who gave their opinion in the opening of the king's body. Upon Queen Anne's accession to the throne, he was appointed one of her physicians, and continued so for some time.

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This gentleman is author of more original poems, of a considerable length, besides a variety of other works, than can well be conceived could have been composed by one man, during the longest period of human life. He was a chaste writer; he struggled in the cause of virtue, even in those times, when vice had the countenance of the great, and when an almost universal degeneracy prevailed. He was not afraid to appear the advocate of virtue, in opposition to the highest authority, and no lustre of abilities in his opponents could deter him from stripping vice of those gaudy colours, with which poets of the first eminence had cloathed her.

An elegant writer having occasion to mention the state of wit in the reign of King Charles II, characterizes the poets in the following manner;

The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame:
Nor sought for Johnson's art, nor Shakespear's flame:
Themselves they studied; as they lived, they writ,
Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit.
Their cause was gen'ral, their supports were strong,
Their slaves were willing, and their reign was long.

Mr. Pope somewhere says,

Unhappy Dryden—in all Charles's days,
Roscommon only boasts unspotted lays.

He might likewise have excepted Blackmore, who was not only chaste in his own writings, but endeavoured to correct those who prostituted the gifts of heaven, to the inglorious purposes of vice and folly, and he was, at least, as good a poet as Roscommon.

Sir Richard had, by the freedom of his censures on the libertine writers of his age, incurred the heavy displeasure of Dryden, who takes all opportunities to ridicule him, and somewhere says, that he wrote to the rumbling of his chariot wheels. And as if to be at enmity with Blackmore had been hereditary to our greatest poets, we find Mr. Pope taking up the quarrel where Dryden left it, and persecuting this worthy man with yet a severer degree of satire. Blackmore had been informed by Curl, that Mr. Pope was the author of a Travestie on the first Psalm, which he takes occasion to reprehend in his Essay on Polite Learning, vol. ii. p. 270. He ever considered it as the disgrace of genius, that it should be employed to burlesque any of the sacred compositions, which as they speak the language of inspiration, tend to awaken the soul to virtue, and inspire it with a sublime devotion. Warmed in this honourable cause, he might, perhaps, suffer his zeal to transport him to a height, which his enemies called enthusiasm; but of the two extremes, no doubt can be made, that Blackmore's was the safest, and even dullness in favour of virtue (which, by the way, was not the case with Sir Richard) is

more tolerable than the brightest parts employed in the cause of lewdness and debauchery.

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The poem for which Sir Richard had been most celebrated, was, undoubtedly, his Creation, now deservedly become a classic. We cannot convey a more amiable idea of this great production, than in the words of Mr. Addison, in his Spectator, Number 339, who, after having criticised on that book of Milton, which gives an account of the Works of Creation, thus proceeds, 'I cannot conclude this book upon the Creation, without mentioning a poem which has lately appeared under that title. The work was undertaken with so good an intention, and executed with so great a mastery, that it deserves to be, looked upon as one of the most useful and noble productions in our English verse. The reader cannot but be pleased to find the depths of philosophy, enlivened with all the charms of poetry, and to see so great a strength of reason amidst so beautiful a redundancy of the imagination. The author has shewn us that design in all the works of nature, which necessarily leads us to the knowledge of its first cause. In short, he has illustrated, by numberless and incontestable instances, that divine wisdom, which the son of Sirach has so nobly ascribed to the Supreme Being in his formation of the world, when he tells us, that he *created her, and saw her, and numbered her, and poured her out upon all his works*.'

The design of this excellent poem is to demonstrate the self-existence of an eternal mind, from the created and dependent existence of the universe, and to confute the hypothesis of the Epicureans and the Fatalists, under whom all the patrons of impiety, ancient and modern, of whatsoever denomination may be ranged. The first of whom affirm, the world was in time caused by chance, and the other, that it existed from eternity without a cause. 'Tis true, both these acknowledge the existence of Gods, but by their absurd and ridiculous description of them, it is plain, they had nothing else in view, but to avoid the obnoxious character of atheistical philosophers. To adorn this poem, no embellishments are borrowed from the exploded and obsolete theology of the ancient idolaters of Greece and Rome; no rapturous invocations are addressed to their idle deities, nor any allusions to their fabulous actions. 'I have more than once (says Sir Richard) publicly declared my opinion, that a Christian poet cannot but appear monstrous and ridiculous in a Pagan dress. That though it should be granted, that the Heathen religion might be allowed a place in light and loose songs, mock heroic, and the lower lyric compositions, yet in Christian poems, of the sublime and greater kind, a mixture of the Pagan theology must, by all who are masters of reflexion and good sense, be condemned, if not as impious, at least, as impertinent and absurd. And this is a truth so clear and evident, that I make no doubt it will, by degrees, force its way, and prevail over the contrary practice. Should Britons recover their virtue, and reform their taste, they could no more bear the

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Heathen religion in verse, than in prose. Christian poets, as well as Christian preachers, the business of both being to instruct the people, though the last only are wholly appropriated to it, should endeavour to confirm, and spread their own religion. If a divine should begin his sermon with a solemn prayer to Bacchus or Apollo, to Mars or Venus, what would the people think of their preacher? and is it not as really, though not equally absurd, for a poet in a great and serious poem, wherein he celebrates some wonderful and happy event of divine providence, or magnifies the illustrious instrument that was honoured to bring the event about, to address his prayer to false deities, and cry for help to the abominations of the heathen?'

Mr. Gildon, in his Compleat Art of Poetry, after speaking of our author in the most respectful terms, says, 'that notwithstanding his merit, this admirable author did not think himself upon the same footing with Homer.' But how different is the judgment of Mr. Dennis, who, in this particular, opposes his friend Mr. Gildon.

'Blackmore's action (says he) has neither unity, integrity, morality, nor universality, and consequently he can have no fable, and no heroic poem. His narration is neither probable, delightful, nor wonderful. His characters have none of these necessary qualifications.—The things contained in his narrations, are neither in their own nature delightful nor numerous enough, nor rightly disposed, nor surprizing, nor pathetic;' nay he proceeds so far as to say Sir Richard has no genius; first establishing it as a principle, 'That genius is known by a furious joy, and pride of soul, on the conception of an extraordinary hint. Many men (says he) have their hints without these motions of fury and pride of soul; because they want fire enough to agitate their spirits; and these we call cold writers. Others who have a great deal of fire, but have not excellent organs, feel the fore-mentioned motions, without the extraordinary hints; and these we call fustian writers.'

And he declares, that Sir Richard hath neither the hints nor the motions[2]. But Dennis has not contented himself, with charging Blackmore with want of genius; but has likewise the following remarks to prove him a bad Church of England man: These are his words. 'All Mr. Blackmore's coelestial machines, as they cannot be defended so much as by common received opinion, so are they directly contrary to the doctrine of the church of England, that miracles had ceased a long time before prince Arthur come into the world. Now if the doctrine of the church of England be true, as we are obliged to believe, then are all the coelestial machines of prince Arthur unsufferable, as wanting not only human but divine probability. But if the machines are sufferable, that is, if they have so much as divine probability, then it follows of necessity, that the doctrine of the church is false; so that I leave it to every impartial clergyman to consider.'

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If no greater objection could be brought against Blackmore's Prince Arthur, than those raised by Mr. Dennis, the Poem would be faultless; for what has the doctrine of the church of England to do with an epic poem? It is not the doctrine of the church of England, to suppose that the apostate spirits put the power of the Almighty to proof, by openly resisting his will, and maintaining an obstinate struggle with the angels commissioned by him, to drive them from the mansions of the bless'd; or that they attempted after their perdition, to recover heaven by violence. These are not the doctrines of the church of England; but they are conceived in a true spirit of poetry, and furnish those tremendous descriptions with which Milton has enriched his Paradise Lost.

Whoever has read Mr. Dryden's dedication of his Juvenal, will there perceive, that in that great man's opinion, coelestial machines might with the utmost propriety be introduced in an Epic Poem, built upon a christian model; but at the same time he adds, 'The guardian angels of states and kingdoms are not to be managed by a vulgar hand.'

Perhaps it may be true, that the guardian angels of states and kingdoms may have been too powerful for the conduct of Sir Richard Blackmore; but he has had at least the merit of paving the way, and has set an example how Epic Poems may be written, upon the principles of christianity; and has enjoyed a comfort of which no bitterness, or raillery can deprive him, namely the virtuous intention of doing good, and as he himself expresses it, 'of rescuing the Muses from the hands of ravishers, and restoring them again to their chaste and pure mansions.'

Sir Richard Blackmore died on the 9th of October 1729, in an advanced age; and left behind him the character of a worthy man, a great poet, and a friend to religion. Towards the close of his life, his business as a physician declined, but as he was a man of prudent conduct, it is not to be supposed that he was subjected to any want by that accident, for in his earlier years he was considered amongst the first in his profession, and his practice was consequently very extensive.

The decay of his employment might partly be owing to old age and infirmities, which rendered him less active than before, and partly to the diminution his character might suffer by the eternal war, which the wits waged against him, who spared neither bitterness nor calumny; and, perhaps, Sir Richard may be deemed the only poet, who ever suffered for having too much religion and morality.

The following is the most accurate account we could obtain of his writings, which for the sake of distinction we have divided into classes, by which the reader may discern how various and numerous his compositions are—To have written so much upon so great a variety of subjects, and to have written nothing contemptibly, must indicate a genius much superior to the common standard.—His versification is almost every where beautiful; and tho' he has been ridiculed in the Treatise of the Bathos, published in Pope's works, for being too minute in his descriptions of the objects of nature; yet it rather proceeded from a philosophical exactness, than a penury of genius.

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It is really astonishing to find Dean Swift, joining issue with less religious wits, in laughing at Blackmore's works, of which he makes a ludicrous detail, since they were all written in the cause of virtue, which it was the Dean's business more immediately to support, as on this account he enjoy'd his preferment: But the Dean perhaps, was one of those characters, who chose to sacrifice his cause to his joke. This was a treatment Sir Richard could never have expected at the hands of a clergyman.

A List of Sir Richard Blackmore's
Works.

THEOLOGICAL.

I. Just Prejudices against the Arian Hypothesis, Octavo. 1725

II. Modern Arians Unmask'd, Octavo, 1721

III. Natural Theology; or Moral Duties considered apart from positive; with some Observations on the Desirableness and Necessity of a super-natural Revelation, Octavo, 1728

IV. The accomplished Preacher; or an Essay upon Divine Eloquence,
Octavo, 1731

This Tract was published after the author's death, in pursuance of his express order, by the Reverend Mr. John White of Nayland in Essex; who attended on Sir Richard during his last illness, in which he manifested an elevated piety towards God, and faith in Christ, the Saviour of the World. Mr. White also applauds him as a person in whose character great candour and the finest humanity were the prevailing qualities. He observes also that he had the greatest veneration for the clergy of the Church of England, whereof he was a member. No one, says he, did more highly magnify our office, or had a truer esteem and honour for our persons, discharging our office as we ought, and supporting the holy character we bear, with an unblameable conversation,

POETICAL.

I. Creation, a Philosophical Poem, demonstrating the Existence and
Providence of God, in seven Books, Octavo, 1712

II. The Redeemer, a Poem in six Books, Octavo, 1721

III. Eliza, a Poem in ten Books, Folio, 1705

IV. King Arthur, in ten Books, 1697

V. Prince Arthur, in ten Books, 1695

VI. King Alfred, in twelve books, Octavo, 1723

VII. A Paraphrase on the Book of Job; the Songs of Moses, Deborah and David; the ii. viii. ciii. cxiv, cxlviii. Psalms. Four chapters of Isaiah, and the third of Habbakkuk, Folio and Duodecimo, 1716

VIII. A New Version of the Book of Psalms, Duodecimo, 1720

IX. The Nature of Man, a Poem in three Books, Octavo, 1720

X. A Collection of Poems, Octavo, 1716

XI. Essays on several Subjects, 2 vols. Octavo. Vol. I. On Epic Poetry, Wit, False Virtue, Immortality of the Soul, Laws of Nature, Origin of Civil Power. Vol. II. On Athesim, Spleen, Writing, Future Felicity, Divine Love. 1716

XII. History of the Conspiracy against King William the IIId, 1696, Octavo, 1723

MEDICINAL.

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I. A Discourse on the Plague, with a preparatory Account of Malignant Fevers, in two Parts; containing an Explication of the Nature of those Diseases, and the Method of Cure, Octavo, 1720

II. A Treatise on the Small-Pox, in two Parts; containing an Account of the Nature, and several Kinds of that Disease; with the proper Methods of Cure: And a Dissertation upon the modern Practice of Inoculation, Octavo, 1722

III. A Treatise on Consumptions, and other Distempers belonging to the Breast and Lungs, Octavo, 1724

VI. A Treatise on the Spleen and Vapours; or Hyppocondriacal and Hysterical Affections; with three Discourses on the Nature and Cure of the Cholic, Melancholly and Palsy, Octavo, 1725

V. A Critical Dissertation upon the Spleen, so far as concerns the following Question, *viz*. Whether the Spleen is necessary or useful to the animal possessed of it? 1725

VI. Discourses on the Gout, Rheumatism, and the King's Evil; containing an Explanation of the Nature, Causes, and different Species of those Diseases, and the Method of curing them, Octavo, 1726

VII. Dissertations on a Dropsy, a Tympany, the Jaundice, the Stone, and the Diabetes, Octavo, 1727

Single POEMS by Sir *Richard Blackmore*.

I. His Satire against Wit, Folio, 1700

II. His Hymn to the Light of the World; with a short Description of the Cartoons at Hampton-Court, Folio, 1703

III. His Advice to the Poets, Folio, 1706

IV. His Kit-Kats, Folio, 1708

It might justly be esteemed an injury to Blackmore, to dismiss his life without a specimen from his beautiful and philosophical Poem on the Creation. In his second Book he demonstrates the existence of a God, from the wisdom and design which appears in the motions of the heavenly orbs; but more particularly in the solar system. First in the situation of the Sun, and its due distance from the earth. The fatal consequences of its having been placed, otherwise than it is. Secondly, he considers its diurnal motion, whence the change of the day and night proceeds; which we shall here insert as a specimen of the elegant versification, and sublime energy of this Poem.

Next see Lucretian Sages, see the Sun,
His course diurnal, and his annual run.
How in his glorious race he moves along,
Gay as a bridegroom, as a giant strong.
How his unweari'd labour he repeats,
Returns at morning, and at eve retreats;
And by the distribution of his light,
Now gives to man the day, and now the night:
Night, when the drowsy swain, and trav'ler cease
Their daily toil, and sooth their limbs with ease;
When all the weary sons of woe restrain
Their yielding cares with slumber's silken chain,
Solace sad grief, and lull reluctant pain.
And while the sun, ne'er covetous of rest,
Flies with such rapid speed from east

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to west,
In tracks oblique he thro' the zodiac rolls,
Between the northern and the southern poles;
From which revolving progress thro' the skies.
The needful seasons of the year arise:
And as he now advances, now retreats,
Whence winter colds proceed, and summer heats,
He qualifies, and chears the air by turns,
Which winter freezes, and which summer burns.
Thus his kind rays the two extremes reduce,
And keep a temper fit for nature's use.
The frost and drought by this alternate pow'r.
The earth's prolific energy restore.
The lives of man and beast demand the change;
Hence fowls the air, and fish the ocean range.
Of heat and cold, this just successive reign,
Which does the balance of the year maintain,
The gard'ner's hopes, and farmer's patience props,
Gives vernal verdure, and autumnal crops.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Jacob.

[2] Preface to Remarks on Prince Arthur, octavo 1696.

* * * * *

Mr. JAMES THOMSON.

This celebrated poet, from whom his country has derived the most distinguished honour, was son of the revd. Mr. Thomson, a minister of the church of Scotland, in the Presbytery of Jedburgh.

He was born in the place where his father was minister, about the beginning of the present century, and received the rudiments of his education at a private country school. Mr. Thomson, in the early part of his life, so far from appearing to possess a sprightly genius, was considered by his school master, and those which directed his education, as being really without a common share of parts.

While he was improving himself in the Latin and Greek tongues at this country school, he often visited a minister, whose charge lay in the same presbytery with his father's, the revd. Mr. Rickerton, a man of such amazing powers, that many persons of genius, as well as Mr. Thomson, who conversed with him, have been astonished, that such great merit should be buried in an obscure part of the country, where he had no opportunity to display himself, and, except upon periodical meetings of the ministers, seldom an opportunity of conversing with men of learning.

Though Mr. Thomson's schoolmaster could not discover that he was endowed with a common portion of understanding, yet Mr. Rickerton was not so blind to his genius; he distinguished our author's early propension to poetry, and had once in his hands some of the first attempts Mr. Thomson ever made in that province.

It is not to be doubted but our young poet greatly improved while he continued to converse with Mr. Rickerton, who, as he was a philosophical man, inspired his mind with a love of the Sciences, nor were the revd. gentleman's endeavours in vain, for Mr. Thomson has shewn in his works how well he was acquainted with natural and moral philosophy, a circumstance which, perhaps, is owing to the early impressions he received from Mr. Rickerton.

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Nature, which delights in diversifying her gifts, does not bestow upon every one a power of displaying the abilities she herself has granted to the best advantage. Though Mr. Rickerton could discover that Mr. Thomson, so far from being without parts, really possessed a very fine genius, yet he never could have imagined, as he often declared, that there existed in his mind such powers, as even by the best cultivation could have raised him to so high a degree of eminence amongst the poets.

When Mr. Rickerton first saw Mr. Thomson's Winter, which was in a Bookseller's shop at Edinburgh, he stood amazed, and after he had read the lines quoted below, he dropt the poem from his hand in the extasy of admiration. The lines are his induction to Winter, than which few poets ever rose to a more sublime height[1].

After spending the usual time at a country school in the acquisition of the dead languages, Mr. Thomson was removed to the university of Edinburgh, in order to finish his education, and be fitted for the ministry. Here, as at the country school, he made no great figure: his companions thought contemptuously of him, and the masters under whom he studied, had not a higher opinion of our poet's abilities, than their pupils. His course of attendance upon the classes of philosophy being finished, he was entered in the Divinity Hall, as one of the candidates for the ministry, where the students, before they are permitted to enter on their probation, must yield six years attendance.

It was in the second year of Mr. Thomson's attendance upon this school of divinity, whose professor at that time was the revd. and learned Mr. William Hamilton, a person whom he always mentioned with respect, that our author was appointed by the professor to write a discourse on the Power of the Supreme Being. When his companions heard their task assigned him, they could not but arraign the professor's judgment, for assigning so copious a theme to a young man, from whom nothing equal to the subject could be expected. But when Mr. Thomson delivered the discourse, they had then reason to reproach themselves for want of discernment, and for indulging a contempt of one superior to the brightest genius amongst them. This discourse was so sublimely elevated, that both the professor and the students who heard it delivered, were astonished. It was written in blank verse, for which Mr. Hamilton rebuked him, as being improper upon that occasion. Such of his fellow-students as envied him the success of this discourse, and the admiration it procured him, employed their industry to trace him as a plagiary; for they could not be persuaded that a youth seemingly so much removed from the appearance of genius, could compose a declamation, in which learning, genius, and judgment had a very great share. Their search, however, proved fruitless, and Mr. Thomson continued, while he remained at the university, to possess the honour of that discourse, without any diminution.

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We are not certain upon what account it was that Mr. Thomson dropt the notion of going into the ministry; perhaps he imagined it a way of life too severe for the freedom of his disposition: probably he declined becoming a presbyterian minister, from a consciousness of his own genius, which gave him a right to entertain more ambitious views; for it seldom happens, that a man of great parts can be content with obscurity, or the low income of sixty pounds a year, in some retired corner of a neglected country; which must have been the lot of Thomson, if he had not extended his views beyond the sphere of a minister of the established church of Scotland.

After he had dropt all thoughts of the clerical profession, he began to be more sollicitous of distinguishing his genius, as he placed some dependence upon it, and hoped to acquire such patronage as would enable him to appear in life with advantage. But the part of the world where he then was, could not be very auspicious to such hopes; for which reason he began to turn his eyes towards the grand metropolis.

The first poem of Mr. Thomson's, which procured him any reputation from the public, was his Winter, of which mention is already made, and further notice will be taken; but he had private approbation for several of his pieces, long before his Winter was published, or before he quitted his native country. He wrote a Paraphrase on the 104th Psalm, which, after it had received the approbation of Mr. Rickerton, he permitted his friends to copy. By some means or other this Paraphrase fell into the hands of Mr. Auditor Benson, who, expressing his admiration of it, said, that he doubted not if the author was in London, but he would meet with encouragement equal to his merit. This observation of Benson's was communicated to Thomson by a letter, and, no doubt, had its natural influence in inflaming his heart, and hastening his journey to the metropolis. He soon set out for Newcastle, where he took shipping, and landed at Billinsgate. When he arrived, it was his immediate care to wait on [2]Mr. Mallet, who then lived in Hanover-Square in the character of tutor to his grace the duke of Montrose, and his late brother lord G. Graham. Before Mr. Thomson reached Hanover-Square, an accident happened to him, which, as it may divert some of our readers, we shall here insert. He had received letters of recommendation from a gentleman of rank in Scotland, to some persons of distinction in London, which he had carefully tied up in his pocket-handkerchief. As he sauntered along the streets, he could not withhold his admiration of the magnitude, opulence, and various objects this great metropolis continually presented to his view. These must naturally have diverted the imagination of a man of less reflexion, and it is not greatly to be wondered at, if Mr. Thomson's mind was so ingrossed by these new presented scenes, as to be absent to the busy crowds around him. He often stopped to gratify his curiosity, the consequences

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of which he afterwards experienced. With an honest simplicity of heart, unsuspecting, as unknowing of guilt, he was ten times longer in reaching Hanover-Square, than one less sensible and curious would have been. When he arrived, he found he had paid for his curiosity; his pocket was picked of his handkerchief, and all the letters that were wrapped up in it. This accident would have proved very mortifying to a man less philosophical than Thomson; but he was of a temper never to be agitated; he then smiled at it, and frequently made his companions laugh at the relation.

It is natural to suppose, that as soon as Mr. Thomson arrived in town, he shewed to some of his friends his poem on Winter[3]. The approbation it might meet with from them, was not, however, a sufficient recommendation to introduce it to the world. He had the mortification of offering it to several Booksellers without success, who, perhaps, not being qualified themselves to judge of the merit of the performance, refused to risque the necessary expences, on the work of an obscure stranger, whose name could be no recommendation to it. These were severe repulses; but, at last, the difficulty was surmounted. Mr. Mallet, offered it to Mr. Millan, now Bookseller at Charing-Cross, who without making any scruples, printed it. For some time Mr. Millan had reason to believe, that he should be a loser by his frankness; for the impression lay like as paper on his hands, few copies being sold, 'till by an accident its merit was discovered.[4] One Mr. Whatley, a man of some taste in letters, but perfectly enthusiastic in the admiration of any thing which pleased him, happened to cast his eye upon it, and finding something which delighted him, perused the whole, not without growing astonishment, that the poem should be unknown, and the author obscure. He learned from the Bookseller the circumstances already mentioned, and, in the extasy of his admiration of this poem, he went from Coffee-house to Coffee house, pointing out its beauties, and calling upon all men of taste, to exert themselves in rescuing one of the greatest geniuses that ever appeared, from obscurity. This had a very happy effect, for, in a short time, the impression was bought up, and they who read the poem, had no reason to complain of Mr. Whatley's exaggeration; for they found it so compleatly beautiful, that they could not but think themselves happy in doing justice to a man of so much merit.

The poem of Winter is, perhaps, the most finished, as well as most picturesque, of any of the Four Seasons. The scenes are grand and lively. It is in that season that the creation appears in distress, and nature assumes a melancholy air; and an imagination so poetical as Thomson's, could not but furnish those awful and striking images, which fill the soul with a solemn dread of *those Vapours, and Storms, and Clouds*, he has so well painted. Description is the peculiar talent of Thomson; we tremble at his thunder in summer, we shiver with his winter's cold, and we rejoice at the renovation of nature, by the sweet influence of spring. But the poem deserves a further illustration, and we shall take an opportunity of pointing out some of its most striking beauties; but before we speak of these, we beg leave to relate the following anecdote.

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As soon as Winter was published, Mr. Thomson sent a copy of it as a present to Mr. Joseph Mitchell, his countryman, and brother poet, who, not liking many parts of it, inclosed to him the following couplet;

Beauties and faults so thick lye scattered here,
Those I could read, if these were not so near.

To this Mr. Thomson answered extempore.

Why all not faults, injurious Mitchell; why
Appears one beauty to thy blasted eye;
Damnation worse than thine, if worse can be,
Is all I ask, and all I want from thee.

Upon a friend's remonstrating to Mr. Thomson, that the expression of blasted eye would look like a personal reflexion, as Mr. Mitchell had really that misfortune, he changed the epithet blasted, into blasting. But to return:

After our poet has represented the influence of Winter upon the face of nature, and particularly described the severities of the frost, he has the following beautiful transition;

—Our infant winter sinks,
Divested of its grandeur; should our eye
Astonish'd shoot into the frigid zone;
Where, for relentless months, continual night
Holds o'er the glitt'ring waste her starry reign:
There thro' the prison of unbounded wilds
Barr'd by the hand of nature from escape,
Wide roams the Russian exile. Nought around
Strikes his sad eye, but desarts lost in snow;
And heavy loaded groves; and solid floods,
That stretch athwart the solitary waste,
Their icy horrors to the frozen main;
And chearless towns far distant, never bless'd
Save when its annual course, the caravan
Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay[5]
With news of human-kind. Yet there life glows;
Yet cherished there, beneath the shining waste,
The furry nations harbour: tipt with jet
Fair ermines, spotless as the snows they press;
Sables of glossy black; and dark embrown'd
Or beauteous, streak'd with many a mingled hue,
Thousands besides, the costly pride of courts.

The description of a thaw is equally picturesque. The following lines consequent upon it are excellent.

—Those sullen seas
That wash th'ungenial pole, will rest no more
Beneath the shackles of the mighty North;
But rousing all their waves resistless heave.—
And hark! the lengthen'd roar continuous runs
Athwart the rested deep: at once it bursts
And piles a thousand mountains to the clouds.
Ill fares the bark, with trembling wretches charg'd,
That tost amid the floating fragments, moors
Beneath the shelter of an icy isle,
While night o'erwhelms the sea, and horror looks
More horrible. Can human force endure
Th' assembled mischiefs that besiege 'em round!
Heart-gnawing hunger, fainting weariness,
The roar of winds and waves, the crush of ice,
Now ceasing, now renew'd with louder rage,
And in dire ecchoes bellowing round the main.

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As the induction of Mr. Thomson's Winter has been celebrated for its sublimity, so the conclusion has likewise a claim to praise, for the tenderness of the sentiments, and the pathetic force of the expression.

'Tis done!—Dread winter spreads her latest glooms,
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquer'd year.
How dead the vegetable kingdom lies!
How dumb the tuneful! horror wide extends
Her desolate domain. Behold, fond man!
See here thy pictur'd life; pass some few years,
Thy flow'ring spring, thy summer's ardent strength,
Thy sober autumn fading into age,
And page concluding winter comes at last,
And shuts the scene.—

He concludes the poem by enforcing a reliance on providence, which will in proper compensate for all those seeming severities, with which good men are often oppressed.

—Ye good distrest!
Ye noble few! who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up awhile,
And what your bounded view which only saw
A little part, deemed evil, is no more:
The storms of Wintry time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded Spring encircle all.

The poem of Winter meeting with such general applause, Mr. Thomson was induced to write the other three seasons, which he finished with equal success. His Autumn was next given to the public, and is the most unfinished of the four; it is not however without its beauties, of which many have considered the story of Lavinia, naturally and artfully introduced, as the most affecting. The story is in itself moving and tender. It is perhaps no diminution to the merit of this beautiful tale, that the hint of it is taken from the book of Ruth in the Old Testament.

The author next published the Spring, the induction to which is very poetical and beautiful.

Come gentle Spring, etherial mildness come,
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veil'd in a show'r
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.

It is addressed to the countess of Hertford, with the following elegant compliment,

O Hertford! fitted, or to shine in courts
With unaffected grace, or walk the plains,
With innocence and meditation joined,
In soft assemblage; listen to the song,
Which thy own season paints; while nature all
Is blooming, and benevolent like thee.—

The descriptions in this poems are mild, like the season they paint; but towards the end of it, the poet takes occasion to warn his countrymen against indulging the wild and irregular passion of love. This digression is one of the most affecting in the whole piece, and while he paints the language of a lover's breast agitated with the pangs of strong desire, and jealous transports, he at the same time dissuades the ladies from being too credulous in the affairs of gallantry. He represents the natural influence of spring, in giving a new glow to the beauties of the fair creation, and firing their hearts with the passion of love.

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The shining moisture swells into her eyes,
In brighter flow; her wishing bosom heaves,
With palpitations wild; kind tumults seize
Her veins; and all her yielding soul is love.
From the keen gaze her lover turns away,
Full of the dear extatic power, and sick
With sighing languishment. Ah then, ye fair!
Be greatly cautious of your sliding hearts:
Dare not th'infectious sigh; the pleading look,
Down-cast, and low, in meek submission drest,
But full of guile. Let not the fervent tongue,
Prompt to deceive, with adulation smooth,
Gain on your purpos'd will. Nor in the bower,
Where woodbines flaunt, and roses shed a couch,
While evening draws her crimson curtains round,
Trust your soft minutes with betraying man.

Summer has many manly and striking beauties, of which the Hymn to the Sun, is one of the sublimest and most masterly efforts of genius we have ever seen.—There are some hints taken from Cowley's beautiful Hymn to Light.—Mr. Thomson has subjoined a Hymn to the Seasons, which is not inferior to the foregoing in poetical merit.

The Four Seasons considered separately, each Season as a distinct poem has been judged defective in point of plan. There appears no particular design; the parts are not subservient to one another; nor is there any dependance or connection throughout; but this perhaps is a fault almost inseparable from a subject in itself so diversified, as not to admit of such limitation. He has not indeed been guilty of any incongruity; the scenes described in spring, are all peculiar to that season, and the digressions, which make up a fourth part of the poem, flow naturally. He has observed the same regard to the appearances of nature in the other seasons; but then what he has described in the beginning of any of the seasons, might as well be placed in the middle, and that in the middle, as naturally towards the close. So that each season may rather be called an assemblage of poetical ideas, than a poem, as it seems written without a plan.

Mr. Thomson's poetical diction in the Seasons is very peculiar to him: His manner of writing is entirely his own: He has introduced a number of compound words; converted substantives into verbs, and in short has created a kind of new language for himself. His stile has been blamed for its singularity and stiffness; but with submission to superior judges, we cannot but be of opinion, that though this observation is true, yet is it admirably fitted for description. The object he paints stands full before the eye, we admire it in all its lustre, and who would not rather enjoy a perfect inspection into a natural curiosity through a microscope capable of discovering all the minute beauties, though its exterior form should not be comely, than perceive an object but faintly, through a microscope ill adapted for the purpose, however its outside may be

decorated. Thomson has a stiffness in his manner, but then his manner is new; and there never yet arose a distinguished genius, who had not an air peculiarly his own. 'Tis true indeed, the tow'ring sublimity of Mr. Thomson's stile is ill adapted for the tender passions, which will appear more fully when we consider him as a dramatic writer, a sphere in which he is not so excellent as in other species of poetry.

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The merit of these poems introduced our author to the acquaintance and esteem of several persons, distinguished by their rank, or eminent for their talents:—Among the latter Dr. Rundle, afterwards bishop of Derry, was so pleased with the spirit of benevolence and piety, which breathes throughout the Seasons, that he recommended him to the friendship of the late lord chancellor Talbot, who committed to him the care of his eldest son, then preparing to set out on his travels into France and Italy.

With this young nobleman, Mr. Thomson performed (what is commonly called) The Tour of Europe, and stay'd abroad about three years, where no doubt he inriched his mind with the noble monuments of antiquity, and the conversation of ingenious foreigners. 'Twas by comparing modern Italy with the idea he had of the antient Romans, which furnished him with the hint of writing his Liberty, in three parts. The first is Antient and Modern Italy compared. The second Greece, and the third Britain. The whole is addressed to the eldest son of lord Talbot, who died in the year 1734, upon his travels.

Amongst Mr. Thomson's poems, is one to the memory of Sir Isaac Newton, of which we shall say no more than this, that if he had never wrote any thing besides, he deserved to enjoy a distinguished reputation amongst the poets. Speaking of the amazing genius of Newton, he says,

Th'aerial flow of sound was known to him,
From whence it first in wavy circles breaks.
Nor could the darting beam of speed immense,
Escape his swift pursuit, and measuring eye.
Ev'n light itself, which every thing displays,
Shone undiscover'd, till his brighter mind
Untwisted all the shining robe of day;
And from the whitening undistinguished blaze,
Collecting every separated ray,
To the charm'd eye educ'd the gorgeous train
Of parent colours. First, the flaming red,
Sprung vivid forth, the tawny orange next,
And next refulgent yellow; by whose side
Fell the kind beams of all-refreshing green.
Then the pure blue, that swells autumnal skies,
AEtherial play'd; and then of sadder hue,
Emerg'd the deepen'd indico, as when
The heavy skirted evening droops with frost,
While the last gleamings of refracted light,
Died in the fainting violet away.
These when the clouds distil the rosy shower,
Shine out distinct along the watr'y bow;
While o'er our heads the dewy vision bends,
Delightful melting in the fields beneath.

Myriads of mingling dyes from these result,
And myriads still remain—Infinite source
Of beauty ever-flushing, ever new.

About the year 1728 Mr. Thomson wrote a piece called Britannia, the purport of which was to rouse the nation to arms, and excite in the spirit of the people a generous disposition to revenge the injuries done them by the Spaniards: This is far from being one of his best poems.

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Upon the death of his generous patron, lord chancellor Talbot, for whom the nation joined with Mr. Thomson in the most sincere inward sorrow, he wrote an elegiac poem, which does honour to the author, and to the memory of that great man he meant to celebrate. He enjoyed, during lord Talbot's life, a very profitable place, which that worthy patriot had conferred upon him, in recompence of the care he had taken in forming the mind of his son. Upon his death, his lordship's successor reserved the place for Mr. Thomson, and always expected when he should wait upon him, and by performing some formalities enter into the possession of it. This, however, by an unaccountable indolence he neglected, and at last the place, which he might have enjoyed with so little trouble, was bestowed upon another.

Amongst the latest of Mr. Thomson's productions is his Castle of Indolence, a poem of so extraordinary merit, that perhaps we are not extravagant, when we declare, that this single performance discovers more genius and poetical judgment, than all his other works put together. We cannot here complain of want of plan, for it is artfully laid, naturally conducted, and the descriptions rise in a beautiful succession: It is written in imitation of Spenser's stile; and the obsolete words, with the simplicity of diction in some of the lines, which borders on the ludicrous, have been thought necessary to make the imitation more perfect.

'The stile (says Mr. Thomson) of that admirable poet, as well as the measure in which he wrote, are, as it were, appropriated by custom to all allegorical poems written in our language; just as in French, the stile of Marot, who lived under Francis the 1st, has been used in Tales and familiar Epistles, by the politest writers of the age of Louis the XIVth.'

We shall not at present enquire how far Mr. Thomson is justifiable in using the obsolete words of Spenser: As Sir Roger de Coverley observed on another occasion, much may be said on both sides. One thing is certain, Mr. Thomson's imitation is excellent, and he must have no poetry in his imagination, who can read the picturesque descriptions in his Castle of Indolence, without emotion. In his LXXXIst Stanza he has the following picture of beauty:

Here languid beauty kept her pale-fac'd court,
Bevies of dainty dames, of high degree,
From every quarter hither made resort;
Where, from gross mortal care, and bus'ness free,
They lay, pour'd out in ease and luxury:
Or should they a vain shew of work assume,
Alas! and well-a-day! what can it be?
To knot, to twist, to range the vernal bloom;
But far is cast the distaff, spinning-wheel and loom.

He pursues the description in the subsequent Stanza.

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Their only labour was to kill the time;
And labour dire it is, and weary woe.
They fit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhime;
Then rising sudden, to the glass they go,
Or saunter forth, with tott'ring steps and slow:
This soon too rude an exercise they find;
Strait on the couch their limbs again they throw,
Where hours on hours they sighing lie reclin'd,
And court the vapoury God soft breathing in the wind.

In the two following Stanzas, the dropsy and hypochondria are beautifully described.

Of limbs enormous, but withal unsound,
Soft swoln and pale, here lay the Hydropsy:
Unwieldly man; with belly monstrous round,
For ever fed with watery supply;
For still he drank, and yet he still was dry.
And moping here did Hypochondria sit,
Mother of spleen, in robes of various die,
Who vexed was full oft with ugly fit;
And some her frantic deem'd, and some her deem'd a wit.
A lady proud she was, of antient blood,
Yet oft her fear, her pride made crouchen low:
She felt, or fancy'd in her fluttering mood,
All the diseases which the spitals know,
And sought all physic which the shops bestow;
And still new leaches, and new drugs would try,
Her humour ever wavering too and fro;
For sometimes she would laugh, and sometimes cry,
And sudden waxed wroth, and all she knew not why.

The speech of Sir Industry in the second Canto, when he enumerates the various blessings which flow from action, is surely one of the highest instances of genius which can be produced in poetry. In the second stanza, before he enters upon the subject, the poet complains of the decay of patronage, and the general depravity of taste; and in the third breaks out into the following exclamation, which is so perfectly beautiful, that it would be the greatest mortification not to transcribe it,

I care not, fortune, what you me deny:
You cannot rob me of free nature's grace;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shews her bright'ning face;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns, by living stream at eve:

Let health my nerves, and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave;
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

Before we quit this poem, permit us, reader, to give you two more stanzas from it: the first shews Mr. Thomson's opinion of Mr. Quin as an actor; of their friendship we may say more hereafter.

STANZA LXVII.

Of the CASTLE of INDOLENCE.

Here whilom ligg'd th'Aesopus[6] of the age;
But called by fame, in foul ypricked deep,
A noble pride restor'd him to the stage,
And rous'd him like a giant from his sleep.
Even from his slumbers we advantage reap:
With double force th'enliven'd scene he wakes,
Yet quits not nature's bounds. He knows to keep
Each due decorum: now the heart he shakes,
And now with well-urg'd sense th'enlighten'd judgment takes.

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The next stanza (wrote by a friend of the author's, as the note mentions) is a friendly, though familiar, compliment; it gives us an image of our bard himself, at once entertaining, striking, and just.

STANZA LXVIII.

A bard here dwelt, more fat than bard beseems,
Who void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,
On virtue still, and nature's pleasing themes,
Pour'd forth his unpremeditated strain:
The world forsaking with a calm disdain.
Here laugh'd he, careless in his easy seat;
Here quaff'd, encircl'd with the joyous train,
Oft moralizing sage: his ditty sweet
He loathed much to write, ne cared to repeat.

We shall now consider Mr. Thomson as a dramatic writer.

In the year 1730, about six years after he had been in London, he brought a Tragedy upon the stage, called Sophonisba, built upon the Carthaginian history of that princess, and upon which the famous Nathaniel Lee has likewise written a Tragedy. This play met with a favourable reception from the public. Mrs. Oldfield greatly distinguished herself in the character of Sophonisba, which Mr. Thomson acknowledges in his preface.—'I cannot conclude, says he, without owning my obligations to those concerned in the representation. They have indeed done me more than justice; Whatever was designed as amiable and engageing in Masinessa shines out in Mr. Wilks's action. Mrs. Oldfield, in the character of Sophonisba, has excelled what even in the fondness of an author I could either wish or imagine. The grace, dignity and happy variety of her action, have been universally applauded, and are truly admirable.'

Before we quit this play, we must not omit two anecdotes which happened the first night of the representation. Mr. Thomson makes one of his characters address Sophonisba in a line, which some critics reckoned the false pathetic.

O! Sophonisba, Sophonisba Oh!

Upon which a smart from the pit cried out,

Oh! Jamey Thomson, Jamey Thomson Oh!

However ill-natured this critic might be in interrupting the action of the play for sake of a joke; yet it is certain that the line ridiculed does partake of the false pathetic, and should be a warning to tragic poets to guard against the swelling stile; for by aiming at the sublime, they are often betrayed into the bombast.—Mr. Thomson who could not but

feel all the emotions and sollicitudes of a young author the first night of his play, wanted to place himself in some obscure part of the house, in order to see the representation to the best advantage, without being known as the poet.—He accordingly placed himself in the upper gallery; but such was the power of nature in him, that he could not help repeating the parts along with the players, and would sometimes whisper to himself, ‘now such a scene is to open,’ by which he was soon discovered to be the author, by some gentlemen who could not, on account of the great crowd, be situated in any other part of the house.

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After an interval of four years, Mr. Thomson exhibited to the public his second Tragedy called Agamemnon. Mr. Pope gave an instance of his great affection to Mr. Thomson on this occasion: he wrote two letters in its favour to the managers, and honoured the representation on the first night with his presence. As he had not been for some time at a play, this was considered as a very great instance of esteem. Mr. Thomson submitted to have this play considerably shortened in the action, as some parts were too long, other unnecessary, in which not the character but the poet spoke; and though not brought on the stage till the month of April, it continued to be acted with applause for several nights.

Many have remark'd that his characters in his plays are more frequently descriptive, than expressive, of the passions; but they all abound with uncommon beauties, with fire, and depth of thought, with noble sentiments and nervous writing. His speeches are often too long, especially for an English audience; perhaps sometimes they are unnaturally lengthened: and 'tis certainly a greater relief to the ear to have the dialogue more broken; yet our attention is well rewarded, and in no passages, perhaps, in his tragedies, more so, than in the affecting account Melisander [7] gives of his being betrayed, and left on the desolate island.

—'Tis thus my friend.
Whilst sunk in unsuspecting sleep I lay,
Some midnight ruffians rush'd into my chamber,
Sent by Egisthus, who my presence deem'd
Obstructive (so I solve it) to his views,
Black views, I fear, as you perhaps may know,
Sudden they seiz'd, and muffled up in darkness,
Strait bore me to the sea, whose instant prey
I did conclude myself, when first around
The ship unmoor'd, I heard the chiding wave.
But these fel tools of cruel power, it seems,
Had orders in a desart isle to leave me;
There hopeless, helpless, comfortless, to prove
The utmost gall and bitterness of death.
Thus malice often overshoots itself,
And some unguarded accident betrays
The man of blood.—Next night—a dreary night!
Cast on the wildest of the Cyclad Isles,
Where never human foot had mark'd the shore,
These ruffians left me.—Yet believe me, Arcas,
Such is the rooted love we bear mankind,
All ruffians as they were, I never heard
A sound so dismal as their parting oars.—
Then horrid silence follow'd, broke alone
By the low murmurs of the restless deep,

Mixt with the doubtful breeze that now and then
Sigh'd thro' the mournful woods. Beneath a shade
I sat me down, more heavily oppress'd,
More desolate at heart, than e'er I felt
Before. When, Philomela, o'er my head
Began to tune her melancholy strain,
As piteous of my woes, 'till, by degrees,
Composing sleep on wounded nature shed
A kind but short relief. At early

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morn,
Wak'd by the chant of birds, I look'd around
For usual objects: objects found I none,
Except before me stretch'd the toiling main,
And rocks and woods in savage view behind.
Wrapt for a moment in amaz'd confusion,
My thought turn'd giddy round; when all at once,
To memory full my dire condition rush'd—

In the year 1736 Mr. Thomson offered to the stage a Tragedy called Edward and Eleonora, which was forbid to be acted, for some political reason, which it is not in our power to guess.

The play of Tancred and Sigismunda was acted in the year 1744; this succeeded beyond any other of Thomson's plays, and is now in possesion of the stage. The plot is borrowed from a story in the celebrated romance of Gil Blas: The fable is very interesting, the characters are few, but active; and the attention in this play is never suffered to wander. The character of Seffredi has been justly censured as inconsistent, forced, and unnatural.

By the command of his royal highness the prince of Wales, Mr. Thomson, in conjunction with Mr. Mallet, wrote the Masque of Alfred, which was performed twice in his royal highness's gardens at Cliffden. Since Mr. Thomson's death, this piece has been almost entirely new modelled by Mr. Mallet, and brought on the stage in the year 1751, its success being fresh in the memory of its frequent auditors, 'tis needless to say more concerning it.

Mr. Thomson's last Tragedy, called Coriolanus, was not acted till after his death; the profits of it were given to his sisters in Scotland, one of whom is married to a minister there, and the other to a man of low circumstances in the city of Edinburgh. This play, which is certainly the least excellent of any of Thomson's, was first offered to Mr. Garrick, but he did not think proper to accept it. The prologue was written by Sir George Lyttleton, and spoken by Mr. Quin, which had a very happy effect upon the audience. Mr. Quin was the particular friend of Thomson, and when he spoke the following lines, which are in themselves very tender, all the endearments of a long acquaintance, rose at once to his imagination, while the tears gushed from his eyes.

He lov'd his friends (forgive this gushing tear:
Alas! I feel I am no actor here)
He lov'd his friends with such a warmth of heart,
So clear of int'rest, so devoid of art,

Such generous freedom, such unshaken real,
No words can speak it, but our tears may tell.

The beautiful break in these lines had a fine effect in speaking. Mr. Quin here excelled himself; he never appeared a greater actor than at this instant, when he declared himself none: 'twas an exquisite stroke to nature; art alone could hardly reach it. Pardon the digression, reader, but, we feel a desire to say somewhat more on this head. The poet and the actor were friends, it cannot then be quite foreign to the purpose to proceed. A deep fetch'd sigh filled up the heart felt pause; grief spread o'er all the countenance; the tear started to the eye, the muscles fell, and,

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’The whiteness of his cheek
Was apter than his tongue to speak his tale.’

They all expressed the tender feelings of a manly heart, becoming a Thomson’s friend. His pause, his recovery were masterly; and he delivered the whole with an emphasis and pathos, worthy the excellent lines he spoke; worthy the great poet and good man, whose merits they painted, and whose loss they deplored.

The epilogue too, which was spoken by Mrs. Woffington, with an exquisite humour, greatly pleased. These circumstances, added to the consideration of the author’s being no more, procured this play a run of nine nights, which without these assistances ’tis likely it could not have had; for, without playing the critic, it is not a piece of equal merit to many other of his works. It was his misfortune as a dramatist, that he never knew when to have done; he makes every character speak while there is any thing to be said; and during these long interviews, the action too stands still, and the story languishes. His Tancred and Sigismunda may be excepted from this general censure: But his characters are too little distinguished; they seldom vary from one another in their manner of speaking. In short, Thomson was born a descriptive poet; he only wrote for the stage, from a motive too obvious to be mentioned, and too strong to be refilled. He is indeed the eldest born of Spenser, and he has often confessed that if he had any thing excellent in poetry, he owed it to the inspiration he first received from reading the Fairy Queen, in the very early part of his life.

In August 1748 the world was deprived of this great ornament of poetry and genius, by a violent fever, which carried him off in the 48th year of his age. Before his death he was provided for by Sir George Littleton, in the profitable place of comptroller of America, which he lived not long to enjoy. Mr. Thomson was extremely beloved by his acquaintance. He was of an open generous disposition; and was sometimes tempted to an excessive indulgence of the social pleasures: A failing too frequently inseparable from men of genius. His exterior appearance was not very engaging, but he grew more and more agreeable, as he entered into conversation: He had a grateful heart, ready to acknowledge every favour he received, and he never forgot his old benefactors, notwithstanding a long absence, new acquaintance, and additional eminence; of which the following instance cannot be unacceptable to the reader.

Some time before Mr. Thomson’s fatal illness, a gentleman enquired for him at his house in Kew-Lane, near Richmond, where he then lived. This gentleman had been his acquaintance when very young, and proved to be Dr. Gustard, the son of a revd. minister in the city of Edinburgh. Mr. Gustard had been Mr. Thomson’s patron in the early part of his life, and contributed from his own purse (Mr. Thomson’s father not being in very affluent circumstances) to enable him to prosecute his studies. The visitor

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sent not in his name, but only intimated to the servant that an old acquaintance desired to see Mr. Thomson. Mr. Thomson came forward to receive him, and looking stedfastly at him (for they had not seen one another for many years) said, Troth Sir, I cannot say I ken your countenance well—Let me therefore crave your name. Which the gentleman no sooner mentioned but the tears gushed from Mr. Thomson's eyes. He could only reply, good God! are you the son of my dear friend, my old benefactor; and then rushing to his arms, he tenderly embraced him; rejoicing at so unexpected a meeting.

It is a true observation, that whenever gratitude is absent from a heart, it is generally capable of the most consummate baseness; and on the other hand, where that generous virtue has a powerful prevalence in the soul, the heart of such a man is fraught with all those other endearing and tender qualities, which constitute goodness. Such was the heart of this amiable poet, whose life was as inoffensive as his page was moral: For of all our poets he is the farthest removed from whatever has the appearance of indecency; and, as Sir George Lyttleton happily expresses it, in the prologue to Mr. Thomson's Coriolanus,

—His chaste muse employ'd her heav'n-taught lyre
None but the noblest passions to inspire,
Not one immoral, one corrupted thought,
One line, which dying he could wish to blot.

FOOTNOTES:

[1]
See winter comes to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train!
Vapours, and storms, and clouds; be these my theme;
These that exalt the soul to solemn thought,
And heav'nly musing; welcome kindred glooms.
Congenial horrors hail!—with frequent foot
Oft have I in my pleasing calm of life,
When nurs'd by careless solitude I liv'd,
Oft have I wander'd thro' your rough domain;
Trod the pure virgin snows; my self as pure;
Heard the winds blow, or the big torrents burst,
Or seen the deep fermenting tempest brew'd
In the red evening sky. Thus pass'd the time,
'Till from the lucid chambers of the south
Look'd out the joyous spring, look'd out and smil'd.

[2] Mr. Mallet was his quondam schoolfellow (but much his junior) they contracted an early intimacy, which improved with their years, nor was it ever once disturbed by any casual mistake, envy, or jealousy on either side: a proof that two writers of merit may agree, in spite of the common observation to the contrary.

[3] The Winter was first wrote in detached pieces, or occasional descriptions; it was by the advice of Mr. Mallet they were collected and made into one connected piece. This was finished the first of all the seasons, and was the first poem he published. By the farther advice, and at the earnest request, of Mr. Mallet, he wrote the other three seasons.

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[4] Though 'tis possible this piece might be offered to more Printers who could read, than could taste, nor is it very surprizing, that an unknown author might meet with a difficulty of this sort; since an eager desire to peruse a new piece, with a fashionable name to it, shall, in one day, occasion the sale of thousands of what may never reach a second edition: while a work, that has only its intrinsic merit to depend on, may lie long dormant in a Bookseller's shop, 'till some person, eminent for taste, points out its worth to the many, declares the bullion sterling, stamps its value with his name, and makes it pass current with the world. Such was the fate of Thomson at this juncture: Such heretofore was Milton's, whose works were only found in the libraries of the curious, or judicious few, 'till Addison's remarks spread a taste for them; and, at length, it became even unfashionable not to have read them.

[5] The old name of China.

[6] Mr. Quin.

[7] The mention of this name reminds me of an obligation I had to Mr. Thomson; and, at once, an opportunity offers, of gratefully acknowledging the favour, and doing myself justice.

I had the pleasure of perusing the play of Agamemnon, before it was introduced to the manager. Mr. Thomson was so thoroughly satisfied (I might say more) with my reading of it; he said, he was confirmed in his design of giving to me the part of Melisander. When I expressed my sentiments of the favour, he told me, he thought it none; that my old acquaintance Savage knew, he had not forgot my taste in reading the poem of Winter some years before: he added, that when (before this meeting) he had expressed his doubt, to which of the actors he should give this part (as he had seen but few plays since his return from abroad) Savage warmly urged, I was the fittest person, and, with an oath affirmed, that Theo. Cibber would taste it, feel it, and act it; perhaps he might extravagantly add, 'beyond any one else.' 'Tis likely, Mr. Savage might be then more vehement in this assertion, as some of his friends had been more used to see me in a comic, than a serious light; and which was, indeed, more frequently my choice. But to go on. When I read the play to the manager, Mr. Quin, &c. (at which several gentlemen, intimate friends of the author, were present) I was complimented by them all; Mr. Quin particularly declared, he never heard a play done so much justice to, in reading, through all its various parts, Mrs. Porter also (who on this occasion was to appear in the character of Clytemnestra) so much approved my entering into the taste, sense, and spirit of the piece, that she was pleased to desire me to repeat a reading of it, which, at her request, and that of other principal performers, I often did; they all confessed their approbation, with thanks.

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When this play was to come forward into rehearsal, Mr. Thomson told me, another actor had been recommended to him for this part in private, by the manager (who, by the way) our author, or any one else, never esteemed as the best judge, of either play, or player. But money may purchase, and interest procure, a patent, though they cannot purchase taste, or parts, the person proposed was, possibly, some favoured flatterer, the partner of his private pleasures, or humble admirer of his table talk: These little monarchs have their little courtiers. Mr. Thomson insisted on my keeping the part. He said, 'Twas his opinion, none but myself, or Mr. Quin, could do it any justice; and, as that excellent actor could not be spared from the part of Agamemnon (in the performance of which character he added to his reputation, though before justly rated as the first actor of that time) he was peremptory for my appearing in it; I did so, and acquitted myself to the satisfaction of the author and his friends (men eminent in rank, in taste, and knowledge) and received testimonies of approbation from the audience, by their attention and applause.By this time the reader may be ready to cry out, 'to what purpose is all this?' Have patience, sir. As I gained reputation in the forementioned character, is there any crime in acknowledging my obligation to Mr. Thomson? or, am I unpardonable, though I should pride myself on his good opinion and friendship? may not gratitude, as well as vanity, be concerned in this relation? but there is another reason that may stand as an excuse, for my being led into this long narrative; which, as it is only an annotation, not made part of our author's life, the reader, at his option, may peruse, or pass it over, without being interrupted in his attention to what more immediately concerns Mr. Thomson. As what I have related is a truth, which living men of worth can testify; and as it evidently shows that Mr. Savage's opinion of me as an actor was, in this latter part of his life, far from contemptible, of which, perhaps, in his earlier days he had too lavishly spoke; I thought this no improper (nor ill-timed) contradiction to a remark the writer of[7A] Mr. Savage's Life has been pleased, in his Gaite de Coeur, to make, which almost amounts to an unhandsome innuendo, that Mr. Savage, and some of his friends, thought me no actor at all.I accidentally met with the book some years ago, and dipt into that part where the author says, 'The preface (to Sir Thomas Overbury) contains a very liberal encomium on the blooming excellences of Mr. Theophilus Cibber, which Mr. Savage could not, in the latter part of his life, see his friends about to read, without snatching the play out of their hands.' As poor Savage was well remembered to have been as inconsiderate, inconsistent, and inconstant a mortal as ever existed, what he might have said carried but little weight; and, as he would blow both hot and cold, nay,

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too frequently, to gratify the company present, would sacrifice the absent, though his best friend, I disregarded this invidious hint, 'till I was lately informed, a person of distinction in the learned world, had condescended to become the biographer of this unhappy man's unimportant life: as the sanction of such a name might prove of prejudice to me, I have since thought it worth my notice.The truth is, I met Savage one summer, in a condition too melancholy for description. He was starving; I supported him, and my father cloathed him, 'till his tragedy was brought on the stage, where it met with success in the representation, tho' acted by the young part of the company, in the summer season; whatever might be the merit of his play, his necessities were too pressing to wait 'till winter for its performance. When it was just going to be published (as I met with uncommon encouragement in my young attempt in the part of Somerset) he repeated to me a most extraordinary compliment, as he might then think it, which, he said, he intended to make me in his preface. Neither my youth (for I was then but 18) or vanity, was so devoid of judgment, as to prevent my objecting to it. I told him, I imagined this extravagancy would have so contrary an effect to his intention, that what he kindly meant for praise, might be misinterpreted, or render him liable to censure, and me to ridicule; I insisted on his omitting it: contrary to his usual obstinacy, he consented, and sent his orders to the Printer to leave it out; it was too late; the sheets were all work'd off, and the play was advertised to come out (as it did) the next day. T.C.

[7A] *Published about the year* 1743.

* * * * *

ALEXANDER POPE, Esq;

This illustrious poet was born at London, in 1688, and was descended from a good family of that name, in Oxfordshire, the head of which was the earl of Downe, whose sole heiress married the earl of Lindsey. His father, a man of primitive simplicity, and integrity of manners, was a merchant of London, who upon the Revolution quitted trade, and converted his effects into money, amounting to near 10,000 l. with which he retired into the country; and died in 1717, at the age of 75.

Our poet's mother, who lived to a very advanced age, being 93 years old when she died, in 1733, was the daughter of William Turner, Esq; of York. She had three brothers, one of whom was killed, another died in the service of king Charles; and the eldest following his fortunes, and becoming a general officer in Spain, left her what estate remained after sequestration, and forfeitures of her family. To these circumstances our poet alludes in his epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, in which he mentions his parents.

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Of gentle blood (part shed in honour's cause,
While yet in Britain, honour had applause)
Each parent sprang,—What fortune pray?—their own,
And better got than Bestia's from the throne.
Born to no pride, inheriting no strife,
Nor marrying discord in a noble wife;
Stranger to civil and religious rage,
The good man walked innoxious thro' his age:
No courts he saw; no suits would ever try;
Nor dar'd an oath, nor hazarded a lye:
Unlearn'd, he knew no schoolmen's subtle art,
No language, but the language of the heart:
By nature honest, by experience wise,
Healthy by temp'rance, and by exercise;
His life though long, to sickness past unknown,
His death was instant and without a groan.

The education of our great author was attended with circumstances very singular; and some of them extremely unfavourable; but the amazing force of his genius fully compensated the want of any advantage in his earliest instruction. He owed the knowledge of his letters to an aunt; and having learned very early to read, took great delight in it, and taught himself to write by copying after printed books, the characters of which he could imitate to great perfection. He began to compose verses, farther back than he could well remember; and at eight years of age, when he was put under one Taverner a priest, who taught him the rudiments of the Latin and Greek tongues at the same time, he met with Ogilby's Homer, which gave him great delight; and this was encreased by Sandys's Ovid: The raptures which these authors, even in the disguise of such translations, then yielded him, were so strong, that he spoke of them with pleasure ever after. From Mr. Taverner's tuition he was sent to a private school at Twiford, near Winchester, where he continued about a year, and was then removed to another near Hyde Park Corner; but was so unfortunate as to lose under his two last masters, what he had acquired under the first.

While he remained at this school, being permitted to go to the play-house, with some of his school fellows of a more advanced age, he was so charmed with dramatic representations, that he formed the translation of the Iliad into a play, from several of the speeches in Ogilby's translation, connected with verses of his own; and the several parts were performed by the upper boys of the school, except that of Ajax by the master's gardener. At the age of 12 our young poet, went with his father to reside at his house at Binfield, in Windsor forest, where he was for a few months under the tuition of another priest, with as little success as before; so that he resolved now to become his own master, by reading those Classic Writers which gave him most entertainment; and by this method, at fifteen he gained a ready habit in the learned languages, to which he soon after added the French and Italian. Upon his retreat to the forest, he became first

acquainted with the writings of Waller, Spenser and Dryden; in the last of which he immediately found what he wanted; and the poems of that excellent writer were never out of his hands; they became his model, and from them alone he learned the whole magic of his versification.

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The first of our author's compositions now extant in print, is an Ode on Solitude, written before he was twelve years old: Which, consider'd as the production of so early an age, is a perfect master piece; nor need he have been ashamed of it, had it been written in the meridian of his genius. While it breathes the most delicate spirit of poetry, it at the same time demonstrates his love of solitude, and the rational pleasures which attend the retreats of a contented country life.

Two years after this he translated the first Book of Statius' Thebais, and wrote a copy of verses on Silence, in imitation of the Earl of Rochester's poem on Nothing[1]. Thus we find him no sooner capable of holding the pen, than he employed it in writing verses,

"*He lisp'd [Transcriber's note: 'lips'd' in original] in Numbers, for the Numbers came*."

Though we have had frequent opportunity to observe, that poets have given early displays of genius, yet we cannot recollect, that among the inspired tribe, one can be found who at the age of twelve could produce so animated an Ode; or at the age of fourteen translate from the Latin. It has been reported indeed, concerning Mr. Dryden, that when he was at Westminster-School, the master who had assigned a poetical task to some of the boys, of writing a Paraphrase on our Saviour's Miracle, of turning Water into Wine, was perfectly astonished when young Dryden presented him with the following line, which he asserted was the best comment could be written upon it.

The conscious water saw its God, and blush'd.

This was the only instance of an early appearance of genius in this great man, for he was turn'd of 30 before he acquired any reputation; an age in which Mr. Pope's was in its full distinction.

The year following that in which Mr. Pope wrote his poem on Silence, he began an Epic Poem, intitled Alcander, which he afterwards very judiciously committed to the flames, as he did likewise a Comedy, and a Tragedy; the latter taken from a story in the legend of St. Genevieve; both of these being the product of those early days. But his Pastorals, which were written in 1704, when he was only 16 years of age, were esteemed by Sir William Trumbull, Mr. Granville, Mr. Wycherley, Mr. Walsh and others of his friends, too valuable to be condemned to the same fate.

Mr. Pope's Pastorals are four, *viz*.

Spring, address'd to Sir William Trumbull,
Summer, to Dr. Garth.
Autumn, to Mr. Wycherley.
Winter, in memory of Mrs. Tempest.

The three great writers of Pastoral Dialogue, which Mr. Pope in some measure seems to imitate, are Theocritus, Virgil, and Spenser. Mr. Pope is of opinion, that Theocritus excells all others in nature and simplicity.

That Virgil, who copies Theocritus, refines on his original; and in all points in which judgment has the principal part is much superior to his master.

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That among the moderns, their success has been, greatest who have most endeavoured to make these antients their pattern. The most considerable genius appears in the famous Tasso, and our Spenser. Tasso in his Aminta has far excelled all the pastoral writers, as in his Gierusalemme he has outdone the Epic Poets of his own country. But as this piece seems to have been the original of a new sort of poem, the Pastoral Comedy, in Italy, it cannot so well be considered as a copy of the antients. Spenser's Calendar, in Mr. Dryden's opinion, is the most compleat work of this kind, which any nation has produced ever since the time of Virgil. But this he said before Mr. Pope's Pastorals appeared.

Mr. Walsh pronounces on our Shepherd's Boy (as Mr. Pope called himself) the following judgment, in a letter to Mr. Wycherly.

'The verses are very tender and easy. The author seems to have a particular genius for that kind of poetry, and a judgment that much exceeds the years, you told me he was of. It is no flattery at all to say, that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age. I shall take it as a favour if you will bring me acquainted with him; and if he will give himself the trouble, any morning, to call at my house, I shall be very glad to read the verses with him, and give him him my opinion of the particulars more largely than I can well do in this letter.'

Thus early was Mr. Pope introduced to the acquaintance of men of genius, and so improved every advantage, that he made a more rapid progress towards a consummation in fame, than any of our former English poets. His Messiah; his Windsor-Forest, the first part of which was written at the same time with his pastorals; his Essay on Criticism in 1709, and his Rape of the Lock in 1712, established his poetical character in such a manner, that he was called upon by the public voice, to enrich our language with the translation of the Iliad; which he began at 25, and executed in five years. This was published for his own benefit, by subscription, the only kind of reward, which he received for his writings, which do honour to our age and country: His religion rendering him incapable of a place, which the lord treasurer Oxford used to express his concern for, but without offering him a pension, as the earl of Halifax, and Mr. Secretary Craggs afterwards did, though Mr. Pope declined it.

The reputation of Mr. Pope gaining every day upon the world, he was caressed, flattered, and railed at; according as he was feared, or loved by different persons. Mr. Wycherley was amongst the first authors of established reputation, who contributed to advance his fame, and with whom he for some time lived in the most unreserved intimacy. This poet, in his old age, conceived a design of publishing his poems, and as he was but a very imperfect master of numbers, he entrusted his manuscripts to Mr. Pope, and submitted them to his correction. The freedom which our young bard was under a necessity to use, in order to

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polish and refine what was in the original, rough, unharmonious, and indelicate, proved disgustful to the old gentleman, then near 70, who, perhaps, was a little ashamed, that a boy at 16 should so severely correct his works. Letters of dissatisfaction were written by Mr. Wycherley, and at last he informed him, in few words, that he was going out of town, without mentioning to what place, and did not expect to hear from him 'till he came back. This cold indifference extorted from Mr. Pope a protestation, that nothing should induce him ever to write to him again. Notwithstanding this peevish behaviour of Mr. Wycherley, occasioned by jealousy and infirmities, Mr. Pope preserved a constant respect and reverence for him while he lived, and after his death lamented him. In a letter to Edward Blount, esq; written immediately upon the death of this poet, he has there related some anecdotes of Wycherly, which we shall insert here, especially as they are not taken notice of in his life.

'DEAR SIR,

'I know of nothing that will be so interesting to you, at present, as some circumstances of the last act of that eminent comic poet, and our friend, Wycherley. He had often told me, as, I doubt not, he did all his acquaintance, that he would marry, as soon as his life was despaired of: accordingly, a few days before his death, he underwent the ceremony, and joined together those two sacraments, which, wise men say, should be the last we receive; for, if you observe, matrimony is placed after extreme unction in our catechism, as a kind of hint of the order of time in which they are to be taken. The old man then lay down, satisfied in the conscience of having, by this one act, paid his just debts, obliged a woman, who, he was told, had merit, and shewn a heroic resentment of the ill usage of his next heir. Some hundred pounds which he had with the lady, discharged those debts; a jointure of four hundred a year made her a recompence; and the nephew he left to comfort himself, as well as he could, with the miserable remains of a mortgaged estate. I saw our friend twice after this was done, less peevish in his sickness, than he used to be in his health, neither much afraid of dying, nor (which in him had been more likely) much ashamed of marrying. The evening before he expired, he called his young wife to the bed side, and earnestly entreated her not to deny him one request, the last he should ever make. Upon her assurance of consenting to it, he told her, my dear, it is only this, that you will never marry an old man again. I cannot help remarking, that sickness, which often destroys both wit and wisdom, yet seldom has power to remove that talent we call humour. Mr. Wycherley shewed this even in this last compliment, though, I think, his request a little hard; for why should he bar her from doubling her jointure on the same easy terms.'

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One of the most affecting and tender compositions of Mr. Pope, is, his Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady, built on a true story. We are informed in the Life of Pope, for which Curl obtained a patent, that this young lady was a particular favourite of the poet, though it is not ascertained whether he himself was the person from whom she was removed. This young lady was of very high birth, possessed an opulent fortune, and under the tutorage of an uncle, who gave her an education suitable to her titles and pretensions. She was esteemed a match for the greatest peer in the realm, but, in her early years, she suffered her heart to be engaged by a young gentleman, and in consequence of this attachment, rejected offers made to her by persons of quality, seconded by the sollicitations of her uncle. Her guardian being surprized at this behaviour, set spies upon her, to find out the real cause of her indifference. Her correspondence with her lover was soon discovered, and, when urged upon that topic, she had too much truth and honour to deny it. The uncle finding, that she would make no efforts to disengage her affection, after a little time forced her abroad, where she was received with a ceremony due to her quality, but restricted from the conversation of every one, but the spies of this severe guardian, so that it was impossible for her lover even to have a letter delivered to her hands. She languished in this place a considerable time, bore an infinite deal of sickness, and was overwhelmed with the profoundest sorrow. Nature being wearied out with continual distress, and being driven at last to despair, the unfortunate lady, as Mr. Pope justly calls her, put an end to her own life, having bribed a maid servant to procure her a sword. She was found upon the ground weltering in her blood. The severity of the laws of the place, where this fair unfortunate perished, denied her Christian burial, and she was interred without solemnity, or even any attendants to perform the last offices of the dead, except some young people of the neighbourhood, who saw her put into common ground, and strewed the grave with flowers.

The poet in the elegy takes occasion to mingle with the tears of sorrow, just reproaches upon her cruel uncle, who drove her to this violation.

But thou, false guardian of a charge too good,
Thou base betrayer of a brother’s blood!
See on those ruby lips the trembling breath,
Those cheeks now fading at the blast of death:
Lifeless the breast, which warm’d the world before,
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.

The conclusion of this elegy is irresistably affecting.

So peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,
Which once had beauty, titles, wealth and fame,
How lov’d, how honoured once, avails thee not,
To whom related, or by whom begot;

A heap of dust alone remains of thee;
’Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be!

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No poem of our author's more deservedly obtained him reputation, than his Essay on Criticism. Mr. Addison, in his Spectator, No. 253, has celebrated it with such profuse terms of admiration, that it is really astonishing, to find the same man endeavouring afterwards to diminish that fame he had contributed to raise so high.

The art of criticism (says he) which was published some months ago, is a master-piece in its kind. The observations follow one another, like those in Horace's Art of Poetry, without that methodical regularity, which would have been requisite in a prose writer. They are some of them uncommon, but such as the reader must assent to, when he sees them explained with that elegance and perspicuity in which they are delivered. As for those which are the most known, and the most received, they are placed in so beautiful a light, and illustrated with such apt allusions, that they have in them all the graces of novelty, and make the reader, who was before acquainted with them, still more convinced of their truth and solidity. And here give me leave to mention, what Monsieur Boileau has so well enlarged upon, in the preface to his works; that wit and fine writing do not consist so much in advancing things that are new, as in giving things that are known an agreeable turn. It is impossible for us, who live in the latter ages of the world, to make observations in criticism, morality, or any art and science, which have not been touched upon by others. We have little else left us, but to represent the common sense of mankind in more strong, more beautiful, or more uncommon lights. If a reader examines Horace's Art of Poetry, he will find but few precepts in it, which he may not meet with in Aristotle, and which were not commonly known by all the poets of the Augustan age. His way of expressing, and applying them, not his invention of them, is what we are chiefly to admire.—

"Longinus, in his Reflexions, has given us the same kind of sublime, which he observes in the several passages which occasioned them. I cannot but take notice, that our English author has, after the same manner, exemplified several of his precepts, in the very precepts themselves." He then produces some instances of a particular kind of beauty in the numbers, and concludes with saying, that "we have three poems in our tongue of the same nature, and each a master-piece in its kind: The Essay on Translated Verse, the Essay on the Art of Poetry, and the Essay on Criticism." [Transcriber's note: Opening quotes missing in original.]

In the Lives of Addison and Tickell, we have thrown out some general hints concerning the quarrel which subsisted between our poet and the former of these gentlemen; here it will not be improper to give a more particular account of it.

The author of Mist's Journal positively asserts, 'that Mr. Addison raised Pope from obscurity, obtained him the acquaintance and friendship of the whole body of our nobility, and transferred his powerful influence with those great men to this rising bard, who frequently levied by that means, unusual contributions on the public.[Transcriber's note: 'pubic' in original.] No sooner was his body lifeless, but this author reviving his

resentment, libelled the memory of his departed friend, and what was still more heinous, made the scandal public.'

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When this charge of ingratitude and dishonour was published against Mr. Pope, to acquit himself of it, he called upon any nobleman, whose friendship, or any one gentleman, whose subscription Mr. Addison had procured to our author, to stand forth, and declare it, that truth might appear. But the whole libel was proved a malicious story, by many persons of distinction, who, several years before Mr. Addison's decease, approved those verses denominated a libel, but which were, 'tis said, a friendly rebuke, sent privately in our author's own hand, to Mr. Addison himself, and never made public, 'till by Curl in his Miscellanies, 12mo. 1727. The lines indeed are elegantly satirical, and, in the opinion of many unprejudiced judges, who had opportunities of knowing the character of Mr. Addison, are no ill representation of him. Speaking of the poetical triflers of the times, who had declared against him, he makes a sudden transition to Addison.

Peace to all such! But were there one whose fires
True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires,
Blest with each talent, and each art to please,
And born to write, converse, and live with ease;
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no rival near the throne,
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts, that caus'd himself to rise;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And, without sneering, others teach to sneer;
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;
Alike reserv'd to blame or to commend,
A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend;
Dreading even fools; by flatt'rers besieg'd;
And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd.
Like Cato give his little senate laws,
[Transcriber's note: 'litttle' in original]
And sit attentive to his own applause;
While Wits and Templars ev'ry sentence raise,
And wonder with a foolish face of praise.
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be!
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he!

Some readers may think these lines severe, but the treatment he received from Mr. Addison, was more than sufficient to justify them, which will appear when we particularize an interview between these two poetical antagonists, procured by the warm sollicitations of Sir Richard Steele, who was present at it, as well as Mr. Gay.

Mr. Jervas being one day in company with Mr. Addison, the conversation turned upon Mr. Pope, for whom Addison, at that time, expressed the highest regard, and assured

Mr. Jervas, that he would make use not only of his interest, but of his art likewise, to do Mr. Pope service; he then said, he did not mean his art of poetry, but his art at court, and protested, notwithstanding many insinuations were spread, that it shall not be his fault, if there was not the best understanding and intelligence between them. He observed, that Dr.

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Swift might have carried him too far among the enemy, during the animosity, but now all was safe, and Mr. Pope, in his opinion, was escaped. When Mr. Jervas communicated this conversation to Mr. Pope, he made this reply: 'The friendly office you endeavour to do between Mr. Addison and me deserves acknowledgments on my part. You thoroughly know my regard to his character, and my readiness to testify it by all ways in my power; you also thoroughly knew the meanness of that proceeding of Mr. Phillips, to make a man I so highly value suspect my disposition towards him. But as, after all, Mr. Addison must be judge in what regards himself, and as he has seemed not to be a very just one to me, so I must own to you, I expect nothing but civility from him, how much soever I wish for his friendship; and as for any offers of real kindness or service which it is in his power to do me, I should be ashamed to receive them from a man, who has no better opinion of my morals, than to think me a party man, nor of my temper, than to believe me capable of maligning, or envying another's reputation as a poet. In a word, Mr. Addison is sure of my respect at all times, and of my real friendship, whenever he shall think fit to know me for what I am.'

Some years after this conversation, at the desire of Sir Richard Steele, they met. At first, a very cold civility, and nothing else appeared on either side, for Mr. Addison had a natural reserve and gloom at the beginning of an evening, which, by conversation and a glass, brightened into an easy chearfulness. Sir Richard Steele, who was a most social benevolent man, begged of him to fulfill his promise, in dropping all animosity against Mr. Pope. Mr. Pope then desired to be made sensible how he had offended; and observed, that the translation of Homer, if that was the great crime, was undertaken at the request, and almost at the command of Sir Richard Steele. He entreated Mr. Addison to speak candidly and freely, though it might be with ever so much severity, rather than by keeping up forms of complaisance, conceal any of his faults. This Mr. Pope spoke in such a manner as plainly indicated he thought Mr. Addison the aggressor, and expected him to condescend, and own himself the cause of the breach between them. But he was disappointed; for Mr. Addison, without appearing to be angry, was quite overcome with it. He began with declaring, that he always had wished him well, had often endeavoured to be his friend, and in that light advised him, if his nature was capable of it, to divert himself of part of his vanity, which was too great for his merit; that he had not arrived yet to that pitch of excellence he might imagine, or think his most partial readers imagined; that when he and Sir Richard Steele corrected his verses, they had a different air; reminding Mr. Pope of the amendment (by Sir Richard) of a line, in the poem called The MESSIAH.

He wipes the tears for ever from our eyes.

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Which is taken from the prophet Isaiah,

The Lord God will wipe all tears from off all faces.

From every face he wipes off ev'ry tear.

And it stands so altered in the newer editions of Mr. Pope's works. He proceeded to lay before him all the mistakes and inaccuracies hinted at by the writers, who had attacked Mr. Pope, and added many things, which he himself objected to. Speaking of his translation in general, he said, that he was not to be blamed for endeavouring to get so large a sum of money, but that it was an ill-executed thing, and not equal to Tickell, which had all the spirit of Homer. Mr. Addison concluded, in a low hollow voice of feigned temper, that he was not sollicitous about his own fame as a poet; that he had quitted the muses to enter into the business of the public, and that all he spoke was through friendship to Mr. Pope, whom he advised to have a less exalted sense of his own merit.

Mr. Pope could not well bear such repeated reproaches, but boldly told Mr. Addison, that he appealed from his judgment to the public, and that he had long known him too well to expect any friendship from him; upbraided him with being a pensioner from his youth, sacrificing the very learning purchased by the public money, to a mean thirst of power; that he was sent abroad to encourage literature, in place of which he had always endeavoured to suppress merit. At last, the contest grew so warm, that they parted without any ceremony, and Mr. Pope upon this wrote the foregoing verses, which are esteemed too true a picture of Mr. Addison.

In this account, and, indeed, in all other accounts, which have been given concerning this quarrel, it does not appear that Mr. Pope was the aggressor. If Mr. Addison entertained suspicions of Mr. Pope's being carried too far among the enemy, the danger was certainly Mr. Pope's, and not Mr. Addison's. It was his misfortune, and not his crime. If Mr. Addison should think himself capable of becoming a rival to Mr. Pope, and, in consequence of this opinion, publish a translation of part of Homer; at the same time with Mr. Pope's, and if the public should decide in favour of the latter by reading his translation, and neglecting the other, can any fault be imputed to Mr. Pope? could he be blamed for exerting all his abilities in so arduous a province? and was it his fault that Mr. Addison (for the first book of Homer was undoubtedly his) could not translate to please the public? Besides, was it not somewhat presumptuous to insinuate to Mr. Pope, that his verses bore another face when he corrected them, while, at the same time, the translation of Homer, which he had never seen in manuscript, bore away the palm from that very translation, he himself asserted was done in the true spirit of Homer? In matters of genius the public judgment seldom errs, and in this case posterity has confirmed the sentence of that age, which gave the preference to Mr. Pope; for his translation is in the hands of all readers of taste, while the other is seldom regarded but as a soil to Pope's.

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It would appear as if Mr. Addison were himself so immersed in party business, as to contrast his benevolence to the limits of a faction: Which was infinitely beneath the views of a philosopher, and the rules which that excellent writer himself established. If this was the failing of Mr. Addison, it was not the error of Pope, for he kept the strictest correspondence with some persons, whose affections to the Whig-interest were suspected, yet was his name never called in question. While he was in favour with the duke of Buckingham, the lords Bolingbroke, Oxford, and Harcourt, Dr. Swift, and Mr. Prior, he did not drop his correspondence with the lord Hallifax, Mr. Craggs, and most of those who were at the head of the Whig interest. A professed Jacobite one day remonstrated to Mr. Pope, that the people of his party took it ill that he should write with Mr. Steele upon ever so indifferent a subject; at which he could not help smiling, and observed, that he hated narrowness of soul in any party; and that if he renounced his reason in religious matters, he should hardly do it on any other, and that he could pray not only for opposite parties, but even for opposite religions. Mr. Pope considered himself as a citizen of the world, and was therefore obliged to pray for the prosperity of mankind in general. As a son of Britain he wished those councils might be suffered by providence to prevail, which were most for the interest of his native country: But as politics was not his study, he could not always determine, at least, with any degree of certainty, whose councils were best; and had charity enough to believe, that contending parties might mean well. As taste and science are confined to no country, so ought they not to be excluded from any party, and Mr. Pope had an unexceptionable right to live upon terms of the strictest friendship with every man of parts, to which party soever he might belong. Mr. Pope's uprightness in his conduct towards contending politicians, is demonstrated by his living independent of either faction. He accepted no place, and had too high a spirit to become a pensioner.

Many effects however were made to proselyte him from the Popish faith, which all proved ineffectual. His friends conceived hopes from the moderation which he on all occasions expressed, that he was really a Protestant in his heart, and that upon the death of his mother, he would not scruple to declare his sentiments, notwithstanding the reproaches he might incur from the Popish party, and the public observation it would draw upon him. The bishop of Rochester strongly advised him to read the controverted points between the Protestant and the Catholic church, to suffer his unprejudiced reason to determine for him, and he made no doubt, but a separation from the Romish communion would soon ensue. To this Mr. Pope very candidly answered, 'Whether the change would be to my spiritual advantage, God only knows: This I know, that I mean as well in the religion I now profess, as ever I can do in any other. Can a man who thinks so, justify a change, even if he thought both equally good? To such an one, the part of joining with any one body of Christians might perhaps be easy, but I think it would not be so to renounce the other.

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’Your lordship has formerly advised me to read the best controversies between the churches. Shall I tell you a secret? I did so at 14 years old (for I loved reading, and my father had no other books) there was a collection of all that had been written on both sides, in the reign of King James II. I warmed my head with them, and the consequence was, I found myself a Papist, or a Protestant by turns, according to the last book I read. I am afraid most seekers are in the same case, and when they stop, they are not so properly converted, as outwitted. You see how little glory you would gain by my conversion: and after all, I verily believe, your lordship and I are both of the same religion, if we were thoroughly understood by one another, and that all honest and reasonable Christians would be so, if they did but talk enough together every day, and had nothing to do together but to serve God, and live in peace with their neighbours.

“As to the temporal side of the question, I can have no dispute with you; it is certain, all the beneficial circumstances of life, and all the shining ones, lie on the part you would invite me to. But if I could bring myself to fancy, what I think you do but fancy, that I have any talents for active life, I want health for it; and besides it is a real truth. I have, if possible, less inclination, than ability. Contemplative life is not only my scene, but is my habit too. I begun my life where most people end theirs, with all that the world calls ambition. I don’t know why it is called so, for, to me, it always seemed to be stooping, or climbing. I’ll tell you my politic and religious sentiments in a few words. In my politics, I think no farther, than how to preserve my peace of life, in any government under which I live; nor in my religion, than to preserve the peace of my conscience, in any church with which I communicate. I hope all churches, and all governments are so far of God, as they are rightly understood, and rightly administered; and where they are, or may be wrong, I leave it to God alone to mend, or reform them, which, whenever he does, it must be by greater instruments than I am. I am not a Papist, for I renounce the temporal invasions of the papal power, and detest their arrogated authority over Princes and States. I am a Catholic in the strictest sense of the word. If I was born under an absolute Prince, I would be a quiet subject; but, I thank God, I was not. I have a due sense of the excellence of the British constitution. In a word, the things I have always wished to see, are not a Roman Catholic, or a French Catholic, or a Spanish Catholic, but a True Catholic; and not a King of Whigs, or [Transcriber’s note: repeated ‘or’ removed] a King of Tories, but a King of England.”

These are the peaceful maxims upon which we find Mr. Pope conducted his life, and if they cannot in some respects be justified, yet it must be owned, that his religion and his politics were well enough adapted for a poet, which entitled him to a kind of universal patronage, and to make every good man his friend.

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Dean Swift sometimes wrote to Mr. Pope on the topic of changing his religion, and once humorously offered him twenty pounds for that purpose. Mr. Pope's answer to this, lord Orrery has obliged the world by preserving in the life of Swift. It is a perfect master-piece of wit and pleasantry.

We have already taken notice, that Mr. Pope was called upon by the public voice to translate the Iliad, which he performed with so much applause, and at the same time, with so much profit to himself, that he was envied by many writers, whose vanity perhaps induced them to believe themselves equal to so great a design. A combination of inferior wits were employed to write The Popiad, in which his translation is characterized, as unjust to the original, without beauty of language, or variety of numbers. Instead of the justness of the original, they say there is absurdity and extravagance. Instead of the beautiful language of the original, there is solecism and barbarous English. A candid reader may easily discern from this furious introduction, that the critics were actuated rather by malice than truth, and that they must judge with their eyes shut, who can see no beauty of language, no harmony of numbers in this translation.

But the most formidable critic against Mr. Pope in this great undertaking, was the celebrated Madam Dacier, whom Mr. Pope treated with less ceremony in his Notes on the Iliad, than, in the opinion of some people, was due to her sex. This learned lady was not without a sense of the injury, and took an opportunity of discovering her resentment.

"Upon finishing (says she) the second edition of my translation of Homer, a particular friend sent me a translation of part of Mr. Pope's preface to his Version of the Iliad. As I do not understand English, I cannot form any judgment of his performance, though I have heard much of it. I am indeed willing to believe, that the praises it has met with are not unmerited, because whatever work is approved by the English nation, cannot be bad; but yet I hope I may be permitted to judge of that part of the preface, which has been transmitted to me, and I here take the liberty of giving my sentiments concerning it. I must freely acknowledge that Mr. Pope's invention is very lively, though he seems to have been guilty of the same fault into which he owns we are often precipitated by our invention, when we depend too much upon the strength of it; as magnanimity (says he) may run up to confusion and extravagance, so may great invention to redundancy and wildness.

"This has been the very case of Mr. Pope himself; nothing is more overstrained, or more false than the images in which his fancy has represented Homer; sometimes he tells us, that the Iliad is a wild paradise, where, if we cannot see all the beauties, as in an ordered garden, it is only because the number of them is infinitely greater. Sometimes he compares him to a copious nursery, which contains the seeds and first productions of every kind; and, lastly, he represents him under the notion of a mighty tree, which rises from the most vigorous seed, is improved with industry, flourishes and produces

the finest fruit, but bears too many branches, which might be lopped into form, to give it a more regular appearance.

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“What! is Homer’s poem then, according to Mr. Pope, a confused heap of beauties, without order or symmetry, and a plot whereon nothing but seeds, nor nothing perfect or formed is to be found; and a production loaded with many unprofitable things which ought to be retrenched, and which choak and disfigure those which deserve to be preserved? Mr. Pope will pardon me if I here oppose those comparisons, which to me appear very false, and entirely contrary to what the greatest of ancient, and modern critics ever thought.

“The Iliad is so far from being a wild paradise, that it is the most regular garden, and laid out with more symmetry than any ever was. Every thing herein is not only in the place it ought to have been, but every thing is fitted for the place it hath. He presents you at first with that which ought to be first seen; he places in the middle what ought to be in the middle, and what would be improperly placed at the beginning or end, and he removes what ought to be at a greater distance, to create the more agreeable surprize; and, to use a comparison drawn from painting, he places that in the greatest light which cannot be too visible, and sinks in the obscurity of the shade, what does not require a full view; so that it may be said, that Homer is the Painter who best knew how to employ the shades and lights. The second comparison is equally unjust; how could Mr. Pope say, ’that one can only discover seeds, and the first productions of every kind in the Iliad?’ every beauty is there to such an amazing perfection, that the following ages could add nothing to those of any kind; and the ancients have always proposed Homer, as the most perfect model in every kind of poetry.

“The third comparison is composed of the errors of the two former; Homer had certainly an incomparable fertility of invention, but his fertility is always checked by that just sense, which made him reject every superfluous thing which his vast imagination could offer, and to retain only what was necessary and useful. Judgment guided the hand of this admirable gardener, and was the pruning hook he employed to lop off every useless branch.”

Thus far Madam Dacier differs in her opinion from Mr. Pope concerning Homer; but these remarks which we have just quoted, partake not at all of the nature of criticism; they are meer assertion. Pope had declared Homer to abound with irregular beauties. Dacier has contradicted him, and asserted, that all his beauties are regular, but no reason is assigned by either of these mighty geniuses in support of their opinions, and the reader is left in the dark, as to the real truth. If he is to be guided by the authority of a name only, no doubt the argument will preponderate in favour of our countryman. The French lady then proceeds to answer some observations, which Mr. Pope made upon her Remarks on the Iliad, which she performs with a warmth that generally attends writers of her sex. Mr. Pope, however, paid more

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regard to this fair antagonist, than any other critic upon his works. He confessed that he had received great helps from her, and only thought she had (through a prodigious, and almost superstitious, fondness for Homer) endeavoured to make him appear without any fault, or weakness, and stamp a perfection on his works, which is no where to be found. He wrote her a very obliging letter, in which he confessed himself exceedingly sorry that he ever should have displeased so excellent a wit, and she, on the other hand, with a goodness and frankness peculiar to her, protested to forgive it, so that there remained no animosities between those two great admirers and translators of Homer.

Mr. Pope, by his successful translation of the Iliad, as we have before remarked, drew upon him the envy and raillery of a whole tribe of writers. Though he did not esteem any particular man amongst his enemies of consequence enough to provoke an answer, yet when they were considered collectively, they offered excellent materials for a general satire. This satire he planned and executed with so extraordinary a mastery, that it is by far the most compleat poem of our author's; it discovers more invention, and a higher effort of genius, than any other production of his. The hint was taken from Mr. Dryden's Mac Flecknoe, but as it is more general, so it is more pleasing. The Dunciad is so universally read, that we reckon it superfluous to give any further account of it here; and it would be an unpleasing task to trace all the provocations and resentments, which were mutually discovered upon this occasion. Mr. Pope was of opinion, that next to praising good writers, there was a merit in exposing bad ones, though it does not hold infallibly true, that each person stigmatized as a dunce, was genuinely so. Something must be allowed to personal resentment; Mr. Pope was a man of keen passions; he felt an injury strongly, retained a long remembrance of it, and could very pungently repay it. Some of the gentlemen, however, who had been more severely lashed than the rest, meditated a revenge, which redounds but little to their honour. They either intended to chastize him corporally, or gave it out that they had really done so, in order to bring shame upon Mr. Pope, which, if true, could only bring shame upon themselves.

While Mr. Pope enjoyed any leisure from severer applications to study, his friends were continually solliciting him to turn his thoughts towards something that might be of lasting use to the world, and engage no more in a war with dunces who were now effectually humbled. Our great dramatic poet Shakespear had pass'd through several hands, some of whom were very reasonably judged not to have understood any part of him tolerably, much less were capable to correct or revise him.

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The friends of Mr. Pope therefore strongly importuned him, to undertake the whole of Shakespear's plays, and, if possible, by comparing all the different copies now to be procured, restore him to his ancient purity. To which our poet made this modest reply, that not having attempted any thing in the Drama, it might in him be deemed too much presumption. To which he was answered, that this did not require great knowledge of the foundation and disposition of the drama, as that must stand as it was, and Shakespear [Transcriber's note: 'Skakespear' in original] himself had not always paid strict regard to the rules of it; but this was to clear the scenes from the rubbish with which ignorant editors had filled them.

His proper business in this work was to render the text so clear as to be generally understood, to free it from obscurities, and sometimes gross absurdities, which now seem to appear in it, and to explain doubtful and difficult passages of which there are great numbers. This however was an arduous province, and how Mr. Pope has acquitted himself in it has been differently determined: It is certain he never valued himself upon that performance, nor was it a task in the least adapted to his genius; for it seldom happens that a man of lively parts can undergo the servile drudgery of collecting passages, in which more industry and labour are necessary than persons of quick penetration generally have to bestow.

It has been the opinion of some critics, that Mr. Pope's talents were not adapted for the drama, otherwise we cannot well account for his neglecting the most gainful way of writing which poetry affords, especially as his reputation was so high, that without much ceremony or mortification, he might have had any piece of his brought upon the stage. Mr. Pope was attentive to his own interest, and if he had not either been conscious of his inability in that province, or too timid to wish the popular approbation, he would certainly have attempted the drama. Neither was he esteemed a very competent judge of what plays were proper or improper for representation. He wrote several letters to the manager of Drury-Lane Theatre, in favour of Thomson's Agamemnon, which notwithstanding his approbation, Thomson's friends were obliged to mutulate and shorten; and after all it proved a heavy play.—Though it was generally allowed to have been one of the best acted plays that had appeared for some years.

He was certainly concerned in the Comedy, which was published in Mr. Gay's name, called Three Hours after Marriage, as well as Dr. Arbuthnot. This illustrious triumvirate, though men of the most various parts, and extensive understanding, yet were not able it seems to please the people, tho' the principal parts were supported by the best actors in that way on the stage. Dr. Arbuthnot and Mr. Pope were no doubt solicitous to conceal their concern in it; but by a letter which Gay wrote to Pope, published in Ayre's Memoirs, it appears evident (if Ayre's authority may be depended on) that they, both assisted in the composition.

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DEAR POPE,

’Too late I see, and confess myself mistaken in relation to the Comedy; yet I do not think, had I followed your advice, and only introduced the mummy, that the absence of the crocodile had saved it. I can’t help laughing myself (though the vulgar do not consider it was designed to look ridiculous) to think how the poor monster and mummy were dashed at their reception, and when the cry was loudest, I thought that if the thing had been written by another, I should have deemed the town in some measure mistaken; and as to your apprehension that this may do us future injury, do not think of it; the Dr. has a more valuable name than can be hurt by any thing of this nature; and your’s is doubly safe. I will, if any shame there be, take it all to myself, and indeed I ought, the motion being first mine, and never heartily approved by you.’

Of all our poet’s writings none were read with more general approbation than his Ethic Epistles, or multiplied into more editions. Mr. Pope who was a perfect oeconomist, secured to himself the profits arising from his own works; he was never subjected to necessity, and therefore was not to be imposed upon by the art or fraud of publishers.

But now approaches the period in which as he himself expressed it, he stood in need of the generous tear he paid,

Posts themselves must fall like those they sung,
Deaf the prais’d ear, and mute the tuneful tongue.
Ev’n he whose soul now melts in mournful lays,
Shall shortly want the generous tear he pays.

Mr. Pope who had been always subjected to a variety of bodily infirmities, finding his strength give way, began to think that his days, which had been prolonged past his expectation, were drawing towards a conclusion. However, he visited the Hot-Wells at Bristol, where for some time there were small hopes of his recovery; but making too free with purges he grew worse, and seemed desirous to draw nearer home. A dropsy in the breast at last put a period to his life, at the age of 56, on the 30th of May 1744, at his house at Twickenham, where he was interred in the same grave with his father and mother.

Mr. Pope’s behaviour in his last illness has been variously represented to the world: Some have affirmed that it was timid and peevish; that having been fixed in no particular system of faith, his mind was wavering, and his temper broken and disturb’d. Others have asserted that he was all chearfulness and resignation to the divine will: Which of these opinions is true we cannot now determine; but if the former, it must be regretted, that he, who had taught philosophy to others, should himself be destitute of its assistance in the most critical moments of his life.

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The bulk of his fortune he bequeath'd to Mrs. Blount, with whom he lived in the strictest friendship, and for whom he is said to have entertained the warmest affection. His works, which are in the hands of every person of true taste, and will last as long as our language will be understood, render unnecessary all further remarks on his writings. He was equally admired for the dignity and sublimity of his moral and philosophical works, the vivacity of his satirical, the clearness and propriety of his didactic, the richness and variety of his descriptive, and the elegance of all, added to an harmony of versification and correctness of sentiment and language, unknown to our former poets, and of which he has set an example which will be an example or a reproach to his successors. His prose-stile is as perfect in its kind as his poetic, and has all the beauties proper for it, joined to an uncommon force and perspicuity.

Under the profession of the Roman-Catholic religion, to which he adhered to the last, he maintained all the moderation and charity becoming the most thorough and confident Protestant. His conversation was natural, easy and agreeable, without any affectation of displaying his wit, or obtruding his own judgment, even upon subjects of which he was so eminently a master.

The moral character of our author, as it did not escape the lash of his calumniators in his life; so have there been attempts since his death to diminish his reputation. Lord Bolingbroke, whom Mr. Pope esteemed to almost an enthusiastic degree of admiration, was the first to make this attack. Not many years ago, the public were entertained with this controversy immediately upon the publication of his lordship's Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism, and the Idea of a Patriot King. Different opinions have been offered, some to extenuate the fault of Mr. Pope, for printing and mutilating these letters, without his lordship's knowledge; others to blame him for it as the highest breach of friendship, and the greatest mark of dishonour. It would exceed our proposed bounds to enter into the merits of this controversy; the reader, no doubt, will find it amply discussed in that account of the life of this great author, which Mr. Warburton has promised the public.

This great man is allowed to have been one of the first rank amongst the poets of our nation, and to acknowledge the superiority of none but Shakespear, Milton, and Dryden. With the two former, it is unnatural to compare him, as their province in writing is so very different. Pope has never attempted the drama, nor published an Epic Poem, in which these two distinguished genius's have so wonderfully succeeded. Though Pope's genius was great, it was yet of so different a cast from Shakespear's, and Milton's, that no comparison can be justly formed. But if this may be said of the former two, it will by no means hold with respect to the later, for between him and Dryden, there is a great similarity of writing, and a very striking coincidence of genius. It will not perhaps be unpleasing to our readers, if we pursue this comparison, and endeavour to discover to whom the superiority is justly to be attributed, and to which of them poetry owes the highest obligations.

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When Dryden came into the world, he found poetry in a very imperfect state; its numbers were unpolished; its cadences rough, and there was nothing of harmony or mellifluence to give it a graceful of flow. In this harsh, unmusical situation, Dryden found it (for the refinements of Waller were but puerile and unsubstantial) he polished the rough diamond, he taught it to shine, and connected beauty, elegance, and strength, in all his poetical compositions. Though Dryden thus polished our English numbers, and thus harmonized versification, it cannot be said, that he carried his art to perfection. Much was yet left undone; his lines with all their smoothness were often rambling, and expletives were frequently introduced to compleat his measures. It was apparent therefore that an additional harmony might still be given to our numbers, and that cadences were yet capable of a more musical modulation. To effect this purpose Mr. Pope arose, who with an ear elegantly delicate, and the advantage of the finest genius, so harmonized the English numbers, as to make them compleatly musical. His numbers are likewise so minutely correct, that it would be difficult to conceive how any of his lines can be altered to to advantage. He has created a kind of mechanical versification; every line is alike; and though they are sweetly musical, they want diversity, for he has not studied so great a variety of pauses, and where the accents may be laid gracefully. The structure of his verse is the best, and a line of his is more musical than any other line can be made, by placing the accents elsewhere; but we are not quite certain, whether the ear is not apt to be soon cloy'd with this uniformity of elegance, this sameness of harmony. It must be acknowledged however, that he has much improved upon Dryden in the article of versification, and in that part of poetry is greatly his superior. But though this must be acknowledged, perhaps it will not necessarily follow that his genius was therefore superior.

The grand characteristic of a poet is his invention, the surest distinction of a great genius. In Mr. Pope, nothing is so truly original as his Rape of the Lock, nor discovers so much invention. In this kind of mock-heroic, he is without a rival in our language, for Dryden has written nothing of the kind. His other work which discovers invention, fine designing, and admirable execution, is his Dunciad; which, tho' built on Dryden's Mac Flecknoe, is yet so much superior, that in satiric writing, the Palm must justly be yielded to him. In Mr. Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel, there are indeed the most poignant strokes of satire, and characters drawn with the most masterly touches; but this poem with all its excellencies is much inferior to the Dunciad, though Dryden had advantages which Mr. Pope had not; for Dryden's characters are men of great eminence and figure in the state, while Pope has to expose men of obscure birth and unimportant lives only distinguished from the herd of mankind,

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by a glimmering of genius, which rendered the greatest part of them more emphatically contemptible. Pope's was the hardest task, and he has executed it with the greatest success. As Mr. Dryden must undoubtedly have yielded to Pope in satyric writing, it is incumbent on the partizans of Dryden to name another species of composition, in which the former excells so as to throw the ballance again upon the side of Dryden. This species is the Lyric, in which the warmest votaries of Pope must certainly acknowledge, that he is much inferior; as an irrefutable proof of this we need only compare Mr. Dryden's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, with Mr. Pope's; in which the disparity is so apparent, that we know not if the most finished of Pope's compositions has discovered such a variety and command of numbers.

It hath been generally acknowledged, that the Lyric is a more excellent kind of writing than the Satiric; and consequently he who excells in the most excellent species, must undoubtedly be esteemed the greatest poet. —Mr. Pope has very happily succeeded in many of his occasional pieces, such as Eloisa to Abelard, his Elegy on an unfortunate young Lady, and a variety of other performances deservedly celebrated. To these may be opposed Mr. Dryden's Fables, which though written in a very advanced age, are yet the most perfect of his works. In these Fables there is perhaps a greater variety than in Pope's occasional pieces: Many of them indeed are translations, but such as are original shew a great extent of invention, and a large compass of genius.

There are not in Pope's works such poignant discoveries of wit, or such a general knowledge of the humours and characters of men, as in the Prologues and Epilogues of Dryden, which are the best records of the whims and capricious oddities of the times in which they are written.

When these two great genius's are considered in the light of translators, it will indeed be difficult to determine into whose scale the ballance should be thrown: That Mr. Pope had a more arduous province in doing justice to Homer, than Dryden with regard to Virgil is certainly true; as Homer is a more various and diffuse poet than Virgil; and it is likewise true, that Pope has even exceeded Dryden in the execution, and none will deny, that Pope's Homer's Iliad, is a finer poem than Dryden's Aeneis of Virgil: Making a proper allowance for the disproportion of the original authors. But then a candid critic should reflect, that as Dryden was prior in the great attempt of rendering Virgil into English, so did he perform the task under many disadvantages, which Pope, by a happier situation in life, was enabled to avoid; and could not but improve upon Dryden's errors, though the authors translated were not the same: And it is much to be doubted, if Dryden were to translate the Aeneid now, with that attention which the correctness of the present age would force upon him, whether the preference would be due to Pope's Homer.

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But supposing it to be yielded (as it certainly must) that the latter bard was the greatest translator; we are now to throw into Mr. Dryden's scale all his dramatic works; which though not the most excellent of his writings, yet as nothing of Mr. Pope's can be opposed to them, they have an undoubted right to turn the ballance greatly in favour of Mr. Dryden.—When the two poets are considered as critics, the comparison will very imperfectly hold. Dryden's Dedications and Prefaces, besides that they are more numerous, and are the best models for courtly panegyric, shew that he understood poetry as an art, beyond any man that ever lived. And he explained this art so well, that he taught his antagonists to turn the tables against himself; for he so illuminated the mind by his clear and perspicuous reasoning, that dullness itself became capable of discerning; and when at any time his performances fell short of his own ideas of excellence; his enemies tried him by rules of his own establishing; and though they owed to him the ability of judging, they seldom had candour enough to spare him.

Perhaps it may be true that Pope's works are read with more appetite, as there is a greater evenness and correctness in them; but in perusing the works of Dryden the mind will take a wider range, and be more fraught with poetical ideas: We admire Dryden as the greater genius, and Pope as the most pleasing versifier.

ERRATA in the foregoing life, *viz*.

P. 237. l. 27. for with all that the world calls ambition, read with *a disgust of* all, &c. And l. 29. for 'stooping or climbing' read, *rather* stooping *than* climbing.

FOOTNOTE:

[1] See a Note in Warburton's Edition of Pope's Works.

* * * * *

AARON HILL, Esq;[1]

Was the son of George Hill, esq; of Malmsbury-Abbey in Wiltshire; a gentleman possessed of an estate of about 2000 l. a year, which was entailed upon him, and the eldest son, and to his heirs for many descents. But the unhappy misconduct of Mr. George Hill, and the weakness of the trustees, entangled it in such a manner as hitherto has rendered it of no advantage to his family; for, without any legal title so to do, he sold it all, at different times, for sums greatly beneath the value of it, and left his children to their mother's care, and her mother's (Mrs. Ann Gregory) who took great pains with her grandson's education. At nine years old she put him to school to Mr. Rayner at Barnstable in Devonshire, from whence, he went to Westminster school; where soon (under the care of Dr. Knipe) his genius shewed itself in a distinguished light, and often made him some amends for his hard fortune, which denied him such supplies of pocket-

money as his spirit wished, by enabling him to perform the tasks of many who had not his capacity.

Mr. Aaron Hill, was born in Beaufort-Buildings in the Strand, on February 10, 1684-5. At fourteen years of age he left Westminster school; and, shortly after, hearing his grandmother make mention of a relation much esteemed (lord Paget, then ambassador at Constantinople) he formed a resolution of paying him a visit there, being likewise very desirous to see that empire.

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His grandmother being a woman of uncommon understanding, and great good-nature, would not oppose him in it; and accordingly he soon embark'd on board a ship, then going there, March 2, 1700, as appears by a Journal which he kept during his voyage, and in his travels (though at so weak an age) wherein he gave the most accurate account of every particular, in a manner much above his years.

When he arrived, lord Paget received him with as much surprize, as pleasure, wondering that so young a person as he was (but then in his fifteenth year) should chuse to run the hazard of such a voyage to visit a relation, whom he knew but by character. The ambassador immediately provided for him a very learned ecclesiastic in his own house, and, under his tuition, sent him to travel, being desirous to improve, as far as possible, the education of a person he found worthy of it. With this tutor he had the opportunity of seeing Egypt, Palestine, and a great part of the Eastern country.

With lord Paget he returned home, about the year 1703, through great part of Europe; in which tour he saw most of the courts.

He was in great esteem with that nobleman; insomuch, that in all probability he had been still more distinguished by him at his death, than in his life time, had not the envious fears and malice of a certain female, who was in high authority and favour with that lord, prevented and supplanted his kind disposition towards him: My lord took great pleasure in instructing him himself, wrote him whole books in different languages, on which his student placed the greatest value; which was no sooner taken notice of by jealous observation, than they were stolen from his apartment, and suffered to be some days missing, to the great displeasure of my lord, but still much greater affliction of his pupil, whose grief for losing a treasure he so highly valued, was more than doubled, by perceiving that from some false insinuation that had been made, it was believed he had himself wilfully lost them: But young Mr. Hill was soon entirely cleared on this head.

A few years after, he was desired both on account of his sobriety and understanding, to accompany Sir William Wentworth, a worthy baronet of Yorkshire, who was then going to make the tour of Europe; with whom he travelled two or three years, and brought him home improved, to the satisfaction of that gentleman's relations.

'Twas in those different travels he collected matter for the history he wrote of Turkey, and published in 1709; a work he afterwards often repented having printed; and (though his own) would criticise upon it with much severity. (But, as he used to say, he was a very boy when he began and ended it; therefore great allowance may be made on that account); and in a letter which has since been printed in his works, wrote to his greatly valued friend, the worthy author of Clarissa, he acknowledges his consciousness of such defects: where speaking of obscurity, he says,

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’Obscurity, indeed (if they had penetration to mean that) is burying sense alive, and some of my rash, early, too affected, puerile scriblings must, and should, have pleaded guilty to so just an accusation.’

The fire of youth, with an imagination lively as his was, seldom, if ever, go hand in hand with solid judgment. Mr. Hill did not give himself indeed time for correction, having wrote it so very expeditiously, as hardly would be credited. But (as Dr. Sprat, then bishop of Rochester, used to observe) there is certainly visible in that book, the seeds of a great writer.—He seldom in his riper years was guilty of the fault of non-correction; for he revis’d, too strictly rather, every piece he purposed for the public eye (exclusive of an author’s natural fondness); and it has been believed by many, who have read some of his pieces in the first copy, that had they never been by a revisal deepened [Transcriber’s note: ‘deepned’ in original] into greater strength, they would have pleased still more, at least more generally.

About the year 1709 he published his first poem, called Camillus; in vindication, and honour of the earl of Peterborough, who had been general in Spain. After that nobleman had seen it, he was desirous to know who was the author of it; which having found by enquiry, he complimented him by making him his secretary, in the room of Mr. Furly, who was gone abroad with another nobleman: And Mr. Hill was always held in high esteem with that great peer; with whom, however, he did not continue long; for in the year 1710 he married the only daughter of Edmund Morris, Esq; of Stratford, in Essex; with whom he had a very handsome fortune: By her he had nine children, four of whom (a son, and three daughters) are still living.

In 1709 he was made master of the Theatre in Drury-Lane; and then, at the desire of Mr. Barton Booth, wrote his first Tragedy, (Elfrid, or the Fair Inconstant) which from his first beginning of it he compleated in a little more than a week.—The following year, 1710, he was master of the Opera House in the Hay-Market; and then wrote an Opera called Rinaldo, which met with great success: It was the first which that admirable genius Mr. Handel compos’d, after he came to England; (this he dedicated to Queen Anne).—His genius was adapted greatly to the business of the stage; and while he held the management, he conducted both Theatres, intirely to the satisfaction of the public. —But in a few months he relinquished it, from some misunderstanding with the then lord chamberlain; and though he was soon after sollicited to take that charge again upon him (by a person the highest in command) he still declined it.

From that time he bent his thoughts on studies far more solid and desirable to him; to views of public benefit: For his mind was ardently devoted to the pursuit of general improvement. But, as one genius seldom is adapted to both theory and practice; so in the execution of a variety of undertakings, the most advantageous in themselves, by some mismanagement of those concerned with him, he fail’d of the success his labours merited.

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As in particular, in an affair he set on foot about the year 1715, and was the sole discoverer of, for which he had a patent; the making of an Oil, as sweet as that from Olives, from the Beech-Nuts: But this being an undertaking of a great extent, he was obliged to work conjointly with other men's assistance, and materials; whence arose disputes among them, which terminated in the overthrowing the advantage then arising from it; which otherwise might have been great and lasting.

This, has occasioned that affair to be misunderstood by many; it therefore may not be thought improper, here, to set it in a juster light; and this cannot more exactly be given, than from his own words, called, A fair state of the Account, published in the year 1716.

'An impartial state of the case, between the patentee, annuitants, and sharers, in the Beech-Oil-Company.'—Some part of which is here recited.

'The disappointments of the Beech-Oil-Company this year have made abundance of sharers peevish; the natural effect of peevishness is clamour, and clamour like a tide will work itself a passage, where it has no right of flowing; some gentlemen, misled by false conceptions both of the affair and its direction, have driven their discontent through a mistaken chanel, and inclined abundance who are strangers to the truth, to accuse the patentee of faults, he is not only absolutely free from, but by which he is, of all concern'd, the greatest sufferer.

'But, he is not angry with the angry; he considers they must take things as they hear them represented; he governs all his actions by this general maxim; never to be moved at a reproach, unless it be a just one.

'In October 1713 the patentee procured a grant for fourteen years, to him and his assigns, for the Beech-Oil invention.

'Anno 1714, he made and published proposals, for taking a subscription of 20,000 l. upon the following conditions;

'That every subscriber should receive, by half yearly payments, at Lady-Day and Michaelmas, during the continuance of the patent from Lady-Day 1715, inclusive, an annuity amounting to fifty-pound per cent, for any sum subscribed, excepting a deduction for the payment of the directors.

'That nine directors should be chosen on midsummer-day, who should receive complaints upon non-payments of annuities; and in such case, upon refusal, any five of the nine directors had power to meet and chuse a governor from among themselves, enrolling that choice in chancery, together with the reasons for it.

'That after such choice and enrollment, the patentee should stand absolutely excluded, the business be carried on, and all the right of the grant be vested (not as a mortgage,

but as a sale without redemption) in the governor so chosen, for the joint advantage of the annuitants, in proportion to their several interests.

’As a security for making good the articles, the patentee did, by indenture enrolled in chancery, assign and make over his patent to trustees, in the indenture named, for the uses above-mentioned.

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’In the mean time the first half yearly payments to the annuitants, amounting to 3750 l. became due, and the company not being yet compleated, the patentee himself discharged it, and has never reckon’d that sum to the account between him and the company; which he might have done by virtue of the articles on which he gave admission to the sharers.

’For the better explanation of this scheme it will be necessary to observe, that while the shares were selling, he grew apprehensive that the season would be past, before the fifty pounds per share they were to furnish by the articles could be contributed: He therefore gave up voluntarily, and for the general good, 20,000 l. of his own 25,000 guineas purchase money, as a loan to the company till the expiration of the patent, after which it was again to be made good to him, or his assigns; and this money so lent by the patentee, is all the stock that ever has been hitherto employed by the company.

’But instead of making good the above-mentioned conditional covenant, the board proceeded to unnecessary warmth, and found themselves involved still more and more in animosities, and those irregularities which naturally follow groundless controversy. He would therefore take upon himself the hazard and the power of the whole affair, accountable however to the board, as to the money part; and yet would bind himself to pay for three years to come, a profit of forty shillings per annum upon every share, and then deliver back the business to the general care, above the reach of future disappointments.

’What reasons the gentlemen might have to refuse so inviting an offer is best known to themselves; but they absolutely rejected that part of it, which was to fix the sole power of management in the patentee. Upon which, and many other provocations afterward, becoming more and more dissatisfied, he thought fit to demand repayment of five hundred pounds, which he had lent the company; as he had several other sums before; and not receiving it, but, on the contrary, being denied so much as an acknowledgment that it was due, withdrew himself intirely from the board, and left them to their measures.

’Thus at the same time have I offered my defence, and my opinion: By the first I am sure I shall be acquitted from all imputations; and confirmed in the good thoughts of the concerned on either side, who will know for the future what attention they should give to idle reflections, and the falsehood of rumour; and from the last, I have hopes that a plan may be drawn, which will settle at once all disputed pretensions, and restore that fair prospect, which the open advantage of last year’s success (indifferent as it was) has demonstrated to be a view that was no way chimerical.—

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’They know how to judge of malicious insinuations to my prejudice, by this *one most scandalous example*, which has been given by the endeavours of some to persuade the out-sharers that I have made an extravagant *profit* from the *losses* of the adventurers. Whereas on the contrary, out of *Twenty-five Thousand Guineas*, which was the whole I should have received by the sale of the shares, I have given up *Twenty Thousand Pounds* to the use of the company, and to the annuities afterward; and three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds more I paid to the annuitants, at Lady-Day 1715, on the company’s account; and have never demanded it again, in consideration of their disappointments the first year.

’So that it plainly appears, that out of twenty-five thousand guineas, I have given away in two articles only, twenty-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds for the public advantage. And I can easily prove, that the little remainder has been short of making good the charges I have been at for their service; by which means I am not one farthing a gainer by the company, notwithstanding the clamour and malice of some unthinking adventurers: And for the truth of all this, I appeal to their own *Office-Books*, and defy the most angry among them to deny any article of it. See then what a grateful and generous encouragement may be expected by men, who would dedicate their labours to the profit of others.

November the 30th. 1716. A. HILL.’

This, and much more, too tedious to insert, serves to demonstrate that it was a great misfortune, for a mind so fertile of invention and improvement, to be embarrassed by a narrow power of fortune; too weak alone to execute such undertakings.

About the same year he wrote another Tragedy, intitled [Transcriber’s note: ‘intiled’ in original] the Fatal Vision[2], or the Fall of Siam (which was acted the same year, in Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields) to which he gave this Motto out of Horace.

I not for vulgar admiration write;
To be well read, not much, is my delight.

And to his death he would declare in favour of that choice.—That year, he likewise published the two first books of an Epic Poem, called Gideon (founded on a Hebrew Story) which like its author, and all other authors, had its enemies; but many more admirers.

But his poetic pieces were not frequent in their appearance. They were the product of some leisure hours, when he relaxed his thoughts from drier study; as he took great delight in diving into every useful science, *viz*. criticism, history, geography, physic, commerce in general, agriculture, war, and law; but in particular natural philosophy, wherein he has made many and valuable discoveries.

Concerning poetry, he says, in his preface to King Henry the Vth, where he laments the want of taste for Tragedy,

’But in all events I will be easy, who have no better reason to wish well to poetry, than my love for a mistress I shall never be married to: For, whenever I grow ambitious, I shall wish to build higher; and owe my memory to some occasion of more importance than my writings.’

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He had acquired so deep an insight in law, that he has from his arguments and demonstrations obliged some of the greatest council (formally) under their hands, to retract their own first-given opinions.

He wrote part of a Tract of War; another upon Agriculture; but they are left unfinished, with several other pieces.

In his younger days he bought a grant of Sir Robert Montgomery (who had purchas'd it of the lords proprietors of Carolina) with whom, &c. be had been concern'd, in a design of settling a new plantation in the South of Carolina, of a vast tract of land; on which he then designed to pursue the same intention.—But being not master of a fortune equal to that scheme, it never proved of any service to him, though many years since, it has been cultivated largely[3].

His person was (in youth) extremely fair, and handsome; his eyes were a dark blue, both bright and penetrating; brown hair and visage oval; which was enlivened with a smile, the most agreeable in conversation; where his address was affably engageing; to which was joined a dignity, which rendered him at once respected and admired, by those (of either sex) who were acquainted with him—He was tall, genteelly made, and not thin.—His voice was sweet, his conversation elegant; and capable of entertaining upon various subjects.—His disposition was benevolent, beyond the power of the fortune he was blessed with; the calamities of those he knew (and valued as deserving) affected him more than his own: He had fortitude of mind sufficient to support with calmness great misfortune; and from his birth it may be truly said he was obliged to meet it.

Of himself, he says in his epistle dedicatory to one of his poems,

'I am so devoted a lover of a private and unbusy life, that I cannot recollect a time wherein I wish'd an increase to the little influence I cultivate in the dignified world, unless when I have felt the deficience of my own power, to reward some merit that has charm'd me:'—

His temper, though by nature warm (when injuries were done him) was as nobly forgiving; mindful of that great lesson in religion, of returning good for evil; and he fulfilled it often to the prejudice of his own circumstances. He was a tender husband, friend, and father; one of the best masters to his servants, detesting the too common inhumanity, that treats them almost as if they were not fellow-creatures.

His manner of life was temperate in all respects (which might have promis'd greater length of years) late hours excepted which his indefatigable love of study drew him into; night being not liable to interruptions like the day.

About the year 1718 he wrote a poem called the Northern-Star, upon the actions of the Czar Peter the Great; and several years after he was complimented with a gold medal from the empress Catherine (according to the Czar's desire before his death) and was to have wrote his life, from papers which were to be sent him of the Czar's: But the death of the Czarina, quickly after, prevented it.—In an advertisement to the reader, in the fifth edition of that poem, published in 1739, the author says of it.

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’Though the design was profess’d panegyric, I may with modesty venture to say it was not a very politic, perhaps, but an honest example of praise without flattery.—In the verse, I am afraid there was much to be blamed, as too low; but, I am sure there was none of that fault in the purpose: The poem having never been hinted, either before or after the publication, to any person (native or foreigner) who could be supposed to have interest in, or concern for, its subject.

’In effect, it had for six years or more been forgot by myself—and my country,—when upon the death of the prince it referred to, I was surprized by the condescension of a compliment from the empress his relict, and immediate successor; and thereby first became sensible that the poem had, by means of some foreign translation, reach’d the eye and regard of that emphatically great monarch, in justice to whom it was written.’

Soon after he finished six books more of Gideon; which made eight, of the twelve he purpos’d writing; but did not live to finish it.

In 1723 he brought his Tragedy called King Henry the Vth, upon the stage in Drury-Lane; which is (as he declares in the preface) a new fabric, yet built on Shakespear’s foundation.

In 1724, for the advantage of an unhappy gentleman (an old officer in the army) he wrote a paper in the manner of the Spectators, in conjunction with Mr. William Bond, &c. intitled the Plain Dealer; which were some time after published in two volumes octavo. And many of his former writings were appropriated to such humane uses; both those to which he has prefixed his name, and several others which he wrote and gave away intirely. But, though the many imagined authors are not living, their names, and those performances will be omitted here; yet, in mere justice to the character of Mr. Hill, we mention this particular.

In 1728, he made a journey into the North of Scotland, where he had been about two years before, having contracted with the York-Buildings Company, concerning many woods of great extent in that kingdom, for timber for the uses of the navy; and many and various were the assertions upon this occasion: Some thought, and thence reported, that there was not a stick in Scotland could be capable of answering that purpose; but he demonstrated the contrary: For, though there was not a great number large enough for masts to ships of the greatest burthen; yet there were millions, fit for all smaller vessels; and planks and banks, proper for every sort of building.—One ship was built entirely of it; and a report was made, that never any better timber was brought from any part of the world: But he found many difficulties in this undertaking; yet had sagacity to overcome them all (as far as his own management extended) for when the trees were by his order chain’d together into floats, the ignorant Highlanders refus’d to venture themselves on them down the river Spey; till he first went himself, to make them sensible

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there was no danger.—In which passage however, he found a great obstacle in the rocks, by which that river seemed impassible; but on these he ordered fires to be made, when by the lowness of the river they were most expos'd; and then had quantities of water thrown upon them: Which method being repeated with the help of proper tools, they were broke in pieces and thrown down, which made the passage easy for the floats.

This affair was carried on to a very good account, till those concern'd thought proper to call off the men and horses from the woods of Abernethy, in order to employ them in their lead mines in the same country; from which they hoped to make greater advantage.

The magistrates of Inverness paid him the compliment of making him a present of the freedom of that place (at an elegant entertainment made by them on that occasion) a favour likewise offered him at Aberdeen, &c.

After a stay of several months in the Highlands, during which time he visited the duke and duchess of Gordon, who distinguished him with great civilities, he went to York, and other places in that country; where his wife then was, with some relations, for the recovery of her health; but his staying longer there (on that account) than he intended, had like to have proved of unhappy consequence; by giving room for some, who imagined (as they wished) that he would not return, to be guilty of a breach of trust that aimed at the destruction of great part of what he then was worth; but they were disappointed.

In that retirement in the North, he wrote a poem intitled, The Progress of Wit, a Caveat for the use of an eminent Writer. It was composed of the genteelest praise, and keenest allegorical satire; and it gave no small uneasiness to Mr. Pope: Who had indeed drawn it upon himself, by being the aggressor in his Dunciad.—This afterwards occasioned a private paper-war between those writers, in which 'tis generally thought that Mr. Hill had greatly the advantage of Mr. Pope. For the particulars, the reader is referred to a shilling pamphlet lately published by Owen, containing Letters between Mr. Pope and Mr. Hill, &c.

The progress of wit begins with the eight following lines, wherein the SNEAKINGLY APPROVES affected Mr. Pope extreamly.

Tuneful Alexis on the Thames' fair side,
The Ladies play-thing, and the Muses pride,
With merit popular, with wit polite,
Easy tho' vain, and elegant tho' light:
Desiring, and deserving other's praise,

Poorly accepts a fame he ne'er repays:
Unborn to cherish, SNEAKINGLY APPROVES,
And wants the soul to spread the worth he loves.

During their controversy, Mr. Pope seemed to express his repentance, by denying the offence he had given; thus, in one of his letters, he says,

'That the letters A.H. were apply'd to you in the papers I did not know (for I seldom read them) I heard it only from Mr. Savage[4], as from yourself, and sent my assurances to the contrary: But I don't see how the annotator on the D. could have rectified that mistake publicly, without particularizing your name in a book where I thought it too good to be inserted, &c.[5].'

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And in another place he says,

’I should imagine the Dunciad meant you a real compliment, and so it has been thought by many who have ask’d to whom that passage made that oblique panegyric. As to the notes, I am weary of telling a great truth, which is, that I am not author of them, &c.’

Which paragraph was answer’d by the following in Mr. Hill’s reply.

’As to your oblique panegyric, I am not under so blind an attachment to the goddess I was devoted to in the Dunciad, but that I know it was a commendation; though a dirtier one than I wished for; who am neither fond of some of the company in which I was listed —the noble reward, for which I was to become a diver;—the allegorical muddiness in which I was to try my skill;—nor the institutor of the games you were so kind to allow me a share in, &c.’—A genteel severe reprimand.

Much about the same time he wrote another poem, called Advice to the Poets; in praise of worthy poetry, and in censure of the misapplication of poetry in general. The following lines here quoted, are the motto of it, taken from the poem.

Shame on your jingling, ye soft sons of rhyme,
Tuneful consumers of your reader’s time!
Fancy’s light dwarfs! whose feather-footed strains,
Dance in wild windings, thro’ a waste of brains:
Your’s is the guilt of all, who judging wrong,
Mistake tun’d nonsense for the poet’s song.

He likewise in this piece, reproves the above named celebrated author, for descending below his genius; and in speaking of the inspiration of the Muse, he says,

I feel her now.—Th’invader fires my breast:
And my soul swells, to suit the heav’nly guest.
Hear her, O Pope!—She sounds th’inspir’d decree,
Thou great Arch-Angel of wit’s heav’n! for thee!
  Let vulgar genii, sour’d by sharp disdain,
Piqu’d and malignant, words low war maintain,
  While every meaner art exerts her aim,
O’er rival arts, to list her question’d fame;
Let half-soul’d poets still on poets fall,
And teach the willing world to scorn them all.
But, let no Muse, pre-eminent as thine,
Of voice melodious, and of force divine,
Stung by wits, wasps, all rights of rank forego,
And turn, and snarl, and bite, at every foe.

No—like thy own Ulysses, make no stay
Shun monsters—and pursue thy streamy way.

In 1731 he brought his Tragedy of Athelwold upon the stage in Drury-Lane; which, as he says in his preface to it, was written on the same subject as his Elfrid or the Fair Inconstant, which he there calls, 'An unprun'd wilderness of fancy, with here and there a flower among the leaves; but without any fruit of judgment.'—

He likewise mentions it as a folly, having began and finished Elfrid in a week; and both the difference of time and judgment are visible in favour of the last of those performances.

That year he met the greatest shock that affliction ever gave him; in the loss of one of the most worthy of wives, to whom he had been married above twenty years.

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The following epitaph he wrote, and purpos'd for a monument which he designed to erect over her grave.

Enough, cold stone! suffice her long-lov'd name;
Words are too weak to pay her virtues claim.
Temples, and tombs, and tongues, shall waste away,
And power's vain pomp, in mould'ring dust decay.
But e'er mankind a wife more perfect see,
Eternity, O Time! shall bury thee.

He was a man susceptible of love, in its sublimest sense; as may be seen in that poetical description of that passion, which he has given in his poem called the Picture of Love; wrote many years ago (from whence the following two lines are taken)

No wild desire can this proud bliss bestow,
Souls must be match'd in heav'n, tho' mix'd below.

About the year 1735 he was concern'd with another gentleman in writing a paper called the Prompter; all those mark'd with a B. were his.—This was meant greatly for the service of the stage; and many of them have been regarded in the highest manner.—-But, as there was not only instruction, but reproof, the bitter, with the sweet, by some could not be relish'd.

In 1736 having translated from the French of Monsieur de Voltaire, the Tragedy of Zara, he gave it to be acted for the benefit of Mr. William Bond; and it was represented first, at the Long-Room in Villars-Street, York-Buildings; where that poor gentleman performed the part of Lusignan (the old expiring king) a character he was at that time too well suited to; being, and looking, almost dead, as in reality he was before the run of it was over.—Soon after this play was brought upon the stage in Drury-Lane, by Mr. Fleetwood, at the earnest sollicitation of Mr. Theophilus Cibber; the part of Zara was played by Mrs. Cibber, and was her first attempt in Tragedy; of the performers therein he makes very handsome mention in the preface. This play he dedicated to his royal highness the Prince of Wales.

The same year was acted, at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, another Tragedy of his translating from the same French author, called Alzira, which was likewise dedicated to the Prince.—His dedications generally wore a different face from those of other writers; he there most warmly recommends Monsieur de Voltaire, as worthy of his royal highness's partiality; disclaiming for himself all expectations of his notice. But he was, notwithstanding, particularly honoured with his approbation.

These plays, if not a litteral translation, have been thought much better, for their having past his hands; as generously was acknowledged by Monsieur de Voltaire himself.

In 1737 he published a poem called, The Tears of the Muses; composed of general satire: in the address to the reader he says (speaking of satire)

’There is, indeed, something so like cruelty in the face of that species of poetry, that it can only be reconciled to humanity, by the general benevolence of its purpose; attacking particulars for the public advantage.’

The following year he wrote (in prose) a book called, An Enquiry into the Merit of Assassination, with a View to the Character of Caesar; and his Designs on the Roman Republic.

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About this time, he in a manner left the world, (though living near so populous a part of it as London) and settled at Plaistow in Essex; where he entirely devoted himself to his study, family, and garden; and the accomplishment of many profitable views; particularly one, in which for years he had laboured through experiments in vain; and when he brought it to perfection, did not live to reap the benefit of it: The discovery of the art of making pot-ash like the Russian, which cost this nation, yearly, an immense sum of money.

In the year 1743 he published The Fanciad, an Heroic Poem; inscribed to his grace the duke of Marlborough: Who as no name was then prefixed to it, perhaps, knew not the author by whom he was distinguished in it.

Soon after he wrote another, intitled the Impartial; which he inscribed, in the same manner, to the lord Carteret (now earl of Granville). In the beginning of it are the following lines,

Burn, sooty slander, burn thy blotted scroll;
Greatness is greatness, spite of faction's soul.

Deep let my soul detest th'adhesive pride,
That changing sentiment, unchanges side.

It would be tedious to enumerate the variety of smaller pieces he at different times was author of.

His notions of the deity were boundlessly extensive; and the few lines here quoted from his Poem upon faith, published in 1746, must give the best idea of his sentiments upon that most elevated of all subjects.

What then must be believ'd?—Believe God kind,
To fear were to offend him. Fill thy heart
With his felt laws; and act the good he loves.
Rev'rence his power. Judge him but by his works:
Know him but in his mercies. Rev'rence too
The most mistaken schemes that mean his praise.
Rev'rence his priests.—for ev'ry priest is his,—
Who finds him in his conscience.—

This year he published his Art of Acting, a Poem, deriving Rules from a new Principle, for touching the Passions in a natural Manner, &c. Which was dedicated to the Earl of Chesterfield.

Having for many years been in a manner forgetful of the eight Books he had finished of his Epic Poem called Gideon,—in 1749 he re-perused that work, and published three of

the Books; to which he gave the name of Gideon, or the Patriot.—They were inscribed to the late lord Bolingbroke; to whom he accounts as follows, for the alterations he had made since the first publication of two Books.

Erring, where thousands err'd, in youth's hot smart,
Propulsive prejudice had warp'd his heart:
Bold, and too loud he sigh'd, for high distress,
Fond of the fall'n, nor form'd to serve success;
Partial to woes, had weigh'd their cause too light,
Wept o'er misfortune,—and mis-nam'd it right:
Anguish, attracting, turn'd attachment wrong,
And pity's note mis-tun'd his devious song.

'Tis much lamented by many who are admirers of that species of poetry, that the author did not finish it.

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The same year (after a length of different applications, for several seasons, at both Theatres without success) his Tragedy, called Merope, was brought upon the stage in Drury-Lane by Mr. Garrick; to whom, as well as to another gentleman he likewise highly both admired and esteemed, he was greatly obliged; and his own words (here borrowed) will shew how just a sense he had of these obligations.—They begin the preface to the play.

’If there can be a pride that ranks with virtues, it is that we feel from friendships with the worthy. Mr. Mallet, therefore, must forgive me, that I boast the honour he has done my Merope—I have so long been a retreater from the world, that one of the best spirits in it told me lately, I had made myself an alien there. I must confess, I owe so many obligations to its ornaments of most distinguished genius, that I must have looked upon it as a great unhappiness to have made choice of solitude, could I have judged society in general, by a respect so due to these adorners of it.’

And in relation to this Tragedy he says, after very justly censuring Monsieur de Voltaire, for representing in the preface to his Merope the English as incapable of Tragedy,

’To such provoking stimulations I have owed inducement to retouch, for Mr. Voltaire’s use, the characters in his high boasted Merope; and I have done it on a plan as near his own as I could bring it with a safe conscience; that is to say, without distaste to English audiences.

This he likewise dedicated to lord Bolingbroke; and was the last he ever wrote.—There is a melancholy thread of fatal prophecy in the beginning of it; of his own approaching dissolution.

Cover’d in fortune’s shade, I rest reclin’d;
My griefs all silent; and my joys resign’d.
With patient eye life’s evening gloom survey:
Nor shake th’out-hast’ning sands; nor bid ’em stay—
Yet, while from life my setting prospects fly,
Fain wou’d my mind’s weak offspring shun to die.
Fain wou’d their hope some light through time explore;
The name’s kind pasport—When the man’s no more.

From about the time he was solliciting the bringing on this play, an illness seized him; from the tormenting pains of which he had scarce an hour’s intermission; and after making trial of all he thought could be of service to him in medicine; he was desirous to try his native air of London (as that of Plaistow was too moist a one) but he was then past all recovery, and wasted almost to a skeleton, from some internal cause, that had produced a general decay (and was believed to have been an inflamation in the kidneys; which his intense attachment to his studies might probably lay the foundation of.—When in town, he had the comfort of being honoured with the visits of the most

worthy and esteemed among his friends; but he was not permitted many weeks to taste that blessing. [Transcriber's note: closing brackets missing in original.]

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The same humane and generous Mr. Mallet, who had before aided his Merope, about this time was making interest for its being played again, for the advantage of its author:—His royal highness the prince of Wales; had the great goodness to command it; and Mr. Hill just lived to express his grateful acknowledgments (to those about him) upon hearing of it:—But on the day before it was to be represented he died, in the very minute of the earthquake, February the eighth, 1749, which he seemed sensible of, though then deprived of utterance. Had he lived two days longer, he had been sixty-five years old.—He endur'd a twelve-month's torment of the body with a calmness that confess'd a superiority of soul! He was interred in the same grave with her the most dear to him when living, in the great cloister of Westminster-Abbey; near the lord Godolphin's tomb.

It may be truly said of Mr. Hill, he was a great and general writer; and had he been possest of the estate he was intitled to, his liberality had been no less extensive than his genius. But often do we see misfortune's clouds obscure the brightest sunshine.

Besides his works which here have been enumerated, there are several other; particularly two poems, intitled the Creation, and the Judgment-Day; which were published many years ago.—Another in blank verse he published in the time of his retreat into Essex; it was called, Cleon to Lycidas, a Time Piece; the date not marked by the printer.

Some years before his death, he talked of making a collection of his works for publication; but postponed it for the finishing some pieces, which he did not live to effect.

Since his death, four volumes of them have been published by subscription, for his family. He left one Tragedy, never yet acted; which was wrote originally about 1737, and intitled Caesar; but since, he has named it the Roman Revenge:—But as the author was avowedly a great admirer of Caesar's character, not in the light he is generally understood (that of a tyrant) but in one much more favourable, he was advised by several of the first distinction, both in rank and judgment, to make such alterations in it as should adapt it more to the general opinion; and upon that advice he in a manner new wrote the play: But as most first opinions are not easily eradicated, it has been never able to make a public trial of the success; which many of the greatest understanding have pronounced it highly worthy of.—The late lord Bolingbroke (in a letter wrote to the author) has called it one of the noblest drama's, that our language, or any age can boast.

These few little speeches are taken from the part of Caesar.

'Tis the great mind's expected pain, Calphurnia,
To labour for the thankless.—He who seeks

Reward in ruling, makes ambition guilt;
And living for himself disclaims mankind.

And thus speaking to Mark Anthony;

If man were placed above the reach of insult,
To pardon were no virtue.—Think, warm Anthony,
What mercy is—'Tis, daring to be wrong'd,
Yet unprovok'd by pride, persist, in pity.

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This again to Calphurnia.

No matter.—Virtue triumphs by neglect:
Vice, while it darkens, lends but foil to brightness:
And juster times, removing slander's veil,
Wrong'd merit after death is help'd to live.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] This was sent us by an unknown hand.

[2] This play he made a present of to the patentee, and had several fine scenes painted for it, at his own expence: He indeed gave all his pieces to the stage; never taking any benefit, or gratuity from the managers, as an author—'till his last piece, Merope, was brought on the stage; when (unhappy gentleman) he was under the necessity of receiving his profits of the third nights; which 'till then, his generosity, and spirit, had ever declined.

[3] Under the name of Georgia.

[4] Savage was of great use to Mr. Pope, in helping him to little stories, and idle tales, of many persons whose names, lives, and writings, had been long since forgot, had not Mr. Pope mentioned them in his Dunciad:—This office was too mean for any one but inconsistent Savage: Who, with a great deal of absurd pride, could submit to servile offices; and for the vanity of being thought Mr. Pope's intimate, made no scruple of frequently sacrificing a regard to sincerity or truth. He had certainly, at one time, considerable influence over that great poet; but an assuming arrogance at last tired out Mr. Pope's patience.

[5] A lame come-off.

* * * * *

Mr. LEWIS THEOBALD.

This gentleman was born at Sittingburn in Kent, of which place his father, Mr. Peter Theobald, was an eminent attorney. His grammatical learning he received chiefly under the revd. Mr. Ellis, at Isleworth in Middlesex, and afterwards applied himself to the study and practice of the law: but finding that study too tedious and irksome for his genius, he quitted it for the profession of poetry. He engaged in a paper called the Censor, published in Mill's Weekly Journal; and by delivering his opinion with two little

reserve, concerning some eminent wits, he exposed himself to their lashes, and resentment. Upon the publication of Pope's Homer, he praised it in the most extravagant terms of admiration; but afterwards thought proper to retract his opinion, for reasons we cannot guess, and abused the very performance he had before hyperbollically praised.

Mr. Pope at first made Mr. Theobald the hero of his Dunciad, but afterwards, for reasons best known to himself, he thought proper to disrobe him of that dignity, and bestow it upon another: with what propriety we shall not take upon us to determine, but refer the reader to Mr. Cibber's two letters to Mr. Pope. He was made hero of the poem, the annotator informs us, because no better was to be had. In the first book of the Dunciad, Mr. Theobald, or Tibbald, as he is there called, is thus stigmatised,

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—Dullness her image full exprest,
But chief in Tibbald's monster-breeding breast;
Sees Gods with Daemons in strange league engage,
And Earth, and heav'n, and hell her battles wage;
She eyed the bard, where supperless he sate,
And pin'd unconscious of his rising fate;
Studious he sate, with all his books around,
Sinking from thought to thought, a vast profound!
Plung'd for his sense, but found no bottom there;
Then writ, and flounder'd on, in meer despair.
He roll'd his eyes, that witness'd huge dismay,
Where yet unpawn'd much learned lumber lay.

He describes Mr. Theobald as making the following address to Dulness.

—For thee
Old puns restore, lost blunders nicely seek,
And crucify poor Shakespear once a-week.
For thee I dim these eyes, and stuff this head,
With all such reading as was never read;
For thee, supplying in the worst of days,
Notes to dull books, and prologues to dull plays;
For thee explain a thing till all men doubt it,
And write about it, goddess, and about it;
So spins the silk-worm small its slender store,
And labours till it clouds itself all o'er.

In the year 1726 Mr. Theobald published a piece in octavo, called Shakespear Restored: Of this it is said, he was so vain as to aver, in one of Mist's Journals, June the 8th, 'That to expose any errors in it was impracticable;' and in another, April the 27th, 'That whatever care might for the future be taken, either by Mr. Pope, or any other assistants, he would give above five-hundred emendations, that would escape them all.'

During two whole years, while Mr. Pope was preparing his edition, he published advertisements, requesting assistance, and promising satisfaction to any who would contribute to its greater perfection. But this restorer, who was at that time solliciting favours of him, by letters, did wholly conceal that he had any such design till after its publication; which he owned in the Daily Journal of November 26, 1728: and then an outcry was made, that Mr. Pope had joined with the bookseller to raise an extravagant subscription; in which he had no share, of which he had no knowledge, and against which he had publickly advertised in his own proposals for Homer.

Mr. Theobald was not only thus obnoxious to the resentment of Pope, but we find him waging war with Mr. Dennis, who treated him with more roughness, though with less

satire. Mr. Theobald in the Censor, Vol. II. No. XXXIII. calls Mr. Dennis by the name of Furius. 'The modern Furius (says he) is to be looked upon as more the object of pity, than that which he daily provokes, laughter, and contempt. Did we really know how much this poor man suffers by being contradicted, or which is the same thing in effect, by hearing another praised; we should in compassion sometimes attend to him with a silent nod, and let him go away with the triumphs of his ill-nature.

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Poor Furius, where any of his cotemporaries are spoken well of, quitting the ground of the present dispute, steps back a thousand years, to call in the succour of the antients. His very panegyric is spiteful, and he uses it for the same reason as some ladies do their commendations of a dead beauty, who never would have had their good word; but that a living one happened to be mentioned in their company. His applause is not the tribute of his heart, but the sacrifice of his revenge.'

Mr. Dennis in resentment of this representation made of him, in his remarks on Pope's Homer, page 9. 10. thus mentions him. 'There is a notorious idiot, one HIGHT WHACHUM, who from an Under-spur-leather to the law, is become an Under strapper to the play-house, who has lately burlesqued the Metamorphoses of Ovid, by a vile translation, &c. This fellow is concerned in an impertinent paper called the Censor.' Such was the language of Mr. Dennis, when enflamed by contradiction.

In the year 1729 Mr. Theobald introduced upon the stage a Tragedy called the Double Falsehood; the greatest part of which he asserted was Shakespear's. Mr. Pope insinuated to the town, that it was all, or certainly the greatest part written, not by Shakespear, but Theobald himself, and quotes this line,

None but thyself can be thy parallel.

Which he calls a marvellous line of Theobald, 'unless (says he) the play called the Double Falsehood be (as he would have it thought) Shakespear's; but whether this line is his or not, he proves Shakespear to have written as bad.' The arguments which Mr. Theobald uses to prove the play to be Shakespear's are indeed far from satisfactory;—-First, that the MS. was above sixty years old;—Secondly, that once Mr. Betterton had it, or he hath heard so;—Thirdly, that some body told him the author gave it to a bastard daughter of his;—But fourthly, and above all, that he has a great mind that every thing that is good in our tongue should be Shakespear's.

This Double Falsehood was vindicated by Mr. Theobald, who was attacked again in the art of sinking in poetry. Here Mr. Theobald endeavours to prove false criticisms, want of understanding Shakespear's manner, and perverse cavelling in Mr. Pope: He justifies himself and the great dramatic poet, and essays to prove the Tragedy in question to be in reality Shakespear's, and not unworthy of him. We cannot set this controversy in a clearer light, than by transcribing a letter subjoined to the Double Falsehood.

Dear Sir,

You desire to know, why in the general attack which Mr. Pope has lately made against writers living and dead, he has so often had a fling of satire at me. I should be very willing to plead guilty to his indictment, and think as meanly of myself as he can possibly

do, were his quarrel altogether upon a fair, or unbiassed nature. But he is angry at the man; and as Juvenal says—

Facit indignatio versum.

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He has been pleased to reflect on me in a few quotations from a play, which I had lately the good fortune to usher into the world; I am there concerned in reputation to enter upon my defence. There are three passages in his Art of Sinking in Poetry, which he endeavours to bring into disgrace from the Double Falsehood.

One of these passages alledged by our critical examiner is of that stamp, which is certain to include me in the class of profound writers. The place so offensive for its cloudiness, is,

—The obscureness of her birth
Cannot eclipse the lustre of her eyes,
Which make her all one light.

I must own, I think, there needs no great Oedipus to solve the difficulty of this passage. Nothing has ever been more common, than for lovers to compare their mistresses eyes to suns and stars. And what does Henriquez say more here than this, 'That though his mistress be obscure by her birth; yet her eyes are so refulgent, they set her above that disadvantage, and make her all over brightness.' I remember another rapture in Shakespear, upon a painter's drawing a fine lady's picture, where the thought seems to me every whit as magnified and dark at the first glance,

—But her eyes—
How could he see to do them! having done one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,
And leave itself unfinished.—

This passage is taken from the Merchant of Venice, which will appear the more beautiful, the more it is considered.

Another passage which Mr. Pope is pleased to be merry with, is in a speech of Violante's;

Wax! render up thy trust.—

This, in his English is open the letter; and he facetiously mingles it with some pompous instances, most I believe of his own framing; which in plain terms signify no more than, See, whose there; snuff the candle; uncork the bottle; chip the bread; to shew how ridiculous actions of no consequence are, when too much exalted in the diction. This he brings under a figure, which he calls the Buskin, or Stately. But we'll examine circumstances fairly, and then we shall see which is most ridiculous; the phrase, or our sagacious censurer.

Violante is newly debauched by Henriquez, on his solemn promise of marrying her: She thinks he is returning to his father's court, as he told her, for a short time; and

expects no letter from him. His servant who brings the letter, contradicts his master's going for court; and tells her he is gone some two months progress another way, upon a change of purpose. She who knew what concessions she had made to him, declares herself by starts, under the greatest agonies; and immediately upon the servant leaving her, expresses an equal impatience, and fear of the contents of this unexpected letter.

To hearts like mine, suspence is misery.
Wax! render up thy trust,—Be the contents
Prosperous, or fatal, they are all my due.

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Now Mr. Pope shews us his profound judgment in dramatical passions; thinks a lady in her circumstances cannot without absurdity open a letter that seems to her as surprize, with any more preparation than the most unconcerned person alive should a common letter by the penny-post. I am aware Mr. Pope may reply, his cavil was not against the action itself of addressing to the wax, but of exalting that action in the terms. In this point I may fairly shelter myself under the judgment of a man, whose character in poetry will vie with any rival this age shall produce.

Mr. Dryden in his Essay on Dramatic Poetry, tells us. 'That when from the most elevated thoughts of verse, we pass to those which are most mean, and which are common with the lowest houshold conversation; yet still there is a choice to be made of the best words, and the least vulgar (provided they be apt) to express such thoughts. Our language, says he, is noble, full, and significant; and I know not, why he who is master of it, may not cloath ordinary things in it as decently as the Latin, if we use the same diligence in the choice of words.'

I come now to the last quotation, which in our examiner's handling, falls under this predicament of *being a thought astonishingly out of the way of common sense.*

None but himself can be his parallel.

This, he hints, may seem borrowed from the thought of that master of a show in Smithfield, who wrote in large letters over the picture of his Elephant. *This is the greatest Elephant in the world except himself.* I like the pleasantry of the banter, but have no great doubt of getting clear from the severity of it. The lines in the play stand thus.

Is there a treachery like this in baseness,
Recorded any where? It is the deepest;
None but itself can be its parallel.

I am not a little surprized, to find that our examiner at last is dwindled into a word-catcher. Literally speaking, indeed, I agree with Mr. Pope, that nothing can be the parallel to itself; but allowing a little for the liberty of expression, does it not plainly imply, that it is a treachery which stands single for the nature of its baseness, and has not its parallel on record; and that nothing but a treachery equal to it in baseness can parallel it? If this were such nonsense as Pope would willingly have it, it would be a very bad plea for me to alledge, as the truth is, that the line is in Shakespear's old copy; for I might have suppressed it. But I hope it is defensible; at least if examples can keep it in countenance. There is a piece of nonsense of the same kind in the Amphytrio of Plautus: Sofia having survey'd Mercury from top to toe, finds him such an exact resemblance of himself, in dress, shape, and features, that he cries out,

Tam consimil' est, atq; ego.

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That is, he is as like me, as I am to myself. Now I humbly conceive, in strictness of expression a man can no more be like himself, than a thing its own parallel. But to confine myself to Shakespear. I doubt not but I can produce some similar passages from him, which literally examined, are stark nonsense; and yet taken with a candid latitude have never appeared ridiculous. Mr. Pope would scarce allow one man to say to another. 'Compare and weigh your mistress with your mistress; and I grant she is a very fair woman; but compare her with some other woman that I could name, and the case will be very much altered.' Yet the very substance of this, is said by Shakespear, in Romeo and Juliet; and Mr. Pope has not degraded it as any absurdity, or unworthy of the author.

Pho! pho! you saw her fair, none else being by;
HERSELF poiz'd with HERSELF in either eye.
But, &c.

Or, what shall we say of the three following quotations.

ROMEO and JULIET.
—Oh! so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint.

WINTER'S TALE.
—For *Cogitation*
Resides not in the man *that does not think.*

HAMLET.
—Try what repentance can, what can it not?
Yet what can it, when one *cannot repent.*

Who does not see at once, the heaviest foot that ever trod cannot wear out the everlasting flint? or that he who does not think has no thoughts in him? or that repentance can avail nothing when a man has not repentance? yet let these passages appear, with a casting weight of allowance, and their absurdity will not be so extravagant, as when examined by the literal touchstone.—

Your's, &c.

LEWIS THEOBALD.

By perusing the above, the reader will be enabled to discern whether Mr. Pope has wantonly ridiculed the passages in question; or whether Mr. Theobald has, from a superstitious zeal for the memory of Shakespear, defended absurdities, and palliated extravagant blunders.

The ingenious Mr. Dodd, who has lately favoured the public with a judicious collection of the beauties of Shakespear, has quoted a beautiful stroke of Mr. Theobald's, in his Double Falsehood, upon music.

—Strike up, my masters;
But touch the strings with a religious softness;
Teach sounds to languish thro' the night's dull ear,
'Till Melancholy start from her lazy couch,
And carelessness grow concert to attention.

ACT I. SCENE III.

A gentleman of great judgment happening to commend these lines to Mr. Theobald, he assured him he wrote them himself, and only them in the whole play.

Mr. Theobald, besides his edition of all Shakespear's plays, in which he corrected, with great pains and ingenuity, many faults which had crept into that great poet's writings, is the author of the following dramatic pieces.

I. The Persian Princess, or the Royal Villain; a Tragedy, acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, printed in the year 1715. The author observes in his preface, this play was written and acted before he was full nineteen years old.

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II. The Perfidious Brother; a Tragedy acted at the Theatre in Little Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, 1716. This play is written on the model of Otway's Orphan; the scene is in a private family in Brussels.

III. Pan and Syrinx; an Opera of one act, performed on the Theatre in Little Lincoln's Inn-Fields, 1717.

IV. Decius and Paulina, a Masque; to which is added Musical Entertainments, as performed at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, in the Dramatic Opera of Circe.

V. Electra, a Tragedy; translated from the Greek of Sophocles, with notes, printed in the year 1714, dedicated to Joseph Addison, Esq;

VI. Oedipus King of Thebes; a Tragedy translated from Sophocles, with notes, translated in the year 1715, dedicated to the earl of Rockingham.

VII. Plutus, or the World's Idol; a Comedy translated from the Greek of Aristophanes, with notes, printed in the year 1715. The author has to this Translation prefixed a Discourse, containing some Account of Aristophanes, and his two Comedies of Plutus and the Clouds.

VIII. The Clouds, a Comedy; translated from Aristophanes, with notes, printed in the year 1715.

IX. The Rape of Proserpine; a Farce acted at the Theatre-Royal in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, 1727.

X. The Fatal Secret; a Tragedy acted at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden, 1725.

XI. The Vocal Parts of an Entertainment, called Apollo and Daphne, or the Burgo Master Trick'd; performed at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, 1726.

XII. Double Falsehood; which we have already mentioned.

Mr. Theobald's other Works are chiefly these.

The Gentleman's Library, containing Rules for Conduct in all Parts of Life, in 12mo. 1722.

The first Book of Homer's Odyssey translated, with notes, 8vo. 1716.

The Cave of Poverty, written in imitation of Shakespear.

Pindaric Ode on the Union, 1707.

A Poem sacred to the Memory of Queen Anne, Folio 1714.

Translations from Ovid's Metamorphoses.

Lives of Antiochus, and Berenice, from the French, 1717.

* * * * *

The Revd. Dr. SAMUEL CROXALL,

The celebrated author of the Fair Circassian, was son of the revd. Mr. Samuel Croxall, rector of Hanworth, Middlesex, and vicar of Walton upon Thames in Surry, in the last of which places our author was born. He received his early education at Eton school, and from thence was admitted to St. John's College, Cambridge. Probably while he was at the university, he became enamoured of Mrs. Anna Maria Mordaunt, who first inspired his breast with love, and to whom he dedicates the poem of the Circassian, for which he has been so much distinguished. This dedication is indeed the characteristic of a youth in love, but then it likewise proves him altogether unacquainted with the world, and with that easiness of address which distinguishes a gentleman. A recluse scholar may be passionately in love, but he discovers it by strains of bombast, and forced allusions, of which this dedication is a very lively instance.

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’The language of the Fair Circassian, says he, like yours, was natural poetry; her voice music, and the excellent colouring and formation of her features, painting; but still, like yours, drawn by the inimitable pencil of nature, life itself; a pattern for the greatest master, but copying after none; I will not say angels are not cast in the same mould.’ And again in another place, ’Pardon, O lovely deity, the presumption of this address, and favour my weak endeavours. If my confession of your divine power is any where too faint, believe it not to proceed from a want of due respect, but of a capacity more than human. Whoever thinks of you can no longer be himself; and if he could, ought to be something above man to celebrate the accomplishment of a goddess. To you I owe my creation as a lover, and in the beams of your beauty only I live, move, and exist. If there should be a suspension of your charms, I should fall to nothing. But it seems to be out of your power to deprive us of their kind influence; wherever you shine they fill all our hearts, and you are charming out of necessity, as the author of nature is good.’ We have quoted enough to shew the enthusiasm, or rather phrenzy, of this address, which is written in such a manner as if it were intended for a burlesque on the False Sublime, as the speeches of James I. are upon pedantry.

Mr. Croxall, who was intended for holy orders, and, probably, when he published the Circassian, had really entered into them, was cautious lest he should be known to be the author of this piece, since many divines have esteemed the Song of Solomon, from which it is taken, as an inspired poem, emblematic of the Messiah and the Church. Our author was of another opinion, and with him almost all sensible men join, in believing that it is no more than a beautiful poem, composed by that Eastern monarch, upon some favourite lady in his Seraglio. He artfully introduces it with a preface, in which he informs us, that it was the composition of a young gentleman, his pupil, lately deceased, executed by him, while he was influenced by that violent passion with which Mrs. Mordaunt inspired him. He then endeavours to ascertain who this Eastern beauty was, who had charms to enflame the heart of the royal poet. He is of opinion it could not be Pharaoh’s daughter, as has been commonly conjectured, because the bride in the Canticles is characterised as a private person, a shepherdess, one that kept a vineyard, and was ill used by her mother’s children, all which will agree very well with somebody else, but cannot, without great straining, be drawn to fit the Egyptian Princess. He then proceeds, ’seeing we have so good reason to conclude that it was not Pharaoh’s daughter, we will next endeavour to shew who she was: and here we are destitute of all manner of light, but what is afforded us by that little Arabian manuscript, mentioned in the Philosophical Transactions of Amsterdam, 1558, said to be found in a marble chest among the

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ruins of Palmyra, and presented to the university of Leyden by Dr. Hermanus Hoffman. The contents of which are something in the nature of Memoirs of the Court of Solomon; giving a sufficient account of the chief offices and posts in his houshold; of the several funds of the royal revenue; of the distinct apartments of his palace there; of the different Seraglios, being fifty two in number in that one city. Then there is an account given of the Sultanas; their manner of treatment and living; their birth and country, with some touches of their personal endowments, how long they continued in favour, and what the result was of the King's fondness for each of them. Among these, there is particular mention made of a slave of more exceeding beauty than had ever been known before; at whose appearance the charms of all the rest vanished like stars before the morning sun; that the King cleaved to her with the strongest affection, and was not seen out of the Seraglio, where she was kept, for about a month. That she was taken captive, together with her mother, out of a vineyard, on the Coast of Circassia, by a Corsair of Hiram King of Tyre, and brought to Jerusalem. It is said, she was placed in the ninth Seraglio, to the east of Palmyra, which, in the Hebrew tongue, is called Tadmor; which, without farther particulars, are sufficient to convince us that this was the charming person, sung with so much rapture by the Royal poet, and in the recital of whose amour he seems so transported. For she speaks of herself as one that kept a vineyard, and her mother's introducing her in one of the gardens of pleasure (as it seems she did at her first presenting her to the King) is here distinctly mentioned. The manuscript further takes notice, that she was called Saphira, from the heavenly blue of her eyes.'

Notwithstanding the caution with which Mr. Croxall published the Fair Circassian, yet it was some years after known to be his. The success it met with, which was not indeed above its desert, was perhaps too much for vanity (of which authors are seldom entirely divested) to resist, and he might be betrayed into a confession, from that powerful principle, of what otherwise would have remained concealed.

Some years after it was published, Mr. Cragg, one of the ministers of the city of Edinburgh, gave the world a small volume of spiritual poems, in one of which he takes occasion to complain of the prostitution of genius, and that few poets have ever turned their thoughts towards religious subjects; and mentions the author of the Circassian with great indignation, for having prostituted his Muse to the purposes of lewdness, in converting the Song of Solomon (a work, as he thought it, of sacred inspiration) into an amorous dialogue between a King and his mistress. His words are,

Curss'd be he that the Circassian wrote,
Perish his fame, contempt be all his lot,
Who basely durst in execrable strains,
Turn holy mysteries into impious scenes.

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The revd. gentleman met with some remonstrances from his friends, for indulging so splenetic a temper, when he was writing in the cause of religion, as to wish any man accursed. Of this censure he was not insensible; in the next edition of his poems, he softened the sarcasm, by declaring, in a note, that he had no enmity to the author's person, and that when he wished him accursed, be meant not the man, but the author, which are two very distinct considerations; for an author may be accursed, that is, damned to fame, while the man may be in as fair a way to happiness as any body; but, continues he, I should not have expected such prophanation from a clergyman.

The Circassian, however, is a beautiful poem, the numbers are generally smooth, and there is a tender delicacy in the dialogue, though greatly inferior to the noble original.

Mr. Croxall had not long quitted the university, e'er he was instituted to the living of Hampton in Middlesex; and afterwards to the united parishes of St. Mary Somerset, and St. Mary Mounthaw, in the city of London, both which he held 'till his death. He was also chancellor, prebend, and canon residentiary and portionist of the church of Hereford. Towards the latter end of the reign of Queen Anne he published two original Cantos, in imitation of Spenser's Fairy Queen, which were meant as a satire on the earl of Oxford's administration. In the year 1715 he addressed a poem to the duke of Argyle, upon his obtaining a Victory over the Rebels, and the same year published The Vision, a poem, addressed to the earl of Halifax. He was concerned, with many others, in the translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses, of which the following were performed by him:

The Story of Nisus and Scylla, from the sixth Book.

The Labyrinth, and Daedalus and Icarus, from the eighth Book.

Part of the Fable of Cyparissus from the tenth Book.

Most part of the eleventh Book, and The Funeral of Memnon, from the thirteenth Book.

He likewise performed an entire Translation of AEsop's Fables.

Subjoined to the Fair Circassian are several Poems addressed to Sylvia; Naked Truth, from the second Book of Ovid's Fastorum; Heathen Priestcraft, from the first Book of Ovid's Fastorum; A Midsummer's Wish; and an Ode on Florinda, seen while she was Bathing. He is also author of a curious work, in one Volume Octavo, entitled Scripture Politics: being a view of the original constitution, and subsequent revolutions in the government of that people, out of whom the Saviour of the World was to arise: As it is contained in the Bible.

In consequence of his strong attachment to the Whig interest, he was made archdeacon of Salop 1732, and chaplain in ordinary to his present Majesty.

As late as the year 1750, Dr. Croxall published a poem called The Royal Manual, in the preface to which he endeavours to shew, that it was composed by Mr. Andrew Marvel, and found amongst his MSS. but the proprietor declares, that it was written by Dr. Croxall himself. This was the last of his performances, for he died the year following, in a pretty advanced age. His abilities, as a poet, we cannot better display, than by the specimen we are about to quote.

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On FLORINDA, Seen while she was Bathing.

Twas summer, and the clear resplendent moon
  Shedding far o'er the plains her full-orb'd light,
Among the lesser stars distinctly shone,
  Despoiling of its gloom the scanty night,
When, walking forth, a lonely path I took
Nigh the fair border of a purling brook.

Sweet and refreshing was the midnight air,
  Whose gentle motions hush'd the silent grove;
Silent, unless when prick'd with wakeful care
  Philomel warbled out her tale of love:
While blooming flowers, which in the meadows grew,
O'er all the place their blended odours threw.

Just by, the limpid river's crystal wave,
  Its eddies gilt with Phoebe's silver ray,
Still as it flow'd a glittering lustre gave
  With glancing gleams that emulate the day;
Yet oh! not half so bright as those that rise
Where young Florinda bends her smiling eyes.

Whatever pleasing views my senses meet,
  Her intermingled charms improve the theme;
The warbling birds, the flow'rs that breath so sweet,
  And the soft surface of the dimpled stream,
Resembling in the nymph some lovely part,
With pleasures more exalted seize my heart.

Rapt in these thoughts I negligently rov'd,
  Imagin'd transports all my soul employ,
When the delightful voice of her I lov'd
  Sent thro' the Shades a sound of real joy.
Confus'd it came, with giggling laughter mixt,
And echo from the banks reply'd betwixt.

Inspir'd with hope, upborn with light desire,
  To the dear place my ready footsteps tend.
Quick, as when kindling trails of active fire
  Up to their native firmament ascend:
There shrouded in the briers unseen I stood,
And thro' the leaves survey'd the neighb'ring flood.

Florinda, with two sister nymphs, undrest,
  Within the channel of the cooly tide,
By bathing sought to sooth her virgin breast,
  Nor could the night her dazzling beauties hide;
Her features, glowing with eternal bloom,
Darted, like Hesper, thro' the dusky gloom.

Her hair bound backward in a spiral wreath
  Her upper beauties to my sight betray'd;
The happy stream concealing those beneath,
  Around her waste with circling waters play'd;
Who, while the fair one on his bosom sported,
Her dainty limbs with liquid kisses courted.

A thousand Cupids with their infant arms
  Swam padling in the current here and there;
Some, with smiles innocent, remarked the charms
  Of the regardless undesigning fair;
Some, with their little Eben bows full-bended,
And levell'd shafts, the naked girl defended.

Her eyes, her lips, her breasts exactly round,
  Of lilly hue, unnumber'd arrows sent;
Which to my heart an easy passage found,
  Thrill'd in my bones, and thro' my marrow went:
Some bubbling upward thro' the water came,
Prepar'd by fancy to augment my flame.

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Ah love! how ill I bore thy pleasing pain?
  For while the tempting scene so near I view'd,
A fierce impatience throb'd in every vein,
  Discretion fled and reason lay subdu'd;
My blood beat high, and with its trembling made
A strange commotion in the rustling shade.

Fear seiz'd the tim'rous Naiads, all aghast
  Their boding spirits at the omen sink,
Their eyes they wildly on each other cast,
  And meditate to gain the farther brink;
When in I plung'd, resolving to asswage
In the cool gulph love's importuning rage.

Ah, stay Florinda (so I meant to speak)
  Let not from love the loveliest object fly!
But ere I spoke, a loud combining squeak
  From shrilling voices pierc'd the distant sky:
When straight, as each was their peculiar care,
Th' immortal pow'rs to bring relief prepare.

A golden cloud descended from above,
  Like that which whilom hung on Ida's brow,
Where Juno, Pallas, and the queen of love,
  As then to Paris, were conspicuous now.
Each goddess seiz'd her fav'rite charge, and threw
Around her limbs a robe of azure hue.

But Venus, who with pity saw my flame
  Kindled by her own Amorer so bright,
Approv'd in private what she seem'd to blame,
  And bless'd me with a vision of delight:
Careless she dropt Florinda's veil aside,
That nothing might her choicest beauties hide.

I saw Elysium and the milky way
  Fair-opening to the shades beneath her breast;
In Venus' lap the struggling wanton lay,
  And, while she strove to hide, reveal'd the rest.
A mole, embrown'd with no unseemly grace,
Grew near, embellishing the sacred place.

So pleas'd I view'd, as one fatigu'd with heat,
  Who near at hand beholds a shady bower,

Joyful, in hope-amidst the kind retreat
  To shun the day-star in his noon-tide hour;
Or as when parch'd with droughty thirst he spies
A mossy grot whence purest waters rise.

So I Florinda—but beheld in vain:
  Like Tantalus, who in the realms below
Sees blushing fruits, which to increase his pain,
  When he attempts to eat, his taste forego.
O Venus! give me more, or let me drink
Of Lethe's fountain, and forget to think.

* * * * *

The Revd. Mr. CHRISTOPHER PITT,

The celebrated translator of Virgil, was born in the year 1699. He received his early education in the college near Winchester; and in 1719 was removed from thence to new college in Oxford. When he had studied there four years, he was preferred to the living of Pimperne in Dorsetshire, by his friend and relation, Mr. George Pitt; which he held during the remaining part of his life. While he was at the university, he possessed the affection and esteem of all who knew him; and was particularly distinguished by that great poet Dr. Young, who so much admired the early displays of his genius, that with an engaging familiarity he used to call him his son.

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Amongst the first of Mr. Pitt's performances which saw the light, were a panegyric on lord Stanhope, and a poem on the Plague of Marseilles: But he had two large Folio's of MS. Poems, very fairly written out, while he was a school-boy, which at the time of election were delivered to the examiners. One of these volumes contained an entire translation of Lucan; and the other consisted of Miscellaneous pieces. Mr. Pitt's Lucan has never been published; perhaps from the consideration of its being the production of his early life, or from a consciousness of its not equalling the translation of that author by Rowe, who executed this talk in the meridian of his genius. Several of his other pieces were published afterwards, in his volume of Miscellaneous Poems.

The ingenious writer of the Student hath obliged the world by inferring in that work several original pieces by Mr. Pitt; whose name is prefixed to them.

Next to his beautiful Translation of Virgil, Mr. Pitt gained the greatest reputation by rendering into English, Vida's Art of Poetry, which he has executed with the strictest attention to the author's sense, with the utmost elegance of versification, and without suffering the noble spirit of the original to be lost in his translation.

This amiable poet died in the year 1748, without leaving one enemy behind him. On his tombstone were engraved these words,

"He lived innocent, and died beloved."

Mr. Auditor Benson, who in a pamphlet of his writing, has treated Dryden's translation of Virgil with great contempt, was yet charmed with that by Mr. Pitt, and found in it some beauties, of which he was fond even to a degree of enthusiasm. Alliteration is one of those beauties Mr. Benson so much admired, and in praise of which he has a long dissertation in his letters on translated verse. He once took an opportunity, in conversation with Mr. Pitt, to magnify that beauty, and to compliment him upon it. Mr. Pitt thought this article far less considerable than Mr. Benson did; but says he, 'since you are so fond of alliteration, the following couplet upon Cardinal Woolsey will not displease you,

'Begot by butchers, but by bishops bred,
How high his honour holds his haughty head.

Benson was no doubt charmed to hear his favourite grace in poetry so beautifully exemplified, which it certainly is, without any affectation or stiffness. Waller thought this a beauty; and Dryden was very fond of it. Some late writers, under the notion of imitating these two great versifiers in this point, run into downright affectation, and are guilty of the most improper and ridiculous expressions, provided there be but an alliteration. It is very remarkable, that an affectation of this beauty is ridiculed by Shakespear, in Love's Labour Lost, Act II. where the Pedant Holofernes says,

I will something affect the letter, for it argues facility.—
The praiseful princess pierced, and prickt.—

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Mr. Upton, in his letter concerning Spencer, observes, that alliteration is ridiculed too in Chaucer, in a passage which every reader does not understand.

The Ploughman's Tale is written, in some measure, in imitation of Pierce's Ploughman's Visions; and runs chiefly upon some one letter, or at least many stanza's have this affected iteration, as

A full sterne striefe is stirr'd now,—
For some be grete grown on grounde.

When the Parson therefore in his order comes to tell his tale, which reflected on the clergy, he says,

—I am a southern man,
I cannot jest, rum, ram, riff, by letter,
And God wote, rime hold I but little better.

Ever since the publication of Mr. Pitt's version of the Aeneid, the learned world has been divided concerning the just proportion of merit, which ought to be ascribed to it. Some have made no scruple in defiance of the authority of a name, to prefer it to Dryden's, both in exactness, as to his author's sense, and even in the charms of poetry. This perhaps, will be best discovered by producing a few shining passages of the Aeneid, translated by these two great masters.

In biographical writing, the first and most essential principal is candour, which no reverence for the memory of the dead, nor affection for the virtues of the living should violate. The impartiality which we have endeavoured to observe through this work, obliges us to declare, that so far as our judgment may be trusted, the latter poet has done most justice to Virgil; that he mines in Pitt with a lustre, which Dryden wanted not power, but leisure to bestow; and a reader, from Pitt's version, will both acquire a more intimate knowledge of Virgil's meaning, and a more exalted idea of his abilities.—Let not this detract from the high representations we have endeavoured in some other places to make of Dryden. When he undertook Virgil, he was stooping with age, oppressed with wants, and conflicting with infirmities. In this situation, it was no wonder that much of his vigour was lost; and we ought rather to admire the amazing force of genius, which was so little depressed under all these calamities, than industriously to dwell on his imperfections.

Mr. Spence in one of his chapters on Allegory, in his Polymetis, has endeavoured to shew, how very little our poets have understood the allegories of the antients, even in their translations of them; and has instanced Mr. Dryden's translation of the Aeneid, as he thought him one of our most celebrated poets. The mistakes are very numerous, and some of them unaccountably gross. Upon this, says Mr. Warton, "I was desirous to examine Mr. Pitt's translation of the same passages; and was surprized to find near fifty

instances which Mr. Spence has given of Dryden's mistakes of that kind, when Mr. Pitt had not fallen into above three or four." Mr. Warton then produces some instances, which we shall not here transcribe, as it will be more entertaining to our readers to have a few of the most shining passages compared, in which there is the highest room for rising to a blaze of poetry.

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There are few strokes in the whole Aeneid, which have been more admired than Virgil's description of the Lake of Avernus, Book VI.

Spelunca alta fuit, vastoque immanis hiatu,
Scrupea, tuta lacu nigro, nemorumque tenebris;
Quam super haud ullae poterant impune volantes.
Tendere iter pennis; talis sese halitus atris,
Faucibus effundens supera ad convexa ferebat:
Unde locum Graii dixerunt nomine Aornon.
Quatuor hic primum nigrantes terga juvencos
Constituit, frontique invergit vina sacerdos;
Et, summas carpens media inter cornua setas,
Ignibus imponit sacris libarmina prima,
Voce vocans Hecaten, caeloque ereboque potentem.

DRYDEN.

Deep was the cave; and downward as it went,
From the wide mouth, a rocky wide descent;
And here th'access a gloomy grove defends;
And there th'innavigable lake extends.
O'er whose unhappy waters, void of light,
No bird presumes to steer his airy flight;
Such deadly stenches from the depth arise,
And steaming sulphur that infects the skies.
From hence the Grecian bards their legends make,
And give the name Aornus to the lake.
Four fable bullocks in the yoke untaught,
For sacrifice, the pious hero brought.
The priestess pours the wine betwixt their horns:
Then cuts the curling hair, that first oblation burns,
Invoking Hecate hither to repair;
(A powerful name in hell and upper air.)

PITT.

Deep, deep, a cavern lies, devoid of light,
All rough with rocks, and horrible to sight;
Its dreadful mouth is fenc'd with sable floods,
And the brown horrors of surrounding woods.
From its black jaws such baleful vapours rise,
Blot the bright day, and blast the golden skies,
That not a bird can stretch her pinions there,

Thro' the thick poisons, and incumber'd air,
But struck by death, her flagging pinions cease;
And hence Aornus was it call'd by Greece.
Hither the priestess, four black heifers led,
Between their horns the hallow'd wine she shed;
From their high front the topmost hairs she drew,
And in the flames the first oblations threw.
Then calls on potent Hecate, renown'd
In Heav'n above, and Erebus profound.

The next instance we shall produce, in which, as in the former, Mr. Pitt has greatly exceeded Dryden, is taken from Virgil's description of Elysium, which says Dr. Trap is so charming, that it is almost Elysium to read it.

His demum exactis, perfecto munere divae,
Devenere locos laetos, & amoena vireta
Fortunatorum nemorum, sedesque beatas.
Largior hic campos aether & lumine vestit
Purpureo; solemque suum, sua sidera norunt.
Pars in gramineis exercent membra palaestris,
Contendunt ludo, & fulva luctanter arena:
Pars pedibus plaudunt choreas, & carmina dicunt.
Necnon Threicius longa cum veste sacerdos
Obloquitur numeris septem discrimina vocum:
Jamque eadem digitis, jam pectine pulsat eburno.

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PITT.

These rites compleat, they reach the flow'ry plains,
The verdant groves, where endless pleasure reigns.
Here glowing AEther shoots a purple ray,
And o'er the region pours a double day.
From sky to sky th'unwearied splendour runs,
And nobler planets roll round brighter suns.
Some wrestle on the sands, and some in play
And games heroic pass the hours away.
Those raise the song divine, and these advance
In measur'd steps to form the solemn dance.
There Orpheus graceful in his long attire,
In seven divisions strikes the sounding lyre;
Across the chords the quivering quill he flings,
Or with his flying fingers sweeps the strings.

DRYDEN.

These holy rites perform'd, they took their way,
Where long extended plains of pleasure lay.
The verdant fields with those of heav'n may vie;
With AEther veiled, and a purple sky:
The blissful seats of happy souls below;
Stars of their own, and their own suns they know.
Their airy limbs in sports they exercise,
And on the green contend the wrestlers prize.
Some in heroic verse divinely sing,
Others in artful measures lead the ring.
The Thracian bard surrounded by the rest,
There stands conspicuous in his flowing vest.
His flying fingers, and harmonious quill,
Strike seven distinguish'd notes, and seven at once they fill.

In the celebrated description of the swiftness of Camilla in the VIIth Aeneid, which Virgil has laboured with so much industry, Dryden is more equal to Pitt than in the foregoing instances, tho' we think even in this he falls short of him.

Illa vel intactae segetis per summa volaret
Gramina, nec teneras curfu laesisset aristas:
Vel mare per medium, fluctu suspensa tumenti
Ferret iter; celeres nec tingeret aequore plantas.

DRYDEN.

—The fierce virago fought,—
Outstrip'd the winds, in speed upon the plain,
Flew o'er the fields, nor hurt the bearded grain:
She swept the seas, and as she skim'd along,
Her flying feet, unbath'd, on billows hung.

PITT.

She led the rapid race, and left behind,
The flagging floods, and pinions of the wind;
Lightly she flies along the level plain,
Nor hurts the tender grass, nor bends the golden grain;
Or o'er the swelling surge suspended sweeps,
And smoothly skims unbath'd along the deeps.

We shall produce one passage of a very different kind from the former, that the reader may have the pleasure of making the comparison. This is the celebrated simile in the XIth Book, when the fiery eagerness of Turnus panting for the battle, is resembled to that of a Steed; which is perhaps one of the most picturesque beauties in the whole Aeneid.

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Qualis, ubi abruptis fugit praesepia vinc'lis,
Tandem liber equus, campoque potitus aperto;
Aut ille in pastus armentaque tendit equarum,
Aut assuetus aquae perfundi flumine noto
Emicat; arrectisque fremit cervicibus alte
Luxurians, luduntque jubae per colla, per armos.

DRYDEN.

Freed from his keepers, thus with broken reins,
The wanton courser prances o'er the plains:
Or in the pride of youth, o'erleaps the mounds,
And snuffs the females in forbidden grounds.
Or seeks his wat'ring in the well-known flood,
To quench his thirst, and cool his fiery blood:
He swims luxuriant in the liquid plain;
And o'er his shoulders flows his waving main.
He neighs, he snorts, he bears his head on high;
Before his ample chest, the frothy waters fly.

PITT.

So the gay pamper'd steed with loosen'd reins,
Breaks from the stall, and pours along the plains;
With large smooth strokes he rushes to the flood,
Bathes his bright sides, and cools his fiery blood;
Neighs as he flies, and tossing high his head,
Snuffs the fair females in the distant mead;
At every motion o'er his neck reclin'd,
Plays his redundant main, and dances in the wind.

From the above specimens, our readers may determine for themselves to whose translation they would give the preference. Critics, like historians, should divest themselves of prejudice: they should never be misguided by the authority of a great name, nor yield that tribute to prescription, which is only due to merit. Mr. Pitt, no doubt, had many advantages above Dryden in this arduous province: As he was later in the attempt, he had consequently the version of Dryden to improve upon. He saw the errors of that great poet, and avoided them; he discovered his beauties, and improved upon them; and as he was not impelled by necessity, he had leisure to revise, correct, and finish his excellent work.

The Revd. and ingenious Mr. Joseph Warton has given to the world a compleat edition of Virgil's works made English. The Aeneid by Mr. Pitt: The Eclogues, Georgics, and

notes on the whole, by himself; with some new observations by Mr. Holdsworth, Mr. Spence, and others. This is the compleatest English dress, in which Virgil ever appeared. It is enriched with a dissertation on the VIth Book of the Aeneid, by Warburton. On the Shield of Aeneas, by Mr. William Whitehead. On the Character of Japis, by the late Dr. Atterbury bishop of Rochester; and three Essays on Pastoral, Didactic, and Epic Poetry, by Mr. Warton.

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Mr. HAMMOND.

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This Gentleman, known to the world by the Love Elegies, which some years after his death were published by the Earl of Chesterfield, was the son of a Turkey merchant, in the city of London. We cannot ascertain where he received his education; but it does not appear that he was at any of the universities. Mr. Hammond was early preferred to a place about the person of the late Prince of Wales, which he held till an unfortunate accident stript him of his reason, or at least so affected his imagination, that his senses were greatly disordered. The unhappy cause of his calamity was a passion he entertained for one Miss Dashwood, which proved unsuccessful. Upon this occasion it was that he wrote his Love Elegies, which have been much celebrated for their tenderness. The lady either could not return his passion with a reciprocal fondness, or entertained too ambitious views to settle her affections upon him, which he himself in some of his Elegies seems to hint; for he frequently mentions her passion for gold and splendour, and justly treats it as very unworthy a fair one's bosom. The chief beauty of these Elegies certainly consists in their being written by a man who intimately felt the subject; for they are more the language of the heart than of the head. They have warmth, but little poetry, and Mr. Hammond seems to have been one of those poets, who are made so by love, not by nature.

Mr. Hammond died in the year 1743, in the thirty-first year of his age, at Stow, the seat of his kind patron, the lord Cobham, who honoured him with a particular intimacy. The editor of Mr. Hammond's Elegies observes, that he composed them before he was 21 years of age; a period, says he, when fancy and imagination commonly riot at the expence of judgment and correctness. He was sincere in his love, as in his friendship; he wrote to his mistress, as he spoke to his friends, nothing but the true genuine sentiments of his heart. Tibullus seems to have been the model our author judiciously preferred to Ovid; the former writing directly from the heart to the heart, the latter too often yielding and addressing himself to the imagination.

As a specimen of Mr. Hammond's turn for Elegiac Poetry, we shall quote his third Elegy, in which he upbraids and threatens the avarice of Neaera, and resolves to quit her.

Should Jove descend in floods of liquid ore,
And golden torrents stream from every part,
That craving bosom still would heave for more,
Not all the Gods cou'd satisfy thy heart.

But may thy folly, which can thus disdain
My honest love, the mighty wrong repay,
May midnight-fire involve thy sordid gain,
And on the shining heaps of rapine prey.

May all the youths, like me, by love deceiv'd,
Not quench the ruin, but applaud the doom,

And when thou dy’st, may not one heart be griev’d:
May not one tear bedew the lonely tomb.

But the deserving, tender, gen’rous maid,
Whose only care is her poor lover’s mind,
Tho’ ruthless age may bid her beauty fade,
In every friend to love, a friend shall find.

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And when the lamp of life will burn no more,
When dead, she seems as in a gentle sleep,
The pitying neighbour shall her loss deplore;
And round the bier assembled lovers weep.

With flow'ry garlands, each revolving year
Shall strow the grave, where truth and softness rest,
Then home returning drop the pious tear,
And bid the turff lie easy on her breast.

* * * * *

Mr. JOHN BANKS.

This poet was the son of Mr. John Banks of Sunning in Berkshire, in which place he was born in 1709. His father dying while our author was very young, the care of his education devolved upon an uncle in law, who placed him at a private school, under the tuition of one Mr. Belpene, an Anabaptist. This schoolmaster, so far from encouraging young Banks to make a great progress in classical learning, exerted his influence with his relations to have him taken from school, and represented him as incapable of receiving much erudition. This conduct in Mr. Belpene proceeded from an early jealousy imbibed against this young man, who, so far from being dull, as the school-master represented him, possessed extraordinary parts, of which he gave very early proofs.

Mr. Belpene was perhaps afraid, that as soon as Mr. Banks mould finish his education, he would be preferred to him as minister to the congregation of Anabaptists, which place he enjoyed, independent of his school. The remonstrances of Mr. Belpene prevailed with Mr. Banks's uncle, who took him from school, and put him apprentice to a Weaver at Reading. Before the expiration of the apprenticeship, Mr. Banks had the misfortune to break his arm, and by that accident was disqualified from pursuing the employment to which he was bred. How early Mr. Banks began to write we cannot determine, but probably the first sallies of his wit were directed against this school-master, by whom he was injuriously treated, and by whose unwarrantable jealousy his education, in some measure, was ruined. Our author, by the accident already mentioned, being rendered unfit to obtain a livelihood, by any mechanical employment, was in a situation deplorable enough. His uncle was either unable, or unwilling to assist him, or, perhaps, as the relation between them was only collateral, he had not a sufficient degree of tenderness for him, to make any efforts in his favour. In this perplexity of our young poet's affairs, ten pounds were left him by a relation, which he very oeconomically improved to the best advantage. He came to London, and purchasing a parcel of old books, he set up a stall in Spital-Fields.

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Much about this time Stephen Duck, who had wrote a poem called The Thresher, reaped very great advantages from it, and was caressed by persons in power, who, in imitation of the Royal patroness, heaped favours upon him, perhaps more on account of the extraordinary regard Queen Caroline had shewn him, than any opinion of his merit. Mr. Banks considered that the success of Mr. Duck was certainly owing to the peculiarity of his circumstances, and that the novelty of a thresher writing verses, was the genuine cause of his being taken notice of, and not any intrinsic excellence in the verses themselves. This reflexion inspired him with a resolution of making an effort of the same kind; but as curiosity was no more to be excited by novelty, the attempt was without success. He wrote, in imitation of The Thresher, The Weaver's Miscellany, which failed producing the intended effect, and, 'tis said, never was reckoned by Mr. Banks himself as any way worthy of particular distinction. His business of selling books upon a stall becoming disagreeable to him, as it demanded a constant and uncomfortable attendance, he quitted that way of life, and was received into the shop of one Mr. Montague a bookbinder, and bookseller, whom he served some time as a journeyman. During the time he lived with Mr. Montague, he employed his leisure hours in composing several poems, which were now swelled to such a number, that he might sollicit a subscription for them with a good grace. He had taken care to improve his acquaintance, and as he had a power of distinguishing his company, he found his interest higher in the world than he had imagined. He addressed a poem to Mr. Pope, which he transmitted to that gentleman, with a copy of his proposals inclosed. Mr. Pope answered his letter, and the civilities contained in it, by subscribing for two setts of his poems, and 'tis said he wrote to Mr. Banks the following compliment,

'May this put money in your purse:
For, friend, believe me, I've seen worse.'

The publication of these poems, while they, no doubt, enhanced his interest, added likewise something to his reputation; and quitting his employment at Mr. Montague's, he made an effort to live by writing only. He engaged in a large work in folio, entitled, The Life of Christ, which was very acceptable to the public, and was executed with much piety and precision.

Mr. Banks's next prose work, of any considerable length, was A Critical Review of the Life of Oliver Cromwell. We have already taken notice that he received his education among the Anabaptists, and consequently was attached to those principles, and a favourer of that kind of constitution which Cromwell, in the first period of his power, meant to establish. Of the many Lives of this great man, with which the biography of this nation has been augmented, perhaps not one is written with a true dispassionate candour. Men are divided in their sentiments concerning the measures which, at that critical AEra, were pursued

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by contending factions. The writers, who have undertaken to review those unhappy times, have rather struggled to defend a party, to which they may have been swayed by education or interest, than, by stripping themselves of all partiality, to dive to the bottom of contentions in search of truth. The heats of the Civil War produced such animosities, that the fervour which then prevailed, communicated itself to posterity, and, though at the distance of a hundred years, has not yet subsided. It will be no wonder then if Mr. Banks's Review is not found altogether impartial. He has, in many cases, very successfully defended Cromwell; he has yielded his conduct, in others, to the just censure of the world. But were a Whig and a Tory to read this book, the former would pronounce him a champion for liberty, and the latter would declare him a subverter of truth, an enemy to monarchy, and a friend to that chaos which Oliver introduced.

Mr. Banks, by his early principles, was, no doubt, biassed to the Whig interest, and, perhaps, it may be true, that in tracing the actions of Cromwell, he may have dwelt with a kind of increasing pleasure on the bright side of his character, and but slightly hinted at those facts on which the other party fasten, when they mean to traduce him as a parricide and an usurper. But supposing the allegation to be true, Mr. Banks, in this particular, has only discovered the common failing of humanity: prejudice and partiality being blemishes from which the mind of man, perhaps, can never be entirely purged.

Towards the latter end of Mr. Banks's life, he was employed in writing two weekly news-papers, the Old England, and the Westminster Journals. Those papers treated chiefly on the politics of the times, and the trade and navigation of England. They were carried on by our author, without offence to any party, with an honest regard to the public interest, and in the same kind of spirit, that works of that sort generally are. These papers are yet continued by other hands.

Mr. Banks had from nature very considerable abilities, and his poems deservedly hold the second rank. They are printed in two volumes 8vo. Besides the poems contained in these volumes, there are several other poetical pieces of his scattered in news-papers, and other periodical works to which he was an occasional contributer. He had the talent of relating a tale humorously in verse, and his graver poems have both force of thinking, and elegance of numbers to recommend them.

Towards the spring of the year 1751 Mr. Banks, who had long been in a very indifferent state of health, visibly declined. His disorder was of a nervous sort, which he bore with great patience, and even with a chearful resignation. This spring proved fatal to him; he died on the 19th of April at his house at Islington, where he had lived several years in easy circumstances, by the produce of his pen, without leaving one enemy behind him.

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Mr. Banks was a man of real good nature, of an easy benevolent disposition, and his friends ever esteemed him as a most agreeable companion. He had none of the petulance, which too frequently renders men of genius unacceptable to their acquaintance. He was of so composed a temper, that he was seldom known to be in a passion, and he wore a perpetual chearfulness in his countenance. He was rather bashful, than forward; his address did not qualify him for gay company, and though he possessed a very extensive knowledge of things, yet, as he had not much grace of delivery, or elegance of manner, he could not make so good a figure in conversation, as many persons of his knowledge, with a happier appearance. Of all authors Mr. Banks was the farthest removed from envy or malevolence. As he could not bear the least whisper of detraction, so he was never heard to express uneasiness at the growing reputation of another; nor was he ever engaged in literacy contests. We shall conclude this article in the words of lord Clarendon. 'He that lives such a life, need be less anxious at how short warning it is taken from him [1].'

[1] See lord Clarendon's character of the lord Falkland.

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Mrs. LAETITIA PILKINGTON.

This unfortunate poetess, the circumstances of whose life, written by herself, have lately entertained the public, was born in the year 1712. She was the daughter of Dr. Van Lewen, a gentleman of Dutch extraction, who settled in Dublin. Her mother was descended of an ancient and honourable family, who have frequently intermarried with the nobility.

Mrs. Pilkington, from her earliest infancy, had a strong disposition to letters, and particularly to poetry. All her leisure hours were dedicated to the muses; from a reader she quickly became a writer, and, as Mr. Pope expresses it,

'She lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.'

Her performances were considered as extraordinary for her years, and drew upon her the admiration of many, who found more pleasure in her conversation, than that of girls generally affords. In consequence of a poetical genius, and an engaging sprightliness peculiar to her, she had many wooers, some of whom seriously addressed her, while others meant no more than the common gallantries of young people. After the usual ceremony of a courtship, she became the wife of Mr. Matthew Pilkington, a gentleman in holy orders, and well known in the poetical world by his volume of Miscellanies, revised by dean Swift. As we have few materials for Mrs. Pilkington's life, beside those furnished by herself in her Memoirs published in 1749, our readers must depend upon her veracity for some facts which we may be obliged to mention, upon her sole authority.

Our poetess, says she, had not been long married, e'er Mr. Pilkington became jealous, not of her person, but her understanding. She was applauded by dean Swift, and many other persons of taste; every compliment that was paid her, gave a mortal stab to his peace. Behold the difference between the lover and the husband! When Mr. Pilkington courted her, he was not more enamoured of her person, than her poetry, he shewed her verses to every body in the enthusiasm of admiration: but now he was become a husband, it was a kind of treason for a wife to pretend to literary accomplishments.

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It is certainly true, that when a woman happens to have more understanding than her husband, she should be very industrious to conceal it; but it is like wise true, that the natural vanity of the sex is difficult to check, and the vanity of a poet still more difficult: wit in a female mind can no more cease to sparkle, than she who possesses it, can cease to speak. Mr. Pilkington began to view her with scornful, yet with jealous eyes, and in this situation, nothing but misery was likely to be their lot. While these jealousies subsisted, Mr. Pilkington, contrary to the advice of his friends, went into England, in order to serve as chaplain to alderman Barber during his mayoralty of the city of London.

While he remained in London, and having the strange humour of loving his wife best at a distance, he wrote her a very kind letter, in which he informed her, that her verses were like herself, full of elegance and beauty[1]; that Mr. Pope and others, to whom he had shewn them, longed to see the writer, and that he heartily wished her in London. This letter set her heart on flame. London has very attractive charms to most young people, and it cannot be much wondered at if Mrs. Pilkington should take the only opportunity she was ever likely to have, of gratifying her curiosity: which however proved fatal to her; for though we cannot find, that during this visit to London, her conduct was the least reproachable, yet, upon her return to Ireland, she underwent a violent persecution of tongues. They who envied her abilities, fastened now upon her morals; they were industrious to trace the motives of her going to London; her behaviour while she was there; and insinuated suspicions against her chastity. These detracters were chiefly of her own sex, who supplied by the bitterest malice what they wanted in power.

Not long after this an accident happened, which threw Mrs. Pilkington's affairs into the utmost confusion. Her father was stabbed, as she has related, by an accident, but many people in Dublin believe, by his own wife, though some say, by his own hand. Upon this melancholy occasion, Mrs. Pilkington has given an account of her father, which places her in a very amiable light. She discovered for him the most filial tenderness; she watched round his bed, and seems to have been the only relation then about him, who deserved his blessing. From the death of her father her sufferings begin, and the subsequent part of her life is a continued series of misfortunes.

Mr. Pilkington having now no expectation of a fortune by her, threw off all reserve in his behaviour to her. While Mrs. Pilkington was in the country for her health, his dislike of her seems to have encreased, and, perhaps, he resolved to get rid of his wife at any rate: nor was he long waiting for an occasion of parting with her. The story of their separation may be found at large in her Memoirs. The substance is, that she was so indiscreet as to permit a gentleman

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to be found in her bed-chamber at an unseasonable hour; for which she makes this apology. 'Lovers of learning I am sure will pardon me, as I solemnly declare, it was the attractive charms of a new book, which the gentleman would not lend me, but consented to stay till I read it through, that was the sole motive of my detaining him.' This indeed is a poor evasion; and as Mrs. Pilkington has said no more in favour of her innocence, they must have great charity indeed with whom she can stand exculpated.

While the gentleman was with her, the servants let in twelve men at the kitchen window, who, though they might, as she avers, have opened the chamber door, chose rather to break it to pieces, and took both her and the gentleman prisoners. Her husband now told her, that she must turn out of doors; and taking hold of her hand, made a present of it to the gentleman, who could not in honour refuse to take her, especially as his own liberty was to be procured upon no other terms. It being then two o'clock in the morning, and not knowing where to steer, she went home with her gallant: but she sincerely assures us, that neither of them entertained a thought of any thing like love, but sat like statues 'till break of day.

The gentleman who was found with her, was obliged to fly, leaving a letter and five guineas inclosed in it for her. She then took a lodging in some obscure street, where she was persecuted by infamous women, who were panders to men of fortune.

In the mean time Mr. Pilkington carried on a vigorous prosecution against her in the Spiritual Court; during which, as she says, he solemnly declared, he would allow her a maintainance, if she never gave him any opposition: but no sooner had he obtained a separation, than he retracted every word he had said on that subject. Upon this she was advised to lodge an appeal, and as every one whom he consulted, assured him he would be cast, he made a proposal of giving her a small annuity, and thirty pounds[2] in money; which, in regard to her children, she chose to accept, rather than ruin their father. She was with child at the time of her separation, and when her labour came on, the woman where she lodged insisted upon doubling her rent: whereupon she was obliged to write petitionary letters, which were not always successful.

Having passed the pains and peril of childbirth, she begged of Mr. Pilkington to send her some money to carry her to England; who, in hopes of getting rid of her, sent her nine pounds. She was the more desirous to leave Ireland, as she found her character sinking every day with the public. When she was on board the yacht, a gentleman of figure in the gay world took an opportunity of making love to her, which she rejected with some indignation. 'Had I (said she) accepted the offers he made me, poverty had never approached me. I dined with him at Parkgate, and I hope virtue will be rewarded; for though I had but five guineas in the world to carry me to London,

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I yet possessed chastity enough to refuse fifty for a night's lodging, and that too from a handsome well-bred man. I shall scarcely ever forget his words to me, as they seemed almost prophetic. "Well, madam, said he, you do not know London; you will be undone there." "Why, sir, said I, I hope you don't imagine I will go into a bad course of life?" "No, madam, said he, but I think you will sit in your chamber and starve;" which, upon my word, I have been pretty near doing; and, but that the Almighty raised me one worthy friend, good old Mr. Cibber, to whose humanity I am indebted, under God, both for liberty and life, I had been quite lost.'

When Mrs. Pilkington arrived in London, her conduct was the reverse of what prudence would have dictated. She wanted to get into favour with the great, and, for that purpose, took a lodging in St. James's Street, at a guinea a week; upon no other prospect of living, than what might arise from some poems she intended to publish by subscription. In this place she attracted the notice of the company frequenting White's Chocolate-House; and her story, by means of Mr. Cibber, was made known to persons of the first distinction, who, upon his recommendation, were kind to her.

Her acquaintance with Mr. Cibber began by a present she made him of The Trial of Constancy, a poem of hers, which Mr. Dodsley published. Mr. Cibber, upon this, visited her, and, ever after, with the most unwearied zeal, promoted her interest. The reader cannot expect that we should swell this volume by a minute relation of all the incidents which happened to her, while she continued a poetical mendicant. She has not, without pride, related all the little tattle which passed between her and persons of distinction, who, through the abundance of their idleness, thought proper to trifle an hour with her.

Her virtue seems now to have been in a declining state; at least, her behaviour was such, that a man, must have extraordinary faith, who can think her innocent. She has told us, in the second volume of her Memoirs, that she received from a noble person a present of fifty pounds. This, she says, was the ordeal, or fiery trial; youth, beauty, nobility of birth, attacking at once the most desolate person in the world. However, we find her soon after this thrown into great distress, and making various applications to persons of distinction for subscriptions to her poems. Such as favoured her by subscribing, she has repaid with most lavish encomiums, and those that withheld that proof of their bounty, she has sacrificed to her resentment, by exhibiting them in the most hideous light her imagination could form.

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From the general account of her characters, this observation results, That such as she has stigmatized for want of charity, ought rather to be censured for want of decency. There might be many reasons, why a person benevolent in his nature, might yet refuse to subscribe to her; but, in general, such as refused, did it (as she says) in a rude manner, and she was more piqued at their deficiency in complaisance to her, than their want of generosity. Complaisance is easily shewn; it may be done without expence; it often procures admirers, and can never make an enemy. On the other hand, benevolence itself, accompanied with a bad grace, may lay us under obligations, but can never command our affection. It is said of King Charles I. that he bestowed his bounty with so bad a grace, that he disobliged more by giving, than his son by refusing; and we have heard of a gentleman of great parts, who went to Newgate with a greater satisfaction, as the judge who committed him accompanied the sentence with an apology and a compliment, than he received from his releasment by another, who, in extending the King's mercy to him, allayed the Royal clemency by severe invectives against the gentleman's conduct.

We must avoid entering into a detail of the many addresses, disappointments and encouragements, which she met with in her attendance upon the great: her characters are naturally, sometimes justly, and often strikingly, exhibited. The incidents of her life while she remained in London were not very important, though she has related them with all the advantage they can admit of. They are such as commonly happen to poets in distress, though it does not often fall out, that the insolence of wealth meets with such a bold return as this lady has given it. There is a spirit of keenness, and freedom runs through her book, she spares no man because he is great by his station, or famous by his abilities. Some knowledge of the world may be gained from reading her Memoirs; the different humours of mankind she has shewn to the life, and whatever was ridiculous in the characters she met with, is exposed in very lively terms.

The next scene which opens in Mrs. Pilkington's life, is the prison of the Marshalsea. The horrors and miseries of this jail she has pathetically described, in such a manner as should affect the heart of every rigid creditor. In favour of her fellow-prisoners, she wrote a very moving memorial, which, we are told, excited the legislative power to grant an Act of Grace for them. After our poetess had remained nine weeks in this prison, she was at last released by the goodness of Mr. Cibber, from whose representation of her distress, no less than sixteen dukes contributed a guinea apiece towards her enlargement. When this news was brought her, she fainted away with excess of joy. Some time after she had tasted liberty, she began to be weary of that continued attendance upon the great; and therefore was resolved, if ever

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she was again favoured with a competent sum, to turn it into trade, and quit the precarious life of a poetical mendicant. Mr. Cibber had five guineas in reserve for her, which, with ten more she received from the duke of Marlborough, enabled her to take a shop in St. James's Street, which she filled with pamphlets and prints, as being a business better suited to her taste and abilities, than any other. Her adventures, while she remained a shopkeeper, are not extremely important. She has neglected to inform us how long she continued behind the counter, but has told us, however, that by the liberality of her friends, and the bounty of her subscribers, she was set above want, and that the autumn of her days was like to be spent in peace and serenity.

But whatever were her prospects, she lived not long to enjoy the comforts of competence, for on the 29th of August, 1750, a few years after the publication of her second volume, she died at Dublin, in the thirty ninth year of her age.

Considered as a writer, she holds no mean rank. She was the author of The Turkish Court, or The London Apprentice, acted at the theatre in Caple-street, Dublin, 1748, but never printed. This piece was poorly performed, otherwise it promised to have given great satisfaction. The first act of her tragedy of the Roman Father, is no ill specimen of her talents that way, and throughout her Memoirs there are scattered many beautiful little pieces, written with a true spirit of poetry, though under all the disadvantages that wit can suffer. Her memory seems to have been amazingly great, of which her being able to repeat almost all Shakespear is an astonishing instance.

One of the prettiest of her poetical performances, is the following Address to the reverend Dr. Hales, with whom she became acquainted at the house of captain Mead, near Hampton-Court.

To the Revd. Dr. HALES.

Hail, holy sage! whose comprehensive mind,
Not to this narrow spot of earth confin'd,
Thro' num'rous worlds can nature's laws explore,
Where none but Newton ever trod before;
And, guided by philosophy divine,
See thro' his works th'Almighty Maker shine:
Whether you trace him thro' yon rolling spheres,
Where, crown'd with boundless glory, he appears;
Or in the orient sun's resplendent rays,
His setting lustre, or his noon-tide blaze,
New wonders still thy curious search attend,
Begun on earth, in highest Heav'n to end.
O! while thou dost those God-like works pursue,

What thanks, from human-kind to thee are due!
Whose error, doubt, and darkness, you remove,
And charm down knowledge from her throne above.
Nature to thee her choicest secrets yields,
Unlocks her springs, and opens all her fields;
Shews the rich treasure that her breast contains,
In azure fountains, or enamell'd plains;
Each healing stream, each plant of virtuous use,
To thee their medicinal pow'rs produce.
Pining disease and anguish wing their flight,
And rosy health renews us to delight.

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When you, with art, the animal dissect,
And, with the microscopic aid, inspect
[Transcriber's note: 'microsopic' in
original]
Where, from the heart, unnumbered rivers glide,
And faithful back return their purple tide;
How fine the mechanism, by thee display'd!
How wonderful is ev'ry creature made!
Vessels, too small for sight, the fluids strain,
Concoct, digest, assimilate, sustain;
In deep attention, and surprize, we gaze,
And to life's author, raptur'd, pour out praise.

What beauties dost thou open to the sight,
Untwisting all the golden threads of light!
Each parent colour tracing to its source,
Distinct they live, obedient to thy force!
Nought from thy penetration is conceal'd,
And light, himself, shines to thy soul reveal'd.

So when the sacred writings you display,
And on the mental eye shed purer day;
In radiant colours truth array'd we see,
Confess her charms, and guided up by thee;
Soaring sublime, on contemplation's wings,
The fountain seek, whence truth eternal springs.
Fain would I wake the consecrated lyre,
And sing the sentiments thou didst inspire!
But find my strength unequal to a theme,
Which asks a Milton's, or a Seraph's flame!
If, thro' weak words, one ray of reason shine,
Thine was the thought, the errors only mine.
Yet may these numbers to thy soul impart
The humble incense of a grateful heart.
Trifles, with God himself, acceptance find,
If offer'd with sincerity of mind;
Then, like the Deity, indulgence shew,
Thou, most like him, of all his works below.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] An extravagant compliment; for Mrs. Pilkington was far from being a beauty.

[2] Of which, she says, she received only 15 l.

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Mr. THOMAS SOUTHERN.

This eminent poet was born in Dublin, on the year of the Restoration of Charles the IId. and received his early education at the university there. In the 18th year of his age, he quitted Ireland, and as his intention was to pursue a lucrative profession, he entered himself in the Middle-Temple. But the natural vivacity of his mind overcoming considerations of advantage, he quitted that state of life, and entered into the more agreeable service of the Muses[1].

The first dramatic performance of Mr. Southern, his Persian Prince, or Loyal Brother, was acted in the year 1682. The story is taken from Thamas Prince of Persia, a Novel; and the scene is laid in Ispahan in Persia. This play was introduced at a time when the Tory interest was triumphant in England, and the character of the Loyal brother was no doubt intended to compliment James Duke of York, who afterwards rewarded the poet for his service. To this Tragedy Mr. Dryden wrote the Prologue and Epilogue, which furnished Mr. Southern with an opportunity of saying in his dedication, 'That the Laureat's own pen secured me, maintaining the out-works, while I lay safe entrenched within his lines; and malice, ill-nature, and censure were forced to grin at a distance.'

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The Prologue is a continued invective against the Whigs, and whether considered as a party libel, or an induction to a new play, is in every respect unworthy of the great hand that wrote it. His next play was a Comedy, called the Disappointment, or the Mother in Fashion, performed in the year 1684.—After the accession of king James the IId to the throne, when the duke of Monmouth made an unfortunate attempt upon his uncle's crown, Mr. Southern went into the army, in the regiment of foot raised by the lord Ferrers, afterwards commanded by the duke of Berwick; and he had three commissions, *viz*. ensign, lieutenant, and captain, under King James, in that regiment.

During the reign of this prince, in the year before the Revolution, he wrote a Tragedy called the Spartan Dame, which however was not acted till the year 1721. The subject is taken from the Life of Agis in Plutarch, where the character of Chelonis, between the duties of a wife and daughter was thought to have a near resemblance to that of King William's Queen Mary. 'I began this play, says Mr. Southern, a year before the Revolution, and near four acts written without any view. Many things interfering with those times, I laid by what I had written for seventeen years: I shewed it then to the late duke of Devonshire, who was in every regard a judge; he told me he saw no reason why it might not have been acted the year of the Revolution: I then finished it, and as I thought cut out the exceptionable parts, but could not get it acted, not being able to persuade myself to the cutting off those limbs, which I thought essential to the strength and life of it. But since I found it must pine in obscurity without it, I consented to the operation, and after the amputation of every line, very near to the number of 400, it stands on its own legs still, and by the favour of the town, and indulging assistance of friends, has come successfully forward on the stage.' This play was inimitably acted. Mr. Booth, Mr. Wilks, Mr. Cibber, Mr. Mills, sen. Mrs. Oldfield, and Mrs. Porter, all performed in it, in their heighth of reputation, and the full vigour of their powers.

Mr. Southern acknowledges in his preface to this play, that the last scene of the third Act, was almost all written by the honourable John Stafford, father to the earl of Stafford. Mr. Southern has likewise acknowledged, that he received from the bookseller, as a price for this play, 150 l. which at that time was very extraordinary. He was the first who raised the advantage of play writing to a second and third night, which Mr. Pope mentions in the following manner,

—Southern born to raise,
The price of Prologues and of Plays.

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The reputation which Mr. Dryden gained by the many Prologues he wrote, induced the players to be sollicitous to have one of his to speak, which were generally well received by the public. Mr. Dryden's price for a Prologue had usually been five guineas, with which sum Mr. Southern presented him when he received from him a Prologue for one of his plays. Mr. Dryden returned the money, and said to him; 'Young man this is too little, I must have ten guineas.' Mr. Southern on this observ'd, that his usual price was five guineas. Yes answered Dryden, it has been so, but the players have hitherto had my labours too cheap; for the future I must have ten guineas [2].

Mr. Southern was industrious to draw all imaginable profits from his poetical labours. Mr. Dryden once took occasion to ask him how much he got by one of his plays; to which he answered, that he was really ashamed to inform him. But Mr. Dryden being a little importunate to know, he plainly told him, that by his last play he cleared seven hundred pounds; which appeared astonishing to Mr. Dryden, as he himself had never been able to acquire more than one hundred by any of his most successful pieces. The secret is, Mr. Southern was not beneath the drudgery of sollicitation, and often sold his tickets at a very high price, by making applications to persons of distinction: a degree of servility which perhaps Mr. Dryden thought was much beneath the dignity of a poet; and too much in the character of an under-player.

That Mr. Dryden entertained a very high opinion of our author's abilities, appears from his many expressions of kindness towards him. He has prefixed a copy of verses to a Comedy of his, called the Wife's Excuse, acted in the year 1692, with very indifferent success: Of this Comedy, Mr. Dryden had so high an opinion, that he bequeathed to our poet, the care of writing half the last act of his Tragedy of Cleomenes, 'Which, says Mr. Southern, when it comes into the world will appear to be so considerable a trust, that all the town will pardon me for defending this play, that preferred me to it.'

Our author continued from time to time to entertain the public with his dramatic pieces, the greatest part of which met with the success they deserved. The night on which his Innocent Adultery was first acted, which is perhaps the most moving play in any language; a gentleman took occasion to ask Mr. Dryden, what was his opinion of Southern's genius? to which that great poet replied, 'That he thought him such another poet as Otway.' When this reply was communicated to Mr. Southern, he considered it as a very great compliment, having no ambition to be thought a more considerable poet than Otway was.

Of our author's Comedies, none are in possession of the stage, nor perhaps deserve to be so; for in that province he is less excellent than in Tragedy. The present Laureat, who is perhaps one of the best judges of Comedy now living, being asked his opinion by a gentleman, of Southern's comic dialogue, answered, That it might be denominated Whip-Syllabub, that is, flashy and light, but indurable; and as it is without the Sal Atticum of wit, can never much delight the intelligent part of the audience.

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The most finished, and the most pathetic of Mr. Southern's plays, in the opinion of the critics, is his Oroonoko, or the Royal Slave. This drama is built upon a true story, related by Mrs. Behn, in a Novel; and has so much the greater influence on the audience, as they are sensible that the representation is no fiction. In this piece, Mr. Southern has touched the tender passions with so much skill, that it will perhaps be injurious to his memory to say of him, that he is second to Otway. Besides the tender and delicate strokes of passion, there are many shining and manly sentiments in Oroonoko; and one of the greatest genius's of the present age, has often observed, that in the most celebrated play of Shakespear, so many striking thoughts, and such a glow of animated poetry cannot be furnished. This play is so often acted, and admired, that any illustration of its beauties here, would be entirely superfluous. His play of The Fatal Marriage, or The Innocent Adultery, met with deserved success; the affecting incidents, and interesting tale in the tragic part, sufficiently compensate for the low, trifling, comic part; and when the character of Isabella is acted, as we have seen it, by Mrs. Porter, and Mrs. Woffington, the ladies seldom fail to sympathise in grief.

Mr. Southern died on the 26th of May, in the year 1746, in the 86th year of his age; the latter part of which he spent in a peaceful serenity, having by his commission as a soldier, and the profits of his dramatic works, acquired a handsome fortune; and being an exact oeconomist, he improved what fortune he gained, to the best advantage: He enjoyed the longest life of all our poets, and died the richest of them, a very few excepted.

A gentleman whose authority we have already quoted, had likewise informed us, that Mr. Southern lived for the last ten years of his life in Westminster, and attended very constant at divine service in the Abbey, being particularly fond of church music. He never staid within doors while in health, two days together, having such a circle of acquaintance of the best rank, that he constantly dined with one or other, by a kind of rotation.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Jacob.

[2] From the information of a gentleman personally acquainted with Mr. Southern, who desires to have his name conceal'd.

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The Revd. Mr. JAMES MILLER.

This gentleman was born in the year 1703. He was the son of a clergyman, who possessed two considerable livings in Dorsetshire[1]. He received his education at

Wadham-College in Oxford, and while he was resident in that university he composed part of his famous Comedy called the Humours of Oxford, acted in the year 1729, by the particular recommendation of Mrs. Oldfield.

This piece, as it was a lively representation of the follies and vices of the students of that place, procured the author many enemies.

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Mr. Miller was designed by his relations to be bred to business, which he declined, not being able to endure the servile drudgery it demanded. He no sooner quitted the university than he entered into holy orders, and was immediately preferred to be lecturer in Trinity-College in Conduit-Street, and preacher of Roehampton-Chapel. These livings were too inconsiderable to afford a genteel subsistence, and therefore it may be supposed he had recourse to dramatic writing to encrease his finances. This kind of composition, however, being reckoned by some very foreign to his profession, if not inconsistent with it, was thought to have retarded his preferment in the church. Mr. Miller was likewise attached to the High-Church interest, a circumstance in the times in which he lived, not very favourable to preferment. He was so honest however in these principles, that upon a large offer being made him by the agents for the ministry in the time of a general opposition, he had virtue sufficient to withstand the temptation, though his circumstances at that time were far from being easy. Mr. Miller often confessed to some of his friends, that this was the fiery trial of his constancy. He had received by his wife a very genteel fortune, and a tenderness for her had almost overcome his resolutions; but he recovered again to his former firmness, when upon hinting to his wife, the terms upon which preferment might be procured, she rejected them with indignation; and he became ashamed of his own wavering. This was an instance of honour, few of which are to be met with in the Lives of the Poets, who have been too generally of a time-serving temper, and too pliant to all the follies and vices of their age. But though Mr. Miller would not purchase preferment upon the terms of writing for the ministry, he was content to stipulate, never to write against them, which proposal they rejected in their turn.

About a year before Mr. Miller's death, which happened in 1743, he was presented by Mr. Cary of Dorsetshire, to the profitable living of Upsun, his father had before possess'd, but which this worthy man lived not long to enjoy; nor had he ever an opportunity of making that provision for his family he so much sollicited; and which he even disdained to do at the expence of his honour.

Mr. Miller's dramatic works are,

I. Humours of Oxford, which we have already mentioned.

II. The Mother-in-Law, or the Doctor the Disease; a Comedy, 1733.

III. The Man of Taste, a Comedy; acted in the year 1736, which had a run of 30 nights[2].

IV. Universal Passion, a Comedy, 1736.

V. Art and Nature, a Comedy, 1737.

VI. The Coffee-House, a Farce, 1737.

VII. An Hospital for Fools, a Farce, 1739.

VIII. The Picture, or Cuckold in Conceit.

IX. Mahomet the Impostor, a Tragedy; during the run of this play the author died.

X. Joseph and his Brethren; a sacred Drama.

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Mr. Miller was author of many occasional pieces in poetry, of which his Harlequin Horace is the most considerable. This Satire is dedicated to Mr. Rich, the present manager of Covent-Garden Theatre, in which with an ironical severity he lashes that gentleman, in consequence of some offence Mr. Rich had given him.

Mr. Miller likewise published a volume of Sermons, all written with a distinguished air of piety, and a becoming zeal for the interest of true religion; and was principally concerned in the translation of Moliere's comedies, published by Watts.

Our author left behind him a son, whose profession is that of a sea surgeon. Proposals for publishing his Poems have been inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine, with a specimen, which does him honour. The profits of this subscription, are to be appropriated to his mother, whom he chiefly supported, an amiable instance of filial piety.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] The account of this gentleman is taken from the information of his widow.

[2] These two pieces were brought on the stage, without the author's name being known; which, probably, not a little contributed to their success; the care of the rehearsals being left to Mr. Theo. Cibber, who played the characters of the Man of Taste, and Squire Headpiece.

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Mr. NICHOLAS AMHURST.

This gentleman, well known to the world, by the share he had in the celebrated anti-court paper called The Craftsman, was born in Marden in Kent, but in what year we cannot be certain. Mr. Amhurst's grandfather was a clergyman, under whose protection and care he received his education at Merchant-Taylors school. Having received there the rudiments of learning, he was removed to St. John's College, Oxford, from which, on account of the libertinism of his principles, and some offence he gave to the head of that college, it appears, he was ejected. We can give no other account of this affair, than what is drawn from Mr. Amhurst's dedication of his poems to Dr. Delaune, President of St. John's College in Oxford. This dedication abounds with mirth and pleasantry, in which he rallies the Dr. with very pungent irony, and hints at the causes of his disgrace in that famous college. In page 10, of his dedication, he says,

'You'll pardon me, good sir, if I think it necessary for your honour to mention the many heinous crimes for which I was brought to shame. None were indeed publicly alledged

against me at that time, because it might as well be done afterwards; sure old Englishmen can never forget that there is such a thing as hanging a man for it, and trying him afterwards: so fared it with me; my prosecutors first proved me, by an undeniable argument, to be no fellow of St. John's College, and then to be—the Lord knows what.

'My indictment may be collected out of the faithful annals of common fame, which run thus,

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’Advices from Oxford say, that on the 29th of June, 1719, one Nicholas Amhurst of St. John’s College was expelled for the following reasons;

’Imprimis, For loving foreign turnips and Presbyterian bishops.

’Item, For ingratitude to his benefactor, that spotless martyr, Sir William Laud.

’Item, For believing that steeples and organs are not necessary to salvation.

’Item, For preaching without orders, and praying without a commission.

’Item, For lampooning priestcraft and petticoatcraft.

’Item, For not lampooning the government and the revolution.

’Item, For prying into secret history.

’My natural modesty will not permit me, like other apologists, to Vindicate myself in any one particular, the whole charge is so artfully drawn up, that no reasonable person would ever think the better of me, should I justify myself ‘till doomsday.’ Towards the close of the dedication, he takes occasion to complain of some severities used against him, at the time of his being excluded the college. ’But I must complain of one thing, whether reasonable or not, let the world judge. When I was voted out of your college, and the nusance was thereby removed, I thought the resentments of the holy ones would have proceeded no further; I am sure the cause of virtue and sound religion I was thought to offend, required no more; nor could it be of any possible advantage to the church, to descend to my private affairs, and stir up my creditors in the university to take hold of me at a disadvantage, before I could get any money returned; but there are some persons in the world, who think nothing unjust or inhuman in the prosecution of their implacable revenge.’

It is probable, that upon this misfortune happening to our author, he repaired to the capital, there to retrieve his ruined affairs. We find him engaged deeply in the Craftsman, when that paper was in its meridian, and when it was more read and attended to than any political paper ever published in England, on account of the assistance given to it by some of the most illustrious and important characters of the nation. It is said, that ten thousand of that paper have been sold in one day.

The Miscellanies of Mr. Amhurst, the greatest part of which were written at the university, consist chiefly of poems sacred and profane, original, paraphrased, imitated, and translated; tales, epigrams, epistles, love-verses, elegies, and satires. The Miscellany begins with a beautiful paraphrase on the Mosaic Account of the Creation; and ends with a very humorous tale upon the discovery of that useful utensil, A Bottle-Screw.

Mr. Amhurst died of a fever at Twickenham, April 27, 1742. Our poet had a great enmity to the exorbitant demands, and domineering spirit of the High-Church clergy, which he discovers by a poem of his, called, The convocation, in five cantos; a kind of satire against all the writers, who shewed themselves enemies of the bishop of Bangor. He translated The Resurrection, and some other of Mr. Addison's Latin pieces.

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He wrote an epistle (with a petition in it) to Sir John Blount, Bart. one of the directors of the South-Sea Company, 1726.

Oculus Britanniae, an Heroi-panegyrical Poem, on the University of Oxford, 8vo. 1724.

In a poem of Mr. Amhurst's, called, An Epistle from the Princess Sobiesky to the Chevalier de St. George, he has the following nervous lines, strongly expressive of the passion of love.

Relentless walls and bolts obstruct my way,
And, guards as careless, and as deaf as they;
Or to my James thro' whirlwinds I would, go,
Thro' burning deserts, and o'er alps of snow,
Pass spacious roaring, oceans undismay'd,
And think the mighty dangers well repaid.

* * * * *

Mr. GEORGE LILLO.

Was by profession a jeweller. He was born in London, on the 4th of Feb. 1693. He lived, as we are informed, near Moorgate, in the same neighbourhood where he received his birth, and where he was always esteemed as a person of unblemished character. 'Tis said, he was educated in the principles of the dissenters: be that as it will, his morals brought no disgrace on any sect or party. Indeed his principal attachment was to the muses.

His first piece, brought on the stage, was a Ballad Opera, called Sylvia; or, The Country Burial; performed at the Theatre Royal in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, but with no extraordinary success, in the year 1730. The year following he brought his play, called The London Merchant; or, The True Story of George Barnwell, to Mr. Cibber junior; (then manager of the summer company, at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane) who originally played the part of Barnwell.—The author was not then known. As this was almost a new species of tragedy, wrote on a very uncommon subject, he rather chose it should take its fate in the summer, than run the more hazardous fate of encountering the winter criticks. The old ballad of George Barnwell (on which the story was founded) was on this occasion reprinted, and many thousands sold in one day. Many gaily-disposed spirits brought the ballad with them to the play, intending to make their pleasant remarks (as some afterwards owned) and ludicrous comparisons between the antient ditty and the modern drama. But the play was very carefully got up, and universally allowed to be well performed. The piece was thought to be well conducted, and the subject well managed, and the diction proper and natural; never low, and very rarely swelling above the characters that spoke. Mr. Pope, among other persons, distinguished by their rank, or particular publick merit, had the curiosity to attend the performance, and commended

the actors, and the author; and remarked, if the latter had erred through the whole play, it was only in a few places, where he had unawares led himself into a poetical luxuriancy, affecting to be too elevated for the simplicity of the subject. But the play, in general, spoke

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so much to the heart, that the gay persons before mentioned confessed, they were drawn in to drop their ballads, and pull out their handkerchiefs. It met with uncommon success; for it was acted above twenty times in the summer season to great audiences; was frequently bespoke by some eminent merchants and citizens, who much approved its moral tendency: and, in the winter following, was acted often to crowded houses: And all the royal family, at several different times, honoured it with their appearance. It gained reputation, and brought money to the poet, the managers, and the performers. Mr. Cibber, jun. not only gave the author his usual profits of his third days, &c. but procured him a benefit-night in the winter season, which turned out greatly to his advantage; so that he had four benefit-nights in all for that piece; by the profits whereof, and his copy-money, he gained several hundred pounds. It continued a stock-play in Drury-Lane Theatre till Mr. Cibber left that house, and went to the Theatre in Covent-Garden. It was often acted in the Christmas and Easter holidays, and judged a proper entertainment for the apprentices, &c. as being a more instructive, moral, and cautionary drama, than many pieces that had been usually exhibited on those days, with little but farce and ribaldry to recommend them.

A few years after, he brought out his play of The Christian Hero at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane.

And another Tragedy called Elmerick.

His tragedy of three acts, called Fatal Curiosity, founded on an old English story, was acted with success at the Hay-Market, in 1737.

He wrote another tragedy, never yet acted, called Arden of Feversham.

He was a man of strict morals, great good-nature, and sound sense, with an uncommon share of modesty.

He died Sept. 3. 1739. and was buried in the vault of Shoreditch church.

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Mr. CHARLES JOHNSON.

Mr. Charles Johnson was designed for the law; but being an admirer of the muses, turned his thoughts to dramatic writing; and luckily being an intimate of Mr. Wilks, by the assistance of his friendship, Mr. Johnson had several plays acted, some of which met with success. He was a constant attendant at Will's and Button's coffee houses, which were the resort of most of the men of taste and literature, during the reigns of queen Anne and king George the first. Among these he contracted intimacy enough to intitle him to their patronage, &c on his benefit-nights; by which means he lived (with

oeconomy) genteelly. At last he married a young widow, with a tolerable fortune, and set up a tavern in Bow-street, which he quitted on his wife's dying, and lived privately on the small remainder of his fortune.

He died about the year 1744. His parts were not very brilliant; but his behaviour was generally thought inoffensive; yet he escaped not the satire of Mr. Pope, who has been pleased to immortalize him in his Dunciad.

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His dramatic pieces are,

1. The Gentleman Cully, a Comedy: acted at the Theatre-Royal, Covent-Garden, 1702.

2. Fortune in her Wits, a Comedy; 1705. It is a very indifferent translation of Mr. Cowley's Naufragium Joculare.

3. The Force of Friendship, a Tragedy, 1710.

4. Love in a Chest, a Farce, 1710.

5. The Wife's Relief; or, the Husband's Cure; a Comedy. It is chiefly borrowed from Shirley's Gamester, 1711.

6. The Successful Pirate, a Tragi-Comedy, 1712.

7. The Generous Husband; or, the Coffee-house Politician; a Comedy, 1713.

8. The Country Lasses; or, the Custom of the Manor; a Comedy, 1714.

9. Love and Liberty; a Tragedy, 1715.

10. The Victim; a Tragedy, 1715.

11. The Sultaness; a Tragedy, 1717.

12. The Cobler of Preston; a Farce of two Acts, 1717.

13. Love in a Forest; a Comedy, 1721. Taken from Shakespear's Comedy, As you like it.

14. The Masquerade; a Comedy, 1723.

15. The Village Opera, 1728.

16. The Ephesian Matron; a Farce of one Act, 1730.

17. Celia; or, the Perjured Lovers; a Tragedy, 1732.

* * * * *

PHILIP FROWDE, Esq;

This elegant poet was the son of a gentleman who had been post-master-general in the reign of queen Anne. Where our author received his earliest instructions in literature we cannot ascertain; but, at a proper time of life, he was sent to the university of Oxford,

where he had the honour of being particularly distinguished by Mr. Addison, who took him under his immediate protection. While he remained at that university, he became author of several poetical performances; some of which, in Latin, were sufficiently elegant and pure, to intitle them to a place in the Musae Anglicanae, published by Mr. Addison; an honour so much the more distinguished, as the purity of the Latin poems contained in that collection, furnished the first hint to Boileau of the greatness of the British genius. That celebrated critick of France entertained a mean opinion of the English poets, till he occasionally read the Musae Anglicanae; and then he was persuaded that they who could write with so much elegance in a dead language, must greatly excel in that which was native to them.

Mr. Frowde has likewise obliged the publick with two tragedies; the Fall of Saguntum, dedicated to sir Robert Walpole; and Philotas, addressed to the earl of Chesterfield. The first of these performances, so far as we are able to judge, has higher merit than the last. The story is more important, being the destruction of a powerful city, than the fall of a single hero; the incidents rising out of this great event are likewise of a very interesting nature, and the scenes in many places are not without passion, though justly subject to a very general criticism, that they are written with too little. Mr. Frowde has been industrious in this play to conclude his acts with similes, which however exceptionable for being too long and tedious for the situations of the characters who utter them, yet are generally just and beautiful. At the end of the first act he has the following simile upon sedition:

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Sedition, thou art up; and, in the ferment,
To what may not the madding populace,
Gathered together for they scarce know what,
Now loud proclaiming their late, whisper'd grief,
Be wrought at length? Perhaps to yield the city.
Thus where the Alps their airy ridge extend,
Gently at first the melting snows descend;
From the broad slopes, with murm'ring lapse they glide
In soft meanders, down the mountain's side;
But lower fall'n streams, with each other crost,
From rock to rock impetuously are tost,
'Till in the Rhone's capacious bed they're lost.
United there, roll rapidly away,
And roaring, reach, o'er rugged rocks, the sea.

In the third act, the poet, by the mouth of a Roman hero, gives the following concise definition of true courage.

True courage is not, where fermenting spirits
Mount in a troubled and unruly stream;
The soul's its proper seat; and reason there
Presiding, guides its cool or warmer motions.

The representation of besiegers driven back by the impetuosity of the inhabitants, after they had entered a gate of the city, is strongly pictured by the following simile.

Imagine to thyself a swarm of bees
Driv'n to their hive by some impending storm,
Which, at its little pest, in clustering heaps,
And climbing o'er each other's backs they enter.
Such was the people's flight, and such their haste
To gain the gate.

We have observed, that Mr. Frowde's other tragedy, called Philotas, was addressed to the earl of Chesterfield; and in the dedication he takes care to inform his lordship, that it had obtained his private approbation, before it appeared on the stage. At the time of its being acted, lord Chesterfield was then embassador to the states-general, and consequently he was deprived of his patron's countenance during the representation. As to the fate of this play, he informs his lordship, it was very particular: "And I hope (says he) it will not be imputed as vanity to me, when I explain my meaning in an expression of Juvenal, Laudatur & al-get." But from what cause this misfortune attended it, we cannot take upon us to say.

Mr. Frowde died at his lodgings in Cecil-street in the Strand, on the 19th of Dec. 1738. In the London Daily Post 22d December, the following amiable character is given of our poet:

“But though the elegance of Mr. Frowde’s writings has recommended him to the general publick esteem, the politeness of his genius is the least amiable part of his character; for he esteemed the talents of wit and learning, only as they were, conducive to the excitement and practice of honour and humanity. Therefore,

“with a soul chearful, benevolent, and virtuous, he was in conversation genteelly delightful; in friendship punctually sincere; in death christianly resigned. No man could live more beloved; no private man could die more lamented.”

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* * * * *

Mrs. MARY CHANDLER,

Was born at Malmsbury in Wiltshire, in the year 1687, of worthy and reputable parents; her father, Mr. Henry Chandler, being minister, many years, of the congregation of protestant dissenters in Bath, whose integrity, candour, and catholick spirit, gained him the esteem and friendship of all ranks and parties. She was his eldest daughter, and trained up carefully in the principles of religion and virtue. But as the circumstances of the family rendered it necessary that she should be brought up to business, she was very early employed in it, and incapable of receiving that polite and learned education which she often regretted the loss of, and which she afterwards endeavoured to repair by diligently reading, and carefully studying the best modern writers, and as many as she could of the antient ones, especially the poets, as far as the best translations could assist her.

Amongst these, Horace was her favourite; and how just her sentiments were of that elegant writer, will fully appear from her own words, in a letter to an intimate friend, relating to him, in which she thus expresses herself: "I have been reading Horace this month past, in the best translation I could procure of him. O could I read his fine sentiments cloathed in his own dress, what would I, what would I not give! He is more my favorite than Virgil or Homer. I like his subjects, his easy manner. It is nature within my view. He doth not lose me in fable, or in the clouds amidst gods and goddesses, who, more brutish than myself, demand my homage, nor hurry me into the noise and confusion of battles, nor carry me into inchanted circles, to conjure with witches in an unknown land, but places me with persons like myself, and in countries where every object is familiar to me. In short, his precepts are plain, and morals intelligible, though not always so perfect as one could have wished them. But as to this, I consider when and where he lived."

The hurries of life into which her circumstances at Bath threw her, sat frequently extremely heavy upon a mind so intirely devoted to books and contemplation as hers was; and as that city, especially in the seasons, but too often furnished her with characters in her own sex that were extremely displeasing to her, she often, in the most passionate manner, lamented her fate, that tied her down to so disagreeable a situation; for she was of so extremely delicate and generous a soul, that the imprudences and faults of others gave her a very sensible pain, though she had no other connexion with, or interest in them, but what arose from the common ties of human nature. This made her occasional retirements from that place to the country-seats of some of her peculiarly intimate and honoured friends, doubly delightful to her, as she there enjoyed the solitude she loved, and could converse, without interruption, with those objects of nature, that never failed to inspire her with the most exquisite

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satisfaction. One of her friends, whom she highly honoured and loved, and of whose hospitable house, and pleasant gardens, she was allowed the freest use, was the late excellent Mrs. Stephens, of Sodbury in Gloucestershire, whose feat she celebrated in a poem inscribed to her, inserted in the collection she published. A lady, that was worthy of the highest commendation her muse could bestow upon her. The fine use she made of solitude, the few following lines me wrote on it, will be an honourable testimony to her.

Sweet solitude, the Muses dear delight,
Serene thy day, and peaceful is thy night!
Thou nurse of innocence, fair virtue's friend,
Silent, tho' rapturous, pleasures thee attend.
Earth's verdant scenes, the all surrounding skies
Employ my wondring thoughts, and feast my eyes,
Nature in ev'ry object points the road,
Whence contemplation wings my soul to God.
He's all in all. His wisdom, goodness, pow'r,
Spring in each blade, and bloom in ev'ry flow'r,
Smile o'er the meads, and bend in ev'ry hill,
Glide in the stream, and murmur in the rill
All nature moves obedient to his will.
Heav'n shakes, earth trembles, and the forests nod,
When awful thunders speak the voice of God.

However, notwithstanding her love of retirement, and the happy improvement she knew how to make of it, yet her firm belief that her station was the appointment of providence, and her earnest desire of being useful to her relations, whom she regarded with the warmest affection, brought her to submit to the fatigues of her business, to which, during thirty-five years, she applied herself with, the utmost diligence and care.

Amidst such perpetual avocations, and constant attention to business, her improvements in knowledge, and her extensive acquaintance with the best writers, are truly surprising. But she well knew the worth of time, and eagerly laid hold of all her leisure hours, not to lavish them away in fashionable unmeaning amusements; but in the pursuit of what she valued infinitely more, those substantial acquisitions of true wisdom and goodness, which she knew were the noblest ornaments of the reasonable mind, and the only sources of real and permanent happiness: and she was the more desirous of this kind of accomplishments, as she had nothing in her shape to recommend her, being grown, by an accident in her childhood, very irregular in her body, which she had resolution enough often to make the subject of her own pleasantry, drawing this wise inference from it, "That as her person would not recommend her, she must endeavour to cultivate her mind, to make herself agreeable."

And indeed this she did with the greatest care; and she had so many excellent qualities in her, that though her first appearance could never create any prejudice in her favour, yet it was impossible to know her without valuing and esteeming her.

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Wherever she professed friendship, it was sincere and cordial to the objects of it; and though she admired whatever was excellent in them, and gave it the commendations it deserved, yet she was not blind to their faults, especially if such as she apprehended to be inconsistent with the character of integrity and virtue. As she thought one of the noblest advantages of real friendship, was the rendering it serviceable mutually to correct, polish, and perfect the characters of those who professed it, and as she was not displeased to be kindly admonished herself for what her friends thought any little disadvantage to her character, so she took the same liberty with others; but used that liberty with such a remarkable propriety, tenderness, and politeness, as made those more sincerely esteem her, with whom she used the greatest freedom, and has lost her no intimacy but with one person, with whom, for particular reasons, she thought herself obliged to break off all correspondence.

Nor could one, who had so perfect a veneration and love for religion and virtue, fail to make her own advantage of the admonitions and reproofs she gave to others: and she often expressed a very great pleasure, that the care she had of those young persons, that were frequently committed to her friendship, put her upon her guard, as to her own temper and conduct, and on a review of her own actions, lest she should any way give them a wrong example, or omit any thing that was really for their good. And if she at any time reflected, that her behaviour to others had been wrong, she, with the greatest ease and frankness, asked the pardon of those she had offended; as not daring to leave to their wrong construction any action of hers, lest they should imagine that she indulged to those faults for which she took the liberty of reproving them. Agreeable to this happy disposition of mind, she gave, in an off-hand manner, the following advice to an intimate friend, who had several children, whom she deservedly honoured, and whom she could not esteem and love beyond his real merits.

To virtue strict, to merit kind,
With temper calm, to trifles blind,
Win them to mend the faults they see,
And copy prudent rules from thee.
Point to examples in their sight,
T'avoid, and scorn, and to delight.
Then love of excellence inspire,
By hope their emulation fire,
You'll gain in time your own desire.

She used frequently to complain of herself, as naturally eager, anxious, and peevish. But, by a constant cultivation of that benevolent disposition, that was never inwrought in any heart in a stronger and more prevailing manner than in hers, she, in a good measure, dispossest herself of those inward sources of uneasiness, and was pleased with the victory she had gained over herself, and continually striving to render it more absolute and complete.

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Her religion was rational and prevalent. She had, in the former part of her life, great doubts about christianity, during which state of uncertainty, she was one of the most uneasy and unhappy persons living. But her own good sense, her inviolable attachment to religion and virtue, her impartial inquiries, her converse with her believing friends, her study of the best writers in defence of christianity, and the observations she made on the temper and conduct, the fall and ruin of some that had discarded their principles, and the irregularities of others, who never attended to them, fully at last released her from all her doubts, and made her a firm and established christian. The immediate consequence of this was, the return of her peace, the possession of herself, the enjoyment of her friends, and an intire freedom from the terror of any thing that could befall her in the future part of her existence. Thus she lived a pleasure to all who knew her, and being, at length, resolved to disengage herself from the hurries of life, and wrap herself up in that retirement she was so fond of, after having gained what she thought a sufficient competency for one of her moderate desires, and in that station that was allotted her, and settled her affairs to her own mind, she finally quitted the world, and in a manner agreeable to her own wishes, without being suffered to lie long in weakness and pain, a burthen to herself, or those who attended her: dying after about two days illness, in the 58th year of her age, Sept. 11, 1745.

She thought the disadvantages of her shape were such, as gave her no reasonable prospect of being happy in a married state, and therefore chose to continue single. She had, however, an honourable offer from a country gentleman of worth and large fortune, who, attracted merely by the goodness of her character, took a journey of an hundred miles to visit her at Bath, where he made his addresses to her. But she convinced him that such a match could neither be for his happiness, or her own. She had, however, something extremely agreeable and pleasing in her face, and no one could enter into any intimacy of conversation with her, but he immediately lost every disgust towards her, that the first appearance of her person tended to excite in him.

She had the misfortune of a very valetudinary constitution, owing, in some measure, probably to the irregularity of her form. At last, after many years illness, she entered, by the late ingenious Dr. Cheney's advice, into the vegetable diet, and indeed the utmost extremes of it, living frequently on bread and water; in which she continued so long, as rendered her incapable of taking any more substantial food when she afterwards needed it; for want of which she was so weak as not to be able to support the attack of her last disorder, and which, I doubt not, hastened on her death. But it must be added, in justice to her character, that the ill state of her health was not the only or

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principal reason that brought her to, and kept her fixed in her resolution, of attempting, and persevering in this mortifying diet. The conquest of herself, and subjecting her own heart more intirely to the command of her reason and principles, was the object she had in especial view in this change of her manner of living; as being firmly persuaded, that the perpetual free use of animal food, and rich wines, tends so to excite and inflame the passions, as scarce to leave any hope or chance, for that conquest of them which she thought not only religion requires, but the care of our own happiness, renders necessary. And the effect of the trial, in her own case, was answerable to her wishes; and what she says of herself in her own humorous epitaph,

That time and much thought had all passion extinguish'd,

was well known to be true, by those who were most nearly acquainted with her. Those admirable lines on *Temperance*, in her Bath poem, she penned from a very feeling experience of what she found by her own regard to it, and can never be read too often, as the sense is equal to the goodness of the poetry.

Fatal effects of luxury and ease!
We drink our poison, and we eat disease,
Indulge our senses at our reason's cost,
Till sense is pain, and reason hurt, or lost.
Not so, O temperance bland! when rul'd by thee,
The brute's obedient, and the man is free.
Soft are his slumbers, balmy is his rest,
His veins not boiling from the midnight feast.
Touch'd by Aurora's rosy hand, he wakes
Peaceful and calm, and with the world partakes
The joyful dawnings of returning day,
For which their grateful thanks the whole creation pay,
All but the human brute. 'Tis he alone,
Whose works of darkness fly the rising sun.
'Tis to thy rules, O temperance, that we owe
All pleasures, which from health and strength can flow,
Vigour of body, purity of mind,
Unclouded reason, sentiments refin'd,
Unmixt, untainted joys, without remorse,
Th' intemperate sinner's never-failing curse.

She was observed, from her childhood, to have a fondness for poetry, often entertaining her companions, in a winter's evening, with riddles in verse, and was extremely fond, at that time of life, of Herbert's poems. And this disposition grew up with her, and made her apply, in her riper years, to the study of the best of our English poets; and before

she attempted any thing considerable, sent many small copies of verses, on particular characters and occasions, to her peculiar friends. Her poem on the Bath had the full approbation of the publick; and what sets it above censure, had the commendation of Mr. Pope, and many others of the first rank, for good sense and politeness. And indeed there are many lines in it admirably penn'd, and that the finest genius need not to be ashamed of. It hath ran through several editions; and, when first published, procured her the personal acknowledgments of several of the brightest quality, and of many others, greatly distinguished as the best judges of poetical performances.

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She was meditating a nobler work, a large poem on the Being and Attributes of God, which was her favourite subject; and, if one may judge by the imperfect pieces of it, which she left behind her in her papers, would have drawn the publick attention, had she liv'd to finish it.

She was peculiarly happy in her acquaintance, as she had good sense enough to discern that worth in others she justly thought was the foundation of all real friendship, and was so happy as to be honoured and loved as a friend, by those whom she would have wished to be connected with in that sacred character. She had the esteem of that most excellent lady, who was superior to all commendation, the late dutchess of Somerset, then countess of Hertford, who hath done her the honour of several visits, and allowed her to return them at the Mount of Marlborough. Mr. Pope favoured her with his at Bath, and complimented her for her poem on that place. Mrs. Rowe, of Froom, was one of her particular friends. 'Twould be endless to name all the persons of reputation and fortune whom she had the pleasure of being intimately acquainted with. She was a good woman, a kind relation, and a faithful friend. She had a real genius for poetry, was a most agreeable correspondent, had a large fund of good sense, was unblemished in her character, lived highly esteemed, and died greatly lamented,

FINIS.