0,1Specimens with Memoirs of the Less-known British Poets, Vol. 3

George Gilfillan

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SPECIMENS WITH MEMOIRS OF THE LESS-KNOWN BRITISH POETS.

With an Introductory Essay,

By

THE REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.

IN THREE VOLS.

VOL. III.

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SPECIMENS, WITH MEMOIRS, OF THE LESS-KNOWN BRITISH POETS.

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THIRD PERIOD.

FROM DRYDEN TO COWPER.

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SIR CHARLES SEDLEY.

Sedley was one of those characters who exert a personal fascination over their own age without leaving any works behind them to perpetuate the charm to posterity. He was the son of Sir John Sedley of Aylesford, in Kent, and was born in 1639. When the Restoration took place he repaired to London, and plunged into all the licence of the time, shedding, however, over the putrid pool the sheen of his wit, manners, and genius. Charles was so delighted with him, that he is said to have asked him whether he had not obtained a patent from Nature to be Apollo's viceroy. He cracked jests, issued lampoons, wrote poems and plays, and, despite some great blunders, was universally admired and loved. When his comedy of 'Bellamira' was acted, the roof fell in, and a few, including the author, were slightly injured. When a parasite told him that the fire of the play had blown up the poet, house and all, Sedley replied, 'No; the play was so heavy that it broke down the house, and buried the poet in his own rubbish.' Latterly he sobered down, entered parliament, attended closely to public business, and became a determined opponent of the arbitrary measures of James II. To this he was stimulated by a personal reason. James had seduced Sedley's daughter, and made her Countess of Dorchester. 'For making my daughter a countess,' the father said, 'I have helped to make his daughter' (Mary, Princess of Orange,) 'a queen.' Sedley, thus talking, acting, and writing, lived on till he was sixty-two years of age. He died in 1701.

He has left nothing that the world can cherish, except such light and graceful songs, sparkling rather with point than with poetry, as we quote below.

TO A VERY YOUNG LADY.

1 Ah, Chloris! that I now could sit
  As unconcerned, as when
 Your infant beauty could beget
  No pleasure, nor no pain.

2 When I the dawn used to admire,
  And praised the coming day;
 I little thought the growing fire
  Must take my rest away.

3 Your charms in harmless childhood lay,
  Like metals in the mine,
 Age from no face took more away,
  Than youth concealed in thine.

4 But as your charms insensibly
  To their perfection pressed,

Fond Love as unperceived did fly,
And in my bosom rest.

5 My passion with your beauty grew,
And Cupid at my heart,
Still as his mother favoured you,
Threw a new flaming dart.

6 Each gloried in their wanton part,
To make a lover, he
Employed the utmost of his art,
To make a Beauty, she.

7 Though now I slowly bend to love,
Uncertain of my fate,
If your fair self my chains approve,
I shall my freedom hate.

8 Lovers, like dying men, may well
At first disordered be,
Since none alive can truly tell
What fortune they must see.

SONG.

1 Love still has something of the sea,
From whence his mother rose;
No time his slaves from doubt can free,
Nor give their thoughts repose.

2 They are becalmed in clearest days,
And in rough weather tossed;
They wither under cold delays,
Or are in tempests lost.

3 One while they seem to touch the port,
Then straight into the main
Some angry wind, in cruel sport,
The vessel drives again.

4 At first Disdain and Pride they fear,
Which if they chance to 'scape,
Rivals and Falsehood soon appear,
In a more cruel shape.

5 By such degrees to joy they come,
And are so long withstood;
So slowly they receive the sum,
It hardly does them good.

6 'Tis cruel to prolong a pain;
And to defer a joy,
Believe me, gentle Celemene,
Offends the winged boy.

7 An hundred thousand oaths your fears,
Perhaps, would not remove;
And if I gazed a thousand years,

I could not deeper love.

JOHN POMFRET,

The author of the once popular 'Choice,' was born in 1667. He was the son of the rector of Luton, in Bedfordshire, and, after attending Queen's College, Cambridge, himself entered the Church. He became minister of Malden, which is also situated in Bedfordshire, and there he wrote and, in 1699, published a volume of poems, including some Pindaric essays, in the style of Cowley and 'The Choice.' He might have risen higher in his profession, but Dr Compton, Bishop of London, was prejudiced against him on account of the following lines in the 'Choice:'--

'And as I near approached the verge of life,
Some kind relation (for I'd have no wife)
Should take upon him all my worldly care,
Whilst I did for a better state prepare.'

The words in the second line, coupled with a glowing description, in a previous part of the poem, of his ideal of an 'obliging modest fair' one, near whom he wished to live, led to the suspicion that he preferred a mistress to a wife. In vain did he plead that he was actually a married man. His suit for a better living made no progress, and while dancing attendance on his patron in London he caught small-pox, and died in 1703, in the thirty-sixth year of his age.

His Pindaric odes, &c., are feeble spasms, and need not detain us. His 'Reason' shews considerable capacity and common sense. His 'Choice' opens up a pleasing vista, down which our quiet ancestors delighted to look, but by which few now can be attracted. We quote a portion of what a biographer calls a 'modest' preface, which Pomfret prefixed to his poems:--'To please every one would be a new thing, and to write so as to please nobody would be as new; for even Quarles and Withers have their admirers. It is not the multitude of applauses, but the good sense of the applauders which establishes a valuable reputation; and if a Rymer or a Congreve say it is well, he will not be at all solicitous how great the majority be to the contrary.' How strangely are opinions now altered! Rymer was some time ago characterised by Macaulay as the worst critic that ever lived, and Quarles and Withers have now many admirers, while 'The Choice' and its ill-fated author are nearly forgotten.

THE CHOICE.

If Heaven the grateful liberty would give,
That I might choose my method how to live,
And all those hours propitious fate should lend,
In blissful ease and satisfaction spend,
Near some fair town I'd have a private seat,
Built uniform, not little, nor too great:
Better, if on a rising ground it stood,
On this side fields, on that a neighbouring wood.
It should within no other things contain,
But what are useful, necessary, plain:

Methinks 'tis nauseous, and I'd ne'er endure,
The needless pomp of gaudy furniture.
A little garden, grateful to the eye;
And a cool rivulet run murmuring by,
On whose delicious banks, a stately row
Of shady limes or sycamores should grow.
At the end of which a silent study placed,
Should be with all the noblest authors graced:
Horace and Virgil, in whose mighty lines
Immortal wit and solid learning shines;
Sharp Juvenal, and amorous Ovid too,
Who all the turns of love's soft passion knew;
He that with judgment reads his charming lines,
In which strong art with stronger nature joins,
Must grant his fancy does the best excel;
His thoughts so tender, and expressed so well;
With all those moderns, men of steady sense,
Esteemed for learning and for eloquence.
In some of these, as fancy should advise,
I'd always take my morning exercise;
For sure no minutes bring us more content,
Than those in pleasing, useful studies spent.
I'd have a clear and competent estate,
That I might live genteelly, but not great;
As much as I could moderately spend,
A little more sometimes t' oblige a friend.
Nor should the sons of poverty repine
Too much at fortune; they should taste of mine;
And all that objects of true pity were,
Should be relieved with what my wants could spare;
For that our Maker has too largely given,
Should be returned in gratitude to Heaven.

THE EARL OF DORSET.

This noble earl was rather a patron of poets than a poet, and possessed more wit than genius. Charles Sackville was born on the 24th January 1637. He was descended directly from the famous Thomas, Lord Buckhurst. He was educated under a private tutor, travelled in Italy, and returned in time to witness the Restoration. In the first parliament thereafter, he sat for East Grinstead, in Surrey, and might have distinguished himself, had he not determined, in common with almost all the wits of the time, to run a preliminary career of dissipation. What a proof of the licentiousness of these times is to be found in the fact, that young Lord Buckhurst, Sir Charles Sedley, and Sir Thomas Ogle were fined for exposing themselves, drunk and naked, in indecent postures on the public street! In 1665, the erratic energies of Buckhurst found a more legitimate vent in the Dutch war. He attended the Duke of York in the great sea-fight of the 3d June, in which Opdam, the Dutch admiral, was, with all his crew, blown up. He is said to have composed the song, quoted afterwards, 'To all you ladies now at land,' on the evening before the battle, although Dr Johnson (who observes that seldom any splendid story is wholly true) maintains that its composition cost him a whole week, and that he only retouched it on that remarkable evening. Buckhurst was soon after made a gentleman of the bed-chamber, and

despatched on short embassies to France. In 1674, his uncle, James Cranfield, the Earl of Middlesex, died, and left him his estate, and the next year the title, too, was conferred on him. In 1677, he became, by the death of his father, Earl of Dorset, and inherited the family estate. In 1684, his wife, whose name was Bagot, and by whom he had no children, died, and he soon after married a daughter of the Earl of Northampton, who is said to have been celebrated both for understanding and beauty. Dorset was courted by James, but found it impossible to coincide with his violent measures, and when the bishops were tried at Westminster Hall, he, along with some other lords, appeared to countenance them. He concurred with the Revolution settlement, and, after William's accession, was created lord chamberlain of the household, and received the Order of the Garter. His attendance on the king, however, eventually cost him his life, for having been tossed with him in an open boat on the coast of Holland for sixteen hours, in very rough weather, he caught an illness from which he never recovered. On 19th January 1705-6, he died at Bath.

During his life, Dorset was munificent in his kindness to such men of genius as Prior and Dryden, who repaid him in the current coin of the poor Parnassus of their day--gross adulation. He is now remembered mainly for his spirited war-song, and for such pointed lines in his satire on Edward Howard, the notorious author of 'British Princes,' as the following:--

'They lie, dear Ned, who say thy brain is barren,
When deep conceits, like maggots, breed in carrion;
Thy stumbling, foundered jade can trot as high
As any other Pegasus can fly.
So the dull eel moves nimbler in the mud
Than all the swift-finned racers of the flood.
As skilful divers to the bottom fall
Sooner than those who cannot swim at all,
So in this way of writing without thinking,
Thou hast a strange alacrity in sinking.'

This last line has not only become proverbial, but forms the distinct germ of 'The Dunciad.'

SONG.

WRITTEN AT SEA, IN THE FIRST DUTCH WAR, 1665,
THE NIGHT BEFORE AN ENGAGEMENT.

1 To all you ladies now at land,
We men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand
How hard it is to write;
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you,
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

2 For though the Muses should prove kind,
And fill our empty brain;
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind,
To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we,
Roll up and down our ships at sea.

With a fa, &c.

3 Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost,
By Dutchmen, or by wind;
Our tears we'll send a speedier way,
The tide shall bring them twice a-day.
With a fa, &c.

4 The king, with wonder and surprise,
Will swear the seas grow bold;
Because the tides will higher rise
Than e'er they used of old:
But let him know, it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs.
With a fa, &c.

5 Should foggy Opdam chance to know
Our sad and dismal story,
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
And quit their fort at Goree:
For what resistance can they find
From men who've left their hearts behind?
With a fa, &c.

6 Let wind and weather do its worst,
Be you to us but kind;
Let Dutchmen vapour, Spaniards curse,
No sorrow we shall find:
'Tis then no matter how things go,
Or who's our friend, or who's our foe.
With a fa, &c.

7 To pass our tedious hours away,
We throw a merry main;
Or else at serious ombre play:
But why should we in vain
Each other's ruin thus pursue?
We were undone when we left you.
With a fa, &c.

8 But now our fears tempestuous grow,
And cast our hopes away;
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play:
Perhaps, permit some happier man
To kiss your hand, or flirt your fan.
With a fa, &c.

9 When any mournful tune you hear,
That dies in every note,
As if it sighed with each man's care,
For being so remote,
Think how often love we've made
To you, when all those tunes were played.
With a fa, &c.

10 In justice you can not refuse

To think of our distress,
When we for hopes of honour lose
Our certain happiness;
All those designs are but to prove
Ourselves more worthy of your love.
With a fa, &c.

11 And now we've told you all our loves,
And likewise all our fears,
In hopes this declaration moves
Some pity from your tears;
Let's hear of no inconstancy,
We have too much of that at sea.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

JOHN PHILIPS.

Bampton in Oxfordshire was the birthplace of this poet. He was born on the 30th of December 1676. His father, Dr Stephen Philips, was archdeacon of Salop, as well as minister of Bampton. John, after some preliminary training at home, was sent to Winchester, where he distinguished himself by diligence and good-nature, and enjoyed two great luxuries,--the reading of Milton, and the having his head combed by some one while he sat still and in rapture for hours together. This pleasure he shared with Vossius, and with humbler persons of our acquaintance; the combing of whose hair, they tell us,

'Dissolves them into ecstasies,
And brings all heaven before their eyes.'

In 1694, he entered Christ Church, Cambridge. His intention was to prosecute the study of medicine, and he took great delight in the cognate pursuits of natural history and botany. His chief friend was Edmund Smith, (Rag Smith, as he was generally called,) a kind of minor Savage, well known in these times as the author of 'Phaedra and Hippolytus,' and for his cureless dissipation. In 1703, Philips produced 'The Splendid Shilling,' which proved a hit, and seems to have diverted his aspirations from the domains of Aesculapius to those of Apollo. Bolingbroke sought him out, and employed him, after the battle of Blenheim, to sing it in opposition to Addison, the laureate of the Whigs. At the house of the magnificent but unprincipled St John, Philips wrote his 'Blenheim,' which was published in 1705. The year after, his 'Cider,' a poem in two books, appeared, and was received with great applause. Encouraged by this, he projected a poem on the Last Day, which all who are aware of the difficulties of the subject, and the limitations of the author's genius, must rejoice that he never wrote. Consumption and asthma removed him prematurely on the 15th of February 1708, ere he had completed his thirty-third year. He was buried in Hereford Cathedral, and Sir Simon Harcourt, afterwards Lord Chancellor, erected a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey.

Bulwer somewhere records a story of John Martin in his early days. He was, on one occasion, reduced to his last shilling. He had kept it, out of a heap, from a partiality to its appearance. It was very bright. He was compelled, at last, to part with it. He went out to a baker's shop

to purchase a loaf with his favourite shilling. He had got the loaf into his hands, when the baker discovered that the shilling was a bad one, and poor Martin had to resign the loaf, and take back his dear, bright, bad shilling once more. Length of time and cold criticism in like manner have reduced John Philips to his solitary 'Splendid Shilling.' But, though bright, it is far from bad. It is one of the cleverest of parodies, and is perpetrated against one of those colossal works which the smiles of a thousand caricatures were unable to injure. No great or good poem was ever hurt by its parody:--the 'Paradise Lost' was not by 'The Splendid Shilling'--'The Last Man' of Campbell was not by 'The Last Man' of Hood--nor the 'Lines on the Burial of Sir John Moore' by their witty, well-known caricature; and if 'The Vision of Judgment' by Southey was laughed into oblivion by Byron's poem with the same title, it was because Southey's original was neither good nor great. Philip's poem, too, is the first of the kind; and surely we should be thankful to the author of the earliest effort in a style which has created so much innocent amusement. Dr Johnson speaks as if the pleasure arising from such productions implied a malignant 'momentary triumph over that grandeur which had hitherto held its captives in admiration.' We think, on the contrary, that it springs from our deep interest in the original production, making us alive to the strange resemblance the caricature bears to it. It is our love that provokes our laughter, and hence the admirers of the parodied poem are more delighted than its enemies. At all events, it is by 'The Splendid Shilling' alone--and that principally from its connexion with Milton's great work--that Philips is memorable. His 'Cider' has soured with age, and the loud echo of his Blenheim battle-piece has long since died away.

THE SPLENDID SHILLING.

"... Sing, heavenly Muse!
Things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme,"
A Shilling, Breeches, and Chimeras dire.

Happy the man who, void of cares and strife,
In silken or in leathern purse retains
A Splendid Shilling: he nor hears with pain
New oysters cried, nor sighs for cheerful ale;
But with his friends, when nightly mists arise,
To Juniper's Magpie or Town-Hall[1] repairs:
Where, mindful of the nymph whose wanton eye
Transfixed his soul and kindled amorous flames,
Chloe, or Phillis, he each circling glass
Wisheth her health, and joy, and equal love.
Meanwhile, he smokes, and laughs at merry tale,
Or pun ambiguous, or conundrum quaint.
But I, whom griping Penury surrounds,
And Hunger, sure attendant upon Want,
With scanty offals, and small acid tiff,
(Wretched repast!) my meagre corpse sustain:
Then solitary walk, or doze at home
In garret vile, and with a warming puff
Regale chilled fingers; or from tube as black
As winter-chimney, or well-polished jet,
Exhale mundungus, ill-perfuming scent!
Not blacker tube, nor of a shorter size,
Smokes Cambro-Briton (versed in pedigree,
Sprung from Cadwallader and Arthur, kings

Full famous in romantic tale) when he
O'er many a craggy hill and barren cliff,
Upon a cargo of famed Cestrian cheese,
High over-shadowing rides, with a design
To vend his wares, or at the Arvonian mart,
Or Maridunum, or the ancient town
Ycleped Brechinia, or where Vaga's stream
Encircles Ariconium, fruitful soil!
Whence flow nectareous wines, that well may vie
With Massic, Setin, or renowned Falern.

Thus while my joyless minutes tedious flow,
With looks demure, and silent pace, a Dun,
Horrible monster! hated by gods and men,
To my aerial citadel ascends,
With vocal heel thrice thundering at my gate,
With hideous accent thrice he calls; I know
The voice ill-boding, and the solemn sound.
What should I do? or whither turn? Amazed,
Confounded, to the dark recess I fly
Of wood-hole; straight my bristling hairs erect
Through sudden fear; a chilly sweat bedews
My shuddering limbs, and, wonderful to tell!
My tongue forgets her faculty of speech;
So horrible he seems! His faded brow,
Entrenched with many a frown, and conic beard,
And spreading band, admired by modern saints,
Disastrous acts forebode; in his right hand
Long scrolls of paper solemnly he waves,
With characters and figures dire inscribed,
Grievous to mortal eyes; ye gods, avert
Such plagues from righteous men! Behind him stalks
Another monster, not unlike himself,
Sullen of aspect, by the vulgar called
A Catchpole, whose polluted hands the gods,
With force incredible, and magic charms,
Erst have endued; if he his ample palm
Should haply on ill-fated shoulder lay
Of debtor, straight his body, to the touch
Obsequious, as whilom knights were wont,
To some enchanted castle is conveyed,
Where gates impregnable, and coercive chains,
In durance strict detain him, till, in form
Of money, Pallas sets the captive free.

Beware, ye Debtors! when ye walk, beware,
Be circumspect; oft with insidious ken
The caitiff eyes your steps aloof, and oft
Lies perdue in a nook or gloomy cave,
Prompt to enchant some inadvertent wretch
With his unhallowed touch. So (poets sing)
Grimalkin, to domestic vermin sworn
An everlasting foe, with watchful eye
Lies nightly brooding o'er a chinky gap,
Protending her fell claws, to thoughtless mice
Sure ruin. So her disembowelled web
Arachne, in a hall or kitchen, spreads
Obvious to vagrant flies: she secret stands
Within her woven cell; the humming prey,

Regardless of their fate, rush on the toils
Inextricable, nor will aught avail
Their arts, or arms, or shapes of lovely hue;
The wasp insidious, and the buzzing drone,
And butterfly, proud of expanded wings
Distinct with gold, entangled in her snares,
Useless resistance make: with eager strides,
She towering flies to her expected spoils;
Then, with envenomed jaws, the vital blood
Drinks of reluctant foes, and to her cave
Their bulky carcasses triumphant drags.

So pass my days. But, when nocturnal shades
This world envelop, and the inclement air
Persuades men to repel benumbing frosts
With pleasant wines, and crackling blaze of wood;
Me lonely sitting, nor the glimmering light
Of make-weight candle, nor the joyous talk
Of loving friend, delights; distressed, forlorn,
Amidst the horrors of the tedious night,
Darkling I sigh, and feed with dismal thoughts
My anxious mind; or sometimes mournful verse
Indite, and sing of groves and myrtle shades,
Or desperate lady near a purling stream,
Or lover pendent on a willow-tree.
Meanwhile I labour with eternal drought,
And restless wish, and rave; my parched throat
Finds no relief, nor heavy eyes repose:
But if a slumber haply does invade
My weary limbs, my fancy's still awake,
Thoughtful of drink, and, eager, in a dream,
Tipples imaginary pots of ale,
In vain; awake I find the settled thirst
Still gnawing, and the pleasant phantom curse.

Thus do I live, from pleasure quite debarred,
Nor taste the fruits that the sun's genial rays
Mature, john-apple, nor the downy peach,
Nor walnut in rough-furrowed coat secure,
Nor medlar, fruit delicious in decay;
Afflictions great! yet greater still remain:
My galligaskins, that have long withstood
The winter's fury, and encroaching frosts,
By time subdued (what will not time subdue!)
An horrid chasm disclosed with orifice
Wide, discontinuous; at which the winds
Eurus and Auster, and the dreadful force
Of Boreas, that congeals the Cronian waves,
Tumultuous enter with dire chilling blasts,
Portending agues. Thus a well-fraught ship,
Long sailed secure, or through the Aegean deep,
Or the Ionian, till cruising near
The Lilybean shore, with hideous crush
On Scylla, or Charybdis (dangerous rocks!)
She strikes rebounding; whence the shattered oak,
So fierce a shock unable to withstand,
Admits the sea; in at the gaping side
The crowding waves gush with impetuous rage,
Resistless, overwhelming; horrors seize

The mariners; Death in their eyes appears,
They stare, they lave, they pump, they swear, they pray;
Vain efforts! still the battering waves rush in,
Implacable, till, deluged by the foam,
The ship sinks foundering in the vast abyss.

[1]'Magpie or Town-hall:' two noted alehouses at Oxford in 1700.

We may here mention a name or two of poets from whose verses we can afford no extracts,--such as Walsh, called by Pope 'knowing Walsh,' a man of some critical discernment, if not of much genius; Gould, a domestic of the Earl of Dorset, and afterwards a schoolmaster, from whom Campbell quotes one or two tolerable songs; and Dr Walter Pope, a man of wit and knowledge, who was junior proctor of Oxford, one of the first chosen fellows of the Royal Society, and who succeeded Sir Christopher Wren as professor of astronomy in Gresham College. He is the author of a comico-serious song of some merit, entitled 'The Old Man's Wish.'

SIR SAMUEL GARTH.

Of Garth little is known, save that he was an eminent physician, a scholar, a man of benevolence, a keen Whig, and yet an admirer of old Dryden, and a patron of young Pope--a friend of Addison, and the author of the 'Dispensary.' The College of Physicians had instituted a dispensary, for the purpose of furnishing the poor with medicines gratis. This measure was opposed by the apothecaries, who had an obvious interest in the sale of drugs; and to ridicule their selfishness Garth wrote his poem, which is mock-heroic, in six cantos, copied in form from the 'Lutrin,' and which, though ingenious and elaborate, seems now tedious, and on the whole uninteresting. It appeared in 1696, and the author died in 1718. We extract some of the opening lines of the first canto of the poem.

THE DISPENSARY.

Speak, goddess! since 'tis thou that best canst tell
How ancient leagues to modern discord fell;
And why physicans were so cautious grown
Of others' lives, and lavish of their own;
How by a journey to the Elysian plain
Peace triumphed, and old Time returned again.
Not far from that most celebrated place,
Where angry Justice shows her awful face;
Where little villains must submit to fate,
That great ones may enjoy the world in state;
There stands a dome, majestic to the sight,
And sumptuous arches bear its oval height;
A golden globe, placed high with artful skill,
Seems, to the distant sight, a gilded pill:
This pile was, by the pious patron's aim,
Raised for a use as noble as its frame;

Nor did the learn'd society decline
The propagation of that great design;
In all her mazes, nature's face they viewed,
And, as she disappeared, their search pursued.
Wrapped in the shade of night the goddess lies,
Yet to the learn'd unveils her dark disguise,
But shuns the gross access of vulgar eyes.
Now she unfolds the faint and dawning strife
Of infant atoms kindling into life;
How ductile matter new meanders takes,
And slender trains of twisting fibres makes;
And how the viscous seeks a closer tone,
By just degrees to harden into bone;
While the more loose flow from the vital urn,
And in full tides of purple streams return;
How lambent flames from life's bright lamps arise,
And dart in emanations through the eyes;
How from each sluice a gentle torrent pours,
To slake a feverish heat with ambient showers;
Whence their mechanic powers the spirits claim;
How great their force, how delicate their frame;
How the same nerves are fashioned to sustain
The greatest pleasure and the greatest pain;
Why bilious juice a golden light puts on,
And floods of chyle in silver currents run;
How the dim speck of entity began
To extend its recent form, and stretch to man;
To how minute an origin we owe
Young Ammon, Caesar, and the great Nassau;
Why paler looks impetuous rage proclaim,
And why chill virgins redden into flame;
Why envy oft transforms with wan disguise,
And why gay mirth sits smiling in the eyes;
All ice, why Lucrece; or Sempronia, fire;
Why Scarsdale rages to survive desire;
When Milo's vigour at the Olympic's shown,
Whence tropes to Finch, or impudence to Sloane;
How matter, by the varied shape of pores,
Or idiots frames, or solemn senators.

Hence 'tis we wait the wondrous cause to find,
How body acts upon impassive mind;
How fumes of wine the thinking part can fire,
Past hopes revive, and present joys inspire;
Why our complexions oft our soul declare,
And how the passions in the features are;
How touch and harmony arise between
Corporeal figure, and a form unseen;
How quick their faculties the limbs fulfil,
And act at every summons of the will.
With mighty truths, mysterious to descry,
Which in the womb of distant causes lie.

But now no grand inquiries are descried,
Mean faction reigns where knowledge should preside,
Feuds are increased, and learning laid aside.
Thus synods oft concern for faith conceal,
And for important nothings show a zeal:
The drooping sciences neglected pine,

And Paean's beams with fading lustre shine.
No readers here with hectic looks are found,
Nor eyes in rheum, through midnight watching, drowned;
The lonely edifice in sweats complains
That nothing there but sullen silence reigns.

This place, so fit for undisturbed repose,
The god of sloth for his asylum chose;
Upon a couch of down in these abodes,
Supine with folded arms he thoughtless nods;
Indulging dreams his godhead lull to ease,
With murmurs of soft rills and whispering trees:
The poppy and each numbing plant dispense
Their drowsy virtue, and dull indolence;
No passions interrupt his easy reign,
No problems puzzle his lethargic brain;
But dark oblivion guards his peaceful bed,
And lazy fogs hang lingering o'er his head.

SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE.

Our next name is that of one who, like the former, was a knight, a physician, and (in a manner) a poet. Blackmore was the son of Robert Blackmore of Corsham, in Wiltshire, who is styled by Wood _gentleman_, and is believed to have been an attorney. He took his degree of M.A. at Oxford, in June 1676. He afterwards travelled, was made Doctor of Physic at Padua, and, when he returned home, began to practise in London with great success. In 1695, he tried his hand at poetry, producing an epic entitled 'King Arthur,' which was followed by a series on 'King Alfred,' 'Queen Elizabeth,' 'Redemption,' 'The Creation,' &c. Some of these productions were popular; one, 'The Creation,' has been highly praised by Dr Johnson; but most of them were heavy. Matthew Henry has preserved portions in his valuable Commentary. Blackmore, a man of excellent character and of extensive medical practice, was yet the laughingstock of the wits, perhaps as much for his piety as for his prosiness. Old, rich, and highly respected, he died on the 8th of October 1729, while some of his poetic persecutors came to a disgraceful or an early end.

We quote the satire of John Gay, as one of the cleverest and best conditioned, although one of the coarsest of the attacks made on poor Sir Richard:--

VERSES TO BE PLACED UNDER THE PICTURE OF SIR R. BLACKMORE, CONTAINING A COMPLETE CATALOGUE OF HIS WORKS.

See who ne'er was, nor will be half read,
Who first sang Arthur, then sang Alfred;
Praised great Eliza in God's anger,
Till all true Englishmen cried, Hang her;
Mauled human wit in one thick satire,
Next in three books spoiled human nature;
Undid Creation at a jerk,
And of Redemption made ---- work;
Then took his Muse at once, and dipt her

Full in the middle of the Scripture;
What wonders there the man grown old did,
Sternhold himself he out Sternholded;
Made David seem so mad and freakish,
All thought him just what thought King Achish;
No mortal read his Solomon
But judged Reboam his own son;
Moses he served as Moses Pharaoh,
And Deborah as she Sisera;
Made Jeremy full sore to cry,
And Job himself curse God and die.

What punishment all this must follow?
Shall Arthur use him like King Tollo?
Shall David as Uriah slay him?
Or dext'rous Deborah Sisera him?
Or shall Eliza lay a plot
To treat him like her sister Scot?
No, none of these; Heaven save his life,
But send him, honest Job, thy wife!

CREATION.

No more of courts, of triumphs, or of arms,
No more of valour's force, or beauty's charms;
The themes of vulgar lays, with just disdain,
I leave unsung, the flocks, the amorous swain,
The pleasures of the land, and terrors of the main.
How abject, how inglorious 'tis to lie
Grovelling in dust and darkness, when on high
Empires immense and rolling worlds of light,
To range their heavenly scenes the muse invite;
I meditate to soar above the skies,
To heights unknown, through ways untried, to rise;
I would the Eternal from his works assert,
And sing the wonders of creating art.
While I this unexampled task essay,
Pass awful gulfs, and beat my painful way,
Celestial Dove! divine assistance bring,
Sustain me on thy strong extended wing,
That I may reach the Almighty's sacred throne,
And make his causeless power, the cause of all things, known.
Thou dost the full extent of nature see,
And the wide realms of vast immensity;
Eternal Wisdom thou dost comprehend,
Rise to her heights, and to her depths descend;
The Father's sacred counsels thou canst tell,
Who in his bosom didst for ever dwell;
Thou on the deep's dark face, immortal Dove!
Thou with Almighty energy didst move
On the wild waves, incumbent didst display
Thy genial wings, and hatch primeval day.
Order from thee, from thee distinction came,
And all the beauties of the wondrous frame.
Hence stamped on nature we perfection find,
Fair as the idea in the Eternal Mind.
See, through this vast extended theatre
Of skill divine, what shining marks appear!

Creating power is all around expressed,
The God discovered, and his care confessed.
Nature's high birth her heavenly beauties show;
By every feature we the parent know.
The expanded spheres, amazing to the sight!
Magnificent with stars and globes of light,
The glorious orbs which heaven's bright host compose,
The imprisoned sea, that restless ebbs and flows,
The fluctuating fields of liquid air,
With all the curious meteors hovering there,
And the wide regions of the land, proclaim
The Power Divine, that raised the mighty frame.
What things soe'er are to an end referred,
And in their motions still that end regard,
Always the fitness of the means respect,
These as conducive choose, and those reject,
Must by a judgment foreign and unknown
Be guided to their end, or by their own;
For to design an end, and to pursue
That end by means, and have it still in view,
Demands a conscious, wise, reflecting cause,
Which freely moves, and acts by reason's laws;
That can deliberate, means elect, and find
Their due connexion with the end designed.
And since the world's wide frame does not include
A cause with such capacities endued,
Some other cause o'er nature must preside,
Which gave her birth, and does her motions guide;
And here behold the cause, which God we name,
The source of beings, and the mind supreme;
Whose perfect wisdom, and whose prudent care,
With one confederate voice unnumbered worlds declare.

ELIJAH FENTON.

This author, who was very much respected by his contemporaries, and who translated a portion of the Odyssey in conjunction with Pope, was born May 20, 1683, at Newcastle, in Staffordshire; studied at Cambridge, which, owing to his nonjuring principles, he had to leave without a degree; and passed part of his life as a schoolmaster, and part of it as secretary to Charles, Earl of Orrery. By his tragedy of 'Mariamne' he secured a moderate competence; and during his latter years, spent his life comfortably as tutor in the house of Lady Trumbull. He died in 1730. His accomplishments were superior, and his character excellent. Pope, who was indebted to him for the first, fourth, nineteenth, and twentieth of the books of the Odyssey, mourns his loss in one of his most sincere-seeming letters. Fenton edited Waller and Milton, wrote a brief life of the latter poet,--with which most of our readers are acquainted,--and indited some respectable verse.

AN ODE TO THE RIGHT HON. JOHN LORD GOWER.

WRITTEN IN THE SPRING OF 1716.

1 O'er Winter's long inclement sway,
  At length the lusty Spring prevails;
And swift to meet the smiling May,
  Is wafted by the western gales.
Around him dance the rosy Hours,
And damasking the ground with flowers,
  With ambient sweets perfume the morn;
With shadowy verdure flourished high,
A sudden youth the groves enjoy;
  Where Philomel laments forlorn.

2 By her awaked, the woodland choir
  To hail the coming god prepares;
And tempts me to resume the lyre,
  Soft warbling to the vernal airs.
Yet once more, O ye Muses! deign
For me, the meanest of your train,
  Unblamed to approach your blest retreat:
Where Horace wantons at your spring,
And Pindar sweeps a bolder string;
  Whose notes the Aonian hills repeat.

3 Or if invoked, where Thames's fruitful tides,
  Slow through the vale in silver volumes play;
Now your own Phoebus o'er the month presides,
  Gives love the night, and doubly gilds the day;
Thither, indulgent to my prayer,
Ye bright harmonious nymphs, repair,
  To swell the notes I feebly raise:
So with aspiring ardours warmed
May Gower's propitious ear be charmed
  To listen to my lays.

4 Beneath the Pole on hills of snow,
  Like Thracian Mars, the undaunted Swede[1]
To dint of sword defies the foe;
  In fight unknowing to recede:
From Volga's banks, the imperious Czar
Leads forth his furry troops to war;
  Fond of the softer southern sky:
The Soldan galls the Illyrian coast;
But soon, the miscreant Moony host
  Before the Victor-Cross shall fly.

5 But here, no clarion's shrilling note
  The Muse's green retreat can pierce;
The grove, from noisy camps remote,
  Is only vocal with my verse:
Here, winged with innocence and joy,
Let the soft hours that o'er me fly
  Drop freedom, health, and gay desires:
While the bright Seine, to exalt the soul,
With sparkling plenty crowns the bowl,
  And wit and social mirth inspires.

6 Enamoured of the Seine, celestial fair,
  (The blooming pride of Thetis' azure train,)
Bacchus, to win the nymph who caused his care,
  Lashed his swift tigers to the Celtic plain:

There secret in her sapphire cell,
He with the Nais wont to dwell;
Leaving the nectared feasts of Jove:
And where her mazy waters flow
He gave the mantling vine to grow,
A trophy to his love.

7 Shall man from Nature's sanction stray,
With blind opinion for his guide;
And, rebel to her rightful sway,
Leave all her beauties unenjoyed?
Fool! Time no change of motion knows;
With equal speed the torrent flows,
To sweep Fame, Power, and Wealth away:
The past is all by death possessed;
And frugal fate that guards the rest,
By giving, bids him live To-Day.

8 O Gower! through all the destined space,
What breath the Powers allot to me
Shall sing the virtues of thy race,
United and complete in thee.
O flower of ancient English faith!
Pursue the unbeaten Patriot-path,
In which confirmed thy father shone:
The light his fair example gives,
Already from thy dawn receives
A lustre equal to its own.

9 Honour's bright dome, on lasting columns reared,
Nor envy rusts, nor rolling years consume;
Loud Paeans echoing round the roof are heard
And clouds of incense all the void perfume.
There Phocion, Laelius, Capel, Hyde,
With Falkland seated near his side,
Fixed by the Muse, the temple grace;
Prophetic of thy happier fame,
She, to receive thy radiant name,
Selects a whiter space.

[1] Charles XII.

ROBERT CRAWFORD.

Robert Crawford, a Scotchman, is our next poet. Of him we know only that he was the brother of Colonel Crawford of Achinames; that he assisted Allan Ramsay in the 'Tea-Table Miscellany;' and was drowned when coming from France in 1733. Besides the popular song, 'The Bush aboon Traquair,' which we quote, Crawford wrote also a lyric, called 'Tweedside,' and some verses, mentioned by Burns, to the old tune of 'Cowdenknowes.'

THE BUSH ABOON TRAQUAIR.

1 Hear me, ye nymphs, and every swain,
I'll tell how Peggy grieves me;

Though thus I languish and complain,
Alas! she ne'er believes me.
My vows and sighs, like silent air,
Unheeded, never move her;
At the bonnie Bush aboon Traquair,
'Twas there I first did love her.

2 That day she smiled and made me glad,
No maid seemed ever kinder;
I thought myself the luckiest lad,
So sweetly there to find her;
I tried to soothe my amorous flame,
In words that I thought tender;
If more there passed, I'm not to blame--
I meant not to offend her.

3 Yet now she scornful flies the plain,
The fields we then frequented;
If e'er we meet she shows disdain,
She looks as ne'er acquainted.
The bonnie bush bloomed fair in May,
Its sweets I'll aye remember;
But now her frowns make it decay--
It fades as in December.

4 Ye rural powers, who hear my strains,
Why thus should Peggy grieve me?
Oh, make her partner in my pains,
Then let her smiles relieve me!
If not, my love will turn despair,
My passion no more tender;
I'll leave the Bush aboon Traquair--
To lonely wilds I'll wander.

THOMAS TICKELL.

Tickell is now chiefly remembered from his connexion with Addison. He was born in 1686, at Bridekirk, near Carlisle. In April 1701, he became a member of Queen's College in Oxford. In 1708, he was made M.A., and two years after was chosen Fellow. He held his Fellowship till 1726, when, marrying in Dublin, he necessarily vacated it. He attracted Addison's attention first by some elegant lines in praise of Rosamond, and then by the 'Prospect of Peace,' a poem in which Tickell, although called by Swift Whiggissimus, for once took the Tory side. This poem Addison, in spite of its politics, praised highly in the _Spectator_, which led to a lifelong friendship between them. Tickell commenced contributing to the _Spectator_, among other things publishing there a poem entitled the 'Royal Progress.' Some time after, he produced a translation of the first book of the Iliad, which Addison declared to be superior to Pope's. This led the latter to imagine that it was Addison's own, although it is now, we believe, certain, from the MS., which still exists, that it was a veritable production of Tickell's. When Addison went to Ireland, as secretary to Lord Sunderland, Tickell accompanied him, and was employed in public business. When Addison became Secretary of State, he made Tickell Under-Secretary; and when he died, he left him

the charge of publishing his works, with an earnest recommendation to the care of Craggs. Tickell faithfully performed the task, prefixing to them an elegy on his departed friend, which is now his own chief title to fame. In 1725, he was made secretary to the Lords-Justices of Ireland, a place of great trust and honour, and which he retained till his death. This event happened at Bath, in the year 1740.

His genius was not strong, but elegant and refined, and appears, as we have just stated, to best advantage in his lines on Addison's death, which are warm with genuine love, tremulous with sincere sorrow, and shine with a sober splendour, such as Addison's own exquisite taste would have approved.

TO THE EARL OF WARWICK, ON THE DEATH OF MR ADDISON.

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

Can I forget the dismal night that gave
My soul's best part for ever to the grave?
How silent did his old companions tread,
By midnight lamps, the mansions of the dead,
Through breathing statues, then unheeded things,
Through rows of warriors, and through walks of kings!
What awe did the slow solemn knell inspire;
The pealing organ, and the pausing choir;
The duties by the lawn-robed prelate paid:
And the last words that dust to dust conveyed!
While speechless o'er thy closing grave we bend,
Accept these tears, thou dear departed friend.
Oh, gone for ever! take this long adieu;
And sleep in peace, next thy loved Montague.
To strew fresh laurels, let the task be mine,
A frequent pilgrim at thy sacred shrine;
Mine with true sighs thy absence to bemoan,
And grave with faithful epitaphs thy stone.
If e'er from me thy loved memorial part,
May shame afflict this alienated heart;
Of thee forgetful if I form a song,
My lyre be broken, and untuned my tongue,
My grief be doubled from thy image free,
And mirth a torment, unchastised by thee!

Oft let me range the gloomy aisles alone,
Sad luxury! to vulgar minds unknown,
Along the walls where speaking marbles show
What worthies form the hallowed mould belew;
Proud names, who once the reins of empire held;
In arms who triumphed, or in arts excelled;
Chiefs, graced with scars, and prodigal of blood;
Stern patriots, who for sacred freedom stood;
Just men, by whom impartial laws were given;

And saints, who taught and led the way to heaven;
Ne'er to these chambers, where the mighty rest,
Since their foundation came a nobler guest;
Nor e'er was to the bowers of bliss conveyed
A fairer spirit or more welcome shade.

In what new region, to the just assigned,
What new employments please the embodied mind?
A winged Virtue, through the ethereal sky,
From world to world unwearied does he fly?
Or curious trace the long laborious maze
Of Heaven's decrees, where wondering angels gaze?
Does he delight to hear bold seraphs tell
How Michael battled, and the dragon fell;
Or, mixed with milder cherubim, to glow
In hymns of love, not ill essayed below?
Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
A task well suited to thy gentle mind?
Oh! if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
To me thy aid, thou guardian genius, lend!
When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more.

That awful form, which, so the heavens decree,
Must still be loved and still deplored by me,
In nightly visions seldom fails to rise,
Or, roused by fancy, meets my waking eyes.
If business calls, or crowded courts invite,
The unblemished statesman seems to strike my sight;
If in the stage I seek to soothe my care,
I meet his soul which breathes in Cato there;
If pensive to the rural shades I rove,
His shape o'ertakes me in the lonely grove;
'Twas there of just and good he reasoned strong,
Cleared some great truth, or raised some serious song:
There patient showed us the wise course to steer,
A candid censor, and a friend severe;
There taught us how to live; and (oh! too high
The price for knowledge,) taught us how to die.

Thou hill, whose brow the antique structures grace,
Reared by bold chiefs of Warwick's noble race,
Why, once so loved, whene'er thy bower appears,
O'er my dim eyeballs glance the sudden tears?
How sweet were once thy prospects fresh and fair,
Thy sloping walks, and unpolluted air!
How sweet the glooms beneath thy aged trees,
Thy noontide shadow, and thy evening breeze!
His image thy forsaken bowers restore;
Thy walks and airy prospects charm no more;
No more the summer in thy glooms allayed,
Thy evening breezes, and thy noon-day shade.

From other ills, however fortune frowned,
Some refuge in the Muse's art I found;

Reluctant now I touch the trembling string,
Bereft of him who taught me how to sing;
And these sad accents, murmured o'er his urn,
Betray that absence they attempt to mourn.
Oh! must I then (now fresh my bosom bleeds,
And Craggs in death to Addison succeeds,)
The verse, begun to one lost friend, prolong,
And weep a second in the unfinished song!

These works divine, which, on his death-bed laid,
To thee, O Craggs! the expiring sage conveyed,
Great, but ill-omened, monument of fame,
Nor he survived to give, nor thou to claim.
Swift after him thy social spirit flies,
And close to his, how soon! thy coffin lies.
Blest pair! whose union future bards shall tell
In future tongues: each other's boast! farewell!
Farewell! whom, joined in fame, in friendship tried,
No chance could sever, nor the grave divide.

JAMES HAMMOND.

This elegiast was the second son of Anthony Hammond, a brother-in-law of Sir Robert Walpole, and a man of some note in his day. He was born in 1710; educated at Westminster school; became equerry to the Prince of Wales; fell in love with a lady named Dashwood, who rejected him, and drove him to temporary derangement, and then to elegy-writing; entered parliament for Truro, in Cornwall, in 1741; and died the next year. His elegies were published after his death, and, although abounding in pedantic allusions and frigid conceits, became very popular.

ELEGY XIII.

He imagines himself married to Delia, and that, content with each other, they are retired into the country.

1 Let others boast their heaps of shining gold,
  And view their fields, with waving plenty crowned,
  Whom neighbouring foes in constant terror hold,
  And trumpets break their slumbers, never sound:

2 While calmly poor I trifle life away,
  Enjoy sweet leisure by my cheerful fire,
  No wanton hope my quiet shall betray,
  But, cheaply blessed, I'll scorn each vain desire.

3 With timely care I'll sow my little field,
  And plant my orchard with its master's hand,
  Nor blush to spread the hay, the hook to wield,
  Or range my sheaves along the sunny land.

4 If late at dusk, while carelessly I roam,
  I meet a strolling kid, or bleating lamb,
  Under my arm I'll bring the wanderer home,

And not a little chide its thoughtless dam.

5 What joy to hear the tempest howl in vain,
And clasp a fearful mistress to my breast!
Or, lulled to slumber by the beating rain,
Secure and happy, sink at last to rest!

6 Or, if the sun in flaming Leo ride,
By shady rivers indolently stray,
And with my Delia, walking side by side,
Hear how they murmur as they glide away!

7 What joy to wind along the cool retreat,
To stop and gaze on Delia as I go!
To mingle sweet discourse with kisses sweet,
And teach my lovely scholar all I know!

8 Thus pleased at heart, and not with fancy's dream,
In silent happiness I rest unknown;
Content with what I am, not what I seem,
I live for Delia and myself alone.

* * * * *

9 Hers be the care of all my little train,
While I with tender indolence am blest,
The favourite subject of her gentle reign,
By love alone distinguished from the rest.

10 For her I'll yoke my oxen to the plough,
In gloomy forests tend my lonely flock;
For her, a goat-herd, climb the mountain's brow,
And sleep extended on the naked rock:

11 Ah, what avails to press the stately bed,
And far from her 'midst tasteless grandeur weep,
By marble fountains lay the pensive head,
And, while they murmur, strive in vain to sleep!

12 Delia alone can please, and never tire,
Exceed the paint of thought in true delight;
With her, enjoyment wakens new desire,
And equal rapture glows through every night:

13 Beauty and worth in her alike contend,
To charm the fancy, and to fix the mind;
In her, my wife, my mistress, and my friend,
I taste the joys of sense and reason joined.

14 On her I'll gaze, when others' loves are o'er,
And dying press her with my clay-cold hand--
Thou weep'st already, as I were no more,
Nor can that gentle breast the thought withstand.

15 Oh, when I die, my latest moments spare,
Nor let thy grief with sharper torments kill,
Wound not thy cheeks, nor hurt that flowing hair,
Though I am dead, my soul shall love thee still:

16 Oh, quit the room, oh, quit the deathful bed,
Or thou wilt die, so tender is thy heart;
Oh, leave me, Delia, ere thou see me dead,
These weeping friends will do thy mournful part:

17 Let them, extended on the decent bier,
Convey the corse in melancholy state,
Through all the village spread the tender tear,
While pitying maids our wondrous loves relate.

We may here mention Dr George Sewell, author of a Life of Sir Walter Haleigh, a few papers in the _Spectator_, and some rather affecting verses written on consumption, where he says, in reference to his garden--

'Thy narrow pride, thy fancied green,
(For vanity's in little seen,)
All must be left when death appears,
In spite of wishes, groans, and tears;
Not one of all thy plants that grow,
But rosemary, will with thee go;'--

Sir John Vanbrugh, best known as an architect, but who also wrote poetry;--Edward Ward (more commonly called Ned Ward), a poetical publican, who wrote ten thick volumes, chiefly in Hudibrastic verse, displaying a good deal of coarse cleverness;--Barton Booth, the famous actor, author of a song which closes thus--

'Love, and his sister fair, the Soul,
Twin-born, from heaven together came;
Love will the universe control,
When dying seasons lose their name.
Divine abodes shall own his power,
When time and death shall be no more;'--

Oldmixon, one of the heroes of the 'Dunciad,' famous in his day as a party historian;--Richard West, a youth of high promise, the friend of Gray, and who died in his twenty-sixth year;--James Eyre Weekes, an Irishman, author of a clever copy of love verses, called 'The Five Traitors;'--Bramston, an Oxford man, who wrote a poem called 'The Man of Taste;'--and William Meston, an Aberdonian, author of a set of burlesque poems entitled 'Mother Grim's Tales.'

RICHARD SAVAGE.

The extreme excellence, fulness, and popularity of Johnson's Life of Savage must excuse our doing more than mentioning the leading dates of his history. He was the son of the Earl of Rivers and the Countess of Macclesfield, and was born in London, 1698. His mother, who had begot him in adultery after having openly avowed her criminality, in order to

obtain a divorce from her husband, placed the boy under the care of a poor woman, who brought him up as her son. His maternal grandmother, Lady Mason, however, took an interest him and placed him at a grammar school at St Alban's. He was afterwards apprenticed to a shoemaker. On the death of his nurse, he found some letters which led to the discovery of his real parent. He applied to her, accordingly, to be acknowledged as her son; but she repulsed his every advance, and persecuted him with unrelenting barbarity. He found, however, some influential friends, such as Steele, Fielding, Aaron Hill, Pope, and Lord Tyrconnell. He was, however, his own worst enemy, and contracted habits of the most irregular description. In a tavern brawl he killed one James Sinclair, and was condemned to die; but, notwithstanding his mother's interference to prevent the exercise of the royal clemency, he was pardoned by the queen, who afterwards gave him a pension of L50 a-year. He supported himself in a precarious way by writing poetical pieces. Lord Tyrconnell took him for a while into his house, and allowed him L200 a-year, but he soon quarrelled with him, and left. When the queen died he lost his pension, but his friends made it up by an annuity to the same amount. He went away to reside at Swansea, but on occasion of a visit he made to Bristol he was arrested for a small debt, and in the prison he sickened, and died on the 1st of August 1743. He was only forty-five years of age.

After all, Savage, in Johnson's Life, is just a dung-fly preserved in amber. His 'Bastard,' indeed, displays considerable powers, stung by a consciousness of wrong into convulsive action; but his other works are nearly worthless, and his life was that of a proud, passionate, selfish, and infatuated fool, unredeemed by scarcely one trait of genuine excellence in character. We love and admire, even while we deeply blame, such men as Burns; but for Savage our feeling is a curious compost of sympathy with his misfortunes, contempt for his folly, and abhorrence for the ingratitude, licentiousness, and other coarse and savage sins which characterised and prematurely destroyed him.

THE BASTARD.

INSCRIBED, WITH ALL DUE REVERENCE, TO MRS BRETT,
ONCE COUNTESS OF MACCLESFIELD.

In gayer hours, when high my fancy ran,
The Muse exulting, thus her lay began:
'Blest be the Bastard's birth! through wondrous ways,
He shines eccentric like a comet's blaze!
No sickly fruit of faint compliance he!
He! stamped in nature's mint of ecstasy!
He lives to build, not boast a generous race:
No tenth transmitter of a foolish face:
His daring hope no sire's example bounds;
His first-born lights no prejudice confounds.
He, kindling from within, requires no flame;
He glories in a Bastard's glowing name.

'Born to himself, by no possession led,
In freedom fostered, and by fortune fed;
Nor guides, nor rules his sovereign choice control,
His body independent as his soul;
Loosed to the world's wide range, enjoined no aim,
Prescribed no duty, and assigned no name:
Nature's unbounded son, he stands alone,

His heart unbiased, and his mind his own.

'O mother, yet no mother! 'tis to you
My thanks for such distinguished claims are due;
You, unenslaved to Nature's narrow laws,
Warm championess for freedom's sacred cause,
From all the dry devoirs of blood and line,
From ties maternal, moral, and divine,
Discharged my grasping soul; pushed me from shore,
And launched me into life without an oar.

'What had I lost, if, conjugally kind,
By nature hating, yet by vows confined,
Untaught the matrimonial bonds to slight,
And coldly conscious of a husband's right,
You had faint-drawn me with a form alone,
A lawful lump of life by force your own!
Then, while your backward will retrenched desire,
And unconcurring spirits lent no fire,
I had been born your dull, domestic heir,
Load of your life, and motive of your care;
Perhaps been poorly rich, and meanly great,
The slave of pomp, a cipher in the state;
Lordly neglectful of a worth unknown,
And slumbering in a seat by chance my own.

'Far nobler blessings wait the bastard's lot;
Conceived in rapture, and with fire begot!
Strong as necessity, he starts away,
Climbs against wrongs, and brightens into day.'
Thus unprophetic, lately misinspired,
I sung: gay fluttering hope my fancy fired:
Inly secure, through conscious scorn of ill,
Nor taught by wisdom how to balance will,
Rashly deceived, I saw no pits to shun,
But thought to purpose and to act were one;
Heedless what pointed cares pervert his way,
Whom caution arms not, and whom woes betray;
But now exposed, and shrinking from distress,
I fly to shelter while the tempests press;
My Muse to grief resigns the varying tone,
The raptures languish, and the numbers groan.

O Memory! thou soul of joy and pain!
Thou actor of our passions o'er again!
Why didst thou aggravate the wretch's woe?
Why add continuous smart to every blow?
Few are my joys; alas! how soon forgot!
On that kind quarter thou invad'st me not;
While sharp and numberless my sorrows fall,
Yet thou repeat'st and multipli'st them all.

Is chance a guilt? that my disastrous heart,
For mischief never meant; must ever smart?
Can self-defence be sin?--Ah, plead no more!
What though no purposed malice stained thee o'er?
Had Heaven befriended thy unhappy side,
Thou hadst not been provoked--or thou hadst died.

Far be the guilt of homeshed blood from all
On whom, unsought, embroiling dangers fall!
Still the pale dead revives, and lives to me,
To me! through Pity's eye condemned to see.
Remembrance veils his rage, but swells his fate;
Grieved I forgive, and am grown cool too late.
Young, and unthoughtful then; who knows, one day,
What ripening virtues might have made their way?
He might have lived till folly died in shame,
Till kindling wisdom felt a thirst for fame.
He might perhaps his country's friend have proved;
Both happy, generous, candid, and beloved,
He might have saved some worth, now doomed to fall;
And I, perchance, in him

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