

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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Loe this is he whose infant Muse began  
 To braue the World before yeares stild him Man;  
 Though praise he sleight & scornes to make his Rymes  
 Begg fauors or opinion of the Tymes,  
 Yet few by good men haue bin more approu'd  
 None so vnseene, so generally lou'd

S. T. I.

Non pictoris opus fuit hoc sed pectoris, Unde  
 Quince in Tabulam mentis imago fuit  
 S. A.

LE  
V. 0226p

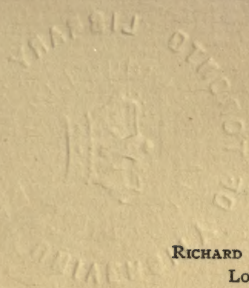
THE POETRY  
OF  
GEORGE WITHER

EDITED BY  
FRANK SIDGWICK

VOL. II

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FAIRE-VIRTVE,  
THE  
MISTRESSE  
OF  
PHIL'ARETE.

Written by  
GEO: WITHER.

Catul. Carm. xv.  
——— *nihil veremur*  
*Istos, qui in platea, modo huc, modo illuc*  
*In re pretereunt sua occupati.*

LONDON,  
Printed for *John Grismand.*  
CIC.IOC.XXII.

Another title-page of 1622 gives "Himselfe" instead of Wither's name.

## EDITIONS.

1622. Scarcely any collation is required in this poem ; it appeared in 1622, first by itself, the name on the title-page alone differing in two issues ; then bound up with some copies of the *Juvenilia* of that year ; the text in each case being identical.
1633. The *Juvenilia* of 1633 is a reprint, with hardly one variation from the previous text.



## The Stationer to the Reader.

THIS being one of the author's first poems was composed many years ago, and unknown to him gotten out of his custody by an acquaintance of his: and coming lately to my hands without a name, it was thought to have so much resemblance of the maker, that many upon the first sight undertook to guess who was author of it, and persuaded that it was likely also to become profitable both to them and me.

Whereupon I got it authorized according to order, intending to publish it without further inquiry. But, attaining by chance a more perfect knowledge to whom it most properly belonged, I thought it fitting to acquaint him therewithal, and did so; desiring also both his good-will to publish the same and leave to pass it under his name. Both which I found him very unwilling to permit, lest the seeming lightness of such a subject might somewhat disparage the more serious studies which he hath since undertaken.

Yet doubting, this being got out of his custody, some imperfecter copies might hereafter be scattered abroad in writing, or be, unknown to him, imprinted,

he was pleased, upon my importunities, to condescend that it might be published without his name. And his words were these :—

“When,” said he, “I first composed it, I well liked thereof, and it well enough became my years ; but now I neither like nor dislike it. That, therefore, it should be divulged I desire not ; and whether it be, or whether, if it happen so, it be approved or no, I care not. For this I am sure of : howsoever it be valued it is worth as much as I prized it at ; likely it is also to be as beneficial to the world as the world hath been to me, and will be more than those who like it not ever deserved at my hands.”

These were his speeches ; and, if you looked for a prologue, thus much he wished me to tell you instead thereof ; because, as he said, he himself had somewhat else to do. Yet, to acknowledge the truth, I was so earnest with him that, as busy as he would seem to be, I got him to write this epistle for me ; and have thereunto set my name ; which he wished me to confess, partly to avoid the occasion of belying my invention, and partly because he thought some of you would suppose so much.

I entreated him to explain his meaning in certain obscure passages ; but he told me how that were to take away the employment of his interpreters. Whereas, he would purposely leave somewhat remaining doubtful, to see what Sir Politic Would-be and his companions could pick out of it.

I desired him also to set down, to what good purposes this poem would serve ; but his reply was, how

that would be well enough found out in the perusing by all such as had honest understandings : and they who are not so provided, he hopes will not read it. More I could not get from him.

Whether therefore this Mistress of Philarete be really a woman, shadowed under the name of Virtue ; or Virtue only, whose loveliness is represented by the beauty of an excellent woman ; or whether it meant both together, I cannot tell you. But, thus much I dare promise for your money : that here you shall find familiarly expressed both such beauties as young men are most entangled withal, and the excellency also of such as are most worthy their affection. That, seeing both impartially set forth by him that was capable of both, they might the better settle their love on the best.

Hereby also those women who desire to be truly beloved may know what makes them so to be ; and seek to acquire those accomplishments of the mind, which may endear them, when the sweetest features of a beautiful face shall be converted into deformities. And here is described that loveliness of theirs, which is the principal object of wanton affection, to no worse end but that those, who would never have looked on this poem (if virtue and goodness had been therein no otherwise represented than as they are objects of the soul) might, where they expected the satisfaction of their sensuality only, meet with that also which would insinuate into them an apprehension of more reasonable and most excellent perfections. Yea, whereas the common opinion of youth hath been

that only old men, and such as are unable, or past delighting in a bodily loveliness, are those who are best capable of the mind's perfections ; and, that they do therefore so much prefer them before the other, because their age or stupidity hath deprived them of being sensible what pleasures they yield ; though this be the vulgar error, yet here it shall appear that he who was able to conceive the most excellent pleasingness which could be apprehended in a corporal beauty, found it, even when he was most enamoured with it, far short of that unexpressible sweetness which he discovered in a virtuous and well-tempered disposition. And if this be not worth your money, keep it.

JOHN MARRIOT.

PHILARETE TO HIS MISTRESS.

HAIL, thou fairest of all creatures  
Upon whom the sun doth shine,  
Model of all rarest features  
And perfections most divine.

Thrice all hail, and blessed be  
Those that love and honour thee.

Of thy worth this rural story  
Thy unworthy swain hath penn'd ;  
And to thy ne'er-ending glory,  
These plain numbers doth commend,      10  
Which ensuing times shall warble,  
When 'tis lost that's writ in marble.

Though thy praise and high deservings  
Cannot all be here express'd,  
Yet my love and true observings  
Someway ought to be profess'd,  
And where greatest love we see,  
Highest things attempted be.

By thy beauty I have gained  
To behold the best perfections ;      20  
By the love I have obtained,  
To enjoy the best affections.

And my tongue to sing thy praise,  
Love and beauty thus doth raise.

What although in rustic shadows  
 I a shepherd's breeding had?  
 And confined to these meadows  
 So in homespun russet clad?  
     Such as I have now and then  
     Dared as much as greater men. 30

Though a stranger to the Muses,  
 Young, obscured, and despis'd:  
 Yet such art thy love infuses,  
 That I thus have poetiz'd.  
     Read, and be content to see  
     Thy admired power in me.

And, oh grant, thou sweetest beauty  
 Wherewith ever earth was grac'd,  
 That this trophy of my duty  
 May with favour be embrac'd: 40  
     And disdain not in these rhymes  
     To be sung to after-times.

Let those doters on Apollo  
 That adore the Muses so,  
 And like geese each other follow,  
 See what love alone can do.  
     For in love-lays, grove and field  
     Nor to schools nor courts will yield.

On this glass of thy perfection  
 If that any women pry, 50  
 Let them thereby take direction  
 To adorn themselves thereby.

*PHILARETE TO HIS MISTRESS* 9

And if aught amiss they view,  
Let them dress themselves anew.

Young men shall by this acquainted  
With the truest beauties grow,  
So the counterfeit or painted  
They may shun when them they know.  
But the way all will not find,  
For some eyes have, yet are blind. 60

Thee entirely I have loved,  
So thy sweetness on me wrought ;  
Yet thy beauty never moved  
Ill temptations in my thought,  
But still did thy beauty's ray,  
Sun-like, drive those fogs away.

Those that mistresses are named,  
And for that suspected be,  
Shall not need to be ashamed,  
If they pattern take by thee ; 70  
Neither shall their servants fear  
Favours openly to wear.

Thou to no man favour deignest  
But what's fitting to bestow ;  
Neither servants entertainest  
That can ever wanton grow ;  
For the more they look on thee,  
Their desires still bettered be.

This thy picture, therefore, show I  
Naked unto every eye, 80

Yet no fear of rival know I,  
 Neither touch of jealousy ;  
     For the more make love to thee,  
     I the more shall pleased be.

I am no Italian lover  
 That will mew thee in a jail ;  
 But thy beauty I discover,  
 English-like, without a veil.  
     If thou may'st be won away,  
     Win and wear thee he that may. 90

Yet in this thou may'st believe me,  
 So indifferent though I seem,  
 Death with tortures would not grieve me  
 More than loss of thy esteem ;  
     For if virtue me forsake,  
     All a scorn of me will make.

Then as I on thee relying  
 Do no changing fear in thee,  
 So, by my defects supplying,  
 From all changing keep thou me ; 100  
     That unmatched we may prove,  
     Thou for beauty, I for love.

Then while their loves are forgotten  
 Who to pride and lust were slaves,  
 And their mistresses quite rotten  
 Lie unthought on in their graves.  
     Kings and queens, in their despite,  
     Shall to mind us take delight.



FAIR VIRTUE  
OR  
THE MISTRESS OF PHILARETE.

Two pretty rills do meet, and meeting make  
Within one valley a large silver lake,  
About whose banks the fertile mountains stood  
In ages passed bravely crown'd with wood,  
Which, lending cold-sweet shadows, gave it grace  
To be accounted Cynthia's bathing-place,  
And from her father Neptune's brackish court  
Fair Thetis thither often would resort,  
Attended by the fishes of the sea,  
Which in those sweeter waters came to play. 10  
There would the daughter of the sea-god dive ;  
And thither came the land-nymphs every eve  
To wait upon her, bringing for her brows  
Rich garlands of sweet flowers and beechy boughs.  
For pleasant was that pool, and near it then  
Was neither rotten marsh nor boggy fen.  
It was nor overgrown with boist'rous sedge,  
Nor grew there rudely then along the edge  
A bending willow nor a prickly bush,  
Nor broadleaf'd flag, nor reed, nor knotty rush ; 20

But here, well order'd, was a grove with bowers :  
 There grassy plots set round about with flowers.  
 Here you might through the water see the land  
 Appear, strow'd o'er with white or yellow sand.  
 Yon, deeper was it ; and the wind by whiffs  
 Would make it rise and wash the little cliffs,  
 On which oft pluming sat, unfrighted than,  
 The gagging wildgoose and the snow-white swan :  
 With all those flocks of fowls which to this day  
 Upon those quiet waters breed and play. 30

For though those excellences wanting be,  
 Which once it had, it is the same that we  
 By transposition name the Ford of Arle,  
 And out of which along a chalky marl  
 That river trills whose waters wash the fort  
 In which brave Arthur kept his royal court.  
 North-east, not far from this great pool, there lies  
 A tract of beechy mountains, that arise  
 With leisurely-ascending to such height,  
 As from their tops the warlike Isle of Wight 40  
 You in the ocean's bosom may espy,  
 Though near two hundred furlongs thence it lie.  
 The pleasant way, as up those hills you climb,  
 Is strewed o'er with marjoram and thyme,  
 Which grows unset. The hedgerows do not want  
 The cowslip, violet, primrose, nor a plant  
 That freshly scents, as birch both green and tall ;  
 Low sallows, on whose bloomings bees do fall ;  
 Fair woodbines, which about the hedges twine ;  
 Smooth privet, and the sharp, sweet eglantine ; 50





With many moe, whose leaves and blossoms fair  
The earth adorn, and oft perfume the air.

When you unto the highest do attain,  
An intermixture both of wood and plain  
You shall behold, which, though aloft it lie,  
Hath downs for sheep and fields for husbandry.  
So much, at least, as little needeth more,  
If not enough to merchandise their store.

In every row hath Nature planted there  
Some banquet for the hungry passenger. 60  
For here the hazel-nut and filbert grows ;  
There bulloes, and a little further sloes ;  
On this hand standeth a fair wilding-tree ;  
On that large thickets of black cherries be.  
The shrubby fields are raspice-orchards there,  
The new-fell'd woods like strawberry-gardens are :  
And had the king of rivers blest those hills  
With some small number of such pretty rills  
As flow elsewhere, Arcadia had not seen  
A sweeter plot of earth than this had been. 70

For what offence this place was scanted so  
Of springing waters, no record doth show,  
Nor have they old tradition left that tells ;  
But till this day at fifty-fathom wells  
The shepherds drink. And strange it was to hear  
Of any swain that ever lived there,  
Who either in a pastoral ode had skill,  
Or knew to set his fingers to a quill.

l. 52. 1622 and 1633 both give 'perfumes.' I have followed  
Gutch and Brydges in the text.

l. 62. 1622 omits 'a.'

For rude they were who there inhabited ;  
 And to a dull contentment being bred, 80  
 They no such art esteem'd, nor took much heed  
 Of anything the world without them did.

E'en there, and in the least-frequented place  
 Of all these mountains, is a little space  
 Of pleasant ground hemm'd in with dropping trees,  
 And those so thick that Phœbus scarcely sees  
 The earth they grow on once in all the year,  
 Nor what is done among the shadows there.  
 Along those lonely paths, where never came  
 Report of Pan or of Apollo's name, 90  
 Nor rumour of the Muses till of late,  
 Some nymphs were wand'ring ; and by chance or  
 fate

Upon a laund arrived, where they met  
 The little flock of pastor Philaret.  
 They were a troop of beauties known well nigh  
 Through all the plains of happy Britany.  
 A shepherd's lad was he, obscure and young,  
 Who, being first that ever there had sung,  
 In homely verse expressed country loves,  
 And only told them to the beechy groves, 100  
 As if to sound his name he never meant  
 Beyond the compass that his sheep-walk went.

They saw not him, nor them perceived he,  
 For in the branches of a maple-tree  
 He shrouded sat, and taught the hollow hill  
 To echo forth the music of his quill,  
 Whose tattling voice redoubled so the sound,  
 That where he was concealed they quickly found.

And there they heard him sing a madrigal,  
That soon betrayed his cunning to them all. 110

Full rude it was, no doubt, but such a song  
Those rustic and obscured shades among  
Was never heard, they say, by any ear,  
Until his Muses had inspired him there.  
Though mean and plain his country habit seemed,  
Yet by his song the ladies rightly deemed  
That either he had travelled abroad,  
Where swains of better knowledge make abode,  
Or else that some brave nymph, who used that grove,  
Had deigned to enrich him with her love. 120

Approaching nearer, therefore, to this swain,  
They him saluted, and he them again,  
In such good fashion as well seemed to be  
According to their state and his degree.  
Which greetings being passed, and much chat,  
Concerning him, the place, with this and that,  
He to an arbour doth those beauties bring,  
Where he them prays to sit, they him to sing,  
And to express that untaught country art,  
In setting forth the mistress of his heart, 130  
Which they o'erheard him practise, when unseen  
He thought no ear had witness of it been.

At first, as much unable, he refused,  
And seemed willing to have been excused  
From such a task. "For, trust me, nymphs," quoth he,  
"I would not purposely uncivil be,  
Nor churlish in denying what you crave ;  
But, as I hope great Pan my flock will save,  
I rather wish that I might, heard of none,

Enjoy my music by myself alone ; 140  
 Or that the murmurs of some little flood,  
 Joined with the friendly echoes of the wood,  
 Might be the impartial umpires of my wit,  
 Than vent it where the world might hear of it.  
 And doubtless I had sung less loud while-ere,  
 Had I but thought of any such so near.  
 Not that I either wish obscurified  
 Her matchless beauty, or desire to hide  
 Her sweet perfections ; for by Love I swear,  
 The utmost happiness I aim at here, 150  
 Is but to compass worth enough to raise  
 A high-built trophy equal with her praise.  
 Which, fairest ladies, I shall hope in vain,  
 For I was meanly bred on yonder plain ;  
 And, though I can well prove my blood to be  
 Deriv'd from no ignoble stems to me,  
 Yet fate and time them so obscured and crost,  
 That with their fortunes their esteem is lost :  
 And whatsoe'er repute I strive to win,  
 Now from myself alone it must begin. 160  
 For I have no estate, nor friends, nor fame,  
 To purchase either credit to my name,  
 Or gain a good opinion, though I do  
 Ascend the height I shall aspire unto.  
 If any of those virtues yet I have,  
 Which honour to my predecessors gave,  
 There's all that's left me. And though some contemn  
 Such needy jewels, yet it was for them  
 My fair one did my humble suit affect,  
 And deigned my adventurous love respect; 170



And by their help I passage hope to make  
Through such poor things as I dare undertake.

But, you may say, what goodly thing, alas,  
Can my despised meanness bring to pass?  
Or what great monument of honour raise  
To Virtue, in these vice-abounding days,  
In which a thousand times more honour finds  
Ignoble gotten means, than noble minds?  
Indeed, the world affordeth small reward  
For honest minds, and therefore her regard 180

I seek not after; neither do I care,  
If I have bliss, how others think I fare:  
For, so my thoughts have rest, it irks not me,  
Though none but I do know how blest they be.  
Here, therefore, in these groves and hidden plains,  
I pleased sit alone, and many strains  
I carol to myself these hills among,  
Where no man comes to interrupt my song.  
Whereas, if my rude lays make known I should  
Beyond their home, perhaps some carpers would, 190  
Because they have not heard from whence we be,  
Traduce, abuse, and scoff both them and me.

For if our great and learned shepherds, who  
Are graced with wit, and fame, and favours too,  
With much ado escape uncensur'd may,  
What hopes have I to pass unscoff'd, I pray,  
Who yet unto the Muses am unknown,  
And live unhonour'd here among mine own?

A gadding humour seldom taketh me  
To range out further than yon mountains be; 200  
Nor hath applausive rumour born my name

Upon the spreading wings of sounding fame.  
 Nor can I think, fair nymphs, that you resort  
 For other purpose than to make a sport  
 At that simplicity which shall appear  
 Among the rude untutor'd shepherds here.

I know that you my noble mistress ween  
 At best a homely milk-maid on the green,  
 Or some such country lass, as tasked stays  
 At servile labour until holidays.

210

For poor men's virtues so neglected grow,  
 And are now prized at a rate so low,  
 As 'tis impossible you should be brought  
 To let it with belief possess your thought,  
 That any nymph, whose love might worthy be,  
 Would deign to cast respective eyes on me.  
 ✓ You see I live possessing none of those  
 Gay things with which the world enamour'd grows.  
 To woo a courtly beauty I have neither  
 Rings, bracelets, jewels, nor a scarf, nor feather. 220  
 I use no double-dyed cloth to wear ;  
 No scrip embroider'd richly do I bear ;  
 No silken belt, nor sheephook laid with pearls,  
 To win me favour from the shepherds' girls ;  
 No place of office or command I keep,  
 But this my little flock of homely sheep ;  
 And in a word, the sum of all my pelf  
 Is this—I am the master of myself.

No doubt in courts of princes you have been,  
 And all the pleasures of the palace seen. 230  
 There you beheld brave courtly passages  
 Between heroës and their mistresses.

You there, perhaps, in presence of the King,  
 Have heard his learned bards and poets sing.  
 And what contentment, then, can wood or field  
 To please your curious understandings yield?  
 I know you walked hither but to prove  
 What silly shepherds do conceive of love ;  
 Or to make trial how our simpleness  
 Can passion's force or beauty's power express ;   240  
 And when you are departed, you will joy  
 To laugh, or descant on the shepherd's boy.

But yet, I vow, if all the art I had  
 Could any more esteem, or glory add  
 To her unmatched worth, I would not weigh  
 What you intended." "Prithee, lad," quoth they,  
 "Distrustful of our court'sy do not seem.  
 Her nobleness can never want esteem,  
 Nor thy concealed measures be disgraced,  
 Though in a meaner person they were placed,   250  
 If thy too modestly refused quill  
 But reach that height, which we suppose it will.  
 Thy meanness or obscureness cannot wrong  
 The nymph thou shalt eternize in thy song.  
 For, as it higher rears thy glory, that  
 A noble mistress thou hast aimed at,  
 So more unto her honour it will prove,  
 That, whilst deceiving shadows others move,  
 Her constant eyes could pass unmoved by  
 The subtle time's bewitching bravery,   260  
 And those obscured virtues love in thee,  
 That with despised meanness clouded be.  
 Now, then, for her sweet sake, whose beauteous eye

Hath filled thy soul with heavenly poesy,  
 Sing in her praise some new inspired strain ;  
 And, if within our power there shall remain  
 A favour to be done may pleasure thee,  
 Ask, and obtain it, whatsoe'er it be."

"Fair ladies," quoth the lad, "such words as those  
 Compel me can : " and, therewithal he rose, 270  
 Return'd them thanks, obeisance made, and than  
 Down sat again, and thus to sing began.

You that at a blush can tell  
 Where the best perfections dwell,  
 And the substance can conjecture,  
 By a shadow, or a picture,  
 Come and try if you by this  
 Know my mistress, who she is.

For though I am far unable  
 Here to match Apelles' table, 280  
 Or draw Zeuxes' cunning lines,  
 Who so painted Bacchus' vines  
 That the hungry birds did muster  
 Round the counterfeited cluster ;  
 Though I vaunt not to inherit  
 Petrarch's yet unequal'd spirit ;  
 Nor to quaff the sacred well,  
 Half so deep as Astrophel :  
 Though the much-commended Celia,  
 Lovely Laura, Stella, Delia, 290  
 Who in former times excell'd,  
 Live in lines unparallel'd ;

l. 292. 1622 and 1633 read 'unparaled.'

Making us believe 'twere much,  
 Earth should yield another such;  
 Yet, assisted but by nature,  
 I essay to paint a creature  
 Whose rare worth in future years  
 Shall be prais'd as much as theirs.  
 Nor let any think amiss  
 That I have presumed this ; 300  
 For a gentle nymph is she,  
 And hath often honour'd me.  
 She's a noble spark of light,  
 In each part so exquisite,  
 Had she in times passed been  
 They had made her beauty's queen.  
 Then shall cowardly despair  
 Let the most unblemish'd fair,  
 For default of some poor art  
 Which her favour may impart, 310  
 And the sweetest beauty fade  
 That was ever born or made ?  
 Shall, of all the fair ones, she  
 Only so unhappy be,  
 As to live in such a time,  
 In so rude, so dull a clime,  
 Where no spirit can ascend  
 High enough to apprehend  
 Her unprized excellence,  
 Which lies hid from common-sense ? 320  
 Never shall a stain so vile  
 Blemish this, our poets' isle.  
 I myself will rather run

And seek out for Helicon.  
 I will wash and make me clean  
 In the waves of Hippocrene ;  
 And in spite of fortune's bars,  
 Climb the hill that braves the stars,  
 Where, if I can get no Muse  
 That will any skill infuse, 330  
 Or my just attempt prefer,  
 I will make a Muse of her,  
 Whose kind heat shall soon distil  
 Art into my ruder quill.  
 By her favour I will gain  
 Help to reach so rare a strain,  
 That the learned hills shall wonder  
 How the untaught valleys under,  
 Met with raptures so divine,  
 Without knowledge of the Nine. 340

I, that am a shepherd's swain,  
 Piping on the lowly plain,  
 And no other music can,  
 Than what learn'd I have of Pan,  
 I, who never sung the lays  
 That deserve Apollo's bays,  
 Hope not only here to frame  
 Measures which shall keep her name  
 From the spite of wasting times,  
 But, enshrined in sacred rhymes, 350  
 Place her where her form divine  
 Shall to after ages shine,  
 And without respect of odds,  
 Vie renown with demi-gods.

Then, whilst of her praise I sing,  
 Hearken, valley, grove, and spring ;  
 Listen to me, sacred fountains,  
 Solitary rocks, and mountains ;  
 Satyrs, and you wanton elves,  
 That do nightly sport yourselves ; 360  
 Shepherds, you that on the reed  
 Whistle while your lambs do feed ;  
 Aged woods and floods, that know  
 What hath been long times ago,  
 Your more serious notes among,  
 Hear how I can in my song  
 Set a nymph's perfection forth ;  
 And when you have heard her worth,  
 Say if such another lass  
 Ever known to mortal was. 370

Listen, lordlings, you that most  
 Of your outward honours boast ;  
 And you gallants, that think scorn  
 We, to lowly fortunes born,  
 Should attain to any graces  
 Where you look for sweet embraces ;  
 See if all those vanities  
 Whereon your affection lies,  
 Or the titles, or the power,  
 By your fathers' virtues your, 380  
 Can your mistresses enshrine  
 In such state as I will mine,  
 Who am forced to importune  
 Favours in despite of fortune.  
 Beauties, listen, chiefly you,

That yet know not virtue's due.  
 You that think there are no sports,  
 Nor no honours, but in courts ;  
 Though of thousands there lives not  
 Two, but die and are forgot ; 390  
 See if any palace yields  
 Ought more glorious than the fields,  
 And consider well if we  
 May not as high-flying be  
 In our thoughts, as you that sing  
 In the chambers of a King.  
 See, if our contented minds,  
 Whom Ambition never blinds—  
 We, that clad in homespun grey,  
 On our own sweet meadows play— 400  
 Cannot honour, if we please,  
 Where we list as well as these ;  
 Or as well of worth approve,  
 Or with equal passions love.  
 See if beauties may not touch  
 Our soon-loving hearts as much ;  
 Or our services effect  
 Favours, with as true respect  
 In your good conceits to rise,  
 As our painted butterflies. 410  
 And you fairest, give her room,  
 When your sex's pride doth come,  
 For that subject of my song  
 I invoke these groves among,  
 To be witness of the lays  
 Which I carol in her praise.



And because she soon will see  
 If my measures faulty be,  
 Whilst I chant them, let each rhyme  
 Keep a well-proportion'd time, 420  
 And with strains that are divine  
 Meet her thoughts in every line.  
 Let each accent there present  
 To her soul a new content ;  
 And with ravishings so seize her,  
 She may feel the height of pleasure.

You enchanting spells that lie  
 Lurking in sweet poesy,  
 And to none else will appear  
 But to those that worthy are, 430  
 Make her know there is a power  
 Ruling in these charms of your,  
 That transcends a thousand heights  
 Ordinary men's delights ;  
 And can leave within her breast  
 Pleasures not to be exprest.  
 Let her linger on each strain  
 As if she would hear 't again,  
 And were loth to part from thence  
 Till she had the quintessence 440  
 Out of each conceit she meets,  
 And had stored her with those sweets.

Make her by your art to see,  
 I, that am her swain, was he  
 Unto whom all beauties here  
 Were alike and equal dear ;  
 That I could of freedom boast,

And of favours with the most ;  
 Yet now, nothing more affecting,  
 Sing of her, the rest neglecting. 450

Make her heart with full compassion  
 Judge the merit of true passion ;  
 And as much my love prefer,  
 As I strive to honour her.

Lastly, you that will, I know,  
 Hear me, wh'er you should or no ;  
 You that seek to turn all flowers,  
 By your breath's infectious powers,  
 Into such rank, loathsome weeds  
 As your dunghill nature breeds ; 460  
 Let your hearts be chaste, or here  
 Come not till you purge them clear.  
 Mark, and mark then, what is worst :  
 For whate'er it seem at first,  
 If you bring a modest mind,  
 You shall nought immodest find.

But if any too severe  
 Hap to lend a partial ear,  
 Or out of his blindness yawn  
 Such a word as Oh profane,  
 Let him know thus much from me, 470  
 If here's ought profane, 'tis he  
 Who applies these excellences  
 Only to the touch of senses,  
 And, dim-sighted, cannot see  
 Where the soul of this may be.

Yet, that no offence may grow,  
 'Tis their choice to stay or go.

Or if any for despite  
 Rather comes than for delight, 480  
 For his presence I'll not pray,  
 Nor his absence ; come he may.  
 Critics shall admitted be,  
 Though I know they'll carp at me ;  
 For I neither fear nor care  
 What in this their censures are.  
 ↓ If the verse here used be  
 Their dislike, it liketh me.  
 If my method they deride,  
 Let them know Love is not tied 490  
 In his free discourse to choose  
 Such strict rules as arts-men use.  
 These may prate of Love ; but they  
 Know him not : for he will play  
 From the matter now and then,  
 Off and on, and off again.  
 ~ If this prologue tedious seem,  
 Or the rest too long they deem,  
 Let them know my love they win,  
 Though they go ere I begin, 500  
 Just as if they should attend me  
 Till the last, and there commend me.  
 For I will for no man's pleasure  
 Change a syllable or measure,  
 Neither for their praises add  
 Ought to mend what they think bad,  
 Since it never was my fashion  
 To make work of recreation.  
 Pedants shall not tie my strains

To our antique poets' veins ; 510  
 As if we, in latter days,  
 Knew to love, but not to praise.  
 Being born as free as these,  
 I will sing as I shall please,  
 Who as well new paths may run,  
 As the best before have done.  
 I disdain to make my song  
 For their pleasures short or long.  
 If I please I'll end it here:  
 If I list I'll sing this year. 520  
 And, though none regard of it,  
 By myself I pleas'd can sit,  
 And with that contentment cheer me,  
 As if half the world did hear me.  
 But because I am assured  
 All are either so conjured,  
 As they will my song attend  
 With the patience of a friend,  
 Or, at least, take note, that I  
 Care not much, now willingly 530  
 I these goodly colours lay,  
 Wind, nor rain, shall wear away ;  
 But retain their purest glass  
 When the statues made of brass  
 For some prince's more renown,  
 Shall be wholly overthrown,  
 Or, consum'd with canker'd rust,  
 Lie neglected in the dust.  
 And my reason gives direction,  
 When I sing of such perfection, 540

First, those beauties to declare,  
 Which, though hers, without her are.  
 To advance her fame, I find,  
 Those are of a triple kind.  
 Privileges she hath store,  
 At her birth, since, and before.

From before her birth the fame  
 She of high descents may claim ;  
 Whose well-gotten honours may  
 Her deserving more display. 550  
 For from heavenly race she springs,  
 And from high and mighty kings.

At her birth she was by fate  
 In those parents fortunate  
 Whose estates and virtues stood  
 Answerable to their blood.

Then the nation, time, and place,  
 To the rest may add some grace.  
 For the people, with the clime,  
 And the fashions of the time, 560  
 In all which she hath been blest,  
 By enjoying them at best,  
 Do not only mend the features,  
 But oft-times make better natures.  
 Whereas, those who hap not so,  
 Both deform'd and ruder grow.

In these climes and latter days  
 To deserve sweet beauty's praise,  
 Where so many females dwell,  
 That each seemeth to excel, 570  
 Is more glory twenty-fold,

Than it was in days of old,  
 When our ordinary fair ones  
 Might have been esteemed rare ones,  
 And have made a subject fit  
 For their bravest poet's wit.  
 Little rush-lights, or a spark,  
 Shineth fairly in the dark,  
 And to him occasion gives  
 That from sight of lesser lives 580  
 To adore it ; yet the ray  
 Of one torch will take away  
 All the light of twenty more  
 That shin'd very well before.  
 So those petty beauties, which  
 Made the times before us rich,  
 Though but sparkles, seem'd a flame  
 Which hath been increased by fame,  
 And their true affections, who  
 Better never liv'd to know. 590  
 Whereas, her if they had seen,  
 She had sure adored been,  
 And taught ages past to sing  
 Sweeter in their sonneting.

Such a ray, so clear, so bright,  
 Had outshined all the light  
 Of a thousand such as theirs,  
 Who were then esteemed stars ;  
 And would have enlighten'd near  
 Half the world's wide hemisphere. 600  
 She is fairest that may pass  
 For a fair one, where the lass

Trips it on the country green,  
 That may equal Sparta's queen ;  
 Where in every street you see  
 Throngs of nymphs and ladies be,  
 That are fair enough to move  
 Angels and enamour Jove.

She must matchless features bring  
 That now moves a Muse to sing,  
 Whenas one small province may  
 Show more beauties in a day  
 Than the half of Europe could  
 Breed them in an age of old.  
 Such is she, and such a lot  
 Hath her rare perfection got.

610

Since her birth, to make the colour  
 Of so true a beauty fuller,  
 And to give a better grace  
 To that sweetness in the face,  
 She hath all the furth'rance had,  
 Noble educations add ;

620

And not only knoweth all  
 Which our ladies courtship call,  
 With those knowledges that do  
 Grace her sex, and suit thereto,  
 But she hath attain'd to find,  
 What is rare with womankind,  
 Excellences whereby she  
 May in soul delighted be,  
 And reap more contentment than  
 One of twenty thousand can.

630

By this means hath better'd bin

All without her, and within.  
 For it hath by adding arts  
 To adorn her native parts,  
 Raised to a noble flame,  
 Which shall lighten forth her fame,  
 Those dear sparks of sacred fire  
 Which the Muses did inspire 640  
 At her birth, that she complete  
 Might with them befit a seat.

But, perhaps I do amiss  
 To insist so long on this.  
 These are superficial things,  
 And but slender shadowings  
 To the work I have in hand.  
 Neither can you understand  
 What her excellence may be,  
 Till herself describ'd you see. 650

Nor can mine or any pen  
 Paint her half so lovely then  
 As she is indeed. For here  
 Might those Deities appear,  
 Which young Paris view'd at will,  
 Naked, upon Ida hill ;  
 That I from those three might take  
 All their beauties one to make ;  
 Those, no question, well compact,  
 Would have made up one exact. 660  
 Something yet we miss of might,  
 To express her sweetness right ;  
 Juno's majesty would fit ;  
 Venus beauty, Pallas wit



Might have brought to pattern hers,  
 In some show'd particulars,  
 But they never can express  
 Her whole frame or worthiness  
 With those excellences which  
 Make both soul and body rich.

670

Pallas sometimes was untoward,  
 Venus wanton, Juno froward ;  
 Yea, all three infected were,  
 With such faults as women are.  
 And though falsely deified,  
 Frailties had, which she'll deride.

By herself must therefore she  
 Or by nothing pattern'd be.  
 And I hope to paint her so,  
 By herself, that you shall know  
 I have served no common dame  
 Of mean worth or vulgar fame,  
 But a nymph that's fairer than  
 Pen or pencil portrait can.

680

And to-morrow if you stray  
 Back again this uncouth way,  
 I my simple art will show ;  
 But the time prevents me now.  
 For, except at yonder glade,  
 All the land is under shade ;  
 That, before these ewes be told,  
 Those my wethers in the fold,  
 Ten young wainlings driven down  
 To the well beneath the town,  
 And my lambkins changed from

690

Broom-leas to the mead at home,  
 'Twill be far in night: and so  
 I shall make my father woe  
 For my stay, and be in fear  
 Somewhat is mischanced here. 700  
 On your way I'll therefore bring you,  
 And a song or two I'll sing you,  
 Such as I, half in despair,  
 Made when first I woo'd my fair;  
 Whereunto my boy shall play,  
 That my voice assist it may.

## I.

COME, my Muse, if thou disdain,  
 All my comforts are bereft me;  
 No delight doth now remain,  
 I nor friend nor flock have left me, 710  
 They are scattered on the plain.

Men, alas, are too severe,  
 And make scoffs at lovers' fortunes;  
 Women, hearted like the bear,  
 That regards not who importunes,  
 But doth all in pieces tear.

If I should my sorrows show  
 Unto rivers, springs, or fountains,  
 They are senseless of my woe;  
 So are groves, and rocks, and mountains. 720  
 Then, oh, whither shall I go?

Means of harbour me to shield  
 From despair, ah, know you any?  
 For nor city, grange, nor field,  
 Though they lend content to many,  
 Unto me can comfort yield.

I have wept and sighed too,  
 For compassion to make trial—  
 Yea, done all that words can do,  
 Yet have nothing but denial. 730  
 What way is there then to woo?

Shall I swear, protest, and vow?  
 So have I done most extremely.  
 Should I die? I know not how.  
 For from all attempts unseemly,  
 Love and Virtue keeps me now.

I have heard that Time prevails;  
 But I fear me 'tis a fable.  
 Time and all endeavour fails;  
 To bear more my heart's unable, 740  
 Yet none careth what it ails.

Lines to some have oped the door,  
 And got entrance for affection.  
 Words well-spoken much implore  
 By the gesture's good direction:  
 But a look doth ten times more.

'Tis the eye that only reads  
 To the heart love's deepest lectures.

By a moving look it pleads,  
 More than common-sense conjectures, 750  
 And a way to pity leads.

This I knowing did observe,  
 Both by words and looks complaining,  
 Yet for pity I may starve :  
 There's no hope of my obtaining  
 Till I better can deserve.

Yea, and he that thinks to win  
 By desert, may be deceived.  
 For they who have worthiest bin,  
 Of their right have been bereaved, 760  
 And a groom admitted in.

Wherefore, Muse, to thee I call ;  
 Thou, since nothing else avails me,  
 Must redeem me from my thrall.  
 If thy sweet enchantment fails me,  
 Then adieu, love, life, and all.

## 2.

TELL me, my heart, what thoughts these pantings  
 move?

My thoughts of Love.

What flames are these, that set thee so on fire?

Flames of Desire. 770

What means hast thou, contentment's flower to crop?

No means but Hope.

Yet let us feed on Hope, and hope the best.  
 For they amid their griefs are something blest,  
 Whose thoughts, and flames, and means, have such  
     free scope  
 They may at once both Love, Desire, and Hope.

But say what fruit will love at last obtain ?

    Fruitless Disdain.

What will those hopes prove, which yet seem so fair ?

    Hopeless Despair.      780

What end shall run those passions out of breath ?

    An endless Death.

Oh, can there be such cruelty in Love ?

And doth my fortune so ungentle prove,

She will no fruit, nor hope, nor end bequeath,

But cruellest Disdain, Despair, and Death ?

Then what new study shall I now apply ?

    Study to Die.

How might I end my care, and die content ?

    Care to Repent.      790

And what good thoughts may make my end more  
     holy ?

    Think on thy Folly.

Yes, so I will ; and since my fate can give

No Hope, but ever without Hope to live,

My studies, cares, and thoughts, I'll all apply

To weigh my Folly well, Repent and Die.

## 3.

SAD eyes, what do you ail  
 To be thus ill-disposed?  
 Why doth your sleeping fail,  
 Now all men's else are closed? 800  
 Was 't I, that ne'er did bow  
 In any servile duty,  
 And will you make me now  
 A slave to love and beauty?

What though thy mistress smile,  
 And in her love affects thee?  
 Let not her eye beguile,  
 I fear she disrespects thee.  
 Do not, poor heart, depend  
 On those vain thoughts that fill thee; 810  
 They'll fail thee in the end,  
 So must thy passions kill thee.

What hopes have I, that she  
 Will hold her favours ever,  
 When so few women be,  
 That constant can persevere?  
 Whate'er she do protest,  
 When fortunes do deceive me,  
 Then she, with all the rest,  
 I fear, alas, will leave me. 820

Whilst youth and strength remains,  
 With art that may commend her,  
 Perhaps she nought disdains,  
 Her servant should attend her.

But it is one to ten,  
 If crosses overtake me,  
 She will not know me then,  
 But scorn and so forsake me.

Shall then in earnest truth  
 My careful eyes observe her? 830  
 Shall I consume my youth,  
 And short my time to serve her?  
 Shall I, beyond my strength,  
 Let passion's torments prove me,  
 To hear her say at length,  
 Away, I cannot love thee?

Oh, rather let me die  
 Whilst I thus gentle find her ;  
 'Twere worse than death if I  
 Should find she proves unkind. 840  
 One frown, though but in jest,  
 Or one unkindness feigned,  
 Would rob me of more rest  
 Than e'er could be regained.

But in her eyes I find  
 Such signs of pity moving,  
 She cannot be unkind,  
 Nor err, nor fail in loving.  
 And on her forehead this  
 Seems written to relieve me ; 850  
 My heart no joy shall miss  
 That love, or she, can give me.

Which if I find, I vow,  
 My service shall persever :  
 The same that I am now,  
 I will continue ever.  
 No other's high degree,  
 Nor beauteous look shall change me.  
 My love shall constant be,  
 And no estate estrange me.

860

When other noble dames  
 By greater men attended,  
 Shall with their lives and names  
 Have all their glories ended,  
 With fairest queens shall she  
 Sit sharing equal glory,  
 And times to come shall be  
 Delighted with our story.

In spite of others' hates,  
 More honour I will do her,  
 Than those that with estates  
 And helps of Fortune woo her.  
 Yea, that true worth I spy,  
 Though monarchs strove to grace it,  
 They should not reach more high,  
 Than I dare hope to place it.

870

And though I never vaunt  
 What favours are possessed,  
 Much less content I want,  
 Than if they were expressed.

880



Let others make their mirth  
 To blab each kiss or toying,  
 I know no bliss on earth  
 Like secret love enjoying.

And this shall be the worst  
 Of all that can betide me ;  
 If I, like some accurst,  
 Should find my hopes deride me,  
 My cares will not be long,  
 I know which way to mend them ; 890  
 I'll think who did the wrong,  
 Sigh, break my heart, and end them.

HAIL, fair beauties, and again,  
 Hail to all your goodly train.  
 What I promised yesterday,  
 If it please you, hear ye may :  
 For now once begun have I,  
 Sing I will, though none were by.  
 And though freely on I run,  
 Yet confused paths to shun, 900  
 First that part shall be disclosed,  
 That's of elements composed.  
 There the two unequal pair,  
 Water, fire, earth and air,  
 Each one suiting a complexion,  
 Have so cunning a commixtion,  
 As they, in proportion sweet,  
 With the rarest temper meet.  
 Either inasmuch as needeth,

So as neither ought exceedeth. 910  
 This pure substance is the same,  
 Which the body we do name.  
 Were that of immortal stuff,  
 'Tis refin'd and pure enough  
 To be call'd a soul ; for sure,  
 Many souls are not so pure.  
 I that with a serious look  
 Note of this rare model took,  
 Find that nature in their places  
 So well couched all the graces, 920  
 As the curious't eyes that be  
 Can nor blot nor blemish see.

Like a pine it groweth straight,  
 Reaching an approved height :  
 And hath all the choice perfections,  
 That inflame the best affections.  
 In the motion of each part,  
 Nature seems to strive with Art,  
 Which her gestures most shall bless  
 With the gifts of pleasingness. 930

When she sits, methinks I see  
 How all virtues fixed be  
 In a frame, whose constant mould  
 Will the same unchanged hold.  
 If you note her when she moves,  
 Cytherea drawn with doves  
 May come learn such winning motions  
 As will gain to love's devotions  
 More than all her painted wiles,  
 Such as tears, or sighs, or smiles. 940

Some, whose bodies want true graces,  
 Have sweet features in their faces ;  
 Others, that do miss them there,  
 Lovely are some other where ;  
 And to our desires do fit,  
 In behaviour, or in wit ;  
 Or some inward worth appearing  
 To the soul, the soul endearing :  
 But in her your eye may find  
 All that's good in womankind. 950  
 What in others we prefer,  
 Are but sundry parts of her ;  
 Who most perfect doth present  
 What might one and all content.  
 Yea, he that in love still ranges,  
 And each day, or hourly changes,  
 Had he judgment but to know  
 What perfection in her grow,  
 There would find the spring of store,  
 Swear a faith, and change no more. 960  
 Neither in the total frame  
 Is she only void of blame ;  
 But each part survey'd asunder  
 Might beget both love and wonder  
 If you dare to look so high,  
 Or behold such majesty,  
 Lift your wond'ring eyes and see  
 Whether ought can better'd be.  
 There's her hair, with which love angles,  
 And beholders' eyes entangles ; 970  
 For, in those fair curled snares,

They are hamper'd unawares,  
 And compell'd to swear a duty  
 To her sweet enthralling beauty.  
 In my mind 'tis the most fair  
 That was ever called hair,  
 Somewhat brighter than a brown ;  
 And her tresses waving down  
 At full length, and so dispread  
 Mantles her from foot to head.

980

If you saw her arched brow,  
 Tell me, pray, what art knows how  
 To have made it in a line  
 More exact or more divine.  
 Beauty there may be descried  
 In the height of all her pride ;  
 'Tis a meanly-rising plain,  
 Whose pure white hath many a vein,  
 Interlacing like the springs  
 In the earth's enamellings.

990

If the tale be not a toy  
 Of the little winged Boy,  
 When he means to strike a heart,  
 Thence he throws the fatal dart,  
 Which of wounds still makes a pair,  
 One of Love, one of Despair.

Round her visage—or so near  
 To a roundness doth appear,  
 That no more of length it takes,  
 Than what best proportion makes.

1000

Short her chin is, and yet so  
 As it is just long enow ;

Loveliness doth seem to glory  
 In that circling promontory.  
 Pretty moving features skip  
 'Twixt that hillock and the lip,  
 If you note her but the while  
 She is pleased to speak or smile.

And her lips, that knew no dullness,  
 Full are, in the meanest fullness ; 1010  
 Those the leaves be whose unfolding  
 Brings sweet pleasures to beholding ;  
 For such pearls they do disclose,  
 Both the Indies match not those ;  
 Yet are so in order placed,  
 As their whiteness is more graced.  
 Each part is so well disposed,  
 And her dainty mouth composed,  
 So as there is no distortion  
 Misbeseems that sweet proportion. 1020

When her ivory teeth she buries  
 'Twixt her two enticing cherries,  
 There appears such pleasures hidden,  
 As might tempt what were forbidden.  
 If you look again, the while  
 She doth part those lips in smiles,  
 'Tis as when a flash of light  
 Breaks from heaven to glad the night.

Other parts my pencil crave,  
 But those lips I cannot leave ; 1030  
 For methinketh I should go

1. 1031. So 1633. 1622 reads 'methinkes.' Gutch read  
 'For, methinks, if I should go . . . Would hold me,' etc.

And forsake those cherries so,  
 There's a kind of excellence  
 Holds me from departing hence.  
 I would tell you what it were,  
 But my cunning fails me there.  
 They are like in their discloses  
 To the morning's dewy roses,  
 That beside the name of fair  
 Cast perfumes that sweet the air.

1040

Melting soft her kisses be,  
 And had I now two or three,  
 More inspired by their touch,  
 I had prais'd them twice as much.

But, sweet Muses, mark ye how  
 Her fair eyes do check me now,  
 That I seem'd to pass them so,  
 And their praises overgo ;  
 And yet blame me not, that I  
 Would so fain have pass'd them by ;  
 For I feared to have seen them,  
 Lest there were some danger in them.  
 Yet such gentle looks they lend,  
 As might make her foe a friend ;  
 And by their allurings move  
 All beholders unto love.  
 Such a power is also there,  
 As will keep those thoughts in fear ;  
 And command enough I saw,  
 To hold impudence in awe.

1050

1060

There may he, that knows to love,  
 Read contents which are above

Their ignoble aims, who know  
 Nothing that so high doth grow.  
 Whilst she me beholding is,  
 My heart dares not think amiss ;  
 For her sight most piercing clear,  
 Seems to see what's written there.


Those bright eyes, that with their light  
 Oftentimes have blest my sight, 1070  
 And in turning thence their shining  
 Left me in sad darkness pining,  
 Are the rarest, loveliest grey,  
 And do cast forth such a ray,  
 As the man that black prefers,  
 More would like this grey of hers.

When their matchless beams she shrouds,  
 'Tis like Cynthia hid in clouds.  
 If again she show them light,  
 'Tis like morning after night. 1080  
 And 'tis worthy well beholding,  
 With how many a pretty folding  
 Her sweet eyelids grace that fair,  
 Meanly fring'd with beaming hair ;  
 Whereby neatly overspread,  
 Those bright lamps are shadowed.

'Twixt the eyes no hollow place,  
 Wrinkle, nor undecent space,  
 Disproportions her in ought,  
 Though by envy faults were sought. 1090

On those eyebrows never yet  
 Did disdainful scowling sit.  
 Love and Goodness gotten thither,

Sit on equal thrones together ;  
 And do throw just scorn on them  
 That their government contemn.

Then, almost obscur'd, appears  
 Those her jewel-gracing ears,  
 Whose own beauties more adorn,  
 Than the richest pearl that's worn 1100  
 By the proudest Persian dames,  
 Or the best that Nature frames.   
 There the voice, in love's meanders,  
 Those their pretty circlings wanders,  
 Whose rare turnings will admit  
 No rude speech to enter it.

Stretching from mount forehead lies  
 Beauty's cape betwixt her eyes.  
 Which two crystal-passing lakes  
 Love's delightful isthmus makes ; 1110  
 Neither more nor less extending  
 Than most meriteth commending.  
 Those in whom that part hath been  
 Best deserving praises seen,  
 Or, survey'd without affection,  
 Came the nearest to perfection,  
 Would scarce handsome ones appear  
 If with her compared they were.  
 For it is so much excelling,  
 That it passeth means of telling. 1120

On the either side of this  
 Love's most lovely prospect is :  
 Those her smiling cheeks, whose colour  
 Comprehends true beauty fuller



Than the curious't mixtures can,  
 That are made by art of man.  
 It is beauty's garden-plot,  
 Where as in a true-love knot,  
 So the snowy lily grows,  
 Mixed with the crimson rose, 1130  
 That as friends they joined be.  
 Yet they seem to disagree  
 Whether of the two shall reign,  
 And the lilies oft obtain  
 Greatest sway, unless a blush  
 Help the roses at a push.  
 Hollow fallings none there are ;  
 There's no wrinkle, there's no scar ;  
 Only there's a little mole,  
 Which from Venus' cheek was stole. 1140

If it were a thing in Nature  
 Possible, that any creature  
 Might decaying life repair  
 Only by the help of air,  
 There were no such salve for death  
 As the balm of her sweet breath.  
 Or if any human power  
 Might detain the soul an hour  
 From the flesh to dust bequeathing,  
 It would linger on her breathing, 1150  
 And be half in mind that there  
 More than mortal pleasures were.  
 And whose fortune were so fair  
 As to draw so sweet an air,  
 Would no doubt let slighted lie

The perfumes of Araby.  
 For the English eglantine  
 Doth, through envy of her, pine.  
 Violets, and roses too,  
 Fears that she will them undo ; 1160  
 And it seems that in her breast  
 Is compos'd the Phœnix' nest.

    But descend awhile, mine eye ;  
 See if polish'd ivory,  
 Or the finest-fleeced flocks,  
 Or the whitest Albion rocks,  
 For comparisons may stand,  
 To express that snowy hand.  
 When she draws it from her glove  
 It hath virtue to remove, 1170  
 Or disperse 't, if there be ought  
 Cloudeth the beholder's thought.  
 If that palm but toucheth your,  
 You shall feel a secret power  
 Cheer your heart, and glad it more,  
 Though it droop'd with grief before.

    Through the veins disposed true  
 Crimson yields a sapphire hue,  
 Which adds grace, and more delight,  
 By embracing with the white. 1180  
 Smooth, and moist, and soft, and tender,  
 Are her palms ; the fingers slender,  
 Tipp'd with mollified pearl :  
 And if that transformed girl  
 Whose much cunning made her dare  
 With Jove's daughter to compare,

Had that hand worn, maugre spite,  
 She had shamed the goddess quite.  
 For there is in every part  
 Nature perfecter than Art.

1190

These were joined to those arms  
 That were never made for harms ;  
 But possess the sweetest graces,  
 That may apt them for embraces.  
 Like the silver streams they be,  
 Which from some high hill we see  
 Clipping in a goodly vale,  
 That grows proud of such a thrall.

Neither alabaster rocks,  
 Pearl-strow'd shores, nor Cotswold flocks, 1200  
 Nor the mountains tipp'd with snow,  
 Nor the milk-white swans of Po,  
 Can appear so fair to me  
 As her spotless shoulders be.  
 They are like some work of state,  
 Cover'd with the richest plate,  
 And a presence have, that strike  
 With devotions, goddess-like.

'Twixt those shoulders, meanly spread,  
 To support that globe-like head, 1210  
 Riseth up her neck, wherein  
 Beauty seemeth to begin  
 To disclose itself in more  
 Tempting manner than before.  
 How therein she doth excel,  
 Though I would, I cannot tell :  
 For I naught on earth espy,

That I may express it by.

There should lovers, as in duty  
Hang rich trophies up to beauty. 1220

'Tis proportion'd to a height

That is even with delight.

Yet it is a great deal higher

Than to answer base desire.

Where the neck hath end, begins

That smooth path where love's close gins

Are thick placed to enthrall

Such as that way straggle shall.

There a pleasing passage lies,

Far beyond the sight of eyes : 1230

And much more delight contains

Than the old Elysian plains.

Whatsoever others say,

There's alone the Milky Way,

That to beauty's walks doth go,

Which, if others came to know,

In possessing their delight,

They should never reach the height

Of the pleasures which I share,

Whilst that those debarred are. 1240

Yet unspoken of there rests

Her two twin-like lovely breasts,

Whose round-rising, pretty panting,

I would tell, but art is wanting.

Words can never well declare

Her fair sweet perfections there :

For, would measures give me leave

To express what I conceive,

I do know I should go near  
 Half to ravish all that hear. 1250  
 And, but that I learn to season  
 What I apprehend with reason,  
 It had made my passions' weight  
 Sink me through my own conceit.  
 There I find so large a measure  
 Of an unexpressed pleasure,  
 That my heart, through strong surmise,  
 In a pleasing fainting lies.

He that there may rest to prove,  
 Softer finds those beds of love, 1260  
 Than the cotton ripest grown,  
 Or fine pillows of such down,  
 As in time of moulting, fans  
 From the breasts of silver swans.  
 Those two sisters are a pair  
 Smooth alike, like soft, like fair,  
 If together they be view'd.  
 Yet if they apart be shew'd,  
 That you touch, or see, seems smother,  
 Softer, fairer, than the other. 1270

That the colour may delight,  
 So much red as makes the white  
 Purer seem, is shed among :  
 And then here and there along  
 Runs a sapphire-mine, whose blue,  
 Shadow'd, makes so brave a show  
 On those lily mounts, as tho'  
 Beauty's simples there did grow.  
 In the vale, 'twixt either hill,

Lies desire in ambush still ; 1280  
 And surpriseth every eye  
 Which doth that way dare to pry.

There is sure the twy-top hill  
 Where the poets learn their skill.  
 That's Parnassus where the Muses  
 Chaste and wise Minerva uses.  
 Her two cherrilets are those,  
 Whence the pleasant'st nectar flows :  
 And no fruits e'er equall'd these,  
 Fetch'd from the Hesperides. 1290

Once, as Cynthia's games she chased,  
 And for air left half unlaced  
 Her light summer robe of green,  
 Beauty's safe but slender screen,  
 Unawares I partly spied  
 That fair lily field unhid,  
 Which you may her belly name ;  
 Yet nor she nor I to blame,  
 For it was but what mine eye  
 Might behold with modesty. 1300

'Tis a fair and matchless plain  
 Where unknown delights remain ;  
 'Tis the store-house wherein pleasure  
 Hides the richest of her treasure ;  
 Which true modesty in ward  
 Keeps with a continual guard  
 Of such virtues as she's sure  
 No corruption can allure.

There, they say, for mind it well,  
 I do this by hearsay tell, 1310

Grows her navel, which doth seem  
 Like some jewel of esteem ;  
 With so wondrous cunning wrought  
 That an injury 'tis thought  
 Such a beauty, with the rest,  
 Should, unknown, be unexpressed.

Somewhat else there is, that's hidden,  
 Which to name I am forbidden :

Neither have I ever pried  
 After that should be unspied.

1320

Never shall my maiden Muse  
 So herself and me abuse,  
 As to sing what I may fear  
 Will offend the choicest ear.  
 Though I know, if none be by  
 But true friends to modesty,  
 I might name each part at will,  
 And yet no man's thought be ill.

Yet, for fear loose hearers may  
 Judge amiss, if more I say,

1330

I'll descend to shun all blame,  
 To the pillars of this frame ;  
 Where, though I ne'er aim'd so high  
 As her dainty youthful thigh—  
 Whose rare softness, smoothness, fullness,  
 Being known, would teach my dullness  
 Such a strain as might befit  
 Some brave Tuscan poet's wit—

Once a saucy bush I spied,  
 Pluck her silken skirts aside ;

1340

So discover'd unto me

All those beauties to the knee.  
 And, before the thorns' entanglings  
 Had let go the silver spanglings,  
 I perceived the curious knitting  
 Of those joints were well befitting ;  
 Such a noble piece of work,  
 'Mongst whose turnings seem'd to lurk  
 Much to entertain the sight  
 With new objects of delight. 1350

Then the leg for shape as rare,  
 Will admit of no compare.  
 Straight it is ; the ankle lean,  
 Full the calf, but in the mean ;  
 And the slender foot doth fit,  
 So each way to suit with it,  
 As she nothing less excels  
 Therein, than in all things else.  
 Yea, from head to foot her feature  
 Shows her an unblemish'd creature : 1360  
 In whom love with reason might  
 Find so matchless a delight,  
 That more cannot be acquired,  
 Nor a greater bliss desired.

Yet if you will rest an hour  
 Under yonder shady bower,  
 I anon my Muse will raise  
 To a higher pitch of praise.  
 But awhile with raspice-berries,  
 Strawberries, ripe pears, and cherries 1370  
 (Such as these our groves do bear),

l 1362. Both 1622 and 1633 give 'Finds . . .'



We will cool our palates there.  
 And those homely cates among,  
 Now and then a past'ral song  
 Shall my lad here sing and play,  
 Such as you had yesterday.

## I.

A LAD whose faith will constant prove,  
 And never know an end,  
 Late by an oversight in love,  
 Displeas'd his dearest friend. 1380  
 For which incens'd, she did retake  
 The favours which he wore,  
 And said he never for her sake  
 Should wear or see them more.

The grief whereof, how near it went,  
 And how unkindly took,  
 Was figur'd by the discontent  
 Appearing in his look.  
 At first he could not silence break,  
 So heavy sorrow lay, 1390  
 But when his sighs gave way to speak,  
 Thus sadly did he say :

“ My only dear ; ” and with that speech,  
 Not able to sustain  
 The floods of grief at sorrow's breach,  
 He paus'd awhile again.

At length, nigh fainting, did express  
 These words, with much ado :  
 “ Oh, dear, let not my love’s excess  
 Me and my love undo.” 1400

She, little moved with his pain,  
 His much distraction eyed ;  
 And changing love into disdain,  
 Thus, still unkind, replied :  
 “ Forbear to urge one kindness more,  
 Unless you long to see  
 The good respect you had before  
 At once all lost in me.”

With that, dismay’d, his suit he ceased,  
 And down his head he hung ; 1410  
 And as his reason’s strength decreased,  
 His passion grew more strong.  
 But, seeing she did slight his moan,  
 With willow garlands wreath’d,  
 He sat him down, and all alone  
 This sad complaint he breath’d :

“ Oh heavens ! ” quoth he, “ why do we spend  
 Endeavours thus in vain ;  
 Since what the Fates do fore-intend,  
 They never change again ? 1420  
 Nor faith, nor love, nor true desert,  
 Nor all that man can do,  
 Can win him place within her heart,  
 That is not born thereto.

“Why do I fondly waste my youth  
In secret sighs and tears?  
Why to preserve a spotless truth,  
Taste I so many cares?  
For women, that no worth respect,  
Do so ungentle prove, 1430  
That some shall win by their neglect  
What others lose with love.

“Those that have set the best at naught,  
And no man could enjoy,  
At last by some base gull are caught,  
And gotten with a toy.  
Yea, they that spend an age's light,  
Their favours to obtain,  
For one unwilling oversight  
May lose them all again. 1440

“How glad, and fain, alas! would I  
For her have underwent  
The greatest care, ere she should try  
The smallest discontent?  
Yet she that may my life command,  
And doth those passions know,  
Denieth me a poor demand,  
In height of all my woe.

“Oh, if the noblest of her time,  
And best beloved of me, 1450  
Could for so poor, so slight a crime,  
So void of pity be,

Sure, had it been some common one  
 Whose patience I had tried,  
 No wonder I had been undone,  
 Or unforgiven died.

“A thousand lives I would have laid,  
 So well I once believed  
 She would have deign'd to lend me aid,  
 If she had seen me grieved. 1460  
 But now I live to see the day  
 Where I presumed so,  
 I neither dare for pity pray,  
 Nor tell her of my woe.

“Yet let not, poor despised heart,  
 Her worth ought question'd be  
 Hadst thou not failed in desert,  
 She had not failed thee.  
 But lest, perhaps, they flout thy moan,  
 That should esteem thee dear, 1470  
 Go, make it by thyself alone,  
 Where none may come to hear.

“Still keep thy forehead crown'd with smiles,  
 What passion e'er thou try,  
 That none may laugh at thee, the whiles  
 Thou discontented lie.  
 And let no wrong by chance disdain  
 A love so truly fair,  
 But rather never hope again,  
 And thou shalt ne'er despair.” 1480

## 2.

O'ERTIRED by cruel passions that oppress me,  
 With heart nigh broken, time no hope would give me,  
 Upon my bed I laid me down to rest me ;  
 And gentle sleep I wooed to relieve me.  
     But oh, alas ! I found that on the morrow  
     My sleeping joys brought forth my waking sorrow.

For lo ! a dream I had so full of pleasure,  
 That to possess what to embrace I seem'd  
 Could not affect my joy in higher measure  
 Than now it grieves me that I have but dream'd. 1490  
     Oh, let my dreams be sighs and tears hereafter,  
     So I that sleeping weep, may wake in laughter.

Fain would I tell how much that shadow pleased me ;  
 But tongue and pen want words and art in telling :  
 Yet this I'll say, to show what horror seized me  
 When I was robb'd of bliss, so much excelling :  
     Might all my dreams be such, oh, let me never  
     Awake again, but sleep and dream for ever.

For when I waking saw myself deceived,  
 And what an inward Hell it had procured,      1500  
 To find myself of all my hopes bereaved,  
 It brought on passions not to be endured :  
     And knew I next night had such dreams in  
     keeping,  
     I'd make my eyes forswear for ever sleeping.

## 3.

YOU woody hills, you dales, you groves,  
 You floods, and every spring,  
 You creatures, come, whom nothing moves,  
 And hear a shepherd sing.  
 For to heroës, nymphs, and swains,  
 I long have made my moan ; 1510  
 Yet what my mournful verse contains  
 Is understood of none.

In song Apollo gave me skill ;  
 Their love his sisters deign :  
 With those that haunt Parnassus' hill  
 I friendship entertain :  
 Yet this is all in vain to me,  
 So haplessly I fare,  
 As those things which my glory be  
 My cause of ruin are. 1520

For Love hath kindled in my breast  
 His never-quenched fire :  
 And I, who often have exprest  
 What other men desire,  
 Because I could so dive into  
 The depth of others' moan,  
 Now I my own affliction show,  
 I heeded am of none.

Oft have the nymphs of greatest worth  
 Made suit my songs to hear : 1530  
 As oft, when I have sighed forth  
 Such notes as saddest were,  
 "Alas!" said they, "poor gentle heart,  
 Whoe'er that shepherd be :"  
 But none of them suspects my smart,  
 Nor thinks it meaneth me.

When I have reach'd so high a strain  
 Of passion in my song,  
 That they have seen the tears to rain  
 And trill my cheek along, 1540  
 Instead of sigh, or weeping eye,  
 To sympathize with me,  
 "Oh, were he once in love," they cry,  
 "How moving would he be !"

Oh, pity me, you powers above,  
 And take my skill away ;  
 Or let my hearers think I love,  
 And feign not what I say:  
 For if I could disclose the smart  
 Which I unknown do bear, 1550  
 Each line would make them sighs impart,  
 And every word a tear.

"Had I a mistress," some do think,  
 "She should revealed be ;  
 And I would favours wear, or drink  
 Her health upon my knee."

Alas, poor fools ! they aim awry,  
 Their fancy flags too low :  
 Could they my love's rare course espy,  
 They would amazed grow. 1560

But let nor nymph nor swain conceive  
 My tongue shall ever tell  
 Who of this rest doth me bereave,  
 Or where I am not well.  
 But if you sighing me espy,  
 Where rarest features be,  
 Mark where I fix a weeping eye,  
 And swear you, there is she.

Yet, ere my eyes betray me shall,  
 I'll swell and burst with pain : 1570  
 And for each drop they would let fall,  
 My heart shall bleed me twain.  
 For since my soul more sorrow bears  
 Than common lovers know,  
 I scorn my passions should, like theirs,  
 A common humour show.

Ear never heard of, heretofore,  
 Of any love like mine.  
 Nor shall there be for evermore  
 Affection so divine. 1580  
 And that to feign it none may try,  
 When I dissolv'd must be,  
 The first I am it lived by,  
 And die it shall with me.



BOY, ha' done ; for now my brain  
 Is inspir'd afresh again,  
 And new raptures pressing are,  
 To be sung in praise of her,  
 Whose fair picture lieth nigh,  
 Quite unveil'd to every eye. 1590  
 No small favour hath it been  
 That such beauty might be seen :  
 Therefore, ever may they rue it,  
 Who with evil eyes shall view it.  
 Yea, what ancient stories tell,  
 Once to rude Actæon fell,  
 When with evil thoughts he stood  
 Eyeing Cynthia in the flood,  
 May that fatal horned curse  
 Light upon them, or a worse. 1600

But, whatever others be,  
 Lest some fault be found in me,  
 If imperfect this remain,  
 I will over-trim 't again.  
 Therefore, turn where we begun :  
 And now all is overrun,  
 Mark if everything exprest  
 Suit not so unto the rest,  
 As if Nature would prefer  
 All perfections unto her. 1610  
 Wherefore seems it strange to any  
 That they daily see so many,  
 Who were else most perfect creatures,  
 In some one part want true features?  
 Since, from all the fair'st that live,

Nature took the best, to give  
 Her perfection in each part.  
 I alone except her heart ;  
 For, among all woman-kind,  
 Such as hers is hard to find. 1620

If you truly note her face,  
 You shall find it hath a grace  
 Neither wanton, nor o'er-serious,  
 Nor too yielding, nor imperious ;  
 But with such a feature blest,  
 It is that which pleaseth best,  
 And delights each sev'ral eye,  
 That affects with modesty.  
 Lowliness hath in her look  
 Equal place with greatness took ; 1630  
 And if beauty anywhere  
 Claims prerogatives, 'tis there ;  
 For at once thus much 'twill do,  
 Threat, command, persuade, and woo.

In her speech there is not found  
 Any harsh, displeasing sound,  
 But a well-beseeming power,  
 Neither higher, neither lower,  
 Than will suit with her perfection ;  
 'Tis the loadstone of affection ; 1640  
 And that man, whose judging eyes  
 Could well sound such mysteries,  
 Would in love make her his choice,  
 Though he did but hear her voice.  
 For such accents breathe not, whence  
 Beauty keeps non-residence.

Never word of hers I hear  
 But 'tis music to mine ear,  
 And much more contentment brings  
 Than the sweetly-touched strings 1650  
 Of the pleasing lute, whose strains  
 Ravish hearers when it plains.

Raised by her discourse, I fly  
 In contented thoughts so high,  
 That I pass the common measures  
 Of the dulled senses' pleasures,  
 And leave far below my flight  
 Vulgar pitches of delight.

If she smile, and merry be,  
 All about her are as she, 1660  
 For each looker-on takes part  
 Of the joy that's in her heart.

If she grieve, or you but spy  
 Sadness peeping through her eye,  
 Such a grace it seems to borrow,  
 That you'll fall in love with sorrow,  
 And abhor the name of mirth  
 As the hateful'st thing on earth.  
 Should I see her shed a tear,  
 My poor eyes would melt, I fear. 1670  
 For much more in hers appears,  
 Than in other women's tears ;  
 And her look did never feign  
 Sorrow where there was no pain.

Seldom hath she been espied  
 So impatient as to chide :  
 For if any see her so,

They'll in love with anger grow.  
 Sigh, or speak, or smile, or talk,  
 Sing, or weep, or sit, or walk, 1680  
 Everything that she doth do  
 Decent is, and lovely too.  
 Each part that you shall behold  
 Hath within itself enrolled  
 What you could desire to see,  
 Or your heart conceive to be.  
 Yet if from that part your eye  
 Moving, shall another spy,  
 There you see as much or more  
 Than you thought to praise before. 1690

While the eye surveys it, you  
 Will imagine that her brow  
 Hath all beauty ; when her cheek  
 You behold, it is as like  
 To be deemed fairest too,  
 So much there can beauty do.  
 Look but thence upon her eye,  
 And you wonder, by and by,  
 How there may be anywhere  
 So much worthy praise as there. 1700  
 Yet if you survey her breast,  
 Then as freely you'll protest  
 That in them perfection is ;  
 Though I know that one poor kiss  
 From her tempting lips would then  
 Make all that forsworn again.  
 For the selfsame moving grace  
 Is at once in every place.

She her beauty never foils  
 With your ointments, waters, oils, 1710  
 Nor no loathsome fucus settles,  
 Mix'd with Jewish fasting spittles.  
 Fair by nature being born,  
 She doth borrow'd beauty scorn ;  
 Whoso kisses her needs fear  
 No unwholesome varnish there ;  
 For from thence he only sips  
 The pure nectar of her lips,  
 And at once with these he closes  
 Melting rubies, cherries, roses. 1720

Then in her behaviour she  
 Striveth but herself to be ;  
 Keeping such a decent state,  
 As indeed she seems to hate  
 Precious leisure should be spent  
 In abused compliment.  
 Though she knows what other do,  
 And can all their courtship too,  
 She is not in so ill case,  
 As to need their borrow'd grace. 1730

Her discourses sweeten'd are  
 With a kind of artless care,  
 That expresseth greater art  
 Than affected words impart.  
 So her gestures, being none  
 But that freeness which alone  
 Suits the braveness of her mind,  
 Make her, of herself, to find  
 Postures more becoming far

Than the mere acquired are. 1740

If you mark when for her pleasure  
 She vouchsafes to foot a measure,  
 Though with others' skill she pace,  
 There's a sweet delightful grace  
 In herself, which doth prefer  
 Art beyond that art in her.

Neither needs she beat her wit  
 To devise what dressings fit.  
 Her complexion, and her feature,  
 So beholding are to Nature, 1750  
 If she in the fashions go,  
 All the reason she doth so  
 Is because she would not err  
 In appearing singular :

Doubtless not for any thought  
 That 'twill perfect her in ought.

Many a dainty-seeming dame  
 Is in native beauties lame.  
 Some are graced by their tires,  
 As their quoifs, their hats, their wires. 1760  
 One a ruff doth best become ;  
 Falling-bands much alt'reth some.  
 And their favours oft we see  
 Changed as their dressings be :  
 Which her beauty never fears,  
 For it graceth all she wears.  
 If ye note her tire to-day,  
 That doth suit her best, you'll say.  
 Mark what she next morn doth wear ;  
 That becomes her best, you'll swear. 1770

Yea, as oft as her you see,  
 Such new graces still there be,  
 As she ever seemeth grac'd  
 Most by that she weareth last,  
 Though it be the same she wore  
 But the very day before.

When she takes her tires about her  
 (Never half so rich without her),  
 At the putting on of them,  
 You may liken every gem 1780  
 To those lamps which at a play  
 Are set up to light the day ;  
 For their lustre adds no more  
 To what Titan gave before,  
 Neither doth their pretty gleamings  
 Hinder ought his greater beamings ;  
 And yet, which is strange to me,  
 When those costly deckings be  
 Laid away, there seems descried  
 Beauties which those veils did hide ; 1790  
 And she looks as doth the moon  
 Past some cloud through which she shone ;  
 Or some jewel watch, whose case,  
 Set with diamonds, seems to grace  
 What it doth contain within,  
 Till the curious work be seen ;  
 Then 'tis found that costly shringing  
 Did but hinder t'other's shining.

If you chance to be in place  
 When her mantle she doth grace, 1800

l. 1775. 'she' omitted in 1622.

You would presently protest  
 Irish dressings were the best.  
 If again she lay it down,  
 While you view her in a gown,  
 And how those her dainty limbs  
 That close-bodied garment trims,  
 You would swear, and swear again,  
 She appeared loveliest then.

But if she so truly fair  
 Should untie her shining hair 1810  
 And at length that treasure shed,  
 Jove's endured Ganimed,  
 Neither Cytherea's joy,  
 Nor the sweet self-loving boy  
 Who in beauty did surpass,  
 Nor the fair'st that ever was,  
 Could, to take you prisoner, bring  
 Looks so sweetly conquering.

She excels her whom Apollo  
 Once with weeping eyes did follow ; 1820  
 Or that nymph who, shut in towers,  
 Was beguil'd with golden showers ;  
 Yea, and she, whose love was wont  
 To swim o'er the Hellespont  
 For her sake, though in attire  
 Fittest to inflame desire,  
 Seem'd not half so fair to be,  
 Nor so lovely as is she.  
 For the man whose happy eye  
 Views her in full majesty, 1830  
 Knows she hath a power that moves



More than doth the Queen of Loves,  
 When she useth all her power  
 To inflame her paramour.

And sometime I do admire  
 All men burn not with desire.  
 Nay, I muse her servants are not  
 Pleading love ; but oh, they dare not :  
 And I therefore wonder why  
 They do not grow sick and die.

1840

Sure they would do so, but that  
 By the ordinance of Fate,  
 There is some concealed thing  
 So each gazer limiting,  
 He can see no more of merit  
 Than beseems his worth and spirit.  
 For in her a grace there shines,  
 That o'er-daring thoughts confines,  
 Making worthless men despair  
 To be loved of one so fair.

1850

Yea, the destinies agree,  
 Some good judgments blind should be,  
 And not gain the power of knowing  
 Those rare beauties in her growing.  
 Reason doth as much imply :  
 For, if every judging eye  
 Which beholdeth her should there  
 Find what excellences are,  
 All, o'ercome by those perfections,  
 Would be captive to affections.

1860

So, in happiness unblest,  
 She for lovers should not rest.

This, well heeding, think upon :  
 And, if there be any one  
 Who alloweth not the worth  
 Which my Muse hath painted forth,  
 Hold it no defect in her,  
 But that he's ordain'd to err.  
 Or if any female wight  
 Should detract from this I write, 1870  
 She, I yield, may show her wit,  
 But disparage her no whit ;  
 For on earth few women be,  
 That from Envy's touch are free ;  
 And who ever Envy knew  
 Yield those honours that were due ?

Though sometimes my song I raise  
 To unused heights of praise,  
 And break forth as I shall please  
 Into strange hyperboles, 1880  
 'Tis to show conceit hath found  
 Worth beyond expression's bound.  
 Though her breath I do compare  
 To the sweet'st perfumes that are ;  
 Or her eyes, that are so bright,  
 To the morning's cheerful light ;  
 Yet I do it not so much  
 To infer that she is such,  
 As to show that being blest  
 With what merits name of best, 1890  
 She appears more fair to me  
 Than all creatures else that be.

Her true beauty leaves behind

Apprehensions in my mind,  
 Of more sweetness than all art,  
 Or inventions can impart ;  
 Thoughts too deep to be expressed,  
 And too strong to be suppressed ;  
 Which oft raiseth my conceits  
 To so unbeliev'd heights, 1900  
 That I fear some shallow brain  
 Thinks my Muses do but feign.  
 Sure, he wrongs them if he do :  
 For, could I have reached to  
 So like strains as these you see,  
 Had there been no such as she ?  
 Is it possible that I,  
 Who scarce heard of poesy,  
 Should a mere Idea raise  
 To as true a pitch of praise 1910  
 As the learned poets could,  
 Now, or in the times of old,  
 All those real beauties bring  
 Honour'd by their sonneting—  
 Having arts, and favours too,  
 More t' encourage what they do ?  
 No ; if I had never seen  
 Such a beauty, I had been  
 Piping in the country shades  
 To the homely dairymaids, 1920  
 For a country fiddler's fees,  
 Clouted cream, and bread and cheese.  
 I no skill in numbers had,  
 More than every shepherd's lad,

Till she taught me strains that were  
 Pleasing to her gentle ear.  
 Her fair splendour and her worth  
 From obscureness drew me forth ;  
 And, because I had no Muse,  
 She herself deign'd to infuse 1930  
 All the skill by which I climb  
 To these praises in my rhyme :  
 Which if she had pleased to add  
 To that art sweet Drayton had ;  
 Or that happy swain that shall  
 Sing Britannia's Pastoral ;  
 Or to theirs, whose verse set forth  
 Rosalind and Stella's worth ;  
 They had doubled all their skill  
 Gained on Apollo's hill, 1940  
 And as much more set her forth,  
 As I'm short of them in worth.  
 They had unto heights aspired,  
 Might have justly been admired ;  
 And in such brave strains had moved  
 As of all had been approved.  
 I must praise her as I may ;  
 Which I do mine own rude way :  
 Sometime setting forth her glories  
 By unheard-of allegories. 1950  
 Think not, though, my Muse now sings  
 Mere absurd or feigned things.  
 If to gold I like her hair,  
 Or to stars her eyes so fair ;  
 Though I praise her skin by snow,

Or by pearls her double row,  
 'Tis that you might gather thence  
 Her unmatched excellence.

Eyes as fair for eyes hath she  
 As stars fair for stars may be ; 1960  
 And each part as fair doth show,  
 In it kind, as white in snow.

'Tis no grace to her at all  
 If her hair I sunbeams call :  
 For, were there a power in art  
 So to portrait every part,  
 All men might those beauties see  
 As they do appear to me.  
 I would scorn to make compare  
 With the glorious't things that are. 1970

Nought I e'er saw fair enow  
 But the hair, the hair to show.  
 Yet some think him overbold  
 That compares it but to gold.  
 He from reason seems to err,  
 Who, commending of his dear,  
 Gives her lips the ruby's hue,  
 Or by pearls her teeth doth show.  
 But what pearls, what rubies can  
 Seem so lovely fair to man, 1980  
 As her lips whom he doth love,  
 When in sweet discourse they move,  
 Or her lovelier teeth, the while  
 She doth bless him with a smile ?

Stars indeed fair creatures be,  
 Yet amongst us where is he

Joys not more the while he lies  
 Sunning in his mistress' eyes,  
 Than in all the glimmering light  
 Of a starry winter's night?

1990

Him to flatter most suppose,  
 That prefers before the rose  
 Or the lilies, while they grow,  
 Or the flakes of new-fall'n snow,  
 Her complexion whom he loveth;  
 And yet this my Muse approveth.  
 For, in such a beauty, meets  
 Unexpressed moving sweets,  
 That the like unto them no man  
 Ever saw but in a woman.

2000

Look on moon, on stars, on sun,  
 All God's creatures overrun,  
 See if all of them presents  
 To your mind such sweet contents;  
 Or, if you from them can take  
 Ought that may a beauty make,  
 Shall one half so pleasing prove,  
 As is hers whom you do love?

For indeed, if there had been  
 Other mortal beauties seen,  
 Objects for the love of man,  
 Vain was their creation than.

2010

Yea, if this could well be granted,  
 Adam might his Eve have wanted.

But a woman is the creature  
 Whose proportion with our nature

l. 1998. Gutch printed 'Unexpressive.'

Best agrees, and whose perfections  
 Sympathize with our affections,  
 And not only finds our senses  
 Pleasure in their excellences, 2020  
 But our reason also knows  
 Sweetness in them, that outgoes  
 Human wit to comprehend,  
 Much more, truly, to commend.

Note the beauty of an eye ;  
 And if ought you praise it by  
 Leave such passion in your mind,  
 Let my reason's eye be blind.  
 Mark if ever red or white  
 Anywhere gave such delight 2030  
 As when they have taken place  
 In a worthy woman's face.  
 He that so much hath not noted,  
 Will not, or is grown besotted.

Such as lovers are conceive  
 What impressions beauty leave  
 And those hearts that fire have took  
 By a love-inflaming look,  
 Those believe what here I say,  
 And suppose not that I stray 2040  
 In a word, by setting forth  
 Any praise beyond true worth.

And yet, wherefore should I care  
 What another's censures are,  
 Since I know her to be such

L. 2025. 1622 and 1633 print 'any eye.'

As no praise can be too much ?  
 All that see her will agree  
 In the self-same mind with me,  
 If their wit be worth the having,  
 Or their judgment merit craving. 2050  
 And the man that kens her not,  
 Speaks, at best, he knows not what :  
 So his envy or good will,  
 Neither doth her good nor ill.

Then fools' cavils I disdain,  
 And call back my Muse again  
 To decipher out the rest,  
 For I have too long digressed.

This is she, in whom there meets  
 All variety of sweets. 2060  
 An epitome of all  
 That on earth we fair may call.  
 Nay, yet more I dare aver :  
 He that is possess'd of her,  
 Shall at once all pleasure find,  
 That is reap'd from womankind.

Oh, what man would further range,  
 That in one might find such change ?  
 What dull eye such worth can see,  
 And not sworn a lover be? 2070  
 Or from whence was he, could prove  
 Such a monster in his love,  
 As in thought to use amiss  
 Such unequall'd worth as this ?  
 Pity 'twere that such a creature,  
 Phoenix-like for matchless feature,



Should so suffer, or be blamed  
 With what now the times are shamed.

Beauty, unto me divine,  
 Makes my honest thoughts incline 2080

Unto better things than that  
 Which the vulgar aimeth at.

And, I vow, I grieve to see  
 Any fair and false to be ;

Or when I sweet pleasures find  
 Match'd with a defiled mind.

But above all others her

So much doth my soul prefer,

That to him, whose ill desire

Should so nurse a lawless fire 2090

As to tempt to that which might

Dim her sacred virtue's light,

I could wish that he might die

Ere he did it, though 'twere I.

For if she should hap to stray,

All this beauty would away,

And not her alone undo,

But kill him that prais'd her, too.

But I know her Maker will

Keep her undistained still, 2100

That ensuing ages may

Pattern out by her the way

To all goodness ; and if Fate

That appoints all things a date

Hear me would, I'd wish that she

Might for aye preserved be.

And that neither wasting cares,

Neither all-consuming years,  
 Might from what she is estrange her,  
 Or in mind or body change her. 2110

For oh, why should envious Time  
 Perpetrate so vile a crime  
 As to waste, or wrong, or stain,  
 What shall ne'er be match'd again?

Much I hope it shall not be :

For, if Love deceive not me,  
 To that height of fair she grows,  
 Age or sickness, beauty's foes,  
 Cannot so much wrong it there,  
 But enough there will appear, 2120  
 Ever worthy to be loved ;

And that heart shall more be moved,  
 Where there is a judging eye,  
 With those prints it doth espy  
 Of her beauty wrong'd by Time,  
 Than by others in their prime.

One advantage she hath more,  
 That adds grace to all before.  
 It is this—her beauty's fame  
 Hath not done her honour shame. 2130

For where beauty we do find,  
 Envy still is so unkind  
 That although their virtues are  
 Such as pass their beauties far,  
 Yet on slander's rocks they be  
 Shipwreck'd oftentimes, we see ;  
 And are subject to the wrongs  
 Of a thousand spiteful tongues,

When the greatest fault they had  
 Was that some would make them bad, 2140  
 And not finding them for action,  
 Sought for vengeance by detraction.

But her beauty sure no tongue  
 Is so villainous to wrong.  
 Never did the jealous't ear  
 Any muttering rumour hear  
 That might cause the least suspects  
 Of indifferent defects.

And, which somewhat stranger is,  
 They whose slanders few can miss, 2150  
 Though set on by evil will  
 And habituated ill,

Nothing can of her invent  
 Whence to frame disparagement ;  
 Which, if we respect the crimes  
 Of these loose injurious times,  
 Doth not only truly prove  
 Great discretion in her love,  
 And that she hath liv'd upright  
 In each jealous tongue's despite, 2160

But it must be understood  
 That her private thoughts are good.  
 Yea, 'tis an apparent sign  
 That her beauty is divine :  
 And that angels have a care  
 Men's polluting tongues should spare  
 To defile what God hath given  
 To be dear to earth and heaven.

Tell me, you that hear me now,

Is there any one of you 2170  
 Wanteth feeling of affection,  
 Or that loves not such perfection?  
 Can there be so dull an ear  
 As of so much worth to hear,  
 And not seriously incline  
 To this saint-like friend of mine?  
 If there be, the fault doth lie  
 In my artless poesy.  
 For if I could reach the strain  
 Which methinks I might obtain, 2180  
 Or but make my measures fly,  
 Equal with my fantasy,  
 I would not permit an ear  
 To attend unravish'd here,  
 If but so much sense it knew  
 As the blocks that Orpheus drew.  
 Think on this description well,  
 And your noblest ladies tell;  
 Which of you, that worth can see,  
 This my mistress would not be? 2190  
 You brave English, who have run  
 From the rising of the sun,  
 Till in travelling you found  
 Where he doth conclude his round;  
 You, that have the beauties seen,  
 Which in farthest lands have been;  
 And survey'd the fair resorts  
 Of the French and Spanish courts,  
 With the best that fame renowns  
 In the rich trans-Alpine towns, 2200

Do not, with our brainless fry  
 That admire each novelty,  
 Wrong your country's fame in ought  
 But here freely speak your thought ;  
 And I durst presume you'll swear  
 She's not matched anywhere.

Gallants, you that would so fain  
 Nymphs' and ladies' loves obtain,  
 You that strive to serve and please  
 Fairest queens and empresses, 2210  
 Tell me this and tell me right,  
 If you would not, so you might,  
 Leave them all despis'd, to prove  
 What contents are in her love ?

Could your fathers ever tell  
 Of a nymph did more excel ?  
 Or hath any story told  
 Of the like, in times of old ?  
 Dido was not such a one,  
 Nor the Trojan's paragon, 2220  
 Though they so much favour found,  
 As to have their honours crown'd  
 By the best of poets' pens,  
 Ever known before, or since.

For had Dido been so fair,  
 Old Anchises' noble heir  
 Jove's command had disobeyed,  
 And with her in Carthage stayed,  
 Where he would have quite forswore  
 Seeing the Lavinian shore. 2230  
 Or, had Leda's daughter been,

When she was the Spartan queen,  
 Equal with this lovely one,  
 Menelaus had never gone  
 From her sight so far away  
 As to leave her for a prey,  
 And his room to be possest  
 By her wanton Phrygian guest.

But lest yet among you some  
 Think she may behind these come, 2240  
 Stay a little more and hear me,  
 In another strain I'll rear me.  
 I'll unmask a beauty, now,  
 Which to kiss the gods may bow,  
 And so feelingly did move,  
 That your souls shall fall in love.

I have yet the best behind :  
 Her most fair, unequal'd mind.  
 This that I have here expressed  
 Is but that which veils the rest, 2250  
 An incomparable shrine,  
 Of a beauty more divine.

Whereof ere I farther speak,  
 Off again my song I'll break,  
 And if you among the roses,  
 Which yon quickset hedge encloses,  
 Will with plucking flowers beguile  
 Tedious-seeming time awhile,  
 Till I step to yonder green,  
 Whence the sheep so plain are seen, 2260  
 I will be returned ere  
 You an hour have stay'd there.

And excuse me now, I pray,  
 Though I rudely go away,  
 For affairs I have to do,  
 Which, unless I look into,  
 I may sing out summer here  
 Like the idle grasshopper,  
 And at winter hide my head,  
 Or else fast till I am dead.

2270

Yet if rustic past'ral measures  
 Can aught add unto your pleasures,  
 I will leave you some of those  
 Which it pleas'd me to compose  
 When despairing fits were over,  
 And I, made a happy lover,  
 Exercis'd my loving passion  
 In another kind of fashion  
 Than to utter I devised,  
 When I feared to be despised.

2280

Those shall lie in gage for me  
 Till I back returned be,  
 And in writing here you have them ;  
 Either sing, or read, or leave them.

## SONNET I.

ADMIRE not, shepherd's boy,  
 Why I my pipe forbear ;  
 My sorrows and my joy  
 Beyond expression are.

Though others may  
 In songs display  
 Their passions, when they woo,

2290

Yet mine do fly  
 A pitch too high  
 For words to reach unto.

If such weak thoughts as those  
 With others' fancies move,  
 Or if my breast did close  
 But common strains of love,  
     Or passion's store  
     Learned me no more                   2300  
 To feel than others do,  
     I'd paint my cares  
     As black as theirs,  
 And teach my lines to woo.

But oh ! thrice happy ye  
 Whose mean conceit is dull,  
 You from those thoughts are free  
 That stuff my breast so full :  
     My love's excess  
     Lets to express                   2310  
 What songs are used to,  
     And my delights  
     Take such high flights,  
 My joys will me undo.

I have a love that's fair,  
 Rich, wise, and nobly born ;  
 She's true perfection's heir,  
 Holds nought but vice in scorn.



A heart to find  
 More chaste, more kind, 2320  
 Our plains afford no moe ;  
 Of her degree  
 No blab I'll be,  
 For doubt some prince should woo.

And yet I do not fear,  
 Though she my meanness knows,  
 The willow branch to wear,  
 No, nor the yellow hose.  
 For if great Jove  
 Should sue for love, 2330  
 She would not me forego ;  
 Resort I may  
 By night or day,  
 Which braver dare not do.

You gallants, born to pelf,  
 To lands, to titles' store,  
 I'm born but to myself,  
 Nor do I care for more.  
 Add to your earth,  
 Wealth, honours, birth, 2340  
 And all you can thereto,  
 You cannot prove  
 That height of love  
 Which I in meanness do.

Great men have helps to gain  
 Those favours they implore ;

Which, though I win with pain,  
I find my joys the more.

Each clown may rise,  
And climb the skies, 2350  
When he hath found a stair :  
But joy to him  
That dares to climb,  
And hath no help but air.

Some say that love repents  
Where fortunes disagree ;  
I know the high'st contents  
From low beginnings be.

My love's unfeigned  
To her that deigned 2360  
From greatness stoop thereto ;  
She loves 'cause I,  
So mean, dared try  
Her better worth to woo.

And yet, although much joy  
My fortune seems to bless,  
'Tis mix'd with more annoy  
Than I shall e'er express :

For with much pain  
Did I obtain 2370  
The gem I'll ne'er forego,  
Which yet I dare  
Nor show, nor wear,  
And that breeds all my woe.

But fie, my foolish tongue,  
 How loosely now it goes !  
 First let my knell be rung,  
 Ere I do more disclose.

Mount thoughts on high,  
 Cease words, for why  
 2380  
 My meaning to divine,  
 To those I leave  
 That can conceive  
 So brave a love as mine.

And now no more I'll sing  
 Among my fellow swains ;  
 Nor groves nor hills shall ring  
 With echoes of my plains.

My measures be  
 Confused, you see,  
 2390  
 And will not suit thereto ;  
 'Cause I have more  
 Brave thoughts in store  
 Than words can reach unto.

## SONNET 2.

HENCE, away, you Sirens, leave me,  
 And unclasp your wanton arms ;  
 Sugar'd words shall ne'er deceive me,  
 Though thou prove a thousand charms ;

Fie, fie, forbear ;  
 No common snare  
 2400  
 Could ever my affection chain :

Your painted baits  
 And poor deceits  
 Are all bestow'd on me in vain.

I'm no slave to such as you be ;  
 Neither shall a snowy breast,  
 Wanton eye, or lip of ruby,  
 Ever rob me of my rest.

Go, go, display

Your beauty's ray

2410

To some o'er-soon enamour'd swain.

Those common wiles

Of sighs and smiles

Are all bestow'd on me in vain.

I have elsewhere vow'd a duty ;  
 Turn away thy tempting eyes.  
 Show not me a naked beauty,  
 Those impostures I despise.

My spirit loathes

Where gaudy clothes

2420

And feigned oaths may love obtain.

I love her so,

Whose look swears no,

That all your labours will be vain.

Can he prize the tainted posies  
 Which on every breast are worn,  
 That may pluck the spotless roses  
 From their never-touched thorn?

I can go rest  
 On her sweet breast, 2430  
 That is the pride of Cynthia's train :  
 Then hold your tongues,  
 Your mermaid songs  
 Are all bestow'd on me in vain.

He's a fool that basely dallies  
 Where each peasant mates with him.  
 Shall I haunt the thronged valleys  
 Whilst there's noble hills to climb ?  
 No, no ; though clowns  
 Are scared with frowns, 2440  
 I know the best can but disdain :  
 And those I'll prove ;  
 So shall your love  
 Be all bestow'd on me in vain.

Yet I would not deign embraces  
 With the greatest, fairest she,  
 If another shared those graces  
 Which had been bestow'd on me.  
 I gave that one  
 My love where none 2450  
 Shall come to rob me of my gain.  
 Your fickle hearts  
 Makes tears and arts  
 And all bestow'd on me in vain.

I do scorn to vow a duty  
 Where each lustful lad may woo.

Give me her whose sun-like beauty  
 Buzzards dare not soar unto.

She, she it is

Affords that bliss

2460

For which I would refuse no pain.

But such as you,

Fond fools, adieu ;

You seek to captive me in vain.

Proud she seem'd in the beginning,  
 And disdain'd my looking on ;  
 But that coy one in the winning  
 Proves a true one being won.

Whate'er betide

She'll ne'er divide

2470

The favour she to me shall deign.

But your fond love

Will fickle prove,

And all that trust in you are vain.

Therefore know, when I enjoy one,  
 And for love employ my breath,  
 She I court shall be a coy one,  
 Though I win her with my death.

A favour there

Few aim at dare.

2480

And if, perhaps, some lover plain,

She is not won,

Nor I undone,

By placing of my love in vain.

Leave me then, you Sirens, leave me,  
 Seek no more to work my harms ;  
 Crafty wiles cannot deceive me,  
 Who am proof against your charms.

You labour may

To lead astray

2490

The heart that constant shall remain,

And I the while

Will sit and smile

To see you spend your time in vain.

## SONNET 3.

WHEN Philomela with her strains

The spring had welcomed in,

And Flora to bestow the plains

With daisies did begin,

My love and I, on whom suspicious eyes

Had set a thousand spies,

2500

To cozen Argus strove ;

And seen of none

We got alone

Into a shady grove.

On every bush the eglantine,

With leaves perfumed hung,

The primrose made the hedgerows fine,

The woods of music rung.

The earth, the air, and all things did conspire

To raise contentment higher ;

2510

That, had I come to woo,  
 Nor means of grace,  
 Nor time, nor place,  
 Were wanting thereunto.

With hand in hand alone we walked,  
 And oft each other eyed ;  
 Of love and passions past we talked,  
 Which our poor hearts had tried.  
 Our souls infus'd into each other were :

And what may be her care, 2520  
 Did my more sorrow breed ;  
 One mind we bore,  
 One faith we swore,  
 And both in one agreed.

Her dainty palm I gently prest,  
 And with her lips I play'd ;  
 My cheek upon her panting breast,  
 And on her neck I laid.  
 And yet we had no sense of wanton lust :

Nor did we then mistrust 2530  
 The poison in the sweet ;  
 Our bodies wrought  
 So close, we thought,  
 Because our souls should meet.

With pleasant toil we breathless grew,  
 And kiss'd in warmer blood ;  
 Upon her lips the honey-dew  
 Like drops on roses stood ;



And on those flowers play'd I the busy bee,  
 Whose sweets were such to me, 2540  
 Them could I not forego.  
 No, not to feast  
 On Venus' breast,  
 Whence streams of sweetness flow.

But kissing and embracing we  
 So long together lay,  
 Her touches all inflamed me,  
 And I began to stray.  
 My hands presum'd so far, they were too bold ;  
 My tongue unwisely told 2550  
 How much my heart was changed.  
 And virtue quite  
 Was put to flight,  
 Or for the time estranged.

Oh ! what are we, if in our strength  
 We over-boldly trust ?  
 The strongest forts will yield at length,  
 And so our virtues must.  
 In me no force of reason had prevailed  
 If she had also failed ; 2560  
 But ere I further strayed,  
 She sighing kissed  
 My naked wrist,  
 And thus in tears she said :

“Sweetheart,” quoth she, “if in thy breast  
 Those virtues real be,  
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Which hitherto thou hast profest,  
 And I believed in thee,  
 Thyself and me, oh, seek not to abuse.

Whilst thee I thus refuse                    2570  
 In hotter flames I fry ;  
 Yet let us not  
 Our true love spot,  
 Oh, rather let me die.

“ For if thy heart should fall from good,  
 What would become of mine ?  
 As strong a passion stirs my blood,  
 As can distemper thine.  
 Yet in my breast this rage I smother would,  
 Though it consume me should,                    2580  
 And my desires contain :  
 For where we see  
 Such breaches be,  
 They seldom stop again.

“ Are we the two that have so long  
 Each other’s loves embraced ?  
 And never did affection wrong,  
 Nor think a thought unchaste ?  
 And shall, oh, shall we now our matchless joy  
 For one poor touch destroy,                    2590  
 And all content forego ?  
 Oh no, my dear ;  
 Sweetheart, forbear ;  
 I will not lose thee so.

“For, should we do a deed so base,  
As it can never be,  
I could no more have seen thy face,  
Nor would'st thou look on me.  
I should of all our passions grow ashamed,  
And blush when thou art named ; 2600  
Yea, though thou constant wert,  
I being nought,  
A jealous thought  
Would still torment my heart.

“What goodly thing do we obtain  
If I consent to thee?  
Rare joys we lose, and what we gain  
But common pleasures be :  
Yea, those, some say, who are to lust inclin'd,  
Drive love out of the mind ; 2610  
And so much reason miss,  
That they admire  
What kind of fire  
A chaste affection is.

“No vulgar bliss I aimed at  
When first I heard thee woo ;  
I'll never prize a man for that  
Which every groom can do.  
If that be love, the basest men that be  
Do love as well as we, 2620

Who, if we bear us well,  
 Do pass them then,  
 As angels men  
 In glory do excel."

Whilst thus she spake a cruel band  
 Of passions seized my soul,  
 And what one seemed to command,  
 Another did control.

'Twixt good and ill I did divided lie.

But as I raised mine eye,  
 In her methought I saw  
 Those virtues shine  
 Whose rays divine  
 First gave desire a law.

2630

With that I felt the blush of shame  
 Into my cheeks return ;  
 And love did with a chaster flame  
 Within my bosom burn.

My soul her light of reason had renew'd ;

And by those beams I view'd  
 How slyly lust ensnares :  
 And all the fires  
 Of ill desires  
 I quenched with my tears.

2640

Go, wantons, now, and flout at this  
 My coldness, if you list ;  
 Vain fools, you never knew the bliss  
 That doth in love consist.

You sigh, and weep, and labour to enjoy  
 A shade, a dream, a toy ; 2650  
 Poor folly you pursue ;  
 And are unblessed,  
 Since every beast  
 In pleasure equals you.

You never took so rich content,  
 In all your wanton play,  
 As this to me hath pleasure lent,  
 That chaste she went away.  
 For as some sins which we committed have,  
 Sharp stings behind them leave, 2660  
 Whereby we vexed are,  
 So ill suppressed  
 Begetteth rest  
 And peace without compare.

But lest this conquest slight you make,  
 Which on myself I won,  
 Twelve labours I will undertake  
 With Jove's victorious son,  
 Ere I will such another brunt endure. 2670  
 For, had Diana pure  
 Thus tempted been to sin,  
 That queen of night,  
 With her chaste light,  
 Had scarce a maiden bin.

OH! how honoured are my songs,  
 Graced by your melodious tongues !  
 And how pleasing do they seem,  
 Now your voices carol them !  
 Were not yet that task to do,  
 Which my word enjoins me to, 2680  
 I should beg of you to hear  
 What your own inventions were.

But before I ought will crave,  
 What I promised you shall have.  
 And as I on mortal creatures  
 Call'd, to view her body's features,  
 Showing how to make the senses  
 Apprehend her excellences,  
 Now I speak of no worse subject  
 Than a soul's and reason's object : 2690

And relate a beauty's glories,  
 Fitting heavenly auditories.  
 Therefore, whilst I sit and sing,  
 Hem me, angels, in a ring ;  
 Come, ye spirits, which have eyes  
 That can gaze on deities,  
 And unclogg'd with brutish senses,  
 Comprehend such excellences.  
 Or, if any mortal ear  
 Would be granted leave to hear, 2700  
 And find profit with delight  
 In what now I shall indite,  
 Let him first be sure to season  
 A prepared heart with reason :

And with judgment drawing nigh,  
Lay all fond affections by.  
So, through all her veilings, he  
Shall the soul of beauty see.

But avoid, you earth-bred wights,  
Cloy'd with sensual appetites : 2710  
On base objects glut your eyes,  
Till your starveling pleasure dies :  
Feed your ears with such delights,  
As may match your gross conceits :  
For, within your muddy brain,  
These you never can contain.

Think not, you who by the sense  
Only judge of excellence,  
Or do all contentment place  
In the beauty of a face, 2720  
That these higher thoughts of our  
Soar so base a pitch as your.  
I can give, as well as you,  
Outward beauties all their due :  
I can most contentments see,  
That in love or women be.

Though I dote not on the features  
Of our daintiest female creatures,  
Nor was e'er so void of shames  
As to play their lawless games, 2730  
I more prize a snowy hand  
Than the gold on Tagus' strand,  
And a dainty lip before  
All the greatest monarch's store.  
Yea, from these I reap as true

And as large contents as you.

Yet to them I am not tied :  
 I have rarer sweets espied,  
 Wider prospects of true pleasure,  
 Than your curbed thoughts can measure. 2740  
 In her soul my soul descries  
 Objects that may feed her eyes.  
 And the beauty of her mind  
 Shows my reason where to find  
 All my former pleasure doubled,  
 Neither with such passion troubled,  
 As wherewith it oft was crost,  
 Nor so easy to be lost.

I that ravish'd lay, well-nigh,  
 By the lustre of her eye, 2750  
 And had almost sworn affection  
 To the fore-express'd perfection,  
 As if nothing had been higher  
 Whereunto I might aspire,  
 Now have found, by seeking nearer,  
 Inward worth that shining clearer  
 By a sweet and secret moving,  
 Draws me to a dearer loving.  
 And whilst I that love conceive,  
 Such impressions it doth leave 2760  
 In the intellectual part,  
 As defaceth from my heart  
 Every thought of those delights  
 Which allure base appetites ;  
 And my mind so much employs  
 In contemplating those joys



Which a purer sight doth find  
 In the beauty of her mind,  
 That I so thereon am set,  
 As methinks I could forget 2770  
 All her sweetest outward graces,  
 Though I lay in her embraces.

But some, thinking with a smile  
 What they would have done the while,  
 Now suppose my words are such  
 As exceed my power too much.  
 For all those our wantons hold  
 Void of vigour, dull, and cold,  
 Or at best but fools, whose flame  
 Makes not way unto their shame, 2780  
 Though at length with grief they see  
 They the fools do prove to be.

These the body so much minded,  
 That their reason, over-blinded  
 By the pleasures of the sense,  
 Hides from them that excellence,  
 And that sweetness, whose true worth  
 I am here to blazon forth.

'Tis not, 'tis not those rare graces  
 That do lurk in women's faces, 2790  
 'Tis not a display'd perfection,  
 Youthful eyes, nor clear complexion,  
 Nor a skin, smooth satin like,  
 Nor a dainty rosy cheek,  
 That to wantonness can move  
 Such as virtuously do love.  
 Beauty rather gently draws

Wild desires to reason's laws ;  
 And oft frights men from that sin  
 They had else transgressed in, 2800  
 Through a sweet amazement strook  
 From an over-ruling look.  
 Beauty never tempteth men  
 To lasciviousness, but when  
 Careless idleness hath brought  
 Wicked longings into thought.  
 Nor doth youth, or heat of blood,  
 Make men prove what is not good,  
 Nor the strength of which they vaunt ;  
 'Tis the strength and power they want ; 2810  
 And the baseness of the mind  
 Makes their brute desires inclin'd  
 To pursue those vain delights  
 Which affect their appetites ;  
 And so blinded do they grow,  
 Who are overtaken so,  
 As their dullness cannot see,  
 Nor believe that better be.  
     Some have blood as hot as their,  
 Whose affections loosest are ; 2820  
 Bodies that require no art  
 To supply weak Nature's part ;  
 Youth they have ; and sure might, too,  
 Boast of what some shameless do ;  
 Yet their minds, that aim more high  
 Than those baser pleasures lie,  
 Taught by virtue can suppress  
 All attempts of wantonness,

And such powerful motives frame  
 To extinguish passion's flame, 2830  
 That, by reason's good direction,  
 Qualifying loose affection,  
 They'll in midst of beauty's fires  
 Walk unscorch'd of ill desires ;  
 Yet no such as stupid shame  
 Keeps from actions worthy blame,  
 But in all so truly man,  
 That their apprehensions can  
 Prize the body's utmost worth,  
 And find many pleasures forth 2840  
 In those beauties—more than you,  
 That abuse them, ever knew.

But perhaps her outward grace,  
 Here described, hath ta'en such place  
 In some o'er-enamour'd breast,  
 And so much his heart possessed,  
 As he thinks it passeth telling,  
 How she may be more excelling,  
 Or what worth I can prefer 2850  
 To be more admired in her.  
 Therefore now I will be brief,  
 To prevent that misbelief.  
 And if there be present here  
 Any one whose nicer ear  
 Tasks my measures as offending,  
 In too seriously commending  
 What affects the sense, or may  
 Injure virtue any way,  
 Let them know 'tis understood

That if they were truly good, 2860  
 It could never breed offence  
 That I showed the excellence,  
 With the power of God and nature,  
 In the beauty of his creature :  
 They from thence would rather raise  
 Cause to meditate his praise,  
 And thus think : How fair must He  
 That hath made this fair one be !  
     That was my proposed end,  
 And to make them more attend 2870  
 Unto this, so much excelling,  
 As it passeth means of telling.  
     But, at worst, if any strain  
 Makes your memories retain  
 Sparks of such a baneful fire  
 As may kindle ill desire,  
 This that follows after shall  
 Not alone extinguish all,  
 But e'en make you blush with shame,  
 That your thoughts were so to blame. 2880  
 Yet I know, when I have done,  
 In respect of that bright sun  
 Whose inestimable light  
 I would blazon to your sight,  
 These ensuing flashes are  
 As to Cynthia's beams a star ;  
 Or a petty comet's ray,  
 To the glorious eye of day.  
 For what power of words or art  
 Can her worth at full impart ? 2890

Or what is there may be found,  
 Plac'd within the senses' bound,  
 That can paint those sweets to me,  
 Which the eyes of love do see?  
 Or the beauties of that mind  
 Which her body hath enshrined?

Can I think the Guide of Heaven  
 Hath so bountifully given

Outward features, cause He meant  
 To have made less excellent

2900

Her divine part? Or suppose  
 Beauty goodness doth oppose,  
 Like those fools who do despair  
 To find any good and fair?

Rather there I seek a mind  
 Most excelling, where I find  
 God hath to the body lent  
 Most beseeming ornament.

But, though he that did inspire  
 First the true Promethean fire,

2910

In each several soul did place  
 Equal excellence and grace,  
 As some think, yet have not they  
 Equal beauties every way.

For they more or less appear  
 As the outward organs are:  
 Following much the temp'ature  
 Of the body, gross or pure.

And I do believe it true,  
 That, as we the body view  
 Nearer to perfection grow,

2920

So the soul herself doth show  
 Others more and more excelling  
 In her power, as in her dwelling.  
 For that pureness giveth way,  
 Better to disclose each ray  
 To the dull conceit of man,  
 Than a grosser substance can.  
 Thus, through spotless crystal, we  
 May the day's full glory see ; 2930  
 When, if clearest sunbeams pass  
 Through a foul polluted glass,  
 So discolour'd they'll appear,  
 As those stains they shone through were.

Let no critic cavil then,  
 If I dare affirm again  
 That her mind's perfections are  
 Fairer than her body's far ;  
 And I need not prove it by  
 Axioms of philosophy, 2940  
 Since no proof can better be  
 Than their rare effect in me.  
 For, while other men complaining,  
 Tell their mistresses' disdain,  
 Free from care I write a story  
 Only of her worth and glory.

While most lovers pining sit,  
 Robb'd of liberty and wit,  
 Vassaling themselves with shame  
 To some proud imperious dame, 2950  
 Or in songs their fate bewailing,  
 Show the world their faithless failing,

I, enwreath'd with boughs of myrtle,  
Fare like the beloved turtle.

Yea, while most are most untoward,  
Peevish, vain, inconstant, froward,  
While their best contentments bring  
Nought but after-sorrowing,  
She those childish humours slighting  
Hath conditions so delighting, 2960  
And doth so my bliss endeavour,  
As my joy increaseth ever.

By her actions I can see  
That her passions so agree  
Unto reason, as they err  
Seldom to distemper her.

Love she can, and doth, but so  
As she will not overthrow  
Love's content by any folly,  
Or by deeds that are unholy. 2970  
Dotingly she ne'er affects ;  
Neither willingly neglects  
Honest love ; but means doth find  
With discretion to be kind.  
'Tis nor thund'ring phrase, nor oaths,  
Honours, wealth, nor painted clothes,  
That can her good liking gain,  
If no other worth remain.

Never took her heart delight  
In your court-hermaphrodite, 2980  
Or such frothy gallants as  
For the time's heroës pass,  
Such who, still in love, do all

Fair, and sweet, and lady call,  
 And where'er they hap to stray,  
 Either prate the rest away,  
 Or of all discourse to seek  
 Shuffle in at cent or gleek.

Goodness more delights her than  
 All their mask of folly can. 2990  
 Fond she hateth to appear,  
 Though she hold her friend as dear  
 As her part of life unspent,  
 Or the best of her content.

If the heat of youthful fires  
 Warm her blood with those desires  
 Which are by the course of nature  
 Stirred in every perfect creature,  
 As those passions kindle, so  
 Doth Heaven's grace and reason grow 3000  
 Abler to suppress in her  
 Those rebellions, and they stir  
 Never more affection then  
 One good thought allays again.

I could say so chaste is she  
 As the new-blown roses be ;  
 Or the drifts of snow that none  
 Ever touch'd or look'd upon.  
 But that were not worth a fly,  
 Seeing so much chastity 3010  
 Old Pygmalion's picture had :  
 Yea, those eunuchs, born or made  
 Ne'er to know desire, might say  
 She deserv'd no more than they ;



Whereas, whilst their worth proceeds  
 From such wants as they must needs  
 Be unmov'd, 'cause nature framed  
 No affections to be tamed,  
 Through her dainty limbs are spread  
 Vigour, heat, and freely shed 3020  
 Life-blood into every vein,  
 Till they fill and swell again :  
 And no doubt they strive to force  
 Way in some forbidden course,  
 Which by grace she still resists,  
 And so curbs within their lists  
 Those desires, that she is chaster  
 Than if she had none to master.

Malice never lets she in,  
 Neither hates she ought but sin. 3030  
 Envy if she could admit,  
 There's no means to nourish it,  
 For her gentle heart is pleased  
 When she knows another's eased :  
 And there's none who ever got  
 That perfection she hath not.  
 So that no cause is there why  
 She should any one envy.

Mildly angry she'll appear,  
 That the baser rout may fear 3040  
 Through presumption to misdo :  
 Yet she often feigns that too.  
 But let wrong be whatsoever,  
 She gives way to choler never.

If she e'er of vengeance thought

'Twas nor life nor blood was sought,  
 But, at most, some prayer to move  
 Justice for abused love,  
 Or that fate would pay again  
 Love's neglectors with disdain. 3050

If she ever crav'd of fate  
 To obtain a higher state,  
 Or ambitiously were given,  
 Sure, 'twas but to climb to heaven.  
 Pride is from her heart as far  
 As the poles in distance are.  
 For her worth, nor all this praise,  
 Can her humble spirit raise  
 Less to prize me than before,  
 Or herself to value more. 3060

Were she vain, she might allege  
 'Twere her sex's privilege.  
 But she's such as doubtless no man  
 Knows less folly in a woman.

To prevent a being idle,  
 Sometime, with her curious needle,  
 Though it be her meanest glory,  
 She so limns an antique story,  
 As Minerva, would she take it,  
 Might her richest sample make it. 3070

Otherwhile, again, she rather  
 Labours with delight to gather  
 Knowledge from such learned writs  
 As are left by famous wits,  
 Where she chiefly seeks to know  
 God, herself, and what we owe

To our neighbour, since with these  
Come all needful knowledges.

She, with Adam, never will  
Long to learn both good and ill ;      3080  
But her state well understood,  
Rests herself content with good.

Avarice abhorreth she  
As the loathsom'st things that be ;  
Since she knows it is an ill  
That doth ripest virtue kill,  
And, where'er it comes to rest,  
Though in some strict matron's breast,  
Be she ne'er so seeming just,  
I'll no shows of goodness trust.      3090  
For, if you but gold can bring,  
Such are hired to any thing.

If you think she jealous be,  
You are wide, for credit me,  
Her strong'st jealousies nought are  
Other than an honest care  
Of her friends ; and most can tell  
Whoso wants that, loves not well.

Though some little fear she shows,  
'Tis no more than love allows :      3100  
So the passion do not move her  
Till she grieve or wrong her lover.  
She may think he may do ill,  
Though she'll not believe he will :  
Nor can such a harmless thought  
Blemish true affection ought ;  
Rather, whenas else it would

Through security grow cold,  
 This her passion, keeping measure,  
 Strengthens love and sweetens pleasure. 3110

Cruelty her soul detests,  
 For within her bosom rests  
 Noblest pity, usher'd by  
 An unequall'd courtesy,  
 And is griev'd at good men's moan  
 As the grief were all her own.

Just she is ; so just, that I  
 Know she would not wrong a fly,  
 Or oppress the meanest thing  
 To be mistress to a king. 3120

If our painters would include  
 Temperance and Fortitude  
 In one picture, she would fit  
 For the nonce to pattern it.  
 Patient as the lamb is she,  
 Harmless as the turtles be ;  
 Yea, so largely stor'd with all  
 Which we mortals goodness call,  
 That if ever virtue were,  
 Or may be, incarnate here, 3130  
 This is she, whose praises I  
 Offer to eternity.

She's no image trimmed about,  
 Fair within and foul without,  
 But a gem that doth appear  
 Like the diamond, everywhere  
 Sparkling rays of beauty forth,  
 All of such unblemish'd worth,

That, were 't possible your eye  
 Might her inmost thoughts espy, 3140  
 And behold the dimmest part  
 Of the lustre in her heart,  
 It would find that centre pass  
 What the superficies was.  
 And that every angle there  
 Like a diamond's inside were.

For, although that excellence  
 Pass the piercing'st eye of sense,  
 By their operations we  
 Guess at things that hidden be. 3150  
 So, beyond our common reach,  
 Wise men can by reason teach  
 What the influences been  
 Of a planet when unseen,  
 Or the beauty of a star  
 That doth shine above us far.  
 So, by that wide-beaming light  
 Wherewith Titan courts our sight,  
 By his clothing of the earth,  
 By the wondrous, various birth 3160  
 Of new creatures yearly bred  
 Through his heat, and nourished,  
 And by many virtues moe,  
 Which our senses reach unto,  
 We conclude they are not all  
 Which make fair that goodly ball.

Though she prize her honour more  
 Than the far-fetched precious store  
 Of the rich Molucchi, or

All the wealth was traffick'd for, 3170  
 Since our vessels passage knew  
 Unto Mexico, Peru,  
 Or those spacious kingdoms which  
 Make the proud Iberians rich,  
 'Tis not that uncertain blast  
 Keeps my mistress good or chaste.  
 She that but for honour's sake  
 Doth of ill a conscience make,  
 More in fear what rumour says,  
 Than in love to virtuous ways ; 3180  
 Though she seem'd more civil than  
 You have seen a courtesan  
 For an honour, and cries, oh, fie !  
 At each show of vanity ;  
 Though she censure all that be  
 Not so foolish coy as she ;  
 Though she with the Roman dame  
 Kill herself to purchase fame ;  
 She would prostitute become  
 To the meanest, basest groom, 3190  
 If so closely they may do it  
 As the world should never know it.  
 So at best those women prove  
 That for honour virtue love.  
 Give me her that goodness chooseth  
 For its own sake, and refuseth  
 To have greatest honours gain'd  
 With her secret conscience stain'd.  
 Give me her that would be poor,  
 Die disgrac'd, nay, thought a whore, 3200

And each time's reproach become,  
 Till the general day of doom,  
 Rather than consent to act  
 Pleasing sin, though by the fact,  
 With esteem of virtuous, she  
 Might the German Empress be.  
 Such my mistress is, and nought  
 Shall have power to change her thought ;  
 Pleasures cannot tempt her eye  
 On their baits to glance awry, 3210  
 For their good she still esteems  
 As it is, not as it seems,  
 And she takes no comfort in  
 Sweetest pleasure sour'd with sin.  
     By herself she hath such care,  
 That her actions decent are.  
 For, were she in secret hid,  
 None might see her what she did,  
 She would do as if for spies  
 Every wall were stuck with eyes, 3220  
 And be chary of her honour  
 'Cause the heavens do look upon her.  
 And oh, what had power to move  
 Flames of lust, or wanton love,  
 So far to disparage us,  
 If we all were minded thus?  
 These are beauties that shall last  
 When the crimson blood shall waste,  
 And the shining hair wax grey,  
 Or with age be worn away. 3230  
 These yield pleasures such as might

Be remembered with delight,  
 When we gasp our latest breath  
 On the loathed bed of death.

Though discreetly speak she can,  
 She'll be silent rather than  
 Talk while others may be heard,  
 As if she did hate or fear'd  
 Their condition who will force  
 All to wait on their discourse. 3240  
 Reason hath on her bestow'd  
 More of knowledge than she ow'd  
 To that sex, and grace with it  
 Doth aright her practice fit.

Yet hath fate so framed her,  
 As she may at sometime err :  
 But if e'er her judgment stray,  
 'Tis that other women may  
 Those much pleasing beauties see  
 Which in yielding natures be. 3250  
 For since no perfection can  
 Here on earth be found in man,  
 There's more good in free submissions  
 Than there's ill in our transgressions.  
 Should you hear her once contend,  
 In discoursing, to defend,  
 As she can, a doubtful cause,  
 She such strong positions draws  
 From known truths, and doth apply  
 Reasons with such majesty, 3260  
 As if she did undertake  
 From some oracle to speak :



And you could not think what might  
Breed more love or more delight.

Yet, if you should mark again  
Her discreet behaviour when  
She finds reason to repent  
Some wrong-pleaded argument,  
She so temperately lets all  
Her mis-held opinions fall, 3270  
And can with such mildness bow,  
As 'twill more enamour you  
Than her knowledge : for there are  
Pleasing sweets without compare  
In such yieldings, which do prove  
Wit, humility, and love.

Yea, by those mistakings you  
Her condition so shall know,  
And the nature of her mind  
So undoubtedly shall find, 3280  
As will make her more endear'd  
Than if she had never err'd.

Farther, that she nought may miss  
Which worth praise in woman is,  
This unto the rest I add :  
If I wound or sickness had,  
None should for my curing run,  
No, not to Apollo's son ;  
She so well the virtue knows,  
Of each needful herb that grows, 3290  
And so fitly can apply  
Salves to every malady,  
That if she no succour gave me,

'Twere no means of art could save me.

Should my soul oppressed lie,  
Sunk with grief and sorrow nigh,  
She hath balm for minds distrest,  
And could ease my pained breast.  
She so well knows how to season  
Passionate discourse with reason,  
And knows how to sweeten it,  
Both with so much love and wit,  
That it shall prepare the sense  
To give way with less offence.  
For griev'd minds can ill abide  
Counsel churlishly applied,  
Which, instead of comfortings,  
Desperation often brings.

3300

But hark, nymphs, methinks I hear  
Music sounding in mine ear.  
'Tis a lute, and he's the best  
For a voice in all the west  
That doth touch it. And the swain  
I would have you hear so fain,  
That my song forbear will I,  
To attend his melody.

3310

Hither comes he day by day,  
In these groves to sing and play.  
And in yon close arbour he  
Sitteth now, expecting me.  
He so bashful is, that mute  
Will his tongue be, and his lute,  
Should he happen to espy  
This unlook'd-for company.

3320

If you, therefore, list to hear him,  
 Let's with silence walk more near him.  
 'Twill be worth your pains, believe me,  
 If a voice content may give ye,  
 And await you shall not long,  
 For he now begins a song.

3330

## SONNET I.

WHAT is the cause, when elsewhere I resort,  
 I have my gestures and discourse more free?  
 And, if I please, can any beauty court,  
 Yet stand so dull and so demure by thee?  
 Why are my speeches broken whilst I talk?  
 Why do I fear almost thy hand to touch?  
 Why dare I not embrace thee as we walk,  
 Since with the greatest nymphs I've dared as much?  
 Ah! know that none of those I e'er affected,  
 And therefore used a careless courtship there, 3340  
 Because I neither their disdain respected,  
 Nor reckoned them or their embraces dear.  
 But, loving thee, my love hath found content  
 And rich delights in things indifferent.

## SONNET 2.

WHY covet I thy blessed eyes to see,  
 Whose sweet aspect may cheer the saddest mind?  
 Why, when our bodies must divided be,  
 Can I no hour of rest or pleasure find?  
 Why do I sleeping start, and waking moan,  
 To find that of my dreamed hopes I miss? 3350

Why do I often contemplate alone  
 Of such a thing as thy perfection is?  
 And wherefore, when we meet, doth passion stop  
 My speechless tongue, and leave me in a panting?  
 Why doth my heart, o'ercharged with fear and hope,  
 In spite of reason, almost droop to fainting?  
     Because in me thy excellences moving  
     Have drawn me to an excellence in loving.

## SONNET 3.

FAIR, since thy virtues my affections move,  
 And I have vow'd my purpose is to join                   3360  
 In an eternal band of chastest love  
 Our souls, to make a marriage most divine.  
 Why, thou may'st think, then seemeth he to prize  
 An outward beauty's fading hue so much?  
 Why doth he read such lectures in mine eyes?  
 And often strive my tender palm to touch?  
 Oh, pardon my presuming; for I swear  
 My love is soiled with no lustful spot:  
 Thy soul's perfections through those veils appear,  
 And I half faint that I embrace them not.                   3370  
     No foul desires doth make thy touches sweet:  
     But my soul striveth with thy soul to meet.

## SONNET 4.

SHALL I wasting in despair  
 Die because a woman's fair?  
 Or make pale my cheeks with care  
 'Cause another's rosy are?

Be she fairer than the day,  
 Or the flowery meads in May,  
     If she be not so to me  
     What care I how fair she be? 3380

Should my heart be griev'd or pin'd  
 'Cause I see a woman kind?  
 Or a well-disposed nature  
 Joined with a lovely feature?  
 Be she meeker, kinder than  
 Turtle-dove or pelican,  
     If she be not so [to] me  
     What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's virtues move  
 Me to perish for her love? 3390  
 Or her well-deserving known,  
 Make me quite forget mine own?  
 Be she with that goodness blest  
 Which may gain her name of best,  
     If she be not such to me  
     What care I how good she be?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,  
 Shall I play the fool and die?  
 Those that bear a noble mind,  
 Where they want of riches find 3400  
 Think what with them they would do  
 That without them dare to woo.  
     And unless that mind I see  
     What care I though great she be?

l. 3387. Editions of 1622 and 1633 omit 'to.'

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,  
 I will ne'er the more despair ;  
 If she love me, this believe,  
 I will die ere she shall grieve.  
 If she slight me when I woo  
 I can scorn and let her go, 3410  
     For if she be not for me  
     What care I for whom she be?

## SONNET 5.

I WANDERED out a while agone,  
 And went I know not whither :  
 But there do beauties many a one  
 Resort and meet together.  
 And Cupid's power will there be shown  
 If ever you come thither.

For like two suns, two beauties bright  
 I shining saw together, 3420  
 And tempted by their double light  
 My eyes I fix'd on either ;  
 Till both at once so thrall'd my sight,  
 I lov'd, and knew not whether.

Such equal sweet Venus gave,  
 That I preferr'd not either,  
 And when for love I thought to crave  
 I knew not well of whether.  
 For one while this I wish'd to have,  
 And then I that had liefer. 3430

l. 3425. So 1622 and 1633. See Notes.

A lover of the curious't eye  
 Might have been pleas'd in either,  
 And so, I must confess, might I,  
 Had they not been together.  
 Now both must love or both deny,  
 In one enjoy I neither.

But yet at last I 'scap'd the smart  
 I fear'd at coming hither ;  
 For seeing my divided heart,  
 I choosing, knew not whether,  
 Love angry grew, and did depart,  
 And now I care for neither.

3440

SEE, these trees so ill did hide us,  
 That the shepherd hath espied us,  
 And, as jealous of his cunning,  
 All in haste away is running.  
 To entreat him back again  
 Would be labour spent in vain.  
 You may therefore now betake ye  
 To the music I can make ye,  
 Who do purpose my invention,  
 Shall pursue my first intention.

3450

For in her whose worth I tell  
 Many excellences dwell  
 Yet unmention'd, whose perfections  
 Worthy are of best affections.

That which is so rare to find,  
 Both in man and womankind,

That, whose absence love defaceth,  
 And both sexes more disgraceth 3460  
 Than the spite of furrow'd age,  
 Sickneses, or sorrow's rage,  
 That's the jewel so divine  
 Which doth on her forehead shine,  
 And therewith endow'd is she  
 In an excellent degree :  
 Constancy, I mean, the purest  
 Of all beauties, and the surest ;  
 For whoe'er doth that profess,  
 Hath an endless loveliness. 3470

All afflictions, labours, crosses,  
 All our dangers, wounds, and losses,  
 Games of pleasure we can make  
 For that matchless woman's sake,  
 In whose breast that virtue bideth ;  
 And we joy whate'er betideth.

Most dejected hearts it gladdeth,  
 Twenty thousand glories addeth  
 Unto beauty's brightest ray,  
 And preserves it from decay ; 3480  
 'Tis the salt that's made to season  
 Beauty for the use of reason ;  
 'Tis the varnish, and the oiling,  
 Keeps her colours fresh from spoiling ;  
 'Tis an excellence whereby  
 Age, though join'd with poverty,  
 Hath more dear affection won  
 Than fresh youth and wealth have done ;  
 'Tis a loveliness endearing



Beauties scarce worth note appearing ; 3490  
 Whilst a fairer fickle dame  
 Nothing gains but scorn and shame.

Further, 'tis a beauty such  
 As I cannot praise too much,  
 Nor frame measures to express,  
 No, nor any man, unless  
 He who more than all men crost  
 Finds it in that woman lost,  
 On whose faith he would have pawn'd  
 Life, and all he could command. 3500

Such a man may by that miss  
 Make us know how dear it is,  
 When, o'ercharg'd with grief, he shall  
 Sigh, and break his heart withal.

This is that perfection which  
 In her favour makes me rich.  
 All whose beauties, named before,  
 Else would but torment me more ;  
 And in having this, I find,  
 Whate'er haps, a quiet mind. 3510  
 Yea, 'tis that which I do prize  
 Far above her lips, her eyes,  
 Or that general beauty whence  
 Shines each several excellence.

For, alas ! what gain'd hath he  
 Who may clip the fairest she  
 That the name of woman bears,  
 If, unhappily, he fears  
 Any other's worth may win  
 What he thought his own had bin? 3520

Him base-minded deem I should,  
 Who, although he were in hold,  
 Wrapp'd in chains, would not disdain  
 Love with her to entertain  
 That both daughter to a peer,  
 And most rich and lovely were,  
 When a brainless gull shall dare  
 In her favours with him share,  
 Or the action of a player  
 Rob him of a hope so fair.

3530

This I dread not : for I know  
 Strained gestures, painted show,  
 Shameless boastings, borrow'd jests,  
 Female looks, gay-plumed crests,  
 Vows nor protestations vain,  
 Wherewith fools are made so vain,  
 Move her can, save to contemn,  
 Or, perhaps, to laugh at them.

Neither can I doubt or fear  
 Time shall either change or wear  
 This her virtue, or impair  
 That which makes her soul so fair :  
 In which trust great comforts are,  
 Which the fear of loss would mar.

3540

Nor hath this my rare hope stood  
 So much in her being good,  
 With her love to blessed things,  
 As in her acknowledgings  
 From a higher Power to have them,  
 And her love to Him that gave them.  
 For, although to have a mind

3550

Naturally to good inclin'd,  
 And to love it, would assure  
 Reason that it might endure,  
 Yet, since man was first unjust,  
 There's no warrant for such trust.  
 Virtues that most wonder win,  
 Would converted be to sin,  
 If their flourishings began  
 From no better root than man. 3560  
 Our best virtues, when they are  
 Of themselves, we may compare  
 To the beauty of a flower  
 That is blasted in an hour,  
 And which, growing to be fuller,  
 Turns into some loathed colour.  
 But those being freely given  
 And confirm'd in us from heaven,  
 Have a promise on them past,  
 And for evermore shall last, 3570  
 Diamond-like, their lustre clearing  
 More and more by use and wearing.

But if this rare worth I praise  
 Should by Fate's permission raise  
 Passions in some gentle breast  
 That distemper may his rest,  
 And be author of such treason  
 As might nigh endanger reason,  
 Or enforce his tongue to crave  
 What another man must have, 3580  
 Mark, in such a strait as this,  
 How discreet her dealing is.

She is nothing of their humours  
 Who their honour build on rumours,  
 And had rather private sporting  
 Than allow of open courting ;  
 Nor of theirs that would seem holy  
 By divulging others' folly :  
 Further is she from their guise,  
 That delight to tyrannize, 3590  
 Or make boastings in espying  
 Others for their favours dying.

She a spirit doth possess  
 So replete with nobleness,  
 That, if she be there beloved  
 Where she ought not to be moved  
 Equally to love again,  
 She doth so well entertain  
 That affection, as there's none  
 Can suppose it ill bestown. 3600

From deluding she is free ;  
 From disdain as far is she ;  
 And so feelingly bears part  
 Of what pains another's heart,  
 That no curse of scorned duty  
 Shall draw vengeance on her beauty.  
 Rather, with so tender fear  
 Of her honour and their care  
 She is touch'd, that neither shall  
 Wrong unto herself befall, 3610  
 By the favour she doth show,  
 Nor will she neglect them so  
 As may just occasion give

Any way to make them grieve.

Hope she will not let them see,  
Lest they should presuming be,  
And aspire to that which none  
Ever must enjoy but one.  
From despair she keeps them too,  
Fearing they might hap to do,  
Either through love's indiscretions  
Or much over-stirred passions,  
What might with their hurt and shame  
Into question call her name,  
And a scandal on her bring  
Who is just in everything.

3620

She hath mark'd how others run,  
And by them hath learn'd to shun  
Both their fault who, otherwise,  
Err by being too precise ;

3630

And their folly that, o'erkind,  
Are to all complaints inclin'd.  
For her wit hath found the way  
How awhile to hold them play ;  
And that inconvenience shun  
Whereinto both seem to run,  
By allowing them a scope  
Just bewixt despair and hope.  
Where confin'd, and reaching neither,  
They do take a part in either,  
Till, long living in suspense,  
Tired by her indifference,  
Time at last their passion wears ;  
Passions wearing, reason clears ;

3640

Reason gives their judgment light ;  
 Judgment bringeth all to right.  
 So their hope appearing vain,  
 They become themselves again,  
 And with high applauses, fit  
 For such virtue with such wit, 3650  
 They that service only proffer  
 She may take and they may offer.

Yet this course she never proves,  
 Save with those whose virtuous loves  
 Use the noblest means of gaining  
 Favours worthy the obtaining.  
 And if such should chance to err,  
 Either 'gainst themselves or her,  
 In some oversights, when they  
 Are through passion led astray, 3660  
 She so well man's frailty knows,  
 With the darts that beauty throws,  
 As she will not adding terror  
 Break the heart for one poor error.  
 Rather, if still good they be,  
 Twenty remedies hath she  
 Gently to apply, where sense  
 Hath invaded reason's fence,  
 And, without or wound or scar,  
 Turns to peace a lawless war. 3670

But to those whose baser fires  
 Breathe out smoke of such desires  
 As may dim with impure steams  
 Any part of beauty's beams,  
 She will deign no milder way

Those foul burnings to allay,  
 Save with such extreme neglect  
 As shall work her wish'd effect.

And to use so sharp a cure  
 She's not oft constrained, sure, 3680  
 'Cause upon her forehead still  
 Goodness sits, so fear'd of ill,  
 That the scorn and high disdains,  
 Wherewithal she entertains  
 Those loathed glances, giveth ending  
 To such flamings in the tinding,  
 That their cooled hopes needs must  
 Freeze desires in heat of lust.

'Tis a power that never lies  
 In the fair'st immodest eyes. 3690  
 Wantons, 'tis not your sweet eyeings,  
 Forced passions, feigned dyings,  
 Gestures, temptings, tears, beguilings,  
 Dancings, singings, kissings, smilings,  
 Nor those painted sweets with which  
 You unwary men bewitch,  
 All united, nor asunder,  
 That can compass such a wonder,  
 Or to win you love prevails  
 Where her moving virtues fails. 3700

Beauties, 'tis not at all those features,  
 Placed in the fairest creatures,  
 Though their best they should discover,  
 That can tempt from her a lover.  
 'Tis not those soft snowy breasts,  
 Where love rock'd in pleasure rests,

And, by their continual motions,  
 Draweth hearts to vain devotions ;  
 Nor the nectar that we sip  
 From a honey-dropping lip ;                    3710  
 Nor those eyes whence beauty's lances  
 Wound the heart with wanton glances ;  
 Nor those sought delights that lie  
 In love's hidden treasury,  
 That can liking gain where she  
 Will the best beloved be.

For should those who think they may  
 Draw my love from her away,  
 Bring forth all their female graces,  
 Wrap me in their close embraces,                    3720  
 Practise all the art they may,  
 Weep, or sing, or kiss, or pray,  
 And with sighs and looks come woo me,  
 When they soonest may undo me,  
 One poor thought of her would arm me  
 So as Circe could not harm me.  
 Since beside those excellences  
 Wherewith others please the senses,  
 She whom I have prized so  
 Yields delights for reason too,                    3730  
 Who could dote on thing so common  
 As mere outward-handsome woman ?  
 Those half-beauties only win  
 Fools to let affection in ;  
 Vulgar wits, from reason shaken,  
 Are with such impostures taken ;  
 And with all their art in love,



Wantons can but wantons move.  
 But when unto those are join'd  
 Those things which adorn the mind, 3740  
 None their excellences see  
 But they straight enthralled be.  
 Fools and wise men, worst and best,  
 Subject are to love's arrest.  
 For, when virtue woos a lover,  
 She's an unresisted mover,  
 That will have no kind of nay,  
 And in love brooks no delay.

She can make the sensual wights  
 To restrain their appetites ; 3750  
 And, her beauty when they see,  
 Spite of vice, in love to be ;  
 Yea, although themselves be bad,  
 Praise the good they never had.  
 She hath to her service brought  
 Those that her have set at nought,  
 And can fair enough appear  
 To enflame the most severe.

She hath oft allured out  
 The religiously devout 3760  
 From their cloisters and their vows,  
 To embrace what she allows,  
 And to such contentments come,  
 As blind zeal had barr'd them from,  
 While, her laws misunderstood,  
 They did ill for love of good.

Where I find true worth to be  
 Sweetest are their lips to me ;

And embraces tempt me to  
 More than outward beauties do, 3770  
 That my firm belief is this :  
 If ever I do amiss,  
 Seeming good the bait will lay  
 That to ill shall me betray,  
 Since, where shows of goodness are,  
 I am oft embolden'd there  
 Freedoms to permit and use  
 Which I elsewhere do refuse,  
 For because I think they mean  
 To allow no deed unclean. 3780

Yet where two love virtue shall  
 Both at once, they seldom fall.  
 For when one hath thoughts of ill,  
 T'other helps exile them-still.

My fair virtue's power is this.  
 And that power the beauty is,  
 Which doth make her here exprest  
 Equally both fair and blest.

This was that contenting grace  
 Which affection made me place 3790  
 With so dear respect that never  
 Can it fail, but last for ever.

This a servant made me sworn,  
 Who beforetime held in scorn  
 To yield vassalage or duty,  
 Though unto the queen of beauty.  
 Yet that I her servant am,  
 It shall more be to my fame  
 Than to own these woods and downs,

Or be lord of fifty towns. 3800

And my mistress to be deem'd,  
 Shall more honour be esteem'd  
 Than those titles to acquire  
 Which most women most desire.

Yea, when you a woman shall  
 Countess or a duchess call,  
 That respect it shall not move,  
 Neither gain her half such love  
 As to say, Lo, this is she

That supposed is to be 3810

Mistress to Philarete,  
 And that lovely nymph which he  
 In a pastoral poem famed,  
 And Fair Virtue there hath named.

Yea, some ladies, ten to one,  
 If not many, now unknown,  
 Will be very well-a-paid  
 When by chance she hears it said  
 She that fair one is whom I  
 Here have praised concealedly. 3820

And though now this age's pride  
 May so brave a hope deride,  
 Yet when all their glories pass  
 As the thing that never was,  
 And on monuments appear  
 That they e'er had breathing here  
 Who envy it, she shall thrive  
 In her fame, and honour'd live  
 Whilst Great Britain's shepherds sing  
 English in their sonneting. 3830

And whoe'er in future days  
 Shall bestow the utmost praise  
 On his love that any man  
 Attribute to creature can,  
 'Twill be this, that he hath dared  
 His and mine to have compared.

Oh ! what stars did shine on me  
 When her eyes I first did see !  
 And how good was their aspect  
 When we first did both affect !  
 For I never since to changing  
 Was inclined, or thought of ranging.

3840

Me so oft my fancy drew  
 Here and there, that I ne'er knew  
 Where to place desire before  
 So that range it might no more,  
 But as he that passeth by,  
 Where in all her jollity  
 Flora's riches in a row  
 Doth in seemly order grow,  
 And a thousand flowers stand  
 Bending as to kiss his hand,  
 Out of which delightful store  
 One he may take, and no more,  
 Long he pausing, doubteth whether  
 Of those fair ones he should gather :

3850

First the primrose courts his eyes ;  
 Then the cowslip he espies ;  
 Next the pansy seems to woo him ;  
 Then carnations bow unto him,  
 Which whilst that enamour'd swain

3860

From the stalk intends to strain,  
 As half fearing to be seen,  
 Prettily her leaves between  
 Peeps the violet, pale to see  
 That her virtues slighted be,  
 Which so much his liking wins,  
 That to seize her he begins ;  
 Yet, before he stoop'd so low,  
 He his wanton eye did throw  
 On a stem that grew more high,  
 And the rose did there espy,  
 Who, beside her precious scent,  
 To procure his eyes content,  
 Did display her goodly breast ;  
 Where he found at full exprest  
 All the good that nature showers  
 On a thousand other flowers ;  
 Wherewith he, affected, takes it,  
 His beloved flower he makes it,  
 And, without desire of more,  
 Walks through all he saw before :

3870

3880

So I wandering but erewhile  
 Through the garden of this isle,  
 Saw rich beauties, I confess,  
 And in number numberless ;  
 Yea, so differing-lovely too,  
 That I had a world to do  
 Ere I could set up my rest  
 Where to choose, and choose the best.

3890

One I saw whose hair excell'd,  
 On another's brow there dwell'd

Such a majesty, it seem'd  
 She was best to be esteem'd.

This had with her speeches won me,  
 That with silence had undone me.  
 On her lips the Graces hung,  
 T'other charm'd me with her tongue.  
 In her eyes a third did bear  
 That which did anew ensnare.

3900

Then a fourth did fairer show,  
 Yet wherein I did not know ;  
 Only this perceived I,  
 Somewhat pleas'd my fantasy.  
 Now the wealth I most esteem'd ;  
 Honour then I better deem'd.  
 Next, the love of beauty seiz'd me,  
 And then virtue better pleas'd me.  
 Juno's love I nought esteem'd,  
 Whilst a Venus fairer seem'd.

3910

Nay, both could not me suffice ;  
 Whilst a Pallas was more wise :  
 Though I found enough in one  
 To content if still alone.  
 Amaryllis I did woo ;  
 And I courted Phyllis too.  
 Daphne for her love I chose ;  
 Chloris for that damask rose  
 In her cheek I held as dear ;  
 Yea, a thousand lik'd well near,  
 And, in love with altogether,  
 Feared the enjoying either,  
 'Cause, to be of one possest,

3920

Barred the hope of all the rest.

Thus I fondly far'd, till Fate—  
Which, I must confess, in that  
Did a greater favour to me  
Than the world can malice do me—  
Show'd to me that matchless flower,  
Subject for this song of our.

3930

Whose perfection having eyed,  
Reason instantly espied  
That desire, which rang'd abroad,  
There would find a period.  
And no marvel if it might ;  
For it there hath all delight,  
And in her hath Nature placed  
What each several fair one graced.

Nor am I alone delighted  
With those graces all united  
Which the sense's eye doth find  
Scattered throughout womankind,  
But my reason finds perfections  
To inflame my soul's affections.  
Yea, such virtues she possesseth,  
As with firmest pleasures blesseth,  
And keeps sound that beauty's state  
Which would else grow ruinate.

3940

In this flower are sweets such store  
I shall never wish for more,  
Nor be tempted out to stray  
For the fairest buds in May.

3950

Let who list for me advancè  
The admired flowers of France ;

Let who will praise and behold  
 The reserved marigold ;  
 Let the sweet-breath'd violet now  
 Unto whom she pleaseth bow,  
 And the fairest lily spread  
 Where she will her golden head ; 3960  
 I have such a flower to wear,  
 That for those I do not care.

Never shall my fancy range,  
 Nor once think again of change ;  
 Never will I, never more,  
 Grieve or sigh as heretofore,  
 Nor within the lodgings lie  
 Of despair or jealousy.

Let the young and happy swains  
 Playing on the Britain plains 3970  
 Court unblam'd their shepherdesses,  
 And with their gold-curled tresses  
 Toy uncensur'd, until I  
 Grutch at their prosperity.

Let all times, both present, past,  
 And the age that shall be last,  
 Vaunt the beauties they bring forth ;  
 I have found in one such worth  
 That, content, I neither care  
 What the best before me were, 3980  
 Nor desire to live and see  
 Who shall fair hereafter be ;  
 For I know the hand of Nature  
 Will not make a fairer creature ;  
 Which, because succeeding days



Shall confess, and add their praise  
 In approving what my tongue,  
 Ere they had their being, sung ;  
 Once again come lend an ear,  
 And a rapture you shall hear, 3990  
 Though I taste no Thespian spring,  
 Will amaze you whilst I sing.  
 I do feel new strains inspiring,  
 And to such brave heights aspiring,  
 That my Muse will touch a key  
 Higher than you heard to-day.

I have beauties to unfold  
 That deserve a pen of gold,  
 Sweets that never dream'd of were,  
 Things unknown, and such as ear 4000  
 Never heard a measure sound  
 Since the sun first ran his round.

When Apelles limn'd to life  
 Loathed Vulcan's lovely wife,  
 With such beauties he did trim  
 Each sweet feature and each limb,  
 And so curiously did place  
 Every well-becoming grace,  
 That 'twas said, ere he could draw  
 Such a piece, he naked saw 4010  
 Many women in their prime,  
 And the fairest of that time ;  
 From all which he parts did take,  
 Which aright disposed make  
 Perfect beauty. So, when you  
 Know what I have yet to show ;

It will seem to pass so far  
 Those things which expressed are  
 That you will suppose I've been  
 Privileged, where I have seen 4020  
 All the good that's spread in parts  
 Through a thousand women's hearts,  
 With their fair'st conditions, lie  
 Bare without hypocrisy,  
 And that I have took from thence  
 Each dispersed excellence  
 To express her who hath gained  
 More than ever one obtained.

And yet soft ; I fear in vain  
 I have boasted such a strain. 4030  
 Apprehensions ever are  
 Greater than expression far ;  
 And my striving to disclose  
 What I know, hath made me lose  
 My invention's better part,  
 And my hopes exceed my art.

Speak I can ; yet think I more ;  
 Words compar'd with thoughts are poor.  
 And I find, had I begun  
 Such a strain, it would be done 4040  
 When we number all the sands  
 Wash'd o'er perjured Goodwin's lands.  
 For of things I should indite,  
 Which, I know, are infinite.  
 I do yield my thoughts did climb  
 Far above the power of rhyme ;  
 And no wonder it is so,

Since there is no art can show  
 Red in roses, white in snow,  
 Nor express how they do grow. 4050  
 Yea, since bird, beast, stone, and tree,  
 That inferior creatures be,  
 Beauties have which we confess  
 Lines unable to express,  
 They more hardly can enrol  
 Those that do adorn a soul.  
 But suppose my measures could  
 Reach the height I thought they would,  
 Now relate I would not tho'  
 What did swell within me so. 4060  
 For if I should all descry,  
 You would know as much as I,  
 And those clowns the Muses hate  
 Would of things above them prate,  
 Or with their profaning eyes,  
 Come to view those mysteries  
 Whereof, since they disesteem'd them,  
 Heaven hath unworthy deem'd them.

And beside, it seems to me  
 That your ears nigh tired be. 4070  
 I perceive the fire that charmeth  
 And inspireth me scarce warmeth  
 Your chill hearts ; nay, sure, were I  
 Melted into poesy,  
 I should not a measure hit,  
 Though Apollo prompted it,  
 Which should able be to leave  
 That in you which I conceive.

You are cold ; and here I may  
 Waste my vital heat away 4080  
 Ere you will be moved so much  
 As to feel one perfect touch  
 Of those sweets which, yet conceal'd,  
 Swell my breast to be reveal'd.  
 Now my words I therefore cease,  
 That my mounting thoughts in peace  
 May alone those pleasures share  
 Whereof lines unworthy are.  
 And so you an end do see  
 Of my song, though long it be. 4090

No sooner had the shepherd Philaret  
 To this description his last period set,  
 But instantly, descending from a wood,  
 Which on a rising ground adjoining stood,  
 A troop of satyrs, to the view of all,  
 Came dancing of a new-devised brawl.  
 The measures they did pace by him were taught  
 them,  
 Who to so rare a gentleness had brought them,  
 That he had learned their rudeness an observing  
 Of such respect unto the well-deserving 4100  
 As they became to no men else a terror,  
 But such as did persist in wilful error,  
 And they the ladies made no whit afraid,  
 Though since that time they some great men have  
 scar'd.  
 Their dance the Whipping of Abuse they named ;

And though the shepherd, since that, hath been  
blamed,

Yet now 'tis daily seen in every town,  
And there's no country dance that's better known,  
Nor that hath gain'd a greater commendation  
'Mongst those that love an honest recreation. 4110

This scene presented, from a grove was heard  
A set of viols ; and there was prepared  
A country banquet, which this shepherd made  
To entertain the ladies in the shade.

And 'tis suppos'd his song prolonged was  
Of purpose, that it might be brought to pass ;  
So well it was perform'd, that each one deem'd  
The banquet might the city have beseem'd.  
Yet better was their welcome than their fare,  
Which they perceiv'd, and the merrier were. 4120

One beauty, tho', there sat amongst the rest,  
That look'd as sad as if her heart oppress'd  
With love had been. Whom Philaret beholding  
Sit so demurely, and her arms enfolding,  
"Lady," quoth he, "am I, or this poor cheer,  
The cause that you so melancholy are ?  
For, if the object of your thoughts be higher,  
It fits nor me to know them, nor inquire.  
But if from me it cometh that offends,  
I seek the cause, that I may make amends." 4130

"Kind swain," said she, "it is nor so, nor so.  
No fault in you, nor in your cheer I know.  
Nor do I think there is a thought in me  
That can too worthy of your knowledge be.  
Nor have I, many a day, more pleasure had

Than here I find, though I have seemed sad.

“ My heart is sometimes heavy when I smile ;  
 And when I grieve I often sing the while.  
 Nor is it sadness that doth me possess,  
 But rather musing with much seriousness 4140  
 Upon that multitude of sighs and tears,  
 With those innumerable doubts and fears  
 Through which you passed ere you could acquire  
 A settled hope of gaining your desire.  
 For you dared love a nymph so great and fair  
 As might have brought a prince unto despair ;  
 And sure the excellency of your passions  
 Did then produce as excellent expressions.

“ If, therefore, me the suit may well become,  
 And if to you it be not wearisome, 4150  
 In name of all these ladies I entreat  
 That one of those sad strains you would repeat  
 Which you compos'd when greatest discontent  
 Unsought-for help to your invention lent.”

“ Fair nymph,” said Philaret, “ I will do so.  
 For, though your shepherd doth no courtship know,  
 He hath humanity, and what's in me  
 To do you service may commanded be.”

So, taking down a lute that near him hung, 4159  
 He gave 't his boy, who played, whilst this he sung.

## SONNET I.

Ah me !  
 Am I the swain,  
 That late from sorrow free,  
 Did all the cares on earth disdain ?  
 And still untouch'd, as at some safer games,  
 Play'd with the burning coals of love!and beauty's flames ?  
 Was 't I could dive and sound each passion's secret depth at will,  
 And from those huge o'erwhelmings rise by help of reason still ?  
 And am I now, oh heavens ! for trying this in vain  
 So sunk that I shall never rise again ?  
 Then let despair set sorrow's string  
 For strains that dolefull'st be,  
 And I will sing,  
 Ah me.

But why,  
 O fatal Time !  
 Dost thou constrain that I  
 Should perish in my youth's sweet prime ?  
 I but awhile ago, you cruel powers,  
 In spite of fortune, cropp'd contentment's sweetest flowers.  
 And yet, unscorned, serve a gentle nymph, the fairest she  
 That ever was beloved of man, or eyes did ever see.  
 Yea, one whose tender heart would rue for my distress ;  
 Yet I, poor I, must perish natheless.  
 And, which much more augments my care,  
 Unmoaned I must die,  
 And no man e'er  
 Know why.

Thy leave,  
 My dying song,  
 Yet take, ere grief bereave  
 The breath which I enjoy too long.  
 Tell thou that fair one this : my soul prefers  
 Her love above my life, and that I died hers ;  
 And let him be for evermore to her remembrance dear,  
 Who loved the very thought of her whilst he remained here.  
 And now farewell, thou place of my unhappy birth,  
 Where once I breathed the sweetest air on earth.  
 Since me my wonted joys forsake,  
 And all my trust deceive,  
 Of all I take  
 My leave.

Farewell,  
 Sweet groves, to you ;  
 You hills, that highest dwell ;  
 And all you humble vales, adieu.  
 You wanton brooks and solitary rocks,  
 My dear companions all, and you, my tender flocks ;  
 Farewell, my pipe, and all those pleasing songs whose moving strains  
 Delighted once the fairest nymphs that dance upon the plains ;  
 You discontents, whose deep and over-deadly smart  
 Have, without pity, broke the truest heart,  
 Sighs, tears, and every sad annoy  
 That erst did with me dwell,  
 And all others joy,  
 Farewell.



Adieu,  
 Fair Shepherdesses ;  
 Let garlands of sad yew  
 Adorn your dainty golden tresses.  
 I that loved you, and often with my quill  
 Made music that delighted fountain, grove, and hill ;  
 I whom you loved so, and with a sweet and chaste embrace,  
 Yea, with a thousand rarer favours, would vouchsafe to grace,  
 I now must leave you all alone, of love to plain,  
 And never pipe nor never sing again.  
 I must for evermore be gone ;  
 And therefore bid I you,  
 And every one,  
 Adieu.

I die !  
 For oh, I feel  
 Death's horrors drawing nigh ;  
 And all this frame of nature reel.  
 My hopeless heart, despairing of relief,  
 Sinks underneath the heavy weight of saddest grief,  
 Which hath so ruthless torn, so rack'd, so tortur'd every vein,  
 All comfort comes too late to have it ever cur'd again  
 My swimming head begins to dance death's giddy round ;  
 A shuddering chillness doth each sense confound :  
 Benumb'd is my cold-sweating brow ;  
 A dimness shuts my eye ;  
 And now, oh, now  
 I die.

So movingly these lines he did express,  
 And to a tune so full of heaviness,  
 As if, indeed, his purpose had been past  
 To live no longer than the song did last,  
 Which in the nymphs such tender passion bred,  
 That some of them did tears of pity shed. 4250

This she perceiving, who first craved the song,  
 "Shepherd," she said, "although it be no wrong  
 Nor grief to you those passions to recall,  
 Which heretofore you have been pain'd withal,  
 But comforts rather, since they now are over,  
 And you, it seemeth, an enjoying lover,  
 Yet some young nymphs among us I do see  
 Who so much moved with your passions be,  
 That if my aim I taken have aright,  
 Their thoughts will hardly let them sleep to-night. 4260

"I dare not, therefore, beg of you again  
 To sing another of the selfsame strain,  
 For fear it breed within them more unrest  
 Than women's weaknesses can well digest.  
 Yet in your measures such content you have,  
 That one song more I will presume to crave.  
 And if your memory preserves of those  
 Which you of your affections did compose  
 Before you saw this mistress, let us hear  
 What kind of passions then within you were." 4270

To which request he instantly obey'd,  
 And this ensuing song both sung and play'd.

## SONNET 2.

You gentle nymphs that on these meadows play,  
 And oft relate the loves of shepherds young,  
 Come, sit you down ; for, if you please to stay,  
 Now may you hear an uncouth passion sung.

A lad there is, and I am that poor groom,  
 That[']s fall'n in love, and cannot tell with whom.

Oh, do not smile at sorrow as a jest ;  
 With others' cares good natures moved be ;      4280  
 And I should weep if you had my unrest ;  
 Then at my grief how can you merry be ?  
 Ah, where is tender pity now become ?  
 I am in love, and cannot tell with whom.

I that have oft the rarest features view'd,  
 And beauty in her best perfection seen ;  
 I that have laugh'd at them that love pursued,  
 And ever free from such affections been,  
 Lo, now at last so cruel is my doom,  
 I am in love, and cannot tell with whom.      4290

My heart is full nigh bursting with desire,  
 Yet cannot find from whence these longings flow ;  
 My breast doth burn, but she that lights the fire  
 I never saw, nor can I come to know.  
 So great a bliss my fortune keeps me from,  
 That though I dearly love, I know not whom.

Ere I had twice four springs renewed seen,  
 The force of beauty I began to prove ;  
 And ere I nine years old had fully been,  
 It taught me how to frame a song of love,                   4300  
     And little thought I, this day should have come,  
     Before that I to love had found out whom.

For on my chin the mossy down you see,  
 And in my veins well-heated blood doth glow ;  
 Of summers I have seen twice three times three,  
 And fast my youthful time away doth go,  
     That much I fear I aged shall become,  
     And still complain, I love I know not whom.

Oh! why had I a heart bestow'd on me  
 To cherish dear affections so inclin'd ?                   4310  
 Since I am so unhappy born to be  
 No object for so true a love to find.  
     When I am dead it will be missed of some,  
     Yet, now I live, I love I know not whom.

I to a thousand beauteous nymphs am known ;  
 A hundred ladies' favours do I wear ;  
 I with as many half in love am grown ;  
 Yet none of them, I find, can be my dear.  
     Methinks I have a mistress yet to come,                   4319  
     Which makes me sing, I love I know not whom.

There lives no swain doth stronger passion prove  
 For her whom most he covets to possess,  
 Than doth my heart, that being full of love,  
 Knows not to whom it may the same profess.

For he that is despis'd hath sorrow some,  
 But he hath more that loves and knows not whom.

Knew I my love as many others do,  
 To some one object might my thoughts be bent,  
 So they divided should not wandering go  
 Until the soul's united force be spent. 4330

As his that seeks and never finds a home,  
 Such is my rest, that love and know not whom.

Those whom the frowns of jealous friends divide  
 May live to meet and descant on their woe ;  
 And he hath gain'd a lady for his bride  
 That durst not woo her maid awhile ago.

But oh ! what end unto my hopes can come  
 That am in love, and cannot tell with whom ?

Poor Colin grieves that he was late disdain'd,  
 And Chloris doth for Willy's absence pine ; 4340  
 Sad Thirsis weeps, for his sick Phœbe pain'd ;  
 But all their sorrows cannot equal mine.

A greater care, alas ! on me is come :  
 I am in love, and cannot tell with whom.

Narcissus-like did I affect my shade,  
 Some shadow yet I had to dote upon ;  
 Or did I love some image of the dead,  
 Whose substance had not breathed long ago,  
     I might despair, and so an end would come ;  
     But, oh, I love ! and cannot tell you whom. 4350

Once in a dream methought my love I view'd,  
 But never waking could her face behold ;  
 And doubtless that resemblance was but shew'd  
 That more my tired heart torment it should.  
     For, since that time, more griev'd I am become,  
     And more in love ; I cannot tell with whom.

When on my bed at night to rest I lie,  
 My watchful eyes with tears bedew my cheek ;  
 And then, oh, would it once were day, I cry ;  
 Yet when it comes I am as far to seek. 4360  
     For who can tell, though all the earth he roam,  
     Or when, or where, to find he knows not whom?

Oh ! if she be among the beauteous trains  
 Of all you nymphs that haunt the silver rills ;  
 Or if you know her, ladies of the plains,  
 Or you that have your bowers on the hills,  
     Tell, if you can, who will my love become,  
     Or I shall die, and never know for whom.

THE ladies smiled oft when this they heard,  
Because the passion strange to them appear'd. 4370  
And stranger was it, since, by his expression,  
As well as by his own unfeign'd confession,  
It seemed true. But, having sung it out,  
And seeing scarcely manners they it thought  
To urge him farther, thus to them he spake :  
" Fair ladies, forasmuch as doubt you make  
To re-command me, of mine own accord  
Another strain I freely will afford.

" It shall not be of love, nor any song  
Which to the praise of beauty doth belong, 4380  
But that hereafter, when you hence are gone,  
Your shepherd may be sometime thought upon.  
To show you also what content the field  
And lovely grove to honest minds may yield.  
That you my humble fate may not despise  
When you return unto your braveries,  
And not suppose that in these homely bowers  
I hug my fortune 'cause I know not yours.  
Such lines I'll sing as were composed by me  
When some proud courtiers, where I hapt to be, 4390  
Did, like themselves, of their own glories prate,  
As in contempt of my more happy state.  
And these they be."

## SONNET.

LORDLY gallants, tell me this,  
 Though my safe content you weigh not,  
 In your greatness what one bliss  
 Have you gain'd that I enjoy not ?  
     You have honours, you have wealth,  
     I have peace, and I have health ;  
     All the day I merry make,  
     And at night no care I take.

4400

Bound to none my fortunes be ;  
 This or that man's fall I fear not ;  
 Him I love that loveth me ;  
 For the rest a pin I care not.  
     You are sad when others chaff,  
     And grow merry as they laugh ;  
     I, that hate it, and am free,  
     Laugh and weep as pleaseth me.

You may boast of favours shown  
 Where your service is applied,  
 But my pleasures are mine own,  
 And to no man's humours tied.  
     You oft flatter, soothe, and feign ;  
     I such baseness do disdain,  
     And to none be slave I would,  
     Though my fetters might be gold.

4410



By great titles some believe  
 Highest honours are attained ;  
 And yet kings have power to give  
 To their fools what these have gained. 4420  
     Where they favour, there they may  
     All their names of honour lay ;  
     But I look not rais'd to be  
     Till mine own wing carry me.

Seek to raise your titles higher,  
 They are toys not worth my sorrow :  
 Those that we to-day admire  
 Prove the age's scorn to-morrow.  
     Take your honours ; let me find  
     Virtue in a free-born mind ; 4430  
     This the greatest kings that be  
     Cannot give nor take from me.

Though I vainly do not vaunt  
 Large demesnes to feed my pleasure,  
 I have favours where you want  
 That would buy respect with treasure.  
     You have lands lie here and there,  
     But my wealth is everywhere,  
     And this addeth to my store,  
     Fortune cannot make me poor. 4440

Say you purchase with your pelf  
 Some respect where you importune,  
 Those may love me for myself  
 That regard you for your fortune.  
     Rich, or born of high degree,  
     Fools as well as you may be :  
     But that peace in which I live  
     No descent nor wealth can give.

If you boast that you may gain  
 The respect of high-born beauties,      4450  
 Know I never wooed in vain,  
 Nor preferred scorned duties.  
     She I love hath all delight,  
     Rosy-red with lily-white,  
     And, whoe'er your mistress be,  
     Flesh and blood as good as she.

Note of me was never took  
 For my woman-like perfections,  
 But so like a man I look,  
 It hath gain'd me best affections.      4460  
     For my love as many showers  
     Have been wept as have for yours ;  
     And yet none doth me condemn  
     For abuse or scorning them.

Though of dainties you have store  
To delight a choicer palate,  
Yet your taste is pleas'd no more  
Than is mine in one poor sallet.

You to please your senses feed,  
But I eat good blood to breed,  
And am most delighted than  
When I spend it like a man.

4470

Though you lord it over me,  
You in vain thereof have braved,  
For those lusts my servants be  
Whereunto your minds are slaved.

To yourselves you wise appear,  
But alas, deceiv'd you are.  
You do foolish me esteem  
And are that which I do seem.

4480

When your faults I open lay  
You are moved and mad with vexing ;  
But you ne'er could do or say  
Ought to drive me to perplexing.

Therefore, my despised power  
Greater is by far than your ;  
And, whate'er you think of me,  
In your minds you poorer be.

You are pleased more or less,  
 As men well or ill report you ; 4490  
 And show discontentedness  
 When the times forbear to court you.  
     That in which my pleasures be  
     No man can divide from me ;  
     And my care it adds not to  
     Whatso others say or do.

Be not proud because you view  
 You by thousands are attended,  
 For alas, it is not you,  
 But your fortune that's befriended. 4500  
     Where I show of love have got  
     Such a danger fear I not,  
     Since they nought can seek of me,  
     But for love belov'd to be.

When your hearts have everything  
 You are pleasantly disposed,  
 But I can both laugh and sing  
 Though my foes have me enclosed.  
     Yea, when dangers me do hem,  
     I delight in scorning them, 4510  
     More than you in your renown,  
     Or a king can in his crown.

You do bravely domineer  
 Whilst the sun upon you shineth,  
 Yet if any storm appear  
 Basely then your mind declineth.  
     But or shine, or rain, or blow,  
     I my resolutions know ;  
     Living, dying, thrall, or free,  
     At one height my mind shall be.

4520

When in thraldom I have lain  
 Me not worth your thought you prized.  
 But your malice was in vain,  
 For your favours I despised.  
     And, howe'er you value me,  
     I with praise shall thought on be,  
     When the world esteems you not,  
     And your names shall be forgot.

In these thoughts my riches are,  
 Now, though poor or mean you deem me, 4530  
 I am pleased, and do not care  
 How the times or you esteem me.  
     For those toys that make you gay  
     Are but play-games for a day.  
     And when Nature craves her due  
     I as brave shall be as you.

HERE Philaret did give his song an ending,  
 To which the nymphs so seriously attending  
 About him sat, as if they had supposed  
 He still had somewhat more to be disclosed : 4540  
 And well they knew not whether did belong  
 Most praise unto the shepherd or his song ;  
 For though, they must confess, they often hear  
 Those lays which much more deeply learned are,  
 Yet, when they well considered of the place,  
 With how unlikely in their thought it was  
 To give them hope of hearing such a strain,  
 Or that so young and so obscure a swain  
 Should such a matchless beauty's favour get,  
 And know her worth so well to sing of it, 4550  
 They wondered at it, and some thus surmised  
 That he a greater man was, so disguised,  
 Or else that she whom he so much had praised  
 Some goddess was, that those his measures raised  
 Of purpose to that rare-attained height,  
 In envy's and presuming art's despite.

But whilst they musing with themselves bethought  
 Which way out of this shepherd to have wrought,  
 What nymph this fair one was, and where she lived,  
 Lo, at that very instant there arrived 4560  
 Three men that by their habits courtiers seemed ;  
 For, though obscure, by some he is esteemed  
 Among the greatest, who do not condemn  
 In his retired walks to visit him ;  
 And there they taste those pleasures of the mind  
 Which they can nor in court nor city find.

Some news or message these new guests had brought  
 him,  
 And to make haste away, it seems, besought him,  
 For instantly he rose, and that his nurture  
 Might not be taxed by a rude departure, 4570  
 Himself excusing, he those nymphs did pray  
 His noble friends might bring them on their way :  
 Who, as it seems, he said, were therefore come  
 That they might wait upon them to their home.  
 So with their favour he departed thence,  
 And, as they thought, to meet her excellence  
 Of whom he sung. Yet many deem that this  
 But an idea of a mistress is,  
 Because to none he yet had deign'd the telling  
 Her proper name, nor shown her place of dwell-  
 ing. 4580

When he was gone a lady from among  
 Those nymphs took up his lute and sung this song.

THE NYMPH'S SONG.

GENTLE swain, good speed befall thee,  
 And in love still prosper thou,  
 Future times shall happy call thee,  
 Though thou lie neglected now.  
 Virtue's lovers shall commend thee,  
 And perpetual fame attend thee.

Happy are these woody mountains  
 In whose shadows thou dost hide, 4590  
 And as happy are those fountains  
 By whose murmurs thou dost bide ;  
     For contents are here excelling  
     More than in a prince's dwelling.

These thy flocks do clothing bring thee,  
 And thy food out of the fields ;  
 Pretty songs the birds do sing thee ;  
 Sweet perfumes the meadow yields ;  
     And, what more is worth the seeing,  
     Heaven and earth thy prospect being ? 4600

None comes hither who denies thee  
 Thy contentments for despite,  
 Neither any that envies thee  
 That wherein thou dost delight ;  
     But all happy things are meant thee,  
     And whatever may content thee.

Thy affection reason measures,  
 And distempers none it feeds ;  
 Still so harmless are thy pleasures,  
 That no other's grief it breeds ; 4610  
     And if night beget thee sorrow,  
     Seldom stays it till the morrow.



Why do foolish men so vainly  
Seek contentment in their store,  
Since they may perceive so plainly  
Thou art rich in being poor?  
And that they are vexed about it,  
Whilst thou merry art without it.

Why are idle brains devising  
How high titles may be gain'd, 4620  
Since, by those poor toys despising,  
Thou hast higher things obtain'd?  
For the man who scorns to crave them  
Greater is than they that have them.

If all men could taste that sweetness  
Thou dost in thy meanness know,  
Kings would be to seek where greatness  
And their honours to bestow ;  
For it such content would breed them  
As they would not think they need them. 4630

And if those who so aspiring  
To the court-preferments be,  
Knew how worthy the desiring  
Those things are enjoy'd by thee,  
Wealth and titles would hereafter  
Subjects be for scorn and laughter.

He that courtly styles affected  
 Should a May-lord's honour have :  
 He that heaps of wealth collected  
 Should be counted as a slave : 4640  
     And the man with few'st things cumbered  
     With the noblest should be numbered.

Thou their folly hast discerned  
 That neglect thy mind and thee ;  
 And to slight them thou hast learned,  
 Of what title e'er they be,  
     That no more with thee obtaineth  
     Than with them thy meanness gaineth.

All their riches, honours, pleasures,  
 Poor unworthy trifles seem, 4650  
 If compared with thy treasures,  
 And do merit no esteem.  
     For they true contents provide thee,  
     And from them can none divide thee.

Whether thrall'd or exiled ;  
 Whether poor or rich thou be ;  
 Whether praised or reviled,  
 Not a rush it is to thee.  
     This nor that thy rest doth win thee,  
     But the mind which is within thee. 4660

Then, oh why so madly dote we  
 On those things that us o'er-load ?  
 Why no more their vainness note we,  
 But still make of them a god ?  
 For, alas ! they still deceive us,  
 And in greatest need they leave us.

Therefore have the Fates provided  
 Well, thou happy swain, for thee,  
 That may'st here so far divided  
 From the world's distractions be. 4670  
 Thee distemper let them never,  
 But in peace continue ever.

In these lonely groves enjoy thou  
 That contentment here begun,  
 And thy hours so pleas'd employ thou  
 Till the latest glass be run.  
 From a fortune so assured  
 By no temptings be allured.

Much good do 't them with their glories,  
 Who in courts of princes dwell. 4680  
 We have read in antique stories  
 How some rose, and how they fell.  
 And 'tis worthy well the heeding ;  
 There's like end where's like proceeding.

Be thou still in thy affection  
 To thy noble mistress true,  
 Let her never-match'd perfection  
 Be the same unto thy view,  
     And let never other beauty  
     Make thee fail in love or duty. 4690

For if thou shalt not estranged  
 From thy course professed be,  
 But remain for aye unchanged,  
 Nothing shall have power on thee.  
     Those that slight thee now shall love thee,  
     And, in spite of spite, approve thee.

So those virtues, now neglected,  
 To be more esteem'd will come ;  
 Yea, those toys so much affected  
 Many shall be wooed from, 4700  
     And the golden age deplored  
     Shall by some be thought restored.

THUS sang the nymph, so rarely well inspired,  
 That all the hearers her brave strains admired.  
 And as I heard by some that there attended,  
 When this her song was finished, all was ended.

## A Postscript

IF any carp for that my younger times  
Brought forth such idle fruit as these slight rhymes,  
It is no matter, so they do not swear  
That they so ill-employed never were.  
Whilst their desires perhaps they looselier spent,  
I gave my heats of youth this better vent,  
And oft by writing thus the blood have tamed,  
Which some with reading wanton lays enflamed.

Nor care I, though their censure some have pass'd  
Because my songs exceed the fiddler's last.           10  
For do they think that I will make my measures  
The longer or the shorter for their pleasures?  
Or maim or curtolize my free invention  
Because fools weary are of their attention?  
No; let them know, who do their length contemn,  
I make to please myself, and not for them.

A Miscellany of Epigrams,  
Sonnets, Epitaphs, and such other  
Verses as were found written with the  
Poem aforegoing.

I. OF THE INVENTION OF THE NINE MUSES.

THE acts of ages past doth Clio write,  
The tragedy's Melpomene's delight,  
Thalia is with comedies contented,  
Euterpe first the shepherd's pipe invented,  
Terpsichore doth song and lute apply,  
Dancing Erato found geometry,  
Calliope on loving verses dwells,  
The secrets of the stars Urania tells,  
Polymnia with choice words the speech doth trim,  
And great Apollo shares with all of them.           10  
Those thrice three feminines we Muses call ;  
But that one masculine is worth them all.

2. OF THE LABOURS OF HERCULES.

FIRST he the strong Nemean lion slew ;  
The many-headed Hydra next o'erthrew.  
The Erymanthian boar he thirdly foils ;  
Then of his golden horns the stag he spoils.

The foul Stymphalian birds he fifthly frayed ;  
 Next he the queen of Amazons o'er-swayed.  
 Then cleansed Augeas' stalls, with filth so full ;  
 And eighthly tamed the untamed bull.  
 He slew proud Diomedes with his horses ;  
 From triple Geryon his rich herd he forces. 10  
 He slew the dragon for the fruit of gold,  
 And made black Cerberus the day behold.  
 These were his twelve stout labours. And they say  
 With fifty virgins in one night he lay.  
 If true it be, 'tis thought he labour'd more  
 In that one act than in the twelve before.

3. BEING LEFT BY A GENTLEMAN IN HIS DINING-  
 ROOM, WHERE WAS NOTHING BUT A MAP OF  
 ENGLAND TO ENTERTAIN HIM, HE THUS  
 TURNED IT INTO VERSE.

FAIR England in the bosom of the seas,  
 Amid her two-and-fifty provinces,  
 Sits like a glorious empress, whose rich throne  
 Great nymphs of honour come to wait upon.  
 First in the height of bravery appears  
 Kent, East-, and South-, and Middle-Saxon shires ;  
 Next, Surrey, Berkshire, and Southampton get,  
 With Dorset, Wilton, and rich Somerset.  
 Then Devon, with the Cornish promontory ;  
 Gloucester and Worcester, fair Sabrina's glory. 10  
 Then Salop, Suffolk, Norfolk large and fair,  
 Oxford and Cambridge, that thrice-learned pair.

Then Lincoln, Derby, Yorkshire, Nottingham,  
 Northampton, Warwick, Stafford, Buckingham.  
 Chester and Lancaster, with herds well stor'd,  
 Huntingdon, Hertford, Rutland, Hereford.  
 Then princely Durham, Bedford, Leicester, and  
 Northumber-, Cumber-, and cold Westmoreland.

Brave English shires, with whom lov'd equally  
 Welsh Monmouth, Radnor, and Montgomery, 20  
 Add all the glory to her train they can ;  
 So doth Glamorgan, Brecknock, Cardigan,  
 Carnarvon, Denbigh, Merionethshire,  
 With Anglesea, which o'er the sea doth rear  
 Her lofty head. And with the first, though last,  
 Flint, Pembroke, and Carmarthen might be plac'd.  
 For all of these unto their power maintain  
 Their mistress England with a royal train.  
 Yea, for supporters at each hand hath she  
 The Wight and Man, that two brave islands be. 30

From these I to the Scottish nymphs had journey'd  
 But that my friend was back again returned,  
 Who having kindly brought me to his home,  
 Alone did leave me in his dining-room,  
 Where I was fain, and glad I had the hap,  
 To beg an entertainment of his map.



4. AN EPITAPH UPON THE RIGHT VIRTUOUS LADY,  
THE LADY SCOTT.

LET none suppose this relic of the just  
Was here wrapt up to perish in the dust ;  
No, like best fruits her time she fully stood,  
Then being grown in faith, and ripe in good,  
With steadfast hope that she another day  
Should rise with Christ, with Death here down she lay.  
And that each part which her in life had grac'd  
Preserv'd might be, and meet again at last,  
The poor, the world, the heavens, and the grave,  
Her alms, her praise, her soul, her body have. 10

5. AN EPITAPH UPON A WOMAN AND HER CHILD,  
BURIED TOGETHER IN THE SAME GRAVE.

BENEATH this marble stone doth lie  
The subject of Death's tyranny—  
A mother, who in this close tomb  
Sleeps with the issue of her womb.  
Though cruelly inclin'd was he,  
And with the fruit shook down the tree,  
Yet was his cruelty in vain,  
For tree and fruit shall spring again.

No. 4. *Ashmolean MS.* 38, *No.* 329 :—

l. 3. 'fruit.'  
l. 4. 'ripe and good.'  
l. 6. 'Shall rise.'

No. 5. *Ash. MS.* 38, *No.* 330 :—

l. 6. 'struck down.'

## 6. A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

So now is come our joyful'st feast ;  
 Let every man be jolly.  
 Each room with ivy-leaves is dress'd,  
 And every post with holly.

    Though some churls at our mirth repine,  
     Round your foreheads garlands twine,  
     Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,  
 And let us all be merry.

Now all our neighbours' chimneys smoke,  
 And Christmas blocks are burning ;           10  
 Their ovens they with baked meats choke,  
 And all their spits are turning.

    Without the door let sorrow lie,  
     And if for cold it hap to die,  
     We'll bury 't in a Christmas pie,  
 And evermore be merry.

Now every lad is wondrous trim,  
 And no man minds his labour ;  
 Our lasses have provided them  
 A bag-pipe and a tabor.                   20

    Young men, and maids, and girls and boys,  
     Give life to one another's joys,  
     And you anon shall by their noise  
 Perceive that they are merry.

Rank misers now do sparing shun,  
Their hall of music soundeth,  
And dogs thence with whole shoulders run,  
So all things there aboundeth.

    The country-folk themselves advance, 29  
    For crowdy-mutton's come out of France;  
    And Jack shall pipe, and Jill shall dance,  
And all the town be merry.

Ned Swash hath fetch'd his bands from pawn,  
And all his best apparel;  
Brisk Nell hath bought a ruff of lawn  
With droppings of the barrel;  
    And those that hardly all the year  
    Had bread to eat or rags to wear,  
    Will have both clothes and dainty fare,  
And all the day be merry. 40

Now poor men to the justices  
With capons make their arrants,  
And if they hap to fail of these  
They plague them with their warrants.  
    But now they feed them with good cheer,  
    And what they want they take in beer,  
    For Christmas comes but once a year,  
And then they shall be merry.

Good farmers in the country nurse  
The poor, that else were undone. 50  
Some landlords spend their money worse,  
On lust and pride at London.

There the roysters they do play,  
 Drab and dice their land away,  
 Which may be ours another day ;  
 And therefore let's be merry.

The client now his suit forbears,  
 The prisoner's heart is eased,  
 The debtor drinks away his cares,  
 And for the time is pleased. 60  
 Though others' purses be more fat,  
 Why should we pine or grieve at that ?  
 Hang sorrow, care will kill a cat,  
 And therefore let's be merry.

Hark how the wags abroad do call  
 Each other forth to rambling ;  
 Anon you'll see them in the hall  
 For nuts and apples scrambling.  
 Hark how the roofs with laughters sound !  
 Anon they'll think the house goes round, 70  
 For they the cellar's depth have found,  
 And there they will be merry.

The wenches with their wassail-bowls  
 About the streets are singing,  
 The boys are come to catch the owls,  
 The wild mare in is bringing.  
 Our kitchen-boy hath broke his box,  
 And to the dealing of the ox  
 Our honest neighbours come by flocks,  
 And here they will be merry. 80

Now kings and queens poor sheepcotes have,  
 And mate with everybody ;  
 The honest now may play the knave,  
 And wise men play at nobby.

    Some youths will now a-mumming go,  
     Some others play at rowland-hoe,  
     And twenty other gameboys moe,  
 Because they will be merry.

Then wherefore in these merry days  
 Should we, I pray, be duller ?  
 No ; let us sing some roundelays  
 To make our mirth the fuller.

90

    And, whilest thus inspir'd we sing,  
     Let all the streets with echoes ring ;  
     Woods, and hills, and everything,  
 Bear witness we are merry.

7. AN EPITAPH UPON THE PORTER OF A PRISON.

HERE lie the bones of him that was of late  
 A churlish porter of a prison gate.  
 Death many an evening at his lodging knock'd,  
 But could not take him, for the door was lock'd ;  
 Yet at a tavern late one night he found him,  
 And getting him into the cellar, drown'd him.  
 On which the world, that still the worst is thinking,  
 Reports abroad that he was kill'd with drinking ;

No. 7. *Asi. MS.* 38, *No.* 331:—  
 l. 1. 'lies.'  
 l. 6. 'a cellar.'  
 l. 8. 'Report.'

Yet let no prisoner, whether thief or debtor,  
 Rejoice, as if his fortune were the better ;                    10  
 Their sorrow's likely to be ne'er the shorter,  
 The warden lives, though death hath took the porter.

## 8. A SONNET UPON A STOLEN KISS.

Now gentle sleep hath closed up those eyes  
 Which waking kept my boldest thoughts in awe,  
 And free access unto that sweet lip lies,  
 From whence I long the rosy breath to draw ;  
 Methinks no wrong it were if I should steal  
 From those two melting rubies one poor kiss ;  
 None sees the theft that would the thief reveal,  
 Nor rob I her of ought which she can miss ;  
 Nay, should I twenty kisses take away,  
 There would be little sign I had done so ;                    10  
 Why then should I this robbery delay ?  
 Oh ! she may wake, and therewith angry grow.  
     Well, if she do, I'll back restore that one,  
     And twenty hundred thousand more for loan.

9. AN EPITAPH UPON ABRAM GOODFELLOW, A  
COMMON ALEHOUSE-HUNTER.

BEWARE thou look not who hereunder lies,  
 Unless thou long to weep away thine eyes.  
 This man, as sorrowful report doth tell us,  
 Was, when he lived, the prince of all Goodfellows.  
 That day he died, it cannot be believed  
 How out of reason all the alewives grieved,

And what abominable lamentation  
 They made at Black-boy and at Salutation ;  
 They howl'd and cried, and ever more among  
 This was the burden of their woeful song : 10  
 Well, go thy ways, thy like hath never been,  
 Nor shall thy match again be ever seen ;  
 For out of doubt now thou art dead and gone,  
 There's many a tap-house will be quite undone,  
 And Death by taking thee did them more scathe,  
 Than yet the alehouse project done them hath.

Lo, such a one but yesterday was he,  
 But now he much is alter'd, you do see.  
 Since he came hither he hath left his riot,  
 Yea, changed both his company and diet, 20  
 And now so civil lies, that to your thinking  
 He neither for an alehouse cares, nor drinking.

10. AN EPITAPH UPON A GENTLEWOMAN WHO  
 HAD FORETOLD THE TIME OF HER DEATH.

HER who beneath this stone consuming lies  
 For many virtues we might memorize.  
 But, most of all, the praise deserveth she  
 In making of her words and deeds agree.  
 For she so truly kept the word she spake,  
 As that with Death she promise would not break.  
 " I shall," quoth she, " be dead before the mid  
 Of such a month." And, as she said, she did.

## II. AN EPITAPH ON A CHILD, SON TO SIR W. H. KNIGHT.

HERE lies, within a cabinet of stone,  
 The dear remainder of a pretty one,  
 Who did in wit his years so far outpass,  
 His parents' wonder and their joy he was.  
 And by his face you might have deemed him  
 To be on earth some heavenly Cherubim.  
 Six years with life he labour'd, then deceased,  
 To keep the sabbath of eternal rest ;  
 So that which many thousand able men  
 Are lab'ring for till threescore years and ten 10  
 This blessed child attained to ere seven,  
 And now enjoys it with the saints of Heaven.

## 12. A SONG.

Now, young man, thy days and thy glories appear  
 Like sunshine and blossoms in spring of the year ;  
 Thy vigour of body, thy spirits, thy wit,  
 Are perfect and sound and untroubled yet.  
 Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
 Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

Mis-spend not a morning so excellent clear ;  
 Never for ever was happiness here.  
 Thy noontide of life hath but little delight,  
 And sorrows on sorrows will follow at night. 10

No. 11. *Ash. MS. 38, No. 251* :—  
 l. 12. 'in heaven.'



Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

That strength and those beauties that grace thee to-  
day

To-morrow may perish and vanish away.

Thy wealth or thy pleasures, or friends that now be,  
May waste or deceive, or be traitors to thee.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

Thy joints are yet nimble, thy sinews unslack,  
And marrow unwasted doth strengthen thy back. 20

Thy youth from diseases preserveth the brain,  
And blood with free passage plumps every vein.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

But trust me it will not for ever be so ;

Those arms that are mighty shall feebler grow.  
And those legs so proudly supporting thee now,  
With age or diseases will stagger and bow.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above. 30

Then all those rare features now graceful in thee  
Shall, ploughed with Time's furrows, quite ruined be.  
And they who admired and loved thee so much,  
Shall loathe, or forget thou hadst ever been such.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

Those tresses of hair which thy youth do adorn  
 Will look like the meads in a winterly morn.  
 And where red and white intermixed did grow,  
 Dull paleness a deadly complexion will show. 40

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
 Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

That forehead imperious, whereon we now view  
 A smoothness and whiteness enamelled with blue,  
 Will lose that perfection which youth now maintains,  
 And change it for hollowness, wrinkles, and stains.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
 Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

Those ears thou with music didst oft entertain,  
 And charm with so many a delicate strain, 50  
 May miss of those pleasures wherewith they are fed,  
 And never hear song more when youth is once fled.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
 Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

Those eyes which so many so much did admire,  
 And with strange affections set thousands on fire,  
 Shut up in that darkness which age will constrain,  
 Shall never see mortal, no, never again.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
 Mind then, oh, mind thou thy Maker above. 60

Those lips whereon beauty so fully discloses  
 The colour and sweetness of rubies and roses,

Instead of that hue will ghastliness wear,  
And none shall believe what perfection was there.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

Thy teeth that stood firmly, like pearls in a row,  
Shall rotten, and scatter'd disorderly grow ;  
The mouth whose proportion earth's wonder was  
thought,

Shall, robb'd of that sweetness, be prized at nought. 70

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

That gait and those gestures that win thee such  
grace

Will turn to a feeble and staggering pace.

And thou that o'er mountains ran'st nimbly to-day,  
Shall stumble at every rub in the way.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

By these imperfections old age will prevail,  
Thy marrow, thy sinews, and spirits will fail. 80  
And nothing is left thee, when those are once spent,  
To give or thyself or another content.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

Those fancies that lull thee with dreams of delight  
Will trouble thy quiet the comfortless night.

And thou that now sleepest thy troubles away,  
Shalt hear how each cock'rel gives warning of day.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above. 90

Then thou that art yet unto thousands so dear,  
Of all shalt despis'd or neglected appear ;  
Which, when thou perceiv'st, though now pleasant it  
be,

Thy life will be grievous and loathsome to thee.  
Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

That lust which thy youth can so hardly forego  
Will leave thee, and leave thee repentance and woe.  
And then in thy folly no joy thou canst have,  
Nor hope other rest than a comfortless grave. 100

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

For next shall thy breath be quite taken away,  
Thy flesh turn'd to dust, and that dust turn'd to clay ;  
And those thou hast loved, and share of thy store,  
Shall leave thee, forget thee, and mind thee no more.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

And yet if in time thou remember not this,  
The slenderest part of thy sorrow it is : 110  
Thy soul to a torture more fearful shall wend,  
Hath ever and ever, and never an end.

Now then, oh, now then, if safety thou love,  
Mind thou, oh, mind thou thy Maker above.

13. A DREAM.

WHEN bright Phœbus at his rest  
Was reposed in the west,  
And the cheerful daylight gone,  
Drew unwelcome darkness on,  
    Night her blackness wrapp'd about me,  
    And within 'twas as without me.

Therefore on my tumbled bed  
Down I laid my troubled head,  
Where mine eyes, inured to care,  
Seldom used to slumb'ring were. 10  
    Yet, o'ertired of late with weeping,  
    Then by chance they fell a-sleeping.

But such visions me diseased,  
As in vain that sleep I seized:  
For I sleeping fancies had,  
Which yet waking make me sad.  
    Some can sleep away their sorrow,  
    But mine doubles every morrow.

Walking to a pleasant grove,  
Where I used to think of love, 20  
I methought a place did view  
Wherein Flora's riches grew.  
    Primrose, hyacinth, and lilies,  
    Cowslips, violets, daffodillies.

There a fountain close beside  
 I a matchless beauty spied.  
 So she lay as if she slept,  
 But much grief her waking kept.  
     And she had no softer pillow  
     Than the hard root of a willow.

30

Down her cheeks the tears did flow,  
 Which a grieved heart did show,  
 Her fair eyes the earth beholding,  
 And her arms themselves enfolding ;  
     She her passion to betoken,  
     Sigh'd as if her heart were broken.

So much grief methought she shew'd,  
 That my sorrow it renew'd ;  
 But when nearer her I went  
 It increased my discontent ;  
     For a gentle nymph she proved  
     Who me long unknown had loved.

40

Straight on me she fix'd her look,  
 Which a deep impression took ;  
 And, " Of all that live," quoth she,  
 " Thou art welcomest to me."  
     Then, misdoubting to be blamed,  
     Thus she spake, as half ashamed.

“ Thee unknown I long affected,  
And as long in vain expected ; 50  
For I had a hopeful thought  
Thou wouldst crave what others sought ;  
And I for thy sake have stay’d  
Many wanton springs a maid.

“ Still, when any wooed me,  
They renew’d the thought of thee ;  
And in hope thou would’st have tried  
Their affections, I denied.  
But a lover forc’d upon me  
By my friends hath now undone me. 60

“ What I waking dared not show,  
In a dream thou now dost know :  
But to better my estate  
Now, alas, it is too late.  
And I, both awake and sleeping,  
Now consume my youth in weeping.”

Somewhat then I would have said,  
But replyings were denied.  
For, methought, when speak I would,  
Not a word bring forth I could. 70  
And as I a kiss was taking,  
That I lost too, by awaking.

14. CERTAIN VERSES WRITTEN TO HIS LOVING  
FRIEND, UPON HIS DEPARTURE.

SWIFT Time, that will by no entreaty stay,  
 Is now gone by, and summons me away ;  
 And what my grief denies my tongue to do,  
 My true affection drives my pen unto.  
 Dear heart, that day and that sad hour is come  
 In which thy face I must be banished from,  
 And go to live where peradventure we  
 Hereafter must for aye divided be.

For, 'twixt our bodies, which now close are met,  
 A thousand hills and valleys shall be set, 10  
 A thousand groves, a thousand weeping springs,  
 And many thousand other envious things,  
 Which, when we are departed, keep us may  
 From coming nearer till our dying day.

So these our hands, which thus each other touch  
 Shall never after this time do so much ;  
 Nor shall these eyes, which yet themselves delight,  
 With mutual gazing on each other light,  
 Be ever raised up again so near  
 To view each other in their proper sphere ; 20  
 Nor e'er again, through those their crystal orbs,  
 Read what sad passion our poor hearts disturbs.

Which when we think upon, we scarce contain  
 Their swelling flood-gates, but a pearly rain  
 Drops from those plenteous springs ; and forth are sent  
 From those sad dungeons where our hearts are pent,  
 So many sighs that, in our parting now,



A storm of passions we must venture through,  
 Whose fury I would stay to see o'erpast  
 Before I went, in spite of all my haste, 30  
 But that I view some tokens which foretell  
 That by delay the floods will higher swell,  
 And, whilst to be divided we are loth,  
 With some worse peril overwhelm us both.

Oh ! rather let us wisely undergo  
 A sorrow that will daily lesser grow,  
 Than venture on a pleasing mischief which  
 Will unawares our honest hearts bewitch,  
 And bring us to such pass at last that we  
 Shall ne'er perceive it till undone we be. 40

I find your love, and so the same approve,  
 That I shall ever love you for that love,  
 And am so covetous of such dear pelf,  
 That for it I could give away myself.  
 And yet I rather would go pine and die  
 For want thereof, than live till you or I  
 Should give or take one dram of that delight  
 Which is another's, and so mar outright  
 Our most unstain'd affection, which hath yet  
 No inclination unto ill in it. 50

Nay, though it more unsufferable were,  
 I would e'en that just liberty forbear  
 Which honest friendship is allow'd to take,  
 If I perceived it me unapt did make  
 To master *my* affections, or to go  
 On those affairs that reason calls me to.

Those parents that discreet in loving be,  
 When on their new-born child a wen they see

Which may perchance in aftertime disgrace  
 The sweet proportion of a lovely face, 60  
 Although it wound their souls to hear the moan,  
 And see the tortures of their pretty one,  
 To weep a little rather are content  
 Whilst he endures the surgeon's instrument,  
 Than suffer that foul blemish there to spread,  
 Until his face be quite disfigured.

So we, betwixt whose souls there is begot  
 That sweet babe, friendship, must beware no spot  
 Through our indulgent indiscretion grow,  
 That may the beauty of our love o'erthrow ; 70  
 Let's rather bear a little discontent,  
 And learn of reason those things to prevent  
 Which mar affection, that our friendship may  
 Wax firmer and more lovely every day.

There is indeed to gentle hearts no smarting  
 That is more torment to them than departing  
 From those they love ; and doubtless if that we  
 Were so united as the married be,  
 Our bodies at our parture would be so  
 As if each of them did a soul forego. 80

But in our flesh we are, and must remain,  
 Perpetual strangers, and ourselves contain  
 From that embrace which marriage love allows,  
 Or else, I injure virtue, you your vows,  
 And for a short unworthy pleasure mar  
 Those rich contentments which eternal are,  
 Of which I am in hope that always we  
 Should in each other's presence guiltless be.  
 But in our absence sure I am we shall

Not only still be innocent of all 90  
 That simple folly and that oversight  
 To which our many frailties tempt us might,  
 But by this means shall also 'scape the blot  
 Wherewith ill tongues our names would seek to spot.

Which if you fear, and would avoid the wrongs  
 That may befall you by malicious tongues,  
 Then seek my absence, for I have in that  
 Unto my friends been too unfortunate ;  
 Yet as I love fair virtue, there is no man  
 E'er heard me boast the favours of a woman 100  
 To her dishonour, neither, by my soul,  
 Was I e'er guilty of an act so foul  
 As some imagine ; neither do I know  
 That woman yet with whom I might be so ;  
 For never kindnesses to me were show'd  
 Which I dared think for evil end bestow'd :  
 Nor ever, to this present hour, did I  
 Turn friendship, favour, opportunity,  
 Or ought vouchsaf'd me, thereby to acquire  
 Those wicked ends which wantons do desire : 110  
 For whensoever lust begun to flame,  
 It was extinguish'd by true love and shame.

But what would this my innocence prevail  
 When your fair name detraction should assail ?  
 And how abhorr'd should I hereafter be  
 If you should suffer infamy by me ?  
 You fear it not one half so much, you say,  
 As you are loth I should depart away,  
 And hap what will, you think to be content  
 Whilst I am here, and you still innocent. 120

Indeed, those friends approve I not which may  
 By every slanderous tongue be talk'd away ;  
 But yet I like not him that will not strive,  
 As much as in him lieth, free to live  
 From giving just occasions of offence,  
 For else he vainly brags of innocence ;  
 And so do we, unless that without blame  
 We purpose with our love to keep our fame.

Then let us pleased part ; and though the dearness  
 Of our affection covets both a nearness 130  
 In mind and body, let us willingly  
 Beget a virtue of necessity.

And since we must compelled be to live  
 By time and place divided, let us strive  
 In the despite of time and distance, so  
 That love of virtue may more perfect grow,  
 And that this separation we lament  
 May make our meeting fuller of content.

Betwixt our bodies, this I'll not deny,  
 There is a dear respective sympathy, 140  
 Which makes us mutually both joy and grieve  
 As there is cause : and farther, I believe  
 That our contentment is imperfect till  
 They have each other in possession still :  
 But that which in us two I love dare name,  
 Is 'twixt our souls, and such a powerful flame,  
 As nothing shall extinguish nor obscure  
 Whilst their eternal substance doth endure ;  
 No, not our absence, nor that mighty space  
 Betwixt my home and your abiding-place. 150

For ere your eyes my eyes had ever seen,

When many thousand furlongs lay between  
 Our unknown bodies, and before that you  
 Had seen my face, or thought the same to view,  
 You most entirely loved me, you say ;  
 Which shows our souls had then found out the way  
 To know each other, and unseen of us,  
 To make our bodies meet unthought of thus.

Then much less now shall hill, or dale, or grove,  
 Or that great tract of ground which must remove 160  
 My body from you, there my soul confine,  
 To keep it back from yours, or yours from mine.  
 Nay, being more acquainted than they were,  
 And active spirits, that can anywhere  
 Within a moment meet, they to and fro  
 Will every minute to each other go,  
 And we shall love with that dear love wherein  
 Will neither be offence nor cause of sin.

Yea, whereas carnal love is ever colder  
 As youth decays, and as the flesh grows older, 170  
 And, when the body is dissolved, must  
 Be buried with oblivion in the dust,  
 We then shall dearer grow, and this our love,  
 Which now imperfect is, shall perfect prove,  
 For there's no mortal power can rob true friends  
 Of that which noblest amity attends,  
 Nor any separation that is able  
 To make the virtuous lovers miserable.  
 Since, when disasters threaten most dejection,  
 Their goodness maketh strongest their affection, 180  
 And that which works in others' loves denial  
 In them more noble makes it by the trial.

'Tis true that when we part we know not whether  
 These bodies shall for ever meet together,  
 As you have said. Yet, wherefore should we grieve,  
 Since we a better meeting do believe?  
 If we did also know that when we die  
 This love should perish everlastingly,  
 And that we must, as brutish creatures do,  
 Lose with our bodies all our dearness too,                   190  
 Our separation then a sorrow were  
 Which mortal heart had never power to bear,  
 And we should faint and die to think upon  
 The passions would be felt when I were gone.  
 But seeing in the soul our love is plac'd,  
 And seeing souls of death shall never taste,  
 No death can end our love—nay, when we die,  
 Our souls, that now in chains and fetters lie,  
 Shall meet more freely to partake that joy,  
 Compar'd to which our friendship's but a toy,                   200  
 And for each bitterness in this our love  
 We shall a thousand sweet contentments prove.

Meanwhile, we that together living may  
 Through human weaknesses be led astray,  
 And unawares make that affection foul  
 Which virtue yet keeps blameless in the soul,  
 By absence shall preserved be as clean  
 As to be kept in our best thoughts we mean,  
 And in our prayers for each other shall  
 Give and receive more kindnesses than all                   210  
 The world can yield us; and when other men  
 Whose love is carnal are tormented when  
 Death calls them hence, because they robbed be

Of all their hope for evermore to see  
 The object of their love, we shall avoid  
 That bitter anguish wherewith they are cloy'd.  
 And whensoever it happens thou or I  
 Shall feel the time approaching us to die,  
 It shall not grieve us at our latest breath  
 To mind each other on the bed of death, 220  
 Because of any oversight or sin  
 Whereof we guilty in our souls have bin ;  
 Nor will death fear us, 'cause we shall perceive  
 That these contentments which we had not leave  
 To take now we are living, shall be gain'd  
 When our imprison'd souls shall be unchain'd :  
 Nay, rather wish to die, we might possess  
 The sweet fruition of that happiness  
 Which we shall then receive in the perfection  
 Of Him that is the fullness of affection. 230

If time prevented not, I had in store  
 To comfort thee so many reasons more,  
 That thou wouldst leave to grieve, although we  
 should

Each other's persons never more behold.  
 But there is hope. And then, that know you may  
 True friends can in their absence find the way  
 To compass their contentments whom they love,  
 You shall ere long the power it hath approve.  
 Meanwhile, you still are dear ; yea, live or die,  
 My soul shall love you everlastingly. 240  
 And howsoever there seem such cause of sorrow,  
 Yet those that part and think to meet to-morrow  
 Death may divide to-night, and as before

Their fear was less, their grief will be the more.  
Since, therefore, whether far I live or nigh  
There is in meeting an uncertainty,  
Let us for that which surest is provide,  
Part like those friends whom nothing can divide ;  
And since we lovers first became, that we  
Might to our power each other's comfort be,        250  
Let's not the sweetness of our love destroy,  
But turn these weepings into tears of joy.  
On which condition I do give thee this,  
To be both mine and sorrow's parting kiss.

PHILARETE.

FINIS



### The Stationer's Postscript.

THERE be three or four songs in this poem aforesaid, which were stolen from the Author, and heretofore impertinently imprinted in an imperfect and erroneous copy, foolishly intituled his "Workes," which the Stationer hath there falsely affirmed to be corrected and augmented for his own advantage, and without the said Author's knowledge, or respect to his credit. If therefore you have seen them formerly in those counterfeit impressions, let it not be offensive that you find them again in their proper places, and in the poem to which they appertain.

*Vale.*

I. M.



## NOTES TO VOL. II

\*.\* Comments followed by "[A. C. S.]" are extracted from Mr. A. C. Swinburne's essay, "George Wither and Charles Lamb," in *Miscellanies*, 1886.



# NOTES

## TO THE READER

p. 4. "Sir Politic Wouldbe," a character in Ben Jonson's *Volpone*.

## FAIR VIRTUE

l. 33. Alresford, seven or eight miles west of Winchester, half-way between there and Bentworth. The wild goose may still be seen there in winter, but not the snow-white swan.

l. 36. *i. e.*, Winchester. King Arthur was crowned at Venta, as it was called.

l. 62. "bulloes." [A dialect form of "bullace," which Brydges printed: Gutch, "bullies."] A wild plum, larger than the sloe.

l. 63. See note on *Shepherd's Hunting*, Ecl. I., l. 22.

l. 86. Cp. *Shepherd's Hunting*, Ecl. IV., ll. 83, 4:—

"Ciel'd so close with boughs all green  
Titan cannot pry between."

l. 93. "laund" = lawn. Cp. Marlowe's *Dido*, Act I. sc. i. l. 207, and note in Mr. A. H. Bullen's edition (1885).

l. 201. "applausive," approbative. It is also used to mean what can be applauded, or is worthy of applause.

l. 216. "respective," respectful.

l. 228. This description of himself is illustrative of his motto, "Nec habeo" (l. 161), "nec careo" (l. 228), "nec curo" (l. 181).

l. 232. "heroës," trisyllabic. So in his *Motto*:—

"I have no large demesnes, or princely rents,  
Like those heroës, nor their discontents."

Cp. also l. 1509, and l. 2982.

- l. 271. "than," then; as elsewhere *passim*.  
 l. 288. "Astrophel," Sir Philip Sidney's pastoral name.  
 l. 289. "Celia," etc. "Laura" is Petrarch's mistress; "Stella," Sidney's. "Delia" perhaps refers to the poems of Samuel Daniel, and "Celia" is sung by more than one.  
 l. 343. "can," *i. e.*, to be skilled in.  
 ll. 353—4. Octavius Gilchrist, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 70, compares these lines to Milton, *Arcades*, l. 22:—

"Mother of a hundred gods,  
 Juno dares not give her odds."

Beyond the rhyme, the resemblance is small; and the rhyme is used elsewhere by Wither.

ll. 379—80. The rhyme "power, your (=yours)," is constantly used by Wither. Cp. ll. 431—2; 1173—4, etc.

l. 427. In Gutch's edition there is a note on the paragraph which begins here, referring to Milton, *L'Allegro*, "Lap me in soft Lydian airs," etc. No doubt this was Lamb's contribution, not Dr. Nott's.

l. 456. "wh'er," whether.

l. 488. "it liketh me." John Fletcher was also writing at this time in the heptasyllabic metre, the *Faithful Shepherdess* being published in 1609—10; later Milton used it for *L'Allegro*, etc. Charles Lamb called it Wither's "darling measure," and wrote his *Farewell to Tobacco* and other poems in imitation.

l. 492. "arts-men," scholars.

l. 534. Gutch's edition compares Horace, *Odes*, Book III., 30, "Exegi monumentum aere perennius."

l. 604. "Sparta's queen," Helen.

ll. 633—4. Another common rhyme of Wither's. Cp. ll. 757, 9.

ll. 677—8: "This resembles Cowley's conceit, 'None but himself can be his parallel.'" (Note in Gutch's edition.)

l. 691. "That"=so that. Cp. l. 2511.

l. 693. "wainlings," *i. e.*, weanlings.

l. 696. "Broom-leas," leas covered with broom. This word seems to have puzzled both Gutch, who printed

"Broom-leaze," and Brydges, who copied the ancient form of the 1622 edition, "Brome-leaze."

l. 767. This is another form of *Inter Equitand: Palinod*: first printed in the 1615 (private) edition of *Fidelia*, and reprinted in the 1617 and 1619 editions and 1620 ("Workes"). See vol. i., p. 140, and notes thereon.

l. 1031. See the critical note at the foot of text. I understand "methinketh" conditionally; "if I think I should go, I cannot." Perhaps "should I go" might be read.

l. 1084. "Meanly fring'd." Dr. Nott pencilled on Gutch's proof, "This word should be explained; I think it signifies interveniently, intermediately." Lamb replied, "Meanly is simply *in a mean*, or *in moderation*." [A. C. S.] Gutch, however, preferred to print, "Meanly here signifies interveniently; intermediately; as veiling the lustre of the eyes."

ll. 1109—10. "lakes . . . makes." For the plural noun with the singular verb, cp. ll. 1159—60; 2019, etc.

l. 1184. "that transformed girl." Arachne of Colophon boasted of her skill in needlework, and challenged Athena to a competition; being defeated, she was changed for her presumption into a spider. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book VI., ll. 1—69.

l. 1514. "his sisters," the Muses.

l. 1558. "flags too low." Cp. *Shepherd's Hunting*, Ecl. IV., l. 326, and note thereon; and *Fidelia*, l. 316.

l. 1712. "Jewish fasting-spittles." Dr. Nott wrote, "Explain this term."—"Leave it out," replied Lamb. [A. C. S.] There is a curious note in Topsell's *Serpents*:—"If the fasting-spittle of a Man fall into the jaws of a Serpent, he certainly dyeth thereof." Cp. Herrick, *Hesperides*, The Fairie Temple, l. 117, "Their holy oil, their fasting-spittle."

l. 1802. This seems to indicate that Philarete met his mistress in his wanderings in Ireland. See Introduction, p. xxi.

l. 1812. "endured." So printed both in the 1622 and 1633 editions. Lamb's suggestion, "endeared," recorded by Mr. Swinburne, is obvious, and almost certainly right.

ll. 1813—4. "Cytherea's joy," Adonis; "the sweet self-loving boy," Narcissus.

- l. 1820. Daphne.  
 l. 1821. Danaë.  
 ll. 1823—4. Hero and Leander.  
 ll. 1835—62. One of Lamb's "two passages of pre-  
 eminent merit." The other is ll. 1979—90, etc.  
 ll. 1889—90. Cp. "Shall I wasting in despair," ll. 21  
 and 22 :—

Be she with that goodness blest  
 Which may merit name of best."  
 (1615 edition.)

ll. 1893—98. In a note at the end of his essay on Wither, Lamb, in quoting these six lines, says, "What metre could go beyond these?" Against ll. 1897—8, Mr. Swinburne notes Lamb's remark, "Two eminently beautiful lines."

l. 1909. "Idea." "Drayton before him [Wither] had shadowed his mistress under the name of Idea."—Lamb's essay on Wither. Cp. l. 1934.

ll. 1935—6. The "happy swain" is William Browne, whose *Britannia's Pastorals* appeared in 1613 and 1616. This couplet must have been added later, when Wither came to London.

ll. 1937—8. Dr. Nott suggested Lodge and Sidney; Lamb wrote "Qu. Spenser and Sidney"; the latter Mr. Swinburne, in recording the note, considers "the more plausible conjecture, as the date of Lodge's popularity was out, or nearly so, before Wither began to write." Gutch, however, printed Dr. Nott's suggestion.

l. 1962. "it"=its. See *Fidelia*, l. 1078.

l. 2100. "undistained," undefiled. See note on *Fidelia*, l. 584.

l. 2191. "The travels of Coriate and Lithgow were at this time highly popular."—Gutch's edition.

l. 2226. Aeneas.

l. 2231. "Leda's daughter" was Helen. The "Phrygian guest" is of course Paris.

l. 2262. "hour" is here, as constantly, a dissyllable.

l. 2395. This sonnet, perhaps the second best known song of Wither's, first appeared, in a slightly different form, at the end of the 1615 *Fidelia*. See vol. i., p. 141.

l. 2501. "Argus" had a hundred eyes; he was set



by Juno to watch Io, whom Jupiter had changed into a heifer. The old editions print "Argos."

l. 2511. "That" = so that. Cp. l. 691.

l. 2668. The reference is to the twelve Labours of Hercules.

l. 2670. Diana was so named on earth; in heaven she was Luna, the "queen of night," and Hecate in the lower regions.

l. 2727. As commentary on the passage that begins here, Lamb transcribed an entire ode ("of the Love and the Beauties of Astrea") from Joshua Sylvester's translation of Du Bartas' *Divine Weekes*. (See Mr. Swinburne's essay.) It was printed by Gutch in its entirety.

l. 2835. "Yet no such." Dr. Nott suggested this should be "not such"; Lamb, who never failed to make a pun on the Doctor's name, retorted smartly. See Mr. Swinburne's essay.

l. 2982. "heroës." See note on l. 232.

l. 2988. "cent or gleek." Cent was a game of cards, supposed to be of Spanish origin, and to resemble picquet: it was so called because 100 was the game. Cotgrave describes another game called "Mariage," as "resembling (somewhat) our Saint."

Gleek was also a game of cards, played by three persons, and varied according to the stakes. Cp. Jonson, *The Devil an Ass*, V. ii., "I am for threepenny gleek your man."

l. 3011. "Old Pygmalion's picture" was rather a piece of sculpture; Ovid records that he decorated his ivory Galatea with gems and purple robes, but not that he tinted his Venus.

l. 3070. "sample" perhaps means "sampler" here.

ll. 3169—74. "The rich Molucchi." The Moluccas, now the Spice Islands, are in the East Indian Archipelago; first discovered in 1521 by the Portuguese, who were driven out by the Dutch in 1607.

"The Iberians" are the Spaniards.

l. 3190. Cp. Shakespeare, *Lucrece*, stanza 96, ll. 6—8. It is somewhat unfair to say that Lucrece killed herself "to purchase fame."

ll. 3227 ff. Dr. Nott wrote, "The beauty of this passage is too apparent to need a comment."—"Then why give it one?" retorted Lamb. [A. C. S.] Gutch nevertheless printed Dr. Nott's superfluous remark.

l. 3288. "Apollo's son." Dr. Nott, mistrusting his scholarship, wrote "Æsculapius?" [A. C. S.]

l. 3373. For another version of this song, see vol. i., p. 138, and notes thereon.

l. 3413. This sonnet became popular, and was printed in many forms, and occasionally abbreviated, in the anthologies of the latter half of the seventeenth century, such as Cotgrave's *Wit's Interpreter* and the *Marrow of Compliments*, both issued in 1655.

l. 3425. This unmetrical line is so printed in all editions. The version in the *Wit's Interpreter* corrects the rhythm by reading "sweetness." Gutch printed it as it stands, without noting the missing syllable. Sir Egerton Brydges observed the omission, and proposed to read, "Such equal *charms* sweet Venus gave" (!) If "sweet" here be an epithet of Venus, I suggest that the word "sweet" should be repeated, "Such equal sweet sweet Venus gave." It can be easily imagined that one "sweet" might be omitted in printing. Otherwise, the early correction, "sweetness," naturally carries greater weight; Cotgrave's version, however, is the same as Wither's in scarcely two lines.

l. 3686. "tinding" = kindling.

l. 3889. "set up my rest," a metaphor from the game of Primero, meaning to make up one's mind. Cp. *Romeo and Juliet*, Act IV. sc. v. l. 6.

l. 4004. "Vulcan's lovely wife," Aphrodite, or Venus, as Wither would doubtless call her. The celebrated painting of Apelles represented her as issuing from the waves, and wringing her tresses on her shoulder.

l. 4042. "perjured Goodwin's lands;" the Goodwin Sands, off Deal, notorious for the danger they offer to vessels. One theory of their origin is that there was an island called Lomea, formerly the estate of Earl Goodwin or Godwin, which was washed away by the sea in 1097. Another tradition relates that in the time of William Rufus or Henry I., they were caused by an inundation of the sea which swept over a great part of Flanders and the Low Countries. [See Hasted's *Kent*.]

The epithet "perjured," applied to Earl Goodwin, may be explained by a tale told by William of Malmesbury. The Earl, sitting at table with his father-in-law the King, said, "If the God of Heaven be true and just,

let not this morsel of bread pass through my body, if I ever so much as thought of working thy destruction." On swallowing the bread he immediately choked.

l. 4096. "brawl," a French dance. See the description in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act III. sc. i. ll. 6 ff., and cp. *The Malcontent* (in Dodsley's *Old Plays*), Act IV. sc. ii. :—

"*Aurelia*. We have forgot the brawl.

*Ferrardo*. So soon? 'tis wonder.

*Guerrino*. Why, 'tis but two singles on the left, two on the right, three doubles forward, a traverse of six round; do this twice, three singles side, a galliard trick of twenty, corrant pace; a figure of eight, three singles broken down, come up, meet two doubles, fall back, and then honour."

l. 4161. Fantastic shapes in which to print songs and poems were much in favour at the time. Herbert, in the *Country Parson*, printed one in the shape of a church-porch; and in Sylvester's translation from Du Bartas there are pyramids and altars, etc.

ll. 4297—4302. This is perhaps an exaggeration as to the date of the development of the poet's amatory powers, but there is without doubt a hint that he was quite young when he began to compose.

l. 4305. This line is perhaps evidence that the greater part, at least, of *Fair Virtue* was an early piece of work.

l. 4578. See note on l. 1909.

l. 4638. "May-lord," a young man chosen to preside over May-day festivities. A well-known May-lord is Ralph, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Cp. Phineas Fletcher, *The Purple Island*, I. ii. :—

"The shepherd boys, who with the Muses dwell  
Met in the plain their May-lords new to chose."

## A POSTSCRIPT

l. 13. "curtolize," curtail. In Murray's *New English Dictionary*, this is the earliest reference given for the word.

A MISCELLANY OF EPIGRAMS,  
ETC.

I.

ll. 6, 7. Erāto, not "Erāto," was the Muse of amatory verse, not geometry; nor is "dancing" a suitable epithet for Erato, it should be applied rather to Terpsichore; while Calliope presided over heroic, not "loving," poetry.

l. 9. "Polymnia," Polymneia, or Polyhymnia, Muse of Rhetoric.

2.

l. 4. "The stag" of Mount Maenalus in Arcadia.

l. 7. Wither gives the name as "Ægeas."

l. 11. "The dragon" that guarded the golden apples of the Hesperides.

3.

A poetical catalogue typical of Wither.

l. 6. *i. e.*, Kent, Essex, Sussex, and Middlesex.

l. 7. "Southampton," the old name for Hampshire.

6.

This description of Christmas is full of allusions to ancient games, etc., about which little is recorded.

l. 30. "crowdy-mutton," according to Halliwell, means a fiddler. A "crowd" was a kind of viol.

l. 63. From Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, Act I. sc. iii. *finis*.

l. 75. Gutch notes, "a credible person, born and brought up in a village near Bury St. Edmunds. . . informed Mr. Brand [author of *Popular Antiquities*] that, when

he was a boy, there was a rural custom there among the youths, of hunting owls and squirrels on Christmas day."

l. 76. "The wild-mare" was a kind of see-saw. Cp. *II. King Henry IV.*, Act II. sc. iv., where Falstaff says, "he . . . rides the wild-mare with the boys."

l. 78. "the dealing of the ox." Gutch suggests "kneeling," and again quotes Brand, who records a superstition in North Devon that oxen are always to be found on their knees at twelve o'clock on Christmas night. But there is no textual authority for this emendation, and the phrase remains unexplained.

l. 84. "noddy," a game of cards, supposed to resemble cribbage.

l. 86. "rowland-hoe." Halliwell only says "a Christmas game," but gives no description of it.

## 8.

This beautiful sonnet has been undeservedly overlooked by anthologists.

## 9.

l. 8. "Black-boy and Salutation" are no doubt names of ale-houses. Both names were applied later to London taverns. See Hutton's *Literary Landmarks*.

## 12.

l. 4. "untroubled," a tetrasyllable. Cp. "feebler" (trisyllabic) in l. 26 of this song, and *The Shepherd's Hunting*, Ecl. IV., l. 372, and note thereon, vol. i., p. 190.

## 14.

This may be considered as epilogue to *Fair Virtue*, or perhaps as prologue to *Fidelia*.

l. 113. "prevail" = avail, as often.

l. 223. "fear" = frighten.

## THE STATIONER'S POSTSCRIPT

This note, though signed I[ohn]. M[arriot], was doubtless written by Wither himself, disclaiming the pirated "Workes" issued by Thomas Walkley.

## APPENDIX A

[See vol. i., *Introduction*, p. xxiii, note.]

- (a) Internal evidence for 1588 as the year of the poet's birth.
1. *Salt upon Salt*, 1658.  
"The round I stand on maketh ten times seven."
  2. *Petition and Narrative*, 1658.  
"Of seven times ten, to spend years ten and seven  
In asking for mine own I have been driven."
  3. *Epistolium-Vagum-Prosa-Metricum*, 1659.  
". . . the seventieth year of my age being past."
  4. *Speculum Speculativum*, 1660.  
". . . at seventy years and two."
  5. *Crums and Scraps*, 1661.  
"Deserving better than that lie I should  
Within a jail at seventy-three years old."
  6. *Memorandum to London*, 1665.  
"That year [1625] I having lived till the sun  
Had thrice twelve times quite through the zodiac  
run."
  7. *Fragmenta Prophetica*, 1669. Legend round  
portrait :—

"Vera. Effigies. Georgei. Wither. Armiger.  
Qui. Obiit. Año. 1667. Aetat. Su. 79."

(b) Internal evidence for 1590.

1. *Westrow Revived*, 1653.

" . . . when much famed Elizabeth  
Reigned here, in whose time though I drew my  
breath  
Not thirteen years . . ."

2. *Fragmenta Prophetica*, 1669.

"He [Wither] was thirteen years old when Queen  
Elizabeth reigned" [*i. e.*, died].

## APPENDIX B

[See vol. i., *Introduction*, p. xxiv, note.]

Internal evidence that *Abuses Stript and Whipt* was published before 1613.

1. Dating of William Holle's portrait of Wither.
2. References in *Epithalamia*, published in 1612.
3. *Se Defendendo*, 1643.

"It is now above thirty years since I first began to suffer for my good affection to the public welfare."

4. *Vox Pacifica*, 1645.

Wither says he "hath this freedom used nigh five and thirty years."

5. *Prosopopeia Britannica*, 1648.

"Hast thou nigh forty years been vex'd and griev'd,  
By this dull generation unreliev'd?"

6. *The Perpetual Parliament*, 1652.

"For as it by my journal-books appears,  
Somewhat above the term of forty years  
I have been on the hills of contemplation,  
A voluntary watchman for this nation."

7. *Salt upon Salt*, 1659.

". . . these monsters for whose overthrow  
I was engag'd nigh fifty years ago."



8. *Speculum Speculativum*, 1660.  
 "I fifty years have served them" [his countrymen].
9. *Crums and Scraps*, 1661.  
 "More to their shame than mine, who now have here  
 Been their remembrancer nigh fifty year."
10. *The Prisoner's Plea*, 1661.  
 "God hath now preserved me about fifty years in  
 being a remembrancer to myself and others."
11. *A Second Course of Scraps and Crums*, 1661.  
 "Nigh fifty years acquainted with the power  
 Of jailers . . ."
12. *A Warning Piece to London*, 1662—3.  
 "In sixteen hundred ten and one  
 I notice took of public crimes."
- There are more than these, but they are less definite.

## APPENDIX C

### THE WILL OF GEORGE WITHER THE ELDER

(Extracted from the District Registry of the Probate Division of the High Court of Justice at Winchester.)

The last will and testament of George Withers, gent., late of Bentworth, deceased.

Particulars concerning the last will and testament of George Withers of Bentworth, if it should please God to prevent a more and full declaration or expression of his mind. After my soul and body recommended to God in Christ Jesus in whom I trust for my eternal salvation, and the recommendation of my dear wife and children for whom I am much bound to praise him and in my trouble pray to his gracious providence and protection :

Concerning my worldly goods this is my mind and will. First I give and bequeath to my daughter Mary the sum of fourscore pounds of good and lawful money of England. Item, to my daughter Ann the same sum of fourscore pounds. Item, to my daughter Polypena<sup>1</sup> the same sum of fourscore pounds. Item, to my son James the same sum of fourscore pounds. Item, to my son Antony the sum of twenty pounds. Item, to my daughter Jane the sum of five pounds. Item, I give to my wife Mary<sup>2</sup> Withers

<sup>1</sup> Polyxena, whose name is spelled in various ways.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i., *Introduction*, p. xvi.

the sum of twenty pounds to be disposed of as she shall see good. These legacies duly paid within 4 or 5 years as I may hereafter more expressly mention, if God shall permit, and my funeral fitly performed, I give all that shall remain of my lands and goods to my deserving and beloved wife Mary and to my beloved and eldest son George,<sup>1</sup> whom I do by these make and appoint the executors of this my will and testament. Item, I do give unto Thomas Martin<sup>2</sup> and his three children an ewe sheep.

dely<sup>d</sup>. with mine own hand the fourteenth day of October, 1629.  
Geo. Wythers.<sup>3</sup>

Subscribed in the presence of  
Thomas Sparke  
the mark of Antony + Bulbeck.

<sup>1</sup> The poet.

<sup>2</sup> A son-in-law, who married Elizabeth, daughter of the testator.

<sup>3</sup> He died just a month later—November 17, 1629. The will was proved in 1630.



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