

Poetical Works of Pope, Vol. II

Alexander Pope

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

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ALEXANDER POPE.

With Memoir, Critical Dissertation, and Explanatory Notes,

BY THE

REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.

VOL. II.

M.DCCC.LVI.

THE GENIUS AND POETRY OF POPE.

Few poets during their lifetime have been at once so much admired and so much abused as Pope. Some writers, destined to oblivion in after-ages, have been loaded with laurels in their own time; while others, on whom Fame was one day to "wait like a menial," have gone to the grave neglected, if not decried and depreciated. But it was the fate of Pope to combine in his single experience the extremes of detraction and flattery--to have the sunshine of applause and the hail-storm of calumny mingled on his living head; while over his dead body, as over the body of Patroclus, there has raged a critical controversy, involving not merely his character as a man, but his claims as a poet. For this, unquestionably, there are some subordinate reasons. Pope's religious creed, his political connexions, his easy circumstances, his popularity with the upper classes, as well as his testy temper and malicious disposition, all tended to rouse against him, while he lived, a personal as well as public hostility, altogether irrespective of the mere merit or demerit of his poetry. "We cannot bear a Papist to be our principal bard," said one class. "No Tory for our translator of Homer," cried the zealous Whigs, "Poets should be poor, and Pope is independent," growled Grub Street. The ancients could not endure that a "poet should build an house, but this varlet has dug a grotto, and established a clandestine connexion between Parnassus and the Temple of Plutus." "Pope," said others, "is hand-in-glove with Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke, and it was never so seen before in any genuine child of genius." "He is a little ugly insect," cried another class; "can such a misbegotten brat be a favourite with the beautiful Apollo?" "He is as venomous and spiteful as he is small; never was so much of the 'essence of devil' packed into such a tiny compass," said another set; "and this, to be sure, is England's great poet!" Besides these personal objections, there were others of a more solid character. While all admitted the exquisite polish and terse language of Pope's compositions, many felt that they were too artificial--that they were often imitative--that they seldom displayed those qualities of original thought and sublime enthusiasm which had formed the chief characteristics of England's best bards, and were slow to rank the author of "Eloisa and Abelard," with the creator of "Hamlet," "Othello," and "Lear;" the author of the "Rape of the Lock" with the author of "Paradise Lost;" the author of the "Pastorals," with

the author of the "Faery Queen;" and the author of the "Imitations of Horace," with the author of the "Canterbury Tales." On the one hand, Pope's ardent friends erred in classing him with or above these great old writers; and on the other, his enemies were thus provoked to thrust him too far down in the scale, and to deny him genius altogether. Since his death, his fame has continued to vibrate between extremes. Lord Byron and Lord Carlisle (the latter, in a lecture delivered in Leeds in December 1850, and published afterwards) have placed him ridiculously high; while Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Bowles, have underrated him. It shall be our endeavour, in our succeeding remarks, to steer a middle course between the parties.

Lord Carlisle commenced his able and eloquent prelection by deploring the fact, that Pope had sunk in estimation. And yet, a few sentences after, he told us that the "Commissioners of the Fine Arts" selected Pope, along with Chaucer, Shakspeare, Spenser, Milton, and Dryden, to fill the six vacant places in the New Palace of Westminster. This does not substantiate the assertion, that Pope has sunk in estimation. Had he sunk to any great extent, the Commissioners would not have dared to put his name and statue beside those of the acknowledged masters of English poetry. But apart from this, we do think that Lord Carlisle has exaggerated the "Decline and Fall" of the empire of Pope. He is still, with the exception, perhaps, of Cowper, the most popular poet of the eighteenth century. His "Essay on Man," and his "Eloisa and Abelard," are probably in every good library, public and private, in Great Britain. Can we say as much of Chaucer and Spenser? Passages and lines of his poetry are stamped on the memory of all well-educated men. More pointed sayings of Pope are afloat than of any English poet, except Shakspeare and Young. Indeed, if frequency of quotation be the principal proof of popularity, Pope, with Shakspeare, Young, and Spenser, is one of the four most popular of English poets. In America, too, Lord Carlisle found, he tells us, the most cultivated and literary portion of that great community warmly imbued with an admiration of Pope.

What more would, or at least should, his lordship desire? Pope is, by his own showing, a great favourite with many wherever the English language is spoken, and that, too, a century after his death. And there are few critics who would refuse to subscribe, on the whole, Lord Carlisle's enumeration of the Poet's qualities; his terse and motto-like lines--the elaborate gloss of his mock-heroic vein--the tenderness of his pathos--the point and polished strength of his satire--the force and vraisemblance of his descriptions of character--the delicacy and refinement of his compliments, "each of which," says Hazlitt, "is as good as an house or estate"--and the heights of moral grandeur into which he can at times soar, whenever he has manly indignation, or warm-hearted patriotism, or high-minded scorn to express. If Lord Carlisle's object, then, was to elevate Pope to the rank of a classic, it was a superfluous task; if it was to justify the Commissioners in placing him on a level with Chaucer, Shakspeare, Spenser, and Milton, our remarks will show that we think it as vain as superfluous.

In endeavouring to fix the rank of a poet, there are, we think, the following elements to be analysed:--His original genius--his kind and degree of culture--his purpose--his special faculties--the works he has written--and the amount of impression he has made on, and impulse he has given to, his own age and the world. In other words, what were his native powers, and what has he done, for, by, and with them?

Now, that Pope possessed genius, and genius of a high order, we

strenuously maintain. But whether this amounted to creative power, the highest quality of the poet, is a very different question. In native imagination, that eyesight of the soul, which sees in the rose a richer red, in the sky a deeper azure, in the sea a more dazzling foam, in the stars a softer and more spiritual gold, and in the sky a more dread magnificence than nature ever gave them, that beholds the Ideal always shining through and above the Real, and that lights the poet on to form within a new and more gorgeous nature, the fresh creation of his own inspired mind, Pope was not only inferior to Chaucer, Shakspeare, Spenser, and Milton, but to Young, Thomson, Collins, Burns, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Byron, Coleridge, and many other poets. His native faculty, indeed, seems rather fine than powerful--rather timid than daring, and resembles rather the petal of a rose peeping out into the summer air, which seems scarce warm enough for its shrinking loveliness, than the feather of the wing of a great eagle, dipping into the night tempest, which raves around the inaccessible rock of his birthplace. He was not eminently original in his thinking. In proof of this, many of those fine sentiments which Pope has thrown into such perfect shape, and to which he has given such dazzling burnish, are found by Watson (see the "Adventurer") in Pascal and others. Shakspeare's wisdom, on the other hand, can be traced to Shakspeare's brain, and no further, although he has borrowed the plots of his plays. Who lent Chaucer his pictures, fresh as dewdrops from the womb of the morning? Spenser's Allegories are as native to him as his dreams; and if Milton has now and then carried off a load which belonged to another, it was a load which only a giant's arm could lift, and which he added to a caravan of priceless wealth, the native inheritance of his own genius.

The highest rank of poets descend on their sublime subjects, like Uriel, descending alongst his sunbeam on the mountain tops; another order, with care, and effort, and circumspection, often with

'Labour dire and weary woe,'

reach noble heights, and there wave their hats, and dance in astonishment at their own perseverance and success. So it is with Pope in his peroration to the Dunciad, and in many other of the serious and really eloquent passages of his works. They ARE eloquent, brilliant, in composition faultless; but the intense self-consciousness of their author, and their visible elaboration, prevent them from seeming or being great. Of Pope, you say, "He smells of the midnight lamp;" of Dante, boys cried out on the street, "Lo! the man that was in hell." With the very first class of poets, artificial objects become natural, the "rod" becomes a "serpent;" with Pope, natural objects become artificial, the "serpent" becomes a "rod." Wordsworth makes a spade poetical; Pope would have made Skiddaw little better than a mass of prose.

Let us hear Hazlitt: "Pope saw nature only dressed by art; he judged of beauty by fashion; he sought for truth in the opinions of the world; he judged the feelings of others by his own. The capacious soul of Shakspeare had an intuitive and mighty sympathy with whatever could enter into the heart of man in all possible circumstances; Pope had an exact knowledge of all that he himself loved or hated, wished or wanted. Milton has winged his daring flight from heaven to earth, through Chaos and old Night; Pope's Muse never wandered in safety, but from his library to his grotto, or from his grotto into his library, back again. His mind dwelt with greater pleasure on his own garden than on the garden of Eden; he could describe the faultless whole-length mirror that

reflected his own person, better than the smooth surface of the lake that reflects the face of heaven; a piece of cut glass or pair of paste-buckles with more brilliancy and effect than a thousand dewdrops glittering in the sun. He would be more delighted with a patent lamp than with the 'pale reflex of Cynthia's brow,' that fills the sky with the soft silent lustre that trembles through the cottage window, and cheers the mariner on the lonely wave. He was the poet of personality and polished life. That which was nearest to him was the greatest. His mind was the antithesis of strength and grandeur; its power was the power of indifference. He had none of the enthusiasm of poetry; he was in poetry what the sceptic is in religion. In his smooth and polished verse we meet with no prodigies of nature, but with miracles of wit; the thunders of his pen are whispered flatteries; its forked lightnings, pointed sarcasms; for the 'gnarled oak,' he gives us the 'soft myrtle;' for rocks, and seas, and mountains, artificial grass-plots, gravel-walks, and tinkling rills; for earthquakes and tempests, the breaking of a flower-pot or the fall of a China jar; for the tug and war of the elements, or the deadly strife of the passions,

"Calm contemplation and poetic ease.'

"Yet within this retired and narrow circle, how much, and that how exquisite, was contained! What discrimination, what wit, what delicacy, what fancy, what lurking spleen, what elegance of thought, what pampered refinement of sentiment!"

A great deal of discussion took place, during the famous controversy about Pope between Bowles and Byron, on the questions--what objects are and are not fitted for poetic purposes, and whether natural or artificial objects be better suited for the treatment of the poet. In our life of Bowles we promised, and shall now proceed to attempt, a short review of the question then at issue, and which on both sides was pled with such ingenuity, ardour, and eloquence.

The question, professedly that of the _province_, slides away into what is the _nature_ of poetry. The object of poetry is, we think, to show the infinite through the finite--to reveal the ideal in the real--it seeks, by clustering analogies and associations around objects, to give them a beautiful, or sublime, or interesting, or terrible aspect which is not entirely their own. Now, as all objects in comparison with the infinite are finite, and all realities in comparison with the ideal are little, it follows that between artificial and natural objects, as fitted for poetic purposes, there is no immense disparity, and that both are capable of poetic treatment. Both, accordingly, have become subservient to high poetic effect; and even the preponderance, whatever it be on the part of natural objects, has sometimes been equalised by the power of genius, and artificial things have often been made to wring the heart or awaken the fancy, as much or more than the other class. Think, for instance, of the words in Lear,

"Prithee, undo this button. Thank you, sir."

What more contemptibly artificial than a button? And yet, beating in the wind of the hysterical passion which is tearing the heart of the poor dying king, what a powerful index of misery it becomes, and its "undoing," as the sign of the end of the tragedy, and the letting forth of the great injured soul, has melted many to tears! When Lady Macbeth exclaims, in that terrible crisis,

"Give me the daggers!"

who feels not, that, although a dagger be only an artificial thing, no natural or supernatural thing, not the flaming sword of the Cherubim itself, could seem, in the circumstances, more fearfully sublime. What action more artificial than dancing, and yet how grand it seems, in Ford's heroine, who continues to dance on till the ball is finished, while the news of "death, and death, and death" of friend, brother, husband, are successively recounted to her--and then herself expires! There seems no comparison between a diamond and a star, and yet a Shakspeare or a Schiller could so describe the trembling of a diamond on the brow say of Belshazzar when the apparition of the writing on the wall disturbed his impious feast, that it would seem more ideal and more magnificent than a star "trembling on the hand of God" when newly created, or trembling on the verge of everlasting darkness, when its hour had come. A slipper seems a very commonplace object; but how interesting the veritable slipper of Empedocles, who flung himself into Etna, whose slipper was disgorged by the volcano, and as a link, connecting the seen with the unseen, the grassy earth with the burning entrails of the eternal furnace, became intensely imaginative! A feather in a cap (even though it were an eagle's) seems, from its position, an object sufficiently artificial; but how affecting the black plume of Ravenswood floating on the waves which had engulfed the proud head that once bore it, and which old Caleb took up, dried, and placed in his bosom!

Nor are we sure that there are any objects so small or vulgar but what genius could extract poetry from them. In Pope's hands, indeed, the "clouded cane" and the "amber snuff-box" of Sir Plume assume no ideal aspect; but in Shakspeare's it might have been different; and the highest order of genius, like true catholicity of faith, counts "nothing common or unclean." What poetry Burns has gathered up even in "Poosie Nancy's," which had been lying unsuspected at the feet of beggars, prostitutes, and pickpockets! What powerful imagination there is in Crabbe's descriptions of poorhouses, prisons, and asylums; and in Wordsworth's "Old Cumberland Beggar," who, although he lived and died in the "eye of nature," was clothed in rags, and had the vulgar, mendicant meal-bag slung over his shoulders! What pathos Scott extracts from that "black bitch of a boat," which Mucklebackit, in the frenzy of his grief, accuses for the loss of his son! Which of the lower animals less poetical or coarser than a swine? and yet Shakspeare introduces such a creature with great effect in "Macbeth," in that weird dialogue of the witches--

"Where hast thou been, sister?"
"Killing swine."

And Goethe makes it ideal by mingling it with the mad revelry of the "Walpurgis Night"--

"An able sow, with old Baubo upon her.
Is worthy of glory and worthy of honour."

The whole truth on this vexed question may perhaps be summed up in the following propositions:--1st, No object, natural or artificial, is per se out of the province of imagination; 2d, There is no infinite gulf between natural and artificial objects, or between the higher and lower degrees of either, as subjects for the idealising power of poetry; 3d, Ere any object natural or artificial, become poetical, it must be

subjected more or less to the transfiguring power of imagination; and, 4th, Some objects in nature, and some in art, need less of this transforming magic than others, and are thus intrinsically, although not immeasurably, superior in adaptation to the purposes of poetry.

The great point, after all, is, What eye beholds objects, whether natural or artificial? Is it a poetical eye or not? For given a poet's eye, then it matters little on what object that eye be fixed, it becomes poetical; where there is intrinsic poetry--as in mountains, the sea, the sky, the stars--it comes rushing out to the silent spell of genius; where there is less--as in artificial objects, or the poorer productions of nature--the mind of the poet must exert itself tenfold, and shed on it its own wealth and glory. Now, Pope, we fear, wanted almost entirely this true second sight. Take, for instance, the "lock" in the famous "Rape!" What fancy, humour, wit, eloquence, he brings to play around it! But he never touches it, even en passant, with a ray of poetry. You never could dream of intertwining it with

"The tangles of Neaera's hair,"

far less with the "golden tresses" and "wanton ringlets" of our primeval parent in the garden of Eden. Shakspeare, on the other hand, would have made it a dropping from the shorn sun, or a mad moonbeam gone astray, or a tress fallen from the hair of the star Venus, as she gazed too intently at her own image in the calm evening sea. Nor will Pope leave the "lock" entire in its beautiful smallness. He must apply a microscope to it, and stake his fame on idealising its subdivided, single hairs. The sylphs are created by combining the agility of Ariel with the lively impertinence of the inhabitants of Lilliput. Yet with what ease, elegance, and lingering love does he draw his petty Pucks, till, though too tiny for touch, they become palpable to vision! On the whole, had not the "Tempest" and the "Midsummer Night's Dream" existed before the "Rape of the Lock," the machinery in it would have proclaimed Pope a man of creative imagination. As it is, it proves wonderful activity of fancy. Shakspeare's delicate creations are touched again without crumbling at the touch, clad in new down, fed on a fresh supply of "honey-dew," and sent out on minor but aerial errands--although, after all, we prefer Puck and Ariel--not to speak of those delectable personages, Cobweb, Peaseblossom, and Mustardseed. Ariel's "oak," in our poet's hands, becomes a "vial"--"knotty entrails" are exchanged for a "bodkin's eye"--the fine dew of the "still vexed Bermoothes" is degraded into an "essence;" pomatum takes the place of poetry; the enchanted lock, of an enchanted isle; and the transformation of original imagination into ingenious fancy is completed before your eyes. Let the admirers of Pope, like the worshippers of Caesar of old, "beg a hair of him for memory;" for certainly he is more at home among hairs and curls than in any field where he has chosen to exercise his powers.

About Pope originally there was a small, trivial, and stinted something which did not promise even the greatness he actually attained. We do not allude merely to his small stature, remembering that the nine-pin Napoleon overthrew half the thrones in Europe. But he possessed sana mens in sano copore, an erect figure, and was "every inch a man," although his inches were few; while in Pope, both bodily and mentally, there lay a crooked, waspish, and petty nature. His form too faithfully reflected his character. He was never, from the beginning to the close of his life, a great, broad, genial being. There was an unhealthy taint which partly enfeebled and partly corrupted him. His self-will, his ambition, his Pariah position, as belonging to the Roman

Catholic faith, the feebleness of his constitution, the uncertainty of his real creed, and one or two other circumstances we do not choose to name, combined to create a life-long ulcer in his heart and temper, against which the vigour of his mind, the enthusiasm of his literary tastes, and the warmth of his heart, struggled with much difficulty. He had not, in short, the basis of a truly great poet, either in imagination or in nature. Nor, with all his incredible industry, tact, and talent, did he ever rise into the "seventh heaven of invention." A splendid sylph let us call him--a "giant angel" he was not.

His culture, like his genius, was rather elegant than profound. He lived in an age when a knowledge of the classics, with a tincture of the metaphysics of the schools, was thought a good average stock of learning, although it was the age, too, of such mighty scholars as Bentley, Clarke, and Warburton. Pope seems to have glanced over a great variety of subjects with a rapid *_recherche_* eye, not examined any one with a quiet, deep, longing, lingering, exhaustive look. He was no literary Behemoth, "trusting that he could draw up Jordan into his mouth." He became thus neither an ill-informed writer, like Goldsmith, whose ingenuity must make up for his ignorance, nor one of those *_doctorum vatum_*, those learned poets, such as Dante, Milton, and Coleridge, whose works alone, according at least to Buchanan, are to obtain the rare and regal palm of immortality--

"*_Sola doctorum_ monumenta vatum
Nesciunt fati imperium severi:
Sola contemnunt Phlegethonta, et Orci
Jura superbi."*

That his philosophy was empirical, is proved by his "Essay on Man," which, notwithstanding all its brilliant rhetoric, is the shallow version of a shallow system of naturalism. And one may accommodate to him the well-known saying of Lyndhurst about Lord Brougham, "who would have made a capital Chancellor if he had had only a little law;" so Pope was very well qualified to have translated Homer, barring his ignorance of Greek. But every page of his writings proves a wide and diversified knowledge--a knowledge, too, which he has perfectly under control--which he can make to go a great way--and by which, with admirable skill, he can subserve alike his moral and literary purpose. But the question now arises--What was his purpose? Was it worthy of his powers? Was it high, holy, and faithfully pursued? No poet, we venture to say, can be great without a great purpose. "Purpose is the edge and point of character; it is the stamp and superscription of genius; it is the direction on the letter of talent. Character without it is blunt and torpid; talent without it is a letter which, undirected, goes nowhere; genius without it is bullion, sluggish, splendid, and uncirculating." Now, Pope's purpose seems, on the whole, dim and uncertain. He is indifferent to destruction, and careless about conserving. He is neither an infidel nor a Christian; no Whig, but no very ardent Tory either. He seems to wish to support morality, but his support is stumbling and precarious; although, on the other hand, notwithstanding his frequent coarseness of language and looseness of allusion, he exhibits no desire to overturn or undermine it. His bursts of moral feeling are very beautiful (such as that containing the noble lines--

"Vice is undone if she forgets her earth,
And stoops from angels to the dregs of birth.
But 'tis the fall degrades her to a whore:
Let greatness own her and she's mean no more.

Her birth, her beauty, crowds and courts confess,
Chaste matrons praise her, and grave bishops bless.
In golden chains the willing world she draws,
And hers the gospel is, and hers the laws;
Mounts the tribunal, lifts her scarlet head,
And sees pale Virtue carted in her stead.")

But they are brief, seem the result of momentary moods rather than the spray of a strong, steady current; and he soon turns from them to the expression of his petty chagrins and personal animosities. In satire, he has not the indomitable pace and deep-mouthed bellow of a Juvenal, pursuing his object like a bloodhound: he resembles more a half-angry, half-playful terrier. To obtain a terse and musical expression for his thought is his artistic purpose, but that of his mind and moral nature is not so apparent in his poetry. Indeed, we are tempted at times to class him with his own sylphs in this respect, as well as in the elegance and swiftness of his genius. They neither belonged to heaven nor hell, but vibrated between in graceful gyrations. They laughed at, and toyed with, all things--never rising to dangerous heights, never sinking into profound abysses--fancying a lock a universe, and a universe only a larger lock--dancing like evening ephemerae in the sunbeam, which was to be their sepulchre, and shutting their tiny eyes to all the solemn responsibilities, grave uncertainties, and mysterious destinies of human nature. And so, too often, did their poet.

Pope's special faculties are easily seen, and may be briefly enumerated. Destitute of the highest imagination, and perhaps of constructive power--(he has produced many brilliant parts, and many little, but no large wholes)--he is otherwise prodigally endowed. He has a keen, strong, clear intellect, which, if it seldom reaches sublimity, never fails to eliminate sense. He has wit of a polished and vigorous kind--less easy, indeed, than Addison's, the very curl of whose lip was crucifixion to his foe. This wit, when exasperated into satire, is very formidable, for, like Addison's, it does its work with little noise. Pope whispers poetic perdition--he deals in drops of concentrated bitterness--he stabs with a poisoned bodkin--he touches his enemies into stone with the light and playful finger of a fairy--and his more elaborate invectives glitter all over with the polish of profound malignity. His knowledge of human nature, particularly of woman's heart, is great, but seems more the result of impish eavesdropping than of that thorough and genial insight which sympathy produces. He has listened at the keyhole, not by any "Open Sesame" entered the chamber. He has rather painted manners than men. His power of simulating passion is great; but the passion must, in general, be mingled with unnatural elements ere he can realise it--the game must be putrid ere he can enjoy its flavour. He has no humour, at least in his poetry. It is too much of an unconscious outflow, and partakes too much of the genial and the human nature for him. His fancy is lively and copious, but its poetical products often resemble the forced fruits of a hothouse rather than those of a natural soil and climate. His description of Sporus, lauded by Byron as a piece of imagination, is exceedingly artificial and far-fetched in its figures--a mere mass of smoked gumflowers. Compare for fancy the speeches of Mercutio, in "Romeo and Juliet," the "Rape of the Lock," if we would see the difference between a spontaneous and artificial outpouring of images, between a fancy as free as fervid, and one lashing itself into productiveness. His power of describing natural objects is far from first-rate; he enumerates instead of describing; he omits nothing in the scene except the one thing needful--the bright poetical gleam or haze which ought to have been there. There is the "grass" but

not the "splendour"--the "flower" but not the "glory." In depicting character, it is very different. His likenesses of men and women, so far as manners, external features, and the contrasts produced by the accidents of circumstances and the mutation of affairs, are inimitable. His power of complimenting is superior even to that of Louis XIV. He picks out the one best quality in a man, sets it in gold, and presents it as if he were conferring instead of describing a noble gift.

"Would you be blest, despise low joys, low gains,
Disdain whatever Cornbury disdains;
Be virtuous, and be happy for your pains."

Pope's language seems as if it were laboriously formed by himself for his peculiar shape of mind, habits of thought, and style of poetry. Compared to all English before him, Pope's English is a new although a lesser language. He has so cut down, shorn, and trimmed the broad old oak of Shakspeare's speech, that it seems another tree altogether. Everything is so terse, so clear, so pointed, so elaborately easy, so monotonously brilliant, that you must pause to remember. "These are the very copulatives, diphthongs, and adjectives of Hooker, Milton, and Jeremy Taylor." The change at first is pleasant, and has been generally popular; but those who know and love our early authors, soon miss their deep organ-tones, their gnarled strength, their intricate but intense sweetness, their varied and voluminous music, their linked _chains_ of lightning, and feel the difference between the fabricator of clever lines and sparkling sentences, and the former of great passages and works. In keeping with his style is his versification, the incessant tinkling of a sheep-bell--sweet, small, monotonous--producing perfectly-melodious single lines, but no grand interwoven swells and well-proportioned masses of harmony. "Pope," says Hazlitt, "has turned Pegasus into a rocking-horse." The noble gallop of Dryden's verse is exchanged for a quick trot. And there is not even a point of comparison between his sweet sing-song, and the wavy, snow-like, spirit-like motion of Milton's loftier passages; or the gliding, pausing, fitful, river-like progress of Shakspeare's verse; or the fretted fury, and "torrent-rapture" of brave old Chapman in his translation of Homer; or the rich, long-drawn-out, slow-swimming, now soft-languishing, and now full-gushing melody of Spenser's "Faery Queen."--Yet, within his own sphere, Pope was, as Scott calls him, a "Deacon of his craft;" he aimed at, and secured, correctness and elegance; his part is not the highest, but in it he approaches absolute perfection; and with all his monotony of manner and versification, he is one of the most interesting of writers, and many find a greater luxury in reading his pages than those of any other poet. He is the _facile princeps_ of those poetical writers who have written for, and are so singularly appreciated by, the fastidious--that class who are more staggered by faults than delighted with beauties.

Our glance at his individual works must be brief and cursory. His "Ode to Solitude" is the most simple and natural thing he ever wrote, and in it he seems to say to nature, "Vale, longum vale." His "Pastorals" have an unnatural and luscious sweetness. He has sugared his milk; it is not, as it ought to be, warm from the cow, and fresh as the clover. How different his "Rural Life" from the rude, rough pictures of Theocritus, and the delightfully true and genial pages of the "Gentle Shepherd!" His "Windsor Forest" is an elegant accumulation of sweet sonnets and pleasant images, but the freshness of the dew is not resting on every bud and blade. No shadowy forms are seen retiring amidst the glades of the forest; no Uriels seem descending on the sudden slips of afternoon

sunshine which pierce athwart the green or brown masses of foliage; and you cannot say of his descriptions that

"Visions, as poetic eyes avow,
Hang on each leaf and cling to every bough."

Shelley studied the scenery of his fine poem, "Alastor," in the same shades with Pope; but he had, like Jonathan of old, touched his lips with a rod dipped in poetic honey, and his "eyes were enlightened" to see sights of beauty and mystery which to the other are denied. Keats could have comprised all the poetry of "Windsor Forest" into one sonnet or line; indeed, has he not done so, where, describing his soul following the note of the nightingale into the far depths of the woods, where she is pouring out her heart in song, he says--

"And with thee fade away into the forest dim?"

The "Essay on Criticism" is rather a wonderful, intellectual, and artistic feat, than a true poem. It is astonishing as the work of a boy of nineteen, and contains a unique collection of clever and sparkling sentences, displaying the highest powers of acuteness and assimilation, if not much profound and original insight or genius. This poem suggests the wish that more of our critics would write in verse. The music might lessen the malice, and set off the commonplace to advantage, so that if there were no "reason," there might be at least "rhyme." His "Lines to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady" are too elaborate and artificial for the theme. It is a tale of intrigue, murder, and suicide, set to a musical snuff-box! His "Rape of the Lock" we have already characterised. It is an "Iliad in a nutshell," an Epic of Lilliput, where all the proportions are accurately observed, and where the finishing is so exact and admirable, that you fancy the author to have had microscopic eyes. It contains certainly the most elegant and brilliant badinage, the most graceful raillery, the most finished nonsense, and one of the most exquisitely-managed machineries in the language. His "Eloisa and Abelard," a poem beautiful and almost unequalled in execution, is ill chosen in subject. He compels you indeed to weep, but you blame and trample on your tears after they are shed. Pope in this poem, as Shelley in the "Cenci," has tried to extract beauty from moral deformity, and to glorify putrefaction. But who can long love to gaze at worms, however well painted, or will be disposed to pardon the monstrous choice of a dead or demon bride for the splendour of her wedding-garment? The passion of the Eloisa and that of the Cenci were both indeed facts; but many facts should be veiled statues in the Temple of Truth. To do, however, both Pope and Shelley justice, they touch their painful and shocking themes with extreme delicacy. "Dryden," well remarks Campbell, "would have given but a coarse draught of Eloisa's passion." Pope's Epistles, Satires, Imitations, &c., contain much of the most spirited sense and elegant sarcasm in literature. The portraits of "Villars" and "Atticus" will occur to every reader as masterpieces in power, although we deem the latter grossly unjust to a good and great man. His Homer is rather an adaptation than a translation--far less a "transfusion" of the Grecian bard. Pope does not, indeed, clothe the old blind rhapsodist with a bag-wig and sword; but he does all short of this to make him a fine modern gentleman. Scott, we think, could have best rendered Homer in his ballad-rhyme. Chapman is Chapman, but he is not Homer. Pope is Pope, and Hobbes is Hobbes, and Sotheby is Sotheby, and Cowper is Cowper, each doing his best to render Homer, but none of them is the grand old Greek, whose lines are all simple and plain as brands, but like brands pointed on their edges with fire.

The "Essay on Man" ought to have been called an "Epigram on Man," or, better still, should have been propounded as a riddle, to which the word "Man" was to supply the solution. But an antithesis, epigram, or riddle on man of 1300 lines, is rather long. It seems so especially as there is no real or new light cast in it on man's nature or destiny. (We refer our readers to the notes of Dr Croly's edition for a running commentary of confutation to the "Essay on Man" distinguished by solid and unanswerable acuteness of argument.) But such an eloquent and ingenious puzzle as it is! It might have issued from the work-basket of Titania herself. It is another evidence of Pope's greatness in trifles. How he would have shone in fabricating the staves of the ark, or the fringes of the tabernacle!

The "Dunciad" is in many respects the ablest, the most elaborate, and the most characteristic of Pope's poems. In embalming insignificance and impaling folly he seems to have found, at last, his most congenial work. With what apparently sovereign contempt, masterly ease, artistic calm, and judicial gravity, does he set about it! And once his museum of dunces is completed, with what dignity--the little tyrant that he was!--does he march through it, and with what complacency does he point to his slain and dried Dunces, and say, "Behold the work of my hands!" It never seems to have occurred to him that his poem was destined to be an everlasting memorial, not only of his enemies, but of the annoyance he had met from them--at once of his strength in crushing, and his weakness in feeling, their attacks, and in showing their mummies for money.

That Pope deserves, on the whole, the name of "poet," we are willing, as aforesaid, to concede. But he was the most artificial of true poets. He had in him a real though limited vein, but did not trust sufficiently to it, and at once weakened and strengthened it by his peculiar kind of cultivation. He weakened it as a faculty, but strengthened it as an art; he lessened its inward force, but increased the elegance and facility of its outward expression. What he might have attained, had he left his study and trim gardens, and visited the Alps, Snowdon, or the Grampians--had he studied Boileau less, and Dante, Milton, or the Bible more--we cannot tell; but he certainly, in this case, would have left works greater, if not more graceful, behind him; and if he had pleased his own taste and that of his age less, he might have more effectually touched the chord of the heart of all future time by his poetry. As it is, his works resemble rather the London Colosseum than Westminster Abbey. They are exquisite imitations of nature; but we never can apply to them the words of the poet--

"O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat."

Read, and admired, Pope must always be--if not for his poetry and passion, yet for his elegance, wit, satiric force, fidelity as a painter of artificial life, and the clear, pellucid English. But his deficiency in the creative faculty (a deficiency very marked in two of his most lauded poems we have not specified, his "Messiah" and "Temple of Fame," both eloquent imitations), his lack of profound thought, the general poverty of his natural pictures (there are some fine ones in "Eloisa and

Abelard"), the coarse and bitter element often intermingled with his satire, the monotonous glitter of his verse, and the want of profound purpose in his writings, combine to class him below the first file of poets. And vain are all attempts, such as those of Byron and Lord Carlisle, to alter the general verdict. It is very difficult, after a time, either to raise or depress an acknowledged classic; and Pope must come, if he has not come already, to a peculiarly defined and strictly apportioned place on the shelf. He was unquestionably the poet of his age. But his age was far from being one of a lofty order: it was a low, languid, artificial, and lazily sceptical age. It loved to be tickled; and Pope tickled it with the finger of a master. It liked to be lulled, at other times, into half-slumber; and the soft and even monotonies of Pope's pastorals and "Windsor Forest" effected this end. It loved to be suspended in a state of semi-doubt, swung to and fro in agreeable equipoise; and the "Essay on Man" was precisely such a swing. It was fond of a mixture of strong English sense with French graces and charms of manner; and Pope supplied it. It was fond of keen, yet artfully managed satire; and Pope furnished it in abundance. It loved nothing that threatened greatly to disturb its equanimity or over-much to excite or arouse it; and there was little of this in Pope. Had he been a really great poet of the old Homer or Dante breed, he would have outshot his age, till he "dwindled in the distance;" but in lieu of immediate fame, and of elaborate lectures in the next century, to bolster it unduly up, all generations would have "risen and called him blessed."

We had intended some remarks on Pope as a prose-writer, and as a correspondent; but want of space has compelled us to confine ourselves to his poetry.

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MORAL ESSAYS.

The 'Essay on Man' was intended to have been comprised in four books:--

The first of which, the author has given us under that title, in four epistles.

The second was to have consisted of the same number:--1. Of the extent and limits of human reason. 2. Of those arts and sciences, and of the parts of them, which are useful, and therefore attainable, together with those which are unuseful, and therefore unattainable. 3. Of the nature, ends, use, and application of the different capacities of men. 4. Of the use of learning, of the science of the world, and of wit; concluding with a satire against the misapplication of them, illustrated by pictures, characters, and examples.

The third book regarded civil regimen, or the science of politics, in which the several forms of a republic were to have been examined and explained; together with the several modes of religious worship, as far forth as they affect society; between which the author always supposed there was the most interesting relation and closest connexion; so that this part would have treated of civil and religious society in their full extent.

The fourth and last book concerned private ethics or practical morality, considered in all the circumstances, orders, professions, and stations of human life.

The scheme of all this had been maturely digested, and communicated to the Lord Bolingbroke, Dr Swift, and one or two more, and was intended for the only work of his riper years; but was, partly through ill health, partly through discouragements from the depravity of the times, and partly on prudential and other considerations, interrupted,

postponed, and, lastly, in a manner laid aside.

But as this was the author's favourite work, which more exactly reflected the image of his strong capacious mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the *_disiecta membra poetae_* that now remain, it may not be amiss to be a little more particular concerning each of these projected books. The first, as it treats of man in the abstract, and considers him in general under every one of his relations, becomes the foundation, and furnishes out the subjects, of the three following; so that--

The second book takes up again the first and second epistles of the first book, and treats of man in his intellectual capacity at large, as has been explained above. Of this, only a small part of the conclusion (which, as we said, was to have contained a satire against the misapplication of wit and learning) may be found in the fourth book of 'The Dunciad,' and up and down, occasionally, in the other three.

The third book, in like manner, reassumes the subject of the third epistle of the first, which treats of man in his social, political, and religious capacity. But this part the poet afterwards conceived might be best executed in an epic poem; as the action would make it more animated, and the fable less invidious; in which all the great principles of true and false governments and religions should be chiefly delivered in feigned examples.

The fourth and last book pursues the subject of the fourth epistle of the first, and treats of ethics, or practical morality; and would have consisted of many members; of which the four following epistles were detached portions: the two first, on the characters of men and women, being the introductory part of this concluding book.--_Warburton._

EPISTLE I.--TO SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, LORD COBHAM.

ARGUMENT.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND CHARACTERS OF MEN.

That it is not sufficient for this knowledge to consider man in the abstract: books will not serve the purpose, nor yet our own experience singly, ver. 1. General maxims, unless they be formed upon both, will be but notional, ver. 10. Some peculiarity in every man, characteristic to himself, yet varying from himself, ver. 15. Difficulties arising from our own passions, fancies, faculties, &c., ver. 31. The shortness of life, to observe in, and the uncertainty of the principles of action in men, to observe by, ver. 37, &c. Our own principle of action often hid from ourselves, ver. 41. Some few characters plain, but in general confounded, dissembled, or inconsistent, ver. 51. The same man utterly different in different places and seasons, ver. 71. Unimaginable weaknesses in the greatest, ver. 70, &c. Nothing constant and certain but God and nature, ver. 95. No judging of the motives from the actions; the same actions proceeding from contrary motives, and the same motives influencing contrary actions, ver. 100. II. Yet to form characters, we can only take the strongest actions of a man's life, and try to make them agree: the utter uncertainty of this, from nature itself, and from policy, ver. 120. Characters given according to the rank of men of the world, ver. 135. And some reason for it, ver. 140. Education alters the nature, or at least character of many, ver. 149. Actions, passions,

opinions, manners, humours, or principles, all subject to change. No judging by nature, from ver. 158 to 174. III. It only remains to find (if we can) his ruling passion: that will certainly influence all the rest, and can reconcile the seeming or real inconsistency of all his actions, ver. 175. Instanced in the extraordinary character of Clodio, ver. 179. A caution against mistaking second qualities for first, which will destroy all possibility of the knowledge of mankind, ver. 210. Examples of the strength of the ruling passion, and its continuation to the last breath, ver. 222, &c.

Yes, you despise the man to books confined,
Who from his study rails at human kind;
Though what he learns he speaks, and may advance
Some general maxims, or be right by chance.
The coxcomb bird, so talkative and grave,
That from his cage cries 'Cuckold,' 'Whore,' and 'Knave,'
Though many a passenger he rightly call,
You hold him no philosopher at all.

And yet the fate of all extremes is such,
Men may be read, as well as books, too much. 10
To observations which ourselves we make,
We grow more partial for the observer's sake;
To written wisdom, as another's, less:
Maxims are drawn from notions, those from guess.
There's some peculiar in each leaf and grain,
Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein:
Shall only man be taken in the gross?
Grant but as many sorts of mind as moss.

That each from other differs, first confess;
Next that he varies from himself no less: 20
Add nature's, custom's, reason's, passion's strife,
And all opinion's colours cast on life.

Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds,
Quick whirls, and shifting eddies, of our minds?
On human actions reason though you can,
It may be reason, but it is not man:
His principle of action once explore,
That instant 'tis his principle no more.
Like following life through creatures you dissect,
You lose it in the moment you detect.

Yet more; the difference is as great between
The optics seeing, as the objects seen.
All manners take a tincture from our own;
Or come discolour'd, through our passions shown;
Or fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies,
Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.

Nor will life's stream for observation stay,
It hurries all too fast to mark their way:
In vain sedate reflections we would make,
When half our knowledge we must snatch, not take. 40
Oft, in the passions' wild rotation toss'd,
Our spring of action to ourselves is lost:
Tired, not determined, to the last we yield,
And what comes then is master of the field.

As the last image of that troubled heap,
When sense subsides, and fancy sports in sleep,
(Though past the recollection of the thought),
Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought:
Something as dim to our internal view,
Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do. 50

True, some are open, and to all men known;
Others so very close, they're hid from none;
(So darkness strikes the sense no less than light)
Thus gracious Chandos is beloved at sight;
And every child hates Shylock, though his soul
Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole.
At half mankind when generous Manly raves,
All know 'tis virtue, for he thinks them knaves:
When universal homage Umbra pays,
All see 'tis vice, and itch of vulgar praise. 60
When flattery glares, all hate it in a queen,
While one there is who charms us with his spleen.

But these plain characters we rarely find;
Though strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind:
Or puzzling contraries confound the whole;
Or affectations quite reverse the soul.
The dull, flat falsehood serves for policy;
And, in the cunning, truth itself's a lie:
Unthought-of frailties cheat us in the wise;
The fool lies hid in inconsistencies. 70

See the same man, in vigour, in the gout;
Alone, in company; in place, or out;
Early at business, and at hazard late;
Mad at a fox-chase, wise at a debate;
Drunk at a borough, civil at a ball;
Friendly at Hackney, faithless at Whitehall.

Catius is ever moral, ever grave,
Thinks who endures a knave, is next a knave,
Save just at dinner--then prefers, no doubt,
A rogue with venison to a saint without. 80

Who would not praise Patricio's[1] high desert,
His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,
His comprehensive head, all interests weigh'd,
All Europe saved, yet Britain not betray'd?
He thanks you not, his pride is in picquet,
Newmarket fame, and judgment at a bet.

What made (says Montaigne, or more sage Charron[2])
Otho a warrior, Cromwell a buffoon?
A perjured prince[3] a leaden saint revere,
A godless regent[4] tremble at a star? 90
The throne a bigot keep, a genius quit,
Faithless through piety, and duped through wit?
Europe a woman, child, or dotard rule,
And just her wisest monarch made a fool?

Know, God and Nature only are the same:
In man, the judgment shoots at flying game;

A bird of passage! gone as soon as found,
Now in the moon perhaps, now under ground.

II. In vain the sage, with retrospective eye,
Would from the apparent _what_ conclude the _why_, 100
Infer the motive from the deed, and show
That what we chanced was what we meant to do.
Behold! if fortune or a mistress frowns,
Some plunge in business, others shave their crowns:
To ease the soul of one oppressive weight,
This quits an empire, that embroils a state:
The same adust complexion has impell'd
Charles[5] to the convent, Philip[6] to the field.

Not always actions show the man: we find
Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind; 110
Perhaps prosperity becalm'd his breast,
Perhaps the wind just shifted from the east:
Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat,
Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great:
Who combats bravely is not therefore brave,
He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave:
Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise,
His pride in reasoning, not in acting, lies.

But grant that actions best discover man;
Take the most strong, and sort them as you can: 120
The few that glare, each character must mark,
You balance not the many in the dark.
What will you do with such as disagree?
Suppress them, or miscall them policy?
Must then at once (the character to save)
The plain rough hero turn a crafty knave?
Alas! in truth the man but changed his mind,
Perhaps was sick, in love, or had not dined.
Ask why from Britain Caesar would retreat?
Caesar himself might whisper he was beat. 130
Why risk the world's great empire for a punk?[7]
Caesar perhaps might answer he was drunk.
But, sage historians! 'tis your task to prove
One action, conduct; one, heroic love.

'Tis from high life high characters are drawn;
A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn;
A judge is just, a chancellor juster still;
A gownman, learn'd; a bishop, what you will;
Wise, if a minister; but, if a king,
More wise, more learn'd, more just, more everything, 140
Court-virtues bear, like gems, the highest rate,
Born where Heaven's influence scarce can penetrate:
In life's low vale, the soil the virtues like,
They please as beauties, here as wonders strike.
Though the same sun with all-diffusive rays
Blush in the rose, and in the diamond blaze,
We prize the stronger effort of his power,
And justly set the gem above the flower.

'Tis education forms the common mind,
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined. 150

Boastful and rough, your first son is a squire;
The next a tradesman, meek, and much a liar;
Tom struts a soldier, open, bold, and brave;
Will sneaks a scrivener, an exceeding knave:
Is he a Churchman? then he's fond of power:
A Quaker? sly: A Presbyterian? sour:
A smart free-thinker? all things in an hour.
Ask men's opinions: Scoto now shall tell
How trade increases, and the world goes well;
Strike off his pension, by the setting sun, 160
And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

That gay free-thinker, a fine talker once,
What turns him now a stupid silent dunce?
Some god, or spirit he has lately found;
Or chanced to meet a minister that frown'd.

Judge we by nature? Habit can efface,
Interest o'ercome, or policy take place:
By actions? those uncertainty divides:
By passions? these dissimulation hides:
Opinions? they still take a wider range: 170
Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.

Manners with fortunes, humours turn with climes,
Tenets with books, and principles with times.

III. Search, then, the ruling passion: there, alone,
The wild are constant, and the cunning known;
The fool consistent, and the false sincere;
Priests, princes, women, no dissemblers here.
This clue once found, unravels all the rest,
The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confess'd.
Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days, 180
Whose ruling passion was the lust of praise:
Born with whate'er could win it from the wise,
Women and fools must like him or he dies;
Though wondering senates hung on all he spoke,
The club must hail him master of the joke.
Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot[8] too.
Then turns repentant, and his God adores
With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;
Enough if all around him but admire, 190
And now the punk applaud, and now the friar.
Thus with each gift of nature and of art,
And wanting nothing but an honest heart;
Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt;
And most contemptible, to shun contempt;
His passion still to covet general praise,
His life, to forfeit it a thousand ways;
A constant bounty which no friend has made;
An angel tongue, which no man can persuade;
A fool, with more of wit than half mankind, 200
Too rash for thought, for action too refined;
A tyrant to the wife his heart approves;
A rebel to the very king he loves;
He dies, sad outcast of each church and state,
And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great.

Ask you why Wharton broke through every rule
'Twas all for fear the knaves should call him fool.

Nature well known, no prodigies remain,
Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.

Yet, in this search, the wisest may mistake, 210
If second qualities for first they take.
When Catiline by rapine swell'd his store;
When Caesar made a noble dame a whore:[9]
In this the lust, in that the avarice
Were means, not ends; ambition was the vice.
That very Caesar, born in Scipio's days,
Had aim'd, like him, by chastity at praise.
Lucullus, when frugality could charm,
Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm.
In vain the observer eyes the builder's toil, 220
But quite mistakes the scaffold for the pile.

In this one passion man can strength enjoy,
As fits give vigour, just when they destroy.
Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,
Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand.
Consistent in our follies and our sins,
Here honest Nature ends as she begins.

Old politicians chew on wisdom past,
And totter on in business to the last;
As weak, as earnest, and as gravely out, 230
As sober Lanesborough[10] dancing in the gout.

Behold a reverend sire, whom want of grace
Has made the father of a nameless race,
Shoved from the wall perhaps, or rudely press'd
By his own son, that passes by unblest:
Still to his wench he crawls on knocking knees,
And envies every sparrow that he sees.

A salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate;
The doctor call'd, declares all help too late:
'Mercy!' cries Helluo, 'mercy on my soul! 240
Is there no hope? Alas! then bring the jowl.'

The frugal crone, whom praying priests attend,
Still tries to save the hallow'd taper's end,
Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,
For one puff more, and in that puff expires.

'Odious! in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke,'
(Were the last words that poor Narcissa[11] spoke),
'No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:
One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead-- 250
And, Betty, give this cheek a little red.'

The courtier smooth, who forty years had shined
An humble servant to all human kind,
Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could stir,
'If--where I'm going--I could serve you, sir?'

'I give and I devise' (old Euclio said,
And sigh'd) 'my lands and tenements to Ned.'
'Your money, sir?' 'My money, sir, what! all?
Why--if I must'--(then wept)--'I give it Paul.'
'The manor, sir?'--'The manor! hold,' (he cried), 260
'Not that--I cannot part with that'--and died.

And you, brave Cobham! to the latest breath
Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death:
Such in those moments as in all the past,

'Oh, save my country, Heaven!' shall be your last.

VARIATIONS.

After VER. 86, in the former editions--

Triumphant leaders, at an army's head,
Hemm'd round with glories, pilfer cloth or bread:
As meanly plunder as they bravely fought,
Now save a people, and now save a groat.

VER. 129, in the former editions--

Ask why from Britain Caesar made retreat?
Caesar himself would tell you he was beat.
The mighty Czar what moved to wed a punk?
The mighty Czar would tell you he was drunk.

In the former editions, VER. 208--

Nature well known, no _miracles_ remain.

EPISTLE II.--TO A LADY.

OF THE CHARACTERS OF WOMEN.

Nothing so true as what you once let fall--
'Most women have no characters at all.'
Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.

How many pictures of one nymph we view,
All how unlike each other, all how true!
Arcadia's Countess, here, in ermined pride,
Is there, Pastora by a fountain side.
Here Fannia, leering on her own good man,
And there, a naked Leda with a swan. 10
Let then the fair one beautifully cry,
In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye,
Or dress'd in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,
With simpering angels, palms, and harps divine;
Whether the charmer sinner it or saint it,
If folly grow romantic, I must paint it.

Come then, the colours and the ground prepare!
Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air;
Choose a firm cloud, before it fall, and in it
Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute. 20

Rufa, whose eye quick glancing o'er the park,
Attracts each light gay meteor of a spark,
Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,
As Sappho's[12] diamonds with her dirty smock;
Or Sappho at her toilet's greasy task,
With Sappho fragrant at an evening mask:
So morning insects that in muck begun,
Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting sun.

How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;
The frail one's advocate, the weak one's friend: 30
To her, Calista proved her conduct nice;
And good Simplicius asks of her advice.
Sudden, she storms! she raves! You tip the wink,
But spare your censure--Silia does not drink.
All eyes may see from what the change arose,
All eyes may see--a pimple on her nose.

Papillia, wedded to her amorous spark,
Sighs for the shades--'How charming is a park!'
A park is purchased, but the fair he sees
All bathed in tears--'Oh odious, odious trees!' 40

Ladies, like variegated tulips, show,
'Tis to their changes half their charms we owe;
Fine by defect, and delicately weak,
Their happy spots the nice admirer take.
'Twas thus Calypso once each heart alarm'd,
Awed without virtue, without beauty charm'd;
Her tongue bewitch'd as oddly as her eyes,
Less wit than mimic, more a wit than wise;
Strange graces still, and stranger flights she had,
Was just not ugly, and was just not mad; 50
Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,
As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Narcissa's[13] nature, tolerably mild,
To make a wash, would hardly stew a child;
Has even been proved to grant a lover's prayer,
And paid a tradesman once, to make him stare;
Gave alms at Easter, in a Christian trim,
And made a widow happy, for a whim.
Why then declare good-nature is her scorn,
When 'tis by that alone she can be borne 60
Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?
A fool to pleasure, yet a slave to fame:
Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,
Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres:
Now conscience chills her, and now passion burns;
And atheism and religion take their turns;
A very heathen in the carnal part,
Yet still a sad, good Christian at her heart.

See Sin in state, majestically drunk;

Proud as a peeress, prouder as a punk; 70
Chaste to her husband, frank to all beside,
A teeming mistress, but a barren bride.
What then? let blood and body bear the fault,
Her head's untouch'd, that noble seat of thought:
Such this day's doctrine--in another fit
She sins with poets through pure love of wit.
What has not fired her bosom or her brain--
Caesar and Tall-boy, Charles and Charlemagne?
As Helluo, late dictator of the feast,
The nose of _haut gout_, and the tip of taste, 80
Critiqued your wine, and analysed your meat,
Yet on plain pudding deign'd at home to eat;
So Philomede,[14] lecturing all mankind
On the soft passion and the taste refined,
The address, the delicacy--stoops at once,
And makes her hearty meal upon a dunce.

Flavia's a wit, has too much sense to pray;
To toast our wants and wishes, is her way;
Nor asks of God, but of her stars, to give
The mighty blessing, 'While we live, to live.' 90
Then all for death, that opiate of the soul!
Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl.
Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?
A spark too fickle, or a spouse too kind.

Wise wretch! with pleasures too refined to please;
With too much spirit to be e'er at ease;
With too much quickness ever to be taught;
With too much thinking to have common thought:
You purchase pain with all that joy can give,
And die of nothing, but a rage to live. 100

Turn then from wits; and look on Simo's mate,
No ass so meek, no ass so obstinate.
Or her, that owns her faults, but never mends,
Because she's honest, and the best of friends.
Or her, whose life the church and scandal share,
For ever in a passion or a prayer.
Or her, who laughs at hell, but (like her Grace[15])
Cries, 'Ah! how charming, if there's no such place!'
Or who in sweet vicissitude appears
Of mirth and opium, ratafia and tears, 110
The daily anodyne, and nightly draught,
To kill those foes to fair ones--time and thought.
Woman and fool are two hard things to hit;
For true no-meaning puzzles more than wit.

But what are these to great Atossa's[16] mind?
Scarce once herself, by turns all womankind!
Who, with herself, or others, from her birth
Finds all her life one warfare upon earth:
Shines, in exposing knaves, and painting fools,
Yet is whate'er she hates and ridicules. 120
No thought advances, but her eddy brain
Whisks it about, and down it goes again.
Full sixty years the world has been her trade,
The wisest fool much time has ever made.

From loveless youth to uninspected age,
 No passion gratified, except her rage.
 So much the fury still outran the wit,
 The pleasure miss'd her, and the scandal hit.
 Who breaks with her, provokes revenge from hell,
 But he's a bolder man who dares be well. 130
 Her every turn with violence pursued,
 Nor more a storm her hate than gratitude:
 To that each passion turns, or soon or late;
 Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate:
 Superiors? death! and equals? what a curse!
 But an inferior not dependent? worse!
 Offend her, and she knows not to forgive:
 Oblige her, and she'll hate you while you live:
 But die, and she'll adore you--then the bust
 And temple rise--then fall again to dust. 140
 Last night, her lord was all that's good and great:
 A knave this morning, and his will a cheat.
 Strange! by the means defeated of the ends,
 By spirit robb'd of power, by warmth of friends,
 By wealth of followers! without one distress,
 Sick of herself through very selfishness!
 Atossa, cursed with every granted prayer,
 Childless with all her children, wants an heir.
 To heirs unknown descends the unguarded store,
 Or wanders, Heaven-directed, to the poor. 150

Pictures like these, dear Madam, to design,
 Asks no firm hand, and no unerring line;
 Some wandering touches, some reflected light,
 Some flying stroke alone can hit 'em right:
 For how should equal colours do the knack?
 Chameleons who can paint in white and black?

'Yet Chloe, sure, was form'd without a spot'--
 Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot.
 'With every pleasing, every prudent part,
 Say, what can Chloe[17] want?'--She wants a heart. 160
 She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought;
 But never, never reach'd one generous thought.
 Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,
 Content to dwell in decencies for ever.
 So very reasonable, so unmoved,
 As never yet to love, or to be loved.
 She, while her lover pants upon her breast,
 Can mark the figures on an Indian chest;
 And when she sees her friend in deep despair,
 Observes how much a chintz exceeds mohair. 170
 Forbid it, Heaven! a favour or a debt
 She e'er should cancel--but she may forget.
 Safe is your secret still in Chloe's ear;
 But none of Chloe's shall you ever hear.
 Of all her dears she never slander'd one,
 But cares not if a thousand are undone.
 Would Chloe know if you're alive or dead?
 She bids her footman put it in her head.
 Chloe is prudent--would you, too, be wise?
 Then never break your heart when Chloe dies. 180

One certain portrait may (I grant) be seen,
Which Heaven has varnish'd out, and made a queen:
The same for ever! and described by all
With truth and goodness, as with crown and ball.
Poets heap virtues, painters gems at will,
And show their zeal, and hide their want of skill.
'Tis well--but, artists! who can paint or write,
To draw the naked is your true delight.
That robe of quality so struts and swells,
None see what parts of nature it conceals: 190
The exactest traits of body or of mind,
We owe to models of an humble kind.
If Queensberry to strip there's no compelling,
'Tis from a handmaid we must take an Helen
From peer or bishop 'tis no easy thing
To draw the man who loves his God, or king:
Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)
From honest Mahomet[18], or plain Parson Hale.[19]

But grant, in public men sometimes are shown,
A woman's seen in private life alone: 200
Our bolder talents in full light display'd;
Your virtues open fairest in the shade.
Bred to disguise, in public 'tis you hide;
There, none distinguish 'twixt your shame or pride,
Weakness or delicacy; all so nice,
That each may seem a virtue, or a vice.

In men, we various ruling passions find;
In women, two almost divide the kind;
Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,
The love of pleasure, and the love of sway. 210

That, Nature gives; and where the lesson taught
Is but to please, can pleasure seem a fault?
Experience, this; by man's oppression curst,
They seek the second not to lose the first.

Men, some to business, some to pleasure take;
But every woman is at heart a rake:
Men, some to quiet, some to public strife;
But every lady would be queen for life.

Yet mark the fate of a whole sex of queens!
Power all their end, but beauty all the means: 220
In youth they conquer, with so wild a rage,
As leaves them scarce a subject in their age:
For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;
No thought of peace or happiness at home.
But wisdom's triumph is well-timed retreat,
As hard a science to the fair as great!
Beauties, like tyrants, old and friendless grown,
Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone,
Worn out in public, weary every eye,
Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die. 230

Pleasure the sex, as children birds, pursue,
Still out of reach, yet never out of view;
Sure, if they catch, to spoil the toy at most,

To covet flying, and regret when lost:
At last, to follies youth could scarce defend,
It grows their age's prudence to pretend;
Ashamed to own they gave delight before,
Reduced to feign it, when they give no more:
As hags hold Sabbaths, less for joy than spite,
So these their merry, miserable night; 240
Still round and round the ghosts of beauty glide,
And haunt the places where their honour died.

See how the world its veterans rewards!
A youth of frolics, an old age of cards;
Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,
Young without lovers, old without a friend;
A fop their passion, but their prize a sot,
Alive, ridiculous; and dead, forgot!

Ah, friend! to dazzle let the vain design;
To raise the thought, and touch the heart, be thine! 250
That charm shall grow, while what fatigues the ring,
Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing:
So when the sun's broad beam has tired the sight,
All mild ascends the moon's more sober light,
Serene in virgin modesty she shines,
And unobserved the glaring orb declines.

Oh! bless'd with temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;
She, who can love a sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear; 260
She, who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rales him, never shows she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most when she obeys;
Let fops or fortune fly which way they will;
Disdains all loss of tickets, or codille;
Spleen, vapours, or small-pox, above them all,
And mistress of herself though China fall.

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
Woman's at best a contradiction still. 270
Heaven, when it strives to polish all it can
Its last, best work, but forms a softer man;
Picks from each sex, to make the favourite blest,
Your love of pleasure or desire of rest:
Blends, in exception to all general rules,
Your taste of follies, with our scorn of fools:
Reserve with frankness, art with truth allied,
Courage with softness, modesty with pride;
Fix'd principles, with fancy ever new;
Shakes all together, and produces--you. 280

Be this a woman's fame: with this unblest'd,
Toasts live a scorn, and queens may die a jest.
This Phoebus promised (I forget the year)
When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere;
Ascendant Phoebus watch'd that hour with care,
Averted half your parents' simple prayer;
And gave you beauty, but denied the pelf

That buys your sex a tyrant o'er itself.
The generous god, who wit and gold refines,
And ripens spirits as he ripens mines, 290
Kept dross for duchesses, the world shall know it,
To you gave sense, good-humour, and a poet.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 77 in the MS.--

In whose mad brain the mix'd ideas roll
Of Tall-toy's breeches, and of Caesar's soul.

After VER. 122 in the MS.--

Oppress'd with wealth and wit, abundance sad!
One makes her poor, the other makes her mad.

After VER. 148 in the MS.--

This Death decides, nor lets the blessing fall
On any one she hates, but on them all.
Cursed chance! this only could afflict her more,
If any part should wander to the poor.

After VER. 198 in the MS.--

Fain I'd in Fulvia spy the tender wife;
I cannot prove it on her, for my life:
And, for a noble pride, I blush no less,
Instead of Berenice, to think on Bess.
Thus while immortal Gibber only sings
(As ----- and H---y preach) for queens and kings,
The nymph that ne'er read Milton's mighty line,
May, if she love, and merit verse, have mine

VER. 207 in the first edition--

In several men we several passions find;
In women, two almost divide the kind.

EPISTLE III.[20]--TO ALLEN LORD BATHURST.

ARGUMENT.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

That it is known to few, most falling into one of the extremes, avarice or profusion, ver. 1., &c. The point discussed, whether the invention of money has been more commodious, or pernicious to mankind, ver. 21 to 77. That riches, either to the avaricious or the prodigal, cannot afford happiness, scarcely necessities, ver. 89 to 160. That avarice is an absolute frenzy, without an end or purpose, ver. 113 to 152. Conjectures about the motives of avaricious men, ver. 121 to 153. That the conduct of men, with respect to riches, can only be accounted for by the order of Providence, which works the general good out of extremes, and brings all to its great end by perpetual revolutions, ver. 161 to 178. How a

miser acts upon principles which appear to him reasonable, ver. 179. How a prodigal does the same, ver. 199. The due medium, and true use of riches, ver. 219. The Man of Ross, ver. 250. The fate of the profuse and the covetous, in two examples; both miserable in life and in death, ver. 300, &c. The story of Sir Balaam, ver. 339 to the end.

P. Who shall decide, when doctors disagree,
And soundest casuists doubt, like you and me?
You hold the word, from Jove to Momus given,
That man was made the standing jest of Heaven;
And gold but sent to keep the fools in play,
For some to heap, and some to throw away.

But I, who think more highly of our kind,
(And, surely, Heaven and I are of a mind)
Opine, that Nature, as in duty bound,
Deep hid the shining mischief under ground: 10
But when, by man's audacious labour won,
Flamed forth this rival to its sire, the Sun,
Then careful Heaven supplied two sorts of men,
To squander these, and those to hide again.

Like doctors thus, when much dispute has pass'd,
We find our tenets just the same at last.
Both fairly owning, riches, in effect,
No grace of Heaven or token of the elect;
Given to the fool, the mad, the vain, the evil,
To Ward,[21] to Waters, Chartres,[22] and the devil. 20

B. What nature wants, commodious gold bestows,
'Tis thus we eat the bread another sows.

P. But how unequal it bestows, observe,
'Tis thus we riot, while who sow it starve:
What nature wants (a phrase I much distrust)
Extends to luxury, extends to lust:
Useful, I grant, it serves what life requires,
But dreadful too, the dark assassin hires:

B. Trade it may help, society extend.

P. But lures the pirate, and corrupts the friend. 30

B. It raises armies in a nation's aid.

P. But bribes a senate, and the land's betray'd.
In vain may heroes fight, and patriots rave;
If secret gold sap on from knave to knave.
Once, we confess, beneath the patriot's cloak,[23]
From the crack'd bag the dropping guinea spoke,
And jingling down the back-stairs, told the crew,
'Old Cato is as great a rogue as you.'
Blest paper-credit! last and best supply!
That lends corruption lighter wings to fly! 40
Gold imp'd by thee, can compass hardest things,
Can pocket states, can fetch or carry kings;
A single leaf shall waft an army o'er,
Or ship off senates[24] to a distant shore;
A leaf, like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro

Our fates and fortunes, as the winds shall blow:
Pregnant with thousands flits the scrap unseen,
And silent sells a king, or buys a queen,

Oh! that such bulky bribes as all might see,
Still, as of old, encumber'd villainy! 50
Could France or Rome divert our brave designs,
With all their brandies, or with all their wines?
What could they more than knights and squires confound,
Or water all the quorum ten miles round?
A statesman's slumbers how this speech would spoil!
'Sir, Spain has sent a thousand jars of oil;
Huge bales of British cloth blockade the door;
A hundred oxen at your levee roar.'

Poor avarice one torment more would find;
Nor could profusion squander all in kind. 60
Astride his cheese, Sir Morgan might we meet;
And Worldly crying coals[25] from street to street,
Whom, with a wig so wild, and mien so mazed,
Pity mistakes for some poor tradesman crazed.
Had Colepepper's[26] whole wealth been hops and hogs,
Could he himself have sent it to the dogs?
His Grace will game: to White's a bull be led,
With spurning heels, and with a butting head:
To White's be carried, as to ancient games,
Fair coursers, vases, and alluring dames. 70
Shall then Uxorio, if the stakes he sweep,
Bear home six whores and make his lady weep?
Or soft Adonis, so perfumed and fine,
Drive to St James's a whole herd of swine?
Oh filthy check on all industrious skill,
To spoil the nation's last great trade--quadrille?
Since then, my lord, on such a world we fall,
What say you?

B. Say! Why, take it, gold and all.

P. What riches give us, let us then inquire:
Meat, fire, and clothes.

B. What more?

P. Meat, clothes, and fire. 80
Is this too little? would you more than live?
Alas! 'tis more than Turner[27] finds they give.
Alas! 'tis more than (all his visions past)
Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last!
What can they give? to dying Hopkins,[28] heirs;
To Chartres, vigour; Japhet,[29] nose and ears?
Can they in gems bid pallid Hippia glow,
In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below;
Or heal, old Narses, thy obscurer ail,
With all the embroidery plaster'd at thy tail? 90
They might (were Harpax not too wise to spend)
Give Harpax' self the blessing of a friend;
Or find some doctor that would save the life
Of wretched Shylock, spite of Shylock's wife:
But thousands die, without or this or that,

Die, and endow a college, or a cat.[30]
To some, indeed, Heaven grants the happier fate,
T' enrich a bastard, or a son they hate.

Perhaps you think the poor might have their part?
Bond[31] damns the poor, and hates them from his heart: 100
The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule,
That 'every man in want is knave or fool:'
'God cannot love' (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)
'The wretch he starves'--and piously denies:
But the good bishop, with a meeker air,
Admits, and leaves them, Providence's care.

Yet, to be just to these poor men of pelf,
Each does but hate his neighbour as himself:
Damn'd to the mines, an equal fate betides
The slave that digs it, and the slave that hides. 110

B. Who suffer thus, mere charity should own,
Must act on motives powerful, though unknown.

P. Some war, some plague, or famine, they foresee,
Some revelation hid from you and me.
Why Shylock wants a meal, the cause is found,
He thinks a loaf will rise to fifty pound.
What made directors cheat in South-sea year?
To live on venison[32] when it sold so dear.
Ask you why Phryne the whole auction buys?
Phryne foresees a general excise.[33] 120
Why she and Sappho raise that monstrous sum?
Alas! they fear a man will cost a plum.

Wise Peter[34] sees the world's respect for gold,
And therefore hopes this nation may be sold:
Glorious ambition! Peter, swell thy store,
And be what Rome's great Didius[35] was before.

The crown of Poland, venal twice an age,
To just three millions stinted modest Gage.
But nobler scenes Maria's dreams unfold,
Hereditary realms, and worlds of gold. 130
Congenial souls! whose life one avarice joins,
And one fate buries in the Asturian mines.

Much-injured Blunt![36] why bears he Britain's hate?
A wizard told him in these words our fate:
'At length corruption, like a general flood,
(So long by watchful ministers withstood)
Shall deluge all; and avarice creeping on,
Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the sun,
Statesman and patriot ply alike the stocks,
Peeress and butler share alike the box, 140
And judges job, and bishops bite the town,
And mighty dukes pack cards for half-a-crown.
See Britain sunk in lucre's sordid charms,
And France revenged of Anne's and Edward's arms!
'Twas no court-badge, great scrivener! fired thy brain,
Nor lordly luxury, nor city gain:
No, 'twas thy righteous end, ashamed to see

Senates degenerate, patriots disagree,
And nobly wishing party-rage to cease,
To buy both sides, and give thy country peace. 150

'All this is madness,' cries a sober sage:
But who, my friend, has reason in his rage?
'The ruling passion, be it what it will,
The ruling passion conquers reason still.'
Less mad the wildest whimsy we can frame,
Than even that passion, if it has no aim;
For though such motives folly you may call,
The folly's greater to have none at all.

Hear, then, the truth: 'Tis Heaven each passion sends,
And different men directs to different ends. 160
Extremes in Nature equal good produce,
Extremes in man concur to general use.'
Ask we what makes one keep, and one bestow?
That Power who bids the ocean ebb and flow,
Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain,
Through reconciled extremes of drought and rain.
Builds life on death, on change duration founds,
And gives the eternal wheels to know their rounds.

Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,
Wait but for wings, and in their season fly. 170
Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,
Sees but a backward steward for the poor;
This year a reservoir, to keep and spare;
The next a fountain, spouting through his heir,
In lavish streams to quench a country's thirst,
And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.

Old Cotta shamed his fortune and his birth,
Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth:
What though (the use of barbarous spits forgot)
His kitchen vied in coolness with his grot? 180
His court with nettles, moats with cresses stored,
With soups unbought and salads bless'd his board?
If Cotta lived on pulse, it was no more
Than Brahmins, saints, and sages did before;
To cram the rich was prodigal expense,
And who would take the poor from Providence?
Like some lone Chartreux stands the good old Hall,
Silence without, and fasts within the wall;
No rafter'd roofs with dance and tabor sound,
No noontide-bell invites the country round: 190
Tenants with sighs the smokeless towers survey,
And turn the unwilling steeds another way:
Benighted wanderers, the forest o'er,
Curse the saved candle, and unopening door;
While the gaunt mastiff growling at the gate,
Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.

Not so his son; he mark'd this oversight,
And then mistook reverse of wrong for right.
(For what to shun will no great knowledge need,
But what to follow, is a task indeed). 200
Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,

More go to ruin fortunes, than to raise.
What slaughter'd hecatombs, what floods of wine,
Fill the capacious squire, and deep divine!
Yet no mean motive this profusion draws,
His oxen perish in his country's cause;
'Tis George and Liberty that crowns the cup,
And zeal for that great house which eats him up.
The woods recede around the naked seat,
The silvans groan--no matter--for the fleet; 210
Next goes his wool--to clothe our valiant bands,
Last, for his country's love, he sells his lands.
To town he comes, completes the nation's hope,
And heads the bold train-bands, and burns a pope.
And shall not Britain now reward his toils,
Britain, that pays her patriots with her spoils?
In vain at court the bankrupt pleads his cause,
His thankless country leaves him to her laws.

The sense to value riches, with the art
To enjoy them, and the virtue to impart, 220
Not meanly, nor ambitiously pursued,
Not sunk by sloth, nor raised by servitude:
To balance fortune by a just expense,
Join with economy, magnificence;
With splendour, charity; with plenty, health;
Oh teach us, Bathurst! yet unspoil'd by wealth!
That secret rare, between the extremes to move
Of mad good-nature and of mean self-love.

B. To worth or want well-weigh'd, be bounty given,
And ease, or emulate, the care of Heaven; 230
(Whose measure full o'erflows on human race)
Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.
Wealth in the gross is death, but life, diffused;
As poison heals, in just proportion used:
In heaps, like ambergris, a stink it lies,
But well-dispersed, is incense to the skies.

P. Who starves by nobles, or with nobles eats?
The wretch that trusts them, and the rogue that cheats.
Is there a lord, who knows a cheerful noon
Without a fiddler, flatterer, or buffoon? 240
Whose table, wit, or modest merit share,
Unelbow'd by a gamester, pimp, or player?
Who copies yours, or Oxford's better part,[37]
To ease the oppress'd, and raise the sinking heart?
Where'er he shines, O Fortune! gild the scene,
And angels guard him in the golden mean!
There, English bounty yet awhile may stand,
And honour linger ere it leaves the land.

But all our praises why should lords engross?
Rise, honest Muse! and sing the Man of Ross:[38] 250
Pleased Vaga echoes through her winding bounds,
And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.
Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?
From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?
Not to the skies in useless columns toss'd,
Or in proud falls magnificently lost,

But clear and artless pouring through the plain
 Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.
 Whose causeway parts the vale with shady rows?
 Whose seats the weary traveller repose? 260
 Who taught that heaven-directed spire to rise?
 'The Man of Ross,' each lisping babe replies.
 Behold the market-place with poor o'erspread!
 The Man of Ross divides the weekly bread:
 He feeds yon alms-house, neat, but void of state,
 Where Age and Want sit smiling at the gate:
 Him portion'd maids, apprenticed orphans bless'd,
 The young who labour, and the old who rest.
 Is any sick? the Man of Ross relieves,
 Prescribes, attends, the medicine makes, and gives. 270
 Is there a variance? enter but his door,
 Balk'd are the courts, and contest is no more.
 Despairing quacks with curses fled the place,
 And vile attorneys, now a useless race.

B. Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue
 What all so wish, but want the power to do!
 Oh say, what sums that generous hand supply?
 What mines, to swell that boundless charity?

P. Of debts and taxes, wife and children clear,
 This man possess'd--five hundred pounds a-year. 280
 Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud courts, withdraw your blaze!
 Ye little stars, hide your diminish'd rays!

B. And what? no monument, inscription, stone?
 His race, his form, his name almost unknown?

P. Who builds a church to God, and not to fame,
 Will never mark the marble with his name:
 Go, search it there,[39] where to be born and die,
 Of rich and poor makes all the history;
 Enough, that virtue fill'd the space between;
 Proved, by the ends of being, to have been. 290
 When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend
 The wretch who, living, saved a candle's end:
 Shouldering God's altar a vile image stands,
 Belies his features, nay, extends his hands;
 That live-long wig which Gorgon's self might own,
 Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.[40]
 Behold what blessings wealth to life can lend!
 And see what comfort it affords our end!

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,
 The floors of plaster, and the walls of dung, 300
 On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,
 With tape-tied curtains, never meant to draw,
 The George and Garter dangling from that bed
 Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
 Great Villiers[41] lies--alas! how changed from him,
 That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim!
 Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,
 The bower of wanton Shrewsbury,[42] and love;
 Or just as gay, at council, in a ring
 Of mimic'd statesmen, and their merry king. 310

No wit to flatter, left of all his store;
No fool to laugh at, which he valued more.
There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends.

His Grace's fate sage Cutler[43] could foresee,
And well (he thought) advised him, 'Live like me.'
As well his Grace replied, 'Like you, Sir John?
That I can do, when all I have is gone.'
Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse,
Want with a full, or with an empty purse? 320
Thy life more wretched, Cutler, was confess'd,
Arise, and tell me, was thy death more bless'd?
Cutler saw tenants break, and houses fall;
For very want he could not build a wall.
His only daughter in a stranger's power;
For very want he could not pay a dower.
A few gray hairs his reverend temples crown'd,
'Twas very want that sold them for two pound.
What even denied a cordial at his end,
Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend? 330
What but a want, which you perhaps think mad,
Yet numbers feel--the want of what he had!
Cutler and Brutus, dying, both exclaim,
'Virtue! and Wealth! what are ye but a name!'

Say, for such worth are other worlds prepared
Or are they both in this their own reward?
A knotty point! to which we now proceed.
But you are tired--I'll tell a tale--

B. Agreed.

P. Where London's column,[44] pointing at the skies
Like a tall bully, lifts the head, and lies; 340
There dwelt a citizen of sober fame,
A plain good man, and Balaam was his name;
Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth;
His word would pass for more than he was worth.
One solid dish his week-day meal affords,
An added pudding solemnised the Lord's:
Constant at church, and 'Change; his gains were sure,
His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.

The devil was piqued such saintship to behold,
And long'd to tempt him like good Job of old: 350
But Satan now is wiser than of yore,
And tempts by making rich, not making poor.

Roused by the Prince of Air, the whirlwinds sweep
The surge, and plunge his father in the deep;
Then lull against his Cornish lands they roar,
And two rich shipwrecks bless the lucky shore.

Sir Balaam now, he lives like other folks,
He takes his chirping pint, and cracks his jokes:
'Live like yourself,' was soon my Lady's word;
And, lo! two puddings smoked upon the board. 360

Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,
An honest factor stole a gem away:
He pledged it to the knight; the knight had wit,
So kept the diamond, and the rogue was bit.
Some scruple rose, but thus he eased his thought--
'I'll now give sixpence where I gave a groat;
Where once I went to church, I'll now go twice--
And am so clear, too, of all other vice.'

The Tempter saw his time; the work he plied;
Stocks and subscriptions pour on every side, 370
Till all the demon makes his full descent
In one abundant shower of cent, per cent.;
Sinks deep within him, and possesses whole,
Then dubs director, and secures his soul.

Behold Sir Balaam, now a man of spirit,
Ascribes his gettings to his parts and merit;
What late he call'd a blessing, now was wit,
And God's good providence, a lucky hit.
Things change their titles, as our manners turn:
His counting-house employ'd the Sunday-morn; 380
Seldom at church ('twas such a busy life)
But duly sent his family and wife.
There (so the devil ordain'd) one Christmas-tide,
My good old lady catch'd a cold, and died.

A nymph of quality admires our knight;
He marries, bows at court, and grows polite:
Leaves the dull cits, and joins (to please the fair)
The well-bred cuckolds in St James's air:
First, for his son a gay commission buys,
Who drinks, whores, fights, and in a duel dies: 390
His daughter flaunts a viscount's tawdry wife;
She bears a coronet and pox for life.
In Britain's senate he a seat obtains,
And one more pensioner St Stephen gains.
My lady falls to play; so bad her chance,
He must repair it; takes a bribe from France;
The House impeach him; Coningsby harangues;
The court forsake him--and Sir Balaam hangs:
Wife, son, and daughter, Satan! are thy own,
His wealth, yet dearer, forfeit to the crown: 400
The devil and the king divide the prize,
And sad Sir Balaam curses God, and dies.

VARIATIONS.

After VER. 50, in the MS.--

To break a trust were Peter bribed with wine,
Peter! 'twould pose as wise a head as thine.

VER. 77, in the former edition--

Well then, since with the world we stand or fall,
Come, take it as we find it, gold and all.

After VER. 218 in the MS.--

Where one lean herring furnish'd Cotta's board,
And nettles grew, fit porridge for their lord;
Where mad good-nature, bounty misapplied,
In lavish Curio blazed awhile and died;
There Providence once more shall shift the scene,
And showing H----y, teach the golden mean.

After VER. 226, in the MS.--

That secret rare with affluence hardly join'd,
Which W----n lost, yet B----y ne'er could find;
Still miss'd by vice, and scarce by virtue hit,
By G----'s goodness, or by S----'s wit.

After VER. 250 in the MS--

Trace humble worth beyond Sabrina's shore,
Who sings not him, oh, may he sing no more!

VER. 287, thus in the MS.--

The register enrolls him with his poor,
Tells he was born and died, and tells no more.
Just as he ought, he fill'd the space between;
Then stole to rest, unheeded and unseen.

VER. 337, in the former editions--

That knotty point, my lord, shall I discuss
Or tell a tale!--A tale.--It follows thus.

EPISTLE IV.--TO RICHARD BOYLE, EARL OF BURLINGTON.

ARGUMENT.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

The vanity of expense in people of wealth and quality. The abuse of the word 'taste,' ver. 13. That the first principle and foundation, in this as in every thing else, is good sense, ver. 40. The chief proof of it is to follow nature, even in works of mere luxury and elegance. Instanced in architecture and gardening, where all must be adapted to the genius and use of the place, and the beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it, ver. 50. How men are disappointed in their most expensive undertakings, for want of this true foundation, without which nothing can please long, if at all; and the best examples and rules will but be perverted into something burdensome or ridiculous, ver. 65 to 92. A description of the false taste of magnificence; the first grand error of which is to imagine that greatness consists in the size and dimension, instead of the proportion and harmony of the whole, ver. 97; and the second, either in joining together parts incoherent, or too minutely resembling, or in the repetition of the same too frequently, ver. 105, &c. A word or two of false taste in books, in music, in painting, even in preaching and prayer, and lastly in entertainments, ver. 133, &c. Yet Providence is justified in giving wealth to be squandered in this manner, since it is dispersed to the poor and laborious part of mankind,

ver. 169 [recurring to what is laid down in the 'Essay on Man,' ep. ii. and in the epistle preceding this, ver. 159, &c.] What are the proper objects of magnificence, and a proper field for the expense of great men, ver. 177, &c.; and finally, the great and public works which become a prince, ver. 191, to the end.

'Tis strange, the miser should his cares employ
To gain those riches he can ne'er enjoy:
Is it less strange, the prodigal should waste
His wealth, to purchase what he ne'er can taste?
Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats;
Artists must choose his pictures, music, meats;
He buys for Topham[45] drawings and designs,
For Pembroke statues, dirty gods, and coins;
Rare monkish manuscripts for Hearne[46] alone,
And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane. 10
Think we all these are for himself? no more
Than his fine wife, alas! or finer whore.

For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?
Only to show how many tastes he wanted.
What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste?
Some demon whisper'd, 'Visto! have a taste.'
Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool,
And needs no rod but Ripley[47] with a rule.
See! sportive fate, to punish awkward pride,
Bids Bubo[48] build, and sends him such a guide: 20
A standing sermon, at each year's expense,
That never coxcomb reach'd magnificence!

You show us, Rome was glorious, not profuse,
And pompous buildings once were things of use.
Yet shall (my lord) your just, your noble rules
Fill half the land with imitating fools,
Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,
And of one beauty many blunders make;
Load some vain church with old theatric state,
Turn arcs of triumph to a garden-gate; 30
Reverse your ornaments, and hang them all
On some patch'd dog-hole eked with ends of wall;
Then clap four slices of pilaster on't,
That, laced with bits of rustic, makes a front.
Shall call the winds through long arcades to roar,
Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door;
Conscious they act a true Palladian part.
And if they starve, they starve by rules of art.

Oft have you hinted to your brother peer,
A certain truth, which many buy too dear: 40
Something there is more needful than expense,
And something previous even to taste--'tis sense:
Good sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,
And though no science, fairly worth the seven:
A light, which in yourself you must perceive;
Jones and Le Notre have it not to give.

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
To rear the column, or the arch to bend,

To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot;
In all, let Nature never be forgot. 50
But treat the goddess like a modest fair,
Nor overdress, nor leave her wholly bare;
Let not each beauty everywhere be spied,
Where half the skill is decently to hide.
He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,
Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.

Consult the genius of the place in all;
That tells the waters or to rise, or fall;
Or helps the ambitious hill the heavens to scale,
Or scoops in circling theatres the vale; 60
Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;
Now breaks, or now directs, the intending lines;
Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.

Still follow sense, of every art the soul,
Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,
Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
Start even from difficulty, strike from chance;
Nature shall join you; time shall make it grow
A work to wonder at--perhaps a Stowe. 70

Without it, proud Versailles! thy glory falls;
And Nero's terraces desert their walls:
The vast parterres a thousand hands shall make,
Lo! Cobham comes, and floats them with a lake:
Or cut wide views through mountains to the plain,
You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.
Even in an ornament its place remark,
Nor in an hermitage set Dr Clarke.[49]
Behold Villario's ten years' toil complete;
His quincunx darkens, his espaliers meet; 80
The wood supports the plain, the parts unite,
And strength of shade contends with strength of light;
A waving glow the blooming beds display,
Blushing in bright diversities of day,
With silver-quivering rills meander'd o'er--
Enjoy them, you! Villario can no more;
Tired of the scene parterres and fountains yield,
He finds at last he better likes a field.

Through his young woods how pleased Sabinus stray'd,
Or sat delighted in the thickening shade, 90
With annual joy the reddening shoots to greet,
Or see the stretching branches long to meet!
His son's fine taste an opener vista loves,
Foe to the Dryads of his father's groves;
One boundless green, or flourish'd carpet views,
With all the mournful family of yews;
The thriving plants, ignoble broomsticks made,
Now sweep those alleys they were born to shade.

At Timon's villa[50] let us pass a day,
Where all cry out, 'What sums are thrown away!' 100
So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air,
Soft and agreeable come never there.

Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a draught
As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.
To compass this, his building is a town,
His pond an ocean, his parterre a down:
Who but must laugh, the master when he sees,
A puny insect, shivering at a breeze!
Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!
The whole a labour'd quarry above ground; 110
Two Cupids squirt before: a lake behind
Improves the keenness of the northern wind.
His gardens next your admiration call,
On every side you look, behold the wall!
No pleasing intricacies intervene,
No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.
The suffering eye inverted nature sees,
Trees cut to statues, statues thick as trees; 120
With here a fountain, never to be play'd;
And there a summer-house, that knows no shade;
Here Amphitrite sails through myrtle bowers;
There gladiators fight, or die in flowers;
Unwater'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn,
And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty urn.

My lord advances with majestic mien,
Smit with the mighty pleasure, to be seen:
But soft--by regular approach--not yet--
First through the length of yon hot terrace sweat; 130
And when up ten steep slopes you've dragg'd your thighs,
Just at his study-door he'll bless your eyes.

His study! with what authors is it stored?
In books, not authors, curious is my lord;
To all their dated backs he turns you round:
These Aldus printed, those Du Sueil has bound.
Lo! some are vellum, and the rest as good
For all his lordship knows, but they are wood.
For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look, 140
These shelves admit not any modern book.

And now the chapel's silver bell you hear,
That summons you to all the pride of prayer:
Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,
Make the soul dance upon a jig to heaven.
On painted ceilings you devoutly stare,
Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,[51]
On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
And bring all Paradise before your eye.
To rest, the cushion and soft dean invite,
Who never mentions hell[51] to ears polite. 150

But hark! the chiming clocks to dinner call;
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall:
The rich buffet well-colour'd serpents grace,
And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.
Is this a dinner? this a genial room?
No, 'tis a temple, and a hecatomb.
A solemn sacrifice, perform'd in state,

You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.
 So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear
 Sancho's dread doctor[53] and his wand were there. 160
 Between each act the trembling salvers ring,
 From soup to sweet-vine, and God bless the king.
 In plenty starving, tantalised in state,
 And complaisantly help'd to all I hate,
 Treated, caress'd, and tired, I take my leave,
 Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;
 I curse such lavish cost, and little skill,
 And swear no day was ever pass'd so ill.

Yet hence the poor are clothed, the hungry fed;
 Health to himself, and to his infants bread 170
 The labourer bears: what his hard heart denies,
 His charitable vanity supplies.

Another age shall see the golden ear
 Imbrown the slope, and nod on the parterre,
 Deep harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,
 And laughing Ceres reassume the land.

Who then shall grace, or who improve the soil?--
 Who plants like Bathurst, or who builds like Boyle.
 'Tis use alone that sanctifies expense,
 And splendour borrows all her rays from sense. 180

His father's acres who enjoys in peace,
 Or makes his neighbours glad, if he increase:
 Whose cheerful tenants bless their yearly toil,
 Yet to their lord owe more than to the soil;
 Whose ample lawns are not ashamed to feed
 The milky heifer and deserving steed;
 Whose rising forests, not for pride or show,
 But future buildings, future navies, grow:
 Let his plantations stretch from down to down,
 First shade a country, and then raise a town. 190

You, too, proceed! make falling arts your care,
 Erect new wonders, and the old repair;
 Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,
 And be whate'er Vitruvius was before:
 Till kings call forth the ideas of your mind,
 (Proud to accomplish what such hands design'd.)
 Bid harbours open, public ways extend,
 Bid temples, worthier of the god, ascend;
 Bid the broad arch the dangerous flood contain,
 The mole projected break the roaring main; 200
 Back to his bonds their subject sea command,
 And roll obedient rivers through the land;
 These honours, peace to happy Britain brings,
 These are imperial works, and worthy kings.

VARIATION.

After VER. 22 in the MS.--

Must bishops, lawyers, statesmen have the skill

To build, to plant, judge paintings, what you will?
Then why not Kent as well our treaties draw,
Bridginan explain the gospel, Gibs the law?

EPISTLE V. TO MR ADDISON.

OCCASIONED BY HIS DIALOGUES ON MEDALS.[54]

See the wild waste of all-devouring years!
How Rome her own sad sepulchre appears,
With nodding arches, broken temples spread!
The very tombs now vanish'd, like their dead!
Imperial wonders raised on nations spoil'd
Where mix'd with slaves the groaning martyr toil'd:
Huge theatres, that now unpeopled woods,
Now drain'd a distant country of her floods:
Fanes, which admiring gods with pride survey,
Statues of men, scarce less alive than they! 10
Some felt the silent stroke of mouldering age,
Some hostile fury, some religious rage,
Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,
And Papal piety, and Gothic fire.
Perhaps, by its own ruins saved from flame,
Some buried marble half-preserves a name;
That name the learn'd with fierce disputes pursue,
And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.

Ambition sigh'd: she found it vain to trust
The faithless column, and the crumbling bust: 20
Huge moles, whose shadow stretch'd from shore to shore,
Their ruins perish'd, and their place no more!
Convinced, she now contracts her vast design,
And all her triumphs shrink into a coin.
A narrow orb each crowded conquest keeps,
Beneath her palm, here sad Judaea weeps.
Now scantier limits the proud arch confine,
And scarce are seen the prostrate Nile or Rhine;
A small Euphrates through the piece is roll'd,
And little eagles wave their wings in gold. 30

The medal, faithful to its charge of fame,
Through climes and ages bears each form and name:
In one short view subjected to our eye
Gods, emperors, heroes, sages, beauties, lie.
With sharpen'd sight, pale antiquaries pore,
The inscription value, but the rust adore.
This the blue varnish, that the green endears,
The sacred rust of twice ten hundred years!
To gain Pescennius one employs his schemes,
One grasps a Cecrops in ecstatic dreams. 40
Poor Vadius,[55] long with learned spleen devour'd.
Can taste no pleasure since his shield was scour'd:
And Curio, restless by the fair one's side,
Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride.

Theirs is the vanity, the learning thine:
Touch'd by thy hand, again Rome's glories shine;
Her gods, and god-like heroes rise to view,

And all her faded garlands bloom anew.
 Nor blush, these studies thy regard engage;
 These pleased the fathers of poetic rage;
 The verse and sculpture bore an equal part,
 And Art reflected images to Art. 50

Oh! when shall Britain, conscious of her claim,
 Stand emulous of Greek and Roman fame?
 In living medals see her wars enroll'd,
 And vanquish'd realms supply recording gold?
 Here, rising bold, the patriot's honest face;
 There, warriors frowning in historic brass:
 Then future ages with delight shall see
 How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's looks agree; 60
 Or in fair series laurell'd bards be shown,
 A Virgil there, and here an Addison.
 Then shall thy Craggs (and let me call him mine)
 On the cast ore, another Pollio, shine;
 With aspect open, shall erect his head,
 And round the orb in lasting notes be read,
 'Statesman, yet friend to truth! of soul sincere,
 In action faithful, and in honour clear;
 Who broke no promise, served no private end,
 Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend; 70
 Ennobled by himself, by all approved,
 And praised, unenvied, by the Muse he loved.'

TRANSLATIONS AND IMITATIONS.

SAPPHO TO PHAON.

FROM THE FIFTEENTH OF OVID'S EPISTLES.

Say, lovely youth, that dost my heart command,
 Can Phaon's eyes forget his Sappho's hand?
 Must then her name the wretched writer prove,
 To thy remembrance lost, as to thy love?
 Ask not the cause that I new numbers choose,
 The lute neglected and the lyric Muse;
 Love taught my tears in sadder notes to flow,
 And tuned my heart to elegies of woe,
 I burn, I burn, as when through ripen'd corn
 By driving winds the spreading flames are borne! 10
 Phaon to AEtna's scorching fields retires,
 While I consume with more than AEtna's fires!
 No more my soul a charm in music finds;
 Music has charms alone for peaceful minds.
 Soft scenes of solitude no more can please;
 Love enters there, and I'm my own disease.
 No more the Lesbian dames my passion move,
 Once the dear objects of my guilty love;
 All other loves are lost in only thine,
 Ah, youth ungrateful to a flame like mine! 20
 Whom would not all those blooming charms surprise,
 Those heavenly looks, and dear deluding eyes!
 The harp and bow would you like Phoebus bear,

A brighter Phoebus Phaon might appear;
 Would you with ivy wreath your flowing hair,
 Not Bacchus' self with Phaon could compare:
 Yet Phoebus loved, and Bacchus felt the flame,
 One Daphne warm'd, and one the Cretan dame;
 Nymphs that in verse no more could rival me,
 Than e'en those gods contend in charms with thee. 30
 The Muses teach me all their softest lays,
 And the wide world resounds with Sappho's praise.
 Though great Alcaeus more sublimely sings,
 And strikes with bolder rage the sounding strings,
 No less renown attends the moving lyre,
 Which Venus tunes, and all her loves inspire.
 To me what nature has in charms denied,
 Is well by wit's more lasting flames supplied.
 Though short my stature, yet my name extends
 To heaven itself, and earth's remotest ends. 40
 Brown as I am, an Ethiopian dame
 Inspired young Perseus with a generous flame;
 Turtles and doves of different hues unite,
 And glossy jet is pair'd with shining white.
 If to no charms thou wilt thy heart resign,
 But such as merit, such as equal thine,
 By none, alas! by none thou canst be moved,
 Phaon alone by Phaon must be loved!
 Yet once thy Sappho could thy cares employ,
 Once in her arms you centred all your joy: 50
 No time the dear remembrance can remove,
 For, oh! how vast a memory has love!
 My music, then, you could for ever hear,
 And all my words were music to your ear.
 You stopp'd with kisses my enchanting tongue,
 And found my kisses sweeter than my song,
 In all I pleased, but most in what was best;
 And the last joy was dearer than the rest.
 Then with each word, each glance, each motion fired,
 You still enjoy'd, and yet you still desired, 60
 Till, all dissolving, in the trance we lay,
 And in tumultuous raptures died away.
 The fair Sicilians now thy soul inflame;
 Why was I born, ye gods, a Lesbian dame?
 But ah, beware, Sicilian nymphs! nor boast
 That wandering heart which I so lately lost;
 Nor be with all those tempting words abused,
 Those tempting words were all to Sappho used.
 And you that rule Sicilia's happy plains,
 Have pity, Venus, on your poet's pains! 70
 Shall fortune still in one sad tenor run,
 And still increase the woes so soon begun?
 Inured to sorrow from my tender years,
 My parents' ashes drank my early tears:
 My brother next, neglecting wealth and fame,
 Ignobly burn'd in a destructive flame:
 An infant daughter late my griefs increased,
 And all a mother's cares distract my breast,
 Alas! what more could Fate itself impose,
 But thee, the last, and greatest of my woes? 80
 No more my robes in waving purple flow,
 Nor on my hand the sparkling diamonds glow;

No more my locks in ringlets curl'd diffuse
 The costly sweetness of Arabian dews,
 Nor braids of gold the varied tresses bind,
 That fly disorder'd with the wanton wind:
 For whom should Sappho use such arts as these?
 He's gone, whom only she desired to please!
 Cupid's light darts my tender bosom move;
 Still is there cause for Sappho still to love: 90
 So from my birth the Sisters fix'd my doom,
 And gave to Venus all my life to come;
 Or, while my Muse in melting notes complains,
 My yielding heart keeps measure to my strains.
 By charms like thine, which all my soul have won,
 Who might not--ah! who would not be undone?
 For those Aurora Cephalus might scorn,
 And with fresh blushes paint the conscious morn.
 For those might Cynthia lengthen Phaon's sleep;
 And bid Endymion nightly tend his sheep; 100
 Venus for those had rapt thee to the skies;
 But Mars on thee might look with Venus' eyes.
 Oh scarce a youth, yet scarce a tender boy!
 Oh useful time for lovers to employ!
 Pride of thy age, and glory of thy race,
 Come to these arms, and melt in this embrace!
 The vows you never will return, receive;
 And take, at least, the love you will not give.
 See, while I write, my words are lost in tears!
 The less my sense, the more my love appears. 110
 Sure 'twas not much to bid one kind adieu,
 (At least to feign was never hard to you)
 'Farewell, my Lesbian love,' you might have said;
 Or coldly thus, 'Farewell, O Lesbian maid!'
 No tear did you, no parting kiss receive,
 Nor knew I then how much I was to grieve.
 No lover's gift your Sappho could confer,
 And wrongs and woes were all you left with her.
 No charge I gave you, and no charge could give,
 But this, 'Be mindful of our loves, and live.' 120
 Now by the Nine, those powers adored by me,
 And Love, the god that ever waits on thee,
 When first I heard (from whom I hardly knew)
 That you were fled, and all my joys with you,
 Like some sad statue, speechless, pale, I stood,
 Grief chill'd my breast, and stopp'd my freezing blood;
 No sigh to rise, no tear had power to flow,
 Fix'd in a stupid lethargy of woe:
 But when its way the impetuous passion found,
 I rend my tresses, and my breast I wound: 130
 I rave, then weep; I curse, and then complain;
 Now swell to rage, now melt in tears again.
 Not fiercer pangs distract the mournful dame,
 Whose first-born infant feeds the funeral flame.
 My scornful brother with a smile appears,
 Insults my woes, and triumphs in my tears;
 His hated image ever haunts my eyes;
 'And why this grief? thy daughter lives!' he cries.
 Stung with my love, and furious with despair,
 All torn my garments, and my bosom bare, 140
 My woes, thy crimes, I to the world proclaim;

Such inconsistent things are love and shame!
 'Tis thou art all my care and my delight,
 My daily longing, and my dream by night;
 Oh night more pleasing than the brightest day,
 When fancy gives what absence takes away,
 And, dress'd in all its visionary charms,
 Restores my fair deserter to my arms!
 Then round your neck in wanton wreaths I twine,
 Then you, methinks, as fondly circle mine: 150
 A thousand tender words I hear and speak;
 A thousand melting kisses give and take:
 Then fiercer joys, I blush to mention these,
 Yet, while I blush, confess how much they please.
 But when, with day, the sweet delusions fly,
 And all things wake to life and joy but I,
 As if once more forsaken, I complain,
 And close my eyes to dream of you again:
 Then frantic rise, and like some Fury rove
 Through lonely plains, and through the silent grove; 160
 As if the silent grove, and lonely plains,
 That knew my pleasures, could relieve my pains.
 I view the grotto, once the scene of love,
 The rocks around, the hanging roofs above,
 That charm'd me more, with native moss o'ergrown,
 Than Phrygian marble, or the Parian stone;
 I find the shades that veil'd our joys before;
 But, Phaon gone, those shades delight no more.
 Here the press'd herbs with bending tops betray
 Where oft entwined in amorous folds we lay; 170
 I kiss that earth which once was press'd by you,
 And all with tears the withering herbs bedew.
 For thee the fading trees appear to mourn,
 And birds defer their songs till thy return:
 Night shades the groves, and all in silence lie,
 All but the mournful Philomel and I:
 With mournful Philomel I join my strain,
 Of Tereus she, of Phaon I complain.

A spring there is, whose silver waters show,
 Clear as a glass, the shining sands below: 180
 A flowery lotus spreads its arms above,
 Shades all the banks, and seems itself a grove;
 Eternal greens the mossy margin grace,
 Watch'd by the sylvan genius of the place.
 Here as I lay, and swell'd with tears the flood,
 Before my sight a watery virgin stood:
 She stood and cried, 'O you that love in vain!
 Fly hence, and seek the fair Leucadian main;
 There stands a rock, from whose impending steep
 Apollo's fane surveys the rolling deep; 190
 There injured lovers, leaping from above,
 Their flames extinguish, and forget to love.
 Deucalion once with hopeless fury burn'd,
 In vain he loved, relentless Pyrrha scorn'd:
 But when from hence he plunged into the main,
 Deucalion scorn'd, and Pyrrha loved in vain.
 Haste, Sappho, haste, from high Leucadia throw
 Thy wretched weight, nor dread the deeps below!
 She spoke, and vanish'd with the voice--I rise,

And silent tears fall trickling from my eyes. 200
I go, ye nymphs! those rocks and seas to prove;
How much I fear, but ah, how much I love!
I go, ye nymphs! where furious love inspires:
Let female fears submit to female fires.
To rocks and seas I fly from Phaon's hate,
And hope from seas and rocks a milder fate.
Ye gentle gales, beneath my body blow,
And softly lay me on the waves below!
And thou, kind Love, my sinking limbs sustain,
Spread thy soft wings, and waft me o'er the main, 210
Nor let a lover's death the guiltless flood profane!
On Phoebus' shrine my harp I'll then bestow,
And this inscription shall be placed below:
'Here she who sung, to him that did inspire,
Sappho to Phoebus consecrates her lyre;
What suits with Sappho, Phoebus, suits with thee:
The gift, the giver, and the god agree.'

But why, alas! relentless youth, ah, why
To distant seas must tender Sappho fly?
Thy charms than those may far more powerful be, 220
And Phoebus' self is less a god to me.
Ah! canst thou doom me to the rocks and sea,
Oh far more faithless and more hard than they?
Ah! canst thou rather see this tender breast
Dash'd on these rocks than to thy bosom press'd?
This breast which once, in vain, you liked so well;
Where the Loves play'd, and where the Muses dwell.
Alas! the Muses now no more inspire;
Untuned my lute, and silent is my lyre.
My languid numbers have forgot to flow, 230
And fancy sinks beneath a weight of woe.
Ye Lesbian virgins, and ye Lesbian dames,
Themes of my verse, and objects of my flames,
No more your groves with my glad songs shall ring,
No more these hands shall touch the trembling string:
My Phaon's fled, and I those arts resign;
(Wretch that I am, to call that Phaon mine!)
Return, fair youth! return, and bring along
Joy to my soul, and vigour to my song:
Absent from thee, the poet's flame expires; 240
But ah! how fiercely burn the lover's fires?
Gods! can no prayers, no sighs, no numbers move
One savage heart, or teach it how to love?
The winds my prayers, my sighs, my numbers bear,
The flying winds have lost them all in air!
Oh when, alas! shall more auspicious gales
To these fond eyes restore thy welcome sails?
If you return--ah, why these long delays?
Poor Sappho dies while careless Phaon stays.
Oh launch thy bark, nor fear the watery plain; 250
Venus for thee shall smooth her native main.
Oh launch thy bark, secure of prosperous gales;
Cupid for thee shall spread the swelling sails.
If you will fly--(yet ah! what cause can be,
Too cruel youth, that you should fly from me?)
If not from Phaon I must hope for ease,
Ah, let me seek it from the raging seas:

To raging seas unpitied I'll remove,
And either cease to live, or cease to love!

THE FABLE OF DRYOPE.[56]

FROM THE NINTH BOOK OF OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

She said, and for her lost Galanthis sighs;
When the fair consort of her son replies:
'Since you a servant's ravish'd form bemoan,
And kindly sigh for sorrows not your own,
Let me (if tears and grief permit) relate
A nearer woe, a sister's stranger fate.
No nymph of all Oechalia could compare
For beauteous form with Dryope the fair,
Her tender mother's only hope and pride,
(Myself the offspring of a second bride). 10
This nymph, compress'd by him who rules the day,
Whom Delphi and the Delian isle obey,
Andraemon loved; and, bless'd in all those charms
That pleased a god, succeeded to her arms.

'A lake there was with shelving banks around,
Whose verdant summit fragrant myrtles crown'd.
These shades, unknowing of the fates, she sought,
And to the Naiads flowery garlands brought:
Her smiling babe (a pleasing charge) she press'd
Within her arms, and nourish'd at her breast. 20
Not distant far, a watery lotus grows;
The spring was new, and all the verdant boughs,
Adorn'd with blossoms, promised fruits that vie
In glowing colours with the Tyrian dye:
Of these she cropp'd, to please her infant son,
And I myself the same rash act had done:
But, lo! I saw (as near her side I stood)
The violated blossoms drop with blood;
Upon the tree I cast a frightful look;
The trembling tree with sudden horror shook. 30
Lotis the nymph (if rural tales be true)
As from Priapus' lawless lust she flew,
Forsook her form, and, fixing here, became
A flowery plant, which still preserves her name.

'This change unknown, astonish'd at the sight,
My trembling sister strove to urge her flight;
And first the pardon of the nymphs implored,
And those offended sylvan powers adored:
But when she backward would have fled, she found
Her stiffening feet were rooted in the ground: 40
In vain to free her fasten'd feet she strove,
And as she struggles only moves above;
She feels th' encroaching bark around her grow
By quick degrees, and cover all below:
Surprised at this, her trembling hand she heaves
To rend her hair; her hand is fill'd with leaves:
Where late was hair, the shooting leaves are seen
To rise, and shade her with a sudden green.

The child Amphissus, to her bosom press'd,
Perceived a colder and a harder breast, 50
And found the springs, that ne'er till then denied
Their milky moisture, on a sudden dried.
I saw, unhappy! what I now relate,
And stood the helpless witness of thy fate;
Embraced thy boughs, thy rising bark delay'd,
There wish'd to grow, and mingle shade with shade.

'Behold Andraemon and th' unhappy sire
Appear, and for their Dryope inquire:
A springing tree for Dryope they find,
And print warm kisses on the panting rind, 60
Prostrate, with tears their kindred plant bedew,
And close embrace as to the roots they grew.
The face was all that now remain'd of thee,
No more a woman, nor yet quite a tree;
Thy branches hung with humid pearls appear,
From every leaf distils a trickling tear;
And straight a voice, while yet a voice remains,
Thus through the trembling boughs in sighs complains:

"If to the wretched any faith be given,
I swear by all th' unpitying powers of Heaven, 70
No wilful crime this heavy vengeance bred;
In mutual innocence our lives we led:
If this be false, let these new greens decay,
Let sounding axes lop my limbs away,
And crackling flames on all my honours prey.
But from my branching arms this infant bear,
Let some kind nurse supply a mother's care:
And to his mother let him oft be led,
Sport in her shades, and in her shades be fed:
Teach him, when first his infant voice shall frame 80
Imperfect words, and lisp his mother's name,
To hail this tree, and say, with weeping eyes,
'Within this plant my hapless parent lies:'
And when in youth he seeks the shady woods,
Oh! let him fly the crystal lakes and floods,
Nor touch the fatal flowers; but, warn'd by me,
Believe a goddess shrined in every tree.
My sire, my sister, and my spouse, farewell!
If in your breasts or love or pity dwell,
Protect your plant, nor let my branches feel 90
The browsing cattle or the piercing steel.
Farewell! and since I cannot bend to join
My lips to yours, advance at least to mine.
My son, thy mother's parting kiss receive,
While yet thy mother has a kiss to give.
I can no more; the creeping rind invades
My closing lips, and hides my head in shades:
Remove your hands, the bark shall soon suffice
Without their aid to seal these dying eyes."

'She ceased at once to speak and ceased to be, 100
And all the nymph was lost within the tree;
Yet latent life through her new branches reign'd,
And long the plant a human heat retain'd.'

VERTUMNUS AND POMONA,

FROM THE FOURTEENTH BOOK OF OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

The fair Pomona flourish'd in his reign;
Of all the virgins of the sylvan train
None taught the trees a nobler race to bear,
Or more improved the vegetable care.
To her the shady grove, the flowery field,
The streams and fountains no delights could yield:
'Twas all her joy the ripening fruits to tend,
And see the boughs with happy burdens bend.
The hook she bore instead of Cynthia's spear,
To lop the growth of the luxuriant year, 10
To decent forms the lawless shoots to bring,
And teach th' obedient branches where to spring.
Now the cleft rind inserted grafts receives,
And yields an offspring more than nature gives;
Now sliding streams the thirsty plants renew,
And feed their fibres with reviving dew.

These cares alone her virgin breast employ,
Averse from Venus and the nuptial joy.
Her private orchards, wall'd on every side,
To lawless sylvans all access denied. 20
How oft the satyrs and the wanton fauns,
Who haunt the forests or frequent the lawns,
The god whose ensign scares the birds of prey,
And old Silenus, youthful in decay,
Employ'd their wives and unavailing care
To pass the fences, and surprise the fair!
Like these, Vertumnus own'd his faithful flame,
Like these, rejected by the scornful dame.
To gain her sight a thousand forms he wears;
And first a reaper from the field appears: 30
Sweating he walks, while loads of golden grain
O'ercharge the shoulders of the seeming swain:
Oft o'er his back a crooked scythe is laid,
And wreaths of hay his sunburnt temples shade:
Oft in his harden'd hand a goad he bears,
Like one who late unyoked the sweating steers:
Sometimes his pruning-hook corrects the vines,
And the loose stragglers to their ranks confines:
Now gathering what the bounteous year allows,
He pulls ripe apples from the bending boughs: 40
A soldier now, he with his sword appears;
A fisher next, his trembling angle bears:
Each shape he varies, and each art he tries,
On her bright charms to feast his longing eyes.

A female form at last Vertumnus wears,
With all the marks of reverend age appears,
His temples thinly spread with silver hairs:
Propp'd on his staff, and stooping as he goes,
A painted mitre shades his furrow'd brows.
The god in this decrepid form array'd 50
The gardens enter'd, and the fruit survey'd;

And, 'Happy you!' he thus address'd the maid,
'Whose charms as far all other nymphs outshine,
As other gardens are excell'd by thine!'
Then kiss'd the fair; (his kisses warmer grow
Than such as women on their sex bestow)
Then, placed beside her on the flowery ground,
Beheld the trees with autumn's bounty crown'd.
An elm was near, to whose embraces led,
The curling vine her swelling clusters spread: 60
He view'd her twining branches with delight,
And praised the beauty of the pleasing sight.

'Yet this tall elm, but for this vine,' he said,
'Had stood neglected, and a barren shade;
And this fair vine, but that her arms surround
Her married elm, had crept along the ground.
Ah, beauteous maid! let this example move
Your mind, averse from all the joys of love.
Deign to be loved, and every heart subdue!
What nymph could e'er attract such crowds as you? 70
Not she whose beauty urged the Centaur's arms,
Ulysses' queen, nor Helen's fatal charms.
Ev'n now, when silent scorn is all they gain,
A thousand court you, though they court in vain--
A thousand sylvans, demigods, and gods,
That haunt our mountains and our Alban woods.
But if you'll prosper, mark what I advise,
Whom age and long experience render wise,
And one whose tender care is far above
All that these lovers ever felt of love, 80
(Far more than e'er can by yourself be guess'd)
Fix on Vertumnus, and reject the rest:
For his firm faith I dare engage my own:
Scarce to himself, himself is better known.
To distant lands Vertumnus never roves;
Like you, contented with his native groves;
Nor at first sight, like most, admires the fair:
For you he lives; and you alone shall share
His last affection, as his early care.
Besides, he's lovely far above the rest, 90
With youth immortal, and with beauty bless'd.
Add, that he varies every shape with ease,
And tries all forms that may Pomona please.
But what should most excite a mutual flame,
Your rural cares and pleasures are the same.
To him your orchard's early fruits are due;
(A pleasing offering when 'tis made by you)
He values these; but yet, alas! complains
That still the best and dearest gift remains.
Not the fair fruit that on yon branches glows 100
With that ripe red th' autumnal sun bestows;
Nor tasteful herbs that in these gardens rise,
Which the kind soil with milky sap supplies;
You, only you, can move the god's desire:
Oh crown so constant and so pure a fire!
Let soft compassion touch your gentle mind:
Think, 'tis Vertumnus begs you to be kind:
So may no frost, when early buds appear,
Destroy the promise of the youthful year;

Nor winds, when first your florid orchard blows, 110
Shake the light blossoms from their blasted boughs!"

This, when the various god had urged in vain,
He straight assumed his native form again:
Such, and so bright an aspect now he bears,
As when through clouds th' emerging sun appears,
And thence exerting his refulgent ray,
Dispels the darkness, and reveals the day.
Force he prepared, but check'd the rash design;
For when, appearing in a form divine,
The nymph surveys him, and beholds the grace 120
Of charming features and a youthful face,
In her soft breast consenting passions move,
And the warm maid confess'd a mutual love.

THE FIRST BOOK OF STATIUS'S THEBAIS.

TRANSLATED IN THE YEAR 1703.

ARGUMENT.

Oedipus, King of Thebes, having, by mistake, slain his father Laius, and married his mother Jocasta, put out his own eyes, and resigned his realm to his sons Eteocles and Polynices. Being neglected by them, he makes his prayer to the fury Tisiphone, to sow debate betwixt the brothers. They agree at last to reign singly, each a year by turns, and the first lot is obtained by Eteocles. Jupiter, in a council of the gods, declares his resolution of punishing the Thebans, and Argives also, by means of a marriage betwixt Polynices and one of the daughters of Adrastus, King of Argos. Juno opposes, but to no effect; and Mercury is sent on a message to the shades, to the ghost of Laius, who is to appear to Eteocles, and provoke him to break the agreement. Polynices, in the meantime, departs from Thebes by night, is overtaken by a storm, and arrives at Argos, where he meets with Tydeus, who had fled from Calydon, having killed his brother. Adrastus entertains them, having received an oracle from Apollo that his daughters should be married to a boar and a lion, which he understands to be meant by these strangers, by whom the hides of those beasts were worn, and who arrived at the time when he kept an annual feast in honour of that god. The rise of this solemnity, he relates to his guests; the loves of Phoebus and Psamathe, and the story of Choroebus. He inquires, and is made acquainted with their descent and quality. The sacrifice is renewed, and the book concludes with a hymn to Apollo.--_P_.

Fraternal rage, the guilty Thebes' alarms,
Th' alternate reign destroy'd by impious arms,
Demand our song; a sacred fury fires
My ravish'd breast, and all the Muse inspires.
O goddess! say, shall I deduce my rhymes
From the dire nation in its early times,
Europa's rape, Agenor's stern decree,
And Cadmus searching round the spacious sea?
How with the serpent's teeth he sow'd the soil,
And reap'd an iron harvest of his toil? 10
Or how from joining stones the city sprung,

While to his harp divine Amphion sung?
Or shall I Juno's hate to Thebes resound,
Whose fatal rage th' unhappy monarch found?
The sire against the son his arrows drew,
O'er the wide fields the furious mother flew,
And while her arms a second hope contain,
Sprung from the rocks, and plunged into the main.

But wave whate'er to Cadmus may belong,
And fix, O Muse! the barrier of thy song 20
At Oedipus--from his disasters trace
The long confusions of his guilty race:
Nor yet attempt to stretch thy bolder wing,
And mighty Caesar's conquering eagles sing;
How twice he tamed proud Ister's rapid flood,
While Dacian mountains stream'd with barbarous blood;
Twice taught the Rhine beneath his laws to roll,
And stretch'd his empire to the frozen pole;
Or, long before, with early valour strove
In youthful arms t' assert the cause of Jove. 30
And thou, great heir of all thy father's fame,
Increase of glory to the Latian name!
Oh! bless thy Rome with an eternal reign,
Nor let desiring worlds entreat in vain.
What though the stars contract their heavenly space,
And crowd their shining ranks to yield thee place;
Though all the skies, ambitious of thy sway,
Conspire to court thee from our world away;
Though Phoebus longs to mix his rays with thine,
And in thy glories more serenely shine; 40
Though Jove himself no less content would be
To part his throne, and share his heaven with thee:
Yet stay, great Caesar! and vouchsafe to reign
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the watery main;
Resign to Jove his empire of the skies,
And people heaven with Roman deities.

The time will come when a diviner flame
Shall warm my breast to sing of Caesar's fame;
Meanwhile, permit that my preluding Muse
In Theban wars an humbler theme may choose: 50
Of furious hate surviving death she sings,
A fatal throne to two contending kings,
And funeral flames, that, parting wide in air,
Express the discord of the souls they bear:
Of towns dispeopled, and the wandering ghosts
Of kings unburied in the wasted coasts;
When Dirce's fountain blush'd with Grecian blood,
And Thetis, near Ismenos' swelling flood,
With dread beheld the rolling surges sweep
In heaps his slaughter'd sons into the deep. 60

What hero, Clio! wilt thou first relate?
The rage of Tydeus, or the prophet's fate?
Or how, with hills of slain on every side,
Hippomedon repell'd the hostile tide?
Or how the youth, with every grace adorn'd,
Untimely fell, to be for ever mourn'd?
Then to fierce Capaneus thy verse extend,

And sing with horror his prodigious end.

Now wretched Oedipus, deprived of sight,
Led a long death in everlasting night; 70
But while he dwells where not a cheerful ray
Can pierce the darkness, and abhors the day,
The clear reflecting mind presents his sin
In frightful views, and makes it day within;
Returning thoughts in endless circles roll,
And thousand Furies haunt his guilty soul:
The wretch then lifted to th' un pitying skies
Those empty orbs from whence he tore his eyes,
Whose wounds, yet fresh, with bloody hands he strook,
While from his breast these dreadful accents broke: 80

'Ye gods! that o'er the gloomy regions reign,
Where guilty spirits feel eternal pain;
Thou, sable Styx! whose livid streams are roll'd
Through dreary coasts, which I though blind behold;
Tisiphone! that oft hast heard my prayer,
Assist, if Oedipus deserve thy care.
If you received me from Jocasta's womb,
And nursed the hope of mischiefs yet to come;
If, leaving Polybus, I took my way
To Cyrrha's temple, on that fatal day 90
When by the son the trembling father died,
Where the three roads the Phocian fields divide;
If I the Sphynx's riddles durst explain,
Taught by thyself to win the promised reign;
If wretched I, by baleful Furies led,
With monstrous mixture stain'd my mother's bed,
For hell and thee begot an impious brood,
And with full lust those horrid joys renew'd;
Then, self-condemn'd to shades of endless night,
Forced from these orbs the bleeding balls of sight; 100
Oh, hear! and aid the vengeance I require,
If worthy thee, and what thou might'st inspire!
My sons their old, unhappy sire despise,
Spoil'd of his kingdom, and deprived of eyes;
Guideless I wander, unregarded mourn,
Whilst these exalt their sceptres o'er my urn:
These sons, ye gods! who with flagitious pride
Insult my darkness and my groans deride.
Art thou a father, unregarding Jove!
And sleeps thy thunder in the realms above? 110
Thou Fury! then some lasting curse entail,
Which o'er their children's children shall prevail;
Place on their heads that crown, distain'd with gore,
Which these dire hands from my slain father tore;
Go! and a parent's heavy curses bear;
Break all the bonds of nature, and prepare
Their kindred souls to mutual hate and war.
Give them to dare, what I might wish to see,
Blind as I am, some glorious villany!
Soon shalt thou find, if thou but arm their hands, 120
Their ready guilt preventing thy commands:
Couldst thou some great proportion'd mischief frame,
They'd prove the father from whose loins they came.'

The Fury heard, while on Cocytus' brink
 Her snakes, untied, sulphureous waters drink;
 But at the summons roll'd her eyes around,
 And snatch'd the starting serpents from the ground.
 Not half so swiftly shoots along in air
 The gliding lightning or descending star;
 Through crowds of airy shades she wing'd her flight, 130
 And dark dominions of the silent night;
 Swift as she pass'd the flitting ghosts withdrew,
 And the pale spectres trembled at her view:
 To th' iron gates of Tenarus she flies,
 There spreads her dusky pinions to the skies.
 The day beheld, and, sickening at the sight,
 Veil'd her fair glories in the shades of night.
 Affrighted Atlas on the distant shore
 Trembled, and shook the heavens and gods he bore.
 Now from beneath Malea's airy height 140
 Aloft she sprung, and steer'd to Thebes her flight;
 With eager speed the well-known journey took,
 Nor here regrets the hell she late forsook.
 A hundred snakes her gloomy visage shade,
 A hundred serpents guard her horrid head;
 In her sunk eyeballs dreadful meteors glow:
 Such rays from Phoebe's bloody circle flow,
 When, labouring with strong charms, she shoots from high
 A fiery gleam, and reddens all the sky.
 Blood stain'd her cheeks, and from her mouth there came 150
 Blue steaming poisons, and a length of flame.
 From every blast of her contagious breath
 Famine and drought proceed, and plagues and death.
 A robe obscene was o'er her shoulders thrown,
 A dress by Fates and Furies worn alone.
 She toss'd her meagre arms; her better hand
 In waving circles whirl'd a funeral brand:
 A serpent from her left was seen to rear
 His flaming crest, and lash the yielding air.
 But when the Fury took her stand on high, 160
 Where vast Cithaeron's top salutes the sky,
 A hiss from all the snaky tire went round:
 The dreadful signal all the rocks rebound,
 And through th' Achaian cities send the sound.
 Oete, with high Parnassus, heard the voice;
 Eurotas' banks remurmur'd to the noise;
 Again Leucothoe shook at these alarms,
 And press'd Palaermon closer in her arms.
 Headlong from thence the glowing Fury springs,
 And o'er the Theban palace spreads her wings, 170
 Once more invades the guilty dome, and shrouds
 Its bright pavilions in a veil of clouds.
 Straight with the rage of all their race possess'd,
 Stung to the soul, the brothers start from rest,
 And all their Furies wake within their breast:
 Their tortured minds repining Envy tears,
 And Hate, engender'd by suspicious fears:
 And sacred thirst of sway, and all the ties
 Of nature broke; and royal perjuries;
 And impotent desire to reign alone, 180
 That scorns the dull reversion of a throne:
 Each would the sweets of sovereign rule devour,

While Discord waits upon divided power.

As stubborn steers, by brawny ploughmen broke,
And join'd reluctant to the galling yoke,
Alike disdain with servile necks to bear
Th' unwonted weight, or drag the crooked share,
But rend the reins, and bound a different way,
And all the furrows in confusion lay:
Such was the discord of the royal pair 190
Whom fury drove precipitate to war.
In vain the chiefs contrived a specious way
To govern Thebes by their alternate sway:
Unjust decree! while this enjoys the state,
That mourns in exile his unequal fate,
And the short monarch of a hasty year
Foresees with anguish his returning heir.
Thus did the league their impious arms restrain,
But scarce subsisted to the second reign.

Yet then no proud aspiring piles were raised, 200
No fretted roofs with polish'd metals blazed;
No labour'd columns in long order placed,
No Grecian stone the pompous arches graced:
No nightly bands in glittering armour wait
Before the sleepless tyrant's guarded gate;
No chargers then were wrought in burnish'd gold,
Nor silver vases took the forming mould;
Nor gems on bowls emboss'd were seen to shine,
Blaze on the brims, and sparkle in the wine--
Say, wretched rivals! what provokes your rage? 210
Say, to what end your impious arms engage?
Not all bright Phoebus views in early morn,
Or when his evening beams the west adorn,
When the south glows with his meridian ray,
And the cold north receives a fainter day;
For crimes like these, not all those realms suffice,
Were all those realms the guilty victor's prize!

But Fortune now (the lots of empire thrown)
Decrees to proud Eteocles the crown:
What joys, O tyrant! swell'd thy soul that day, 220
When all were slaves thou couldst around survey,
Pleased to behold unbounded power thy own,
And singly fill a fear'd and envied throne!

But the vile vulgar, ever discontent,
Their growing fears in secret murmurs vent;
Still prone to change, though still the slaves of state,
And sure the monarch whom they have, to hate;
New lords they madly make, then tamely bear,
And softly curse the tyrants whom they fear.
And one of those who groan beneath the sway 230
Of kings imposed, and grudgingly obey,
(Whom envy to the great, and vulgar spite,
With scandal arm'd, th' ignoble mind's delight)
Exclaim'd--'O Thebes! for thee what fates remain,
What woes attend this inauspicious reign?
Must we, alas! our doubtful necks prepare
Each haughty master's yoke by turns to bear,

And still to change whom changed we still must fear?
 These now control a wretched people's fate
 These can divide, and these reverse the state: 240
 E'en fortune rules no more--O servile land,
 Where exiled tyrants still by turns command!
 Thou sire of gods and men, imperial Jove!
 Is this th' eternal doom decreed above?
 On thy own offspring hast thou fix'd this fate
 From the first birth of our unhappy state,
 When banish'd Cadmus, wandering o'er the main,
 For lost Europa search'd the world in vain,
 And, fated in Boeotian fields to found,
 A rising empire on a foreign ground, 250
 First raised our walls on that ill omen'd plain
 Where earth-born brothers were by brothers slain?
 What lofty looks th' unrivall'd monarch bears!
 How all the tyrant in his face appears!
 What sullen fury clouds his scornful brow!
 Gods! how his eyes with threatening ardour glow!
 Can this imperious lord forget to reign,
 Quit all his state, descend, and serve again?
 Yet who, before, more popularly bow'd?
 Who more propitious to the suppliant crowd? 260
 Patient of right, familiar in the throne,
 What wonder then? he was not then alone.
 Oh wretched we! a vile, submissive train,
 Fortune's tame fools, and slaves in every reign!

'As when two winds with rival force contend,
 This way and that the wavering sails they bend,
 While freezing Boreas and black Eurus blow,
 Now here, now there, the reeling vessel throw;
 Thus on each side, alas! our tottering state
 Feels all the fury of resistless fate, 270
 And doubtful still, and still distracted stands,
 While that prince threatens, and while this commands.'

And now th' almighty Father of the gods
 Convenes a council in the bless'd abodes.
 Far in the bright recesses of the skies,
 High o'er the rolling heavens, a mansion lies,
 Whence, far below, the gods at once survey
 The realms of rising and declining day,
 And all th' extended space of earth, and air, and sea.
 Full in the midst, and on a starry throne, 280
 The Majesty of heaven superior shone:
 Serene he look'd, and gave an awful nod,
 And all the trembling spheres confess'd the god.
 At Jove's assent the deities around
 In solemn state the consistory crown'd.
 Next a long order of inferior powers
 Ascend from hills, and plains, and shady bowers;
 Those from whose urns the rolling rivers flow,
 And those that give the wandering winds to blow:
 Here all their rage and ev'n their murmurs cease, 290
 And sacred silence reigns, and universal peace.
 A shining synod of majestic gods
 Gilds with new lustre the divine abodes:
 Heaven seems improved with a superior ray,

And the bright arch reflects a double day.
The monarch then his solemn silence broke,
The still creation listen'd while he spoke;
Each sacred accent bears eternal weight,
And each irrevocable word is fate.

'How long shall man the wrath of Heaven defy, 300
And force unwilling vengeance from the sky?
O race confederate into crimes, that prove
Triumphant o'er th' eluded rage of Jove!
This wearied arm can scarce the bolt sustain,
And unregarded thunder rolls in vain:
Th' o'erlabour'd Cyclops from his task retires,
Th' AEolian forge exhausted of its fires.
For this, I suffer'd Phoebus' steeds to stray,
And the mad ruler to misguide the day, 310
When the wide earth to heaps of ashes turn'd,
And Heaven itself the wandering chariot burn'd:
For this my brother of the watery reign
Released the impetuous sluices of the main;
But flames consumed, and billows raged in vain.
Two races now, allied to Jove, offend;
To punish these, see Jove himself descend.
The Theban kings their line from Cadmus trace,
From godlike Perseus those of Argive race.
Unhappy Cadmus' fate who does not know,
And the long series of succeeding woe? 320
How oft the Furies, from the deeps of night,
Arose, and mix'd with men in mortal fight;
Th' exulting mother stain'd with filial blood,
The savage hunter and the haunted wood?
The direful banquet why should I proclaim,
And crimes that grieve the trembling gods to name?
Ere I recount the sins of these profane,
The sun would sink into the western main,
And, rising, gild the radiant east again.
Have we not seen (the blood of Laius shed) 330
The murdering son ascend his parent's bed,
Through violated nature force his way,
And stain the sacred womb where once he lay?
Yet now in darkness and despair he groans,
And for the crimes of guilty fate atones;
His sons with scorn their eyeless father view,
Insult his wounds, and make them bleed anew.
Thy curse, O OEdipus! just Heaven alarms,
And sets th' avenging Thunderer in arms.
I from the root thy guilty race will tear, 340
And give the nations to the waste of war.
Adrastus soon, with gods averse, shall join
In dire alliance with the Theban line;
Hence strife shall rise, and mortal war succeed;
The guilty realms of Tantalus shall bleed:
Fix'd is their doom. This all-remembering breast
Yet harbours vengeance for the tyrant's feast.'

He said; and thus the queen of heaven return'd:
(With sudden grief her labouring bosom burn'd)
'Must I, whose cares Phoroneus' towers defend, 350
Must I, O Jove! in bloody wars contend?

Thou know'st those regions my protection claim,
 Glorious in arms, in riches, and in fame:
 Though there the fair Egyptian heifer fed,
 And there deluded Argus slept and bled:
 Though there the brazen tower was storm'd of old,
 When Jove descended in almighty gold!
 Yet I can pardon those obscurer rapes,
 Those bashful crimes disguised in borrow'd shapes;
 But Thebes, where, shining in celestial charms, 360
 Thou cam'st triumphant to a mortal's arms,
 When all my glories o'er her limbs were spread,
 And blazing lightnings danced around her bed;
 Cursed Thebes the vengeance it deserves may prove--
 Ah! why should Argos feel the rage of Jove?
 Yet since thou wilt thy sister-queen control,
 Since still the lust of discord fires thy soul,
 Go, raze my Samos, let Mycene fall,
 And level with the dust the Spartan wall;
 No more let mortals Juno's power invoke, 370
 Her fanes no more with Eastern incense smoke,
 Nor victims sink beneath the sacred stroke!
 But to your Isis all my rights transfer,
 Let altars blaze and temples smoke for her;
 For her, through Egypt's fruitful clime renown'd,
 Let weeping Nilus hear the timbrel sound.
 But if thou must reform the stubborn times,
 Avenging on the sons the fathers' crimes,
 And from the long records of distant age
 Derive incitements to renew thy rage; 380
 Say, from what period then has Jove design'd
 To date his vengeance? to what bounds confined?
 Begin from thence, where first Alpheus hides
 His wandering stream, and through the briny tides
 Unmix'd to his Sicilian river glides.
 Thy own Arcadians there the thunder claim,
 Whose impious rites disgrace thy mighty name;
 Who raise thy temples where the chariot stood
 Of fierce Oenomaues, defiled with blood;
 Where once his steeds their savage banquet found, 390
 And human bones yet whiten all the ground.
 Say, can those honours please? and canst thou love
 Presumptuous Crete, that boasts the tomb of Jove?
 And shall not Tantalus's kingdoms share
 Thy wife and sister's tutelary care?
 Reverse, O Jove! thy too severe decree,
 Nor doom to war a race derived from thee;
 On impious realms and barbarous kings impose
 Thy plagues, and curse them with such sons[57] as those.'

Thus in reproach and prayer the queen express'd 400
 The rage and grief contending in her breast;
 Unmoved remain'd the ruler of the sky,
 And from his throne return'd this stern reply:
 "Twas thus I deem'd thy haughty soul would bear
 The dire, though just revenge which I prepare
 Against a nation thy peculiar care:
 No less Dione might for Thebes contend.
 Nor Bacchus less his native town defend;
 Yet these in silence see the Fates fulfil

Their work, and reverence our superior will: 410
For by the black infernal Styx I swear,
(That dreadful oath which binds the Thunderer)
'Tis fix'd, th' irrevocable doom of Jove;
No force can bend me, no persuasion more.
Haste then, Cyllenius, through the liquid air;
Go, mount the winds, and to the shades repair;
Bid hell's black monarch my commands obey,
And give up Laius to the realms of day,
Whose ghost yet shivering on Cocytus' sand
Expects its passage to the further strand: 420
Let the pale sire revisit Thebes, and bear
These pleasing orders to the tyrant's ear;
That, from his exiled brother, swell'd with pride
Of foreign forces and his Argive bride,
Almighty Jove commands him to detain
The promised empire, and alternate reign:
Be this the cause of more than mortal hate;
The rest, succeeding times shall ripen into fate.'

The god obeys, and to his feet applies
Those golden wings that cut the yielding skies; 430
His ample hat his beamy locks o'erspread,
And veil'd the starry glories of his head.
He seized the wand that causes sleep to fly,
Or in soft slumbers seals the wakeful eye;
That drives the dead to dark Tartarean coasts,
Or back to life compels the wandering ghosts.
Thus through the parting clouds the son of May
Wings on the whistling winds his rapid way;
Now smoothly steers through air his equal flight,
Now springs aloft, and towers th' ethereal height: 440
Then wheeling down the steep of heaven he flies,
And draws a radiant circle o'er the skies.

Meantime the banish'd Polynices roves
(His Thebes abandon'd) through the Aonian groves,
While future realms his wandering thoughts delight,
His daily vision, and his dream by night;
Forbidden Thebes appears before his eye,
From whence he sees his absent brother fly,
With transport views the airy rule his own,
And swells on an imaginary throne. 450
Fain would he cast a tedious age away,
And live out all in one triumphant day.
He chides the lazy progress of the sun,
And bids the year with swifter motion run:
With anxious hopes his craving mind is toss'd
And all his joys in length of wishes lost.

The hero then resolves his course to bend
Where ancient Danaus' fruitful fields extend;
And famed Mycene's lofty towers ascend;
(Where late the sun did Atreus' crimes detest, 460
And disappear'd in horror of the feast).
And now by chance, by fate, or furies led,
From Bacchus' consecrated caves he fled,
Where the shrill cries of frantic matrons sound,
And Pentheus' blood enrich'd the rising ground;

Then sees Cithaeron towering o'er the plain,
And thence declining gently to the main;
Next to the bounds of Nisus' realm repairs,
Where treacherous Scylla cut the purple hairs;
The hanging cliffs of Scyron's rock explores, 470
And hears the murmurs of the different shores;
Passes the strait that parts the foaming seas,
And stately Corinth's pleasing site surveys.

'Twas now the time when Phoebus yields to night,
And rising Cynthia sheds her silver light;
Wide o'er the world in solemn pomp she drew
Her airy chariot, hung with pearly dew:
All birds and beasts lie hush'd; sleep steals away
The wild desires of men, and toils of day,
And brings, descending through the silent air, 480
A sweet forgetfulness of human care.

Yet no red clouds, with golden borders gay,
Promise the skies the bright return of day;
No faint reflections of the distant light
Streak with long gleams the scattering shades of night:
From the damp earth impervious vapours rise,
Increase the darkness, and involve the skies.
At once the rushing winds with roaring sound
Burst from th' AEolian caves, and rend the ground;
With equal rage their airy quarrel try, 490
And win by turns the kingdom of the sky;
But with a thicker night black Auster shrouds
The heavens, and drives on heaps the rolling clouds,
From whose dark womb a rattling tempest pours,
Which the cold north congeals to haily showers.
From pole to pole the thunder roars aloud,
And broken lightnings flash from every cloud.
Now smokes with showers the misty mountain-ground,
And floated fields lie undistinguish'd round;
Th' Inachian streams with headlong fury run, 500
And Erasinus rolls a deluge on;

The foaming Lerna swells above its bounds,
And spreads its ancient poisons o'er the grounds:
Where late was dust, now rapid torrents play,
Rush through the mounds, and bear the dams away:
Old limbs of trees, from crackling forests torn,
Are whirl'd in air, and on the winds are borne:
The storm the dark Lycaean groves display'd,
And first to light exposed the sacred shade.
Th' intrepid Theban hears the bursting sky,
Sees yawning rocks in massy fragments fly,
And views astonish'd, from the hills afar,
The floods descending, and the watery war, 510
That, driven by storms, and pouring o'er the plain,
Swept herds, and hinds, and houses to the main.
Through the brown horrors of the night he fled,
Nor knows, amazed, what doubtful path to tread;
His brother's image to his mind appears,
Inflames his heart with rage, and wings his feet with fears.

So fares the sailor on the stormy main, 520
When clouds conceal Bootes' golden wain,
When not a star its friendly lustre keeps,

Nor trembling Cynthia glimmers on the deeps;
He dreads the rocks, and shoals, and seas, and skies,
While thunder roars, and lightning round him flies.

Thus strove the chief, on every side distress'd;
Thus still his courage with his toils increased:
With his broad shield opposed, he forced his way
Through thickest woods, and roused the beasts of prey
Till he beheld, where from Larissa's height, 530
The shelving walls reflect a glancing light:
Thither with haste the Theban hero flies;
On this side Lerna's poisonous water lies,
On that Prosymna's grove and temple rise:
He pass'd the gates which then unguarded lay,
And to the regal palace bent his way;
On the cold marble, spent with toil, he lies,
And waits till pleasing slumbers seal his eyes.

Adrastus here his happy people sways,
Bless'd with calm peace in his declining days; 540
By both his parents of descent divine,
Great Jove and Phoebus graced his noble line:
Heaven had not crown'd his wishes with a son,
But two fair daughters heir'd his state and throne.
To him Apollo (wondrous to relate!
But who can pierce into the depths of fate?)
Had sung--'Expect thy sons on Argos' shore,
A yellow lion and a bristly boar.'
This, long revolved in his paternal breast,
Sat heavy on his heart, and broke his rest; 550
This, great Amphiaraus! lay hid from thee,
Though skill'd in fate and dark futurity.
The father's care and prophet's art were vain,
For thus did the predicting god ordain.

Lo, hapless Tydeus, whose ill-fated hand
Had slain his brother, leaves his native land,
And, seized with horror, in the shades of night,
Through the thick deserts headlong urged his flight:
Now by the fury of the tempest driven,
He seeks a shelter from th' inclement heaven, 560
Till, led by fate, the Theban's steps he treads,
And to fair Argos' open court succeeds.

When thus the chiefs from different lands resort
To Adrastus' realms and hospitable court,
The king surveys his guests with curious eyes,
And views their arms and habit with surprise.
A lion's yellow skin the Theban wears,
Horrid his mane, and rough with curling hairs:
Such once employ'd Alcides' youthful toils,
Ere yet adorn'd with Nemea's dreadful spoils. 570
A boar's stiff hide, of Calydonian breed,
Oenides' manly shoulders overspread;
Oblique his tusks, erect his bristles stood,
Alive, the pride and terror of the wood.

Struck with the sight, and fix'd in deep amaze,
The king th' accomplish'd oracle surveys,

Reveres Apollo's vocal caves, and owns
The guiding godhead, and his future sons.
O'er all his bosom secret transports reign,
And a glad horror shoots through every vein: 580
To heaven he lifts his hands, erects his sight,
And thus invokes the silent queen of night:

'Goddess of shades! beneath whose gloomy reign
Yon spangled arch glows with the starry train;
You who the cares of heaven and earth allay
Till nature, quicken'd by th' inspiring ray,
Wakes to new vigour with the rising day:
O thou who freest me from my doubtful state,
Long lost and wilder'd in the maze of fate,
Be present still, O goddess! in our aid; 590
Proceed, and firm those omens thou hast made.
We to thy name our annual rites will pay,
And on thy altars sacrifices lay;
The sable flock shall fall beneath the stroke,
And fill thy temples with a grateful smoke.
Hail, faithful Tripos! hail, ye dark abodes
Of awful Phoebus; I confess the gods!'

Thus, seized with sacred fear, the monarch pray'd;
Then to his inner court the guests convey'd,
Where yet thin fumes from dying sparks arise, 600
And dust yet white upon each altar lies,
The relics of a former sacrifice.
The king once more the solemn rites requires,
And bids renew the feasts and wake the fires.
His train obey; while all the courts around
With noisy care and various tumult sound.
Embroider'd purple clothes the golden beds;
This slave the floor, and that the table spreads;
A third dispels the darkness of the night,
And fills depending lamps with beams of light; 610
Here loaves in canisters are piled on high,
And there in flames the slaughter'd victims fly.
Sublime in regal state Adrastus shone,
Stretch'd on rich carpets on his ivory throne;
A lofty couch receives each princely guest;
Around, at awful distance, wait the rest.

And now the king, his royal feast to grace,
Acestis calls, the guardian of his race,
Who first their youth in arts of virtue train'd,
And their ripe years in modest grace maintain'd; 620
Then softly whisper'd in her faithful ear,
And bade his daughters at the rites appear.
When from the close apartments of the night
The royal nymphs approach, divinely bright,
Such was Diana's, such Minerva's face;
Nor shine their beauties with superior grace,
But that in these a milder charm endears,
And less of terror in their looks appears.
As on the heroes first they cast their eyes,
O'er their fair cheeks the glowing blushes rise; 630
Their downcast looks a decent shame confess'd,
Then on their father's reverend features rest.

The banquet done, the monarch gives the sign
To fill the goblet high with sparkling wine,
Which Danaus used in sacred rites of old,
With sculpture graced, and rough with rising gold:
Here to the clouds victorious Perseus flies,
Medusa seems to move her languid eyes,
And, e'en in gold, turns paler as she dies:
There from the chase Jove's towering eagle bears, 640
On golden wings, the Phrygian to the stars;
Still as he rises in th' ethereal height,
His native mountains lessen to his sight,
While all his sad companions upward gaze,
Fix'd on the glorious scene in wild amaze;
And the swift hounds, affrighted as he flies,
Run to the shade, and bark against the skies.

This golden bowl with generous juice was crown'd,
The first libation sprinkled on the ground;
By turns on each celestial power they call; 650
With Phoebus' name resounds the vaulted hall.
The courtly train, the strangers, and the rest,
Crown'd with chaste laurel, and with garlands dress'd,
While with rich gums the fuming altars blaze,
Salute the god in numerous hymns of praise.

Then thus the king: 'Perhaps, my noble guests,
These honour'd altars, and these annual feasts
To bright Apollo's awful name design'd,
Unknown, with wonder may perplex your mind.
Great was the cause: our old solemnities 660
From no blind zeal or fond tradition rise;
But saved from death, our Argives yearly pay
These grateful honours to the god of day.

'When by a thousand darts the Python slain,
With orbs unroll'd lay covering all the plain,
(Transfix'd as o'er Castalia's streams he hung,
And suck'd new poisons with his triple tongue),
To Argos' realms the victor god resorts,
And enters old Crotopus' humble courts.
This rural prince one only daughter bless'd, 670
That all the charms of blooming youth possess'd;
Fair was her face, and spotless was her mind,
Where filial love with virgin sweetness join'd:
Happy! and happy still she might have proved,
Were she less beautiful, or less beloved!
But Phoebus loved, and on the flowery side
Of Nemea's stream the yielding fair enjoy'd.
Now, ere ten moons their orb with light adorn,
Th' illustrious offspring of the god was born;
The nymph, her father's anger to evade, 680
Retires from Argos to the sylvan shade;
To woods and wilds the pleasing burden bears,
And trusts her infant to a shepherd's cares.

'How mean a fate, unhappy child! is thine!
Ah! how unworthy those of race divine!
On flowery herbs in some green covert laid,

His bed the ground, his canopy the shade,
 He mixes with the bleating lambs his cries,
 While the rude swain his rural music tries,
 To call soft slumbers on his infant eyes. 690
 Yet ev'n in those obscure abodes to live
 Was more, alas! than cruel fate would give;
 For on the grassy verdure as he lay,
 And breathed the freshness of the early day,
 Devouring dogs the helpless infant tore,
 Fed on his trembling limbs, and lapp'd the gore.
 Th' astonish'd mother, when the rumour came,
 Forgets her father, and neglects her fame;
 With loud complaints she fills the yielding air,
 And beats her breast, and rends her flowing hair; 700
 Then, wild with anguish, to her sire she flies,
 Demands the sentence, and contented dies.

'But, touch'd with sorrow for the deed too late,
 The raging god prepares t' avenge her fate.
 He sends a monster horrible and fell,
 Begot by Furies in the depths of hell.
 The pest a virgin's face and bosom bears;
 High on her crown a rising snake appears,
 Guards her black front, and hisses in her hairs:
 About the realm she walks her dreadful round, 710
 When Night with sable wings o'erspreads the ground,
 Devours young babes before their parents' eyes,
 And feeds and thrives on public miseries.

'But generous rage the bold Choroebus warms,
 Choroebus, famed for virtue as for arms.
 Some few like him, inspired with martial flame,
 Thought a short life well lost for endless fame.
 These, where two ways in equal parts divide,
 The direful monster from afar descried, 720
 Two bleeding babes depending at her side,
 Whose panting vitals, warm with life, she draws,
 And in their hearts imbrues her cruel claws.
 The youths surround her with extended spears;
 But brave Choroebus in the front appears;
 Deep in her breast he plunged his shining sword,
 And hell's dire monster back to hell restored.
 Th' Inachians view the slain with vast surprise,
 Her twisting volumes, and her rolling eyes,
 Her spotted breast, and gaping womb, imbrued
 With livid poison and our children's blood. 730
 The crowd in stupid wonder fix'd appear,
 Pale ev'n in joy, nor yet forget to fear.
 Some with vast beams the squalid corse engage,
 And weary all the wild efforts of rage.
 The birds obscene, that nightly flock'd to taste,
 With hollow screeches fled the dire repast;
 And ravenous dogs, allured by scented blood,
 And starving wolves, ran howling to the wood.

'But fired with rage, from cleft Parnassus' brow
 Avenging Phoebus bent his deadly bow, 740
 And hissing flew the feather'd fates below:
 A night of sultry clouds involved around

The towers, the fields, and the devoted ground:
And now a thousand lives together fled;
Death with his scythe cut off the fatal thread,
And a whole province in his triumph led.

'But Phoebus, ask'd why noxious fires appear,
And raging Sirius blasts the sickly year,
Demands their lives by whom his monster fell,
And dooms a dreadful sacrifice to hell. 750

'Bless'd be thy dust, and let eternal fame
Attend thy manes, and preserve thy name,
Undaunted hero! who, divinely brave,
In such a cause disdain'd thy life to save,
But view'd the shrine with a superior look,
And its upbraided godhead thus bespoke:
"With piety, the soul's securest guard,
And conscious virtue, still its own reward,
Willing I come, unknowing how to fear,
Nor shalt thou, Phoebus, find a suppliant here: 760
Thy monster's death to me was owed alone,
And 'tis a deed too glorious to disown.
Behold him here, for whom, so many days,
Impervious clouds conceal'd thy sullen rays;
For whom, as man no longer claim'd thy care,
Such numbers fell by pestilential air!
But if th' abandon'd race of human kind
From gods above no more compassion find;
If such inclemency in heaven can dwell,
Yet why must unoffending Argos feel 770
The vengeance due to this unlucky steel?
On me, on me, let all thy fury fall,
Nor err from me, since I deserve it all:
Unless our desert cities please thy sight,
Or funeral flames reflect a grateful light.
Discharge thy shafts, this ready bosom rend,
And to the shades a ghost triumphant send;
But for my country let my fate atone;
Be mine the vengeance, as the crime my own!"

'Merit distress'd, impartial heaven relieves: 780
Unwelcome life relenting Phoebus gives;
For not the vengeful power, that glow'd with rage,
With such amazing virtue durst engage.
The clouds dispersed, Apollo's wrath expired,
And from the wondering god th' unwilling youth retired.
Thence we these altars in his temple raise,
And offer annual honours, feasts, and praise;
These solemn feasts propitious Phoebus please;
These honours, still renew'd, his ancient wrath appease.

'But say, illustrious guest, (adjoin'd the king) 790
What name you bear, from what high race you spring?
The noble Tydeus stands confess'd, and known
Our neighbour prince, and heir of Calydon:
Relate your fortunes, while the friendly night
And silent hours to various talk invite.'

The Theban bends on earth his gloomy eyes,

Confused, and sadly thus at length replies:--
'Before these altars how shall I proclaim
(O generous prince!) my nation or my name,
Or through what veins our ancient blood has roll'd? 800
Let the sad tale for ever rest untold!
Yet if, propitious to a wretch unknown,
You seek to share in sorrows not your own,
Know then from Cadmus I derive my race,
Jocasta's son, and Thebes my native place.'

To whom the king (who felt his generous breast
Touch'd with concern for his unhappy guest)
Replies--'Ah! why forbears the son to name
His wretched father, known too well by fame?
Fame, that delights around the world to stray, 810
Scorns not to take our Argos in her way.
Ev'n those who dwell where suns at distance roll,
In northern wilds, and freeze beneath the pole,
And those who tread the burning Libyan lands,
The faithless Syrtes, and the moving sands;
Who view the western sea's extremest bounds,
Or drink of Ganges in their eastern grounds;
All these the woes of Oedipus have known,
Your fates, your furies, and your haunted town.
If on the sons the parents' crimes descend, 820
What prince from those his lineage can defend?
Be this thy comfort, that 'tis thine t' efface,
With virtuous acts, thy ancestors' disgrace,
And be thyself the honour of thy race.
But see! the stars begin to steal away,
And shine more faintly at approaching day;
Now pour the wine; and in your tuneful lays
Once more resound the great Apollo's praise.'

'O father Phoebus! whether Lycia's coast
And snowy mountains thy bright presence boast: 830
Whether to sweet Castalia thou repair,
And bathe in silver dews thy yellow hair;
Or pleased to find fair Delos float no more,
Delight in Cynthus and the shady shore;
Or choose thy seat in Ilion's proud abodes,
The shining structures raised by labouring gods:
By thee the bow and mortal shafts are borne;
Eternal charms thy blooming youth adorn:
Skill'd in the laws of secret fate above,
And the dark counsels of almighty Jove, 840
'Tis thine the seeds of future war to know,
The change of sceptres and impending woe,
When direful meteors spread through glowing air
Long trails of light and shake their blazing hair.
Thy rage the Phrygian felt, who durst aspire
T' excel the music of thy heavenly lyre;
Thy shafts avenged lewd Tityus' guilty flame,
Th' immortal victim of thy mother's fame;
Thy hand slew Python, and the dame who lost
Her numerous offspring for a fatal boast. 850
In Phlegyas' doom thy just revenge appears,
Condemn'd to Furies and eternal fears;
He views his food, but dreads, with lifted eye,

The mouldering rock that trembles from on high.

'Propitious hear our prayer, O power divine!
And on thy hospitable Argos shine;
Whether the style of Titan please thee more,
Whose purple rays th' Achaemenes adore:
Or great Osiris, who first taught the swain
In Pharian fields to sow the golden grain; 860
Or Mithra, to whose beams the Persian bows,
And pays, in hollow rocks, his awful vows;
Mithra! whose head the blaze of light adorns,
Who grasps the struggling heifer's lunar horns.'

* * * * *

JANUARY AND MAY.

FROM CHAUCER.[58]

There lived in Lombardy, as authors write,
In days of old, a wise and worthy knight;
Of gentle manners, as of generous race,
Bless'd with much sense, more riches, and some grace:
Yet, led astray by Venus' soft delights,
He scarce could rule some idle appetites:
For long ago, let priests say what they could,
Weak sinful laymen were but flesh and blood.

But in due time, when sixty years were o'er,
He vow'd to lead this vicious life no more; 10
Whether pure holiness inspired his mind,
Or dotage turn'd his brain, is hard to find;
But his high courage prick'd him forth to wed,
And try the pleasures of a lawful bed.
This was his nightly dream, his daily care,
And to the heavenly powers his constant prayer,
Once, ere he died, to taste the blissful life
Of a kind husband and a loving wife.

These thoughts he fortified with reasons still
(For none want reasons to confirm their will). 20
Grave authors say, and witty poets sing,
That honest wedlock is a glorious thing:
But depth of judgment most in him appears
Who wisely weds in his maturer years.
Then let him choose a damsel young and fair,
To bless his age, and bring a worthy heir;
To soothe his cares, and, free from noise and strife,
Conduct him gently to the verge of life.
Let sinful bachelors their woes deplore,
Full well they merit all they feel, and more: 30
Unawed by precepts, human or divine,
Like birds and beasts, promiscuously they join;
Nor know to make the present blessing last,
To hope the future, or esteem the past:
But vainly boast the joys they never tried,
And find divulged the secrets they would hide.

The married man may bear his yoke with ease,
Secure at once himself and Heaven to please;
And pass his inoffensive hours away,
In bliss all night, and innocence all day: 40
Though fortune change, his constant spouse remains,
Augments his joys, or mitigates his pains.

But what so pure which envious tongues will spare?
Some wicked wits have libell'd all the fair.
With matchless impudence they style a wife
The dear-bought curse, and lawful plague of life;
A bosom serpent, a domestic evil,
A night invasion, and a midday devil.
Let not the wise these slanderous words regard,
But curse the bones of every lying bard. 50
All other goods by fortune's hand are given,
A wife is the peculiar gift of Heaven.
Vain fortune's favours, never at a stay,
Like empty shadows, pass, and glide away;
One solid comfort, our eternal wife,
Abundantly supplies us all our life:
This blessing lasts (if those who try say true)
As long as heart can wish--and longer too.

Our grandsire Adam, ere of Eve possess'd,
Alone, and e'en in Paradise unblest'd, 60
With mournful looks the blissful scenes survey'd,
And wander'd in the solitary shade.
The Maker saw, took pity, and bestow'd
Woman, the last, the best reserved of God.

A wife! ah, gentle deities! can he
That has a wife e'er feel adversity?
Would men but follow what the sex advise,
All things would prosper, all the world grow wise.
Twas by Rebecca's aid that Jacob won
His father's blessing from an elder son: 70
Abusive Nabal owed his forfeit life
To the wise conduct of a prudent wife:
Heroic Judith, as old Hebrews show,
Preserved the Jews, and slew th' Assyrian foe:
At Hester's suit, the persecuting sword
Was sheath'd, and Israel lived to bless the Lord.

These weighty motives January the sage
Maturely ponder'd in his riper age;
And, charm'd with virtuous joys, and sober life,
Would try that Christian comfort, call'd a wife. 80
His friends were summon'd on a point so nice
To pass their judgment, and to give advice;
But fix'd before, and well resolved was he;
(As men that ask advice are wont to be).

'My friends,' he cried (and cast a mournful look
Around the room, and sigh'd before he spoke),
'Beneath the weight of threescore years I bend,
And, worn with cares, am hastening to my end:
How I have lived, alas! you know too well,
In worldly follies which I blush to tell, 90

But gracious Heaven has oped my eyes at last,
With due regret I view my vices past,
And, as the precept of the church decrees,
Will take a wife, and live in holy ease:
But since by counsel all things should be done,
And many heads are wiser still than one;
Choose you for me, who best shall be content
When my desire's approved by your consent.

'One caution yet is needful to be told,
To guide your choice: this wife must not be old: 100
There goes a saying, and 'twas shrewdly said,
Old fish at table, but young flesh in bed.
My soul abhors the tasteless dry embrace
Of a stale virgin with a winter face:
In that cold season Love but treats his guest
With beanstraw, and tough forage at the best.
No crafty widows shall approach my bed;
Those are too wise for bachelors to wed.
As subtle clerks by many schools are made,
Twice-married dames are mistresses o' th' trade: 110
But young and tender virgins, ruled with ease,
We form like wax, and mould them as we please.

'Conceive me, sirs, nor take my sense amiss;
'Tis what concerns my soul's eternal bliss;
Since, if I found no pleasure in my spouse,
As flesh is frail, and who (God help me) knows?
Then should I live in lewd adultery,
And sink downright to Satan when I die:
Or were I cursed with an unfruitful bed,
The righteous end were lost for which I wed; 120
To raise up seed to bless the powers above,
And not for pleasure only, or for love.
Think not I dote; 'tis time to take a wife,
When vigorous blood forbids a chaster life:
Those that are bless'd with store of grace divine,
May live like saints, by Heaven's consent and mine!

'And since I speak of wedlock, let me say
(As, thank my stars, in modest truth I may),
My limbs are active, still I'm sound at heart,
And a new vigour springs in every part. 130
Think not my virtue lost, though time has shed
These reverend honours on my hoary head:
Thus trees are crown'd with blossoms white as snow,
The vital sap then rising from below.
Old as I am, my lusty limbs appear
Like winter greens, that flourish all the year.
Now, sirs, you know to what I stand inclined,
Let every friend with freedom speak his mind.'

He said; the rest in different parts divide;
The knotty point was urged on either side: 140
Marriage, the theme on which they all declaim'd,
Some praised with wit, and some with reason blamed.
Till, what with proofs, objections, and replies,
Each wondrous positive and wondrous wise,
There fell between his brothers a debate:

Placebo this was call'd, and Justin that.

First to the knight Placebo thus begun,
(Mild were his looks, and pleasing was his tone):
'Such prudence, sir, in all your words appears,
As plainly proves experience dwells with years! 150
Yet you pursue sage Solomon's advice,
To work by counsel when affairs are nice:
But, with the wise man's leave, I must protest,
So may my soul arrive at ease and rest,
As still I hold your own advice the best.

'Sir, I have lived a courtier all my days,
And studied men, their manners, and their ways;
And have observed this useful maxim still.
To let my betters always have their will.
Nay, if my lord affirm'd that black was white, 160
My word was this, "Your honour's in the right."
Th' assuming wit, who deems himself so wise
As his mistaken patron to advise,
Let him not dare to vent his dangerous thought;
A noble fool was never in a fault.
This, sir, affects not you, whose every word
Is weigh'd with judgment, and befits a lord:
Your will is mine: and is (I will maintain)
Pleasing to God, and should be so to man;
At least your courage all the world must praise, 170
Who dare to wed in your declining days.
Indulge the vigour of your mounting blood,
And let gray fools be indolently good,
Who, past all pleasure, damn the joys of sense,
With reverend dulness and grave impotence.'

Justin, who silent sate, and heard the man,
Thus with a philosophic frown began:

'A heathen author, of the first degree,
(Who, though not faith, had sense as well as we),
Bids us be certain our concerns to trust 180
To those of generous principles and just.
The venture's greater, I'll presume to say,
To give your person, than your goods away:
And therefore, sir, as you regard your rest,
First learn your lady's qualities at least:
Whether she's chaste or rampant, proud or civil,
Meek as a saint, or haughty as the devil;
Whether an easy, fond, familiar fool,
Or such a wit as no man e'er can rule.
'Tis true, perfection none must hope to find 190
In all this world, much less in womankind:
But if her virtues prove the larger share,
Bless the kind fates, and think your fortune rare.
Ah, gentle sir, take warning of a friend,
Who knows too well the state you thus commend;
And, spite of all his praises, must declare,
All he can find is bondage, cost, and care.
Heaven knows I shed full many a private tear,
And sigh in silence, lest the world should hear;
While all my friends applaud my blissful life, 200

And swear no mortal's happier in a wife;
Demure and chaste as any vestal nun,
The meekest creature that beholds the sun!
But, by th' immortal powers, I feel the pain,
And he that smarts has reason to complain.
Do what you list, for me; you must be sage,
And cautious sure; for wisdom is in age:
But at these years to venture on the fair!
By Him who made the ocean, earth, and air,
To please a wife, when her occasions call, 210
Would busy the most vigorous of us all.
And trust me, sir, the chastest you can choose,
Will ask observance, and exact her dues.
If what I speak my noble lord offend,
My tedious sermon here is at an end.'

"Tis well, 'tis wondrous well,' the knight replies,
'Most worthy kinsman, faith, you're mighty wise!
We, sirs, are fools; and must resign the cause
To heathenish authors, proverbs, and old saws.'
He spoke with scorn, and turn'd another way: 220
'What does my friend, my dear Placebo, say?'

'I say,' quoth he, 'by Heaven, the man's to blame,
To slander wives, and wedlock's holy name.'

At this the council rose without delay;
Each, in his own opinion, went his way;
With full consent, that, all disputes appeased,
The knight should marry when and where he pleased.

Who now but January exults with joy?
The charms of wedlock all his soul employ:
Each nymph by turns his wavering mind possess'd, 230
And reign'd the short-lived tyrant of his breast;
Whilst fancy pictured every lively part,
And each bright image wander'd o'er his heart.
Thus, in some public forum fix'd on high,
A mirror shows the figures moving by;
Still one by one, in swift succession, pass
The gliding shadows o'er the polish'd glass.
This lady's charms the nicest could not blame,
But vile suspicions had aspersed her fame;
That was with sense, but not with virtue bless'd; 240
And one had grace that wanted all the rest.
Thus doubting long what nymph he should obey
He fix'd at last upon the youthful May.
Her faults he knew not, love is always blind,
But every charm revolved within his mind:
Her tender age, her form divinely fair,
Her easy motion, her attractive air,
Her sweet behaviour, her enchanting face,
Her moving softness, and majestic grace.
Much in his prudence did our knight rejoice, 250
And thought no mortal could dispute his choice:
Once more in haste he summon'd every friend,
And told them all their pains were at an end.
'Heaven, that (said he) inspired me first to wed,
Provides a consort worthy of my bed:

Let none oppose th' election, since on this
Depends my quiet and my future bliss.

'A dame there is, the darling of my eyes,
Young, beauteous, artless, innocent, and wise;
Chaste, though not rich; and, though not nobly born, 260
Of honest parents, and may serve my turn.
Her will I wed, if gracious Heaven so please,
To pass my age in sanctity and ease;
And, thank the powers, I may possess alone
The lovely prize, and share my bliss with none!
If you, my friends, this virgin can procure,
My joys are full, my happiness is sure.

'One only doubt remains: full oft, I've heard
By casuists grave, and deep divines averr'd,
That 'tis too much for human race to know 270
The bliss of heaven above and earth below;
Now, should the nuptial pleasures prove so great,
To match the blessings of the future state,
Those endless joys were ill exchanged for these;
Then clear this doubt, and set my mind at ease.'

This Justin heard, nor could his spleen control,
Touch'd to the quick, and tickled at the soul.
'Sir knight,' he cried, 'if this be all you dread,
Heaven put it past your doubt whene'er you wed:
And to my fervent prayers so far consent, 280
That, ere the rites are o'er, you may repent!
Good Heaven, no doubt, the nuptial state approves,
Since it chastises still what best it loves.
Then be not, sir, abandoned to despair:
Seek, and perhaps you'll find among the fair
One that may do your business to a hair;
Not e'en in wish your happiness delay,
But prove the scourge to lash you on your way:
Then to the skies your mounting soul shall go,
Swift as an arrow soaring from the bow! 290
Provided still, you moderate your joy,
Nor in your pleasures all your might employ;
Let reason's rule your strong desires abate,
Nor please too lavishly your gentle mate
Old wives there are, of judgment most acute,
Who solve these questions beyond all dispute;
Consult with those, and be of better cheer;
Marry, do penance, and dismiss your fear.'

So said, they rose, nor more the work delay'd
The match was offer'd, the proposals made. 300
The parents, you may think, would soon comply
The old have interest ever in their eye.
Nor was it hard to move the lady's mind;
When fortune favours, still the fair are kind.

I pass each previous settlement and deed,
Too long for me to write, or you to read;
Nor will with quaint impertinence display
The pomp, the pageantry, the proud array.
The time approach'd; to church the parties went,

At once with carnal and devout intent: 310
Forth came the priest, and bade the obedient wife
Like Sarah or Rebecca lead her life;
Then pray'd the powers the fruitful bed to bless,
And made all sure enough with holiness.

And now the palace gates are open'd wide,
The guests appear in order, side by side,
And, placed in state, the bridegroom and the bride.
The breathing flute's soft notes are heard around,
And the shrill trumpets mix their silver sound;
The vaulted roofs with echoing music ring, 320
These touch the vocal stops, and those the trembling string.
Not thus Amphion tuned the warbling lyre,
Nor Joab the sounding clarion could inspire,
Nor fierce Theodamas, whose sprightly strain
Could swell the soul to rage, and fire the martial train.

Bacchus himself, the nuptial feast to grace,
(So poets sing) was present on the place:
And lovely Venus, goddess of delight,
Shook high her flaming torch in open sight,
And danced around, and smiled on every knight: 330
Pleased her best servant would his courage try,
No less in wedlock than in liberty.
Full many an age old Hymen had not spied
So kind a bridegroom, or so bright a bride.
Ye bards! renown'd among the tuneful throng
For gentle lays, and joyous nuptial song,
Think not your softest numbers can display
The matchless glories of this blissful day;
The joys are such as far transcend your rage,
When tender youth has wedded stooping age. 340

The beauteous dame sat smiling at the board,
And darted amorous glances at her lord.
Not Hester's self, whose charms the Hebrews sing,
E'er look'd so lovely on her Persian king:
Bright as the rising sun in summer's day,
And fresh and blooming as the month of May!
The joyful knight survey'd her by his side,
Nor envied Paris with his Spartan bride:
Still as his mind revolved with vast delight
Th' entrancing raptures of th' approaching night, 350
Restless he sat, invoking every power
To speed his bliss, and haste the happy hour.
Meantime the vigorous dancers beat the ground,
And songs were sung, and flowing bowls went round.
With odorous spices they perfumed the place,
And mirth and pleasure shone in every face.

Damian alone, of all the menial train,
Sad in the midst of triumphs, sigh'd for pain;
Damian alone, the knight's obsequious squire,
Consumed at heart, and fed a secret fire. 360
His lovely mistress all his soul possess'd,
He look'd, he languish'd, and could take no rest:
His task perform'd, he sadly went his way,
Fell on his bed, and loath'd the light of day:

There let him lie; till his relenting dame
Weep in her turn, and waste in equal flame.

The weary sun, as learned poets write,
Forsook th' horizon, and roll'd down the light;
While glittering stars his absent beams supply.
And night's dark mantle overspread the sky. 370
Then rose the guests, and, as the time required,
Each paid his thanks, and decently retired.

The foe once gone, our knight prepared t' undress,
So keen he was, and eager to possess;
But first thought fit th' assistance to receive,
Which grave physicians scruple not to give:
Satyrion near, with hot eringoes stood,
Cantharides, to fire the lazy blood,
Whose use old bards describe in luscious rhymes,
And critics learn'd explain to modern times. 380

By this the sheets were spread, the bride undress'd,
The room was sprinkled, and the bed was bless'd.
What next ensued beseems not me to say;
'Tis sung, he labour'd till the dawning day,
Then briskly sprung from bed, with heart so light,
As all were nothing he had done by night,
And sipp'd his cordial as he sat upright.
He kiss'd his balmy spouse with wanton play,
And feebly sung a lusty roundelay:
Then on the couch his weary limbs he cast; 390
For every labour must have rest at last.

But anxious cares the pensive squire oppress'd,
Sleep fled his eyes, and peace forsook his breast;
The raging flames that in his bosom dwell,
He wanted art to hide, and means to tell:
Yet hoping time th' occasion might betray,
Composed a sonnet to the lovely May;
Which, writ and folded with the nicest art,
He wrapp'd in silk, and laid upon his heart.

When now the fourth revolving day was run, 400
('Twas June, and Cancer had received the sun),
Forth from her chamber came the beauteous bride;
The good old knight moved slowly by her side.
High mass was sung; they feasted in the hall;
The servants round stood ready at their call
The squire alone was absent from the board,
And much his sickness grieved his worthy lord,
Who pray'd his spouse, attended with her train,
To visit Damian, and divert his pain.
Th' obliging dames obey'd with one consent: 410
They left the hall, and to his lodging went.
The female tribe surround him as he lay,
And close beside him sat the gentle May:
Where, as she tried his pulse, he softly drew
A heaving sigh, and cast a mournful view!
Then gave his bill, and bribed the Powers divine
With secret vows, to favour his design.

Who studies now but discontented May?
On her soft couch uneasily she lay: 420
The lumpish husband snored away the night,
Till coughs awaked him near the morning light.
What then he did, I'll not presume to tell,
Nor if she thought herself in heaven or hell:
Honest and dull in nuptial bed they lay,
Till the bell toll'd, and all arose to pray.

Were it by forceful destiny decreed,
Or did from chance, or nature's power proceed;
Or that some star, with aspect kind to love,
Shed its selectest influence from above;
Whatever was the cause, the tender dame 430
Felt the first motions of an infant flame;
Received th' impressions of the love-sick squire,
And wasted in the soft infectious fire.

Ye fair, draw near, let May's example move
Your gentle minds to pity those who love!
Had some fierce tyrant in her stead been found,
The poor adorer sure had hang'd or drown'd;
But she, your sex's mirror, free from pride,
Was much too meek to prove a homicide.

But to my tale:--Some sages have defined 440
Pleasure the sovereign bliss of humankind:
Our knight (who studied much, we may suppose)
Derived his high philosophy from those;
For, like a prince, he bore the vast expense
Of lavish pomp, and proud magnificence:
His house was stately, his retinue gay,
Large was his train, and gorgeous his array.
His spacious garden, made to yield to none,
Was compass'd round with walls of solid stone;
Priapus could not half describe the grace 450
(Though god of gardens) of this charming place:
A place to tire the rambling wits of France
In long descriptions, and exceed romance:
Enough to shame the gentlest bard that sings
Of painted meadows, and of purling springs.

Full in the centre of the flowery ground
A crystal fountain spread its streams around,
The fruitful banks with verdant laurels crown'd.
About this spring (if ancient fame say true)
The dapper elves their moonlight sports pursue: 460
Their pigmy king, and little fairy queen,
In circling dances gamboll'd on the green,
While tuneful sprites a merry concert made,
And airy music warbled through the shade.

Hither the noble knight would oft repair,
(His scene of pleasure, and peculiar care):
For this he held it dear, and always bore
The silver key that lock'd the garden door.
To this sweet place, in summer's sultry heat,
He used from noise and business to retreat: 470
And here in dalliance spend the livelong day,

Solus cum sola, with his sprightly May:
For whate'er work was undischarged abed,
The duteous knight in this fair garden sped.

But ah! what mortal lives of bliss secure?
How short a space our worldly joys endure!
O Fortune! fair, like all thy treacherous kind,
But faithless still, and wavering as the wind!
O painted monster, form'd mankind to cheat
With pleasing poison, and with soft deceit! 480
This rich, this amorous, venerable knight,
Amidst his ease, his solace, and delight,
Struck blind by thee, resigns his days to grief,
And calls on death, the wretch's last relief.

The rage of jealousy then seized his mind,
For much he fear'd the faith of womankind.
His wife, not suffer'd from his side to stray,
Was captive kept; he watch'd her night and day,
Abridged her pleasures, and confined her sway. 490
Full oft in tears did hapless May complain,
And sigh'd full oft; but sigh'd and wept in vain:
She look'd on Damian with a lover's eye;
For oh, 'twas fix'd; she must possess or die!
Nor less impatience vex'd her amorous squire,
Wild with delay, and burning with desire.
Watch'd as she was, yet could he not refrain
By secret writing to disclose his pain;
The dame by signs reveal'd her kind intent,
Till both were conscious what each other meant.

Ah! gentle knight, what would thy eyes avail, 500
Though they could see as far as ships can sail?
'Tis better, sure, when blind, deceived to be,
Than be deluded when a man can see!

Argus himself, so cautious and so wise,
Was overwatch'd, for all his hundred eyes:
So many an honest husband may, 'tis known,
Who, wisely, never thinks the case his own.

The dame at last, by diligence and care,
Procured the key her knight was wont to bear;
She took the wards in wax before the fire, 510
And gave th' impression to the trusty squire.
By means of this some wonder shall appear,
Which, in due place and season, you may hear.
Well sung sweet Ovid, in the days of yore,
What slight is that which love will not explore?
And Pyramus and Thisbe plainly show
The feats true lovers, when they list, can do:
Though watch'd and captive, yet in spite of all,
They found the art of kissing through a wall.

But now no longer from our tale to stray; 520
It happ'd, that once, upon a summer's day,
Our reverend knight was urged to amorous play;
He raised his spouse ere matin-bell was rung,
And thus his morning canticle he sung:

'Awake, my love, disclose thy radiant eyes!
Arise, my wife, my beauteous lady, rise!
Hear how the doves with pensive notes complain,
And in soft murmurs tell the trees their pain:
The winter's past; the clouds and tempests fly;
The sun adorns the fields, and brightens all the sky. 530
Fair without spot, whose every charming part
My bosom wounds, and captivates my heart!
Come, and in mutual pleasures let's engage,
Joy of my life, and comfort of my age!'

This heard, to Damian straight a sign she made
To haste before; the gentle squire obey'd:
Secret and undescried he took his way,
And, ambush'd close, behind an arbour lay.

It was not long ere January came,
And hand in hand with him his lovely dame; 540
Blind as he was, not doubting all was sure,
He turn'd the key, and made the gate secure.

'Here let us walk,' he said, 'observed by none,
Conscious of pleasures to the world unknown:
So may my soul have joy, as thou, my wife,
Art far the dearest solace of my life;
And rather would I choose, by heaven above!
To die this instant, than to lose thy love.
Reflect what truth was in my passion shown,
When, unendow'd, I took thee for my own, 550
And sought no treasure but thy heart alone.
Old as I am, and now deprived of sight,
Whilst thou art faithful to thy own true knight,
Nor age, nor blindness rob me of delight.
Each other loss with patience I can bear,
The loss of thee is what I only fear.

'Consider then, my lady, and my wife,
The solid comforts of a virtuous life.
As, first, the love of Christ himself you gain;
Next, your own honour undefiled maintain; 560
And, lastly, that which sure your mind must move,
My whole estate shall gratify your love:
Make your own terms, and ere to-morrow's sun
Displays his light, by heaven, it shall be done!
I seal the contract with a holy kiss,
And will perform, by this--my dear, and this--
Have comfort, spouse, nor think thy lord unkind;
'Tis love, not jealousy, that fires my mind!
For when thy charms my sober thoughts engage,
And join'd to them my own unequal age, 570
From thy dear side I have no power to part,
Such secret transports warm my melting heart.
For who that once possess'd those heavenly charms,
Could live one moment absent from thy arms?'

He ceased, and May with modest grace replied,
(Weak was her voice, as while she spoke she cried):
'Heaven knows (with that a tender sigh she drew)

I have a soul to save as well as you;
And, what no less you to my charge commend,
My dearest honour will to death defend. 580
To you in holy church I gave my hand,
And join'd my heart in wedlock's sacred band:
Yet after this, if you distrust my care,
Then hear, my lord, and witness what I swear:

'First may the yawning earth her bosom rend,
And let me hence to hell alive descend;
Or die the death I dread no less than hell,
Sew'd in a sack, and plunged into a well,
Ere I my fame by one lewd act disgrace,
Or once renounce the honour of my race. 590
For know, sir knight, of gentle blood I came;
I loathe a whore, and startle at the name.
But jealous men on their own crimes reflect,
And learn from thence their ladies to suspect:
Else why these heedless cautions, sir, to me
These doubts and fears of female constancy
This chime still rings in every lady's ear,
The only strain a wife must hope to hear.'

Thus while she spoke a sidelong glance she cast,
Where Damian, kneeling, worshipp'd as she pass'd. 600
She saw him watch the motions of her eye,
And singled out a pear-tree planted nigh:
'Twas charged with fruit that made a goodly show,
And hung with dangling pears was every bough.
Thither th' obsequious squire address'd his pace,
And, climbing, in the summit took his place;
The knight and lady walk'd beneath in view,
Where let us leave them and our tale pursue.

'Twas now the season when the glorious sun
His heavenly progress through the Twins had run; 610
And Jove, exalted, his mild influence yields,
To glad the glebe, and paint the flowery fields:
Clear was the day, and Phoebus, rising bright,
Had streak'd the azure firmament with light;
He pierced the glittering clouds with golden streams,
And warm'd the womb of earth with genial beams.

It so befell, in that fair morning tide,
The fairies sported on the garden side,
And in the midst their monarch and his bride.
So featly tripp'd the light-foot ladies round, 620
The knights so nimbly o'er the greensward bound,
That scarce they bent the flowers or touch'd the ground.
The dances ended, all the fairy train
For pinks and daisies search'd the flowery plain;
While on a bank reclined of rising green,
Thus, with a frown, the king bespoke his queen:

"Tis too apparent, argue what you can,
The treachery you women use to man:
A thousand authors have this truth made out,
And sad experience leaves no room for doubt. 630

'Heaven rest thy spirit, noble Solomon!
A wiser monarch never saw the sun:
All wealth, all honours, the supreme degree
Of earthly bliss, was well bestow'd on thee!
For sagely hast thou said, Of all mankind,
One only just, and righteous, hope to find:
But shouldst thou search the spacious world around,
Yet one good woman is not to be found.

'Thus says the king, who knew your wickedness;
The son of Sirach testifies no less. 640
So may some wild-fire on your bodies fall,
Or some devouring plague consume you all;
As well you view the lecher in the tree,
And well this honourable knight you see:
But, since he's blind and old (a helpless case),
His squire shall cuckold him before your face.

'Now by my own dread majesty I swear,
And by this awful sceptre which I bear,
No impious wretch shall 'scape unpunish'd long,
That in my presence offers such a wrong. 650
I will this instant undeceive the knight,
And in the very act restore his sight:
And set the strumpet here in open view,
A warning to these ladies, and to you,
And all the faithless sex, for ever to be true.'

'And will you so,' replied the queen, 'indeed?
Now, by my mother's soul, it is decreed,
She shall not want an answer at her need.
For her, and for her daughters, I'll engage,
And all the sex in each succeeding age; 660
Art shall be theirs to varnish an offence,
And fortify their crimes with confidence.
Nay, were they taken in a strict embrace,
Seen with both eyes, and pinion'd on the place;
All they shall need is to protest and swear,
Breathe a soft sigh, and drop a tender tear;
Till their wise husbands, gull'd by arts like these,
Grow gentle, tractable, and tame as geese.

'What though this slanderous Jew, this Solomon,
Call'd women fools, and knew full many a one; 670
The wiser wits of later times declare
How constant, chaste, and virtuous women are:
Witness the martyrs who resign'd their breath,
Serene in torments, unconcern'd in death;
And witness next what Roman authors tell,
How Arria, Portia, and Lucretia fell.

'But since the sacred leaves to all are free,
And men interpret texts, why should not we?
By this no more was meant than to have shown
That sovereign goodness dwells in Him alone, 680
Who only Is, and is but only One.
But grant the worst; shall women then be weigh'd
By every word that Solomon hath said
What though this king (as ancient story boasts)

Built a fair temple to the Lord of Hosts;
He ceased at last his Maker to adore,
And did as much for idol gods, or more.
Beware what lavish praises you confer
On a rank lecher and idolater;
Whose reign indulgent God, says Holy Writ, 690
Did but for David's righteous sake permit;
David the monarch after Heaven's own mind,
Who loved our sex, and honour'd all our kind.

'Well, I'm a woman, and as such must speak;
Silence would swell me, and my heart would break.
Know, then, I scorn your dull authorities,
Your idle wits, and all their learned lies:
By heaven, those authors are our sex's foes,
Whom, in our right, I must and will oppose!'

'Nay,' quoth the king, 'dear madam, be not wroth; 700
I yield it up; but since I gave my oath,
That this much-injured knight again should see;
It must be done--I am a king,' said he,
'And one whose faith has ever sacred been--'

'And so has mine' (she said)--'I am a queen:
Her answer she shall have, I undertake;
And thus an end of all dispute I make.
Try when you list; and you shall find, my lord,
It is not in our sex to break our word.'

We leave them here in this heroic strain, 710
And to the knight our story turns again;
Who in the garden, with his lovely May,
Sung merrier than the cuckoo or the jay:
This was his song, 'Oh kind and constant be;
Constant and kind I'll ever prove to thee.'

Thus singing as he went, at last he drew
By easy steps to where the pear-tree grew:
The longing dame look'd up, and spied her love
Full fairly perch'd among the boughs above.
She stopp'd, and sighing, 'O good gods!' she cried, 720
'What pangs, what sudden shoots distend my side
Oh for that tempting fruit, so fresh, so green;
Help, for the love of heaven's immortal queen!
Help, dearest lord, and save at once the life
Of thy poor infant, and thy longing wife!'

Sore sigh'd the knight to hear his lady's cry,
But could not climb, and had no servant nigh:
Old as he was, and void of eyesight too,
What could, alas! a helpless husband do?
'And must I languish, then, (she said), and die, 730
Yet view the lovely fruit before my eye?
At least, kind sir, for charity's sweet sake,
Vouchsafe the trunk between your arms to take;
Then from your back I might ascend the tree;
Do you but stoop, and leave the rest to me.'

'With all my soul,' he thus replied again,

'I'd spend my dearest blood to ease thy pain.'
With that his back against the trunk he bent;
She seized a twig, and up the tree she went.

Signs of remorse, while thus his spouse he cheer'd:
'Madam, 'tis past, and my short anger o'er!
Come down, and vex your tender heart no more: 790
Excuse me, dear, if aught amiss was said,
For, on my soul, amends shall soon be made:
Let my repentance your forgiveness draw;
By heaven, I swore but what I _thought_ I saw.'

'Ah, my loved lord! 'twas much unkind (she cried)
On bare suspicion thus to treat your bride.
But, till your sight's establish'd, for a while,
Imperfect objects may your sense beguile.
Thus, when from sleep we first our eyes display,
The balls are wounded with the piercing ray, 800
And dusky vapours rise and intercept the day;
So, just recovering from the shades of night,
Your swimming eyes are drunk with sudden light,
Strange phantoms dance around, and skim before your sight.
Then, sir, be cautious, nor too rashly deem;
Heaven knows how seldom things are what they seem!
Consult your reason, and you soon shall find
'Twas you were jealous, not your wife unkind:
Jove ne'er spoke oracle more true than this,
None judge so wrong as those who think amiss.' 810

With that she leap'd into her lord's embrace,
With well-dissembled virtue in her face.
He hugg'd her close, and kiss'd her o'er and o'er,
Disturb'd with doubts and jealousies no more:
Both, pleased and bless'd, renew'd their mutual vows:
A fruitful wife, and a believing spouse.

Thus ends our tale, whose moral next to make,
Let all wise husbands hence example take;
And pray, to crown the pleasure of their lives,
To be so well deluded by their wives. 820

THE WIFE OF BATH, HER PROLOGUE.

FROM CHAUCER.

Behold the woes of matrimonial life,
And hear with reverence an experienced wife!
To dear-bought wisdom give the credit due,
And think, for once, a woman tells you true.
In all these trials I have borne a part:
I was myself the scourge that caused the smart;
For, since fifteen, in triumph have I led
Five captive husbands from the church to bed.

Christ saw a wedding once, the Scripture says,
And saw but one, 'tis thought, in all his days; 10
Whence some infer, whose conscience is too nice,
No pious Christian ought to marry twice.

But let them read, and solve me if they can,

The words address'd to the Samaritan;
Five times in lawful wedlock she was join'd,
And sure the certain stint was ne'er defined.

'Increase and multiply' was Heaven's command,
And that's a text I clearly understand:
This, too, 'Let men their sires and mothers leave,
And to their dearer wives for ever cleave.' 20
More wives than one by Solomon were tried,
Or else the wisest of mankind's belied.
I've had myself full many a merry fit,
And trust in heaven I may have many yet;
For when my transitory spouse, unkind,
Shall die and leave his woful wife behind,
I'll take the next good Christian I can find.

Paul, knowing one could never serve our turn,
Declared 'twas better far to wed than burn.
There's danger in assembling fire and tow; 30
I grant 'em that; and what it means you know.
The same apostle, too, has elsewhere own'd
No precept for virginity he found:
'Tis but a counsel--and we women still
Take which we like, the counsel or our will.

I envy not their bliss, if he or she
Think fit to live in perfect chastity:
Pure let them be, and free from taint or vice;
I for a few slight spots am not so nice.
Heaven calls us different ways; on these bestows 40
One proper gift, another grants to those;
Not every man's obliged to sell his store,
And give up all his substance to the poor:
Such as are perfect may, I can't deny;
But, by your leaves, divines! so am not I.

Full many a saint, since first the world began,
Lived an unspotted maid in spite of man:
Let such (a God's name) with fine wheat be fed,
And let us honest wives eat barley bread.
For me, I'll keep the post assign'd by heaven, 50
And use the copious talent it has given:
Let my good spouse pay tribute, do me right,
And keep an equal reckoning every night;
His proper body is not his, but mine;
For so said Paul, and Paul's a sound divine.

Know then, of those five husbands I have had,
Three were just tolerable, two were bad.
The three were old, but rich and fond beside,
And toil'd most piteously to please their bride;
But since their wealth (the best they had) was mine, 60
The rest, without much loss, I could resign:
Sure to be loved, I took no pains to please,
Yet had more pleasure far than they had ease.

Presents flow'd in apace: with showers of gold
They made their court, like Jupiter of old:
If I but smiled, a sudden youth they found,

And a new palsy seized them when I frown'd.
Ye sovereign wives! give ear, and understand:
Thus shall ye speak, and exercise command;
For never was it given to mortal man 70
To lie so boldly as we women can:
Forswear the fact, though seen with both his eyes,
And call your maids to witness how he lies.

Hark, old Sir Paul! ('twas thus I used to say)
Whence is our neighbour's wife so rich and gay
Treated, caress'd, where'er she's pleased to roam--
I sit in tatters, and immured at home.
Why to her house dost thou so oft repair?
Art thou so amorous? and is she so fair?
If I but see a cousin or a friend, 80
Lord! how you swell and rage, like any fiend!
But you reel home, a drunken beastly bear,
Then preach till midnight in your easy chair;
Cry, Wives are false, and every woman evil,
And give up all that's female to the devil.
If poor (you say), she drains her husband's purse;
If rich, she keeps her priest, or something worse;
If highly born, intolerably vain,
Vapours and pride by turns possess her brain;
Now gaily mad, now sourly splenetic, 90
Freakish when well, and fretful when she's sick:
If fair, then chaste she cannot long abide,
By pressing youth attack'd on every side;
If foul, her wealth the lusty lover lures,
Or else her wit some fool-gallant procures,
Or else she dances with becoming grace,
Or shape excuses the defects of face.
There swims no goose so gray, but soon or late
She finds some honest gander for her mate.

Horses (thou say'st) and asses men may try, 100
And ring suspected vessels ere they buy;
But wives, a random choice, untried they take,
They dream in courtship, but in wedlock wake;
Then, nor till then, the veil's removed away,
And all the woman glares in open day.

You tell me, to preserve your wife's good grace,
Your eyes must always languish on my face,
Your tongue with constant flatteries feed my ear,
And tag each sentence with 'My life! My dear!'
If, by strange chance, a modest blush be raised, 110
Be sure my fine complexion must be praised.
My garments always must be new and gay,
And feasts still kept upon my wedding day.
Then must my nurse be pleased, and favourite maid:
And endless treats and endless visits paid
To a long train of kindred, friends, allies:
All this thou say'st, and all thou say'st are lies.

On Jenkin, too, you cast a squinting eye:
What! can your 'prentice raise your jealousy?
Fresh are his ruddy cheeks, his forehead fair, 120
And like the burnish'd gold his curling hair.

But clear thy wrinkled brow, and quit thy sorrow,
I'd scorn your 'prentice should you die to-morrow.

Why are thy chests all lock'd? on what design?
Are not thy worldly goods and treasures mine?
Sir, I'm no fool; nor shall you, by St John,
Have goods and body to yourself alone.
One you shall quit, in spite of both your eyes--
I heed not, I, the bolts, the locks, the spies.
If you had wit, you'd say, 'Go where you will, 130
Dear spouse! I credit not the tales they tell:
Take all the freedoms of a married life;
I know thee for a virtuous, faithful wife.'

Lord! when you have enough, what need you care
How merrily soever others fare?
Though all the day I give and take delight,
Doubt not, sufficient will be left at night.
'Tis but a just and rational desire
To light a taper at a neighbour's fire.
There's danger too, you think, in rich array, 140
And none can long be modest that are gay.
The cat, if you but singe her tabby skin,
The chimney keeps, and sits content within:
But once grown sleek, will from her corner run,
Sport with her tail, and wanton in the sun:
She licks her fair round face, and frisks abroad
To show her fur, and to be catterwaw'd.

Lo! thus, my friends, I wrought to my desires
These three right ancient venerable sires.
I told 'em, Thus you say, and thus you do; 150
And told 'em false, but Jenkin swore 'twas true.
I, like a dog, could bite as well as whine,
And first complain'd whene'er the guilt was mine.
I tax'd them oft with wenching and amours,
When their weak legs scarce dragg'd them out of doors
And swore, the rambles that I took by night
Were all to spy what damsels they bedight:
That colour brought me many hours of mirth;
For all this wit is given us from our birth.
Heaven gave to woman the peculiar grace 160
To spin, to weep, and cully human race.
By this nice conduct and this prudent course,
By murmuring, wheedling, stratagem, and force,
I still prevail'd, and would be in the right,
Or curtain lectures made a restless night.
If once my husband's arm was o'er my side,
'What! so familiar with your spouse?' I cried:
I levied first a tax upon his need;
Then let him--'twas a nicety indeed!
Let all mankind this certain maxim hold; 170
Marry who will, our sex is to be sold.
With empty hands no tassels you can lure,
But fulsome love for gain we can endure;
For gold we love the impotent and old,
And heave, and pant, and kiss, and cling, for gold.
Yet with embraces curses oft I mix'd,
Then kiss'd again, and chid, and rail'd betwixt.

Well, I may make my will in peace, and die,
For not one word in man's arrears am I.
To drop a dear dispute I was unable, 180
E'en though the Pope himself had sat at table:
But when my point was gain'd, then thus I spoke:
'Billy, my dear, how sheepishly you look!
Approach, my spouse, and let me kiss thy cheek;
Thou shouldst be always thus, resign'd and meek!
Of Job's great patience since so oft you preach,
Well should you practise who so well can teach.
'Tis difficult to do, I must allow,
But I, my dearest! will instruct you how.
Great is the blessing of a prudent wife, 190
Who puts a period to domestic strife.
One of us two must rule, and one obey;
And since in man right reason bears the sway,
Let that frail thing, weak woman, have her way.
The wives of all my family have ruled
Their tender husbands, and their passions cool'd.
Fye! 'tis unmanly thus to sigh and groan:
What! would you have me to yourself alone?
Why, take me, love! take all and every part!
Here's your revenge! you love it at your heart. 200
Would I vouchsafe to sell what nature gave,
You little think what custom I could have.
But see! I'm all your own--nay, hold--for shame!
What means my dear?--indeed, you are to blame.'

Thus with my first three lords I pass'd my life,
A very woman, and a very wife.
What sums from these old spouses I could raise,
Procured young husbands in my riper days.
Though past my bloom, not yet decay'd was I,
Wanton and wild, and chatter'd like a pie. 210
In country-dances still I bore the bell,
And sung as sweet as evening Philomel.
To clear my quail-pipe, and refresh my soul,
Full oft I drain'd the spicy nut-brown bowl;
Rich luscious wines, that youthful blood improve,
And warm the swelling veins to feats of love:
For 'tis as sure as cold engenders hail,
A liquorish mouth must have a lecherous tail:
Wine lets no lover unrewarded go,
As all true gamesters by experience know. 220

But oh, good gods! whene'er a thought I cast
On all the joys of youth and beauty past,
To find in pleasures I have had my part,
Still warms me to the bottom of my heart.
This wicked world was once my dear delight;
Now, all my conquests, all my charms, good night!
The flour consumed, the best that now I can
Is e'en to make my market of the bran.

My fourth dear spouse was not exceeding true;
He kept, 'twas thought, a private miss or two: 230
But all that score I paid--As how? you'll say,
Not with my body, in a filthy way;
But I so dress'd, and danced, and drank, and dined,

And view'd a friend with eyes so very kind,
As stung his heart, and made his marrow fry,
With burning rage and frantic jealousy
His soul, I hope, enjoys eternal glory,
For here on earth I was his purgatory.
Oft, when his shoe the most severely wrung,
He put on careless airs, and sat and sung. 240
How sore I gall'd him only heaven could know,
And he that felt, and I that caused the woe:
He died, when last from pilgrimage I came,
With other gossips from Jerusalem,
And now lies buried underneath a rood,
Fair to be seen, and rear'd of honest wood:
A tomb, indeed, with fewer sculptures graced
Than that Mausolus' pious widow placed,
Or where enshrined the great Darius lay;
But cost on graves is merely thrown away. 250
The pit fill'd up, with turf we cover'd o'er;
So bless the good man's soul! I say no more.

Now for my fifth loved lord, the last and best;
(Kind heaven afford him everlasting rest!)
Full hearty was his love, and I can show
The tokens on my ribs in black and blue;
Yet with a knack my heart he could have won,
While yet the smart was shooting in the bone.
How quaint an appetite in woman reigns!
Free gifts we scorn, and love what costs us pains: 260
Let men avoid us, and on them we leap;
A glutted market makes provisions cheap.

In pure goodwill I took this jovial spark,
Of Oxford he, a most egregious clerk.
He boarded with a widow in the town,
A trusty gossip, one dame Alison;
Full well the secrets of my soul she knew,
Better than e'er our parish priest could do.
To her I told whatever could befall:
Had but my husband piss'd against a wall, 270
Or done a thing that might have cost his life,
She--and my niece--and one more worthy wife,
Had known it all: what most he would conceal,
To these I made no scruple to reveal.
Oft has he blush'd from ear to ear for shame
That e'er he told a secret to his dame.

It so befell, in holy time of Lent,
That oft a day I to this gossip went;
(My husband, thank my stars, was out of town)
From house to house we rambled up and down, 280
This clerk, myself, and my good neighbour, Alse,
To see, be seen, to tell, and gather tales.
Visits to every church we daily paid,
And march'd in every holy masquerade;
The stations duly, and the vigils kept;
Not much we fasted, but scarce ever slept.
At sermons, too, I shone in scarlet gay:
The wasting moth ne'er spoil'd my best array;
The cause was this, I wore it every day.

'Twas when fresh May her early blossoms yields, 290
This clerk and I were walking in the fields.
We grew so intimate, I can't tell how,
I pawn'd my honour, and engaged my vow,
If e'er I laid my husband in his urn,
That he, and only he, should serve my turn.
We straight struck hands, the bargain was agreed;
I still have shifts against a time of need:
The mouse that always trusts to one poor hole
Can never be a mouse of any soul.

I vow'd I scarce could sleep since first I knew him, 300
And durst be sworn he had bewitch'd me to him
If e'er I slept, I dream'd of him alone,
And dreams foretell, as learned men have shown:
All this I said; but dreams, sirs, I had none:
I follow'd but my crafty crony's lore,
Who bid me tell this lie--and twenty more.

Thus day by day, and month by month we pass'd;
It pleased the Lord to take my spouse at last.
I tore my gown, I soil'd my locks with dust,
And beat my breasts, as wretched widows must. 310
Before my face my handkerchief I spread,
To hide the flood of tears I did not shed.
The good man's coffin to the church was borne;
Around, the neighbours, and my clerk, too, mourn:
But as he march'd, good gods! he show'd a pair
Of legs and feet so clean, so strong, so fair!
Of twenty winters' age he seem'd to be;
I (to say truth) was twenty more than he;
But vigorous still, a lively buxom dame,
And had a wondrous gift to quench a flame. 320
A conjuror once, that deeply could divine,
Assured me Mars in Taurus was my sign.
As the stars order'd, such my life has been:
Alas, alas! that ever love was sin!
Fair Venus gave me fire and sprightly grace,
And Mars assurance and a dauntless face.
By virtue of this powerful constellation,
I follow'd always my own inclination.

But to my tale: A month scarce pass'd away,
With dance and song we kept the nuptial day. 330
All I possess'd I gave to his command,
My goods and chattels, money, house, and land;
But oft repented, and repent it still;
He proved a rebel to my sovereign will;
Nay, once, by heaven! he struck me on the face;
Hear but the fact, and judge yourselves the case.

Stubborn as any lioness was I,
And knew full well to raise my voice on high;
As true a rambler as I was before,
And would be so in spite of all he swore. 340
He against this right sagely would advise,
And old examples set before my eyes;
Tell how the Roman matrons led their life,

Of Gracchus' mother, and Duilius' wife;
And close the sermon, as beseem'd his wit,
With some grave sentence out of Holy Writ.
Oft would he say, 'Who builds his house on sands,
Pricks his blind horse across the fallow lands;
Or lets his wife abroad with pilgrims roam,
Deserves a fool's cap and long ears at home.' 350
All this avail'd not, for whoe'er he be
That tells my faults, I hate him mortally!
And so do numbers more, I'll boldly say,
Men, women, clergy, regular, and lay.

My spouse (who was, you know, to learning bred)
A certain treatise oft at evening read,
Where divers authors (whom the devil confound
For all their lies) were in one volume bound:
Valerius whole, and of St Jerome part;
Chrysippus and Tertullian, Ovid's Art, 360
Solomon's Proverbs, Eloisa's Loves,
And many more than, sure, the Church approves.
More legends were there here of wicked wives
Than good in all the Bible and saints' lives.
Who drew the lion vanquish'd? 'Twas a man:
But could we women write as scholars can,
Men should stand mark'd with far more wickedness
Than all the sons of Adam could redress.
Love seldom haunts the breast where learning lies,
And Venus sets ere Mercury can rise. 370
Those play the scholars who can't play the men,
And use that weapon which they have, their pen:
When old, and past the relish of delight,
Then down they sit, and in their dotage write,
That not one woman keeps her marriage-vow.
(This by the way, but to my purpose now:)

It chanced my husband, on a winter's night,
Read in this book aloud with strange delight,
How the first female (as the Scriptures show)
Brought her own spouse and all his race to woe; 380
How Samson fell; and he whom Dejanire
Wrapp'd in th' envenom'd shirt, and set on fire;
How cursed Eriphyle her lord betray'd,
And the dire ambush Clytemnestra laid;
But what most pleased him was the Cretan dame
And husband-bull--Oh, monstrous! fye, for shame!

He had by heart the whole detail of woe
Xantippe made her good man undergo;
How oft she scolded in a day he knew,
How many pisspots on the sage she threw; 390
Who took it patiently, and wiped his head:
'Rain follows thunder,' that was all he said.

He read how Arius to his friend complain'd
A fatal tree was growing in his land,
On which three wives successively had twined
A sliding noose, and waver'd in the wind.
'Where grows this plant,' replied the friend, 'oh! where?
For better fruit did never orchard bear:

Give me some slip of this most blissful tree,
And in my garden planted it shall be! 400

Then how two wives their lords' destruction prove,
Through hatred one, and one through too much love;
That for her husband mix'd a poisonous draught,
And this for lust an amorous philtre bought:
The nimble juice soon seized his giddy head,
Frantic at night, and in the morning dead.

How some with swords their sleeping lords have slain,
And some have hammer'd nails into their brain,
And some have drench'd them with a deadly potion:
All this he read, and read with great devotion. 410

Long time I heard, and swell'd, and blush'd, and frown'd;
But when no end of these vile tales I found,
When still he read, and laugh'd, and read again,
And half the night was thus consumed in vain,
Provoked to vengeance, three large leaves I tore,
And with one buffet fell'd him on the floor.
With that my husband in a fury rose,
And down he settled me with hearty blows.
I groan'd, and lay extended on my side;
'Oh! thou hast slain me for my wealth!' I cried, 420
'Yet I forgive thee--take my last embrace--'
He wept, kind soul! and stoop'd to kiss my face:
I took him such a box as turn'd him blue,
Then sigh'd, and cried, 'Adieu, my dear, adieu!'

But after many a hearty struggle past,
I condescended to be pleased at last.
Soon as he said, 'My mistress and my wife!
Do what you list the term of all your life,'
I took to heart the merits of the cause,
And stood content to rule by wholesome laws; 430
Received the reins of absolute command,
With all the government of house and land,
And empire o'er his tongue and o'er his hand.
As for the volume that reviled the dames,
'Twas torn to fragments, and condemn'd to flames.

Now, Heaven, on all my husbands gone bestow
Pleasures above for tortures felt below:
That rest they wish'd for, grant them in the grave,
And bless those souls my conduct help'd to save!

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUES

A PROLOGUE

TO A PLAY FOR MR DENNIS'S BENEFIT, IN 1733, WHEN HE WAS OLD, BLIND, AND
IN GREAT DISTRESS, A LITTLE BEFORE HIS DEATH.

As when that hero, who, in each campaign,
 Had braved the Goth, and many a Vandal slain,
 Lay fortune-struck, a spectacle of woe!
 Wept by each friend, forgiven by every foe:
 Was there a generous, a reflecting mind,
 But pitied Belisarius, old and blind?
 Was there a chief but melted at the sight?
 A common soldier, but who clubb'd his mite?
 Such, such emotions should in Britons rise,
 When press'd by want and weakness Dennis lies; 10
 Dennis, who long had warr'd with modern Huns,
 Their quibbles routed, and defied their puns;
 A desperate bulwark, sturdy, firm, and fierce,
 Against the Gothic sons of frozen verse:
 How changed from him who made the boxes groan,
 And shook the stage with thunders all his own!
 Stood up to dash each vain pretender's hope,
 Maul the French tyrant, or pull down the Pope!
 If there's a Briton then, true bred and born,
 Who holds dragoons and wooden shoes in scorn; 20
 If there's a critic of distinguished rage;
 If there's a senior who contemns this age:
 Let him to night his just assistance lend,
 And be the critic's, Briton's, old man's friend.

PROLOGUE TO MR ADDISON'S 'CATO.'

To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
 To raise the genius, and to mend the heart;
 To make mankind, in conscious virtue bold,
 Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold:
 For this the tragic Muse first trod the stage,
 Commanding tears to stream through every age;
 Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,
 And foes to virtue wonder'd how they wept.
 Our author shuns by vulgar springs to move
 The hero's glory, or the virgin's love; 10
 In pitying love, we but our weakness show,
 And wild ambition well deserves its woe.
 Here tears shall flow from a more generous cause,
 Such tears as patriots shed for dying laws:
 He bids your breasts with ancient ardour rise,
 And calls forth Roman drops from British eyes.
 Virtue confess'd in human shape he draws,
 What Plato thought, and godlike Cato was:
 No common object to your sight displays,
 But what with pleasure Heaven itself surveys, 20
 A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
 And greatly falling with a falling state.
 While Cato gives his little senate laws,
 What bosom beats not in his country's cause?
 Who sees him act, but envies every deed?
 Who hears him groan, and does not wish to bleed?
 E'en when proud Caesar, 'midst triumphal cars,
 The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,
 Ignobly vain, and impotently great,
 Show'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state; 30

As her dead father's reverend image pass'd,
 The pomp was darkened, and the day o'ercast;
 The triumph ceased, tears gush'd from every eye;
 The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by;
 Her last good man dejected Rome adored,
 And honour'd Caesar's less than Cato's sword.

Britons, attend: be worth like this approved,
 And show you have the virtue to be moved.
 With honest scorn the first famed Cato view'd
 Rome learning arts from Greece, whom she subdued: 40
 Your scene precariously subsists too long
 On French translation and Italian song.
 Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage,
 Be justly warm'd with your own native rage:
 Such plays alone should win a British ear,
 As Cato's self had not disdain'd to hear.

PROLOGUE TO THOMSON'S 'SOPHONISBA.'[59]

When Learning, after the long Gothic night,
 Fair, o'er the western world, renew'd its light,
 With arts arising, Sophonisba rose;
 The tragic Muse, returning, wept her woes.
 With her th' Italian scene first learn'd to glow,
 And the first tears for her were taught to flow:
 Her charms the Gallic Muses next inspired;
 Corneille himself saw, wonder'd, and was fired.

What foreign theatres with pride have shown,
 Britain, by juster title, makes her own. 10
 When freedom is the cause, 'tis hers to fight,
 And hers, when freedom is the theme, to write.
 For this a British author bids again
 The heroine rise, to grace the British scene:
 Here, as in life, she breathes her genuine flame,
 She asks, What bosom has not felt the same?
 Asks of the British youth--is silence there?
 She dares to ask it of the British fair.
 To-night our homespun author would be true,
 At once to nature, history, and you. 20
 Well pleased to give our neighbours due applause,
 He owns their learning, but disdains their laws;
 Not to his patient touch, or happy flame,
 'Tis to his British heart he trusts for fame.
 If France excel him in one freeborn thought,
 The man, as well as poet, is in fault.
 Nature! informer of the poet's art,
 Whose force alone can raise or melt the heart,
 Thou art his guide; each passion, every line,
 Whate'er he draws to please, must all be thine. 30
 Be thou his judge: in every candid breast
 Thy silent whisper is the sacred test.

PROLOGUE, DESIGNED FOR MR D'URFEY'S LAST PLAY.

Grown old in rhyme, 'twere barbarous to discard
 Your persevering, unexhausted bard;
 Damnation follows death in other men,
 But your damn'd poet lives and writes again.
 The adventurous lover is successful still,
 Who strives to please the fair against her will:
 Be kind, and make him in his wishes easy,
 Who in your own despite has strove to please ye.
 He scorn'd to borrow from the wits of yore,
 But ever writ, as none e'er writ before. 10
 You modern wits, should each man bring his claim,
 Have desperate debentures on your fame;
 And little would be left you, I'm afraid,
 If all your debts to Greece and Rome were paid.
 From this deep fund our author largely draws,
 Nor sinks his credit lower than it was.
 Though plays for honour in old time he made,
 'Tis now for better reasons--to be paid.
 Believe him, he has known the world too long,
 And seen the death of much immortal song. 20
 He says, poor poets lost, while players won,
 As pimps grow rich, while gallants are undone.
 Though Tom the poet writ with ease and pleasure,
 The comic Tom abounds in other treasure.
 Fame is at best an unperforming cheat;
 But 'tis substantial happiness to eat.
 Let ease, his last request, be of your giving,
 Nor force him to be damn'd to get his living.

PROLOGUE TO 'THE THREE HOURS AFTER MARRIAGE'

Authors are judged by strange capricious rules;
 The great ones are thought mad, the small ones fools:
 Yet sure the best are most severely fated;
 For fools are only laugh'd at, wits are hated.
 Blockheads with reason men of sense abhor;
 But fool 'gainst fool, is barbarous civil war.
 Why on all authors, then, should critics fall?
 Since some have writ, and shown no wit at all.
 Condemn a play of theirs, and they evade it;
 Cry, 'Damn not us, but damn the French, who made it.' 10
 By running goods these graceless owlers gain;
 Theirs are the rules of France, the plots of Spain;
 But wit, like wine, from happier climates brought,
 Dash'd by these rogues, turns English common draught.
 They pall Moliere's and Lopez' sprightly strain,
 And teach dull harlequins to grin in vain.

How shall our author hope a gentler fate,
 Who dares most impudently not translate?
 It had been civil, in these ticklish times,
 To fetch his fools and knaves from foreign climes; 20
 Spaniards and French abuse to the world's end,
 But spare old England, lest you hurt a friend.
 If any fool is by our satire bit,
 Let him hiss loud, to show you all he's hit.

Poets make characters, as salesmen clothes;
We take no measure of your fops and beaux;
But here all sizes and all shapes you meet,
And fit yourselves, like chaps in Monmouth Street.

Gallants, look here! this fool's cap[60] has an air, 30
Goodly and smart, with ears of Issachar.
Let no one fool engross it, or confine
A common blessing: now 'tis yours, now mine.
But poets in all ages had the care
To keep this cap for such as will, to wear.
Our author has it now (for every wit
Of course resign'd it to the next that writ)
And thus upon the stage 'tis fairly thrown:[61]
Let him that takes it wear it as his own.

EPILOGUE TO MR ROWE'S 'JANE SHORE.'

DESIGNED FOR MRS OLDFIELD.

Prodigious this! the frail one of our play
From her own sex should mercy find to-day!
You might have held the pretty head aside,
Peep'd in your fans, been serious thus, and cried--
'The play may pass--but that strange creature, Shore,
I can't--indeed now--I so hate a whore--'
Just as a blockhead rubs his thoughtless skull,
And thanks his stars he was not born a fool;
So from a sister sinner you shall hear,
'How strangely you expose yourself, my dear!' 10
But let me die, all raillery apart,
Our sex are still forgiving at their heart;
And, did not wicked custom so contrive,
We'd be the best good-natured things alive.

There are, 'tis true, who tell another tale,
That virtuous ladies envy while they rail;
Such rage without, betrays the fire within;
In some close corner of the soul they sin;
Still hoarding up, most scandalously nice,
Amidst their virtues a reserve of vice. 20
The godly dame, who fleshly failings damns,
Scolds with her maid, or with her chaplain crams.
Would you enjoy soft nights and solid dinners?
Faith, gallants, board with saints, and bed with sinners,

Well, if our author in the wife offends,
He has a husband that will make amends;
He draws him gentle, tender, and forgiving;
And sure such kind good creatures may be living.
In days of old, they pardon'd breach of vows,
Stern Cato's self was no relentless spouse: 30
Plu--Plutarch, what's his name that writes his life?
Tells us, that Cato dearly loved his wife:
Yet if a friend, a night or so, should need her,
He'd recommend her as a special breeder.
To lend a wife, few here would scruple make;

But, pray, which of you all would take her back?
Though with the Stoic chief our stage may ring,
The Stoic husband was the glorious thing.
The man had courage, was a sage, 'tis true,
And loved his country--but what's that to you? 40
Those strange examples ne'er were made to fit ye,
But the kind cuckold might instruct the city:
There, many an honest man may copy Cato,
Who ne'er saw naked sword, or look'd in Plato.

If, after all, you think it a disgrace,
That Edward's miss thus perks it in your face;
To see a piece of failing flesh and blood,
In all the rest so impudently good;
Faith, let the modest matrons of the town
Come here in crowds, and stare the strumpet down. 50

MISCELLANIES

THE BASSET-TABLE.[62]

AN ECLOGUE.

CARDELIA.

The basset-table spread, the tallier come;
Why stays Smilinda in the dressing-room?
Rise, pensive nymph, the tallier waits for you!

SMILINDA.

Ah, madam, since my Sharper is untrue,
I joyless make my once adored Alpeu.
I saw him stand behind Ombrelia's chair,
And whisper with that soft, deluding air,
And those feign'd sighs which cheat the listening fair.

CARDELIA.

Is this the cause of your romantic strains?
A mightier grief my heavy heart sustains. 10
As you by love, so I by fortune cross'd,
One, one bad deal, three Septlevas have lost.

SMILINDA.

Is that the grief, which you compare with mine?
With ease, the smiles of Fortune I resign:
Would all my gold in one bad deal were gone!
Were lovely Sharper mine, and mine alone.

CARDELIA.

A lover lost, is but a common care;

And prudent nymphs against that change prepare:
The Knave of Clubs thrice lost! Oh! who could guess
This fatal stroke, this unforeseen distress? 20

SMILINDA.

See Betty Lovet! very _apropos_
She all the cares of love and play does know:
Dear Betty shall th' important point decide;
Betty, who oft the pain of each has tried;
Impartial, she shall say who suffers most,
By cards' ill usage, or by lovers lost.

LOVET.

Tell, tell your griefs; attentive will I stay,
Though time is precious, and I want some tea.

CARDELIA.

Behold this equipage, by Mathers wrought,
With fifty guineas (a great pen'orth) bought. 30
See, on the tooth-pick, Mars and Cupid strive;
And both the struggling figures seem alive.
Upon the bottom shines the queen's bright face;
A myrtle foliage round the thimble-case.
Jove, Jove himself, does on the scissors shine;
The metal, and the workmanship, divine!

SMILINDA.

This snuff-box,--once the pledge of Sharper's love,
When rival beauties for the present strove;
At Corticelli's he the raffle won;
Then first his passion was in public shown: 40
Hazardia blush'd, and turn'd her head aside,
A rival's envy (all in vain) to hide.
This snuff-box,--on the hinge see brilliants shine:
This snuff-box will I stake; the prize is mine.

CARDELIA.

Alas! far lesser losses than I bear,
Have made a soldier sigh, a lover swear.
And oh! what makes the disappointment hard,
'Twas my own lord that drew the fatal card.
In complaisance, I took the Queen he gave;
Though my own secret wish was for the Knave. 50
The Knave won Sonica, which I had chose;
And the next pull, my Septleva I lose.

SMILINDA.

But ah! what aggravates the killing smart,
The cruel thought, that stabs me to the heart;
This cursed Umbrelia, this undoing fair,
By whose vile arts this heavy grief I bear;
She, at whose name I shed these spiteful tears,
She owes to me the very charms she wears.

An awkward thing, when first she came to town;
Her shape unfashion'd, and her face unknown: 60
She was my friend; I taught her first to spread
Upon her sallow cheeks enlivening red:
I introduced her to the park and plays;
And, by my interest, Cozens made her stays.
Ungrateful wretch! with mimic airs grown pert,
She dares to steal my favourite lover's heart.

CARDELIA.

Wretch that I was, how often have I swore,
When Winnall tallied, I would punt no more?
I know the bite, yet to my ruin run;
And see the folly, which I cannot shun. 70

SMILINDA.

How many maids have Sharper's vows deceived?
How many cursed the moment they believed?
Yet his known falsehood could no warning prove:
Ah! what is warning to a maid in love?

CARDELIA.

But of what marble must that breast be form'd,
To gaze on basset, and remain unwarm'd?
When Kings, Queens, Knaves, are set in decent rank;
Exposed in glorious heaps the tempting bank,
Guineas, half-guineas, all the shining train;
The winner's pleasure, and the loser's pain: 80
In bright confusion open rouleaus lie,
They strike the soul, and glitter in the eye.
Fired by the sight, all reason I disdain;
My passions rise, and will not bear the rein.
Look upon basset, you who reason boast,
And see if reason must not there be lost.

SMILINDA.

What more than marble must that heart compose,
Can hearken coldly to my Sharper's vows?
Then, when he trembles, when his blushes rise,
When awful love seems melting in his eyes! 90
With eager beats his Mechlin cravat moves:
He loves!--I whisper to myself--he loves!
Such unfeign'd passion in his looks appears,
I lose all memory of my former fears;
My panting heart confesses all his charms,
I yield at once, and sink into his arms:
Think of that moment, you who prudence boast;
For such a moment, prudence well were lost.

CARDELIA.

At the groom-porter's, batter'd bullies play,
Some dukes at Mary-bone bowl time away. 100
But who the bowl or rattling dice compares
To basset's heavenly joys, and pleasing cares?

SMILINDA.

Soft Simplicetta dotes upon a beau;
Prudina likes a man, and laughs at show.
Their several graces in my Sharper meet;
Strong as the footman, as the master sweet.

LOVET.

Cease your contention, which has been too long;
I grow impatient, and the tea's too strong.
Attend, and yield to what I now decide;
The equipage shall grace Smilinda's side: 110
The snuff-box to Cardelia I decree.
Now leave complaining, and begin your tea.

LINES

ON RECEIVING FROM THE EIGHT HON. THE LADY FRANCES SHIRLEY[63] A STANDISH
AND TWO PENS.

- 1 Yes, I beheld the Athenian queen
Descend in all her sober charms;
'And take,' she said, and smiled serene,
'Take at this hand celestial arms:
- 2 'Secure the radiant weapons wield;
This golden lance shall guard desert;
And if a vice dares keep the field,
This steel shall stab it to the heart.'
- 3 Awed, on my bended knees I fell,
Received the weapons of the sky;
And dipp'd them in the sable well,
The fount of fame or infamy.
- 4 'What well? what weapon?' Flavia cries--
'A standish, steel, and golden pen!
It came from Bertrand's,[64] not the skies;
I gave it you to write again.
- 5 'But, friend, take heed whom you attack;
You'll bring a house (I mean of peers)
Red, blue, and green, nay, white and black,
L---- and all about your ears.
- 6 'You'd write as smooth again on glass,
And run, on ivory, so glib,
As not to stick at fool or ass,[65]
Nor stop at flattery or fib.[66]
- 7 'Athenian queen! and sober charms!
I tell ye, fool, there's nothing in't:
'Tis Venus, Venus gives these arms:[67]
In Dryden's Virgil see the print.[68]

8 'Come, if you'll be a quiet soul,
That dares tell neither truth nor lies,[69]
I'll list you in the harmless roll
Of those that sing of these poor eyes.'

VERBATIM FROM BOILEAU.

UN JOUR DIT UN AUTEUR, ETC.

Once (says an author--where I need not say)
Two travellers found an oyster in their way;
Both fierce, both hungry; the dispute grew strong,
While, scale in hand, Dame Justice pass'd along.
Before her each with clamour pleads the laws,
Explain'd the matter and would win the cause.
Dame Justice, weighing long the doubtful right,
Takes, opens, swallows it, before their sight.
The cause of strife removed so rarely well,
'There,--take' (says Justice) 'take ye each a shell.
We thrive at Westminster on fools like you:
'Twas a fat oyster--live in peace--adieu.'

ANSWER TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTION OF MRS HOWE.

What is prudery?

'Tis a bledam,
Seen with wit and beauty seldom.
'Tis a fear that starts at shadows.
Tis, (no, 't isn't) like Miss Meadows.
'Tis a virgin hard of feature,
Old, and void of all good-nature;
Lean and fretful; would seem wise;
Yet plays the fool before she dies.
'Tis an ugly, envious shrew,
That rails at dear Lepell and you.

OCCASIONED BY SOME VERSES OF HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

Muse, 'tis enough: at length thy labour ends,
And thou shalt live, for Buckingham commends,
Let crowds of critics now my verse assail,
Let Dennis write, and nameless numbers rail:
This more than pays whole years of thankless pain;
Time, health, and fortune are not lost in vain,
Sheffield approves, consenting Phoebus bends,
And I and Malice from this hour are friends.

MACER: A CHARACTER.

When simple Macer, now of high renown,

First sought a poet's fortune in the town,
'Twas all the ambition his high soul could feel,
To wear red stockings, and to dine with Steele.
Some ends of verse his betters might afford,
And gave the harmless fellow a good word.
Set up with these, he ventured on the town,
And with a borrow'd play, out-did poor Crowne.
There he stopp'd short, nor since has writ a tittle,
But has the wit to make the most of little: 10
Like stunted, hide-bound trees that just have got
Sufficient sap at once to bear and rot.
Now he begs verse, and what he gets commends,
Not of the wits, his foes, but fools, his friends.

So some coarse country wench, almost decay'd,
Trudges to town, and first turns chambermaid;
Awkward and supple, each devoir to pay,
She flatters her good lady twice a-day;
Thought wondrous honest, though of mean degree,
And strangely liked for her simplicity:
In a translated suit, then tries the town,
With borrow'd pins, and patches not her own:
But just endured the winter she began,
And in four months a batter'd harridan.
Now nothing left, but wither'd, pale, and shrunk,
To bawd for others, and go shares with punk.

SONG,

BY A PERSON OF QUALITY, WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1733.

1 Fluttering, spread thy purple pinions,
Gentle Cupid, o'er my heart,
I a slave in thy dominions;
Nature must give way to art.

2 Mild Arcadians, ever blooming,
Nightly nodding o'er your flocks,
See my weary days consuming,
All beneath yon flowery rocks.

3 Thus the Cyprian goddess, weeping,
Mourn'd Adonis, darling youth:
Him the boar, in silence creeping,
Gored with unrelenting tooth.

4 Cynthia, tune harmonious numbers;
Fair Discretion, string the lyre;
Soothe my ever-waking slumbers:
Bright Apollo, lend thy choir.

5 Gloomy Pluto, king of terrors,
Arm'd in adamantine chains,
Lead me to the crystal mirrors,
Watering soft Elysian plains.

6 Mournful cypress, verdant willow,

Gilding my Aurelia's brows,
Morpheus hovering o'er my pillow,
Hear me pay my dying vows.

7 Melancholy smooth Maeander,
Swiftly purling in a round,
On thy margin lovers wander,
With thy flowery chaplets crown'd.

8 Thus when Philomela, drooping,
Softly seeks her silent mate,
See the bird of Juno stooping;
Melody resigns to fate.

ON A CERTAIN LADY AT COURT.

1 I know the thing that's most uncommon;
(Envy be silent, and attend!)
I know a reasonable woman,
Handsome and witty, yet a friend.

2 Not warp'd by passion, awed by rumour,
Not grave through pride, or gay through folly,
An equal mixture of good humour,
And sensible soft melancholy.

3 'Has she no faults, then (Envy says), sir?'
Yes, she has one, I must aver:
When all the world conspires to praise her,
The woman's deaf, and does not hear.

ON HIS GROTTTO AT TWICKENHAM,

COMPOSED OF MARBLES, SPARS, GEMS, ORES, AND MINERALS.

Thou who shalt stop, where Thames' translucent wave
Shines a broad mirror through the shadowy cave;
Where lingering drops from mineral roofs distil,
And pointed crystals break the sparkling rill,
Unpolish'd gems no ray on pride bestow,
And latent metals innocently glow:
Approach! Great Nature studiously behold!
And eye the mine without a wish for gold.
Approach: but awful! lo! the Aegerian grot,[70]
Where, nobly-pensive, St John sate and thought;
Where British sighs from dying Wyndham stole,
And the bright flame was shot through Marchmont's soul.
Let such, such only, tread this sacred floor,
Who dare to love their country, and be poor!

VARIATIONS.

After VER. 6, in the MS.--

Yon see that island's wealth, where, only free,

Earth to her entrails feels not tyranny.

--i.e. Britain is the only place on the globe which feels not tyranny even to its very entrails. Alluding to the condemnation of criminals to the mines, one of the inflictions of civil justice in most countries--W.

VER. 11, in MS. it was thus--

To Wyndham's breast the patriot passions stole.

ROXANA, OR THE DRAWING-ROOM.

AN ECLOGUE.

Roxana, from the Court returning late,
Sigh'd her soft sorrow at St James's gate:
Such heavy thoughts lay brooding in her breast,
Not her own chairmen with more weight oppress'd:
They curse the cruel weight they're doom'd to bear;
She in more gentle sounds express'd her care.

'Was it for this, that I these roses wear?
For this, new-set the jewels for my hair?
Ah, Princess! with what zeal have I pursued!
Almost forgot the duty of a prude. 10
This king I never could attend too soon;
I miss'd my prayers, to get me dress'd by noon.
For thee, ah! what for thee did I resign?
My passions, pleasures, all that e'er was mine:
I've sacrificed both modesty and ease;
Left operas, and went to filthy plays:
Double-entendres shock'd my tender ear;
Yet even this, for thee, I chose to bear:
In glowing youth, when nature bids be gay,
And every joy of life before me lay; 20
By honour prompted, and by pride restrain'd,
The pleasures of the young my soul disdain'd:
Sermons I sought, and with a mien severe
Censured my neighbours, and said daily prayer.
Alas, how changed! with this same sermon-mien,
The filthy _What-d'ye-call-it_[71]--I have seen.
Ah, royal Princess! for whose sake I lost
The reputation, which so dear had cost;
I, who avoided every public place,
When bloom and beauty bid me show my face, 30
Now near thee, constant, I each night abide,
With never-failing duty, by thy side;
Myself and daughters standing in a row,
To all the foreigners a goodly show.
Oft had your drawing-room been sadly thin,
And merchants' wives close by your side had been,
Had I not amply fill'd the empty place,
And saved your Highness from the dire disgrace:
Yet Cockatilla's artifice prevails,
When all my duty and my merit fails: 40
That Cockatilla, whose deluding airs
Corrupts our virgins, and our youth ensnares;

So sunk her character, and lost her fame,
Scarce visited before your Highness came:
Yet for the bedchamber 'tis she you choose,
Whilst zeal, and lame, and virtue you refuse.
Ah, worthy choice; not one of all your train
Which censures blast not, or dishonours stain.
I know the Court, with all its treacherous wiles,
The false caresses, and undoing smiles. 50
Ah, Princess! learn'd in all the courtly arts,
To cheat our hopes, and yet to gain our hearts.'

TO LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE.

1 In beauty or wit,
No mortal as yet
To question your empire has dared;
But men of discerning
Have thought that in learning
To yield to a lady was hard.

2 Impertinent schools,
With musty dull rules,
Have reading to females denied:
So Papists refuse
The Bible to use,
Lest flocks should be wise as their guide.

3 'Twas a woman at first
(Indeed she was cursed)
In knowledge that tasted delight,
And sages agree
The laws should decree
To the first possessor the right.

4 Then bravely, fair dame,
Resume the old claim,
Which to your whole sex does belong;
And let men receive,
From a second bright Eve,
The knowledge of right and of wrong.

5 But if the first Eve
Hard doom did receive,
When only one apple had she,
What a punishment new
Shall be found out for you,
Who, tasting, have robb'd the whole tree!

EXTEMPORANEOUS LINES

ON A PORTRAIT OF LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE, PAINTED BY KNELLER.

The playful smiles around the dimpled mouth,
That happy air of majesty and truth,
So would I draw: but, oh! 'tis vain to try,

My narrow genius does the power deny;
The equal lustre of the heavenly mind,
Where every grace with every virtue's join'd:
Learning not vain, and wisdom not severe,
With greatness easy, and with wit sincere;
With just description show the soul divine,
And the whole princess in my work should shine.

LINES SUNG BY DURASTANTI,

WHEN SHE TOOK LEAVE OF THE ENGLISH STAGE.

1 Generous, gay, and gallant nation,
Bold in arms, and bright in arts;
Land secure from all invasion,
All but Cupid's gentle darts!
From your charms, oh! who would run?
Who would leave you for the sun?
Happy soil, adieu, adieu!

2 Let old charmers yield to new;
In arms, in arts, be still more shining:
All your joys be still increasing;
All your tastes be still refining;
All your jars for ever ceasing;
But let old charmers yield to new:
Happy soil, adieu, adieu!

UPON THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH'S HOUSE AT WOODSTOCK.

'See, sir, here's the grand approach,
This way is for his Grace's coach:
There lies the bridge, and here's the clock,
Observe the lion and the cock,
The spacious court, the colonnade,
And mark how wide the hall is made!
The chimneys are so well design'd,
They never smoke in any wind.
This gallery's contrived for walking,
The windows to retire and talk in;
The council chamber for debate,
And all the rest are rooms of state.'

'Thanks, sir,' cried I, 'tis very fine,
But where d'ye sleep, or where d'ye dine?
I find by all you have been telling
That 'tis a house, but not a dwelling.'

VERSES LEFT BY MR POPE.

ON HIS LYING IN THE SAME BED WHICH WILMOT, THE CELEBRATED EARL OF
ROCHESTER, SLEPT IN AT ADDERBURY, THEN BELONGING TO THE DUKE OF ARGYLL,
JULY 9, 1739.

- 1 With no poetic ardour fired,
I press the bed where Wilmot lay;
That here he loved, or here expired,
Begets no numbers, grave or gay.
- 2 Beneath thy roof, Argyll, are bred
Such thoughts as prompt the brave to lie
Stretch'd out in honour's nobler bed,
Beneath a nobler roof--the sky.
- 3 Such flames as high in patriots burn,
Yet stoop to bless a child or wife;
And such as wicked kings may mourn,
When freedom is more dear than life.

THE CHALLENGE, A COURT BALLAD.

TO THE TUNE OF 'TO ALL YOU LADIES NOW AT LAND.'

- 1 To one fair lady out of Court,
And two fair ladies in,
Who think the Turk[72] and Pope[73] a sport,
And wit and love no sin;
Come these soft lines, with nothing stiff in,
To Bellenden, Lepell, and Griffin.[74]
With a fa, la, la.
- 2 What passes in the dark third row,
And what behind the scene,
Couches and crippled chairs I know,
And garrets hung with green;
I know the swing of sinful hack,
Where many damsels cry alack.
With a fa, la, la.
- 3 Then why to Courts should I repair,
Where's such ado with Townshend?
To hear each mortal stamp and swear,
And every speech with 'zounds!' end;
To hear 'em rail at honest Sunderland,
And rashly blame the realm of Blunderland.[75]
With a fa, la, la.
- 4 Alas! like Schutz I cannot pun,
Like Grafton court the Germans;
Tell Pickenbourg how slim she's grown,
Like Meadows[76] run to sermons;
To Court ambitious men may roam,
But I and Marlbro' stay at home.
With a fa, la, la.
- 5 In truth, by what I can discern
Of courtiers, 'twixt you three,
Some wit you have, and more may learn
From Court, than Gay or me;
Perhaps, in time, you'll leave high diet,

To sup with us on milk and quiet.
With a fa, la, la.

6 At Leicester Fields, a house full high,
With door all painted green,
Where ribbons wave upon the tie,
(A milliner I mean;)
There may you meet us, three to three,
For Gay can well make two of me.
With a fa, la, la.

7 But should you catch the prudish itch
And each become a coward,
Bring sometimes with you Lady Rich,
And sometimes Mistress Howard;
For virgins, to keep chaste, must go
Abroad with such as are not so.
With a fa, la, la.

8 And thus, fair maids, my ballad ends;
God send the king safe landing;[77]
And make all honest ladies friends
To armies that are standing;
Preserve the limits of those nations,
And take off ladies' limitations.
With a fa, la, la.

THE THREE GENTLE SHEPHERDS.

Of gentle Philips[78] will I ever sing,
With gentle Philips shall the valleys ring;
My numbers, too, for ever will I vary,
With gentle Budgell,[79] and with gentle Carey.[80]
Or if in ranging of the names I judge ill,
With gentle Carey, and with gentle Budgell,
Oh! may all gentle bards together place ye,
Men of good hearts, and men of delicacy.
May satire ne'er befool ye, or beknave ye,
And from all wits that have a knack, God save ye!

EPIGRAM,

ENGRAVED ON THE COLLAR OF A DOG WHICH I GAVE TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS.

I am His Highness' dog at Kew;
Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?

THE TRANSLATOR.

Ozell, at Sanger's call, invoked his Muse,
For who to sing for Sanger could refuse?
His numbers such as Sanger's self might use.
Reviving Perrault, murdering Boileau, he

Slander'd the ancients first, then Wycherley;
Which yet not much that old bard's anger raised,
Since those were slander'd most whom Ozell praised.
Nor had the gentle satire caused complaining,
Had not sage Rowe pronounced it entertaining;
How great must be the judgment of that writer,
Who the Plain Dealer damns, and prints the Biter!

THE LOOKING-GLASS.

ON MRS PULTENEY.[81]

With scornful mien, and various toss of air,
Fantastic, vain, and insolently fair,
Grandeur intoxicates her giddy brain,
She looks ambition, and she moves disdain.
Far other carriage graced her virgin life,
But charming Gumley's lost in Pulteney's wife.
Not greater arrogance in him we find,
And this conjunction swells at least her mind:
Oh could the sire, renown'd in glass, produce
One faithful mirror for his daughter's use!
Wherein she might her haughty errors trace,
And by reflection learn to mend her face:
The wonted sweetness to her form restore,
Be what she was, and charm mankind once more!

A FAREWELL TO LONDON

IN THE YEAR 1715.

1 Dear, damn'd, distracting town, farewell!
Thy fools no more I'll tease:
This year in peace, ye critics, dwell,
Ye harlots, sleep at ease!

2 Soft B----s and rough C----s, adieu!
Earl Warwick, make your moan,
The lively H----k and you
May knock up whores alone.

3 To drink and droll be Rowe allow'd
Till the third watchman's toll;
Let Jervas gratis paint, and Frowde
Save threepence and his soul.

4 Farewell, Arbuthnot's raillery
On every learned sot;
And Garth, the best good Christian he,
Although he knows it not.

5 Lintot, farewell! thy bard must go;
Farewell, unhappy Tonson!
Heaven gives thee for thy loss of Rowe,
Lean Philips and fat Johnson.

6 Why should I stay? Both parties rage;
My vixen mistress squalls;
The wits in envious feuds engage;
And Homer (damn him!) calls.

7 The love of arts lies cold and dead
In Halifax's urn;
And not one Muse of all he fed
Has yet the grace to mourn.

8 My friends, by turns, my friends confound,
Betray, and are betray'd:
Poor Y----r's sold for fifty pounds,
And B----ll is a jade.

9 Why make I friendships with the great,
When I no favour seek.
Or follow girls seven hours in eight?--
I need but once a week.

10 Still idle, with a busy air,
Deep whimsies to contrive;
The gayest valetudinaire,
Most thinking rake alive.

11 Solicitous for others' ends,
Though fond of dear repose;
Careless or drowsy with my friends.
And frolic with my foes.

12 Luxurious lobster-nights, farewell,
For sober studious days!
And Burlington's delicious meal,
For salads, tarts, and pease!

13 Adieu to all but Gay alone,
Whose soul, sincere and free,
Loves all mankind, but flatters none,
And so may starve with me.

SANDYS' GHOST;[82]

OR, A PROPER NEW BALLAD ON THE NEW OVID'S METAMORPHOSES: AS IT WAS
INTENDED TO BE TRANSLATED BY PERSONS OF QUALITY.

1 Ye Lords and Commons, men of wit
And pleasure about town,
Read this, ere you translate one bit
Of books of high renown.

2 Beware of Latin authors all!
Nor think your verses sterling,
Though with a golden pen you scrawl,
And scribble in a berlin:

3 For not the desk with silver nails,
Nor bureau of expense,
Nor standish well japann'd, avails
To writing of good sense.

4 Hear how a ghost in dead of night,
With saucer eyes of fire,
In woeful wise did sore affright
A wit and courtly squire.

5 Rare imp of Phoebus, hopeful youth!
Like puppy tame that uses
To fetch and carry, in his mouth,
The works of all the Muses.

6 Ah! why did he write poetry,
That hereto was so civil;
And sell his soul for vanity
To rhyming and the devil?

7 A desk he had of curious work,
With glittering studs about;
Within the same did Sandys lurk,
Though Ovid lay without.

8 Now, as he scratch'd to fetch up thought,
Forth popp'd the sprite so thin,
And from the keyhole bolted out,
All upright as a pin.

9 With whiskers, band, and pantaloon,
And ruff composed most dully,
This squire he dropp'd his pen full soon,
While as the light burnt bluely.

10 'Ho! Master Sam,' quoth Sandys' sprite,
'Write on, nor let me scare ye!
Forsooth, if rhymes fall not in right,
To Budgell seek, or Carey.

11 'I hear the beat of Jacob's[83] drums,
Poor Ovid finds no quarter!
See first the merry P----[84] comes
In haste without his garter.

12 'Then lords and lordlings, squires and knights,
Wits, witlings, prigs, and peers:
Garth at St James's, and at White's
Beats up for volunteers.

13 'What Fenton will not do, nor Gay,
Nor Congreve, Rowe, nor Stanyan,
Tom Burnet, or Tom D'Urfey may,
John Dunton, Steele, or any one.

14 'If Justice Philips' costive head
Some frigid rhymes disburses:
They shall like Persian tales be read,
And glad both babes and nurses.

15 'Let Warwick's Muse with Ashurst join,
And Ozell's with Lord Hervey's,
Tickell and Addison combine,
And Pope translate with Jervas.

16 'L---- himself, that lively lord,
Who bows to every lady,
Shall join with F---- in one accord,
And be like Tate and Brady.

17 'Ye ladies, too, draw forth your pen;
I pray, where can the hurt lie?
Since you have brains as well as men,
As witness Lady Wortley.

18 'Now, Tonson, list thy forces all,
Review them, and tell noses:
For to poor Ovid shall befall
A strange metamorphosis;

19 'A metamorphosis more strange
Than all his books can vapour'--
'To what (quoth squire) shall Ovid change?'
Quoth Sandys, 'To waste paper.'

UMBRA.[85]

Close to the best known author Umbra sits,
The constant index to old Button's wits,
'Who's here?' cries Umbra: 'Only Johnson.'[86]--'Oh!
Your slave,' and exit; but returns with Rowe:
'Dear Rowe, let's sit and talk of tragedies;
Ere long Pope enters, and to Pope he flies.
Then up comes Steele: he turns upon his heel,
And in a moment fastens upon Steele;
But cries as soon, 'Dear Dick, I must be gone,
For, if I know his tread, here's Addison.'
Says Addison to Steele, 'Tis time to go.'
Pope to the closet steps aside with Rowe.
Poor Umbra, left in this abandon'd pickle,
E'en sits him down, and writes to honest Tickell.

Fool! 'tis in vain from wit to wit to roam;
Know, sense, like charity, 'begins at home.'

SYLVIA, A FRAGMENT.

Sylvia my heart in wondrous wise alarm'd
Awed without sense, and without beauty charm'd:
But some odd graces and some flights she had,
Was just not ugly, and was just not mad:
Her tongue still ran on credit from her eyes,
More pert than witty, more a wit than wise:
Good-nature, she declared it, was her scorn,

Though 'twas by that alone she could be borne:
Affronting all, yet fond of a good name;
A fool to pleasure, yet a slave to fame:
Now coy, and studious in no point to fall,
Now all agog for D----y at a ball:
Now deep in Taylor, and the Book of Martyrs,
Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres.

Men, some to business, some to pleasure take;
But every woman's in her soul a rake.
Frail, feverish sex; their fit now chills, now burns:
Atheism and superstition rule by turns;
And a mere heathen in the carnal part,
Is still a sad good Christian at her heart.

IMPROMPTU TO LADY WINCHELSEA.

OCCASIONED BY FOUR SATIRICAL VERSES ON WOMEN WITS, IN 'THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.'

In vain you boast poetic names of yore,
And cite those Sapphos we admire no more:
Fate doom'd the fall of every female wit;
But doom'd it then, when first Ardelia writ.
Of all examples by the world confess'd,
I knew Ardelia could not quote the best;
Who, like her mistress on Britannia's throne,
Fights and subdues in quarrels not her own.
To write their praise you but in vain essay;
E'en while you write, you take that praise away:
Light to the stars the sun does thus restore,
But shines himself till they are seen no more.

EPIGRAM.

A Bishop, by his neighbours hated,
Has cause to wish himself translated:
But why should Hough desire translation,
Loved and esteem'd by all the nation?
Yet, if it be the old man's case,
I'll lay my life I know the place:
'Tis where God sent some that adore Him,
And whither Enoch went before him.

EPIGRAM ON THE FEUDS ABOUT HANDEL AND BONONCINI.

Strange! all this difference should be
'Twixt Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee!

ON MRS TOFTS, A CELEBRATED OPERA SINGER.

So bright is thy beauty, so charming thy song,
As had drawn both the beasts and their Orpheus along:
But such is thy avarice, and such is thy pride,
That the beasts must have starved, and the poet have died.

THE BALANCE OF EUROPE.

Now Europe balanced, neither side prevails;
For nothing's left in either of the scales.

EPITAPH ON LORD CONINGSBY.

Here lies Lord Coningsby--be civil!
The rest God knows--perhaps the Devil.

EPIGRAM.

You beat your pate, and fancy wit will come;
Knock as you please, there's nobody at home.

EPIGRAM FROM THE FRENCH.

Sir, I admit your general rule,
That every poet is a fool:
But you yourself may serve to show it,
That every fool is not a poet.

EPITAPH ON GAY.

Well, then, poor G---- lies under ground!
So there's an end of honest Jack.
So little justice here he found,
'Tis ten to one he'll ne'er come back.

EPIGRAM ON THE TOASTS OF THE KIT-CAT CLUB, ANNO 1716.

1 Whence deathless 'Kit-cat' took its name,
Few critics can unriddle:
Some say from 'pastrycook' it came,
And some, from 'cat' and 'fiddle.'

2 From no trim beaux its name it boasts,
Gray statesmen, or green wits;
But from this pell-mell pack of toasts
Of old 'cats' and young 'kits.'

TO A LADY, WITH THE 'TEMPLE OF FAME.'

What's fame with men, by custom of the nation,
Is call'd, in women, only reputation:
About them both why keep we such a pother?
Part you with one, and I'll renounce the other.

ON THE COUNTESS OF BURLINGTON CUTTING PAPER.

- 1 Pallas grew vapourish once, and odd;
She would not do the least right thing,
Either for goddess or for god,
Nor work, nor play, nor paint, nor sing.
- 2 Jove frown'd, and 'Use (he cried) those eyes
So skilful, and those hands so taper;
Do something exquisite and wise--'
She bow'd, obey'd him, and cut paper.
- 3 This vexing him who gave her birth,
Thought by all heaven a burning shame;
What does she next, but bids, on earth,
Her Burlington do just the same.
- 4 Pallas, you give yourself strange airs;
But sure you'll find it hard to spoil
The sense and taste of one that bears
The name of Saville and of Boyle.
- 5 Alas! one bad example shown,
How quickly all the sex pursue!
See, madam, see the arts o'erthrown
Between John Overton and you!

ON DRAWINGS OF THE STATUES OF APOLLO, VENUS, AND HERCULES,

MADE FOR POPE BY SIR GODFREY KNELLER.

What god, what genius did the pencil move,
When Kneller painted these?
'Twas friendship, warm as Phoebus, kind as Love,
And strong as Hercules.

ON BENTLEY'S 'MILTON.'

Did Milton's prose, O Charles! thy death defend?
A furious foe unconscious proves a friend.
On Milton's verse did Bentley comment? Know,
A weak officious friend becomes a foe.
While he but sought his author's fame to further,
The murderous critic has avenged thy murder.

LINES

WRITTEN IN WINDSOR FOREST.

All hail, once pleasing, once inspiring shade,
Scene of my youthful loves, and happier hours!
Where the kind Muses met me as I stray'd,
And gently press'd my hand, and said, 'Be ours!--
Take all thou e'er shalt have, a constant Muse:
At Court thou mayst be liked, but nothing gain;
Stocks thou mayst buy and sell, but always lose;
And love the brightest eyes, but love in vain.'

TO ERINNA.

Though sprightly Sappho force our love and praise,
A softer wonder my pleased soul surveys,
The mild Erinna, blushing in her bays.
So, while the sun's broad beam yet strikes the sight,
All mild appears the moon's more sober light;
Serene, in virgin majesty she shines,
And, unobserved, the glaring sun declines.

A DIALOGUE.

POPE.

Since my old friend is grown so great,
As to be Minister of State,
I'm told, but 'tis not true, I hope,
That Craggs will be ashamed of Pope.

CRAGGS.

Alas! if I am such a creature,
To grow the worse for growing greater;
Why, faith, in spite of all my brags,
'Tis Pope must be ashamed of Craggs.

ODE TO QUINBUS FLESTRIN,

THE MAN MOUNTAIN,[87] BY TITTY TIT, POET-LAUREATE TO HIS MAJESTY OF
LILLIPUT. TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.

In amaze
Lost I gaze!
Can our eyes
Reach thy size!
May my lays
Swell with praise,
Worthy thee!
Worthy me!
Muse, inspire

All thy fire!	10
Bards of old	
Of him told.	
When they said	
Atlas' head	
Propp'd the skies:	
See! and believe your eyes!	
 See him stride	
Valleys wide,	
Over woods,	
Over floods!	20
When he treads,	
Mountains' heads	
Groan and shake:	
Armies quake:	
Lest his spurn	
Overturn	
Man and steed,	
Troops, take heed!	
Left and right,	
Speed your flight!	30
Lest an host	
Beneath his foot be lost!	
 Turn'd aside	
From his hide	
Safe from wound,	
Darts rebound.	
From his nose	
Clouds he blows:	
When he speaks,	
Thunder breaks!	40
When he eats,	
Famine threats!	
When he drinks,	
Neptune shrinks!	
Nigh thy ear	
In mid air,	
On thy hand	
Let me stand;	
So shall I,	
Lofty poet! touch the sky.	50

THE LAMENTATION OF GLUMDALCLITCH FOR THE LOSS OF GRILDRIG.

A PASTORAL.

Soon as Glumdalclitch miss'd her pleasing care,
 She wept, she blubber'd, and she tore her hair:
 No British miss sincerer grief has known,
 Her squirrel missing, or her sparrow flown.
 She furl'd her sampler, and haul'd in her thread,
 And stuck her needle into Grildrig's bed;
 Then spread her hands, and with a bounce let fall
 Her baby, like the giant in Guildhall.
 In peals of thunder now she roars, and now

She gently whimpers like a lowing cow: 10
Yet lovely in her sorrow still appears:
Her locks dishevell'd, and her flood of tears,
Seem like the lofty barn of some rich swain,
When from the thatch drips fast a shower of rain.

In vain she search'd each cranny of the house,
Each gaping chink impervious to a mouse.
'Was it for this (she cried) with daily care
Within thy reach I set the vinegar,
And fill'd the cruet with the acid tide, 20
While pepper-water worms thy bait supplied;
Where twined the silver eel around thy hook,
And all the little monsters of the brook?
Sure in that lake he dropp'd; my Grilly's drown'd.'
She dragg'd the cruet, but no Grildrig found.

'Vain is thy courage, Grilly, vain thy boast!
But little creatures enterprise the most.
Trembling, I've seen thee dare the kitten's paw,
Nay, mix with children as they play'd at taw,
Nor fear the marbles as they bounding flew;
Marbles to them, but rolling rocks to you! 30

'Why did I trust thee with that giddy youth?
Who from a page can ever learn the truth?
Versed in Court tricks, that money-loving boy
To some lord's daughter sold the living toy;
Or rent him limb from limb in cruel play,
As children tear the wings of flies away.
From place to place o'er Brobdignag I'll roam,
And never will return, or bring thee home.
But who hath eyes to trace the passing wind?
How then thy fairy footsteps can I find? 40
Dost thou bewilder'd wander all alone
In the green thicket of a mossy stone;
Or, tumbled from the toadstool's slippery round,
Perhaps all maim'd, lie grovelling on the ground?
Dost thou, embosom'd in the lovely rose,
Or, sunk within the peach's down, repose?
Within the kingcup if thy limbs are spread,
Or in the golden cowslip's velvet head,
Oh show me, Flora, 'midst those sweets, the flower
Where sleeps my Grildrig in the fragrant bower! 50

'But ah! I fear thy little fancy roves
On little females, and on little loves;
Thy pigmy children, and thy tiny spouse,
The baby playthings that adorn thy house,
Doors, windows, chimneys, and the spacious rooms,
Equal in size to cells of honeycombs:
Hast thou for these now ventured from the shore,
Thy bark a bean-shell, and a straw thy oar?
Or in thy box, now bounding on the main, 60
Shall I ne'er bear thyself and house again?
And shall I set thee on my hand no more,
To see thee leap the lines, and traverse o'er
My spacious palm? Of stature scarce a span,
Mimic the actions of a real man?

No more behold thee turn my watch's key,
As seamen at a capstan anchors weigh?
How wert thou wont to walk with cautious tread,
A dish of tea, like milkpail, on thy head!
How chase the mite that bore thy cheese away,
And keep the rolling maggot at a bay!' 70

She spoke; but broken accents stopp'd her voice,
Soft as the speaking-trumpet's mellow noise:
She sobb'd a storm, and wiped her flowing eyes,
Which seem'd like two broad suns in misty skies.
Oh, squander not thy grief; those tears command
To weep upon our cod in Newfoundland:
The plenteous pickle shall preserve the fish,
And Europe taste thy sorrows in a dish.

TO MR LEMUEL GULLIVER,

THE GRATEFUL ADDRESS OF THE UNHAPPY HOUYHNHNMS, NOW IN SLAVERY AND
BONDAGE IN ENGLAND.

To thee, we wretches of the Houyhnhnm band,
Condemn'd to labour in a barbarous land,
Return our thanks. Accept our humble lays,
And let each grateful Houyhnhnm neigh thy praise.

O happy Yahoo! purged from human crimes,
By thy sweet sojourn in those virtuous climes,
Where reign our sires; there, to thy country's shame,
Reason, you found, and virtue were the same.
Their precepts razed the prejudice of youth,
And even a Yahoo learn'd the love of truth. 10

Art thou the first who did the coast explore?
Did never Yahoo tread that ground before?
Yes, thousands! But in pity to their kind,
Or sway'd by envy, or through pride of mind,
They hid their knowledge of a nobler race,
Which own'd, would all their sires and sons disgrace.

You, like the Samian, visit lands unknown,
And by their wiser morals mend your own.
Thus Orpheus travell'd to reform his kind,
Came back, and tamed the brutes he left behind. 20

You went, you saw, you heard; with virtue fought,
Then spread those morals which the Houyhnhnms taught.
Our labours here must touch thy generous heart,
To see us strain before the coach and cart;
Compell'd to run each knavish jockey's heat!
Subservient to Newmarket's annual cheat!
With what reluctance do we lawyers bear,
To fleece their country clients twice a year!
Or managed in your schools, for fops to ride,
How foam, how fret beneath a load of pride! 30
Yes, we are slaves--but yet, by reason's force,
Have learn'd to bear misfortune, like a horse.

Oh would the stars, to ease my bonds, ordain,
That gentle Gulliver might guide my rein!
Safe would I bear him to his journey's end,
For 'tis a pleasure to support a friend.
But if my life be doom'd to serve the bad,
Oh! mayst thou never want an easy pad!

HOUYHNHNM.

MARY GULLIVER TO CAPTAIN LEMUEL GULLIVER.

AN EPISTLE.

The captain, some time after his return, being retired to Mr Sympson's in the country, Mrs Gulliver, apprehending from his late behaviour some estrangement of his affections, writes him the following expostulatory, soothing, and tenderly complaining epistle:--

Welcome, thrice welcome, to thy native place!--
What, touch me not? what, shun a wife's embrace?
Have I for this thy tedious absence borne,
And waked, and wish'd whole nights for thy return?
In five long years I took no second spouse;
What Redriff wife so long hath kept her vows?
Your eyes, your nose, inconstancy betray;
Your nose you stop, your eyes you turn away.
'Tis said, that thou shouldst 'cleave unto thy wife;' 10
Once thou didst cleave, and I could cleave for life.
Hear, and relent! hark how thy children moan!
Be kind at least to these; they are thy own:
Behold, and count them all; secure to find
The honest number that you left behind.
See how they pat thee with their pretty paws:
Why start you? are they snakes? or have they claws?
Thy Christian seed, our mutual flesh and bone:
Be kind at least to these; they are thy own.

Biddel,[88] like thee, might farthest India rove;
He changed his country, but retain'd his love. 20
There's Captain Pannel,[89] absent half his life,
Comes back, and is the kinder to his wife;
Yet Pannel's wife is brown compared to me,
And Mrs Biddel sure is fifty-three.

Not touch me! never neighbour call'd me slut:
Was Flimnap's dame more sweet in Lilliput?
I've no red hair to breathe an odious fume;
At least thy consort's cleaner than thy groom.
Why then that dirty stable-boy thy care?
What mean those visits to the sorrel mare? 30
Say, by what witchcraft, or what demon led,
Preferr'st thou litter to the marriage-bed?

Some say the devil himself is in that mare:
If so, our Dean shall drive him forth by prayer.
Some think you mad, some think you are possess'd,

That Bedlam and clean straw will suit you best.
Vain means, alas, this frenzy to appease!
That straw, that straw, would heighten the disease.

My bed (the scene of all our former joys,
Witness two lovely girls, two lovely boys), 40
Alone I press: in dreams I call my dear,
I stretch my hand; no Gulliver is there!
I wake, I rise, and, shivering with the frost,
Search all the house; my Gulliver is lost!
Forth in the street I rush with frantic cries;
The windows open, all the neighbours rise:
'Where sleeps my Gulliver? Oh tell me where!'
The neighbours answer, 'With the sorrel mare!'

At early morn I to the market haste 50
(Studious in everything to please thy taste);
A curious fowl and 'sparagus I chose
(For I remember'd you were fond of those);
Three shillings cost the first, the last seven groats;
Sullen you turn from both, and call for oats.
Others bring goods and treasure to their houses,
Something to deck their pretty babes and spouses:
My only token was a cup-like horn,
That's made of nothing but a lady's corn.
'Tis not for that I grieve; oh, 'tis to see
The groom and sorrel mare preferr'd to me! 60

These, for some moments when you deign to quit,
And at due distance sweet discourse admit,
'Tis all my pleasure thy past toil to know;
For pleased remembrance builds delight on woe.
At every danger pants thy consort's breast,
And gaping infants squall to hear the rest.
How did I tremble, when, by thousands bound,
I saw thee stretch'd on Lilliputian ground!
When scaling armies climb'd up every part,
Each step they trod I felt upon my heart. 70
But when thy torrent quench'd the dreadful blaze,
King, queen, and nation staring with amaze,
Full in my view how all my husband came,
And what extinguished theirs increased my flame.
Those spectacles, ordain'd thine eyes to save,
Were once my present; love that armour gave.
How did I mourn at Bolgolam's decree!
For when he sign'd thy death, he sentenced me.
When folks might see thee all the country round
For sixpence, I'd have given a thousand pound. 80
Lord! when the giant babe that head of thine
Got in his mouth, my heart was up in mine!
When in the marrow-bone I see thee ramm'd,
Or on the house-top by the monkey cramm'd,
The piteous images renew my pain,
And all thy dangers I weep o'er again.
But on the maiden's nipple when you rid,
Pray Heaven, 'twas all a wanton maiden did!
Glumdalclitch, too! with thee I mourn her case:
Heaven guard the gentle girl from all disgrace! 90
Oh may the king that one neglect forgive,

And pardon her the fault by which I live!
Was there no other way to set him free?
My life, alas! I fear, proved death to thee.

Oh teach me, dear, new words to speak my flame!
Teach me to woo thee by thy best loved name!
Whether the style of Grildrig please thee most,
So call'd on Brobdignag's stupendous coast,
When on the monarch's ample hand you sate,
And halloo'd in his ear intrigues of state; 100
Or Quinbus Flestrin more endearment brings,
When like a mountain you look'd down on kings:
If ducal Nardac, Lilliputian peer,
Or Glumglum's humbler title soothe thy ear:
Nay, would kind Jove my organs so dispose,
To hymn harmonious Houyhnhnm through the nose,
I'd call thee Houyhnhnm, that high-sounding name;
Thy children's noses all should twang the same;
So might I find my loving spouse of course
Endued with all the virtues of a horse. 110

1740.

A FRAGMENT OF A POEM.

O Wretched B----,[90] jealous now of all,
What god, what mortal shall prevent thy fall?
Turn, turn thy eyes from wicked men in place,
And see what succour from the patriot race.
C----,[91] his own proud dupe, thinks monarchs things
Made just for him, as other fools for kings;
Controls, decides, insults thee every hour,
And antedates the hatred due to power.

Through clouds of passion P----'[92] views are clear;
He foams a patriot to subside a peer; 10
Impatient sees his country bought and sold,
And damns the market where he takes no gold.

Grave, righteous S----[93] jogs on till, past belief,
He finds himself companion with a thief.

To purge and let thee blood with fire and sword,
Is all the help stern S----[94] would afford.

That those who bind and rob thee would not kill,
Good C----[95] hopes, and candidly sits still.

Of Ch---s W----[96] who speaks at all,
No more than of Sir Har--y or Sir P----.[97] 20
Whose names once up, they thought it was not wrong
To lie in bed, but sure they lay too long.

G---r, C---m, B---t,[98] pay thee due regards,
Unless the ladies bid them mind their cards.
with wit that must
And C---d[99] who speaks so well and writes,

Whom (saving W.) every S. _harper bites_,
must needs,
Whose wit and ... equally provoke one,
Finds thee, at best, the butt to crack his joke on.

As for the rest, each winter up they run,
And all are clear, and something must be done. 30
Then urged by C---t,[100] or by C---t stopp'd,
Inflamed by P----,[101] and by P---- dropp'd;
They follow reverently each wondrous wight,
Amazed that one can read, that one can write:
So geese to gander prone obedience keep,
Hiss, if he hiss, and if he slumber, sleep.
Till having done whate'er was fit or fine,
Utter'd a speech, and ask'd their friends to dine;
Each hurries back to his paternal ground, 40
Content but for five shillings in the pound,
Yearly defeated, yearly hopes they give,
And all agree Sir Robert cannot live.

Rise, rise, great W----,[102] fated to appear,
Spite of thyself a glorious minister!
Speak the loud language princes ...
And treat with half the ...
At length to B---- kind as to thy ...
Espouse the nation, you ...

What can thy H---[103] ...
Dress in Dutch ... 50

Though still he travels on no bad pretence,
To shew ...

Or those foul copies of thy face and tongue,
Veracious W----[104] and frontless Young;[105]
Sagacious Bub,[106] so late a friend, and there
So late a foe, yet more sagacious H----?[107]
Hervey and Hervey's school, F----, H---y,[108] H---n[109]
Yea, moral Ebor,[110] or religious Winton.
How! what can O---w,[111] what can D----,
The wisdom of the one and other chair, 60
N----[112] laugh, or D---s[113] sager,
Or thy dread truncheon M----'s[114] mighty peer?
What help from J----'s[115] opiates canst thou draw,
Or H---k's[116] quibbles voted into law?

C----,[117] that Roman in his nose alone,
Who hears all causes, B----,[118] but thy own,
Or those proud fools whom nature, rank, and fate
Made fit companions for the sword of state.

Can the light packhorse, or the heavy steer,
The sowzing prelate, or the sweating peer, 70
Drag out, with all its dirt and all its weight,
The lumbering carriage of thy broken state?
Alas! the people curse, the carman swears,
The drivers quarrel, and the master stares.

The plague is on thee, Britain, and who tries

To save thee, in the infectious office _dies_.
The first firm P---y soon resign'd his breath,
Brave S---w[119] loved thee, and was lied to death.
Good M-m-t's[120] fate tore P---th[121] from thy side,
And thy last sigh was heard when W---m[122] died. 80

Thy nobles sl---s,[123] thy se---s[124] bought with gold
Thy clergy perjured, thy whole people sold.
An atheist [symbol] a [symbol]'s ad ... [125]
Blotch thee all o'er, and sink ...

Alas! on one alone our all relies,
Let him be honest, and he must be wise,
Let him no trifler from his school,
Nor like his ... still a ...
Be but a man! unminister'd, alone, 90
And free at once the senate and the throne;
Esteem the public love his best supply,
A [symbol]'s[126] true glory his integrity:
Rich _with_ his ... _in_ his ... strong,
Affect no conquest, but endure no wrong.
Whatever his religion[127] or his blood,
His public virtue makes his title good.
Europe's just balance and our own may stand,
And one man's honesty redeem the land.

THE FOURTH EPISTLE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.[128]

Say, St John, who alone peruse
With candid eye the mimic Muse,
What schemes of politics, or laws,
In Gallic lands the patriot draws!
Is then a greater work in hand,
Than all the tomes of Haines's band?
'Or shoots he folly as it flies?
Or catches manners as they rise?'
Or urged by unquench'd native heat,
Does St John Greenwich sports repeat? 10
Where (emulous of Chartres' fame)
E'en Chartres' self is scarce a name.

To you (the all-envied gift of heaven)
The indulgent gods, unask'd, have given
A form complete in every part,
And, to enjoy that gift, the art.

What could a tender mother's care
Wish better, to her favourite heir,
Than wit, and fame, and lucky hours,
A stock of health, and golden showers, 20
And graceful fluency of speech,
Precepts before unknown to teach?

Amidst thy various ebbs of fear,
And gleaming hope, and black despair,
Yet let thy friend this truth impart,
A truth I tell with bleeding heart,

(In justice for your labours past)
That every day shall be your last;
That every hour you life renew
Is to your injured country due.

30

In spite of fears, of mercy spite,
My genius still must rail, and write.
Haste to thy Twickenham's safe retreat,
And mingle with the grumbling great;
There, half-devoured by spleen, you'll find
The rhyming bubbler of mankind;
There (objects of our mutual hate)
We'll ridicule both church and state.

EPIGRAM

ON ONE WHO MADE LONG EPITAPHS.[129]

Friend, for your epitaphs I'm grieved,
Where still so much is said;
One half will never be believed,
The other never read.

ON AN OLD GATE.

ERECTED IN CHISWICK GARDENS.

O gate, how cam'st thou here?
Gate. I was brought from Chelsea last year,
Batter'd with wind and weather.
Inigo Jones put me together;
Sir Hans Sloane
Let me alone:
Burlington brought me hither.

A FRAGMENT.

What are the falling rills, the pendant shades,
The morning bowers, the evening colonnades,
But soft recesses for th' uneasy mind
To sigh unheard in, to the passing wind!
So the struck deer, in some sequester'd part,
Lies down to die (the arrow in his heart);
There hid in shades, and wasting day by day,
Inly he bleeds, and pants his soul away.

TO MR GAY,

WHO HAD CONGRATULATED POPE ON FINISHING HIS HOUSE AND GARDENS.

'Ah, friend! 'tis true--this truth you lovers know--

In vain my structures rise, my gardens grow,
In vain fair Thames reflects the double scenes
Of hanging mountains, and of sloping greens:
Joy lives not here, to happier seats it flies,
And only dwells where Wortley casts her eyes.

'What are the gay parterre, the chequer'd shade,
The morning bower, the evening colonnade,
But soft recesses of uneasy minds,
To sigh unheard in, to the passing winds?
So the struck deer in some sequester'd part
Lies down to die, the arrow at his heart,
He, stretch'd unseen in coverts hid from day,
Bleeds drop by drop, and pants his life away.'

ARGUS.

When wise Ulysses, from his native coast
Long kept by wars, and long by tempests toss'd,
Arrived at last, poor, old, disguised, alone,
To all his friends, and even his queen unknown:
Changed as he was with age, and toils, and cares,
Furrow'd his reverend face, and white his hairs,
In his own palace forced to ask his bread,
Scorn'd by those slaves his former bounty fed,
Forgot of all his own domestic crew;
The faithful dog alone his rightful master knew:
Unfed, unhoused, neglected, on the clay,
Like an old servant now cashier'd, he lay;
Touch'd with resentment of ungrateful man,
And longing to behold his ancient lord again.
Him when he saw he rose, and crawl'd to meet,
('Twas all he could) and fawn'd and kiss'd his feet,
Seized with dumb joy: then falling by his side,
Own'd his returning lord, look'd up, and died!

PRAYER OF BRUTUS.

FROM GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH.

Goddess of woods, tremendous in the chase,
To mountain wolves and all the savage race,
Wide o'er th' aerial vault extend thy sway,
And o'er th' infernal regions void of day.
On thy third reign look down; disclose our fate,
In what new station shall we fix our seat?
When shall we next thy hallow'd altars raise,
And choirs of virgins celebrate thy praise?

LINES ON A GROTTO, AT CRUX-EASTON, HANTS.

Here shunning idleness at once and praise,
This radiant pile nine rural sisters^[130] raise;

The glittering emblem of each spotless dame,
Clear as her soul, and shining as her frame;
Beauty which nature only can impart,
And such a polish as disgraces art;
But Fate disposed them in this humble sort,
And hid in deserts what would charm a court.

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

DEO OPT. MAX.

- 1 Father of all! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!
- 2 Thou great First Cause, least understood:
Who all my sense confined
To know but this, that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind;
- 3 Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And, binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.[131]
- 4 What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heaven pursue.
- 5 What blessings thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives;
T' enjoy is to obey.
- 6 Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round:
- 7 Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume Thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge Thy foe.
- 8 If I am right, Thy grace impart,
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
To find that better way!
- 9 Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At ought Thy wisdom has denied.
Or ought Thy goodness lent.[132]

10 Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

11 Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quicken'd by Thy breath;
Oh, lead me, wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death!

12 This day, be bread and peace my lot:
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,
And let Thy will be done.

13 To Thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies!
One chorus let all being raise!
All Nature's incense rise!

THE DUNCIAD.

IN FOUR BOOKS.

A LETTER TO THE PUBLISHER,

OCCASIONED BY THE FIRST CORRECT EDITION OF THE DUNCIAD.

It is with pleasure I hear that you have procured a correct copy of 'The Dunciad,' which the many surreptitious ones have rendered so necessary; and it is yet with more, that I am informed it will be attended with a commentary; a work so requisite, that I cannot think the author himself would have omitted it, had he approved of the first appearance of this poem.

Such notes as have occurred to me I herewith send you: you will oblige me by inserting them amongst those which are, or will be, transmitted to you by others; since not only the author's friends but even strangers appear engaged by humanity, to take some care of an orphan of so much genius and spirit, which its parent seems to have abandoned from the very beginning, and suffered to step into the world naked, unguarded, and unattended.

It was upon reading some of the abusive papers lately published, that my great regard to a person, whose friendship I esteem as one of the chief honours of my life, and a much greater respect to truth, than to him or any man living, engaged me in inquiries, of which the enclosed notes are the fruit.

I perceived that most of these authors had been (doubtless very wisely) the first aggressors. They had tried till they were weary, what was to be got by railing at each other; nobody was either concerned or surprised, if this or that scribbler was proved a dunce. But every one

was curious to read what could be said to prove Mr Pope one, and was ready to pay something for such a discovery; a stratagem which, would they fairly own it, might not only reconcile them to me, but screen them from the resentment of their lawful superiors, whom they daily abuse, only (as I charitably hope) to get that by them, which they cannot get from them.

I found this was not all. Ill success in that had transported them to personal abuse, either of himself, or (what I think he could less forgive) of his friends. They had called men of virtue and honour bad men, long before he had either leisure or inclination to call them bad writers; and some had been such old offenders, that he had quite forgotten their persons as well as their slanders, till they were pleased to revive them.

Now what had Mr Pope done before to incense them? He had published those works which are in the hands of everybody, in which not the least mention is made of any of them. And what has he done since? He has laughed, and written 'The Dunciad.' What has that said of them? A very serious truth, which the public had said before, that they were dull; and what it had no sooner said, but they themselves were at great pains to procure, or even purchase, room in the prints to testify under their hands to the truth of it.

I should still have been silent, if either I had seen any inclination in my friend to be serious with such accusers, or if they had only meddled with his writings; since whoever publishes, puts himself on his trial by his country. But when his moral character was attacked, and in a manner from which neither truth nor virtue can secure the most innocent; in a manner which, though it annihilates the credit of the accusation with the just and impartial, yet aggravates very much the guilt of the accusers; I mean by authors without names; then I thought, since the danger was common to all, the concern ought to be so; and that it was an act of justice to detect the authors, not only on this account, but as many of them are the same who, for several years past, have made free with the greatest names in Church and State, exposed to the world the private misfortunes of families, abused all, even to women, and whose prostituted papers (for one or other party, in the unhappy divisions of their country) have insulted the fallen, the friendless, the exiled, and the dead.

Besides this, which I take to be a public concern, I have already confessed I had a private one. I am one of that number who have long loved and esteemed Mr Pope; and had often declared it was not his capacity or writings (which we ever thought the least valuable part of his character), but the honest, open, and beneficent man, that we most esteemed, and loved in him. Now if what these people say were believed, I must appear to all my friends either a fool, or a knave; either imposed on myself, or imposing on them; so that I am as much interested in the confutation of these calumnies as he is himself.

I am no author, and consequently not to be suspected either of jealousy or resentment against any of the men, of whom scarce one is known to me by sight; and as for their writings, I have sought them (on this one occasion) in vain, in the closets and libraries of all my acquaintance. I had still been in the dark if a gentleman had not procured me (I suppose from some of themselves, for they are generally much more dangerous friends than enemies) the passages I send you. I solemnly protest I have added nothing to the malice or absurdity of them; which

it behoves me to declare, since the vouchers themselves will be so soon and so irrecoverably lost. You may in some measure prevent it, by preserving at least their titles, and discovering (as far as you can depend on the truth of your information) the names of the concealed authors.

The first objection I have heard made to the poem is, that the persons are too obscure for satire. The persons themselves, rather than allow the objection, would forgive the satire; and if one could be tempted to afford it a serious answer, were not all assassins, popular insurrections, the insolence of the rabble without doors, and of domestics within, most wrongfully chastised, if the meanness of offenders indemnified them from punishment? On the contrary, obscurity renders them more dangerous, as less thought of: law can pronounce judgment only on open facts; morality alone can pass censure on intentions of mischief; so that for secret calumny, or the arrow flying in the dark, there is no public punishment left, but what a good writer inflicts.

The next objection is, that these sort of authors are poor. That might be pleaded as an excuse at the Old Bailey for lesser crimes than defamation (for 'tis the case of almost all who are tried there), but sure it can be none: for who will pretend that the robbing another of his reputation supplies the want of it in himself? I question not but such authors are poor, and heartily wish the objection were removed by any honest livelihood. But poverty is here the accident, not the subject: he who describes malice and villany to be pale and meagre, expresses not the least anger against paleness or leanness, but against malice and villany. The apothecary in *Romeo and Juliet* is poor; but is he therefore justified in vending poison? Not but poverty itself becomes a just subject of satire, when it is the consequence of vice, prodigality, or neglect of one's lawful calling; for then it increases the public burden, fills the streets and highways with robbers, and the garrets with clippers, coiners, and weekly journalists.

But admitting that two or three of these offend less in their morals than in their writings, must poverty make nonsense sacred? If so, the fame of bad authors would be much better consulted than that of all the good ones in the world; and not one of a hundred had ever been called by his right name.

They mistake the whole matter: it is not charity to encourage them in the way they follow, but to get them out of it; for men are not bunglers because they are poor, but they are poor because they are bunglers.

Is it not pleasant enough to hear our authors crying out on the one hand, as if their persons and characters were too sacred for satire; and the public objecting on the other, that they are too mean even for ridicule? But whether bread or fame be their end, it must be allowed, our author, by and in this poem, has mercifully given them a little of both.

There are two or three who, by their rank and fortune, have no benefit from the former objections, supposing them good; and these I was sorry to see in such company. But if, without any provocation, two or three gentlemen will fall upon one, in an affair wherein his interest and reputation are equally embarked, they cannot, certainly, after they have been content to print themselves his enemies, complain of being put into the number of them.

Others, I am told, pretend to have been once his friends. Surely they are their enemies who say so, since nothing can be more odious than to treat a friend as they have done. But of this I cannot persuade myself, when I consider the constant and eternal aversion of all bad writers to a good one.

Such as claim a merit from being his admirers, I would gladly ask, if it lays him under a personal obligation? At that rate, he would be the most obliged humble servant in the world. I dare swear for these in particular, he never desired them to be his admirers, nor promised in return to be theirs: that had truly been a sign he was of their acquaintance; but would not the malicious world have suspected such an approbation of some motive worse than ignorance in the author of the *Essay on Criticism*? Be it as it will, the reasons of their admiration and of his contempt are equally subsisting, for his works and theirs are the very same that they were.

One, therefore, of their assertions I believe may be true--'That he has a contempt for their writings.' And there is another, which would probably be sooner allowed by himself than by any good judge beside--'That his own have found too much success with the public.' But as it cannot consist with his modesty to claim this as justice, it lies not on him, but entirely on the public, to defend its own judgment.

There remains what in my opinion might seem a better plea for these people than any they have made use of. If obscurity or poverty were to exempt a man from satire, much more should folly or dulness, which are still more involuntary; nay, as much so as personal deformity. But even this will not help them: deformity becomes an object of ridicule when a man sets up for being handsome; and so must dulness when he sets up for a wit. They are not ridiculed because ridicule in itself is, or ought to be, a pleasure, but because it is just to undeceive and vindicate the

honest and unpretending part of mankind from imposition, because particular interest ought to yield to general, and a great number who are not naturally fools ought never to be made so, in complaisance to a few who are. Accordingly we find that in all ages, all vain pretenders, were they ever so poor or ever so dull, have been constantly the topics of the most candid satirists, from the Codrus of Juvenal to the Damon of Boileau.

Having mentioned Boileau, the greatest poet and most judicious critic of his age and country, admirable for his talents, and yet perhaps more admirable for his judgment in the proper application of them, I cannot help remarking the resemblance betwixt him and our author, in qualities, fame, and fortune, in the distinctions shown them by their superiors, in the general esteem of their equals, and in their extended reputation amongst foreigners; in the latter of which ours has met with the better fate, as he has had for his translators persons of the most eminent rank and abilities in their respective nations. But the resemblance holds in nothing more than in their being equally abused by the ignorant pretenders to poetry of their times, of which not the least memory will remain but in their own writings, and in the notes made upon them. What Boileau has done in almost all his poems, our author has only in this: I dare answer for him he will do it in no more; and on this principle, of attacking few but who had slandered him, he could not have done it at all, had he been confined from censuring obscure and worthless persons, for scarce any other were his enemies. However, as the parity is so

remarkable, I hope it will continue to the last; and if ever he shall give us an edition of this poem himself, I may see some of them treated as gently, on their repentance or better merit, as Perrault and Quinault were at last by Boileau.

In one point I must be allowed to think the character of our English poet the more amiable. He has not been a follower of fortune or success; he has lived with the great without flattery--been a friend to men in power, without pensions, from whom, as he asked, so he received no favour but what was done him in his friends. As his satires were the more just for being delayed, so were his panegyrics; bestowed only on such persons as he had familiarly known, only for such virtues as he had long observed in them, and only at such times as others cease to praise, if not begin to calumniate them--I mean, when out of power or out of fashion. A satire, therefore, on writers so notorious for the contrary practice, became no man so well as himself; as none, it is plain, was so little in their friendships, or so much in that of those whom they had most abused--namely, the greatest and best of all parties. Let me add a further reason, that, though engaged in their friendships, he never espoused their animosities; and can almost singly challenge this honour, not to have written a line of any man, which, through guilt, through shame, or through fear, through variety of fortune, or change of interests, he was ever unwilling to own.

I shall conclude with remarking, what a pleasure it must be to every reader of humanity to see all along, that our author in his very laughter is not indulging his own ill-nature, but only punishing that of others. As to his poem, those alone are capable of doing it justice, who, to use the words of a great writer, know how hard it is (with regard both to his subject and his manner) *_vetustis dare novitatem, obsoletis nitorem, obscuris lucem, fastiditis gratiam_*.--I am

Your most humble servant,

WILLIAM CLELAND.[133]
ST JAMES'S, _Dec_. 22, 1728.

MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS HIS PROLEGOMENA AND ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE DUNCIAD:
WITH THE HYPERCRITICS OF ARISTARCHUS.

DENNIS, REMARKS ON PR. ARTHUR.

I cannot but think it the most reasonable thing in the world to distinguish good writers, by discouraging the bad. Nor is it an ill-natured thing, in relation even to the very persons upon whom the reflections are made. It is true, it may deprive them, a little the sooner, of a short profit and a transitory reputation; but then it may have a good effect, and oblige them (before it be too late) to decline that for which they are so very unfit, and to have recourse to something in which they may be more successful.

CHARACTER OF MR P., 1716.

The persons whom Boileau has attacked in his writings have been for the most part authors, and most of those authors, poets: and the censures he

hath passed upon them have been confirmed by all Europe.

GILDON, PREF. TO HIS NEW REHEARSAL.

It is the common cry of the poetasters of the town, and their fautors, that it is an ill-natured thing to expose the pretenders to wit and poetry. The judges and magistrates may, with full as good reason, be reproached with ill-nature for putting the laws in execution against a thief or impostor. The same will hold in the republic of letters, if the critics and judges will let every ignorant pretender to scribbling pass on the world.

THEOBALD, LETTER TO MIST, JUNE 22, 1728.

Attacks may be levelled either against failures in genius, or against the pretensions of writing without one.

CONCANEN, DED. TO THE AUTHOR OF THE DUNCIAD.

A satire upon dulness is a thing that has been used and allowed in all ages.

Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, wicked scribbler.

TESTIMONIES OF AUTHORS

CONCERNING OUR POET AND HIS WORKS.

M. SCRIBLERUS LECTORI S.

Before we present thee with our exertations on this most delectable poem (drawn from the many volumes of our Adversaria on modern authors) we shall here, according to the laudable usage of editors, collect the various judgments of the learned concerning our Poet: various indeed, not only of different authors, but of the same author at different seasons. Nor shall we gather only the testimonies of such eminent wits as would of course descend to posterity, and consequently be read without our collection; but we shall likewise, with incredible labour, seek out for divers others, which, but for this our diligence, could never, at the distance of a few months, appear to the eye of the most curious. Hereby thou may'st not only receive the delectation of variety, but also arrive at a more certain judgment, by a grave and circumspect comparison of the witnesses with each other, or of each with himself. Hence also, thou wilt be enabled to draw reflections, not only of a critical, but a moral nature, by being let into many particulars of the person as well as genius, and of the fortune as well as merit, of our author: in which, if I relate some things of little concern peradventure to thee, and some of as little even to him, I entreat thee to consider how minutely all true critics and commentators are wont to insist upon such, and how material they seem to themselves, if to none other. Forgive me, gentle reader, if (following learned example) I ever and anon become tedious: allow me to take the same pains to find whether my author were good or bad, well or ill-natured, modest or arrogant; as another, whether his author was fair or brown, short or tall, or whether he wore a coat or a cassock.

We purposed to begin with his life, parentage, and education: but as to these, even his cotemporaries do exceedingly differ. One saith,[134] he was educated at home; another,[135] that he was bred at St Omer's by Jesuits; a third,[136] not at St Omer's, but at Oxford; a fourth,[137] that he had no University education at all. Those who allow him to be bred at home differ as much concerning his tutor: one saith,[138] he was kept by his father on purpose; a second,[139] that he was an itinerant priest; a third,[140] that he was a parson; one[141] calleth him a secular clergyman of the Church of Rome; another,[142] a monk. As little do they agree about his father, whom one[143] supposeth, like the father of Hesiod, a tradesman or merchant; another,[144] a husbandman; another,[145] a hatter, &c. Nor has an author been wanting to give our Poet such a father as Apuleius hath to Plato, Jamblichus to Pythagoras, and divers to Homer, namely, a demon: For thus Mr Gildon[146]: 'Certain it is, that his original is not from Adam, but the Devil; and that he wanteth nothing but horns and tail to be the exact resemblance of his infernal Father.' Finding, therefore, such contrariety of opinions, and (whatever be ours of this sort of generation) not being fond to enter into controversy, we shall defer writing the life of our Poet, till authors can determine among themselves what parents or education he had, or whether he had any education or parents at all.

Proceed we to what is more certain, his Works, though not less uncertain the judgments concerning them; beginning with his Essay on Criticism, of which hear first the most ancient of critics--

MR JOHN DENNIS.

'His precepts are false or trivial, or both; his thoughts are crude and abortive, his expressions absurd, his numbers harsh and unmusical, his rhymes trivial and common:--instead of majesty, we have something that is very mean; instead of gravity, something that is very boyish; and instead of perspicuity and lucid order, we have but too often obscurity and confusion.' And in another place: 'What rare numbers are here! Would not one swear that this youngster had espoused some antiquated Muse, who had sued out a divorce from some superannuated sinner, upon account of impotence, and who, being poxed by her former spouse, has got the gout in her decrepid age, which makes her hobble so damnably.'[147]

No less peremptory is the censure of our hypercritical historian,

MR OLDMIXON.

'I dare not say anything of the Essay on Criticism in verse; but if any more curious reader has discovered in it something new which is not in Dryden's prefaces, dedications, and his Essay on Dramatic Poetry, not to mention the French critics, I should be very glad to have the benefit of the discovery.'[148]

He is followed (as in fame, so in judgment) by the modest and simple-minded

MR LEONARD WELSTED,

who, out of great respect to our poet not naming him, doth yet glance at his essay, together with the Duke of Buckingham's, and the criticisms of Dryden, and of Horace, which he more openly taxeth: 'As to the numerous treatises, essays, arts, &c., both in verse and prose, that have been written by the moderns on this ground-work, they do but hackney the same

thoughts over again, making them still more trite. Most of their pieces are nothing but a pert, insipid heap of common-place. Horace has even, in his Art of Poetry, thrown out several things which plainly shew he thought an Art of Poetry was of no use, even while he was writing one.'[149]

To all which great authorities, we can only oppose that of

MR ADDISON.

'The Art of Criticism (saith he), which was published some months since, 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 ease 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 doth 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 or 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 Reflections, has given us the same kind of sublime which he observes in the several passages that occasioned them: I cannot but take notice that our English author has, after the same manner, exemplified several of the precepts in the very precepts themselves.' He then produces some instances of a particular beauty in the numbers, and concludes with saying, 'that there are 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.'[150]

Of WINDSOR FOREST, positive is the judgment of the affirmative

MR JOHN DENNIS,

'That it is a wretched rhapsody, impudently writ in emulation of the Cooper's Hill of Sir John Denham.[151] The author of it is obscure, is ambiguous, is affected, is temerarious, is barbarous.'[152]

But the author of the Dispensary,

DR GARTH,

in the preface to his poem of Claremont, differs from this opinion:

'Those who have seen these two excellent poems of Cooper's Hill and Windsor Forest--the one written by Sir John Denham, the other by Mr

Pope--will shew a great deal of candour if they approve of this.'

Of the Epistle of ELOISA, we are told by the obscure writer of a poem called Sawney, 'That because Prior's Henry and Emma charmed the finest tastes, our author writ his Eloise in opposition to it, but forgot innocence and virtue: if you take away her tender thoughts and her fierce desires, all the rest is of no value.' In which, methinks, his judgment resembleth that of a French tailor on a villa and gardens by the Thames: 'All this is very fine, but take away the river and it is good for nothing.'

But very contrary hereunto was the opinion of

MR PRIOR

himself, saying in his Alma--

'O Abelard! ill-fated youth,
Thy tale will justify this truth.
But well I weet thy cruel wrong
Adorns a nobler poet's song:
Dan Pope, for thy misfortune grieved,
With kind concern and skill has weaved
A silken web; and ne'er shall fade
Its colours: gently has he laid
The mantle o'er thy sad distress,
And Venus shall the texture bless,'[153] &c.

Come we now to his translation of the ILIAD, celebrated by numerous pens, yet shall it suffice to mention the indefatigable

SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE, KT.,

who (though otherwise a severe censurer of our author) yet styleth this a 'laudable translation.'[154] That ready writer,

MR OLDMIXON,

in his forementioned essay, frequently commends the same. And the painful

MR LEWIS THEOBALD

thus extols it: 'The spirit of Homer breathes all through this translation.--I am in doubt whether I should most admire the justness to the original, or the force and beauty of the language, or the sounding variety of the numbers: but when I find all these meet, it puts me in mind of what the poet says of one of his heroes, that he alone raised and flung with ease a weighty stone, that two common men could not lift from the ground; just so, one single person has performed in this translation what I once despaired to have seen done by the force of several masterly hands.'[155] Indeed, the same gentleman appears to have changed his sentiment in his Essay on the Art of Sinking in Reputation (printed in Mist's Journal, March 30, 1728,) where he says thus:--'In order to sink in reputation, let him take into his head to descend into Homer (let the world wonder, as it will, how the devil he got there), and pretend to do him into English, so his version denote his neglect of the manner how.' Strange variation! We are told in

MIST'S JOURNAL, JUNE 8,

'That this translation of the Iliad was not in all respects conformable to the fine taste of his friend, Mr Addison; insomuch that he employed a younger Muse in an undertaking of this kind, which he supervised himself.' Whether Mr Addison did find it conformable to his taste or not, best appears from his own testimony the year following its publication, in these words:

MR ADDISON, FREEHOLDER, NO. 40.

'When I consider myself as a British freeholder, I am in a particular manner pleased with the labours of those who have improved our language with the translations of old Greek and Latin authors.--We have already most of their historians in our own tongue, and what is more for the honour of our language, it has been taught to express with elegance the greatest of their poets in each nation. The illiterate among our own countrymen may learn to judge from Dryden's Virgil of the most perfect epic performance. And those parts of Homer which have been published already by Mr Pope, give us reason to think that the Iliad will appear in English with as little disadvantage to that immortal poem.'

As to the rest, there is a slight mistake, for this younger Muse was an elder: nor was the gentleman (who is a friend of our author) employed by Mr Addison to translate it after him, since he saith himself that he did it before.[156] Contrariwise that Mr Addison engaged our author in this work appeareth by declaration thereof in the preface to the Iliad, printed some time before his death, and by his own letters of October 26, and November 2, 1713, where he declares it his opinion that no other person was equal to it.

Next comes his Shakspeare on the stage: 'Let him (quoth one, whom I take to be

MR THEOBALD, MIST'S JOURNAL, JUNE 8, 1728,)

publish such an author as he has least studied, and forget to discharge even the dull duty of an editor. In this project let him lend the bookseller his name (for a competent sum of money) to promote the credit of an exorbitant subscription.' Gentle reader, be pleased to cast thine eye on the proposal below quoted, and on what follows (some months after the former assertion) in the same journalist of June 8. 'The bookseller proposed the book by subscription, and raised some thousands of pounds for the same: I believe the gentleman did not share in the profits of this extravagant subscription.

'After the Iliad, he undertook (saith

MIST'S JOURNAL, JUNE 8, 1728,)

the sequel of that work, the Odyssey; and having secured the success by a numerous subscription, he employed some underlings to perform what, according to his proposals, should come from his own hands.' To which heavy charge we can in truth oppose nothing but the words of

MR POPE'S PROPOSAL FOR THE ODYSSEY, (PRINTED BY J. WATTS, JAN. 10, 1724.)

'I take this occasion to declare that the subscription for Shakspeare

belongs wholly to Mr Tonson: And that the benefit of this proposal is not solely for my own use, but for that of two of my friends, who have assisted me in this work.' But these very gentlemen are extolled above our poet himself in another of Mist's Journals, March 30, 1728, saying, 'That he would not advise Mr Pope to try the experiment again of getting a great part of a book done by assistants, lest those extraneous parts should unhappily ascend to the sublime, and retard the declension of the whole.' Behold! these underlings are become good writers!

If any say, that before the said proposals were printed, the subscription was begun without declaration of such assistance, verily those who set it on foot, or (as their term is) secured it, to wit, the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Harcourt, were he living, would testify, and the Right Honourable the Lord Bathurst, now living, doth testify the same is a falsehood.

Sorry I am, that persons professing to be learned, or of whatever rank of authors, should either falsely tax, or be falsely taxed. Yet let us, who are only reporters, be impartial in our citations, and proceed.

MIST'S JOURNAL, JUNE 8, 1728.

'Mr Addison raised this author from obscurity, obtained him the acquaintance and friendship of the whole body of our nobility, and transferred his powerful interests with those great men to this rising bard, who frequently levied by that means unusual contributions on the public.' Which surely cannot be, if, as the author of *The Dunciad* Dissected reporteth, 'Mr Wycherley had before introduced him into a familiar acquaintance with the greatest peers and brightest wits then living.'

'No sooner (saith the same journalist) 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.' Grievous the accusation! unknown the accuser! the person accused no witness in his own cause; the person, in whose regard accused, dead! But if there be living any one nobleman whose friendship, yea, any one gentleman whose subscription Mr Addison procured to our author, let him stand forth that truth may appear! *_Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica veritas_*. In verity, the whole story of the libel is a lie. Witness those persons of integrity, who, several years before Mr Addison's decease, did see and approve of the said verses, in nowise a libel but a friendly rebuke sent privately in our author's own hand to Mr Addison himself, and never made public, till after their own journals and *Curl* had printed the same. One name alone, which I am here authorised to declare, will sufficiently evince this truth, that of the Eight Honourable the Earl of Burlington.

Next is he taxed with a crime (in the opinion of some authors, I doubt, more heinous than any in morality) to wit, plagiarism, from the inventive and quaint-conceited

JAMES MOORE SMITH, GENT.

'Upon reading the third volume of Pope's *Miscellanies*, I found five lines which I thought excellent; and happening to praise them, a gentleman produced a modern comedy (the *Rival Modes*) published last year, where were the same verses to a tittle. These gentlemen are undoubtedly the first plagiaries that pretend to make a reputation by

stealing from a man's works in his own life-time, and out of a public print.'[157] Let us join to this what is written by the author of the Rival Modes, the said Mr James Moore Smith, in a letter to our author himself, who had informed him, a month before that play was acted, Jan. 27, 1726-7, that 'these verses, which he had before given him leave to insert in it, would be known for his, some copies being got abroad. He desires, nevertheless, that since the lines had been read in his comedy to several, Mr P. would not deprive it of them,' &c. Surely if we add the testimonies of the Lord Bolingbroke, of the lady to whom the said verses were originally addressed, of Hugh Bethel, Esq., and others, who knew them as our author's, long before the said gentleman composed his play, it is hoped the ingenuous that affect not error will rectify their opinion by the suffrage of so honourable personages.

And yet followeth another charge, insinuating no less than his enmity both to Church and State, which could come from no other informer than the said

MR JAMES MOORE SMITH.

'The Memoirs of a Parish Clerk was a very dull and unjust abuse of a person who wrote in defence of our religion and constitution, and who has been dead many years.'[158] This seemeth also most untrue, it being known to divers that these memoirs were written at the seat of the Lord Harcourt in Oxfordshire, before that excellent person (Bishop Burnet's) death, and many years before the appearance of that history of which they are pretended to be an abuse. Most true it is that Mr Moore had such a design, and was himself the man who pressed Dr Arbuthnot and Mr Pope to assist him therein; and that he borrowed those memoirs of our author, when that history came forth, with intent to turn them to such abuse. But being able to obtain from our author but one single hint, and either changing his mind, or having more mind than ability, he contented himself to keep the said memoirs, and read them as his own to all his acquaintance. A noble person there is, into whose company Mr Pope once chanced to introduce him, who well remembereth the conversation of Mr Moore to have turned upon the 'contempt he had for the work of that reverend prelate, and how full he was of a design he declared himself to have of exposing it.' This noble person is the Earl of Peterborough.

Here in truth should we crave pardon of all the foresaid right honourable and worthy personages, for having mentioned them in the same page with such weekly riff-raff railers and rhymers, but that we had their ever-honoured commands for the same; and that they are introduced not as witnesses in the controversy, but as witnesses that cannot be controverted; not to dispute, but to decide.

Certain it is, that dividing our writers into two classes, of such who were acquaintance, and of such who were strangers to our author; the former are those who speak well, and the other those who speak evil of him. Of the first class, the most noble

JOHN DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

sums up his character in these lines:

'And yet so wondrous, so sublime a thing,
As the great Iliad, scarce could make me sing,
Unless I justly could at once commend
A good companion, and as firm a friend;

One moral, or a mere well-natured deed,
Can all desert in sciences exceed.'[159]

So also is he deciphered by the honourable

SIMON HARCOURT.

'Say, wondrous youth, what column wilt thou choose,
What laurell'd arch, for thy triumphant Muse?
Though each great ancient court thee to his shrine,
Though every laurel through the dome be thine.
Go to the good and just, an awful train!
Thy soul's delight.'[160]

Recorded in like manner for his virtuous disposition and gentle bearing,
by the ingenious

MR WALTER HART,

in this apostrophe:

'Oh! ever worthy, ever crown'd with praise!
Bless'd in thy life, and bless'd in all thy lays.
Add, that the Sisters every thought refine,
And even thy life be faultless as thy line.
Yet Envy still with fiercer rage pursues,
Obscures the virtue, and defames the Muse.
A soul like thine, in pain, in grief, resign'd,
Views with just scorn the malice of mankind.'[161]

The witty and moral satirist,

DR EDWARD YOUNG,

wishing some check to the corruption and evil manners of the times,
calleth out upon our poet to undertake a task so worthy of his virtue:

'Why slumbers Pope, who leads the Muses' train,
Nor hears that Virtue, which he loves, complain?'[162]

MR MALLET,

in his epistle on Verbal Criticism:

'Whose life, severely scann'd, transcends his lays;
For wit supreme is but his second praise.'

MR HAMMOND,

that delicate and correct imitator of Tibullus, in his Love Elegies,
Elegy xiv.:

'Now, fired by Pope and Virtue, leave the age,
In low pursuit of self-undoing wrong,
And trace the author through his moral page,
Whose blameless life still answers to his song.'

MR THOMSON,

in his elegant and philosophical poem of the Seasons:

'Although not sweeter his own Homer sings,
Yet is his life the more endearing song.'

To the same tune also singeth that learned clerk of Suffolk,

MR WILLIAM BROOME.

'Thus, nobly rising in fair Virtue's cause,
From thy own life transcribe the unerring laws.'[163]

And to close all, hear the reverend Dean of St Patrick's:

'A soul with every virtue fraught,
By patriots, priests, and poets taught.
Whose filial piety excels
Whatever Grecian story tells.
A genius for each business fit,
Whose meanest talent is his wit,' &c.

Let us now recreate thee by turning to the other side, and showing his character drawn by those with whom he never conversed, and whose countenances he could not know, though turned against him: first again, commencing with the high-voiced and never-enough quoted

MR JOHN DENNIS,

who, in his 'Reflections on the Essay on Criticism,' thus describeth him, 'A little affected hypocrite, who has nothing in his mouth but candour, truth, friendship, good-nature, humanity, and magnanimity. He is so great a lover of falsehood, that, whenever he has a mind to calumniate his cotemporaries, he brands them with some defect which is just contrary to some good quality for which all their friends and their acquaintance commend them. He seems to have a particular pique to people of quality, and authors of that rank. He must derive his religion from St Omer's.' But in the character of Mr P. and his writings (printed by S. Popping, 1716), he saith, 'Though he is a professor of the worst religion, yet he laughs at it;' but that 'nevertheless he is a virulent Papist; and yet a pillar for the Church of England.'

Of both which opinions

MR LEWIS THEOBALD

seems also to be; declaring, in Mist's Journal of June 22, 1718--'That, if he is not shrewdly abused, he made it his practice to cackle to both parties in their own sentiments.' But, as to his pique against people of quality, the same journalist doth not agree, but saith (May 8, 1728)--'He had, by some means or other, the acquaintance and friendship of the whole body of our nobility.'

However contradictory this may appear, Mr Dennis and Gildon, in the character last cited, make it all plain, by assuring us, 'That he is a creature that reconciles all contradictions; he is a beast, and a man; a Whig, and a Tory; a writer (at one and the same time) of Guardians and Examiners;[164] an assertor of liberty, and of the dispensing power of kings; a Jesuitical professor of truth, a base and a foul pretender to

candour.' So that, upon the whole account, we must conclude him either to have been a great hypocrite, or a very honest man; a terrible imposer upon both parties, or very moderate to either.

Be it as to the judicious reader shall seem good. Sure it is, he is little favoured of certain authors, whose wrath is perilous: for one declares he ought to have a price set on his head, and to be hunted down as a wild beast.[165] Another protests that he does not know what may happen; advises him to insure his person; says he has bitter enemies, and expressly declares it will be well if he escapes with his life.[166] One desires he would cut his own throat, or hang himself.[167]

But Pasquin seemed rather inclined it should be done by the Government, representing him engaged in grievous designs with a lord of Parliament, then under prosecution.[168] Mr Dennis himself hath written to a minister, that he is one of the most dangerous persons in this kingdom;[169] and assureth the public, that he is an open and mortal enemy to his country; a monster, that will, one day, shew as daring a soul as a mad Indian, who runs a-muck to kill the first Christian he meets.[170] Another gives information of treason discovered in his poem.[171] Mr Curll boldly supplies an imperfect verse with kings and princesses.[172] And one Matthew Concanen, yet more impudent, publishes at length the two most sacred names in this nation, as members of the Dunciad.[173]

This is prodigious! yet it is almost as strange, that in the midst of these invectives his greatest enemies have (I know not how) borne testimony to some merit in him.

MR THEOBALD,

in censuring his Shakspeare, declares, 'He has so great an esteem for Mr Pope, and so high an opinion of his genius and excellencies, that, notwithstanding he professes a veneration almost rising to idolatry for the writings of this inimitable poet, he would be very both even to do him justice, at the expense of that other gentleman's character.'[174]

MR CHARLES GILDON,

after having violently attacked him in many pieces, at last came to wish from his heart, 'That Mr Pope would be prevailed upon to give us Ovid's Epistles by his hand, for it is certain we see the original of Sappho to Pliaon with much more life and likeness in his version, than in that of Sir Car Scrope. And this,' he adds, 'is the more to be wished, because in the English tongue we have scarce anything truly and naturally written upon love.'[175] He also, in taxing Sir Richard Blackmore for his heterodox opinions of Homer, challengeth him to answer what Mr Pope hath said in his preface to that poet.

MR OLDMIXON

calls him a great master of our tongue; declares 'the purity and perfection of the English language to be found in his Homer; and, saying there are more good verses in Dryden's Virgil than in any other work, excepts this of our author only.'[176]

THE AUTHOR OF A LETTER TO MR CIBBER

says, 'Pope was so good a versifier [once], that, his predecessor, Mr

Dryden, and his cotemporary, Mr Prior, excepted, the harmony of his numbers is equal to anybody's. And that he had all the merit that a man can have that way.'[177] And

MR THOMAS COOKE,

after much blemishing our author's Homer, crieth out--

'But in his other works what beauties shine,
While sweetest music dwells in every line!
These he admired--on these he stamp'd his praise,
And bade them live to brighten future days.'[178]

So also one who takes the name of

H. STANHOPE,

the maker of certain verses to Duncan Campbell,[179] in that poem, which is wholly a satire on Mr Pope, confesseth--

"Tis true, if finest notes alone could show
(Tuned justly high, or regularly low)
That we should fame to these mere vocals give,
Pope more than we can offer should receive:
For when some gliding river is his theme,
His lines run smoother than the smoothest stream,' &c.

MIST'S JOURNAL, JUNE 8, 1728.

Although he says, 'The smooth numbers of the Dunciad are all that recommend it, nor has it any other merit,' yet that same paper hath these words: 'The author is allowed to be a perfect master of an easy and elegant versification. In all his works we find the most happy turns and natural similes, wonderfully short and thick sown.'

The Essay on the Dunciad also owns (p. 25) it is very full of beautiful images. But the panegyric which crowns all that can be said on this poem is bestowed by our laureate,

MR COLLEY CIBBER,

who 'grants it to be a better poem of its kind than ever was writ:' but adds, 'it was a victory over a parcel of poor wretches, whom it was almost cowardice to conquer.--A man might as well triumph for having killed so many silly flies that offended him. Could he have let them alone, by this time, poor souls! they had all been buried in oblivion.'[180] Here we see our excellent laureate allows the justice of the satire on every man in it but himself, as the great Mr Dennis did before him.

The said

MR DENNIS AND MR GILDON,

in the most furious of all their works (the forecited Character, p. 5), do in concert confess, 'That some men of good understanding value him for his rhymes.' And (p. 17), 'That he has got, like Mr Bayes in the Rehearsal (that is, like Mr Dryden), a notable knack at rhyming, and writing smooth verse.'

Of his Essay on Man, numerous were the praises bestowed by his avowed enemies, in the imagination that the same was not written by him, as it was printed anonymously.

Thus sang of it even

BEZALEEL MORRIS.

'Auspicious bard! while all admire thy strain,
All but the selfish, ignorant, and vain;
I, whom no bribe to servile flattery drew,
Must pay the tribute to thy merit due:
Thy Muse, sublime, significant, and clear,
Alike informs the soul, and charms the ear,' &c.

And

MR LEONARD WELSTED

thus wrote[181] to the unknown author, on the first publication of the said Essay:--'I must own, after the reception which the vilest and most immoral ribaldry hath lately met with, I was surprised to see what I had long despaired--a performance deserving the name of a poet. Such, sir, is your work. It is, indeed, above all commendation, and ought to have been published in an age and country more worthy of it. If my testimony be of weight anywhere, you are sure to have it in the amplest manner,' &c.

Thus we see every one of his works hath been extolled by one or other of his most inveterate enemies; and to the success of them all, they do unanimously give testimony. But it is sufficient, *_instar omnium_*, to behold the great critic, Mr Dennis, sorely lamenting it, even from the Essay on Criticism to this day of the Dunciad! 'A most notorious instance,' quoth he, 'of the depravity of genius and taste, the approbation this essay meets with.' [182] 'I can safely affirm, that I never attacked any of these writings, unless they had success infinitely beyond their merit. This, though an empty, has been a popular scribbler. The epidemic madness of the times has given him reputation.' [183] 'If, after the cruel treatment so many extraordinary men (Spencer, Lord Bacon, Ben. Jonson, Milton, Butler, Otway, and others) have received from this country, for these last hundred years, I should shift the scene, and show all that penury changed at once to riot and profuseness, and more squandered away upon one object than would have satisfied the greater part of those extraordinary men, the reader to whom this one creature should be unknown would fancy him a prodigy of art and nature, would believe that all the great qualities of these persons were centred in him alone. But if I should venture to assure him that the people of England had made such a choice, the reader would either believe me a malicious enemy and slanderer, or that the reign of the last (Queen Anne's) ministry was designed by fate to encourage fools.' [184]

But it happens that this our poet never had any place, pension, or gratuity, in any shape, from the said glorious queen, or any of her ministers. All he owed, in the whole course of his life, to any court, was a subscription, for his Homer, of L200 from King George I., and L100 from the Prince and Princess.

However, lest we imagine our author's success was constant and

universal, they acquaint us of certain works in a less degree of repute, whereof, although owned by others, yet do they assure us he is the writer. Of this sort Mr Dennis[185] ascribes to him two farces, whose names he does not tell, but assures us that there is not one jest in them; and an imitation of Horace, whose title he does not mention, but assures us it is much more execrable than all his works.[186] The Daily Journal, May 11, 1728, assures us 'He is below Tom D'Urfey in the drama, because (as that writer thinks) the Marriage-Hater Matched, and the Boarding School, are better than the What-d'-ye-call-it,' which is not Mr P.'s, but Mr Gay's. Mr Gildon assures us, in his New Rehearsal, p. 48, 'That he was writing a play of the Lady Jane Grey;' but it afterwards proved to be Mr Howe's. We are assured by another, 'He wrote a pamphlet called Dr Andrew Tripe,'[187] which proved to be one Dr Wagstaff's. Mr Theobald assures us in *Mist* of the 27th April, 'That the Treatise of the Pro-found is very dull, and that Mr Pope is the author of it.' The writer of *Gulliveriana* is of another opinion, and says, 'The whole, or greatest part, of the merit of this treatise must and can only be ascribed to Gulliver.'[188] (Here, gentle reader! cannot I but smile at the strange blindness and positiveness of men, knowing the said treatise to appertain to none other but to me, Martinus Scriblerus.) We are assured, in *_Mist_* of June 8, 'That his own plays and farces would better have adorned the Dunciad than those of Mr Theobald, for he had neither genius for tragedy nor comedy;' which, whether true or not, is not easy to judge, inasmuch as he hath attempted neither--unless we will take it for granted, with Mr Cibber, that his being once very angry at hearing a friend's play abused was an infallible proof the play was his own, the said Mr Cibber thinking it impossible for a man to be much concerned for any but himself: 'Now let any man judge,' saith he, 'by this concern, who was the true mother of the child?'[189]

But from all that hath been said, the discerning reader will collect, that it little availed our author to have any candour, since, when he declared he did not write for others, it was not credited; as little to have any modesty, since, when he declined writing in any way himself, the presumption of others was imputed to him. If he singly enterprised one great work, he was taxed of boldness and madness to a prodigy;[190] if he took assistants in another, it was complained of, and represented as a great injury to the public.[191] The loftiest heroics, the lowest ballads, treatises against the State or Church, satires on lords and ladies, raillery on wits and authors, squabbles with booksellers, or even full and true accounts of monsters, poisons, and murders; of any hereof was there nothing so good, nothing so bad, which hath not at one or other season been to him ascribed. If it bore no author's name, then lay he concealed; if it did, he fathered it upon that author to be yet better concealed: if it resembled any of his styles, then was it evident; if it did not, then disguised he it on set purpose. Yea, even direct oppositions in religion, principles, and politics, have equally been supposed in him inherent. Surely a most rare and singular character! Of which, let the reader make what he can.

Doubtless most commentators would hence take occasion to turn all to their author's advantage; and, from the testimony of his very enemies, would affirm that his capacity was boundless, as well as his imagination; that he was a perfect master of all styles, and all arguments; and that there was in those times no other writer, in any kind, of any degree of excellence, save he himself. But as this is not our own sentiment, we shall determine on nothing, but leave thee, gentle reader, to steer thy judgment equally between various opinions, and to choose whether thou wilt incline to the testimonies of authors avowed,

or of authors concealed--of those who knew him, or of those who knew him not.

P.

* * * * *

MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS OF THE POEM.

This poem, as it celebrateth the most grave and ancient of things, Chaos, Night, and Dulness; so is it of the most grave and ancient kind. Homer (saith Aristotle) was the first who gave the form, and (saith Horace) who adapted the measure, to heroic poesy. But even before this, may be rationally presumed from what the ancients have left written, was a piece by Homer, composed of like nature and matter with this of our poet. For of epic sort it appeareth to have been, yet of matter surely not unpleasant, witness what is reported of it by the learned Archbishop Eustathius, in Odyss. x., and accordingly Aristotle, in his Poetic, chap. iv., does further set forth, that as the Iliad and Odyssey gave example to tragedy, so did this poem to comedy its first idea.

From these authors also it should seem that the hero or chief personage of it was no less obscure, and his understanding and sentiments no less quaint and strange (if indeed not more so), than any of the actors of our poem. Margites was the name of this personage, whom antiquity recordeth to have been Duncce the first; and surely, from what we hear of him, not unworthy to be the root of so spreading a tree and so numerous a posterity. The poem therefore celebrating him was properly and absolutely a Dunciad; which, though now unhappily lost, yet is its nature sufficiently known by the infallible tokens aforesaid. And thus it doth appear that the first Dunciad was the first epic poem, written by Homer himself, and anterior even to the Iliad or Odyssey.

Now, forasmuch as our poet had translated those two famous works of Homer which are yet left, he did conceive it in some sort his duty to imitate that also which was lost; and was therefore induced to bestow on it the same form which Homer's is reported to have had, namely, that of epic poem; with a title also framed after the ancient Greek manner, to wit, that of Dunciad.

Wonderful it is that so few of the moderns have been stimulated to attempt some Dunciad! since, in the opinion of the multitude, it might cost less pain and oil than an imitation of the greater epic. But possible it is also, that, on due reflection, the maker might find it easier to paint a Charlemagne, a Brute, or a Godfrey, with just pomp and dignity heroic, than a Margites, a Codrus, or a Flecknoe.

We shall next declare the occasion and the cause which moved our poet to this particular work. He lived in those days, when (after Providence had permitted the invention of printing as a scourge for the sins of the learned) paper also became so cheap, and printers so numerous, that a deluge of authors covered the land; whereby not only the peace of the honest unwriting subject was daily molested, but unmerciful demands were made of his applause, yea of his money, by such as would neither earn the one nor deserve the other. At the same time, the licence of the press was such, that it grew dangerous to refuse them either: for they would forthwith publish slanders unpunished, the authors being anonymous, and skulking under the wings of publishers, a set of men who never scrupled to vend either calumny or blasphemy, as long as the town

would call for it.

Now our author,[192] living in those times, did conceive it an endeavour well worthy an honest satirist to dissuade the dull and punish the wicked, the only way that was left. In that public-spirited view he laid the plan of this poem, as the greatest service he was capable (without much hurt, or being slain) to render his dear country. First, taking things from their original, he considereth the causes creative of such authors--namely, dulness and poverty; the one born with them, the other contracted by neglect of their proper talents, through self-conceit of greater abilities. This truth he wrappeth in an allegory[193] (as the construction of epic poesy requireth), and feigns that one of these goddesses had taken up her abode with the other, and that they jointly inspired all such writers and such works. He proceedeth to show the qualities they bestow on these authors,[194] and the effects they produce;[195] then the materials, or stock, with which they furnish them;[196] and (above all) that self-opinion[197] which causeth it to seem to themselves vastly greater than it is, and is the prime motive of their setting up in this sad and sorry merchandise. The great power of these goddesses acting in alliance (whereof as the one is the mother of industry, so is the other of plodding) was to be exemplified in some one great and remarkable action:[198] and none could be more so than that which our poet hath chosen, viz., the restoration of the reign of Chaos and Night, by the ministry of Dulness their daughter, in the removal of her imperial seat from the city to the polite world; as the action of the Aeneid is the restoration of the empire of Troy, by the removal of the race from thence to Latium. But as Homer singing only the wrath of Achilles, yet includes in his poem the whole history of the Trojan war; in like manner our author hath drawn into this single action the whole history of Dulness and her children.

A person must next be fixed upon to support this action. This phantom in the poet's mind must have a name:[199] He finds it to be ---; and he becomes, of course, the hero of the poem.

The fable being thus, according to the best example, one and entire, as contained in the proposition, the machinery is a continued chain of allegories, setting forth the whole power, ministry, and empire of Dulness, extended through her subordinate instruments, in all her various operations.

This is branched into episodes, each of which hath its moral apart, though all conducive to the main end. The crowd assembled in the second book demonstrates the design to be more extensive than to bad poets only, and that we may expect other episodes of the patrons, encouragers, or paymasters of such authors, as occasion shall bring them forth. And the third book, if well considered, seemeth to embrace the whole world. Each of the games relateth to some or other vile class of writers: the first concerneth the Plagiary, to whom he giveth the name of More; the second the libellous Novelist, whom he styleth Eliza; the third, the flattering Dedicator; the fourth, the bawling Critic, or noisy Poet; the fifth, the dark and dirty Party-writer; and so of the rest; assigning to each some proper name or other, such as he could find.

As for the characters, the public hath already acknowledged how justly they are drawn: the manners are so depicted, and the sentiments so peculiar to those to whom applied, that surely to transfer them to any other or wiser personages would be exceeding difficult: and certain it is, that every person concerned, being consulted apart, hath readily

owned the resemblance of every portrait, his own excepted. So Mr Cibber calls them 'a parcel of poor wretches, so many silly flies;' but adds, 'our author's wit is remarkably more bare and barren whenever it would fall foul on Cibber, than upon any other person whatever.'[200]

The descriptions are singular, the comparisons very quaint, the narration various, yet of one colour. The purity and chastity of diction is so preserved, that in the places most suspicious, not the words but only the images have been censured, and yet are those images no other than have been sanctified by ancient and classical authority (though, as was the manner of those good times, not so curiously wrapped up), yea, and commented upon by the most grave doctors and approved critics.

As it beareth the name of Epic, it is thereby subjected to such severe indispensable rules as are laid on all neoterics--a strict imitation of the ancients; insomuch that any deviation, accompanied with whatever poetic beauties, hath always been censured by the sound critic. How exact that imitation hath been in this piece, appeareth not only by its general structure, but by particular allusions infinite, many whereof have escaped both the commentator and poet himself; yea, divers by his exceeding diligence are so altered and interwoven with the rest, that several have already been, and more will be, by the ignorant abused, as altogether and originally his own.

In a word, the whole poem proveth itself to be the work of our author when his faculties were in full vigour and perfection, at that exact time when years have ripened the judgment without diminishing the imagination; which by good critics is held to be punctually at forty. For at that season it was that Virgil finished his Georgics; and Sir Richard Blackmore at the like age composing his Arthurs, declared the same to be the very _acme_ and pitch of life for epic poesy--though since he hath altered it to sixty, the year in which he published his Alfred.[201] True it is, that the talents for criticism--namely, smartness, quick censure, vivacity of remark, certainty of asseveration, indeed all but acerbity--seem rather the gifts of youth than of riper age. But it is far otherwise in poetry; witness the works of Mr Rymer and Mr Dennis, who, beginning with criticism, became afterwards such poets as no age hath paralleled. With good reason, therefore, did our author choose to write his essay on that subject at twenty, and reserve for his maturer years this great and wonderful work of the Dunciad.

P.

RICARDUS ARISTARCHUS OF THE HERO OF THE POEM.

Of the nature of Dunciad in general, whence derived, and on what authority founded, as well as of the art and conduct of this our poem in particular, the learned and laborious Scriblerus hath, according to his manner, and with tolerable share of judgment, dissertated. But when he cometh to speak of the person of the hero fitted for such poem, in truth he miserably halts and hallucinates. For, misled by one Monsieur Bossu, a Gallic critic, he prateth of I cannot tell what phantom of a hero, only raised up to support the fable. A putrid conceit! As if Homer and Virgil, like modern undertakers, who first build their house, and then seek out for a tenant, had contrived the story of a war and a wandering, before they once thought either of Achilles or AEneas. We shall therefore set our good brother and the world also right in this particular, by assuring them, that, in the greater epic, the prime intention of the

Muse is to exalt heroic virtue, in order to propagate the love of it among the children of men; and, consequently, that the poet's first thought must needs be turned upon a real subject meet for laud and celebration; not one whom he is to make, but one whom he may find, truly illustrious. This is the *_primum mobile_* of his poetic world, whence everything is to receive life and motion. For this subject being found, he is immediately ordained, or rather acknowledged, a hero, and put upon such action as becometh the dignity of his character.

But the Muse ceaseth not here her eagle-flight. For sometimes, satiated with the contemplation of these suns of glory, she turneth downward on her wing, and darts with Jove's lightning on the goose and serpent kind. For we may apply to the Muse, in her various moods, what an ancient master of wisdom affirmeth of the gods in general: 'Si Dii non irascuntur impiis et injustis, nec pios utique justosque diligunt. In rebus enim diversis, aut in utramque partem moveri necesse est, aut in neutram. Itaque qui bonos diligit, et malos odit; et qui malos non odit, nec bonos diligit. Quia et diligere bonos ex odio malorum venit; et malos odire ex bonorum caritate descendit.' Which, in our vernacular idiom, may be thus interpreted: 'If the gods be not provoked at evil men, neither are they delighted with the good and just. For contrary objects must either excite contrary affections, or no affections at all. So that he who loveth good men must at the same time hate the bad; and he who hateth not bad men cannot love the good; because to love good men proceedeth from an aversion to evil, and to hate evil men from a tenderness to the good.' From this delicacy of the Muse arose the little epic, (more lively and choleric than her elder sister, whose bulk and complexion incline her to the phlegmatic), and for this some notorious vehicle of vice and folly was sought out, to make thereof an example. An early instance of which (nor could it escape the accurate Scriblerus) the father of epic poem himself affordeth us. From him the practice descended to the Greek dramatic poets, his offspring, who, in the composition of their tetralogy, or set of four pieces, were wont to make the last a satiric tragedy. Happily one of these ancient Dunciads (as we may well term it) is come down unto us amongst the tragedies of the poet Euripides. And what doth the reader suppose may be the subject thereof? Why, in truth, and it is worthy observation, the unequal contention of an old, dull, debauched buffoon Cyclops, with the heaven-directed favourite of Minerva; who, after having quietly borne all the monster's obscene and impious ribaldry, endeth the farce in punishing him with the mark of an indelible brand in his forehead. May we not then be excused, if for the future we consider the epics of Homer, Virgil, and Milton, together with this our poem, as a complete tetralogy, in which the last worthily holdeth the place or station of the satiric piece?

Proceed we therefore in our subject. It hath been long, and, alas for pity! still remaineth a question, whether the hero of the greater epic should be an honest man? or, as the French critics express it, *_un honnête homme_*:^[202] but it never admitted of any doubt, but that the hero of the little epic should be just the contrary. Hence, to the advantage of our Dunciad, we may observe how much juster the moral of that poem must needs be, where so important a question is previously decided.

But then it is not every knave, nor (let me add) every fool, that is a fit subject for a Dunciad. There must still exist some analogy, if not resemblance of qualities, between the heroes of the two poems, and this in order to admit what neoteric critics call the parody, one of the liveliest graces of the little epic. Thus, it being agreed that the

constituent qualities of the greater epic hero are wisdom, bravery, and love, from whence springeth heroic virtue; it followeth that those of the lesser epic hero should be vanity, impudence, and debauchery, from which happy assemblage resulteth heroic dulness, the never-dying subject of this our poem.

This being confessed, come we now to particulars. It is the character of true wisdom to seek its chief support and confidence within itself, and to place that support in the resources which proceed from a conscious rectitude of will. And are the advantages of vanity, when arising to the heroic standard, at all short of this self-complacence? Nay, are they not, in the opinion of the enamoured owner, far beyond it? 'Let the world (will such an one say) impute to me what folly or weakness they please; but till wisdom can give me something that will make me more heartily happy, I am content to be gazed at.' [203] This, we see, is vanity according to the heroic gauge or measure; not that low and ignoble species which pretendeth to virtues we have not, but the laudable ambition of being gazed at for glorying in those vices which everybody knows we have. 'The world may ask (says he) why I make my follies public? Why not? I have passed my time very pleasantly with them.' [204] In short, there is no sort of vanity such a hero would scruple, but that which might go near to degrade him from his high station in this our Dunciad--namely, 'Whether it would not be vanity in him to take shame to himself for not being a wise man?' [205]

Bravery, the second attribute of the true hero, is courage manifesting itself in every limb; while its correspondent virtue in the mock hero is that same courage all collected into the face. And as power when drawn together must needs have more force and spirit than when dispersed, we generally find this kind of courage in so high and heroic a degree, that it insults not only men, but gods. Mezentius is, without doubt, the bravest character in all the AENEIS. But how? His bravery, we know, was a high courage of blasphemy. And can we say less of this brave man's, who, having told us that he placed 'his *_summum bonum_* in those follies, which he was not content barely to possess, but would likewise glory in,' adds, 'If I am misguided, 'tis nature's fault, and I follow her.' [206] Nor can we be mistaken in making this happy quality a species of courage, when we consider those illustrious marks of it which made his face 'more known (as he justly boasteth) than most in the kingdom,' and his language to consist of what we must allow to be the most daring figure of speech, that which is taken from the name of God.

Gentle love, the next ingredient in the true hero's composition, is a mere bird of passage, or (as Shakspeare calls it) summer-teeming lust, and evaporates in the heat of youth; doubtless, by that refinement, it suffers in passing through those certain strainers which our poet somewhere speaketh of. But when it is let alone to work upon the lees, it acquireth strength by old age, and becometh a lasting ornament to the little epic. It is true, indeed, there is one objection to its fitness for such a use: for not only the ignorant may think it common, but it is admitted to be so, even by him who best knoweth its value. 'Don't you think,' argueth he, 'to say only a man has his whore, [207] ought to go for little or nothing? Because *_defendit numerus_*; take the first ten thousand men you meet, and I believe you would be no loser if you betted ten to one that every single sinner of them, one with another, had been guilty of the same frailty.' [208] But here he seemeth not to have done justice to himself: the man is sure enough a hero who hath his lady at fourscore. How doth his modesty herein lessen the merit of a whole well-spent life: not taking to himself the commendation (which Horace

accounted the greatest in a theatrical character) of continuing to the very dregs the same he was from the beginning,

... 'Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerat' ...

But here, in justice both to the poet and the hero, let us further remark, that the calling her his whore implieth she was his own, and not his neighbour's. Truly a commendable continence! and such as Scipio himself must have applauded. For how much self-denial was exerted not to covet his neighbour's whore? and what disorders must the coveting her have occasioned in that society where (according to this political calculator) nine in ten of all ages have their concubines!

We have now, as briefly as we could devise, gone through the three constituent qualities of either hero. But it is not in any, or in all of these, that heroism properly or essentially resideth. It is a lucky result rather from the collision of these lively qualities against one another. Thus, as from wisdom, bravery, and love, ariseth magnanimity, the object of admiration, which is the aim of the greater epic; so from vanity, impudence, and debauchery, springeth buffoonery, the source of ridicule, that 'laughing ornament,' as he well termeth it,[209] of the little epic.

He is not ashamed (God forbid he ever should be ashamed!) of this character, who deemeth that not reason, but risibility, distinguisheth the human species from the brutal. 'As nature,' saith this profound philosopher, 'distinguished our species from the mute creation by our risibility, her design must have been by that faculty as evidently to raise our happiness, as by our _os sublime_ (our erected faces) to lift the dignity of our form above them.'[210] All this considered, how complete a hero must he be, as well as how happy a man, whose risibility lieth not barely in his muscles, as in the common sort, but (as himself informeth us) in his very spirits! and whose _os sublime_ is not simply an erect face, but a brazen head, as should seem by his preferring it to one of iron, said to belong to the late king of Sweden![211]

But whatever personal qualities a hero may have, the examples of Achilles and Aeneas show us, that all those are of small avail without the constant assistance of the gods--for the subversion and erection of empires have never been adjudged the work of man. How greatly soever, then, we may esteem of his high talents, we can hardly conceive his personal prowess alone sufficient to restore the decayed empire of Dulness. So weighty an achievement must require the particular favour and protection of the great--who, being the natural patrons and supporters of letters, as the ancient gods were of Troy, must first be drawn off and engaged in another interest, before the total subversion of them can be accomplished. To surmount, therefore, this last and greatest difficulty, we have, in this excellent man, a professed favourite and intimado of the great. And look, of what force ancient piety was to draw the gods into the party of Aeneas, that, and much stronger, is modern incense, to engage the great in the party of Dulness.

Thus have we essayed to portray or shadow out this noble imp of fame. But now the impatient reader will be apt to say, if so many and various graces go to the making up a hero, what mortal shall suffice to bear his character? Ill hath he read who seeth not, in every trace of this picture, that individual, all-accomplished person, in whom these rare

virtues and lucky circumstances have agreed to meet and concentrate with the strongest lustre and fullest harmony.

The good Scriblerus indeed--nay, the world itself--might be imposed on, in the late spurious editions, by I can't tell what sham hero or phantom; but it was not so easy to impose on him whom this egregious error most of all concerned. For no sooner had the fourth book laid open the high and swelling scene, but he recognised his own heroic acts; and when he came to the words--

'Soft on her lap her laureate son reclines,'

(though laureate imply no more than one crowned with laurel, as becometh any associate or consort in empire), he loudly resented this indignity to violated majesty--indeed, not without cause, he being there represented as fast asleep; so misbecoming the eye of empire, which, like that of Providence, should never doze nor slumber. 'Hah!' saith he, 'fast asleep, it seems! that's a little too strong. Pert and dull at least you might have allowed me, but as seldom asleep as any fool.' [212] However, the injured hero may comfort himself with this reflection, that though it be a sleep, yet it is not the sleep of death, but of immortality. Here he will live [213] at least, though not awake; and in no worse condition than many an enchanted warrior before him. The famous Durandarte, for instance, was, like him, cast into a long slumber by Merlin, the British bard and necromancer; and his example, for submitting to it with a good grace, might be of use to our hero. For that disastrous knight being sorely pressed or driven to make his answer by several persons of quality, only replied with a sigh--'Patience, and shuffle the cards.' [214]

But now, as nothing in this world, no, not the most sacred or perfect things either of religion or government, can escape the sting of envy, methinks I already hear these carpers objecting to the clearness of our hero's title.

It would never (say they) have been esteemed sufficient to make an hero for the Iliad or Aeneis, that Achilles was brave enough to overturn one empire, or Aeneas pious enough to raise another, had they not been goddess-born, and princes bred. What, then, did this author mean by erecting a player instead of one of his patrons (a person 'never a hero even on the stage,' [215]) to this dignity of colleague in the empire of Dulness, and achiever of a work that neither old Omar, Attila, nor John of Leyden could entirely bring to pass?

To all this we have, as we conceive, a sufficient answer from the Roman historian, *'Fabrum esse suae quemque fortunae'*: That every man is the smith of his own fortune. The politic Florentine, Nicholas Machiavel, goeth still further, and affirmeth that a man needeth but to believe himself a hero to be one of the worthiest. 'Let him (saith he) but fancy himself capable of the highest things, and he will of course be able to achieve them.' From this principle it follows, that nothing can exceed our hero's prowess; as nothing ever equalled the greatness of his conceptions. Hear how he constantly paragoneth himself; at one time to Alexander the Great and Charles XII of Sweden, for the excess and delicacy of his ambition; [216] to Henry IV of France for honest policy; [217] to the first Brutus, for love of liberty; [218] and to Sir Robert Walpole, for good government while in power. [219] At another time, to the godlike Socrates, for his diversions and amusements; [220] to Horace, Montaigne, and Sir William Temple for an elegant vanity that

maketh them for ever read and admired;[221] to two Lord Chancellors, for law, from whom, when confederate against him at the bar, he carried away the prize of eloquence;[222] and, to say all in a word, to the right reverend the Lord Bishop of London himself, in the art of writing pastoral letters.[223]

Nor did his actions fall short of the sublimity of his conceit. In his early youth he met the Revolution[224] face to face in Nottingham, at a time when his betters contented themselves with following her. It was here he got acquainted with old Battle-array, of whom he hath made so honourable mention in one of his immortal odes. But he shone in courts as well as camps. He was called up when the nation fell in labour of this Revolution;[225] and was a gossip at her christening, with the bishop and the ladies.[226]

As to his birth, it is true he pretended no relation either to heathen god or goddess; but, what is as good, he was descended from a maker of both.[227] And that he did not pass himself on the world for a hero as well by birth as education was his own fault: for his lineage he bringeth into his life as an anecdote, and is sensible he had it in his power to be thought he was nobody's son at all:[228] And what is that but coming into the world a hero?

But be it (the punctilious laws of epic poesy so requiring) that a hero of more than mortal birth must needs be had, even for this we have a remedy. We can easily derive our hero's pedigree from a goddess of no small power and authority amongst men, and legitimate and install him after the right classical and authentic fashion: for like as the ancient sages found a son of Mars in a mighty warrior, a son of Neptune in a skilful seaman, a son of Phoebus in a harmonious poet, so have we here, if need be, a son of Fortune in an artful gamester. And who fitter than the offspring of Chance to assist in restoring the empire of Night and Chaos?

There is, in truth, another objection, of greater weight, namely, 'That this hero still existeth, and hath not yet finished his earthly course. For if Solon said well, that no man could be called happy till his death, surely much less can any one, till then, be pronounced a hero, this species of men being far more subject than others to the caprices of fortune and humour.' But to this also we have an answer, that will (we hope) be deemed decisive. It cometh from himself, who, to cut this matter short, hath solemnly protested that he will never change or amend.

With regard to his vanity, he declareth that nothing shall ever part them. 'Nature (saith he) hath amply supplied me in vanity--a pleasure which neither the pertness of wit nor the gravity of wisdom will ever persuade me to part with.'[229] Our poet had charitably endeavoured to administer a cure to it: but he telleth us plainly, 'My superiors perhaps may be mended by him; but for my part I own myself incorrigible. I look upon my follies as the best part of my fortune.'[230] And with good reason: we see to what they have brought him!

Secondly, as to buffoonery, 'Is it (saith he) a time of day for me to leave off these fooleries, and set up a new character? I can no more put off my follies than my skin; I have often tried, but they stick too close to me; nor am I sure my friends are displeased with them, for in this light I afford them frequent matter of mirth, &c., &c.'[231] Having then so publicly declared himself incorrigible, he is become dead in law

(I mean the law Epopoeian), and devolveth upon the poet as his property, who may take him and deal with him as if he had been dead as long as an old Egyptian hero; that is to say, embowel and embalm him for posterity.

Nothing therefore (we conceive) remaineth to hinder his own prophecy of himself from taking immediate effect. A rare felicity! and what few prophets have had the satisfaction to see alive! Nor can we conclude better than with that extraordinary one of his, which is conceived in these oraculous words, 'My dulness will find somebody to do it right.'[232]

'Tandem Phoebus adest, morsusque inferre parantem
Congelat, et patulos, ut erant, indurat hiatus.'[233]

BY AUTHORITY.

By virtue of the Authority in Us vested by the Act for subjecting poets to the power of a licenser, we have revised this piece; where finding the style and appellation of King to have been given to a certain pretender, pseudo-poet, or phantom, of the name of Tibbald; and apprehending the same may be deemed in some sort a reflection on Majesty, or at least an insult on that Legal Authority which has bestowed on another person the crown of poesy: We have ordered the said pretender, pseudo-poet, or phantom, utterly to vanish and evaporate out of this work: And do declare the said Throne of Poesy from henceforth to be abdicated and vacant, unless duly and lawfully supplied by the Laureate himself. And it is hereby enacted, that no other person do presume to fill the same.

THE DUNCIAD:[234]

BOOK THE FIRST.

TO DR JONATHAN SWIFT.

ARGUMENT.

The proposition, the invocation, and the inscription. Then the original of the great empire of Dulness, and cause of the continuance thereof. The college of the goddess in the city, with her private academy for poets in particular; the governors of it, and the four cardinal virtues. Then the poem hastes into the midst of things, presenting her, on the evening of a Lord Mayor's day, revolving the long succession of her sons, and the glories past and to come. She fixes her eye on Bayes to be the instrument of that great event which is the subject of the poem. He is described pensive among his books, giving up the cause, and apprehending the period of her empire: after debating whether to betake himself to the Church, or to gaming, or to party-writing, he raises an altar of proper books, and (making first his solemn prayer and declaration) purposes thereon to sacrifice all his unsuccessful writings. As the pile is kindled, the goddess, beholding the flame from her seat, flies and puts it out by casting upon it the poem of Thule. She forthwith reveals herself to him, transports him to her temple, unfolds her arts, and initiates him into her mysteries; then announcing the death of Eusden the poet laureate, anoints him, carries him to

court, and proclaims him successor.

The mighty mother, and her son, who brings[235]
The Smithfield Muses[236] to the ear of kings,
I sing. Say you, her instruments, the great!
Called to this work by Dulness, Jove, and Fate;[237]
You by whose care, in vain decried and cursed,
Still Dunc the second reigns like Dunc the first:
Say, how the goddess[238] bade Britannia sleep,
And pour'd her spirit o'er the land and deep.

In eldest time, ere mortals writ or read,
Ere Pallas issued from the Thunderer's head, 10
Dulness o'er all possess'd her ancient right,
Daughter of Chaos[239] and Eternal Night:
Fate in their dotage this fair idiot gave,
Gross as her sire, and as her mother grave,
Laborious, heavy, busy, bold, and blind,[240]
She ruled, in native anarchy, the mind.

Still her old empire[241] to restore she tries,
For, born a goddess, Dulness never dies.
O thou! whatever title please thine ear,
Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver![242] 20
Whether thou choose Cervantes' serious air,
Or laugh and shake in Rabelais' easy-chair,
Or praise the court, or magnify mankind,[243]
Or thy grieved country's copper chains unbind;
From thy Boeotia though her power retires,
Mourn not, my Swift, at ought our realm acquires.
Here pleased behold her mighty wings outspread
To hatch a new Saturnian age of lead.

Close to those walls where Folly holds her throne,
And laughs to think Monro would take her down, 30
Where o'er the gates, by his famed father's hand,[244]
Great Cibber's brazen, brainless brothers stand,
One cell there is, conceal'd from vulgar eye,
The cave of Poverty and Poetry.
Keen, hollow winds howl through the bleak recess,
Emblem of music caused by emptiness.
Hence bards, like Proteus long in vain tied down,
Escape in monsters, and amaze the town.
Hence Miscellanies spring, the weekly boast
Of Curl's chaste press, and Lintot's rubric post:[247] 40
Hence hymning Tyburn's elegiac lines,[248]
Hence Journals, Medleys, Merc'ries, Magazines:
Sepulchral lies,[249] our holy walls to grace,
And new-year odes,[250] and all the Grub Street race.

In clouded majesty here Dulness shone;
Four guardian Virtues, round, support her throne:
Fierce champion Fortitude, that knows no fears
Of hisses, blows, or want, or loss of ears:
Calm Temperance, whose blessings those partake
Who hunger and who thirst for scribbling sake: 50
Prudence, whose glass presents the approaching jail:
Poetic Justice, with her lifted scale,

Where, in nice balance, truth with gold she weighs,
And solid pudding against empty praise.

Here she beholds the chaos dark and deep,
Where nameless somethings in their causes sleep,
'Till genial Jacob,[251] or a warm third day,
Call forth each mass, a poem, or a play;
How hints, like spawn, scarce quick in embryo lie, 60
How new-born nonsense first is taught to cry,
Maggots half-form'd in rhyme exactly meet,
And learn to crawl upon poetic feet.
Here one poor word an hundred clenches makes,
And ductile Dulness new meanders takes;
There motley images her fancy strike,
Figures ill pair'd, and similes unlike.
She sees a mob of metaphors advance,
Pleased with the madness of the mazy dance;
How Tragedy and Comedy embrace; 70
How Farce and Epic[252] get a jumbled race;
How Time himself stands still at her command,
Realms shift their place, and ocean turns to land.
Here gay Description Egypt glads with showers,
Or gives to Zembla fruits, to Barca flowers;
Glittering with ice here hoary hills are seen,
There painted valleys of eternal green;
In cold December fragrant chaplets blow,
And heavy harvests nod beneath the snow.

All these, and more, the cloud-compelling queen
Beholds through fogs that magnify the scene. 80
She, tinsell'd o'er in robes of varying hues,
With self-applause her wild creation views;
Sees momentary monsters rise and fall,
And with her own fools-colours gilds them all.

'Twas on the day,[253] when Thorold rich and grave,
Like Cimon, triumphed both on land and wave:
(Pomps without guilt, of bloodless swords and maces,
Glad chains,[254] warm furs, broad banners, and broad faces.)
Now night descending, the proud scene was o'er,
But lived, in Settle's numbers, one day more.[255] 90
Now mayors and shrieves all hushed and satiate lay,
Yet eat, in dreams, the custard of the day;
While pensive poets painful vigils keep,
Sleepless themselves, to give their readers sleep.
Much to the mindful queen the feast recalls
What city swans once sung within the walls;
Much she revolves their arts, their ancient praise,
And sure succession down from Heywood's[256] days.
She saw, with joy, the line immortal run,
Each sire impress'd and glaring in his son: 100
So watchful Bruin forms, with plastic care,
Each growing lump, and brings it to a bear.
She saw old Pryn in restless Daniel[257] shine,
And Eusden[258] eke out Blackmore's endless line;
She saw slow Philips creep like Tate's[259] poor page,
And all the mighty mad in Dennis rage.[260]

In each she marks her image full express'd,

But chief in Bayes's monster-breeding breast;
 Bayes formed by nature stage and town to bless,
 And act, and be, a coxcomb with success. 110
 Dulness with transport eyes the lively dunce,
 Remembering she herself was pertness once.
 Now (shame to Fortune![261]) an ill run at play
 Blank'd his bold visage, and a thin third day;
 Swearing and supperless the hero sate,
 Blasphemed his gods, the dice, and damn'd his fate.
 Then gnaw'd his pen, then dash'd it on the ground,
 Sinking from thought to thought, a vast profound!
 Plunged for his sense, but found no bottom there,
 Yet wrote and floundered on, in mere despair. 120
 Round him much embryo, much abortion lay,
 Much future ode, and abdicated play;
 Nonsense precipitate, like running lead,
 That slipp'd through cracks and zig-zags of the head;
 All that on Folly Frenzy could beget,
 Fruits of dull heat, and sooterkins of wit.
 Next, o'er his books his eyes began to roll,
 In pleasing memory of all he stole,
 How here he sipp'd, how there he plunder'd snug,
 And suck'd all o'er, like an industrious bug. 130
 Here lay poor Fletcher's half-eat scenes,[262] and here
 The frippery of crucified Moliere;
 There hapless Shakspeare, yet of Tibbald[263] sore,
 Wish'd he had blotted[264] for himself before.
 The rest on outside merit but presume,
 Or serve (like other fools) to fill a room;
 Such with their shelves as due proportion hold,
 Or their fond parents dress'd in red and gold;
 Or where the pictures for the page atone,
 And Quarles is saved by beauties not his own. 140
 Here swells the shelf with Ogilby the great:[265]
 There, stamp'd with arms, Newcastle shines complete:[266]
 Here all his suffering brotherhood retire,
 And 'scape the martyrdom of Jakes and fire:
 A Gothic library! of Greece and Rome
 Well purged, and worthy Settle, Banks, and Broome.[267]

But, high above, more solid learning shone,
 The classics of an age that heard of none;
 There Caxton[268] slept, with Wynkyn at his side,
 One clasp'd in wood, and one in strong cow-hide; 150
 There, saved by spice, like mummies, many a year,
 Dry bodies of divinity appear:
 De Lyra[269] there a dreadful front extends,
 And here the groaning shelves Philemon[270] bends.

Of these, twelve volumes, twelve of amplest size,
 Redeem'd from tapers and defrauded pies,
 Inspired he seizes: these an altar raise:
 An hecatomb of pure, unsullied lays
 That altar crowns: a folio common-place
 Finds the whole pile, of all his works the base: 160
 Quartos, octavos, shape the lessening pyre:
 A twisted birth-day ode completes the spire.

Then he: Great tamer of all human art!

First in my care, and ever at my heart;
 Dulness! whose good old cause I yet defend,
 With whom my Muse began, with whom shall end,
 E'er since Sir Fopling's periwig[271] was praise,
 To the last honours of the butt and bays:
 O thou! of business the directing soul;
 To this our head, like bias to the bowl, 170
 Which, as more ponderous, made its aim more true,
 Obliquely waddling to the mark in view;
 Oh, ever gracious to perplexed mankind,
 Still spread a healing mist before the mind;
 And, lest we err by wit's wild dancing light,
 Secure us kindly in our native night.
 Or, if to wit a coxcomb make pretence,
 Guard the sure barrier between that and sense;
 Or quite unravel all the reasoning thread,
 And hang some curious cobweb in its stead! 180
 As, forced from wind-guns, lead itself can fly,
 And ponderous slugs cut swiftly through the sky;
 As clocks to weight their nimble motion owe,
 The wheels above urged by the load below:
 Me Emptiness and Dulness could inspire,
 And were my elasticity and fire.
 Some demon stole my pen (forgive the offence)
 And once betrayed me into common sense:
 Else all my prose and verse were much the same;
 This, prose on stilts; that, poetry fallen lame. 190
 Did on the stage my fops appear confined?
 My life gave ampler lessons to mankind.
 Did the dead letter unsuccessful prove?
 The brisk example never fail'd to move.
 Yet sure, had Heaven decreed to save the state,
 Heaven had decreed these works a longer date.
 Could Troy be saved by any single hand,
 This gray-goose weapon must have made her stand.
 What can I now my Fletcher cast aside,
 Take up the Bible, once my better guide? 200
 Or tread the path by venturous heroes trod,
 This box my thunder, this right hand my god?
 Or chair'd at White's amidst the doctors sit,
 Teach oaths to gamesters, and to nobles wit?
 Or bidst thou rather party to embrace?
 (A friend to party thou, and all her race;
 'Tis the same rope at different ends they twist;
 To Dulness Ridpath is as dear as Mist.[272])
 Shall I, like Curtins, desperate in my zeal,
 O'er head and ears plunge for the common weal? 210
 Or rob Rome's ancient geese[273] of all their glories,
 And, cackling, save the monarchy of Tories?
 Hold--to the minister I more incline;
 To serve his cause, O queen! is serving thine.
 And see! thy very gazetteers give o'er,
 Ev'n Ralph repents, and Henley writes no more.
 What then remains? Ourselves. Still, still remain
 Cibberian forehead, and Cibberian brain.
 This brazen brightness, to the squire so dear;
 This polish'd hardness, that reflects the peer: 220
 This arch absurd, that wit and fool delights;
 This mess, tossed up of Hockley-hole and White's;

Where dukes and butchers join to wreath my crown,
At once the bear and fiddle[274] of the town.

O born in sin, and forth in folly brought!
Works damn'd, or to be damn'd (your father's fault)!
Go, purified by flames, ascend the sky,
My better and more Christian progeny!
Unstain'd, untouch'd, and yet in maiden sheets;
While all your smutty sisters walk the streets. 230
Ye shall not beg, like gratis-given Bland,[275]
Sent with a pass, and vagrant through the land;
Nor sail with Ward[276] to ape-and-monkey climes,
Where vile Mundungus trucks for viler rhymes:
Not sulphur-tipp'd, emblaze an ale-house fire;
Not wrap up oranges, to pelt your sire!
Oh, pass more innocent, in infant state,
To the mild limbo of our father Tate:[277]
Or peaceably forgot, at once be blest
In Shadwell's bosom with eternal rest! 240
Soon to that mass of nonsense to return,
Where things destroyed are swept to things unborn.

With that, a tear (portentous sign of grace!)
Stole from the master of the sevenfold face:
And thrice he lifted high the birth-day brand,
And thrice he dropp'd it from his quivering hand;
Then lights the structure with averted eyes:
The rolling smoke involves the sacrifice.
The opening clouds disclose each work by turns,
Now flames the Cid, and now Perolla burns; 250
Great Caesar roars, and hisses in the fires;
King John in silence modestly expires:
No merit now the dear Nonjuror claims,
Moliere's[278] old stubble in a moment flames.
Tears gush'd again, as from pale Priam's eyes
When the last blaze sent Ilion to the skies.

Roused by the light, old Dulness heaved the head,
Then snatch'd a sheet of Thule[279] from her bed,
Sudden she flies, and whelms it o'er the pyre;
Down sink the flames, and with a hiss expire. 260

Her ample presence fills up all the place;
A veil of fogs dilates her awful face:
Great in her charms! as when on shrieves and mayors
She looks, and breathes herself into their airs.
She bids him wait her to her sacred dome:
Well pleased he enter'd, and confessed his home.
So, spirits ending their terrestrial race,
Ascend, and recognise their native place.
This the great mother dearer held than all
The clubs of quidnuncs, or her own Guildhall: 270
Here stood her opium, here she nursed her owls,
And here she plann'd the imperial seat of fools.

Here to her chosen all her works she shows;
Prose swell'd to verse, verse loitering into prose:
How random thoughts now meaning chance to find,
Now leave all memory of sense behind:

How prologues into prefaces decay,
And these to notes are fritter'd quite away:
How index-learning turns no student pale,
Yet holds the eel of science by the tail: 280
How, with less reading than makes felons 'scape,
Less human genius than God gives an ape,
Small thanks to France, and none to Rome or Greece,
A past, vamp'd, future, old, revived, new piece,
'Twixt Plautus, Fletcher, Shakspeare, and Corneille,
Can make a Cibber, Tibbald,[280] or Ozell.[281]

The goddess then o'er his anointed head,
With mystic words, the sacred opium shed.
And, lo! her bird (a monster of a fowl,
Something betwixt a Heidegger[282] and owl,) 290
Perch'd on his crown. 'All hail! and hail again,
My son! the promised land expects thy reign.
Know, Eusden thirsts no more for sack or praise;
He sleeps among the dull of ancient days;
Safe, where no critics damn, no duns molest,
Where wretched Withers, Ward, and Gildon[283] rest,
And high-born Howard,[284] more majestic sire,
With fool of quality completes the quire,
Thou, Cibber! thou, his laurel shalt support,
Folly, my son, has still a friend at Court. 300
Lift up your gates, ye princes, see him come!
Sound, sound, ye viols, be the cat-call dumb!
Bring, bring the madding bay, the drunken vine;
The creeping, dirty, courtly ivy join.
And thou! his aide-de-camp, lead on my sons,
Light-arm'd with points, antitheses, and puns.
Let Bawdry, Billingsgate, my daughters dear,
Support his front, and Oaths bring up the rear:
And under his, and under Archer's wing,
Gaming[285] and Grub Street, skulk behind the king. 310
Oh! when shall rise a monarch all our own,
And I, a nursing mother, rock the throne;
'Twixt prince and people close the curtain draw,
Shade him from light, and cover him from law;
Fatten the courtier, starve the learned band,
And suckle armies, and dry-nurse the land:
Till senates nod to lullabies divine,
And all be sleep, as at an ode of thine.'

She ceased. Then swells the chapel-royal[286] throat:
God save King Cibber! mounts in every note. 320
Familiar White's, God save King Colley! cries;
God save King Colley! Drury lane replies:
To Needham's quick the voice triumphal rode,
But pious Needham[287] dropp'd the name of God;
Back to the Devil[288] the last echoes roll,
And Coll! each butcher roars at Hockley-hole.

So when Jove's block descended from on high
(As sings thy great forefather Ogilby[289]),
Loud thunder to its bottom shook the bog,
And the hoarse nation croak'd, God save King Log!

VARIATIONS.

VER. 1. The mighty mother, &c. In the first edition it was thus--

Books and the man I sing, the first who brings
The Smithfield muses to the ear of kings.
Say, great patricians! since yourselves inspire
These wondrous works (so Jove and Fate require)
Say, for what cause, in vain decried and cursed,
Still---

After VER. 22, in the MS.--

Or in the graver gown instruct mankind,
Or silent let thy morals tell thy mind.

But this was to be understood, as the poet says, *_ironice_*, like the 23d verse.

VER. 29. Close to those walls, &c. In the former edition thus--

Where wave the tatter'd ensigns of Rag-fair,[245]
A yawning ruin hangs and nods in air;[246]
Keen hollow winds howl through the bleak recess,
Emblem of music caused by emptiness;
Here in one bed two shivering sisters lie,
The cave of Poverty and Poetry.

VER. 41 in the former lines--

Hence hymning Tyburn's elegiac lay,
Hence the soft sing-song on Cecilia's day.

VER. 42 alludes to the annual songs composed to music on St Cecilia's Feast.

VER. 85 in the former editions--

'Twas on the day--when Thorald,[290] rich and grave.

VER. 108. But chief in Bayes's, &c. In the former edition thus--

But chief, in Tibbald's monster-breeding breast;
Sees gods with demons in strange league engage,
And earth, and heaven, and hell her battles wage.
She eyed the bard, where supperless he sate,
And pined, unconscious of his rising fate;
Studious he sate, with all his books around,
Sinking from thought to thought, &c--

VER. 121. Round him much embryo, &c. In the former editions thus--

He roll'd his eyes, that witness'd huge dismay,
Where yet unpawn'd much learned lumber lay;
Volumes whose size the space exactly fill'd,
Or which fond authors were so good to gild,
Or where, by sculpture made for ever known,

The page admires new beauties not its own.

Here swells the shelf, &c.--

VER. 146. In the first edition it was--

Well-purged, and worthy W--y, W--s, and Bl---.

VER. 162. A twisted, &c. In the former edition--

And last, a little Ajax[291] tips the spire.

VER. 177. Or, if to wit, &c. In the former edition--

Ah! still o'er Britain stretch that peaceful wand,
Which lulls th' Helvetian and Batavian land;
Where rebel to thy throne if science rise,
She does but show her coward face, and dies:
There thy good scholiasts with unwearied pains
Make Horace flat, and humble Maro's strains:
Here studious I unlucky moderns save,
Nor sleeps one error in its father's grave,
Old puns restore, lost blunders nicely seek,
And crucify poor Shakspeare once a week.
For thee supplying, in the worst of days.
Notes to dull books, and prologues to dull plays;
Not that my quill to critics was confined,
My verse gave ampler lessons to mankind;
So gravest precepts may successless prove.
But sad examples never fail to move.
As, forced from wind-guns, &c.

VER. 195. Yet sure had Heaven, &c. In the former edition--

Had Heaven decreed such works a longer date,
Heaven had decreed to spare the Grub Street state.
But see great Settle to the dust descend,
And all thy cause and empire at an end!
Could Troy be saved, &c.--

VER. 213. Hold--to the minister. In the former edition--

Yes, to my country I my pen consign
Yes, from this moment, mighty Mist! am thine.

VER. 225. O born in sin, &c. In the former edition--

Adieu, my children! better thus expire
Unstall'd, unsold; thus glorious mount in fire,
Fair without spot; than greased by grocer's hands,
Or shipp'd with Ward to ape-and-monkey lands,
Or wafting ginger, round the streets to run,
And visit ale-house, where ye first begun,
With that he lifted thrice the sparkling brand,
And thrice he dropp'd it, &c.--

VER. 250. Now flames the Cid, &c. In the former edition--

Now flames old Memnon, now Rodrigo burns,
In one quick flash see Proserpine expire,
And last, his own cold Aeschylus took fire.

Then gushed the tears, as from the Trojan's eyes,
When the last blaze, &c.

After VER. 268, in the former edition, followed these two lines--

Raptured, he gazes round the dear retreat,
And in sweet numbers celebrates the seat.

VER. 293. Know, Eusden, &c. In the former edition--

Know, Settle, cloy'd with custard and with praise,
Is gather'd to the dull of ancient days,
Safe where no critics damn, no duns molest,
Where Gildon, Banks, and high-born Howard rest.
I see a king! who leads my chosen sons
To lands that flow with clenches and with puns:
Till each famed theatre my empire own;
Till Albion, as Hibernia, bless my throne!
I see! I see!--Then rapt she spoke no more.
God save King Tibbald! Grub Street alleys roar.
So when Jove's block, &c.

BOOK THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

The king being proclaimed, the solemnity is graced with public games and sports of various kinds; not instituted by the hero, as by Aeneas in Virgil, but for greater honour by the goddess in person (in like manner as the games Pythia, Isthmia, &c., were anciently said to be ordained by the gods, and as Thetis herself appearing, according to Homer, Odyss. xxiv., proposed the prizes in honour of her son Achilles). Hither flock the poets and critics, attended, as is but just, with their patrons and booksellers. The goddess is first pleased, for her disport, to propose games to the booksellers, and setteth up the phantom of a poet, which they contend to overtake. The races described, with their divers accidents. Next, the game for a poetess. Then follow the exercises for the poets, of tickling, vociferating, diving: The first holds forth the arts and practices of dedicators; the second of disputants and fustian poets; the third of profound, dark, and dirty party-writers. Lastly, for the critics, the goddess proposes (with great propriety) an exercise, not of their parts, but their patience, in hearing the works of two voluminous authors, one in verse, and the other in prose, deliberately read, without sleeping: the various effects of which, with the several degrees and manners of their operation, are here set forth; till the whole number, not of critics only, but of spectators, actors, and all present, fall fast asleep; which naturally and necessarily ends the games.

High on a gorgeous seat, that far out-shone
Henley's gilt tub,[292] or Flecknoe's Irish throne,[293]
Or that where on her Curlls the public pours,[294]
All-bounteous, fragrant grains and golden showers,
Great Cibber sate: the proud Parnassian sneer,
The conscious simper, and the jealous leer,
Mix on his look: all eyes direct their rays
On him, and crowds turn coxcombs as they gaze.
His peers shine round him with reflected grace,

New edge their dulness, and new bronze their face. 10
So from the sun's broad beam, in shallow urns
Heaven's twinkling sparks draw light, and point their horns.

Not with more glee, by hands Pontific crown'd,
With scarlet hats wide-waving circled round,
Rome in her Capitol saw Querno sit,[295]
Throned on seven hills, the Antichrist of wit.

And now the queen, to glad her sons, proclaims
By herald hawkers, high heroic games.
They summon all her race: an endless band
Pours forth, and leaves unpeopled half the land. 20
A motley mixture! in long wigs, in bags,
In silks, in capes, in garters, and in rags,
From drawing-rooms, from colleges, from garrets,
On horse, on foot, in hacks, and gilded chariots:
All who true dunces in her cause appear'd,
And all who knew those dunces to reward.

Amid that area wide they took their stand,
Where the tall maypole once o'er-looked the Strand,
But now (so Anne and piety ordain)
A church collects the saints of Drury Lane. 30

With authors, stationers obey'd the call,
(The field of glory is a field for all).
Glory and gain the industrious tribe provoke;
And gentle Dulness ever loves a joke.
A poet's form she placed before their eyes,
And bade the nimblest racer seize the prize;
No meagre, muse-rid mope, adust and thin,
In a dun night-gown of his own loose skin;
But such a bulk as no twelve bards could raise, 40
Twelve starveling bards of these degenerate days.
All as a partridge plump, full-fed, and fair,
She form'd this image of well-bodied air;
With pert flat eyes she window'd well its head;
A brain of feathers, and a heart of lead;
And empty words she gave, and sounding strain,
But senseless, lifeless! idol void and vain!
Never was dash'd out, at one lucky hit,[297]
A fool, so just a copy of a wit;
So like, that critics said, and courtiers swore,
A wit it was, and call'd the phantom More.[298] 50

All gaze with ardour: some a poet's name,
Others a sword-knot and laced suit inflame.
But lofty Lintot[299] in the circle rose:
'This prize is mine; who tempt it are my foes;
With me began this genius, and shall end.'
He spoke: and who with Lintot shall contend?
Fear held them mute. Alone, untaught to fear,
Stood dauntless Curll:[300] 'Behold that rival here!
The race by vigour, not by vaunts is won;
So take the hindmost Hell.' He said, and run. 60
Swift as a bard the bailiff leaves behind,
He left huge Lintot, and out-stripp'd the wind.
As when a dab-chick waddles through the copse

On feet and wings, and flies, and wades, and hops:
 So labouring on, with shoulders, hands, and head,
 Wide as a wind-mill all his figure spread,
 With arms expanded Bernard rows his state,
 And left-legg'd Jacob[301] seems to emulate.
 Full in the middle way there stood a lake,
 Which Curll's Corinna[302] chanced that morn to make: 70
 (Such was her wont, at early dawn to drop
 Her evening cates before his neighbour's shop,)
 Here fortun'd Curll to slide; loud shout the band,
 And Bernard! Bernard! rings through all the Strand.
 Obscene with filth the miscreant lies bewray'd,
 Fallen in the plash his wickedness had laid:
 Then first (if poets aught of truth declare)
 The caitiff vaticide conceived a prayer:
 'Hear, Jove! whose name my bards and I adore,
 As much at least as any god's, or more; 80
 And him and his if more devotion warms,
 Down with the Bible, up with the Pope's arms.'[303]

A place there is, betwixt earth, air, and seas,[304]
 Where, from Ambrosia, Jove retires for ease.
 There in his seat two spacious vents appear,
 On this he sits, to that he leans his ear,
 And hears the various vows of fond mankind;
 Some beg an eastern, some a western wind:
 All vain petitions, mounting to the sky,
 With reams abundant this abode supply; 90
 Amused he reads, and then returns the bills
 Sign'd with that ichor which from gods distils.

In office here fair Cloacina stands,
 And ministers to Jove with purest hands.
 Forth from the heap she pick'd her votary's prayer,
 And placed it next him, a distinction rare!
 Oft had the goddess heard her servant's call,
 From her black grottos near the Temple-wall,
 Listening delighted to the jest unclean
 Of link-boys vile, and watermen obscene; 100
 Where as he fish'd her nether realms for wit,
 She oft had favour'd him, and favours yet.
 Renew'd by ordure's sympathetic force,
 As oil'd with magic juices for the course,
 Vigorous he rises; from the effluvia strong
 Imbibes new life, and scours and stinks along;
 Repasses Lintot, vindicates the race,
 Nor heeds the brown dishonours of his face.

And now the victor stretch'd his eager hand
 Where the tall Nothing stood, or seem'd to stand; 110
 A shapeless shade, it melted from his sight,
 Like forms in clouds, or visions of the night.
 To seize his papers, Curll, was next thy care;
 His papers light, fly diverse, toss'd in air;
 Songs, sonnets, epigrams the winds uplift,
 And whisk them back to Evans, Young, and Swift.[305]
 The embroider'd suit at least he deem'd his prey,
 That suit an unpaid tailor snatch'd away.
 No rag, no scrap, of all the beau, or wit,

That once so flutter'd, and that once so writ. 120

Heaven rings with laughter: of the laughter vain,
Dulness, good queen, repeats the jest again.
Three wicked imps, of her own Grub Street choir,
She deck'd like Congreve, Addison, and Prior;
Mears, Warner, Wilkins run: delusive thought!
Breval, Bond, Bezaleel,[306] the varlets caught.
Curll stretches after Gay, but Gay is gone,
He grasps an empty Joseph[307] for a John:
So Proteus, hunted in a nobler shape,
Became, when seized, a puppy, or an ape. 130

To him the goddess: 'Son! thy grief lay down,
And turn this whole illusion on the town:[308]
As the sage dame, experienced in her trade,
By names of toasts retails each batter'd jade;
(Whence hapless Monsieur much complains at Paris
Of wrongs from duchesses and Lady Maries;)
Be thine, my stationer! this magic gift;
Cook shall be Prior,[309] and Concanen, Swift:
So shall each hostile name become our own,
And we too boast our Garth and Addison.' 140

With that she gave him (piteous of his case,
Yet smiling at his rueful length of face[310])
A shaggy tapestry, worthy to be spread
On Codrus' old, or Dunton's modern bed:[311]
Instructive work! whose wry-mouth'd portraiture
Display'd the fates her confessors endure.
Earless on high, stood unabash'd Defoe,
And Tutchin flagrant from the scourge below.[312]
There Ridpath, Roper,[313] cudgell'd might ye view,
The very worsted still look'd black and blue. 150
Himself among the storied chiefs he spies,[314]
As, from the blanket, high in air he flies,
And oh! (he cried) what street, what lane but knows
Our purgings, pumpings, blanketings, and blows?
In every loom our labours shall be seen,
And the fresh vomit run for ever green!

See in the circle next, Eliza[315] placed,
Two babes of love close clinging to her waist;
Fair as before her works she stands confess'd, 159
In flowers and pearls by bounteous Kirkall[316] dress'd.
The goddess then: 'Who best can send on high
The salient spout, far-streaming to the sky;
His be yon Juno of majestic size,
With cow-like udders, and with ox-like eyes.
This China Jordan let the chief o'ercome
Replenish, not ingloriously, at home.'

Osborne[317] and Curll accept the glorious strife,
(Though this his son dissuades, and that his wife;)
One on his manly confidence relies,
One on his vigour and superior size. 170
First Osborne lean'd against his letter'd post;
It rose, and labour'd to a curve at most.
So Jove's bright bow displays its watery round

(Sure sign, that no spectator shall be drown'd),
 A second effort brought but new disgrace,
 The wild meander wash'd the artist's face:
 Thus the small jet, which hasty hands unlock,
 Spurts in the gardener's eyes who turns the cock.
 Not so from shameless Curll; impetuous spread
 The stream, and smoking flourish'd o'er his head. 180
 So (famed like thee for turbulence and horns)
 Eridanus his humble fountain scorns;
 Through half the heavens he pours the exalted urn;
 His rapid waters in their passage burn.

Swift as it mounts, all follow with their eyes:
 Still happy impudence obtains the prize.
 Thou triumph'st, victor of the high-wrought day,
 And the pleased dame, soft-smiling, lead'st away.
 Osborne, through perfect modesty o'ercome,
 Crown'd with the Jordan, walks contented home. 190

But now for authors nobler palms remain;
 Room for my lord! three jockeys in his train;
 Six huntsmen with a shout precede his chair:
 He grins, and looks broad nonsense with a stare.
 His honour's meaning Dulness thus express'd,
 'He wins this patron, who can tickle best.'

He chinks his purse, and takes his seat of state:
 With ready quills the dedicators wait;
 Now at his head the dext'rous task commence,
 And, instant, fancy feels the imputed sense; 200
 Now gentle touches wanton o'er his face,
 He struts Adonis, and affects grimace:
 Rolli[318] the feather to his ear conveys,
 Then his nice taste directs our operas:
 Bentley[319] his mouth with classic flattery opes,
 And the puff'd orator bursts out in tropes.
 But Welsted[320] most the poet's healing balm
 Strives to extract from his soft, giving palm;
 Unlucky Welsted! thy unfeeling master,
 The more thou ticklest, gripes his fist the faster. 210

While thus each hand promotes the pleasing pain,
 And quick sensations skip from vein to vein;
 A youth unknown to Phoebus, in despair,
 Puts his last refuge all in Heaven and prayer.
 What force have pious vows! The Queen of Love
 Her sister sends, her votaress, from above.
 As taught by Venus, Paris learn'd the art
 To touch Achilles' only tender part;
 Secure, through her, the noble prize to carry,
 He marches off, his Grace's secretary. 220

'Now turn to different sports (the goddess cries),
 And learn, my sons, the wondrous power of noise.
 To move, to raise, to ravish every heart,
 With Shakspeare's nature, or with Jonson's art,
 Let others aim: 'tis yours to shake the soul
 With thunder rumbling from the mustard bowl,[321]
 With horns and trumpets now to madness swell,

Now sink in sorrows with a tolling bell;
Such happy arts attention can command,
When fancy flags, and sense is at a stand. 230
Improve we these. Three cat-calls be the bribe
Of him whose chattering shames the monkey tribe:
And his this drum whose hoarse heroic bass
Drowns the loud clarion of the braying ass.'

Now thousand tongues are heard in one loud din:
The monkey-mimics rush discordant in;
'Twas chattering, grinning, mouthing, jabbering all,
And noise and Norton, brangling and Breval,[322]
Dennis and dissonance, and captious art,
And snip-snap short, and interruption smart, 240
And demonstration thin, and theses thick,
And major, minor, and conclusion quick.
'Hold' (cried the queen) 'a cat-call each shall win;
Equal your merits! equal is your din!
But that this well-disputed game may end,
Sound forth, nay brayers, and the welkin rend.'

As when the long-ear'd milky mothers wait
At some sick miser's triple-bolted gate,
For their defrauded, absent foals they make
A moan so loud, that all the guild awake; 250
Sore sighs Sir Gilbert, starting at the bray,
From dreams of millions, and three groats to pay.
So swells each windpipe; ass intones to ass,
Harmonic twang! of leather, horn, and brass;
Such as from labouring lungs the enthusiast blows,
High sound, attemper'd to the vocal nose,
Or such as bellow from the deep divine;
There, Webster![323] peal'd thy voice, and, Whitfield![324] thine.
But far o'er all, sonorous Blackmore's strain;
Walls, steeples, skies, bray back to him again. 260
In Tottenham fields, the brethren, with amaze,
Prick all their ears up, and forget to graze;
'Long Chancery Lane retentive rolls the sound,
And courts to courts return it round and round;
Thames wafts it thence to Rufus' roaring hall,
And Hungerford re-echoes bawl for bawl.
All hail him victor in both gifts of song,
Who sings so loudly, and who sings so long.

This labour past, by Bridewell all descend,
(As morning prayer, and flagellation end)[325] 270
To where Fleet-ditch with disemboguing streams
Rolls the large tribute of dead dogs to Thames,
The king of dikes! than whom no sluice of mud
With deeper sable blots the silver flood.
'Here strip, my children! here at once leap in,
Here prove who best can dash through thick and thin,[326]
And who the most in love of dirt excel,
Or dark dexterity of groping well.
Who flings most filth, and wide pollutes around
The stream, be his the weekly journals[327] bound; 280
A pig of lead to him who dives the best;
A peck of coals a-piece[328] shall glad the rest.'

In naked majesty Oldmixon stands,[329]
And, Milo-like, surveys his arms and hands;
Then sighing, thus, 'And am I now threescore?
Ah why, ye gods! should two and two make four?'
He said, and climb'd a stranded lighter's height,
Shot to the black abyss, and plunged downright.
The senior's judgment all the crowd admire,
Who but to sink the deeper, rose the higher. 290

Next Smedley dived:[330] slow circles dimpled o'er
The quaking mud, that closed, and oped no more.
All look, all sigh, and call on Smedley lost;
'Smedley!' in vain, resounds through all the coast.

Then Hill[331] essay'd; scarce vanish'd out of sight,
He buoys up instant, and returns to light:
He bears no token of the sable streams,
And mounts far off among the swans of Thames.

True to the bottom, see Concanen creep,
A cold, long-winded, native of the deep: 300
If perseverance gain the diver's prize,
Not everlasting Blackmore this denies:
No noise, no stir, no motion can'st thou make,
The unconscious stream sleeps o'er thee like a lake.

Next plunged a feeble, but a desperate pack,
With each a sickly brother at his back:[332]
Sons of a day! just buoyant on the flood,
Then number'd with the puppies in the mud.
Ask ye their names? I could as soon disclose 310
The names of these blind puppies as of those.
Fast by, like Niobe (her children gone)
Sits Mother Osborne,[333] stupified to stone!
And monumental brass this record bears,
'These are,--ah no! these were, the gazetteers!'[334]

Not so bold Arnall:[335] with a weight of skull,
Furious he dives, precipitately dull.
Whirlpools and storms his circling arm invest,
With all the might of gravitation bless'd.
No crab more active in the dirty dance,
Downward to climb, and backward to advance. 320
He brings up half the bottom on his head,
And loudly claims the journals and the lead.

The plunging Prelate,[336] and his ponderous Grace,
With holy envy gave one layman place.
When, lo! a burst of thunder shook the flood,
Slow rose a form, in majesty of mud:
Shaking the horrors of his sable brows,
And each ferocious feature grim with ooze.
Greater he looks, and more than mortal stares:
Then thus the wonders of the deep declares. 330

First he relates, how sinking to the chin,
Smit with his mien, the mud-nymphs suck'd him in:
How young Lutetia, softer than the down,
Nigrina black, and Merdamante brown,

Vied for his love in jetty bowers below,
As Hylas fair was ravish'd long ago.
Then sung, how, shown him by the nut-brown maids;
A branch of Styx here rises from the shades,
That, tintured as it runs with Lethe's streams,
And wafting vapours from the land of dreams, 340
(As under seas Alpheus' secret sluice
Bears Pisa's offerings to his Arethuse,)
Pours into Thames: and hence the mingled wave
Intoxicates the pert, and lulls the grave:
Here brisker vapours o'er the Temple creep,
There, all from Paul's to Aldgate drink and sleep.

Thence to the banks where reverend bards repose,
They led him soft; each reverend bard arose;
And Milbourn[337] chief, deputed by the rest,
Gave him the cassock, surcingle, and vest. 350
'Receive (he said) these robes which once were mine,
Dulness is sacred in a sound divine.'

He ceased, and spread the robe; the crowd confess
The reverend Flamen in his lengthen'd dress.
Around him wide a sable army stand,
A low-born, cell-bred, selfish, servile band,
Prompt or to guard or stab, to saint or damn,
Heaven's Swiss, who fight for any god, or man.
Through Lud's famed gates,[338] along the well-known Fleet
Rolls the black troop, and overshades the street, 360
Till showers of sermons, characters, essays,
In circling fleeces whiten all the ways:
So clouds replenish'd from some bog below,
Mount in dark volumes, and descend in snow.
Here stopp'd the goddess; and in pomp proclaims
A gentler exercise to close the games.

'Ye critics! in whose heads, as equal scales,
I weigh what author's heaviness prevails,
Which most conduce to soothe the soul in slumbers,
My Henley's periods, or my Blackmore's numbers, 370
Attend the trial we propose to make:
If there be man, who o'er such works can wake,
Sleep's all-subduing charms who dares defy,
And boasts Ulysses' ear with Argus' eye;
To him we grant our amplest powers to sit
Judge of all present, past, and future wit;
To cavil, censure, dictate, right or wrong,
Full and eternal privilege of tongue.'

Three college Sophs, and three pert Templars came,
The same their talents, and their tastes the same; 380
Each prompt to query, answer, and debate,
And smit with love of poesy and prate.
The ponderous books two gentle readers bring;
The heroes sit, the vulgar form a ring.
The clamorous crowd is hush'd with mugs of mum,
Till all, tuned equal, send a general hum.
Then mount the clerks, and in one lazy tone
Through the long, heavy, painful page drawl on;
Soft creeping, words on words, the sense compose,

At every line they stretch, they yawn, they doze. 390
 As to soft gales top-heavy pines bow low
 Their heads, and lift them as they cease to blow,
 Thus oft they rear, and oft the head decline,
 As breathe, or pause, by fits, the airs divine;
 And now to this side, now to that they nod,
 As verse or prose infuse the drowsy god.
 Thrice Budgell aim'd to speak,[339] but thrice suppress'd
 By potent Arthur, knock'd his chin and breast.
 Toland and Tindal,[340] prompt at priests to jeer,
 Yet silent bow'd to Christ's no kingdom here.[341] 400
 Who sate the nearest, by the words o'ercome,
 Slept first; the distant nodded to the hum.
 Then down are roll'd the books; stretch'd o'er 'em lies
 Each gentle clerk, and, muttering, seals his eyes,
 As what a Dutchman plumps into the lakes,
 One circle first, and then a second makes;
 What Dulness dropp'd among her sons impress'd
 Like motion from one circle to the rest;
 So from the midmost the nutation spreads
 Round and more round, o'er all the sea of heads. 410
 At last Centlivre[342] felt her voice to fail,
 Motteux[343] himself unfinished left his tale,
 Boyer the state, and Law the stage gave o'er,[344]
 Morgan[345] and Mandeville[346] could prate no more;
 Norton,[347] from Daniel and Ostroea sprung,
 Bless'd with his father's front and mother's tongue,
 Hung silent down his never-blushing head;
 And all was hush'd, as Polly's self lay dead.

Thus the soft gifts of sleep conclude the day,
 And stretch'd on bulks, as usual, poets lay. 420
 Why should I sing what bards the nightly Muse
 Did slumbering visit, and convey to stews;
 Who prouder march'd, with magistrates in state,
 To some famed round-house, ever open gate!
 How Henley lay inspired beside a sink,
 And to mere mortals seem'd a priest in drink;
 While others, timely, to the neighbouring Fleet
 (Haunt of the Muses!) made their safe retreat?

VARIATIONS.

VER. 207 in the first edition--

But Oldmixon the poet's healing balm, &c.

After VER. 298 in the first edition, followed these--

Far worse unhappy D---r succeeds,
 He searched for coral, but he gather'd weeds.

VER. 399. In the first edition it was--

Collins and Tindal, prompt at priests to jeer.

VER. 413. In the first edition it was--

T---s and T---- the Church and State gave o'er,
Nor ---- talk'd nor S---- whisper'd more.

BOOK THE THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

After the other persons are disposed in their proper places of rest, the goddess transports the king to her temple, and there lays him to slumber with his head on her lap; a position of marvellous virtue, which causes all the visions of wild enthusiasts, projectors, politicians, inamoratos, castle-builders, chemists, and poets. He is immediately carried on the wings of Fancy, and led by a mad poetical Sibyl, to the Elysian shade; where, on the banks of Lethe, the souls of the dull are dipped by Bavius, before their entrance into this world. There he is met by the ghost of Settle, and by him made acquainted with the wonders of the place, and with those which he himself is destined to perform. He takes him to a mount of vision, from whence he shows him the past triumphs of the empire of Dulness, then the present, and lastly the future: how small a part of the world was ever conquered by science, how soon those conquests were stopped, and those very nations again reduced to her dominion: then distinguishing the island of Great Britain, shows by what aids, by what persons, and by what degrees it shall be brought to her empire. Some of the persons he causes to pass in review before his eyes, describing each by his proper figure, character, and qualifications. On a sudden the scene shifts, and a vast number of miracles and prodigies appear, utterly surprising and unknown to the king himself, till they are explained to be the wonders of his own reign now commencing. On this subject Settle breaks into a congratulation, yet not unmixed with concern, that his own times were but the types of these. He prophesies how first the nation shall be overrun with farces, operas, and shows; how the throne of Dulness shall be advanced over the theatres, and set up even at Court; then how her sons shall preside in the seats of arts and sciences; giving a glimpse, or Pisgah-sight, of the future fulness of her glory, the accomplishment whereof is the subject of the fourth and last book.

But in her temple's last recess enclosed,
On Dulness' lap the anointed head reposed.
Him close the curtains round with vapours blue,
And soft besprinkles with Cimmerian dew.
Then raptures high the seat of sense o'erflow,
Which only heads refined from reason know.
Hence, from the straw where Bedlam's prophet nods,
He hears loud oracles, and talks with gods:
Hence the fool's Paradise, the statesman's scheme,
The air-built castle, and the golden dream, 10
The maid's romantic wish, the chemist's flame,
And poet's vision of eternal fame.

And now, on Fancy's easy wing convey'd,
The king descending, views the Elysian shade,
A slip-shod sibyl led his steps along,
In lofty madness meditating song;
Her tresses staring from poetic dreams,
And never wash'd, but in Castalia's streams.
Taylor,[348] their better Charon, lends an oar,
(Once swan of Thames, though now he sings no more.) 20

Benlowes,[349] propitious still to blockheads, bows;
And Shadwell nods the poppy[350] on his brows.
Here, in a dusky vale where Lethe rolls,
Old Bavius sits,[351] to dip poetic souls,
And blunt the sense, and fit it for a skull
Of solid proof, impenetrably dull:
Instant, when dipp'd, away they wing their flight,
Where Brown and Mears[352] unbar the gates of light,
Demand new bodies, and in calf's array
Rush to the world, impatient for the day. 30
Millions and millions on these banks he views,
Thick as the stars of night, or morning dews,
As thick as bees o'er vernal blossoms fly,
As thick as eggs at Ward in pillory.[353]

Wond'ring he gazed: when, lo! a sage appears,
By his broad shoulders known, and length of ears,
Known by the band and suit which Settle[354] wore
(His only suit) for twice three years before:
All as the vest appear'd the wearer's frame,
Old in new state--another, yet the same. 40
Bland and familiar as in life, begun
Thus the great father to the greater son:

'Oh born to see what none can see awake!
Behold the wonders of the oblivious lake.
Thou, yet unborn, hast touch'd this sacred shore;
The hand of Bavius drench'd thee o'er and o'er.
But blind to former as to future fate,
What mortal knows his pre-existent state?
Who knows how long thy transmigrating soul
Might from Boeotian to Boeotian roll? 50
How many Dutchmen she vouchsafed to thrid?
How many stages through old monks she rid?
And all who since, in mild benighted days,
Mix'd the owl's ivy with the poet's bays.
As man's meanders to the vital spring
Roll all their tides, then back their circles bring;
Or whirligigs, twirl'd round by skilful swain,
Suck the thread in, then yield it out again:
All nonsense thus, of old or modern date,
Shall in thee centre, from thee circulate. 60
For this our queen unfolds to vision true
Thy mental eye, for thou hast much to view:
Old scenes of glory, times long cast behind,
Shall, first recall'd, rush forward to thy mind:
Then stretch thy sight o'er all thy rising reign,
And let the past and future fire thy brain.

'Ascend this hill, whose cloudy point commands
Her boundless empire over seas and lands.
See, round the poles where keener spangles shine,
Where spices smoke beneath the burning line, 70
(Earth's wide extremes), her sable flag display'd,
And all the nations cover'd in her shade!

'Far eastward cast thine eye, from whence the sun
And orient science their bright course begun;
One god-like monarch[355] all that pride confounds,

He whose long wall the wandering Tartar bounds;
Heavens! what a pile! whole ages perish there,
And one bright blaze turns learning into air.

'Thence to the south extend thy gladden'd eyes;
There rival flames with equal glory rise, 80
From shelves to shelves see greedy Vulcan roll,
And lick up all their physic of the soul.[356]

'How little, mark! that portion of the ball,
Where, faint at best, the beams of science fall:
Soon as they dawn, from Hyperborean skies
Embodied dark, what clouds of Vandals rise!
Lo! where Maeotis sleeps, and hardly flows
The freezing Tanais through a waste of snows,
The North by myriads pours her mighty sons,
Great nurse of Goths, of Alans, and of Huns! 90
See Alaric's stern port! the martial frame
Of Genseric! and Attila's dread name!
See the bold Ostrogoths on Latium fall;
See the fierce Visigoths on Spain and Gaul!
See, where the morning gilds the palmy shore,
(The soil that arts and infant letters bore,)
His conquering tribes the Arabian prophet draws,
And saving ignorance enthrones by laws.
See Christians, Jews, one heavy sabbath keep,
And all the western world believe and sleep. 100

'Lo! Rome herself, proud mistress now no more
Of arts, but thundering against heathen lore;
Her gray-hair'd synods damning books unread,
And Bacon trembling for his brazen head.
Padua, with sighs, beholds her Livy burn,
And ev'n the Antipodes Virgilius mourn.
See, the cirque falls, the unpillar'd temple nods,
Streets paved with heroes, Tiber choked with gods:
Till Peter's keys some christen'd Jove adorn,
And Pan to Moses lends his pagan horn; 110
See graceless Venus to a virgin turn'd,
Or Phidias broken, and Apelles burn'd.

'Behold yon isle, by palmers, pilgrims trod,
Men bearded, bald, cowl'd, uncowl'd, shod, unshod,
Peel'd, patch'd, and piebald, linsey-woolsey brothers,
Grave mummers! sleeveless some, and shirtless others.
That once was Britain--happy! had she seen
No fiercer sons, had Easter never been.[357]
In peace, great goddess, ever be adored;
How keen the war, if Dulness draw the sword! 120
Thus visit not thy own! on this bless'd age
Oh spread thy influence, but restrain thy rage.

'And see, my son! the hour is on its way
That lifts our goddess to imperial sway;
This favourite isle, long sever'd from her reign,
Dove-like she gathers to her wings again.
Now look through Fate! behold the scene she draws!
What aids, what armies to assert her cause!
See all her progeny, illustrious sight!

Behold, and count them, as they rise to light. 130
As Berecynthia, while her offspring vie
In homage to the mother of the sky,
Surveys around her, in the bless'd abode,
An hundred sons, and every son a god;
Not with less glory mighty Dulness crown'd,
Shall take through Grub Street her triumphant round;
And her Parnassus glancing o'er at once,
Behold an hundred sons, and each a dunce.

'Mark first that youth who takes the foremost place,
And thrusts his person full into your face. 140
With all thy father's virtues bless'd, be born!
And a new Cibber shall the stage adorn.

'A second see, by meeker manners known,
And modest as the maid that sips alone;
From the strong fate of drams if thou get free,
Another D'Urfey, Ward! shall sing in thee.
Thee shall each ale-house, thee each gill-house mourn,
And answering gin-shops sourer sighs return.

'Jacob, the scourge of grammar, mark with awe,[358]
Nor less revere him, blunderbuss of law. 150
Lo Popple's brow, tremendous to the town,
Horneck's fierce eye, and Roome's[359] funereal frown.
Lo, sneering Goode,[360] half-malice and half-whim,
A fiend in glee, ridiculously grim.
Each cygnet sweet, of Bath and Tunbridge race,
Whose tuneful whistling makes the waters pass:
Each songster, riddler, every nameless name,
All crowd, who foremost shall be damn'd to fame.
Some strain in rhyme; the Muses, on their racks,
Scream like the winding of ten thousand jacks; 160
Some, free from rhyme or reason, rule or check,
Break Priscian's head and Pegasus's neck;
Down, down the 'larum, with impetuous whirl,
The Pindars, and the Miltons of a Curll.

'Silence, ye wolves! while Ralph[361] to Cynthia howls,
And makes night hideous--answer him, ye owls!

'Sense, speech, and measure, living tongues and dead,
Let all give way--and Morris may be read.
Flow, Welsted, flow! like thine inspirer, beer;
Though stale, not ripe; though thin, yet never clear; 170
So sweetly mawkish, and so smoothly dull;
Heady, not strong; o'erflowing, though not full.

'Ah Dennis! Gildon ah! what ill-starr'd rage
Divides a friendship long confirm'd by age?
Blockheads with reason wicked wits abhor,
But fool with fool is barbarous civil war.
Embrace, embrace, my sons! be foes no more!
Nor glad vile poets with true critics' gore.

'Behold yon pair,[362] in strict embraces join'd;
How like in manners, and how like in mind! 180
Equal in wit, and equally polite,

Shall this a Pasquin, that a Grumbler write?
Like are their merits, like rewards they share,
That shines a consul, this commissioner.

'But who is he, in closet close y-pent,
Of sober face, with learned dust besprent?
Right well mine eyes arede the myster wight,
On parchment scraps y-fed, and Wormius hight.[363]
To future ages may thy dulness last,
As thou preserv'st the dulness of the past! 190

'There, dim in clouds, the poring scholiasts mark,
Wits, who, like owls, see only in the dark,
A lumberhouse of books in every head,
For ever reading, never to be read!

'But where each science lifts its modern type,
History her pot, divinity her pipe,
While proud philosophy repines to show,
Dishonest sight! his breeches rent below;
Embrown'd with native bronze, lo! Henley[364] stands,
Tuning his voice, and balancing his hands. 200
How fluent nonsense trickles from his tongue!
How sweet the periods, neither said nor sung!
Still break the benches, Henley! with thy strain,
While Sherlock, Hare, and Gibson[365] preach in vain.
O great restorer of the good old stage,
Preacher at once, and zany of thy age!
O worthy thou of Egypt's wise abodes,
A decent priest, where monkeys were the gods!
But fate with butchers placed thy priestly stall,
Meek modern faith to murder, hack, and maul; 210
And bade thee live to crown Britannia's praise,
In Toland's, Tindal's, and in Woolston's days.[366]

'Yet O! my sons, a father's words attend
(So may the fates preserve the ears you lend):
'Tis yours a Bacon or a Locke to blame,
A Newton's genius, or a Milton's flame:
But O! with One, immortal One dispense,
The source of Newton's light, of Bacon's sense.
Content, each emanation of his fires
That beams on earth, each virtue he inspires, 220
Each art he prompts, each charm he can create,
Whate'er he gives, are given for you to hate.
Persist, by all divine in man unawed,
But, "Learn, ye Dunces! not to scorn your God."

Thus he, for then a ray of reason stole
Half through the solid darkness of his soul;
But soon the cloud return'd--and thus the sire:
'See now, what Dulness and her sons admire!
See what the charms that smite the simple heart
Not touch'd by Nature, and not reach'd by art.' 230

His never-blushing head he turn'd aside,
(Not half so pleased when Goodman prophesied),
And looked, and saw a sable sorcerer[367] rise,
Swift to whose hand a winged volume flies:

All sudden, Gorgons hiss, and dragons glare,
And ten-horn'd fiends and giants rush to war.
Hell rises, heaven descends, and dance on earth:[368]
Gods, imps, and monsters, music, rage, and mirth,
A fire, a jig, a battle, and a ball,
Till one wide conflagration swallows all. 240
Thence a new world to Nature's laws unknown

Breaks out refulgent, with a heaven its own:
Another Cynthia her new journey runs,
And other planets circle other suns.
The forests dance, the rivers upward rise,
Whales sport in woods, and dolphins in the skies;
And last, to give the whole creation grace,
Lo! one vast egg produces human race.[369]

Joy fills his soul, joy innocent of thought: 249
'What power,' he cries, 'what power these wonders wrought?'
'Son, what thou seek'st is in thee! Look, and find
Each monster meets his likeness in thy mind.
Yet would'st thou more? In yonder cloud behold,
Whose sarsenet skirts are edged with flamy gold,
A matchless youth! his nod these worlds controls,
Wings the red lightning, and the thunder rolls.
Angel of Dulness, sent to scatter round
Her magic charms o'er all unclassic ground
Yon stars, yon suns, he rears at pleasure higher,
Illumes their light, and sets their flames on fire. 260
Immortal Rich![370] how calm he sits at ease
'Mid snows of paper, and fierce hail of pease;
And proud his mistress' orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.

'But, lo! to dark encounter in mid air,
New wizards rise; I see my Cibber there!
Booth[371] in his cloudy tabernacle shrined,
On grinning dragons thou shalt mount the wind.
Dire is the conflict, dismal is the din,
Here shouts all Drury, there all Lincoln's inn; 270
Contending theatres our empire raise,
Alike their labours, and alike their praise.

'And are these wonders, son, to thee unknown?
Unknown to thee? These wonders are thy own.
These Fate reserved to grace thy reign divine,
Foreseen by me, but ah! withheld from mine.
In Lud's old walls though long I ruled, renown'd
Far as loud Bow's stupendous bells resound;
Though my own Aldermen conferred the bays,
To me committing their eternal praise, 280
Their full-fed heroes, their pacific mayors,
Their annual trophies, and their monthly wars;
Though long my party[372] built on me their hopes,
For writing pamphlets, and for roasting popes;
Yet lo! in me what authors have to brag on!
Reduced at last to hiss in my own dragon.
Avert it, Heaven! that thou, my Cibber, e'er
Should'st wag a serpent-tail in Smithfield fair!
Like the vile straw that's blown about the streets,

The needy poet sticks to all he meets, 290
 Coach'd, carted, trod upon, now loose, now fast,
 And carried off in some dog's tail at last;
 Happier thy fortunes! like a rolling stone,
 Thy giddy dulness still shall lumber on,
 Safe in its heaviness, shall never stray,
 But lick up every blockhead in the way.
 Thee shall the patriot, thee the courtier taste,
 And every year be duller than the last;
 Till raised from booths, to theatre, to court,
 Her seat imperial Dulness shall transport. 300
 Already Opera prepares the way,
 The sure forerunner of her gentle sway:
 Let her thy heart, next drabs and dice, engage,
 The third mad passion of thy doting age.
 Teach thou the warbling Polypheme[373] to roar,
 And scream thyself as none e'er scream'd before!
 To aid our cause, if Heaven thou can'st not bend,
 Hell thou shalt move; for Faustus[374] is our friend:
 Pluto with Cato thou for this shalt join,
 And link the Mourning Bride to Proserpine. 310
 Grub Street! thy fall should men and gods conspire,
 Thy stage shall stand, ensure it but from fire.[375]
 Another AEschylus appears![376] prepare
 For new abortions, all ye pregnant fair!
 In flames, like Semele's, be brought to bed,
 While opening Hell spouts wild-fire at your head.

'Now, Bavius, take the poppy from thy brow,
 And place it here! here, all ye heroes, bow!
 This, this is he, foretold by ancient rhymes:
 Th' Augustus born to bring Saturnian times. 320
 Signs following signs lead on the mighty year!
 See! the dull stars roll round and re-appear.
 See, see, our own true Phoebus wears the bays!
 Our Midas sits Lord Chancellor of Plays!
 On poets' tombs see Benson's titles writ![377]
 Lo! Ambrose Philips[378] is preferr'd for wit!
 See under Ripley rise a new Whitehall,
 While Jones' and Boyle's united labours fall;[379]
 While Wren with sorrow to the grave descends,
 Gay dies unpension'd with a hundred friends; 330
 Hibernian politics, O Swift! thy fate;
 And Pope's, ten years to comment and translate.

'Proceed, great days! till Learning fly the shore,
 Till Birch shall blush with noble blood no more,
 Till Thames see Eton's sons for ever play,
 Till Westminster's whole year be holiday,
 Till Isis' elders reel, their pupils sport,
 And Alma Mater lie dissolved in port!'

Enough! enough! the raptured monarch cries;
 And through the Ivory Gate the vision flies. 340

VARIATIONS.

VER. 73. In the former edition--

Far eastward cast thine eye, from whence the sun
And orient science at a birth begun.

VER. 149. In the first edition it was--

Woolston, the scourge of scripture, mark with awe!
And mighty Jacob, blunderbuss of law!

VER. 151. Lo Popple's brow, &c. In the former edition--

Haywood, Centlivre, glories of their race,
Lo Horneck's fierce, and Roome's funereal face.

VER. 157. Each songster, riddler, &c. In the former edition--

Lo Bond and Foxton, every nameless name.

After VER. 158 in the first edition followed--

How proud, how pale, how earnest all appear!
How rhymes eternal jingle in their ear!

VER. 197. In the first edition it was--

And proud philosophy with breeches tore,
And English music with a dismal score:
Fast by in darkness palpable enshrined
W---s, B---r, M---n, all the poring kind.

After VER. 274 in the former edition followed--

For works like these let deathless journals tell,
'None but thyself can be thy parallel.'

VER. 295. Safe in its heaviness, etc. In the former edition--

Too safe in inborn heaviness to stray,
And lick up every blockhead in the way.
Thy dragons, magistrates and peers shall taste,
And from each show rise duller than the last;
Till raised from booths, etc.

VER. 323. See, see, our own, &c. In the former edition--

Beneath his reign shall Eusden wear the bays.
Cibber preside Lord Chancellor of plays,
Benson sole Judge of Architecture sit,
And Namby Pamby be preferr'd for wit!
I see the unfinish'd dormitory wall,
I see the Savoy totter to her fall;
Hibernian politics, O Swift! thy doom,
And Pope's, translating three whole years with Broome.
Proceed great days, &c.

VER. 331. In the former edition, thus--

---- O Swift! thy doom,
And Pope's, translating ten whole years with Broome.

See Life.

After VER. 338, in the first edition, were the following lines--

Then when these signs declare the mighty year,
When the dull stars roll round and re-appear;
Let there be darkness! (the dread Power shall say)
All shall be darkness, as it ne'er were day;
To their first Chaos wit's vain works shall fall,
And universal darkness cover all.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.

The poet being, in this book, to declare the completion of the prophecies mentioned at the end of the former, makes a new invocation; as the greater poets are wont, when some high and worthy matter is to be sung. He shows the goddess coming in her majesty to destroy order and science, and to substitute the kingdom of the Dull upon earth; how she leads captive the Sciences, and silenceth the Muses; and what they be who succeed in their stead. All her children, by a wonderful attraction, are drawn about her; and bear along with them divers others, who promote her empire by connivance, weak resistance, or discouragement of Arts; such as half-wits, tasteless admirers, vain pretenders, the flatterers of Dunces, or the patrons of them. All these crowd round her; one of them offering to approach her, is driven back by a rival, but she commends and encourages both. The first who speak in form are the geniuses of the schools, who assure her of their care to advance her cause, by confining youth to words, and keeping them out of the way of real knowledge. Their address, and her gracious answer; with her charge to them and the Universities. The Universities appear by their proper deputies, and assure her that the same method is observed in the progress of education. The speech of Aristarchus on this subject. They are driven off by a band of young gentlemen returned from travel with their tutors; one of whom delivers to the goddess, in a polite oration, an account of the whole conduct and fruits of their travels; presenting to her at the same time a young nobleman perfectly accomplished. She receives him graciously, and indues him with the happy quality of want of shame. She sees loitering about her a number of indolent persons abandoning all business and duty, and dying with laziness: to these approaches the antiquary Annius, entreating her to make them virtuosos, and assign them over to him; but Mummius, another antiquary, complaining of his fraudulent proceeding, she finds a method to reconcile their difference. Then enter a troop of people fantastically adorned, offering her strange and exotic presents: amongst them, one stands forth and demands justice on another, who had deprived him of one of the greatest curiosities in nature; but he justifies himself so well, that the goddess gives them both her approbation. She recommends to them to find proper employment for the indolents before-mentioned, in the study of butterflies, shells, birds' nests, moss, &c., but with particular caution not to proceed beyond trifles, to any useful or extensive views of nature, or of the Author of nature. Against the last of these apprehensions, she is secured by a hearty address from the minute philosophers and freethinkers, one of whom speaks in the name of the rest. The youth thus instructed and principled, are delivered to her in a body, by the hands of Silenus; and then admitted to taste the cup of

the Magus her high-priest, which causes a total oblivion of all obligations, divine, civil, moral, or rational. To these her adepts she sends priests, attendants, and comforters, of various kinds; confers on them orders and degrees; and then dismissing them with a speech, confirming to each his privileges, and telling what she expects from each, concludes with a yawn of extraordinary virtue: the progress and effects whereof on all orders of men, and the consummation of all, in the restoration of Night and Chaos, conclude the poem.

Yet, yet a moment, one dim ray of light
Indulge, dread Chaos, and eternal Night!
Of darkness visible so much be lent,
As half to show, half veil the deep intent.
Ye Powers! whose mysteries restored I sing,
To whom Time bears me on his rapid wing,
Suspend a while your force inertly strong,
Then take at once the poet and the song.

Now flamed the dog-star's unpropitious ray,
Smote every brain, and wither'd every bay; 10
Sick was the sun, the owl forsook his bower,
The moon-struck prophet felt the madding hour:
Then rose the seed of Chaos, and of Night,
To blot out order, and extinguish light,
Of dull and venal a new world to mould,
And bring Saturnian days of lead and gold.

She mounts the throne: her head a cloud conceal'd,
In broad effulgence all below reveal'd,
(Tis thus aspiring Dulness ever shines),
Soft on her lap her laureate son reclines. 20

Beneath her foot-stool, Science groans in chains,
And Wit dreads exile, penalties and pains.
There foam'd rebellious Logic, gagg'd and bound,
There, stripp'd, fair Rhetoric languish'd on the ground;
His blunted arms by Sophistry are borne,
And shameless Billingsgate her robes adorn.
Morality, by her false guardians drawn.
Chicane in furs, and Casuistry in lawn,
Gasps, as they straiten at each end the cord,
And dies, when Dulness gives her page the word. 30
Mad Mathesis[380] alone was unconfined,
Too mad for mere material chains to bind,
Now to pure space[381] lifts her ecstatic stare,
Now running round the circle, finds it square.[382]
But held in tenfold bonds the Muses lie,
Watch'd both by Envy's and by Flattery's eye:
There to her heart sad Tragedy address'd
The dagger wont to pierce the tyrant's breast;
But sober History restrain'd her rage,
And promised vengeance on a barbarous age. 40
There sunk Thalia, nerveless, cold, and dead,
Had not her sister Satire held her head:
Nor could'st thou, Chesterfield![383] a tear refuse,
Thou wept'st, and with thee wept each gentle Muse.

When, lo! a harlot form[384] soft sliding by,
With mincing step, small voice, and languid eye:

Foreign her air, her robe's discordant pride
In patchwork fluttering, and her head aside:
By singing peers upheld on either hand,
She tripp'd and laugh'd, too pretty much to stand; 50
Cast on the prostrate Nine a scornful look,
Then thus in quaint recitative spoke:

'O Cara! Cara! silence all that train:
Joy to great Chaos! let division reign:[385]
Chromatic[386] tortures soon shall drive them hence,
Break all their nerves, and fritter all their sense:
One trill shall harmonise joy, grief, and rage,
Wake the dull church, and lull the ranting stage:[387]
To the same notes thy sons shall hum, or snore,
And all thy yawning daughters cry, Encore! 60
Another Phoebus, thy own Phoebus, reigns,
Joys in my jigs, and dances in my chains.
But soon, ah soon, rebellion will commence,
If music meanly borrows aid from sense:
Strong in new arms, lo! giant Handel stands,
Like bold Briareus, with a hundred hands;
To stir, to rouse, to shake the soul he comes,
And Jove's own thunders follow Mars's drums.
Arrest him, empress; or you sleep no more'--
She heard, and drove him to the Hibernian shore. 70

And now had Fame's posterior trumpet blown,
And all the nations summon'd to the throne.
The young, the old, who feel her inward sway,
One instinct seizes, and transports away.
None need a guide, by sure attraction led,
And strong impulsive gravity of head;
None want a place, for all their centre found,
Hung to the goddess, and cohered around.
Not closer, orb in orb, conglobed are seen
The buzzing bees about their dusky queen. 80

The gathering number, as it moves along,
Involves a vast involuntary throng,
Who, gently drawn, and struggling less and less,
Roll in her vortex, and her power confess.
Not those alone who passive own her laws,
But who, weak rebels, more advance her cause.
Whate'er of dunce in college or in town
Sneers at another, in toupee or gown;
Whate'er of mongrel no one class admits,
A wit with dunces, and a dunce with wits. 90

Nor absent they, no members of her state,
Who pay her homage in her sons, the great;
Who, false to Phoebus, bow the knee to Baal;
Or, impious, preach his word without a call.
Patrons, who sneak from living worth to dead,
Withhold the pension, and set up the head;
Or vest dull flattery in the sacred gown;
Or give from fool to fool the laurel crown.
And (last and worst) with all the cant of wit,
Without the soul, the Muse's hypocrite. 100

There march'd the bard and blockhead, side by side,
 Who rhymed for hire, and patronised for pride.
 Narcissus,[388] praised with all a parson's power,
 Look'd a white lily sunk beneath a shower.
 There moved Montalto with superior air;
 His stretch'd-out arm display'd a volume fair;
 Courtiers and patriots in two ranks divide,
 Through both he pass'd, and bow'd from side to side;
 But as in graceful act, with awful eye
 Composed he stood, bold Benson[389] thrust him by: 110
 On two unequal crutches propp'd he came,
 Milton's on this, on that one Johnston's name.
 The decent knight[390] retired with sober rage,
 Withdrew his hand, and closed the pompous page.
 But (happy for him as the times went then)
 Appear'd Apollo's mayor and aldermen,
 On whom three hundred gold-capp'd youths await,
 To lug the ponderous volume off in state.

When Dulness, smiling--'Thus revive the wits!
 But murder first, and mince them all to bits; 120
 As erst Medea (cruel, so to save!)
 A new edition of old Aeson gave;
 Let standard authors, thus, like trophies borne,
 Appear more glorious as more hack'd and torn.
 And you, my critics! in the chequer'd shade,
 Admire new light through holes yourselves have made.
 Leave not a foot of verse, a foot of stone,
 A page, a grave, that they can call their own;
 But spread, my sons, your glory thin or thick,
 On passive paper, or on solid brick. 130
 So by each bard an alderman[391] shall sit,
 A heavy lord shall hang at every wit,
 And while on Fame's triumphal car they ride,
 Some slave of mine be pinion'd to their side.'

Now crowds on crowds around the goddess press,
 Each eager to present the first address.
 Dunce scorning dunce beholds the next advance,
 But fop shows fop superior complaisance.
 When, lo! a spectre rose, whose index-hand
 Held forth the virtue of the dreadful wand; 140
 His beaver'd brow a birchen garland wears,
 Dropping with infants' blood and mothers' tears.
 O'er every rein a shuddering horror runs;
 Eton and Winton shake through all their sons.
 All flesh is humbled, Westminster's bold race
 Shrink, and confess the genius of the place:
 The pale boy-senator yet tingling stands,
 And holds his breeches close with both his hands.

Then thus: 'Since man from beast by words is known,
 Words are man's province, words we teach alone, 150
 When reason doubtful, like the Samian letter,[392]
 Points him two ways, the narrower is the better.
 Placed at the door of Learning, youth to guide,
 We never suffer it to stand too wide.
 To ask, to guess, to know, as they commence,
 As fancy opens the quick springs of sense,

We ply the memory, we load the brain,
 Bind rebel wit, and double chain on chain,
 Confine the thought, to exercise the breath,
 And keep them in the pale of words till death. 160
 Whate'er the talents, or howe'er design'd,
 We hang one jingling padlock on the mind:
 A poet the first day he dips his quill;
 And what the last? a very poet still.
 Pity! the charm works only in our wall,
 Lost, lost too soon in yonder House or Hall.[393]
 There truant Wyndham every Muse gave o'er,
 There Talbot sunk, and was a wit no more!
 How sweet an Ovid, Murray was our boast!
 How many Martials were in Pulteney lost! 170
 Else sure some bard, to our eternal praise,
 In twice ten thousand rhyming nights and days,
 Had reach'd the work, the all that mortal can,
 And South beheld that master-piece of man.'[394]

'Oh (cried the goddess) for some pedant reign!
 Some gentle James,[395] to bless the land again;
 To stick the doctor's chair into the throne,
 Give law to words, or war with words alone,
 Senates and courts with Greek and Latin rule,
 And turn the council to a grammar school! 180
 For sure, if Dulness sees a grateful day,
 'Tis in the shade of arbitrary sway.
 Oh! if my sons may learn one earthly thing,
 Teach but that one, sufficient for a king;
 That which my priests, and mine alone, maintain,
 Which as it dies or lives, we fall or reign:
 May you, may Cam and Isis, preach it long!
 "The right divine of kings to govern wrong."

Prompt at the call, around the goddess roll
 Broad hats, and hoods, and caps, a sable shoal: 190
 Thick and more thick the black blockade extends,
 A hundred head of Aristotle's friends.
 Nor wert thou, Isis! wanting to the day,
 Though Christ-church long kept prudishly away.
 Each stanch polemic, stubborn as a rock,
 Each fierce logician, still expelling Locke,[396]
 Came whip and spur, and dash'd through thin and thick
 On German Crousaz,[397] and Dutch Burgersdyck.
 As many quit the streams[398] that murmuring fall
 To lull the sons of Margaret and Clare-hall, 200
 Where Bentley late tempestuous wont to sport
 In troubled waters, but now sleeps in port.[399]
 Before them march'd that awful Aristarch!
 Plough'd was his front with many a deep remark:
 His hat, which never vail'd to human pride,
 Walker with reverence took, and laid aside.
 Low bow'd the rest: he, kingly, did but nod;
 So upright Quakers please both man and God.
 'Mistress! dismiss that rabble from your throne:
 Avaunt! is Aristarchus yet unknown? 210
 Thy mighty scholiast, whose unwearied pains
 Made Horace dull, and humbled Milton's strains.
 Turn what they will to verse, their toil is vain,

Critics like me shall make it prose again.
Roman and Greek grammarians! know your better,
Author of something yet more great than letter;[400]
While towering o'er your alphabet, like Saul,
Stands our digamma,[401] and o'ertops them all.

"Tis true, on words is still our whole debate,
Disputes of _me_ or _te_, of _aut_ or _at_, 220
To sound or sink in _cano_, O or A,
Or give up Cicero[402] to C or K.
Let Freind[403] affect to speak as Terence spoke,
And Alsop never but like Horace joke:
For me, what Virgil, Pliny, may deny,
Manilius or Solinus[404] shall supply:
For Attic phrase in Plato let them seek,
I poach in Suidas[405] for unlicensed Greek.
In ancient sense if any needs will deal,
Be sure I give them fragments, not a meal; 230
What Gellius or Stobaeus hash'd before,
Or chew'd by blind old scholiasts o'er and o'er,
The critic eye, that microscope of wit,
Sees hairs and pores, examines bit by bit:
How parts relate to parts, or they to whole,
The body's harmony, the beaming soul,
Are things which Kuster, Burman, Wasse shall see,
When Man's whole frame is obvious to a flea.

'Ah, think not, mistress! more true Dulness lies
In Folly's cap, than Wisdom's grave disguise; 240
Like buoys, that never sink into the flood,
On Learning's surface we but lie and nod.
Thine is the genuine head of many a house,
And much divinity[406] without a [Greek: Nous].
Nor could a Barrow work on every block,
Nor has one Atterbury spoil'd the flock.
See! still thy own, the heavy cannon roll,
And metaphysic smokes involve the pole.
For thee we dim the eyes, and stuff the head
With all such reading as was never read: 250
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.

'What though we let some better sort of fool
Thrid every science, run through every school?
Never by tumbler through the hoops was shown
Such skill in passing all, and touching none.
He may indeed (if sober all this time)
Plague with dispute, or persecute with rhyme. 260
We only furnish what he cannot use,
Or wed to what he must divorce, a Muse:
Full in the midst of Euclid dip at once,
And petrify a genius to a dunce;[407]
Or, set on metaphysic ground to prance,
Show all his paces, not a step advance.
With the same cement, ever sure to bind,
We bring to one dead level every mind.
Then take him to develop, if you can,

And hew the block off,[408] and get out the man. 270
But wherefore waste I words? I see advance
Whore, pupil, and laced governor from France.
Walker! our hat,'--nor more he deign'd to say,
But, stern as Ajax' spectre,[409] strode away.

In flow'd at once a gay embroider'd race,
And tittering push'd the pedants off the place:
Some would have spoken, but the voice was drown'd
By the French horn, or by the opening hound.
The first came forwards,[410] with an easy mien,
As if he saw St James's[411] and the queen; 280
When thus the attendant orator begun:
'Receive, great empress! thy accomplish'd son:
Thine from the birth, and sacred from the rod,
A dauntless infant! never scared with God.
The sire saw, one by one, his virtues wake:
The mother begg'd the blessing of a rake.
Thou gav'st that ripeness which so soon began,
And ceased so soon--he ne'er was boy nor man;
Through school and college, thy kind cloud o'ercast,
Safe and unseen the young AEneas pass'd: 290
Thence bursting glorious, all at once let down,
Stunn'd with his giddy 'larum half the town.
Intrepid then, o'er seas and lands he flew:
Europe he saw, and Europe saw him too.
There all thy gifts and graces we display,
Thou, only thou, directing all our way,
To where the Seine, obsequious as she runs,
Pours at great Bourbon's feet her silken sons;
Or Tiber, now no longer Roman, rolls,
Vain of Italian arts, Italian souls: 300
To happy convents, bosom'd deep in vines,
Where slumber abbots, purple as their wines:
To isles of fragrance, lily-silver'd vales,[412]
Diffusing languor in the panting gales:
To lands of singing or of dancing slaves,
Love-whispering woods, and lute-resounding waves.
But chief her shrine where naked Venus keeps,
And Cupids ride the lion of the deeps:[413]
Where, eased of fleets, the Adriatic main
Wafts the smooth eunuch and enamour'd swain, 310
Led by my hand, he saunter'd Europe round,
And gather'd every vice on Christian ground;
Saw every court, heard every king declare
His royal sense of operas or the fair;
The stews and palace equally explored,
Intrigued with glory, and with spirit whored;
Tried all hors-d'oeuvres, all liqueurs defined,
Judicious drank, and greatly-daring dined:[414]
Dropp'd the dull lumber of the Latin store,
Spoil'd his own language, and acquired no more; 320
All classic learning lost on classic ground;
And last turned air, the echo of a sound!
See now, half-cured, and perfectly well-bred,
With nothing but a solo in his head;
As much estate, and principle, and wit,
As Jansen, Fleetwood, Cibber[415] shall think fit;
Stolen from a duel, follow'd by a nun,

And, if a borough choose him, not undone;
See, to my country happy I restore
This glorious youth, and add one Venus more. 330
Her too receive (for her my soul adores),
So may the sons of sons of sons of whores
Prop thine, O empress! like each neighbour throne,
And make a long posterity thy own.'
Pleased, she accepts the hero, and the dame
Wraps in her veil, and frees from sense of shame.

Then look'd, and saw a lazy, lolling sort,
Unseen at church, at senate, or at court,
Of ever-listless loiterers that attend
No cause, no trust, no duty, and no friend. 340
Thee, too, my Paridel![416] she marked thee there,
Stretch'd on the rack of a too easy chair,
And heard thy everlasting yawn confess
The pains and penalties of idleness.
She pitied! but her pity only shed
Benigner influence on thy nodding head.
But Annius,[417] crafty seer, with ebon wand,
And well-dissembled emerald on his hand,
False as his gems, and canker'd as his coins,
Came, cramm'd with capon, from where Pollio dines. 350
Soft, as the wily fox is seen to creep,
Where bask on sunny banks the simple sheep,
Walk round and round, now prying here, now there,
So he; but pious, whisper'd first his prayer.

'Grant, gracious goddess! grant me still to cheat,[418]
Oh may thy cloud still cover the deceit!
Thy choicer mists on this assembly shed,
But pour them thickest on the noble head.
So shall each youth, assisted by our eyes,
See other Caesars, other Homers rise; 360
Through twilight ages hunt the Athenian fowl,[419]
Which Chalcis gods, and mortals call an owl,
Now see an Attys, now a Cecrops[420] clear,
Nay, Mahomet! the pigeon at thine ear;
Be rich in ancient brass, though not in gold,
And keep his Lares, though his house be sold;
To headless Phoebe his fair bride postpone,
Honour a Syrian prince above his own;
Lord of an Otho, if I vouch it true;
Bless'd in one Niger, till he knows of two.' 370

Mummius[421] o'erheard him; Mummius, fool-renown'd,
Who like his Cheops[422] stinks above the ground,
Fierce as a startled adder, swell'd, and said,
Rattling an ancient sistrum at his head;

'Speak'st thou of Syrian prince?[423] Traitor base!
Mine, goddess! mine is all the horned race.
True, he had wit to make their value rise;
From foolish Greeks to steal them was as wise;
More glorious yet, from barbarous hands to keep,
When Sallee rovers chased him on the deep. 380
Then, taught by Hermes, and divinely bold,
Down his own throat he risk'd the Grecian gold,

Received each demi-god, with pious care,
Deep in his entrails--I revered them there,
I bought them, shrouded in that Irving shrine,
And, at their second birth, they issue mine.'

'Witness, great Ammon![424] by whose horns I swore,
(Replied soft Annius) this our paunch before
Still bears them, faithful; and that thus I eat,
Is to refund the medals with the meat. 390
To prove me, goddess! clear of all design,
Bid me with Pollio sup, as well as dine:
There all the learn'd shall at the labour stand,
And Douglas[425] lend his soft, obstetric hand.'

The goddess smiling seem'd to give consent;
So back to Pollio, hand in hand, they went.

Then thick as locusts blackening all the ground,
A tribe, with weeds and shells fantastic crown'd,
Each with some wondrous gift approach'd the power,
A nest, a toad, a fungus, or a flower. 400
But far the foremost, two, with earnest zeal,
And aspect ardent, to the throne appeal.

The first thus open'd: 'Hear thy suppliant's call,
Great queen, and common mother of us all!
Fair from its humble bed I rear'd this flower,
Suckled, and cheer'd, with air, and sun, and shower;
Soft on the paper ruff its leaves I spread,
Bright with the gilded button tipp'd its head;
Then throned in glass, and named it Caroline:[426] 410
Each maid cried, charming! and each youth, divine!
Did Nature's pencil ever blend such rays,
Such varied light in one promiscuous blaze?
Now prostrate! dead! behold that Caroline:
No maid cries, charming! and no youth, divine!
And lo, the wretch! whose vile, whose insect lust
Laid this gay daughter of the spring in dust.
Oh, punish him, or to th' Elysian shades
Dismiss my soul, where no carnation fades.'
He ceased, and wept. With innocence of mien,
Th' accused stood forth, and thus address'd the queen: 420

'Of all th' enamell'd race, whose silvery wing
Waves to the tepid zephyrs of the spring,
Or swims along the fluid atmosphere,
Once brightest shined this child of heat and air.
I saw, and started, from its vernal bower,
The rising game, and chased from flower to flower;
It fled, I follow'd; now in hope, now pain;
It stopp'd, I stopp'd; it moved, I moved again.
At last it fix'd; 'twas on what plant it pleased,
And where it fix'd, the beauteous bird I seized: 430
Rose or carnation was below my care;
I meddle, goddess! only in my sphere.
I tell the naked fact without disguise,
And, to excuse it, need but show the prize;
Whose spoils this paper offers to your eye,
Fair ev'n in death! this peerless butterfly.'

'My sons! (she answer'd) both have done your parts:
 Live happy both, and long promote our arts.
 But hear a mother, when she recommends
 To your fraternal care our sleeping friends. 440
 The common soul, of Heaven's more frugal make,
 Serves but to keep fools pert and knaves awake:
 A drowsy watchman, that just gives a knock,
 And breaks our rest, to tell us what's a clock.
 Yet by some object every brain is stirr'd;
 The dull may waken to a humming-bird;
 The most recluse, discreetly open'd, find
 Congenial matter in the cockle-kind;
 The mind in metaphysics at a loss,
 May wander in a wilderness of moss;[427] 450
 The head that turns at super-lunar things,
 Poised with a tail, may steer on Wilkins' wings.[428]

'Oh! would the sons of men once think their eyes
 And reason given them but to study flies!
 See nature in some partial narrow shape,
 And let the Author of the whole escape:
 Learn but to trifle; or, who most observe,
 To wonder at their Maker, not to serve.'

'Be that my task' (replies a gloomy clerk,
 Sworn foe to mystery, yet divinely dark; 460
 Whose pious hope aspires to see the day
 When moral evidence[429] shall quite decay,
 And damns implicit faith, and holy lies,
 Prompt to impose, and fond to dogmatise:)
 'Let others creep by timid steps and slow,
 On plain experience lay foundations low,
 By common sense to common knowledge bred,
 And last, to Nature's cause through Nature led:
 All-seeing in thy mists, we want no guide,
 Mother of arrogance, and source of pride! 470
 We nobly take the high priori road,[430]
 And reason downward, till we doubt of God:
 Make Nature still[431] encroach upon his plan;
 And shove him off as far as e'er we can:
 Thrust some mechanic cause into his place;
 Or bind in matter, or diffuse in space.[432]
 Or, at one bound o'erleaping all his laws,
 Make God man's image, man the final cause,
 Find virtue local, all relation scorn,
 See all in self, and but for self be born: 480
 Of nought so certain as our reason still,
 Of nought so doubtful as of soul and will.
 O! hide the God still more! and make us see,
 Such as Lucretius drew, a God like thee:
 Wrapt up in self, a God without a thought,
 Regardless of our merit or default.
 Or that bright image[433] to our fancy draw,
 Which Theocles[434] in raptured vision saw,
 While through poetic scenes the genius roves,
 Or wanders wild in academic groves; 490
 That Nature our society adores,[435]
 Where Tindal dictates, and Silenus[436] snores.'

Roused at his name, up rose the bousy sire,
 And shook from out his pipe the seeds of fire;
 Then snapt his box, and stroked his belly down:
 Rosy and reverend, though without a gown.
 Bland and familiar to the throne he came,
 Led up the youth, and call'd the goddess dame.
 Then thus: 'From priestcraft happily set free,
 Lo! every finish'd son returns to thee: 500
 First, slave to words,[437] then vassal to a name,
 Then dupe to party; child and man the same;
 Bounded by nature, narrow'd still by art,
 A trifling head, and a contracted heart;
 Thus bred, thus taught, how many have I seen,
 Smiling on all, and smiled on by a queen?[438]
 Mark'd out for honours, honour'd for their birth,
 To thee the most rebellious things on earth:
 Now to thy gentle shadow all are shrunk,
 All melted down in pension or in punk! 510
 So K----, so B---- sneak'd into the grave,
 A monarch's half, and half a harlot's slave.
 Poor W----,[439] nipp'd in folly's broadest bloom,
 Who praises now? his chaplain on his tomb.
 Then take them all, oh, take them to thy breast!
 Thy Magus, goddess! shall perform the rest.'

With that, a wizard old his cup extends,
 Which whoso tastes forgets his former friends,
 Sire, ancestors, himself. One casts his eyes
 Up to a star, and like Endymion dies: 520
 A feather, shooting from another's head,
 Extracts his brain, and principle is fled;
 Lost is his God, his country, everything;
 And nothing left but homage to a king![440]
 The vulgar herd turn off to roll with hogs,
 To run with horses, or to hunt with dogs;
 But, sad example! never to escape
 Their infamy, still keep the human shape.
 But she, good goddess, sent to every child
 Firm Impudence, or Stupefaction mild; 530
 And strait succeeded, leaving shame no room,
 Cibberian forehead, or Cimmerian gloom.

Kind Self-conceit to some her glass applies,
 Which no one looks in with another's eyes:
 But as the flatterer or dependant paint,
 Beholds himself a patriot, chief, or saint.

On others Interest her gay livery flings,
 Interest, that waves on party-colour'd wings:
 Turn'd to the sun, she casts a thousand dyes,
 And, as she turns, the colours fall or rise. 540

Others the Syren sisters warble round,
 And empty heads console with empty sound.
 No more, alas! the voice of fame they hear,
 The balm of Dulness[441] trickling in their ear.
 Great C----, H----, P----, R----, K----,
 Why all your toils? your sons have learn'd to sing.

How quick ambition hastes to ridicule!
The sire is made a peer, the son a fool.

On some, a priest succinct in amice white
Attends; all flesh is nothing in his sight! 550
Beeves, at his touch, at once to jelly turn,
And the huge boar is shrunk into an urn:
The board with specious miracles he loads,[442]
Turns hares to larks, and pigeons into toads.
Another (for in all what one can shine?)
Explains the _seve_ and _verdeur_ of the vine.[443]
What cannot copious sacrifice atone?
Thy truffles, Perigord! thy hams, Bayonne!
With French libation, and Italian strain,
Wash Bladen white, and expiate Hays's stain.[444] 560
Knight lifts the head; for what are crowds undone
To three essential partridges in one?
Gone every blush, and silent all reproach,
Contending princes mount them in their coach.

Next bidding all draw near on bended knees,
The queen confers her titles and degrees.
Her children first of more distinguish'd sort,
Who study Shakspeare at the Inns of Court,
Impale a glow-worm, or vertu profess,
Shine in the dignity of F.R.S. 570
Some, deep freemasons, join the silent race,
Worthy to fill Pythagoras's place:
Some botanists, or florists at the least,
Or issue members of an annual feast.
Nor pass'd the meanest unregarded; one
Rose a Gregorian, one a Gormogon.[445]
The last, not least in honour or applause,
Isis and Cam made Doctors of her Laws.

Then, blessing all, 'Go, children of my care!
To practice now from theory repair. 580
All my commands are easy, short, and full:
My sons! be proud, be selfish, and be dull.
Guard my prerogative, assert my throne:
This nod confirms each privilege your own.
The cap and switch be sacred to his grace;
With staff and pumps the marquis lead the race;
From stage to stage the licensed earl may run,
Pair'd with his fellow-charioteer the sun;
The learned baron butterflies design,
Or draw to silk Arachne's subtile line;[446] 590
The judge to dance his brother sergeant call;[447]
The senator at cricket urge the ball;
The bishop stow (pontific luxury!)
An hundred souls of turkeys in a pie;
The sturdy squire to Gallic masters stoop,
And drown his lands and manors in a soup.
Others import yet nobler arts from France,
Teach kings to fiddle, and make senates dance.[448]
Perhaps more high some daring son may soar,
Proud to my list to add one monarch more; 600
And nobly conscious, princes are but things
Born for first ministers, as slaves for kings,

Tyrant supreme! shall three estates command,
And MAKE ONE MIGHTY DUNCIAD OF THE LAND!"

More she had spoke, but yawn'd--All Nature nods:
What mortal can resist the yawn of gods?
Churches and chapels instantly it reach'd;
(St James's first, for leaden Gilbert[449] preach'd;)
Then catch'd the schools; the Hall scarce kept awake;
The Convocation gaped, but could not speak; 610
Lost was the nation's sense, nor could be found,
While the long solemn unison went round:
Wide, and more wide, it spread o'er all the realm;
Even Palinurus nodded at the helm:
The vapour mild o'er each committee crept;
Unfinish'd treaties in each office slept;
And chiefless armies dozed out the campaign;
And navies yawn'd for orders on the main.[450]

O Muse! relate (for you can tell alone,
Wits have short memories, and dunces none,) 620
Relate, who first, who last resign'd to rest;
Whose heads she partly, whose completely bless'd;
What charms could faction, what ambition, lull,
The venal quiet, and entrance the dull;
'Till drown'd was sense, and shame, and right, and wrong--
O sing, and hush the nations with thy song!

In vain, in vain,--the all-composing hour
Resistless falls: the Muse obeys the power.
She comes! she comes! the sable throne behold
Of Night primeval, and of Chaos old! 630
Before her, Fancy's gilded clouds decay,
And all its varying rainbows die away.
Wit shoots in vain its momentary fires,
The meteor drops, and in a flash expires.
As one by one, at dread Medea's strain,
The sick'ning stars fade off the ethereal plain;
As Argus' eyes, by Hermes' wand oppress'd,
Closed one by one to everlasting rest;
Thus at her felt approach, and secret might,
Art after art goes out, and all is night. 640
See skulking Truth to her old cavern fled,[451]
Mountains of casuistry heap'd o'er her head!
Philosophy, that lean'd on heaven before,
Shrinks to her second cause, and is no more.
Physic of Metaphysic begs defence,
And Metaphysic calls for aid on Sense!
See Mystery to Mathematics fly!
In vain! they gaze, turn giddy, rave, and die.
Religion, blushing, veils her sacred fires,
And unawares Morality expires. 650
Nor public flame, nor private, dares to shine;
Nor human spark is left, nor glimpse divine!
Lo! thy dread empire, Chaos! is restored;
Light dies before thy uncreating word:
Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;
And universal darkness buries all.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 114--

'What! no respect, he cried, for Shakspeare's page?'

VER. 441. The common soul, &c. In the first edition, thus--

Of souls the greater part, Heaven's common make,
Serve but to keep fools pert, and knaves awake;
And most but find that sentinel of God,
A drowsy watchman in the land of Nod.

VER. 643. In the former edition, it stood thus--

Philosophy, that reach'd the heavens before,
Shrinks to her hidden cause, and is no more.

BY THE AUTHOR.

A DECLARATION.

Whereas certain haberdashers of points and particles, being instigated by the spirit of pride, and assuming to themselves the name of critics and restorers, have taken upon them to adulterate the common and current sense of our glorious ancestors, poets of this realm, by clipping, coining, defacing the images, mixing their own base alloy, or otherwise falsifying the same; which they publish, utter, and vend as genuine: The said haberdashers having no right thereto, as neither heirs, executors, administrators, assigns, or in any sort related to such poets, to all or any of them: Now we, having carefully revised this our Dunciad,[452] beginning with the words 'The Mighty Mother,' and ending with the words 'buries all,' containing the entire sum of one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four verses, declare every word, figure, point, and comma of this impression to be authentic: And do therefore strictly enjoin and forbid any person or persons whatsoever, to erase, reverse, put between hooks, or by any other means, directly or indirectly, change or mangle any of them. And we do hereby earnestly exhort all our brethren to follow this our example, which we heartily wish our great predecessors had heretofore set, as a remedy and prevention of all such abuses. Provided always, that nothing in this Declaration shall be construed to limit the lawful and undoubted right of every subject of this realm, to judge, censure, or condemn, in the whole or in part, any poem or poet whatsoever.

Given under our hand at London, this third day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred thirty and two.

Declarat' cor' me,
JOHN BARBER, Mayor.

APPENDIX TO THE DUNCIAD.

I.--PREFACE

PREFIXED TO THE FIVE FIRST IMPERFECT EDITIONS OF THE DUNCIAD, IN THREE BOOKS, PRINTED AT DUBLIN AND LONDON, IN OCTAVO AND DUODECIMO, 1727.

THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

It will be found a true observation, though somewhat surprising, that when any scandal is vented against a man of the highest distinction and character, either in the state or in literature, the public in general afford it a most quiet reception; and the larger part accept it as favourably as if it were some kindness done to themselves: whereas, if a known scoundrel or blockhead but chance to be touched upon, a whole legion is up in arms, and it becomes the common cause of all scribblers, booksellers, and printers whatsoever.

Not to search too deeply into the reason hereof, I will only observe as a fact, that every week for these two months past, the town has been persecuted with pamphlets, advertisements, letters, and weekly essays, not only against the wit and writings, but against the character and person of Mr Pope. And that of all those men who have received pleasure from his works, which by modest computation may be about a hundred thousand in these kingdoms of England and Ireland (not to mention Jersey, Guernsey, the Orcades, those in the new world, and foreigners who have translated him into their languages), of all this number not a man hath stood up to say one word in his defence.

The only exception is the author of the following poem, who, doubtless, had either a better insight into the grounds of this clamour, or a better opinion of Mr Pope's integrity, joined with a greater personal love for him, than any other of his numerous friends and admirers.

Further, that he was in his peculiar intimacy, appears from the knowledge he manifests of the most private authors of all the anonymous pieces against him, and from his having in this poem attacked no man living, who had not before printed or published some scandal against this gentleman.

How I came possessed of it is no concern to the reader; but it would have been a wrong to him had I detained the publication, since those names which are its chief ornaments die off daily so fast, as must render it too soon unintelligible. If it provoke the author to give us a more perfect edition, I have my end.

Who he is I cannot say, and (which is a great pity) there is certainly nothing in his style and manner of writing which can distinguish or discover him: for if it bears any resemblance to that of Mr Pope, 'tis not improbable but it might be done on purpose, with a view to have it pass for his. But by the frequency of his allusions to Virgil, and a laboured (not to say affected) shortness in imitation of him, I should think him more an admirer of the Roman poet than of the Grecian, and in that not of the same taste with his friend.

I have been well informed, that this work was the labour of full six years of his life, and that he wholly retired himself from all the avocations and pleasures of the world, to attend diligently to its correction and perfection; and six years more he intended to bestow upon it, as it should seem by this verse of Statius, which was cited at the head of his manuscript--

'Oh mihi bis senos multum vigilata per annos,
Duncia!

Hence, also, we learn the true title of the poem; which, with the same certainty as we call that of Homer the Iliad, of Virgil the Aeneid, of Camoens the Lusiad, we may pronounce, could have been, and can be no other than

THE DUNCIAD.

It is styled heroic, as being doubly so: not only with respect to its nature, which, according to the best rules of the ancients, and strictest ideas of the moderns, is critically such; but also with regard to the heroical disposition and high courage of the writer, who dared to stir up such a formidable, irritable, and implacable race of mortals.

There may arise some obscurity in chronology from the names in the poem, by the inevitable removal of some authors, and insertion of others in their niches. For whoever will consider the unity of the whole design, will be sensible that the poem was not made for these authors, but these authors for the poem. I should judge that they were clapped in as they rose, fresh and fresh, and changed from day to day; in like manner as when the old boughs wither, we thrust new ones into a chimney.

I would not have the reader too much troubled or anxious, if he cannot decipher them; since when he shall have found them out, he will probably know no more of the persons than before.

Yet we judged it better to preserve them as they are, than to change them for fictitious names; by which the satire would only be multiplied, and applied to many instead of one. Had the hero, for instance, been called Codrus, how many would have affirmed him to have been Mr T., Mr E., Sir R. B., &c.; but now all that unjust scandal is saved by calling him by a name, which by good luck happens to be that of a real person.

II.--A LIST OF BOOKS, PAPERS, AND VERSES,

IN WHICH OUR AUTHOR WAS ABUSED, BEFORE THE PUBLICATION OF THE DUNCIAD;
WITH THE TRUE NAMES OF THE AUTHORS.

Reflections Critical and Satirical on a late Rhapsody, called an Essay on Criticism. By Mr Dennis. Printed by B. Lintot, price 6d.

A New Rehearsal, or Bayes the Younger; containing an Examen of Mr Rowe's plays, and a word or two on Mr Pope's Rape of the Lock. Anon. [By Charles Gildon]. Printed for J. Roberts, 1714, price 1s.

Homerides, or a Letter to Mr Pope, occasioned by his intended translation of Homer. By Sir Iliad Doggrel. [Tho. Burnet and G. Duckett, Esquires]. Printed for W. Wilkins, 1715, price 9d.

Aesop at the Bear Garden; a Vision, in imitation of the Temple of Fame. By Mr Preston. Sold by John Morphew, 1715, price 6d.

The Catholic Poet, or Protestant Barnaby's Sorrowful Lamentations; a Ballad about Homer's Iliad. By Mrs Centlivre and others, 1715, price 1d.

An Epilogue to a Puppet Show at Bath, concerning the said Iliad. By

George Ducket, Esq. Printed by E. Curll.

A Complete Key to the What-d'ye-call-it? Anon. [By Griffin, a player, supervised by Mr Th---]. Printed by J. Roberts, 1715.

A True Character of Mr P. and his Writings, in a Letter to a Friend. Anon. [Dennis]. Printed for S. Popping, 1716, price 3d.

The Confederates, a Farce. By Joseph Gay. [J. D. Breval]. Printed for R. Burleigh, 1717, price 1s.

Remarks upon Mr Pope's Translation of Homer; with Two Letters concerning the Windsor Forest, and the Temple of Fame. By Mr Dennis. Printed for E. Curll, 1717, price 1s. 6d.

Satires on the Translators of Homer, Mr P. and Mr T. Anon. [Bez. Morris]. 1717, price 6d.

The Triumvirate; or, a Letter from Palaemon to Celia at Bath. Anon. [Leonard Welsted]. 1711, folio, price 1s.

The Battle of Poets, an Heroic Poem. By Thomas Cooke. Printed for J. Roberts. Folio, 1725.

Memoirs of Lilliput. Anon. [Eliza Haywood]. Octavo, printed in 1727.

An Essay on Criticism, in Prose. By the Author of the Critical History of England [J. Oldmixon]. Octavo, printed 1728.

Gulliveriana and Alexandriana; with an ample Preface and Critique on Swift and Pope's Miscellanies. By Jonathan Smedley. Printed by J. Roberts. Octavo, 1728.

Characters of the Times; or, an Account of the Writings, Characters, &c., of several Gentlemen libelled by S---- and P---, in a late Miscellany. Octavo, 1728.

Remarks on Mr Pope's Rape of the Lock, in Letters to a Friend. By Mr Dennis. Written in 1724, though not printed till 1728. Octavo.

VERSES, LETTERS, ESSAYS, OR ADVERTISEMENTS, IN THE PUBLIC PRINTS.

British Journal, Nov. 25, 1727. A Letter on Swift and Pope's Miscellanies. [Writ by M. Concanen].

Daily Journal, March 18, 1728. A Letter by Philo-mauri. James Moore Smith.

Ibid. March 29. A Letter about Thersites; accusing the author of disaffection to the Government. By James Moore Smith.

Mist's Weekly Journal, March 30. An Essay on the Arts of a Poet's Sinking in Reputation; or, a Supplement to the Art of Sinking in Poetry. [Supposed by Mr Theobald].

Daily Journal, April 3. A Letter under the name of Philo-ditto. By James Moore Smith.

Flying Post, April 4. A Letter against Gulliver and Mr P. [By Mr Oldmixon.]

Daily Journal, April 5. An Auction of Goods at Twickenham. By James Moore Smith.

The Flying Post, April 6. A Fragment of a Treatise upon Swift and Pope. By Mr Oldmixon.

The Senator, April 9. On the same. By Edward Roome.

Daily Journal, April 8. Advertisement by James Moore Smith.

Flying Post, April 13. Verses against Dr Swift, and against Mr P---'s Homer. By J. Oldmixon.

Daily Journal, April 23. Letter about the Translation of the Character of Thersites in Homer. By Thomas Cooke, &c.

Mist's Weekly Journal, April 27. A Letter of Lewis Theobald.

Daily Journal, May 11. A Letter against Mr P. at large. Anon. [John Dennis].

All these were afterwards reprinted in a pamphlet, entitled, A Collection of all the Verses, Essays, Letters, and Advertisements, occasioned by Mr Pope and Swift's Miscellanies, prefaced by Concanen, Anonymous, octavo, and printed for A. Moore, 1728, price 1s. Others of an elder date, having lain as waste paper many years, were, upon the publication of the Dunciad, brought out, and their authors betrayed by the mercenary booksellers (in hope of some possibility of vending a few), by advertising them in this manner:--"The Confederates, a Farce. By Captain Breval (for which he was put into the Dunciad). An Epilogue to Powell's Puppet Show. By Colonel Ducket (for which he is put into the Dunciad). Essays, &c. By Sir Richard Blackmore. (N.B.--It was for a passage of this book that Sir Richard was put into the Dunciad)." And so of others.

AFTER THE DUNCIAD, 1728.

An Essay on the Dunciad, octavo. Printed for J. Roberts. [In this book, p. 9, it was formally declared, 'That the complaint of the aforesaid libels and advertisements was forged and untrue; that all mouths had been silent, except in Mr Pope's praise; and nothing against him published, but by Mr Theobald.']

Sawney, in Blank Verse, occasioned by the Dunciad; with a Critique on that Poem. By J. Ralph [a person never mentioned in it at first, but inserted after]. Printed for J. Roberts, octavo.

A Complete Key to the Dunciad. By E. Curll. 12mo, price 6d.

A Second and Third Edition of the same, with Additions, 12mo.

The Popiad. By E. Curll. Extracted from J. Dennis, Sir Richard Blackmore, &c. 12mo, price 6d.

The Curliad. By the same E. Curll.

The Female Dunciad. Collected by the same Mr Curll. 12mo, price 6d. With the Metamorphosis of P. into a Stinging Nettle. By Mr Foxton. 12mo.

The Metamorphosis of Scriblerus into Snarlerus. By J. Smedley. Printed for A. Moore, folio, price 6d.

The Dunciad Dissected. By Curll and Mrs Thomas. 12mo.

An Essay on the Tastes and Writings of the Present Times. Said to be writ by a Gentleman of C. C. C. Oxon. Printed for J. Roberts, octavo.

The Arts of Logic and Rhetoric, partly taken from Bouhours, with New Reflections, &c. By John Oldmixon. Octavo.

Remarks on the Dunciad. By Mr Dennis. Dedicated to Theobald. Octavo.

A Supplement to the Profund. Anon. By Matthew Coucanen. Octavo.

Mist's Weekly Journal, June 8. A long Letter, signed W. A. Writ by some or other of the Club of Theobald, Dennis, Moore, Concanen, Cooke, who for some time held constant weekly meetings for these kind of performances.

Daily Journal, June 11. A Letter signed Philosciblerus, on the name of Pope. Letter to Mr Theobald, inverse, signed B. M. (Bezaleel Morris) against Mr P---. Many other little Epigrams about this time in the same papers, by James Moore, and others.

Mist's Journal, June 22. A Letter by Lewis Theobald.

Flying Post, August 8. Letter on Pope and Swift.

Daily Journal, August 8. Letter charging the Author of the Dunciad with Treason.

Durgen: A Plain Satire on a Pompous Satirist. By Edward Ward, with a little of James Moore.

Apollo's Maggot in his Cups. By E. Ward.

Gulliveriana Secunda. Being a Collection of many of the Libels in the Newspapers, like the former Volume, under the same title, by Smedley. Advertised in the Craftsman, Nov. 9, 1728, with this remarkable promise, that 'any thing_ which any body_ should send as Mr Pope's or Dr Swift's should be inserted and published as theirs.'

Pope Alexander's Supremacy and Infallibility Examined, &c. By George Duckett and John Dennis. Quarto.

Dean Jonathan's Paraphrase on the Fourth Chapter of Genesis. Writ by E. Roome. Folio. 1729.

Labeo. A Paper of Verses by Leonard Welsted, which after came into _One Epistle_, and was published by James Moore, quarto, 1730. Another part of it came out in Welsted's own name, under the just title of Dulness and Scandal, folio, 1731.

There have been since published--

Verses on the Imitator of Horace. By a Lady (or between a Lady, a Lord, and a Court-squire). Printed for J. Roberts. Folio.

An Epistle from a Nobleman to a Doctor of Divinity, from Hampton Court (Lord H---y). Printed for J. Roberts. Folio.

A Letter from Mr Cibber to Mr Pope. Printed for W. Lewis in Covent Garden. Octavo.

III.--ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION--WITH NOTES,
IN QUARTO, 1729.

It will be sufficient to say of this edition, that the reader has here a much more correct and complete copy of the Dunciad than has hitherto appeared. I cannot answer but some mistakes may have slipped into it, but a vast number of others will be prevented by the names being now not only set at length, but justified by the authorities and reasons given. I make no doubt the author's own motive to use real rather than feigned names, was his care to preserve the innocent from any false application; whereas, in the former editions, which had no more than the initial letters, he was made, by Keys printed here, to hurt the inoffensive, and (what was worse) to abuse his friends, by an impression at Dublin.

The commentary which attends this poem was sent me from several hands, and consequently must be unequally written; yet will have one advantage over most commentaries, that it is not made upon conjectures, or at a remote distance of time: and the reader cannot but derive one pleasure from the very obscurity of the persons it treats of, that it partakes of the nature of a secret, which most people love to be let into, though the men or the things be ever so inconsiderable or trivial.

Of the persons it was judged proper to give some account; for since it is only in this monument that they must expect to survive (and here survive they will, as long as the English tongue shall remain such as it was in the reigns of Queen Anne and King George), it seemed but humanity to bestow a word or two upon each, just to tell what he was, what he writ, when he lived, and when he died.

If a word or two more are added upon the chief offenders, it is only as a paper pinned upon the breast, to mark the enormities for which they suffered; lest the correction only should be remembered, and the crime forgotten. In some articles it was thought sufficient barely to transcribe from Jacob, Curll, and other writers of their own rank, who were much better acquainted with them than any of the authors of this comment can pretend to be. Most of them had drawn each other's characters on certain occasions; but the few here inserted are all that could be saved from the general destruction of such works.

Of the part of Scriblerus, I need say nothing; his manner is well enough known, and approved by all but those who are too much concerned to be judges.

The Imitations of the Ancients are added, to gratify those who either never read, or may have forgotten them; together with some of the parodies and allusions to the most excellent of the Moderns. If, from the frequency of the former, any man think the poem too much a Cento,

our poet will but appear to have done the same thing in jest which Boileau did in earnest; and upon which Vida, Fracastorius, and many of the most eminent Latin poets, professedly valued themselves.

IV.--ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE DUNCIAD,

WHEN PRINTED SEPARATELY IN THE YEAR 1742.

We apprehend it can be deemed no injury to the author of the three first books of the Dunciad that we publish this fourth. It was found merely by accident in taking a survey of the library of a late eminent nobleman; but in so blotted a condition, and in so many detached pieces, as plainly showed it to be not only incorrect, but unfinished. That the author of the three first books had a design to extend and complete his poem in this manner appears from the dissertation prefixed to it, where it is said that the design is more extensive, and that we may expect other episodes to complete it; and from the declaration in the argument to the third book, that the accomplishment of the prophecies therein would be the theme hereafter of a greater Dunciad. But whether or no he be the author of this, we declare ourselves ignorant. If he be, we are no more to be blamed for the publication of it than Tucca and Varius for that of the last six books of the Aeneid, though perhaps inferior to the former.

If any person be possessed of a more perfect copy of this work, or of any other fragments of it, and will communicate them to the publisher, we shall make the next edition more complete: in which we also promise to insert any criticisms that shall be published (if at all to the purpose) with the names of the authors; or any letters sent us (though not to the purpose) shall yet be printed under the title of *_Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum_*; which, together with some others of the same kind formerly laid by for that end, may make no unpleasant addition to the future impressions of this poem.

V.--ADVERTISEMENT TO THE COMPLETE EDITION of 1743.

I have long had a design of giving some sort of Notes on the works of this poet. Before I had the happiness of his acquaintance, I had written a commentary on his Essay on Man, and have since finished another on the Essay on Criticism. There was one already on the Dunciad, which had met with general approbation; but I still thought some additions were wanting (of a more serious kind) to the humorous notes of Scriblerus, and even to those written by Mr Cleland, Dr Arbuthnot, and others. I had lately the pleasure to pass some months with the author in the country, where I prevailed upon him to do what I had long desired, and favour me with his explanation of several passages in his works. It happened that just at that juncture was published a ridiculous book against him, full of personal reflections, which furnished him with a lucky opportunity of improving this poem, by giving it the only thing it wanted--a more considerable hero. He was always sensible of its defect in that particular, and owned he had let it pass with the hero it had purely for want of a better; not entertaining the least expectation that such an one was reserved for this post as has since obtained the Laurel: but since that had happened, he could no longer deny this justice either to him or the Dunciad.

And yet I will venture to say, there was another motive which had still more weight with our author. This person was one who from every folly (not to say vice) of which another would be ashamed has constantly derived a vanity; and therefore was the man in the world who would least be hurt by it.

W. W.

VI.--ADVERTISEMENT PRINTED IN THE JOURNALS, 1730.

Whereas, upon occasion of certain pieces relating to the gentlemen of the Dunciad, some have been willing to suggest, as if they looked upon them as an abuse: we can do no less than own it is our opinion, that to call these gentlemen bad authors is no sort of abuse, but a great truth. We cannot alter this opinion without some reason; but we promise to do it in respect to every person who thinks it an injury to be represented as no wit, or poet, provided he procures a certificate of his being really such, from any three of his companions in the Dunciad, or from Mr Dennis singly, who is esteemed equal to any three of the number.

VII.--A PARALLEL OF THE CHARACTERS OF MR DRYDEN AND MR POPE, AS DRAWN BY CERTAIN OF THEIR CONTEMPORARIES.

MR DRYDEN--HIS POLITICS, RELIGION, MORALS.

MR DRYDEN is a mere renegado from monarchy, poetry, and good sense^[453]--a true republican son of monarchical Church^[454]--a republican atheist.^[455] Dryden was from the beginning an [Greek: alloprosallous], and I doubt not will continue so to the last.^[456]

In the poem called Absalom and Achitophel are notoriously traduced, the King, the Queen, the Lords and Gentlemen, not only their honourable persons exposed, but the whole nation and its representatives notoriously libelled. It is *_scandalum magnatum_*, yea of majesty itself.^[457]

He looks upon God's gospel as a foolish fable, like the Pope, to whom he is a pitiful purveyor.^[458] His very Christianity may be questioned.^[459] He ought to expect more severity than other men, as he is most unmerciful in his own reflections on others.^[460] With as good a right as his holiness, he sets up for poetical infallibility.^[461]

MR DRYDEN ONLY A VERSIFIER.

His whole libel is all bad matter, beautified (which is all that can be said of it) with good metre.^[462] Mr Dryden's genius did not appear in any thing more than his versification, and whether he is to be ennobled for that only is a question.^[463]

MR DRYDEN'S VIRGIL.

Tonson calls it Dryden's Virgil, to show that this is not that Virgil so admired in the Augustaeon age; but a Virgil of another stamp, a silly, impertinent, nonsensical writer.^[464] None but a Bavius, a Maevidius, or a Bathyllus carped at Virgil; and none but such unthinking vermin admire his translator.^[465] It is true, soft and easy lines might become Ovid's

Epistles or Art of Love; but Virgil, who is all great and majestic, &c., requires strength of lines, weight of words, and closeness of expressions--not an ambling muse running on carpet-ground, and shod as lightly as a Newmarket racer. He has numberless faults in his author's meaning, and in propriety of expression.[466]

MR DRYDEN UNDERSTOOD NO GREEK NOR LATIN.

Mr Dryden was once, I have heard, at Westminster school. Dr Bushby would have whipped him for so childish a paraphrase.[467] The meanest pedant in England would whip a lubber of twelve for construing so absurdly.[468] The translator is mad, every line betrays his stupidity.[469] The faults are innumerable, and convince me that Mr Dryden did not, or would not understand his author.[470] This shows how fit Mr D. may be to translate Homer! A mistake in a single letter might fall on the printer well enough, but [Greek: eichor] for [Greek: ichor] must be the error of the author. Nor had he art enough to correct it at the press.[471] Mr Dryden writes for the court ladies. He writes for the ladies, and not for use.[472]

The translator puts in a little burlesque now and then into Virgil, for a ragout to his cheated subscribers.[473]

MR DRYDEN TRICKED HIS SUBSCRIBERS.

I wonder that any man, who could not but be conscious of his own unfitness for it, should go to amuse the learned world with such an undertaking! A man ought to value his reputation more than money; and not to hope that those who can read for themselves will be imposed upon, merely by a partially and unseasonably celebrated name.[474] _Poetis quidlibet audendi_ shall be Mr Dryden's motto, though it should extend to picking of pockets.[475]

NAMES BESTOWED ON MR DRYDEN.

An Ape.--A crafty ape dressed up in a gaudy gown--whips put into an ape's paw, to play pranks with--none but apish and papish brats will heed him.[476]

An Ass.--A camel will take upon him no more burden than is sufficient for his strength, but there is another beast that crouches under all.[477]

A Frog.--Poet Squab endued with Poet Maro's spirit! an ugly croaking kind of vermin, which would swell to the bulk of an ox.[478]

A Coward.--A Clinias or a Damaetas, or a man of Mr Dryden's own courage.[479]

A Knave.--Mr Dryden has heard of Paul, the knave of Jesus Christ; and, if I mistake not, I've read somewhere of John Dryden, servant to his Majesty.[480]

A Fool.--Had he not been such a self-conceited fool.[481]--Some great poets are positive blockheads.[482]

A Thing.--So little a thing as Mr Dryden.[483]

MR POPE--HIS POLITICS, RELIGION, MORALS.

MR POPE is an open and mortal enemy to his country, and the commonwealth of learning.[484] Some call him a Popish Whig, which is directly inconsistent.[485] Pope, as a papist, must be a Tory and High-flyer.[486] He is both a Whig and Tory.[487]

He hath made it his custom to cackle to more than one party in their own sentiments.[488]

In his miscellanies, the persons abused are--the King, the Queen, his late Majesty, both Houses of Parliament, the Privy Council, the Bench of Bishops, the Established Church, the present Ministry, &c. To make sense of some passages, they must be construed into royal scandal.[489]

He is a popish rhymester, bred up with a contempt of the Sacred Writings.[490] His religion allows him to destroy heretics, not only with his pen, but with fire and sword; and such were all those unhappy wits whom he sacrificed to his accursed popish principles.[491] It deserved vengeance to suggest that Mr Pope had less infallibility than his namesake at Rome.[492]

MR POPE ONLY A VERSIFIER.

The smooth numbers of the Dunciad are all that recommend it, nor has it any other merit.[493] It must be owned that he hath got a notable knack of rhyming and writing smooth verse.[494]

MR POPE'S HOMER.

The Homer which Lintot prints does not talk like Homer, but like Pope; and he who translated him, one would swear, had a hill in Tipperary for his Parnassus, and a puddle in some bog for his Hippocrene.[495] He has no admirers among those that can distinguish, discern, and judge.[496] He hath a knack at smooth verse, but without either genius or good sense, or any tolerable knowledge of English. The qualities which distinguish Homer are the beauties of his diction and the harmony of his versification. But this little author, who is so much in vogue, has neither sense in his thoughts nor English in his expressions.[497]

MR POPE UNDERSTOOD NO GREEK.

He hath undertaken to translate Homer from the Greek, of which he knows not one word, into English, of which he understands as little.[498] I wonder how this gentleman would look, should it be discovered that he has not translated ten verses together in any book of Homer with justice to the poet, and yet he dares reproach his fellow-writers with not understanding Greek.[499] He has stuck so little to his original as to have his knowledge in Greek called in question.[500] I should be glad to know which it is of all Homer's excellencies which has so delighted the ladies, and the gentlemen who judge like ladies.[501]

But he has a notable talent at burlesque; his genius slides so naturally into it, that he hath burlesqued Homer without designing it.[502]

MR POPE TRICKED HIS SUBSCRIBERS.

'Tis indeed somewhat bold, and almost prodigious, for a single man to undertake such a work; but 'tis too late to dissuade by demonstrating

the madness of the project. The subscribers' expectations have been raised in proportion to what their pockets have been drained of.[503] Pope has been concerned in jobs, and hired out his name to booksellers.[504]

NAMES BESTOWED ON MR POPE.

An Ape.--Let us take the initial letter of his Christian name, and the initial and final letters of his surname, viz., A P E, and they give you the same idea of an ape as his face,[505] &c.

An Ass.--It is my duty to pull off the lion's skin from this little ass.[506]

A Frog.--A squab short gentleman--a little creature that, like the frog in the fable, swells, and is angry that it is not allowed to be as big as an ox.[507]

A Coward.--A lurking, way-laying coward.[508]

A Knave.--He is one whom God and nature have marked for want of common honesty.[509]

A Fool.--Great fools will be christened by the names of great poets, and Pope will be called Homer.[510]

A Thing.--A little abject thing.[511]

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FOOTNOTES:

[1] 'Patricio:' Lord Godolphin.

[2] 'Charron:' an imitator of Montaigne.

[3] 'Perjured prince:' Louis XI. of France. See 'Quentin Durward'.

[4] 'Godless regent:' Philip Duke of Orleans, Regent of France in the minority of Louis XV., a believer in judicial astrology, though an unbeliever in all religion.

[5] 'Charles:' Charles V.

[6] 'Philip:' Philip II. in the battle of Quintin.

[7] 'Punk:' Cleopatra.

[8] 'Wilmot:' Earl of Rochester.

[9] 'Noble dame a whore:' the sister of Cato, and mother of Brutus.

[10] 'Lanesborough:' an ancient nobleman, who continued this practice long after his legs were disabled by the gout. Upon the death of Prince George of Denmark, he demanded an audience of the Queen, to advise her to preserve her health and dispel her grief by dancing.--P.

[11] 'Narcissa:' Mrs Oldfield, the actress.

[12] 'Sappho:' Lady M. W. Montague.

[13] 'Narcissa:' Duchess of Hamilton.

[14] 'Philomede:' Henrietta, younger Duchess of Marlborough, to whom Congreve left the greater part of his fortune.

[15] 'Her Grace:' Duchess of Montague.

[16] 'Atossa:' Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough.

[17] 'Chloe:' Mrs Howard, afterwards Countess of Suffolk.

[18] 'Mahomet:' servant to the late king, said to be the son of a Turkish pasha, whom he took at the siege of Buda, and constantly kept about his person--P.

[19] 'Parson Hale;' Dr Stephen Hale, not more estimable for his useful discoveries as a natural philosopher, than for his exemplary life and pastoral charity as a parish priest.--P.

[20] 'Epistle III.:' this epistle was written after a violent outcry against our author, on a supposition that he had ridiculed a worthy nobleman merely for his wrong taste. He justified himself upon that article in a letter to the Earl of Burlington; at the end of which are these words: 'I have learnt that there are some who would rather be wicked than ridiculous; and therefore it may be safer to attack vices than follies. I will therefore leave my betters in the quiet possession of their idols, their groves, and their high places; and change my subject from their pride to their meanness, from their vanities to their

miseries; and as the only certain way to avoid misconstructions, to lessen offence, and not to multiply ill-natured applications, I may probably, in my next, make use of real names instead of fictitious ones.'--P.

[21] 'Ward:' John Ward of Hackney, Esq., member of Parliament, being prosecuted by the Duchess of Buckingham, and convicted of forgery, was first expelled the House, and then stood in the pillory on the 17th of March 1727.--P.

[22] 'Chartres:' see a former note.

[23] 'The patriot's cloak:' this is a true story, which happened in the reign of William III. to an unsuspected old patriot, who coming out at the back-door from having been closeted by the king, where he had received a large bag of guineas, the bursting of the bag discovered his business there.--P.

[24] 'Ship off senates:' alludes to several ministers, counsellors, and patriots banished in our times to Siberia, and to that more glorious fate of the Parliament of Paris, banished to Pontoise in the year 1720.--P.

[25] 'Coals:' some misers of great wealth, proprietors of the coal-mines, had entered at this time into an association to keep up coals to an extravagant price, whereby the poor were reduced almost to starve, till one of them, taking the advantage of underselling the rest, defeated the design. One of these misers was worth ten thousand, another seven thousand a-year.--P.

[26] 'Colepepper:' Sir William Colepepper, Bart., a person of an ancient family and ample fortune, without one other quality of a gentleman, who, after ruining himself at the gaming table, passed the rest of his days in sitting there to see the ruin of others; preferring to subsist upon borrowing and begging, rather than to enter into any reputable method of life, and refusing a post in the army which was offered him.--P.

[27] 'Turner:' a miser of the day.

[28] 'Hopkins:' a citizen whose rapacity obtained him the name of Vulture Hopkins.--P.

[29] 'Japhet:' Japhet Crook, alias Sir Peter Stranger, was punished with the loss of those parts, for having forged a conveyance of an estate to himself.--P.

[30] 'Endow a college or a cat:' a famous Duchess of Richmond, in her last will, left considerable legacies and annuities to her cats.--P.

[31] 'Bond:' the director of a charitable corporation.

[32] 'To live on venison:' in the extravagance and luxury of the South-sea year, the price of a haunch of venison was from three to five pounds.--P.

[33] 'General excise:' many people, about the year 1733, had a conceit that such a thing was intended, of which it is not improbable this lady might have some intimation.--P.

[34] 'Wise Peter:' an attorney who made a large fortune.

[35] 'Rome's great Didius:' a Roman lawyer, so rich as to purchase the Empire when it was set to sale upon the death of Pertinax.--P.

[36] 'Blunt:' one of the first projectors of the South-sea scheme.

[37] 'Oxford's better part:' Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford--P.

[38] 'The Man of Ross:' the person here celebrated, who, with a small estate, actually performed all these good works, and whose true name was almost lost (partly by the title of the Man of Ross, given him by way of eminence, and partly by being buried without so much as an inscription) was called Mr John Kyrle. He effected many good works, partly by raising contributions from other benevolent persons. He died in the year 1724, aged 90, and lies interred in the chancel of the church of Ross, in Herefordshire.--P.

[39] 'Go search it there:' the parish register.

[40] 'Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone:' the poet ridicules the wretched taste of carving large periwigs on bustos, of which there are several vile examples in the tombs at Westminster and elsewhere.--P.

[41] 'Great Villiers lies:' this lord, yet more famous for his vices than his misfortunes, after having been possessed of about L.50,000 a-year, and passed through many of the highest posts in the kingdom, died in the year 1687, in a remote inn in Yorkshire, reduced to the utmost misery.--P.

[42] 'Shrewsbury:' the Countess of Shrewsbury, a woman abandoned to gallantries. The earl, her husband, was killed by the Duke of Buckingham in a duel; and it has been said, that during the combat she held the duke's horse in the habit of a page.--P.

[43] 'Cutler:' a notorious miser.

[44] 'Where London's column:' the monument, built in memory of the fire of London, with an inscription, importing that city to have been burnt by the Papists.

[45] 'Topham:' a gentleman famous for a judicious collection of drawings.--P.

[46] 'Hearne:' the antiquarian.

[47] 'Ripley:' this man was a carpenter, employed by a first minister, who raised him to an architect, without any genius in the art; and after some wretched proofs of his insufficiency in public buildings, made him comptroller of the Board of Works.--P.

[48] 'Bubo:' Bubb Doddington, who had just finished a mansion at Eastbury.

[49] 'Dr Clarke:' Dr S. Clarke's busto placed by the Queen in the Hermitage, while the doctor duly frequented the court.--P.

[50] 'Timon's villa:' Cannons, the estate of Lord Chandos. See Life.

[51] 'Verrio or Laguerre:' Verrio (Antonio) painted many ceilings, &c., at Windsor, Hampton Court, &c; and Laguerre at Blenheim Castle, and other places.--P.

[52] 'Who never mentions hell:' this is a fact; a reverend Dean, preaching at court, threatened the sinner with punishment in 'a place which he thought it not decent to name in so polite an assembly.'--P.

[53] 'Sancho's dread doctor:' see 'Don Quixote,' chap, xlvii.--P.

[54] This was originally written in the year 1715, when Mr Addison intended to publish his book of medals; it was sometime before he was Secretary of State; but not published till Mr Tickell's edition of his works; at which time the verses on Mr Craggs, which conclude the poem, were added, viz., in 1720.--P.

[55] 'Vadius:' see his history, and that of his shield, in the 'Memoirs of Scriblerus,' ch. ii.

[56] Alemena, mother of Hercules, is after his death here recounting her misfortunes to Iole, who replies by narrating the transformations of her sister Dryope.

[57] Such sons: Eteocles and Polynices.

[58] The Marchantes Tale. Written at sixteen or seventeen years of age.

[59] The first part of this prologue was written by Pope, the conclusion by Mallet.

[60] Shows a cap with ears.

[61] Flings down the cap, and exit.

[62] 'Basset-Table:' only this of all the Town Eclogues was Mr Pope's, and is here printed from a copy corrected by his own hand. The humour of it consists in this, that the one is in love with the game, and the other with the sharper--W.

[63] 'The Lady Frances Shirley:' a lady whose great merit Mr Pope took a real pleasure in celebrating.

[64] 'Bertrand's:' a famous toy-shop at Bath.

[65] 'Fool or ass:' 'The Dunciad.'--P.

[66] 'Flattery or fib:' the 'Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot.'--P.

[67] 'Arms:' such toys being the usual presents from lovers to their mistresses.--P.

[68] 'Print:' when she delivers Aeneas a suit of heavenly armour.--P.

[69] 'Truth nor lies:' if you have neither the courage to write satire, nor the application to attempt an epic poem. He was then meditating on such a work.--P.

[70] 'Algerian grot:' alluding to Numa's projecting his system of politics in this grot, assisted, as he gave out, by the goddess

Aegeria.--P.

[71] 'What-d'ye-call-it:' a comedy by Gay.

[72] 'Turk:' Ulrick, the Turk.

[73] 'Pope:' the author.

[74] 'Bellenden, Lepell, and Griffin:' ladies of the Court of the Princess Caroline.

[75] 'Blunderland:' Ireland.

[76] 'Meadows:' see verses to Mrs Howe.

[77] 'God send the king safe landing:' this ballad was written anno 1717.

[78] 'Philips:' Ambrose Philips.

[79] 'Budgell:' Eustace Budgell.

[80] 'Carey:' Henry Carey.

[81] 'Mrs Pulteney:' the daughter of John Gumley of Isleworth, who acquired his fortune by a glass manufactory.

[82] 'Sandys:' George Sandy's, the old, and as yet unequalled, translator of Ovid's Metamorphoses.

[83] 'Jacob's:' old Jacob Tonson, the publisher of the Metamorphoses.

[84] 'P----:' perhaps Pembroke.

[85] 'Umbra:' intended, it is said, for Ambrose Philips.

[86] 'Only Johnson:' Charles Johnson, a second-rate dramatist.

[87] 'The Man Mountain:' this Ode, and the three following pieces, were produced by Pope on reading 'Gulliver's Travels.'

[88] 'Biddel:' name of a sea captain mentioned in Gulliver's Travels.

[89] 'Pannel:' name of a sea captain mentioned in Gulliver's Travels.

[90] 'B----:' Britain.

[91] 'C----:' Cobham.

[92] 'P----'s: Pulteney's.

[93] 'S----:' Sandys.

[94] 'S----:' Shippen.

[95] 'C----:' Perhaps the Earl of Carlisle.

[96] 'Ch---s W----:' Sir Charles Hanbury Williams.

[97] 'Sir Har-y or Sir P----:' Sir Henry Oxenden or Sir Paul Methuen.

[98] 'G---r, C---m, B---t:' Lords Gower, Cobham, and Bathurst.

[99] 'C---d:' Chesterfield.

[100] 'C---t:' Lord Carteret.

[101] 'P----:' William Pulteney, created in 1742 Earl of Bath.

[102] 'W----:' Walpole.

[103] 'H----:' either Sir Robert's brother Horace, who had just quitted his embassy at the Hague, or his son Horace, who was then on his travels.

[104] 'W----:' W. Winnington.

[105] 'Young:' Sir William Young.

[106] 'Bub:' Dodington.

[107] 'H----:' probably Hare, Bishop of Chicester.

[108] 'F----, H---y:' Fox and Henley.

[109] 'H---n:' Hinton.

[110] 'Ebor:' Blackburn, Archbishop of York, and Hoadley, Bishop of Winchester.

[111] 'O---w:' Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons, and the Earl of Delawar, Chairman of the Committees of the House of Lords.

[112] 'N----:' Newcastle.

[113] 'D----'s sager:' Dorset; perhaps the last word should be _sneer_.

[114] 'M----'s:' Duke of Marlborough.

[115] 'J----'s:' Jekyll.

[116] 'H---k's:' Hardwick.

[117] 'C----:' probably Sir John Cummins, Lord Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas.

[118] 'B----:' Britain.

[119] 'S---w:' Earl of Scarborough.

[120] 'M-m-t's:' Marchmont.

[121] 'P---th:' Polwarth, son to Lord Marchmont.

[122] 'W---m:' Wyndham.

[123] 'Sl---s:' slaves.

[124] 'Se---s:' senates.

[125] 'Ad.....' administration.

[126] King's.

[127] 'Religion:' an allusion perhaps to Frederick Prince of Wales.

[128] 'First Book of Horace:' attributed to Pope.

[129] The person here meant was Dr Robert Friend, head master of Westminster School.

[130] The Misses Lisle.

[131] There occurred here originally the following lax stanza:--

Can sins of moment claim the rod
Of everlasting fires?

[132] And that offend great nature's God, Which nature's self
inspires.--See Boswell's 'Johnson.'

[133] This gentleman was of Scotland, and bred at the university of Utrecht, with the Earl of Mar. He served in Spain under Earl Rivers. After the peace, he was made one of the Commissioners of the Customs in Scotland, and then of Taxes in England, in which having shewn himself for twenty years diligent, punctual, and incorruptible, though without any other assistance of fortune, he was suddenly displaced by the minister in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and died two months after, in 1741.--P.

[134] Giles Jacob's Lives of Poets, vol. ii. in his Life.

[135] Dennis's Reflections on the Essay on Criticism.

[136] Dunciad Dissected, p. 4.

[137] Guardian, No. 40.

[138] Jacob's Lives, &c. vol. ii.

[139] Dunciad Dissected, p. 4.

[140] Farmer P--- and his Son.

[141] Dunciad Dissected.

[142] Characters of the Times, p. 45.

[143] Female Dunciad, p. ult.

[144] Dunciad Dissected.

[145] Roome, Paraphrase on the 4th of Genesis, printed 1729.

[146] Character of Mr Pope and his Writings, in a Letter to a Friend, printed for S. Popping, 1716, p. 10. Curll, in his Key to the Dunciad (first edition, said to be printed for A. Dodd), in the 10th page,

declared Gildon to be author of that libel; though in the subsequent editions of his Key he left out this assertion, and affirmed (in the *Curlliad*, p. 4 and 8) that it was written by Dennis only.

[147] *Reflections, Critical and Satirical, on a Rhapsody called An Essay on Criticism*. Printed for Bernard Lintot, 8vo.

[148] *Essay on Criticism in prose*, 8vo, 1728, by the author of the *Critical History of England*.

[149] *Preface to his Poems*, p.18, 53.

[150] *Spectator*, No. 253.

[151] Letter to B. B. at the end of the *Remarks on Pope's Homer*, 1717.

[152] Printed 1728, p. 12.

[153] *Alma*, canto 2.

[154] In his *Essays*, vol. i., printed for E. Curll.

[155] *Censor*, vol. ii. n. 33.

[156] _Vide_ preface to Mr Tickel's translation of the first book of the *Iliad*, 4to. Also _vide_ *Life*.

[157] *Daily Journal*, March 18, 1728.

[158] *Ibid*, April 3, 1728.

[159] Verses to Mr Pope on his translation of Homer.

[160] Poem prefixed to his works.

[161] In his poems, printed for B. Lintot.

[162] *Universal Passion*, Satire i.

[163] In his *Poems*, and at the end of the *Odyssey*.

[164] The names of two weekly papers.

[165] Theobald, Letter in *Mist's Journal*, June 22, 1728.

[166] Smedley, Preface to *Gulliveriana*, p. 14, 16.

[167] *Gulliveriana*, p. 332.

[168] Anno 1723.

[169] Anno 1729.

[170] Preface to *Remarks on the Rape of the Lock*, p. 12, and in the last page of that treatise.

[171] Pages 6, 7 of the Preface, by Concanen, to a book entitled, *A Collection of all the Letters, Essays, Verses, and Advertisements occasioned by Pope and Swift's Miscellanies*. Printed for A. Moore, 8vo,

1712.

[172] Key to the Dunciad, third edition, p. 18.

[173] A list of persons, &c., at the end of the forementioned Collection of all the Letters, Essays, &c.

[174] Introduction to his Shakspeare Restored, in 4to, p. 3.

[175] Commentary on the Duke of Buckingham's Essay, 8vo, 1721, p. 97, 98.

[176] In his prose Essay on Criticism.

[177] Printed by J. Roberts, 1742, p. 11.

[178] Battle of Poets, folio, p. 15.

[179] Printed under the title of the Progress of Dulness, duodecimo, 1728.

[180] Cibber's Letter to Mr Pope, p. 9, 12.

[181] In a letter under his hand, dated March 12, 1733.

[182] Dennis's Preface to his Reflections on the Essay on Criticism.

[183] Preface to his Remarks on Homer.

[184] Remarks on Homer, p. 8, 9.

[185] Ibid, p. 8.

[186] Character of Mr Pope, p. 7.

[187] Ibid, p. G.

[188] Gulliver, p. 886.

[189] Cibber's Letter to Mr. Pope, p. 19.

[190] Burnet Homerides, p. 1 of his Translation of the Iliad.

[191] The London and Mist's Journals, on his undertaking of the Odyssey.

[192] Vide Bossu, Du Poeme Epique, ch. viii.

[193] Bossu, chap. vii.

[194] Book i. ver. 32, &c.

[195] Ver. 45 to 54.

[196] Ver. 57 to 77.

[197] Ver. 80.

[198] Ibid, chap, vii., viii.

[199] Bossu, chap. viii. Vide Aristot. Poetic, chap. ix.

[200] Cibber's Letter to Mr Pope, pp. 9, 12, 41.

[201] See his Essays.

[202] Si nil Heros Poetique doit etre un honnete homme. Bossu, du Poeme Epique, lib. v. ch. 5.

[203] Dedication to the Life of C. C.

[204] Life, p. 2, 8vo edition.

[205] Life, ibid.

[206] Life, p. 23, 8vo.

[207] Alluding to these lines in the Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot:

'And has not Colley still his lord and whore,
His butchers, Henley, his freemasons, Moore?'

[208] Letter to Mr Pope, p. 46.

[209] P. 31.

[210] Life, p. 23, 24.

[211] Letter, p. 8.

[212] Letter, p. 53.

[213] Letter, p. 1.

[214] Don Quixote, Part ii. book ii. ch. 22.

[215] See Life, p. 148.

[216] Life, p. 149.

[217] p. 424.

[218] p. 366.

[219] p. 457.

[220] p. 18.

[221] p. 425.

[222] pp. 436, 437.

[223] p. 52.

[224] p. 47.

[225] p. 57.

[226] pp. 58, 59.

[227] A statuary.

[228] Life, p. 6.

[229] p. 424.

[230] p. 19.

[231] Life, p. 17.

[232] Ibid. p. 243, 8vo edition.

[233] Ovid, of the serpent biting at Orpheus's head.

[234] 'The Dunciad:' _sic_ MS. It may well be disputed whether this be a right reading. Ought it not rather to be spelled Dunceiad, as the etymology evidently demands? Dunce with an _e_, therefore Dunceiad with an _e_? That accurate and punctual man of letters, the restorer of Shakespeare, constantly observes the preservation of this very letter _e_, in spelling the name of his beloved author, and not like his common careless editors, with the omission of one, nay, sometimes of two _e's_ (as Shakspear), which is utterly unpardonable. 'Nor is the neglect of a single letter so trivial as to some it may appear; the alteration whereof in a learned language is an achievement that brings honour to the critic who advances it; and Dr Bentley will be remembered to posterity for his performances of this sort, as long as the world shall have any esteem for the remains of Menander and Philemon.'--_Theobald_.

This is surely a slip in the learned author of the foregoing note, there having been since produced by an accurate antiquary, an autograph of Shakspeare himself, whereby it appears that he spelled his own name without the first _e_. And upon this authority it was, that those most critical curators of his monument in Westminster Abbey erased the former wrong reading, and restored the true spelling on a new piece of old Egyptian granite. Nor for this only do they deserve our thanks, but for exhibiting on the same monument the first specimen of an edition of an author in marble; where (as may be seen on comparing the tomb with the book), in the space of five lines, two words and a whole verse are changed, and it is to be hoped will there stand, and outlast whatever hath been hitherto done in paper; as for the future, our learned sister University (the other eye of England) is taking care to perpetuate a total new Shakspeare, at the Clarendon press.--_Bentl_.

It is to be noted, that this great critic also has omitted one circumstance: which is, that the inscription with the name of Shakspeare was intended to be placed on the marble scroll to which he points with his hand; instead of which it is now placed behind his back, and that specimen of an edition is put on the scroll, which indeed Shakspeare hath great reason to point at.--_Anon_.

Though I have as just a value for the letter _e_ as any grammarian living, and the same affection for the name of this poem as any critic for that of his author, yet cannot it induce me to agree with those who would add yet another _e_ to it, and call it the Dunceiade; which being a French and foreign termination, is no way proper to a word entirely English and vernacular. One _e_, therefore, in this case is right, and two _e's_ wrong. Yet, upon the whole, I shall follow the manuscript, and print it without any _e_ at all; moved thereto by authority (at all

times, with critics, equal, if not superior to reason). In which method of proceeding, I can never enough praise my good friend, the exact Mr Thomas Hearne; who, if any word occur which to him and all mankind is evidently wrong, yet keeps he it in the text with due reverence, and only remarks in the margin *_sic_* MS. In like manner we shall not amend this error in the title itself, but only note it *_obiter_*, to evince to the learned that it was not our fault, nor any effect of our ignorance or inattention.--*_Scriblerus_*.

This poem was written in the year 1726. In the next year, an imperfect edition was published at Dublin, and reprinted at London in twelves; another at Dublin, and another at London in octavo; and three others in twelves the same year. But there was no perfect edition before that of London in quarto; which was attended with notes. We are willing to acquaint posterity, that this poem was presented to King George the Second and his queen by the hands of Sir Robert Walpole, on the 12th of March 1728-9.--*_Schol. Vet_*.

It was expressly confessed in the preface to the first edition, that this poem was not published by the author himself. It was printed originally in a foreign country. And what foreign country? Why, one notorious for blunders; where finding blanks only instead of proper names, these blunderers filled them up at their pleasure.

The very hero of the poem hath been mistaken to this hour; so that we are obliged to open our notes with a discovery who he really was. We learn from the former editor, that this piece was presented by the hands of Sir Robert Walpole to King George II. Now the author directly tells us, his hero is the man

'who brings
The Smithfield muses to the ear of kings.'

And it is notorious who was the person on whom this prince conferred the honour of the laurel.

It appears as plainly from the apostrophe to the great in the third verse, that Tibbald could not be the person, who was never an author in fashion, or caressed by the great; whereas this single characteristic is sufficient to point out the true hero, who, above all other poets of his time, was the peculiar delight and chosen companion of the nobility of England, and wrote, as he himself tells us, certain of his works at the earnest desire of persons of quality.

Lastly, the sixth verse affords full proof; this poet being the only one who was universally known to have had a son so exactly like him, in his poetical, theatrical, political, and moral capacities, that it could justly be said of him,

'Still Dunc the second reign'd like Dunc the first.'--*_Bentl_*.

[235] 'Her son who brings,' &c. Wonderful is the stupidity of all the former critics and commentators on this work! It breaks forth at the very first line. The author of the critique prefixed to Sawney, a poem, p. 5, hath been so dull as to explain 'the man who brings,' &c., not of the hero of the piece, but of our poet himself, as if he vaunted that kings were to be his readers--an honour which though this poem hath had, yet knoweth he how to receive it with more modesty.

We remit this ignorant to the first lines of the Aeneid, assuring him that Virgil there speaketh not of himself but of Aeneas:

'Arma virumque cano, Trojae qui primus ab oris
Italiam, fato profugus, Lavinaque venit
Littora: multum ille et terris jactatus et alto,' &c.

I cite the whole three verses, that I may by the way offer a conjectural emendation, purely my own, upon each: First, _oris_ should be read _aris_, it being, as we see, Aen. ii. 513, from the altar of Jupiter Hercaeus that Aeneas fled as soon as he saw Priam slain. In the second line I would _flatu_ for _fato_, since it is most clear it was by winds that he arrived at the shore of Italy. _Jactatus_, in the third, is surely as improperly applied to _terris_, as proper to _alto_. To say a man is tossed on land, is much at one with saying, he walks at sea. _Risum teneatis, amici_? Correct it, as I doubt not it ought to be, _vexatus_.--_Scriblerus_.

[236] 'The Smithfield Muses.' Smithfield was the place where Bartholomew Fair was kept, whose shows, machines, and dramatical entertainments, formerly agreeable only to the taste of the rabble, were, by the hero of this poem and others of equal genius, brought to the theatres of Covent Garden, Lincolns-Inn-Fields, and the Haymarket, to be the reigning pleasures of the court and town. This happened in the reigns of King George I. and II. See Book iii.

[237] 'By Dulness, Jove, and Fate:' _i.e._, by their judgments, their interests, and their inclinations.--W.

[238] 'Say how the goddess,' &c. The poet ventureth to sing the action of the goddess; but the passion she impresseth on her illustrious votaries, he thinketh can be only told by themselves.--_Scribl. W_.

[239] 'Daughter of Chaos,' &c. The beauty of this whole allegory being purely of the poetical kind, we think it not our proper business, as a scholiast, to meddle with it, but leave it (as we shall in general all such) to the reader, remarking only that Chaos (according to Hesiod's [Greek: Theogonia]), was the progenitor of all the gods.--_Scriblerus_.

[240] 'Laborious, heavy, busy, bold,' &c. I wonder the learned Scriblerus has omitted to advertise the reader, at the opening of this poem, that Dulness here is not to be taken contractedly for mere stupidity, but in the enlarged sense of the word, for all slowness of apprehension, shortness of sight, or imperfect sense of things. It includes (as we see by the poet's own words) labour, industry, and some degree of activity and boldness--a ruling principle not inert, but turning topsy-turvy the understanding, and inducing an anarchy or confused state of mind. This remark ought to be carried along with the reader throughout the work; and without this caution he will be apt to mistake the importance of many of the characters, as well as of the design of the poet. Hence it is, that some have complained he chooses too mean a subject, and imagined he employs himself like Domitian, in killing flies; whereas those who have the true key will find he sports with nobler quarry, and embraces a larger compass; or (as one saith, on a like occasion)--

'Will see his work, like Jacob's ladder, rise,
Its foot in dirt, its head amid the skies.'--_Bentl_.

[241] 'Still her old empire to restore.' This restoration makes the completion of the poem. _Vide_ Book iv.--P.

[242] 'Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver!' the several names and characters he assumed in his ludicrous, his splenetic, or his party-writings; which take in all his works.--P.

[243] 'Or praise the court, or magnify mankind:' _ironice_, alluding to Gulliver's representations of both. The next line relates to the papers of the Drapier against the currency of Wood's copper coin in Ireland, which, upon the great discontent of the people, his Majesty was graciously pleased to recall.

[244] 'By his famed father's hand:' Mr Caius-Gabriel Cibber, father of the poet laureate. The two statues of the lunatics over the gates of Bedlam Hospital were done by him, and (as the son justly says of them) are no ill monuments of his fame as an artist.

[245] 'Bag-fair' is a place near the Tower of London, where old clothes and frippery are sold--P.

[246] 'A yawning ruin hangs and nods in air:'--Here in one bed two shivering sisters lie, The cave of Poverty and Poetry.

[247] 'Curll's chaste press, and Lintot's rubric post:' two booksellers, of whom, see Book ii. The former was fined by the Court of King's Bench for publishing obscene books; the latter usually adorned his shop with titles in red letters.--P.

[248] 'Hence hymning Tyburn's elegiac lines:' it is an ancient English custom for the malefactors to sing a psalm at their execution at Tyburn, and no less customary to print elegies on their deaths, at the same time, or before.--P.

[249] 'Sepulchral lies:' is a just satire on the flatteries and falsehoods admitted to be inscribed on the walls of churches, in epitaphs, which occasioned the following epigram:--

'Friend! in your epitaphs, I'm grieved,
So very much is said:
One-half will never be believed,
The other never read.'--W.

[250] 'New-year odes:' made by the poet laureate for the time being, to be sung at Court on every New-Year's Day, the words of which are happily drowned in the voices and instruments.--P.

[251] 'Jacob:' Tonson, the well-known bookseller.

[252] 'How farce and epic--how Time himself,' allude to the transgressions of the unities in the plays of such poets. For the miracles wrought upon time and place, and the mixture of tragedy and comedy, farce and epic, see Pluto and Proserpine, Penelope, &c., if yet extant.--P.

[253] "'Twas on the day, when Thorold rich and grave, like Cimon, triumph'd:' viz., a Lord Mayor's day; his name the author had left in blanks, but most certainly could never be that which the editor foisted in formerly, and which no way agrees with the chronology of the

poem.--_Bentl_. The procession of a lord mayor is made partly by land,
and partly by wat

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