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THE ALDINE EDITION
OF THE BRITISH
POETS



THE POETICAL WORKS OF ALEXANDER POPE
IN THREE VOLUMES
VOL. I





A. Pope

THE POETICAL WORKS OF
ALEXANDER POPE

A NEW EDITION IN THREE VOLUMES
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PREFACE.

IN preparing the present edition of Pope's Poems, no pains have been spared to make the text as accurate as possible. The labours of the late Mr. Carruthers, Professor Ward, and Messrs. Elwin and Courthope, have considerably lightened the Editor's task.

Pope's own notes are distinguished by the initial P., and where notes are taken from previous editions, due acknowledgment is made. Those which are unsigned are the Editor's own.

In the matter of orthography it has been thought best to conform as much as possible to modern usage, and also to avoid the apostrophe where the metre was not endangered by so doing.

G. R. D.

HAMPSTEAD,

October, 1891.



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MEMOIR.

ALLEXANDER POPE was born in London, on the 21st of May, 1688, twelve years before the death of Dryden, the great poet whom he was destined to succeed and to rival.

His parents were devout Roman Catholics, and their boy, an only son, was almost wholly educated under private tuition. For a short time he attended a school at Twyford, and was then sent to one in London; but according to his own report he learned nothing at either. All the teaching he ever had "extended," he said, "a very little way," and he had the additional and far greater disadvantage of a crippled and feeble body, that made his life one "long disease." When Pope was twelve years old, his father left London to reside at Binfield, near Windsor, and there the youth who "lisp'd in numbers," discovered an ardent desire for knowledge. When in his fifteenth year, he went to London to learn French and Italian, but did not make much progress in either language during the few months of his London sojourn. Voltaire once said that Pope knew nothing of French; but if he was unable to speak the language, he appears to have read it

without difficulty, and was certainly familiar with Boileau, whose discretion as a satirist he would have been wise to follow. After this he taught himself both Greek and Latin. "I did not follow the grammar," he said to his friend Spence, "but rather hunted in the authors for a syntax of my own, and then began translating any parts that pleased me particularly in the best Greek and Latin poets, and by that means formed my taste, which, I think, verily about sixteen was very nearly as good as it is now." Pope adds that in his "great reading period" at Binfield he went through all the best critics, almost all the English, French, and Latin poets of any name; the minor poets; Homer and some other of the greater Greek poets in the original, and Tasso and Ariosto in translations. His studies were desultory, but they were so severe that at seventeen he thought himself dying. Idleness and horse exercise, the pleasant remedies prescribed for him, happily proved successful, and he was able before long to return to his pursuits, and to poetry, the dearest of them all. When very young he had been taken to Will's coffee-house to see Dryden, and "who does not wish," says Dr. Johnson, "that Dryden could have known the value of the homage that was paid him, and foreseen the greatness of his young admirer?" Cowley said that the perusal of the "Faerie Queene" made him "irrecoverably a poet." That wonderful poem also charmed the youthful fancy of Pope, but it was Dryden and not Spenser who was destined to be his master, and he expressly states, as Gray stated himself at a later period, that he learnt versification wholly from Dryden's works. For the richer melody, if less regular verse of the Elizabethans, Pope had a regardless ear. He preferred the

smoothness of a well-worn road to the beauty and the difficulty of a rugged mountain track.

Apart from his weak health, Pope's boyish days and early manhood were singularly fortunate. He was tenderly nurtured, and repaid his parents' love with the warmest affection; he never suffered want, and had it not been for a painfully irritable temperament, and the overweening desire for fame that led him into crooked paths, his life might have been as happy as it was successful. He was yet in his teens when he discovered his vocation. Literature in the earlier years of the eighteenth century was a more prosperous calling than at a later period, when the scholar had to endure "toil, envy, want, the patron and the jail." Cut off from public life by his creed as well as by physical infirmities, it was Pope's sole ambition to be a poet and man of letters, and no one ever pursued his aim with more persistent determination. The genius of the precocious youth was soon recognized. "Knowing Walsh," the best critic in the nation according to Dryden, gave him advice and praise; Sir William Trumbull, formerly Secretary of State, who lived in Pope's neighbourhood, became, so far as youth and age can live together, a warm friend and companion, and Wycherley, the famous and dissolute Restoration dramatist, now an old man, was another and less trustworthy associate. This connection however was not of very long duration, and was severed when Pope was twenty-two. Wycherley asked Pope to correct his poems, and, if we may believe the poet's story, quarrelled with him in consequence, but in this instance as in many other cases, the version of facts given in Pope's correspondence may be in large measure delusive. It is quite possible that Wycherley

resented the young poet's unsparing correction of his contemptible verses, but we neither know the amount of provocation given by Pope, nor the spirit in which it was received by Wycherley. All we can say is, that there was a quarrel, the first literary quarrel of many with which Pope is to be credited.

According to his own account he began his poetical career at sixteen with the composition of the "Pastorals." It is certain that one of them was in existence when he was eighteen, and according to Tonson the publisher, it was "generally approved of by the best judges in poetry," but the "Pastorals" were not published until May, 1709, when Pope was two and twenty. It is difficult for the modern student of poetry to understand the appreciation once awarded to these frigid and artificial productions. They are, as Mr. Leslie Stephen truly says, "mere school-boy exercises," and "represent nothing more than so many experiments in versification," but they were not so regarded in Pope's day, and won the praise of men whose approbation was worth having. "It is no flattery at all to say," Walsh wrote to Wycherley, "that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age." The "Pastorals" are chiefly remarkable for the smoothness of versification which is Pope's metrical characteristic. In the first decade of the eighteenth century, flowing lines like these may well have been read with admiration :—

"No more the mounting larks, while Daphne sings,
Shall listening in mid air suspend their wings;
No more the birds shall imitate her lays,
Or hushed with wonder hearken from the sprays;
No more the streams their murmur shall forbear
A sweeter music than their own to hear;
But tell the reeds and tell the vocal shore
Fair Daphne's dead, and music is no more!"

With the "Pastorals" Pope started on the road to fame, and so rapid was his progress, that in five or six years he was universally regarded as the greatest of living poets. Addison was then at the height of his reputation. His "Cato" appeared upon the stage in 1713, and won a triumphant reception, due more to politics than to poetry. "The Whigs applauded every line in which liberty was mentioned, as a satire on the Tories, and the Tories echoed every clap to show that the satire was unfelt."¹ Before this date, however, Addison had discovered where his true genius lay, and one of the sweetest of English humourists had charmed every lover of fine literature by his exquisite papers in the "Tatler" and "Spectator." In 1711 Pope published his "Essay on Criticism," which was probably written two years earlier, and Addison, whose word was law among the wits of the town, praised the poem in the "Spectator." "There are an hundred faults in this thing," said Goldsmith of his immortal "Vicar of Wakefield," and the words may be applied with greater truth to Pope's "Essay," but the faults will not obscure the merit of this remarkable piece. A severe judgment has indeed been passed upon the poem by more than one modern critic, and not wholly without justice. Pope's phraseology is often slovenly, and some passages defy grammatical construction. Commonplace lines too are frequent, and there is not even a couplet that rises out of rhetoric into poetry, but the fact remains that the writer's consummate skill in expressing what everybody knows has given a lasting life to the epigrams in this poem. Indeed, there is no poet in the language,

¹ Johnson's "Life of Addison."

with the exception of Shakespeare, who has written so many lines apt for quotation and continually quoted, and that Pope should have displayed this merit in a youthful work is a noteworthy illustration of precocious genius. Two years after the publication of the "Essay" appeared "Windsor Forest," which is modelled on Sir John Denham's "Cooper's Hill," a poem still remembered for an apostrophe addressed to the most famous of rivers:—

"O, could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep yet clear, though gentle yet not dull,
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full."

Pope himself never composed easier lines than these, which were written in the days when Cowley, a far greater poet than Denham, was exhibiting a learned incapacity for writing simply, and instructing other poets how to entangle their verses with obscurity and conceits. The best that can be said for "Windsor Forest" is that it contains a few happily-turned lines, but it is marred by feeble pedantry, and displays Pope's inability to deal poetically with the common objects of nature. It pleased Swift, who recommended the poem to Stella; but Swift, like Pope, was emphatically a poet of the town. The "Temple of Fame," founded upon Chaucer's "House of Fame," was a greater failure still, but in 1714 the publication of the "Rape of the Lock" in an enlarged form (the first edition had appeared in 1712), exhibited the genius of Pope in its brightest and liveliest mood. The origin of the "Rape of the Lock" may be stated in a word or two. Lord Petre having cut off a lock of Arabella Fermor's hair, the lady was offended, and a quarrel arose in consequence between the two families. Pope

was asked by a common friend to act the part of a peacemaker, and to this trifling cause we are indebted for the most charming heroi-comical poem in the language, or, by the general consent of critics, in any language. The wit, the fancy, and the form are alike exquisite, and one cannot but regret that the contemptuous treatment of women which degrades so much of Pope's poetry is allowed also to taint this delightful work. That Miss Fermor, the heroine, whom the poet wished to propitiate, should have objected to some of his coarse allusions is not surprising. Yet Pope affected to be surprised. "The celebrated lady herself," he wrote, "is offended, and which is stranger, not at herself, but me. Is not this enough to make a writer never be tender of another's character or fame?" Two more poems written in this early and successful period may be mentioned here, the "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady," and "Eloisa to Abelard."

For felicity of language, and for the eloquent rhetoric which may readily be mistaken for imaginative verse, these poems claim no slight distinction. It is impossible to read them without feeling the mastery over his instrument exercised by the poet. The "Elegy" was formerly regarded as a story with a strong foundation in fact. The lady according to one report was in love with Pope, and would have married him, but her guardian, thinking such a match beneath her, sent her to a convent, and "a noose and not a sword put an end to her life." Other strange reports of this poetically famous lady are related by Pope's biographers, but an examination of the Caryll correspondence by the late Mr. Dilke has proved that these tales are "fantastic fictions," and that the poem is a poetical invention. The "Eloisa,"

despite the objectionable passages justly condemned by Hallam, is in a higher strain, and is almost the only illustration in Pope's verse of an emotion that verges upon pathos. "The words," says Hazlitt, "are burning sighs breathed from the soul of love," but in reading them the consciousness of the poet's art dries up the fount of tears. Whether the Latin Letters upon which Pope founded his epistle are authentic has been considered doubtful, but for the purposes of poetry their genuineness is unimportant. The misfortunes of the two distinguished lovers are recorded in history, and the facts of the story afford sufficient ground for the exercise of the poet's imagination.

And now, before recording the event in Pope's poetical life which brought him fortune as well as fame, it will be well to mention a few personal incidents in his biography.

Queen Anne, intellectually one of the dullest of women, has by the irony of fate had her name inseparably linked to the wits of her age. Addison and Swift, Prior and Gay, Steele, Arbuthnot and Pope, and other writers of smaller mark, are known as the "Queen Anne men," though most of them lived far into the Georgian period. When the queen died in 1714, Pope was twenty-six; he had won his first laurels, and was full of the consciousness of power. We are to think of him as still living with his parents at Binfield, but his name was now well known in the town, and there he was sometimes to be seen at the coffee-houses. Addison was then the literary dictator at Button's, as Dryden had been at Will's, and Steele, one of the most impulsive, reckless, and sweetest-natured of men, brought his illustrious friend and Pope together. The acquaintance began in 1712. "I

liked him then," Pope said, "as well as I liked any man, and was very fond of his conversation." When "Cato" appeared, a year later, Pope wrote the Prologue, and for a time the poet who had previously associated with the Tories at Will's, mingled with the Whig wits at Addison's coffee-house, saying that he scorned narrow souls of all parties. The friendship with Addison was, however, soon clouded. Dennis the critic, a man of vigorous sense, but cursed with a vile temper, having abused "Cato," Pope thought to do Addison a good turn by abusing *him*. At the same time, he wished to revenge a private quarrel of his own. Dennis, after the coarse fashion of the age, but not without considerable provocation, had sneered at Pope's deformity, and now his violent attack on "Cato" gave Pope the opportunity he desired. He therefore published a "Narrative" descriptive of the critic's frenzy, which Addison, far from approving, reprobated in strong language, and thus there began a breach between the two wits, which culminated in the most brilliant piece of satire that ever fell from the pen of Pope. His prose "Narrative" is both coarse and dull, but no satirist ever stung more sharply in verse, and the character of Atticus is destined to live with the fame of Addison.

Another indication of a misunderstanding between these rival wits seems to have occurred with regard to "The Rape of the Lock." The first issue of the poem was without the machinery of the sylphs and gnomes, afterwards suggested to Pope by a book on the mysteries of the Rosicrucians. He mentioned to Addison his design to enlarge the poem, and Addison, who could not anticipate the exquisite art by which the poet would enhance its beauty, naturally advised him to let the

“delicious little thing” alone. This advice, which was certainly given in good faith, made Pope think, either at the time or afterwards, that Addison was jealous of his fame. The breach between the two was destined to widen later on.

Pope’s literary jealousy was the source of another quarrel. Ambrose Philips, whose occasional verses gained for him unjustly the *sobriquet* of “Namby-Pamby,” having written some feeble pastorals, which were highly praised in the “Guardian,” Pope was aggrieved that his rival should be described as the chief pastoral poet since Spenser, while his own name was not mentioned. His “Pastorals” had appeared in the same volume with those of Philips, and it vexed him all the more to be told in the “Guardian” that there had been only four true masters of pastoral poetry in above two thousand years—Theocritus and Virgil, Spenser and Philips. Pope therefore hit upon a strange device for asserting his claims. He wrote a fresh paper on pastoral poetry, in which, apparently at his own expense, he gave high praise to Philips, while quoting at the same time some of his most absurd passages, and the best extracts he could select from his own. The paper was sent to the “Guardian” anonymously, and inserted by Steele, who failed to see its purport. Philips was indignant, and hanging up a birch rod at Button’s, swore that if Pope ventured to the coffee-house, he would chastise him with it. “The poet,” writes Mr. Courthope, “may have thought he was likely to keep his word; at any rate, about this period he apparently discontinued his attendance at the club, and began to resume the company of his old associates at Will’s.” Pope never forgot an enemy, and

Ambrose Philips with his red stockings lives in the poet's verse, but he did not admit the threat of chastisement, and writes that Philips never offered him any indecorum. It is not likely that Pope would have changed his course on account of a threat, for he never gave any sign of bodily fear, and was, as Mr. Swinburne has truly said, "as bold as a lion."

Among Pope's early acquaintances were the two beautiful sisters, Teresa and Martha Blount. They were girls, or little more than girls, when he first knew them, and the friendship with the younger sister continued through life. Sickly and deformed though he was, Pope had a poet's sensitiveness to female beauty, and, despite an intellectual contempt for women, understood the art of making his society agreeable to them. The sisters, who sprang from an old Roman Catholic family, resided at Mapledurham, a charming spot upon the Thames within ten miles of Binfield, and there can be little doubt that in their society some of the poet's happiest days were passed. His letters to them are filled with the fine sentiments and stilted compliments that deform all his correspondence, but in spite of many absurdities it is easy to see that Pope entertained a genuine regard for these friends of his youth. More than friendship there could not be, for with all his gallantry and protestations of love, the poet knew but too well that he was not a marrying man. Among the ailments that afflicted him from his boyhood was headache, for which, after the fashion of the day, he tried the waters of Bath, and to that beautiful town, whose circus, according to Landor, has nothing in Rome or in the world to equal it, the poet generally returned year by year. From

Bath, on the occasion of his first visit in 1714, he wrote to Martha Blount in his highflown style, saying, "I never thought so much of yourself and your fair sister as since I have been four-score miles distant from you. At Binfield I look upon you as good neighbours, at London as pretty kind of women, and here as divinities, angels, goddesses, or what you will. In like manner, I never knew at what a rate I valued your life till you were upon the point of dying. If Mrs. Teresa and you will but fall sick every season, I shall certainly die for you."

It is difficult to believe that any sensible woman would be gratified with such compliments, but Pope seemed to think that to flatter was to please, and Lady Wortley Montagu, whom he afterwards abused so shamelessly, must have laughed in her sleeve when, after an evening spent in her company, the poet wrote: "Books have lost their effect upon me; and I was convinced since I saw you that there is something more powerful than philosophy, and since I heard you that there is one alive wiser than all the sages," or again: "For my part I hate a great many women for your sake, and undervalue all the rest." This however was Pope's usual style of correspondence with his lady friends, and we rarely find in it a note of sincerity. His affectation showed itself also in the wish to be thought, to quote his own expression, "a modern rake," and he writes in 1715 of sitting up till one or two o'clock every night over Burgundy and Champagne. A very slight excess must have proved too much for Pope's weak frame, but he loved what by a strange misnomer is called "good living," and injured his health by indulging in the pleasures of the table. "The least transgression of yours,"

Swift wrote, "if it be only two bits and one sup more than your stint, is a great debauch;" and Pope's friend, Dr. King, Principal of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, said that the poet "certainly hastened his death by feeding much on high-seasoned dishes and drinking spirits." King did not set Pope a good example. He is said to have devoted his life to scholarship and literature, but he was also addicted to drinking, "and could not write till he was reasonably flushed."

"'Twas from the bottle King derived his wit,
Drank till he could not talk and then he writ,"

is the comment passed upon him by Christopher Pitt. There were few of Pope's friends who did not live too freely, and shorten their lives in consequence. Arbuthnot, the wittiest and one of the humanest of men in Swift's judgment, if we may believe Lord Chesterfield, died of gluttony. Parnell died from hard drinking before he was forty; Gay lived too luxuriously, and died at forty-four; Fenton, who assisted Pope in his translation of the "Odyssey," is said to have "died of a great chair and two bottles of port a day;" Steele frankly acknowledged his excesses in the same way, and even Addison, by the admission of his greatest admirers, yielded to this fatal habit, and died in his forty-eighth year of asthma and dropsy.

In 1708, Pope's good friend, Sir William Trumbull, advised him to translate the "Iliad." The suggestion proved a fruitful one. In October, 1713, the poet issued his proposals for translating the poem, and invited subscriptions; and bitter as was the political feeling of the time, Whig and Tory united in promoting the undertaking. Swift, who seems to have become acquainted with

Pope in that year, called him the best poet in England, and was zealous in obtaining subscriptions, saying, "The author shall not begin to print till I have a thousand guineas for him." The translation was announced to appear in six volumes, at one guinea a volume, but, large though the sum was, five hundred and seventy-five subscribers were obtained, and "as many of them," Mr. Courthope observes, "entered their names for more than one copy, he must have found himself in anticipation the possessor of nearly, if not quite £4,000." Swift, who had been in London since 1710, supporting the government of Harley and Bolingbroke as no government, before or since, was ever supported by a man of letters, introduced Pope to the ministers, and did his utmost to promote his interests, but the year in which the first volume of Pope's "Homer" appeared, the ministry for which Swift had done so much had fallen from power, and he had retired in disgust to his Irish deanery. The change in the political world did not affect Pope. His translation, which, as the great critic Bentley told him, was a very pretty poem, but not Homer, proved so brilliant a success, that on the completion of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," the poet had made a profit of about £9,000. He had also, in Johnson's judgment, "tuned the English tongue." The tune is not one that will satisfy an ear accustomed to the divine harmony of Milton or to the music of Coleridge and Shelley, and it needs no great critical sagacity to detect a thousand faults in a version which by general consent has failed in representing the original. At the same time, it would be idle to deny the merit of a translation which, despite its conventional diction, is readable throughout, and

carries the reader so smoothly along the road that he does not feel the fatigue of travel. Southey considered that Pope had done grievous harm to English poetry by his "Homer," since, while other versions are as unfaithful, "none was ever so well executed in as bad a style." Like Campbell and Rogers, he greatly preferred Cowper's translation as truer to the original and purer in diction, and he was right in doing so, but of the two Pope's being the more vigorous will always be the more popular. The six volumes of the "Iliad" were published in the course of five years (1715-1720), and with the final volume appeared a dedication to Congreve. Two days after the issue of Pope's first volume, a translation of the first book appeared from the pen of Tickell. According to the report of Gay, Addison called this translation "the best that ever was in any language," and then the rumour got abroad that Addison had had a hand in the work himself. On more than one occasion, as already stated, Pope's jealous suspicions had been excited against Addison, and it appears to have been at this time that he wrote the famous satire published after Addison's death in the "Epistle to Arbuthnot." Pope affirmed that he sent the character of Atticus to Addison at the time, and that, to quote his words, "he used me very civilly ever after." But this is probably one of the many false stories which the poet concocted for the benefit of his reputation. Addison had praised Pope's translation warmly in the "Freeholder," and there is no reason to suppose that he knew of the verses or that his praise was not sincere.

In 1716, while engaged upon the "Iliad," Binfield was exchanged for Chiswick, and the poet

being near to London was much in society. To a Binfield friend he writes: "I have been here in a constant course of entertainments and visits ever since I saw you, which I partly delight in, and partly am tired with; the common case in all pleasures. I have not dined at home these fifteen days, and perfectly regret the quiet indolence, silence, and sauntering that made up my whole life in Windsor Forest." In another letter, he gives a list of the noblemen who were his neighbours and acquaintances, and it is a noteworthy characteristic of Pope that in his frequent intercourse with the nobility and with public men there are no indications of servility. He maintained his independence, and knew his own value too well to fall into the vices of the sycophant. The poet had neither birth nor fortune to recommend him, and it was due to his genius alone that, before reaching the age of thirty, he was received on an equal footing into the first society of the land.

In 1717, Pope, in a few pathetic lines addressed to Martha Blount, announced the death of his father: "My poor Father died last night—Believe, since I do not forget you this moment, I never shall." For his parents he had the deepest reverence and affection. "Whatever was his pride," says Dr. Johnson, "to them he was obedient, and whatever was his irritability, to them he was gentle. Life has, among its soothing and quiet comforts, few things better to give than such a son." Teresa Blount, the elder sister, and Pope had a quarrel about the close of this year, too obscure in its origin to be satisfactorily explained. A temporary reconciliation was effected, but Pope continued to regard Teresa with aversion, and did not scruple to asperse her character.

And yet, at the beginning of the quarrel, he executed a deed in her favour, binding himself to pay her £40 a year for six years, unless she married during that period. The story is one of many which make Pope's social and literary career a puzzle to his biographers.

And now, having been made comparatively easy in circumstances by the success of his "Homer," Pope bought the villa at Twickenham, which, with its five acres of land, was to be his home and his plaything for twenty-five years. There he welcomed Bolingbroke and Swift, Congreve and Gay, Peterborough and Bathurst:—

"There my retreat the best companions grace,
Chiefs out of war, and statesmen out of place,
There St. John mingles with my friendly bowl
The feast of reason and the flow of soul:
And he, whose lightning pierced the Iberian lines,
Now forms my quincunx, and now ranks my vines,
Or tames the genius of the stubborn plain,
Almost as quickly as he conquered Spain."

Among Pope's friends and guests was Mr. Secretary Craggs, who had taken a house at Chiswick in 1717 for the sake of the poet's society, and followed him to Twickenham in 1720. Craggs had offered Pope a pension of £300 a year out of the secret service money, which he was too independent to accept. He prided himself upon being:—

"Unplaced, unpensioned, no man's heir, or slave."

A more distinguished associate and correspondent of Pope was Bishop Atterbury, whom Addison regarded as one of the greatest geniuses of his time, and who, in Pope's judgment, was one of the greatest men in all polite learning this nation ever had. Such estimates were in great measure due to the personal attraction exercised by the Bishop, and to the exaggeration of friendship,

but his wit and eloquence were great, and the speech with which he defended himself when accused of plotting for the Pretender, made a profound impression. We now know that his declaration of innocence was false, but his earnest asseverations deceived his friends, and both Pope and Swift regarded him as an innocent man. At the trial the poet was called to give evidence in his favour, but he became nervous, and told his friend Spence afterwards: "Though I had but two words to say, and that on a plain point, how the Bishop spent his time whilst I was with him at Bromley, I made two or three blunders in it, and that notwithstanding the first row of lords, which was all I could see, were mostly of my acquaintance."

"How pleasing Atterbury's softer hour!
How shined the soul unconquered in the Tower!"

is Pope's poetical tribute to the friend who, on bidding him farewell in 1723, presented the poet with his Bible, and counselled him to study it.

The beautiful and witty Lady Mary Wortley Montagu had taken a house at Twickenham, at the poet's request. His friendship for her may be read in his letters, and his enmity in verse which was more disgraceful to the writer than to the object of his satire. But in her retaliation Lady Mary showed she could be vindictive and unfeeling, and it is no excuse for a woman that the quarrel was provoked. Before the rupture came, caused apparently by an ardour of devotion on the poet's part, which led to an "immoderate fit of laughter" on the part of Lady Mary, she had written to her sister: "I see sometimes Mr. Congreve, and very seldom Mr. Pope, who continues to embellish his house at Twickenham. He has made a subter-

anean grotto, which he has furnished with looking-glasses, and they tell me it has a very good effect. I here send you some verses addressed to Mr. Gay, who wrote him a congratulatory letter on the finishing his house. I stifled them here, and I beg they may die the same death in Paris, and never go farther than your closet":—

"Ah, friend, 'tis true—this truth you lovers know—
In vain my structures rise, my gardens grow ;
In vain fair Thames reflects the double scenes
Of hanging mountains and of sloping greens ;
Joy lives not here, to happier seats it flies,
And only dwells where Wortley casts her eyes.

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

It was evidently time that the intercourse between Lady Mary and her admirer should cease. Pope deserved his punishment, but he felt the shame of it acutely, and it embittered his life. His irritability and self-consciousness, his eagerness for fame and his excessive sensibility, led him again and again into devious paths. The attacks which he too often provoked were returned by every garret-author in Grub Street, and Pope found his chief consolation in carrying on the combat with keener weapons than his foes. Although he affected to find his diversion in these attacks, he had not the magnanimity to despise them :—

"Peace is my dear delight, not Flenry's more,
But touch me and no minister's so sore,
Whoe'er offends at some unlucky time
Slides into verse and hitches in a rhyme."

To follow Pope's quarrels in this brief sketch of his life is impossible, and they must be read at large in the narratives of his biographers. Some

of the most notable were wholly without justification, and in others the poet's resentment was out of all proportion to the provocation he received. Yet such is the exquisite skill of the artist that he forces us to read with pleasure what at the same time we feel to be morally indefensible. Pope maintained that satire was useless if not personal. To attack vices in the abstract, he said, "without touching persons, may be safe fighting indeed, but it is fighting with shadows," and it must be remembered that to this view of his craft we are indebted for the "Dunciad," which Mr. Ruskin, with more enthusiasm, perhaps, than judgment, has styled "the most absolutely chiselled and monumental work 'exacted' in our country."

The success of the "Iliad" encouraged Pope to proceed with the "Odyssey," and in this labour he was considerably assisted by two Cambridge men, Broome and Fenton. The story of this partnership is creditable neither to Pope nor to Broome. Pope translated twelve books, Broome eight, and Fenton four, but Pope induced Broome to ascribe only three books to himself, and two to Fenton, and to state, without consulting his colleague, their mutual satisfaction "in Mr. Pope's acceptance of our best endeavours." At the same time, in proof of his liberality as a paymaster, Pope stated the amount he had paid for the eight books as though it had been paid for three. He could, as he once said, "equivocate pretty genteelly," but Broome, having set his name to a falsehood, had no right to complain; and Fenton's laziness or indifference prevented him from publicly exposing the lie. For the moment he was considerably annoyed, and wrote to Broome, saying, "I had always so ill an opinion of your

postscribing to the "Odyssey" that I was not surprised with anything in it but the mention of my own name, which heartily vexes me, and is, I think, a license that deserves a worse epithet than I have it in my nature to give it." After this transaction Fenton does not appear to have corresponded with Pope, and he died four years later. The poet praised him after his death, and wrote his epitaph. For Broome another distinction was reserved. Pope sneered at him in the "Dunciad," and "laughed unmercifully" at his poetry in the "Treatise on the Bathos." Strange to say, the general quality of the verse by Broome and Fenton in the "Odyssey," as Dr. Johnson has pointed out, is so much on a level with Pope's, that it is difficult if not impossible to distinguish between them. The first three books of the "Odyssey" were published in April, 1725. A month earlier Pope's edition of "Shakespeare" had appeared in six quarto volumes, an edition chiefly notable for the Preface, his best piece of work in prose.

In the summer of 1726, Dean Swift came over to England, after an absence of twelve years, and stayed for many weeks with Pope at Twickenham. "I have lived these two months past," he wrote to Tickell in July, "for the most part in the country, either at Twickenham with Mr. Pope or rambling with him and Mr. Gay for a fortnight together. Yesterday my Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Congreve made up five at dinner at Twickenham." Pope's nature was not sordid; he gave away an eighth part of his income in charity, but as a host he was neither genial nor hospitable. "You have not forgot," Swift writes to Gay, "'Gentlemen, I will leave you to your wine,' which was but the remainder of a pint when four glasses

were drunk. I tell that story to everybody, in commendation of Mr. Pope's abstemiousness." If this story were worth telling, Swift was not the man to tell it, for he was never a liberal host himself, and in his later years, when a friend came to him in expectation of a dinner, he was in the habit of giving him a shilling instead. Yet Swift could be nobly generous. He gave away a third of his income in charity, and put by another third in order to build a hospital for lunatics after his decease. Swift's visit was a memorable one, for he brought with him the MS. of "Gulliver's Travels," which he said he wrote "to vex the world rather than to divert it." The book was published before the close of the year. During this visit the two great wits resolved to publish a Miscellany of their writings in prose and verse, and Arbuthnot was a partner in the enterprise. Among the contributions brought forward by Pope was a rough draft of the "Dunciad," and Swift urged him to carry out the plan. The way in which he did carry it out is far from creditable to the poet. To a "Treatise on the Bathos," which he had written for the Miscellany, he added a chapter "devoted to the baldest personality, consisting of a comparison of a number of living authors, whose identity could be easily recognized by their initials, to Flying Fishes, Swallows, Ostriches, Parrots, Didappers, Porpoises, Frogs, Eels, and Tortoises. This device answered its purpose perfectly. The enraged authors rushed into print, and, as Savage says in his *History*, 'for half a year or more the common newspapers were filled with the most abusive falsehoods and scurrilities they could possibly devise.'" ¹

¹ Courthope's "Life of Pope," p. 214.

Pope had now the opportunity which he wanted. In May, 1728, the "Dunciad" appeared, and was read with avidity by a public eager for the scandal that gave venom to its every page. A little later an enlarged edition was published, full of the mystifications in which Pope delighted. If we could imagine the first poet of our day attacking with all the force of his genius, and with a total disregard of truth and delicacy, every insignificant writer that may have criticised him unfavourably, and out of pure spite placing also in his poetical pillory men of high reputation, and flinging dirt at them with the energy of a scavenger—we might perhaps understand the excitement caused by the publication of the "Dunciad." Pope was beyond question the greatest poet of his age; he had "no brother near the throne," and the comparative narrowness of the world of letters made his greatness the more conspicuous. It was a coarse age, and it is but just to remember that he had suffered deeply from the taunts of his opponents. By the publication of this amazing satire, however, his enemies were multiplied tenfold. So irritated was the poet by the abuse that followed the success of the "Dunciad," that, with the help of two friends, he started the "Grub Street Journal," and once more "slew the slain" in its columns. The cruel blows thus inflicted in verse and prose made him in danger of personal assault, and when Pope went abroad, he carried a brace of pistols, and was accompanied by a large dog. He said he would not go a step out of his way for such villains.

The "Journal" existed for seven years, and Pope's next publication (in 1742) was the "New or Greater Dunciad," now known as the "Fourth Book," in which, a year later, the

Shakespearian commentator Theobald was dethroned from his eminence, in order to give place to Colley Cibber as the King of Dulness. Pope made a conspicuous blunder in this selection. Cibber had many faults, but dulness was not one of them. He was no poet, and any amount of satire levelled at such a verse-maker for wearing the laurel wreath would have been legitimate enough, but all readers of Cibber's "Apology" will admit what his contemporaries knew, that he was one of the liveliest of men and of no mean ability. Moreover, he had far too good an opinion of himself to care much for Pope's stings. In "A Letter from Mr. Cibber to Mr. Pope," he says, "I wrote more to be fed than to be famous; and since my writings still give me a dinner, do you rhyme me out of my stomach if you can," and he suggests by the following story that the poet's malice would recoil upon himself: "An honest lusty grenadier, while a little creeping creature of an ensign for some trifling fault was impatiently laying on him with his cane, quietly folded his arms across, and shaking his head, only replied to his valiant officer, 'Have a care, dear captain! don't strike so hard. Upon my soul you will hurt yourself!'" It is evident that to attack a man so fortified against assault was to waste powder. Pope made a still worse error in placing Bentley, a great scholar and a man of genius, among his motley crowd of dullards. The "Dunciad" is illustrated and burdened by prefaces, commentaries, and criticisms, written under feigned names by Warburton and other friends, and also by the poet himself. Obscure hints and personal allusions abound, and so weighted is the satire in its numerous editions

with prose comments, that the notes occupy a larger space than the text. "It may fairly be doubted," says Professor Ward, "whether the mystification in which every step connected with the publication of the various editions of the "Dunciad" was intentionally involved by Pope has not answered an end beyond that proposed to himself by the poet, and provided a tangle of literary difficulties which no learned ingenuity will ever suffice entirely to unravel." There is much in the "Dunciad" that belonged to the time, and has died with it. The peddling animosities that gave a point to many of the couplets have no interest for the modern reader, but the poem is not dependent on them for its vitality, and its publication lifted Pope to the position which he holds to this day—unless Dryden be his rival—as the greatest of English satirists.

It has been sometimes asked whether Pope was a poet. Let the magnificent lines describing the victory of Dulness, with which he concludes the "Dunciad," be the answer:—

"She comes! she comes! the sable throne behold
Of Night primeval and of Chaos old!
Before her Fancy's gilded clouds decay,
And all its varying rainbows die away;
Wit shoots in vain its momentary fires,
The meteor drops and in a flash expires.
As one by one at dread Medea's strain
The sickening stars fade off the ethereal plain;
As Argus' eyes by Hermes' wand oppressed
Closed one by one to everlasting rest;
Thus at her felt approach and secret might,
Art after Art goes out and all is Night;
See skulking Truth to her old cavern fled,
Mountains of Casuistry heaped o'er her head!
Philosophy, that leaned on Heaven before,
Shrinks to her second cause, and is no more;
Physic of Metaphysic begs defence,
And Metaphysic calls for aid on Sense!
See Mystery to Mathematics fly!
In vain! they gaze, turn giddy, rave and die;
Religion, blushing, veils her sacred fires,
And, unawares, Morality expires;

Nor public flame nor private dares to shine,
 Nor human spark is left nor glimpse divine!
 Lo! thy dread empire, Chaos! is restored;
 Light dies before thy uncreating word;
 Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;
 And universal darkness buries all."

In 1723, Bolingbroke having returned from exile, made his home at Dawley, which was within an easy drive of Twickenham, and thither Pope went frequently to enjoy the eloquent talk of his guide, philosopher, and friend. On one of these occasions, his coach was upset into the river, and if a footman had not managed to break the closed window and pull him out, he would have been drowned. So severely was Pope cut, that he was in danger of losing the use of his right hand. Voltaire, who was then at Dawley, condoled with him in the affected style of the man and of the period, saying that the water was not Hippocrene's, or it would have respected him, and adding, "Is it possible that those fingers which have written the 'Rape of the Lock' and the 'Criticism,' which have dressed Homer so becomingly in an English coat, should have been so barbarously treated?" Voltaire, it is said, was on one occasion the poet's guest at Twickenham, and talked in so coarse a strain as to drive his mother from the room.

The "Essay on Man" was published anonymously in three Epistles in 1733, and to these a fourth Epistle was added in 1734. It cannot be accounted a great poem. Pope, although he was the favourite poet of Kant, is no philosopher, and he is eminently deficient as a moralist. In attempting to justify the ways of God to men, in this famous Essay he failed, partly from ignorance and partly from a deficiency of feeling. Where he failed in argument he might have risen on the wings of devotion, but profound religious

feeling was as alien to his nature as philosophy. He lacked depth, and was deficient, as Mr. Mark Pattison has pointed out, "in a true human and natural sympathy."

"The 'Essay on Man,'" says this admirable critic, "was composed at a time when the reading public in this country were occupied with an intense and eager curiosity by speculation on the first principles of Natural Religion. Everywhere, in the pulpit, in the coffee-houses, in every pamphlet, argument on the origin of evil, on the goodness of God and the constitution of the world, was rife. Into the prevailing topic of polite conversation Bolingbroke, who returned from exile in 1723, was drawn by the bent of his native genius. Pope followed the example and impulse of his friend's more powerful mind. Thus much there was of special suggestion. But the arguments or topics of the poem are to be traced to books in much vogue at the time; to Shaftesbury's 'Characteristics,' King 'On the Origin of Evil,' and particularly to Leibnitz, 'Essais de Théodicée.' . . . In selecting his subject Pope was thus determined against the bent of his own genius by the direction in which the curiosity of his reading public happened to be exerted. Herein lay, to begin with, a source of weakness. To write on a thesis set by circumstances is to begin by wanting inspiration, which proceeds from the fullness of the heart; but when the thesis prescribed is also one which lies beyond the scope of the mental habits of the writer, the difficulties to be overcome are great indeed."

How far Pope was indebted to Bolingbroke for the plan of his Essay is of little consequence. No one now reads the poem for its philosophy, if the poet's fatalistic platitudes merit that appel-

lation, but for the sententious beauty of many a passage or couplet which lives in literature. It is in the "Essay on Man" that the reader will find the two lines characterized by Mr Ruskin as "the most complete, the most concise, and the most lofty expression of moral temper existing in English words":—

"Never elated while one man's oppressed,
Never dejected while another's blessed ;"

and the final lines afford an admirable specimen of Pope's easy flow of verse and felicity of expression:—

"Come, then, my Friend! my Genius! come along,
Oh, master of the poet and the song!
And while the Muse now stoops or now ascends,
To man's low passions or their glorious ends,
Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,
To fall with dignity, with temper rise ;
Formed by thy converse, happily to steer
From grave to gay, from lively to severe ;
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
Intent to reason, or polite to please.
Oh! while along the stream of Time thy name
Expanded flies and gathers all its fame,
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph and partake the gale?
When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,
Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,
Shall then this verse to future age pretend
Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?
That urged by thee I turned the tuneful art
From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart ;
For wit's false mirror held up nature's light,
Showed erring pride, whatever is, is right ;
That reason, passion, answer one great aim ;
That true self-love and social are the same ;
That virtue only makes our bliss below,
And all our knowledge is ourselves to know."

The "Moral Essays," which, according to Warburton, were intended to form a part of the "Essay on Man," have no perceptible connection with that poem, and whatever Pope's plan might have been it was not carried out. They were printed at different periods between 1731 and 1735, and were arranged by Pope in their present

order in 1743. It is significant that in an age by no means distinguished by morality it was deemed necessary that every poem should point a moral. The noblest wisdom is seen by the light of the imagination, and a great poet is no doubt also a great teacher; but the chief end of poetry is to yield delight, and the power of the poet rests upon the faculty of song, and not upon his didactic precepts. If the versemen of the eighteenth century had understood this truth, our literature might have been spared many a treatise in rhyme written by sound moralists and bad poets. Pope did not understand it, and in spite of an occasional grossness that sometimes borders on obscenity, he invariably poses as a moralist. His moral sayings and his reasoning may be false or feeble, often they are both, but the reader does not open Pope to weigh his opinions, but to enjoy his wit and fancy and his consummate art of expression, and with these delightful gifts the "Moral Essays" abound.

None of Pope's poems are more worthy of his fame than the "Imitations of Horace," written in the form of Epistles (1733-38). For happy ease of versification, for keenness of satire, and for variety of illustration, these pieces are unrivalled, and were it not for many grossly abusive passages in which satire degenerates into lampoon, they might be praised without reserve as the finest expression of his satirical genius. The Prologue to the Satires addressed to his friend Dr. Arbuthnot, although often indecently unjust, abounds with familiar lines and passages. In that poem Pope's friends Granville and Garth, Congreve and Swift, Atterbury and Bolingbroke, Gay and Arbuthnot himself are all felicitously mentioned; and there, too, we have the wonder-

ful portrait of Addison and many cruel lines on Lord Hervey, Burnet, Bentley, Dennis, Theobald and Cibber, and on Ambrose Philips, who

“Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
And strains from hard-bound brains eight lines a year.”

Occasionally in the “Imitations,” as in the “Essay on Man,” Pope rises into a strain that is at once beautiful and pathetic. Lines like the following show the poet in his happiest mood;—

“Long as to him who works for debt, the day,
Long as the night to her whose love’s away,
Long as the year’s dull circle seems to run
When the brisk minor pants for twenty-one;
So slow the unprofitable moments roll
That lock up all the functions of my soul;
That keep me from myself; and still delay
Life’s instant business to a future day;
That task, which as we follow or despise,
The eldest is a fool, the youngest wise;
Which done, the poorest can no wants endure;
And which not done, the richest must be poor.”

At an age when most men are in their prime, Pope discovered that “life after the first warm heats are over is all down hill.” His bodily condition may account very much for his irritability of temper, and for the trickeries and intrigues that were his meat and drink. He could look at nothing in a clear straightforward way, and could not, it is said, make tea without a stratagem. His miserable body was a constant torment to him, and he was never able to accept his infirmities in a patient manly spirit. In later life he was too feeble to dress or undress without help, and required the support of stays. By night as well as by day he claimed attention, and could not, as Swift said, ride a mile or walk two. Such was the brutality of the age, that the poet’s deformity supplied “the dunces with miserable jests,” and to Pope every such jest was torture. Truly but

cruelly did his friend Lord Orrery say—friends who know us best often inflict the sharpest stings—that he had *mens curva in corpore curvo*. To a man so unfortunate much may be forgiven, and, without condoning his offences, it will not be amiss perhaps if the feeling of blame is lost in that of pity. Yet one needs a large share of charity to tolerate the grosser faults of Pope, and especially the elaborate system of deception he pursued with regard to the publication of his letters. This was in some measure suspected by Dr. Johnson, but it was left to the late Mr. Dilke to unravel all the threads of this complicated network of intrigue. By the discovery of the Caryll correspondence, he was able to show that the poet had by the most tortuous art endeavoured to deceive the public and to delude his friends also.

With his friend Caryll, of West Grinstead, a correspondence began in 1710, and lasted until 1735, and on the plea that his letters might be stolen, Pope requested him to return them. He did so reluctantly, having previously taken copies. After the death of Caryll in 1736, Pope used these letters so as to present them to the public in a way most favourable to his own reputation. He changed the addresses and the dates, interpolated passages, and altered their original purport, in order to delude readers with a sense of the writer's exalted virtue. Writing of Pope's correspondence generally, Dr. Johnson, who considered it studied and artificial, observes that it "filled the nation with praises of his candour, tenderness, and benevolence, the purity of his purposes, and the fidelity of his friendship." Unfortunately, these indications of the loftiest morality are now known to be entirely misleading, for the

letters, instead of uttering what was in the writer's heart at the time, owe whatever interest they possess to the elaborate manipulation of a literary craftsman. According to Pope's representations, one series of his letters had been surreptitiously printed by the piratical bookseller Curll, another series by Lord Oxford, in spite of his disapproval, while some unknown person obtained by unknown means a large collection, which he printed secretly at his own expense and sold for a trifle. The truth is, however, that every plot in relation to the publication of the letters was concocted by Pope himself, and that the unscrupulous bookseller whom he accused and professed to fear, was but a tool in his hands. "The facts," Mr. Courthope writes, "speak for themselves. They show that to exalt his own reputation Pope on three several occasions deliberately deceived the public by conniving at the publication of his correspondence, while at the same time protesting that this had been effected without his knowledge and against his wish. They show that he had no scruple whatever in altering and transposing his original letters, and in readdressing them to persons to whom they had never been sent. Lastly, they show that in the execution of his schemes there was no form of deceit from equivocation to direct falsehood, which he hesitated to employ, and that not even the obligations of friendship were sacred from the exactions of his vanity and self-love."¹

Probably Pope's worst stratagem was directed against his warmest and most distinguished friend. Swift knew that Pope cherished schemes of epistolary fame, and remarked, with his accustomed good sense, that if letters are written

¹ "The Life of Alexander Pope," p. 294.

with a view to publication they cease to be letters, and become a *jeu d'esprit*. The Dean's splendid intellect was approaching its decay when Pope urged him to return his letters on the plea that they might be misused after Swift's death. He replied: "You need not fear any consequence in the commerce that has so long passed between us, although I never destroyed one of your letters. But my executors are men of honour and virtue, who have strict orders in my will to burn every letter left behind me."

Such instructions would of course have proved fatal to Pope's purpose, nor was he better pleased when Swift promised that all the letters, "well sealed and pacquetted," should be sent to Twickenham on his death. The poet therefore became more eager in the matter, and applied to Lord Orrery to urge his wishes with the Dean. Orrery obtained the letters, and brought them to Pope, who printed the correspondence clandestinely, and sent the volume to Swift with an anonymous letter urging him to publish it. Swift was willing to do so. The publisher, however, waited for Pope's permission, and his cue was to hesitate and to object. He asked Lord Orrery to read the book, who did so, with the unpleasant criticism that it was "unworthy to be published." He, however, adopted Pope's suggestion that it was now too late to withdraw the letters. An attempt was then made by Pope to induce the publisher to throw upon Swift the whole responsibility of the affair, but this he declined to do, and the book appeared without it. How was Pope to account for the publication of the letters brought to him in a sealed packet by Lord Orrery? how also was he to account for the appearance of Swift's letters which were in

his own custody? The task was a difficult one, but he took advantage of a verbal blunder of the Dean's, implying that his own letters as well as Pope's had been in his hands; so that he had some ground for the insinuation that the correspondence had been treacherously obtained by a member of Swift's household. Pope now assumed the attitude of an aggrieved person, and had the amazing effrontery to moralize on the strange incident, so humbling to the pride of human nature, "that the greatest of geniuses, though prudence may have been the companion of wit (which is very rare) for their whole lives past, may have nothing left them at last but their vanity. No decay of body is half so miserable." Pope never sank to a lower depth of degradation than when he wrote these words. But if this conduct to a man for whom he professed unbounded affection was his worst act in relation to the publication, it was but one of many in which he took part in order to thrust his correspondence on the world. The curious student may read this long and painful chapter in Pope's biography elsewhere. It is enough to have given here one or two illustrations of the unscrupulous method by which he sought to gain his object. And the end of all this manœuvring was failure. The fame of Pope is not enhanced by the moral effusions and forced sentiments with which his letters abound. It is obvious that nothing in them is spontaneous. There is no ease, no directness of expression, no humour, and none of the charm which brings us, as the letters of Cowper or of Southey do, face to face with the writers. Indeed, there is probably no other series of published letters written by a man of genius so deficient in the qualities which we expect to find

in the intercourse of friend with friend. The letters, which fill five volumes of Messrs. Elwin and Courthope's edition of Pope, are nevertheless of great interest. The poet numbered among his friends the most brilliant intellects of the day, with Swift, an admirable letter writer, at their head; and the student of the period will find much in this correspondence for which he will look in vain elsewhere.

In this biographical sketch no attempt has been made to enter into all the controversies with which Pope's name is associated. Several doubtful points have been cleared up, not always to his advantage, by recent editors and critics. His life, it has been said, was "a succession of petty secrets and third-rate problems." He was a dangerous man to offend, and the sensitive, self-conscious poet was readily offended. The noble lord whom he praised to-day might, like Lord Halifax, be satirized to-morrow, and the woman who had been at one time on the friendliest terms with him, might, like Lady Mary, be afterwards "hitched" into his verse. Of the stories with which his name is associated the Atossa scandal is the worst, and of this therefore a few words must be said. Pope, who did not number avarice among his vices, was charged with having taken a bribe of £1,000 from the Duchess of Marlborough to destroy a satire, and notwithstanding preserving that satire in order that it might be published after his death. We now know, from letters printed in the "Eighth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts," that Pope did receive a sum of money from the Duchess. Writing to her a year before his death, he acknowledges that she had bowed down his pride, "and reduced me

to take that at your hands which I never took at any other," adding, with a comical misappropriation of phrase—the famous Duchess being then upwards of eighty—"What a girl you are!" It is therefore clear, although without this acknowledgment it would have been incredible, that a gift of the kind was accepted by Pope, and it is almost equally clear that it was not a mere gift, but that in presenting it the Duchess had a purpose to serve. Mr. Courthope, Pope's latest biographer, whose *Life and Notes* must be always consulted with deference by students of the poet, asserts indeed that it was a free gift. We should prefer to say that it was not a direct bribe. Mr. Courthope admits that the Duchess "would have naturally sought to propitiate the dreaded satirist by all the means in her power," and thinks it probable she knew "that he had written, though he had not published, the satire upon her husband." She may have received without believing Pope's explanation in attributing the character of Atossa to the Duchess of Buckingham, and in that case, although she could not say so, would have been anxious to prevent its publication. That this was the Duchess of Marlborough's purpose in the gift is, we think, evident, and Pope must have understood her meaning. There was no specific bargain indeed, but Pope allowed himself to be placed under obligations to a woman towards whom, to put his action in the least offensive light, he showed no generosity in return.

In 1732 Atterbury died in exile, and Pope had also to mourn the death of Gay, with whom he had long been on terms of the closest intimacy. Everyone indeed who knew him appears to have loved this easy indolent poet, whom Pope de-

scribed as sprinkled with rosewater, and there is sincere grief in the letters in which he tells Swift of his unexpected death. To him, he says, the loss is irreparable. A year later he had another and greater loss to deplore. "I have learnt," said the poet Gray, "that a man can have but one mother." In Pope's tenderness for his, he showed that he had learnt the same lesson, and the poet's friends knew that there was no better way of pleasing him than by showing attention to Mrs. Pope. "It is my mother only," he writes, regretting his confinement at home, "that robs me of half the pleasure of my life, and that gives me the greatest at the same time." In his love for her there was the truest human feeling, and in her old age no woman was ever cherished more gently by an affectionate son :—

" Me, let the tender office long engage
To rock the cradle of reposing age,
With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,
Make langnor smile, and smooth the bed of death,
Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,
And keep awhile one parent from the sky!"

Mrs. Pope, who lived to the great age of ninety-three, died in June, 1733. Her son placed a monument to the memory of both parents in Twickenham parish church, and in his grounds he raised an obelisk to his mother with this inscription :—

" Ah, Editha !
Matrum optima !
Mulierum amantissima !
Vale !"

We have said that one of the most brilliant of Pope's poems, the "Prologue to the Satires and Epistles," was addressed to the famous physician, Dr. Arbuthnot, whose fine wit and powerful intellect were combined with a joyous temperament and a sweetness of disposition that made him

universally beloved. "I think Dr. Arbuthnot," said Dr. Johnson, "the first man among the wits of the age," and this seems to have been the impression of his contemporaries. He was a man, Swift said, who could do everything but walk, and Pope called him "as good a doctor as any man for one that is ill, and a better doctor for one that is well." "His imagination," said Lord Chesterfield, "was almost inexhaustible, and his knowledge at everyone's service; charity, benevolence, and a love of mankind appeared unaffectedly in all he said and did." The author of "John Bull," which Macaulay has termed "the most humorous political satire in our language," might have left a great name in literature, but so indifferent was he to fame that it is now difficult to discover what he wrote. His children, we are told, frequently made kites of his scattered papers, which contained hints that "would have furnished good matter for folios." Swift, who loved the good physician warmly, expressed in verse his regret at being—

"Removed from kind Arbuthnot's aid,
Who knows his art, but not his trade,
Preferring his regard for me
Before his credit or his fee ;"

and Pope, who loved to praise his art and care, addressed him as the—

"Friend to my life, which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song."

Arbuthnot attended Gay in his last illness, and was destined soon to follow him. Hampstead in the last century was famous for the medicinal virtue of its springs, and the physician, who had sent many a patient there, went thither himself in 1734, "so reduced," he writes to Swift, "by a dropsy and an asthma, that I could neither

sleep, breathe, eat, nor move." He died in the following spring. "Pope and I were with him," writes Lord Chesterfield, "the evening before he died, when he suffered racking pains from an inflammation in his bowels, but his head was clear to the last. He took leave of us with tenderness, without weakness, and told us that he died not only with the comfort, but even the devout assurance of a Christian."

Later in the same year, Lord Peterborough sent for Pope to bid him farewell before he left England for Lisbon, a dying man. "Poor Lord Peterborough," Pope wrote to Swift, upon hearing of his death at sea, "there is another string lost that would have helped to draw you hither! He ordered on his deathbed his watch to be given me (that which had accompanied him in all his travels), with the reason, 'that I might have something to put me every day in mind of him.'" It is evident that Pope with all his faults knew how to win friends, and to keep them. If in his verse he gave an unenviable notoriety to his foes, he conferred on those whom he loved a poetical immortality. Two of the most prominent of his later associates were Warburton and Spence. As a young man, Warburton, whose ambition was greater than his taste or learning, tried to gain reputation by depreciating the genius of Pope; later on, he used all his art to gain the poet's friendship, and a commentary in defence of the "Essay on Man" was sufficient to secure it. The divine was not blessed with high principle, and the poet found the want of it convenient. A man of strong energy and self-confidence, Pope submitted to his guidance. He did Warburton also essential service by introducing him to his friends. One of these was Murray, after-

wards Lord Mansfield, through whom he was appointed preacher at Lincoln's Inn ; another was Allen, who "did good by stealth, and blushed to find it fame," and by this acquaintance Warburton gained the hand of his niece, a wealthy heiress, and also, through an introduction to Pitt, the bishopric of Gloucester.

Spence, who afterwards became Professor of Poetry in Oxford, was a man of a better stamp. A gentleman in feeling, and a devout admirer of Pope, his homage was sincere, and his criticism, which was for the most part admiration, proved highly grateful to the poet. Spence had the instinct of Boswell, without his ability, and all students of the poet and of his age will be grateful for his "Anecdotes."

The uneasy course of Pope's life was now drawing to a close, and it is interesting to know that he laboured to the last in the art he loved so well. He was arranging a new edition of his works just before his death, and sent copies of the "Moral Epistles" to his friends. "Here I am like Socrates," he said to Spence, "dispensing my morality among my friends, just as I am dying." Like Addison and Arbuthnot, he was asthmatical, and also suffered from dropsy. No remedies were of any avail, and throughout the whole of March (1744) he was unable to leave the room. As a last resource, Pope consulted a quack, who professed to see signs of improvement, and, as the poet said, he was "dying from a hundred good symptoms." Great bodily weakness affected his mental power at the last. Bolingbroke felt his illness strongly, and cried over him as he sat on his chair. "When I was telling his lordship," Spence writes, "that Mr. Pope, on every catching and recovery of his mind,

was always saying something kindly either of his present or absent friends, and that this in some cases was so surprising that it seemed to me as if his humanity had outlived his understanding, Lord Bolingbroke said, 'It is so,' and then added, 'I never in my life knew a man that had so tender a heart for his particular friends, or a more general friendship for mankind. I have known him these thirty years, and value myself more for that man's love and friendship than—' (sinking his head and losing his voice in tears)."

This expression of affection on the part of St. John may have been sincere; but his love for Pope could not stand the test of what he deemed an injury. Bolingbroke had given Pope a manuscript copy of the "Patriot King," and after the poet's death he discovered that he had printed an edition of 1,500 copies, with various alterations and omissions. The fault was venial compared with some of Pope's misdoings, but Bolingbroke was indignant, and hired a hack-writer to abuse the memory of his dead friend.

A few incidents with regard to Pope's dying days have been recorded. He was glad to see friends, and it was very observable, says Spence, "that Mrs. Blount's coming in gave a new turn of spirits or a temporary strength to him." On the 27th May, he was carried down to the room where his friends were at dinner. His dying appearance shocked everyone present, and Miss Ann Arbuthnot, with a touch of her father's spirit, exclaimed, "Lord have mercy upon us! this is quite an Egyptian feast!" Next day Pope sat in his garden in a sedan-chair for three hours, and on the 29th he took an airing in Bushey Park. This was his last sight of Nature, and on the day following, after receiving with great fervour

the last sacraments of his church, Pope died without pain, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, and was buried near his parents in a vault in Twickenham Church. The date of his death was May 30, 1744.

The house and grounds on which he had expended so much labour and money have met with an untoward fate. Pope inherited from his father a love of gardening, and as a landscape gardener is said to have excelled all his contemporaries. His taste was not always good, as is evident from the way in which he adorned his grotto, but he knew how by judicious planting to give character and beauty to a small estate. Thoroughly did he enjoy the art, but it was a melancholy thought to him that he had no one to whom he could leave the villa which he loved so well. The poet's memory should have sufficed to preserve the place as far as possible intact, but the first tenant after his death added wings to the house, and while the second prided himself on preserving whatever remained unaltered, the third, Baroness Howe, not only pulled down the house and built a new one, but destroyed the trees which Pope had planted. The present grotesque residence was erected by a tea-merchant, and pilgrims to Twickenham, allured by the great fame of the poet, will find no local memorial of him beyond the tasteless monument erected by Warburton, and the tablet on which the poet records the death of his parents. In his will he gave instructions that his own death should be also inscribed upon it, and this was accordingly done.

In reading Pope we may find much to regret, but we cannot fail also to enjoy much. His brilliant wit, his mastery of language, his consum-

mate art in saying "what oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed," his occasional dignity and tenderness, and the spirit which gives life to his every line—these are some, but by no means all the merits which have made Pope a power in English verse. He is the poet of an age in which the creative art of the Elizabethans, and their happy voice of song, were exchanged for satire and wit, for rhetorical eloquence and elaborate execution, and if, in estimating Pope's work, the reader follows his wise advice, and "regards the writer's end," he will acknowledge the transcendent ability with which that end has been achieved:—

"Where can you show among your names of note
So much to copy and so much to quote?
And where in fine in all our English verse
A style more trenchant and a sense more terse?"¹

It is easy to point out Pope's limitations, and to compare his poetry with the far richer music and with the more imaginative conceptions of Spenser and of Milton, of Wordsworth and of Keats, but such a comparison is futile, and it is also misleading. Pope could not soar with men like these to the mountain heights of song, neither did he attempt to do so, but if his foot was on lower ground, it was none the less secure, and neither a change of taste, nor the acceptance of any poetical theory, is likely to do a lasting injury to the fame of the poet who wrote the "Imitations of Horace," the "Dunciad," and the "Rape of the Lock."

¹ Andrew Lang. *William D. Howells*.



THE POEMS OF POPE.







AUTHOR'S PREFACE.¹

IAM inclined to think that both the writers of books, and the readers of them, are generally not a little unreasonable in their expectations. The first seem to fancy the world must approve whatever they produce, and the latter to imagine that authors are obliged to please them at any rate. Methinks, as on the one hand, no single man is born with a right of controlling the opinions of all the rest: so, on the other, the world has no title to demand, that the whole care and time of any particular person should be sacrificed to its entertainment. Therefore I cannot but believe that writers and readers are under equal obligations for as much fame, or pleasure, as each affords the other.

Every one acknowledges, it would be a wild notion to expect perfection in any work of man: and yet one would think the contrary was taken for granted, by the judgment commonly passed upon poems. A critic supposes he has done his part, if he proves a writer to have failed in an expression, or erred in any particular point: and can it then be wondered at, if the poets in general seem resolved not to own themselves in any error? For as long as one side will make no allowances, the other will be brought to no acknowledgments.

¹ To the Miscellaneous Works of Pope, 1717.

I am afraid this extreme zeal on both sides is ill-placed ; poetry and criticism being by no means the universal concern of the world, but only the affair of idle men who write in their closets, and of idle men who read there.

Yet sure, upon the whole, a bad author deserves better usage than a bad critic ; for a writer's endeavour, for the most part, is to please his readers, and he fails merely through the misfortune of an ill judgment ; but such a critic's is to put them out of humour : a design he could never go upon without both that and an ill temper.

I think a good deal may be said to extenuate the fault of bad poets. What we call a genius, is hard to be distinguished, by a man himself, from a strong inclination ; and if his genius be ever so great, he cannot at first discover it in any other way, than by giving way to that prevalent propensity which renders him the more liable to be mistaken. The only method he has is to make the experiment by writing, and appealing to the judgment of others : now if he happens to write ill (which is certainly no sin in itself) he is immediately made an object of ridicule. I wish we had the humanity to reflect that even the worst authors might, in their endeavour to please us, deserve something at our hands. We have no cause to quarrel with them but for their obstinacy in persisting to write ; and this too may admit of alleviating circumstances. Their particular friends may be either ignorant or insincere ; and the rest of the world in general is too well-bred to shock them with a truth, which generally their booksellers are the first that inform them of. This happens not till they have spent too much of their time

to apply to any profession which might better fit their talents; and till such talents as they have are so far discredited as to be but of small service to them. For (what is the hardest case imaginable) the reputation of a man generally depends upon the first steps he makes in the world; and people will establish their opinion of us, from what we do at that season when we have least judgment to direct us.

On the other hand, a good poet no sooner communicates his works with the same desire of information, but it is imagined he is a vain young creature given up to the ambition of fame; when perhaps the poor man is all the while trembling with the fear of being ridiculous. If he is made to hope he may please the world, he falls under very unlucky circumstances; for, from the moment he prints, he must expect to hear no more truth than if he were a prince or a beauty. If he has not very good sense (and indeed there are twenty men of wit for one man of sense), his living thus in a course of flattery may put him in no small danger of becoming a coxcomb: if he has, he will consequently have so much diffidence as not to reap any great satisfaction from his praise; since, if it be given to his face, it can scarce be distinguished from flattery, and if in his absence, it is hard to be certain of it. Were he sure to be commended by the best and most knowing, he is as sure of being envied by the worst and most ignorant, which are the majority; for it is with a fine genius as with a fine fashion, all those are displeas'd at it who are not able to follow it: and it is to be feared that esteem will seldom do any man so much good, as ill-will does him harm. Then there is

a third class of people, who make the largest part of mankind, those of ordinary or indifferent capacities : and these (to a man) will hate, or suspect him ; a hundred honest gentlemen will dread him as a wit, and a hundred innocent women as a satirist. In a word, whatever be his fate in poetry, it is ten to one but he must give up all the reasonable aims of life for it. There are indeed some advantages accruing from a genius to poetry, and they are all I can think of : the agreeable power of self-amusement when a man is idle or alone ; the privilege of being admitted into the best company ; and the freedom of saying as many careless things as other people without being so severely remarked upon.

I believe, if any one, early in his life, should contemplate the dangerous fate of authors, he would scarce be of their number on any consideration. The life of a wit is a warfare upon earth ; and the present spirit of the learned world is such, that to attempt to serve it (any way) one must have the constancy of a martyr, and a resolution to suffer for its sake. I could wish people would believe, what I am pretty certain they will not, that I have been much less concerned about fame than I durst declare till this occasion, when methinks I should find more credit than I could heretofore : since my writings have had their fate already, and it is too late to think of prepossessing the reader in their favour. I would plead it as some merit in me, that the world has never been prepared for these trifles by prefaces, biassed by recommendations, dazzled with the names of great patrons, wheedled with fine reasons and pretences, or troubled with excuses. I confess it

was want of consideration that made me an author; I writ because it amused me; I corrected because it was as pleasant to me to correct as to write; and I published because I was told I might please such as it was a credit to please. To what degree I have done this, I am really ignorant; I had too much fondness for my productions to judge of them at first, and too much judgment to be pleased with them at last. But I have reason to think they can have no reputation which will continue long, or which deserves to do so; for they have always fallen short not only of what I read of others, but even of my own ideas of poetry.

If any one should imagine I am not in earnest, I desire him to reflect that the ancients (to say the least of them) had as much genius as we; and that to take more pains, and employ more time, cannot fail to produce more complete pieces. They constantly applied themselves not only to that art, but to that single branch of an art, to which their talent was most powerfully bent; and it was the business of their lives to correct and finish their works for posterity. If we can pretend to have used the same industry, let us expect the same immortality; though if we took the same care, we should still lie under a further misfortune: they writ in languages that became universal and everlasting, while ours are extremely limited both in extent and in duration. A mighty foundation for our pride! when the utmost we can hope, is but to be read in one island, and to be thrown aside at the end of one age.

All that is left us is to recommend our productions by the imitation of the ancients: and it will be found true, that in every age, the

highest character for sense and learning has been obtained by those who have been most indebted to them. For, to say truth, whatever is very good sense, must have been common sense in all times; and what we call learning, is but the knowledge of the sense of our predecessors. Therefore they who say our thoughts are not our own, because they resemble the ancients, may as well say our faces are not our own, because they are like our fathers: and indeed it is very unreasonable, that people should expect us to be scholars, and yet be angry to find us so.

I fairly confess that I have served myself all I could by reading; that I made use of the judgment of authors dead and living; that I omitted no means in my power to be informed of my errors, both by my friends and enemies: but the true reason these pieces are not more correct, is owing to the consideration how short a time they, and I, have to live: one may be ashamed to consume half one's days in bringing sense and rhyme together: and what critic can be so unreasonable, as not to leave a man time enough for any more serious employment, or more agreeable amusement?

The only plea I shall use for the favour of the public, is, that I have as great respect for it, as most authors have for themselves: and that I have sacrificed much of my own self-love for its sake, in preventing not only many mean things from seeing the light, but many which I thought tolerable. I would not be like those authors, who forgive themselves some particular lines for the sake of a whole poem, and *vice versâ* a whole poem for the sake of some particular lines. I believe no one qualification is so likely to make a good writer, as the power of

rejecting his own thoughts; and it must be this (if anything) that can give me a chance to be one. For what I have published, I can only hope to be pardoned; but for what I have burned, I deserve to be praised. On this account the world is under some obligation to me, and owes me the justice in return, to look upon no verses as mine that are not inserted in this collection. And perhaps nothing could make it worth my while to own what are really so, but to avoid the imputation of so many dull and immoral things as, partly by malice and partly by ignorance, have been ascribed to me. I must further acquit myself of the presumption of having lent my name to recommend any Miscellanies, or works of other men; a thing I never thought becoming a person who has hardly credit enough to answer for his own.

In this office of collecting my pieces I am altogether uncertain whether to look upon myself as a man building a monument, or burying the dead.

If time shall make it the former, may these poems (as long as they last) remain as a testimony that their author never made his talents subservient to the mean and unworthy ends of party or self-interest; the gratification of public prejudices, or private passions; the flattery of the undeserving, or the insult of the unfortunate. If I have written well, let it be considered that 'tis what no man can do without good sense, a quality that not only renders one capable of being a good writer, but a good man. And if I have made any acquisition in the opinion of any one under the notion of the former, let it be continued to me under no other title than that of the latter.

But if this publication be only a more solemn funeral of my remains, I desire it may be known that I die in charity, and in my senses, without any murmurs against the justice of this age, or any mad appeals to posterity. I declare I shall think the world in the right, and quietly submit to every truth which time shall discover to the prejudice of these writings; not so much as wishing so irrational a thing, as that everybody should be deceived merely for my credit. However, I desire it may then be considered that there are very few things in this collection which were not written under the age of five-and-twenty; so that my youth may be made (as it never fails to be in executions) a case of compassion. That I was never so concerned about my works as to vindicate them in print, believing, if anything was good, it would defend itself, and what was bad could never be defended. That I used no artifice to raise or continue a reputation, depreciated no dead author I was obliged to, bribed no living one with unjust praise, insulted no adversary with ill language, or, when I could not attack a rival's works, encouraged reports against his morals. To conclude, if this volume perish, let it serve as a warning to the critics, not to take too much pains for the future to destroy such things as will die of themselves; and a *memento mori* to some of my vain contemporaries the poets, to teach them that, when real merit is wanting, it avails nothing to have been encouraged by the great, commended by the eminent, and favoured by the public in general.

Nov. 10, 1716.



TRANSLATIONS AND IMITATIONS.



ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Translations were selected from many others done by the Author in his youth; for the most part, indeed, but a sort of exercises, while he was improving himself in the languages, and carried by his early bent to poetry to perform them rather in verse than prose. Mr. Dryden's "Fables" came out about that time, which occasioned the Translations from Chaucer. They were first separately printed in Miscellanies by J. Tonson and B. Lintot, and afterwards collected in the quarto edition of 1717. The "Imitations of English Authors," which are added to the end, were done as early, some of them at fourteen or fifteen years old; but having also got into Miscellanies,¹ we have put them here together to complete this juvenile volume.²—P.—("Works," vol. iii. ed. of 1736.)

¹ Pope implies that they were printed without his consent, but this was not the case. He published them himself.

² This volume contained the poems which follow, as far as page 136.



THE FIRST BOOK OF STATIUS: HIS THEBAIS.

TRANSLATED IN THE YEAR 1703.

ARGUMENT.

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

acquainted with their descent and quality. The sacrifice is renewed, and the book concludes with a hymn to Apollo.

The translator hopes he need not apologise for his choice of this piece, which was made almost in his childhood. But finding the version better than he expected from those years, he was easily prevailed on to give it some correction, the rather because no part of this author (at least that he knows of) has been tolerably turned into our language.—P.

FRATERNAL rage, the guilty Thebes' alarms,
 The alternate reign destroyed by impious arms,
 Demand our song ; a sacred fury fires
 My ravished breast, and all the Muse inspires.
 O goddess, say, shall I deduce my rhymes 5
 From the dire nation in its early times,
 Europa's rape, Agenor's stern decree,
 And Cadmus searching round the spacious sea?
 How with the serpent's teeth he sowed the soil,
 And reaped an iron harvest of his toil? 10
 Or how from joining stones the city sprung,
 While to his harp divine Amphion sung?
 Or shall I Juno's hate to Thebes resound,
 Whose fatal rage the unhappy monarch found?
 The sire against the son his arrows drew, 15
 O'er the wide fields the furious mother flew,
 And while her arms a second hope contain,
 Sprung from the rocks and plunged into the
 main.

But waive whate'er to Cadmus may belong,
 And fix, O Muse! the barrier of thy song 20
 At Œdipus—from his disasters trace
 The long confusions of his guilty race :
 Nor yet attempt to stretch thy bolder wing,
 And mighty Cæsar's conquering eagles sing ; 24
 How twice he tamed proud Ister's rapid flood,

While Dacian mountains streamed with barbarous blood ;

Twice taught the Rhine beneath his laws to roll,

And stretched his empire to the frozen pole,

Or long before with early valour strove,

In youthful arms to assert the cause of Jove. 30

And thou, great heir of all thy father's fame,

Increase of glory to the Latian name !

Oh bless thy Rome with an eternal reign,

Nor let desiring worlds entreat in vain.

What though the stars contract their heavenly space, 35

And crowd their shining ranks to yield thee place ;

Though all the skies, ambitious of thy sway,

Conspire to court thee from our world away ;

Though Phœbus longs to mix his rays with thine,

And in thy glories more serenely shine ; 40

Though Jove himself no less content would be,

To part his throne and share his heaven with thee :

Yet stay, great Cæsar ! and vouchsafe to reign

O'er the wide earth, and o'er the watery main ;

Resign to Jove his empire of the skies, 45

And people heaven with Roman deities.

The time will come, when a diviner flame

Shall warm my breast to sing of Cæsar's fame :

Meanwhile permit, that my preluding Muse

In Theban wars an humbler theme may choose :

Of furious hate surviving death, she sings, 51

A fatal throne to two contending kings,

And funeral flames that, parting wide in air,

Express the discord of the souls they bear :

Of towns dispeopled, and the wandering ghosts

Of kings unburied in the wasted coasts ; 56

When Dirce's fountain blushed with Greecian
blood,

And Thetis, near Ismenos' swelling flood,
With dread beheld the rolling surges sweep,
In heaps, his slaughtered sons into the deep. 60

What hero, Clio! wilt thou first relate?
The rage of Tydeus, or the Prophet's fate?
Or how with hills of slain on every side,
Hippomedon repelled the hostile tide?
Or how the youth with every grace adorned,¹
Untimely fell, to be for ever mourned? 66
Then to fierce Capaneus thy verse extend,
And sing with horror his prodigious end.

Now wretched Œdipus, deprived of sight,
Led a long death in everlasting night; 70
But while he dwells where not a cheerful ray
Can pierce the darkness, and abhors the day,
The clear reflecting mind presents his sin
In frightful views, and makes it day within;
Returning thoughts in endless circles roll, 75
And thousand furies haunt his guilty soul:
The wretch then lifted to the unpying skies
Those empty orbs from whence he tore his eyes,
Whose wounds, yet fresh, with bloody hands he
strook,

While from his breast these dreadful accents
broke. 80

“Ye gods! that o'er the gloomy regions
reign,
Where guilty spirits feel eternal pain;
Thou, sable Styx! whose livid streams are
rolled
Through dreary coasts, which I, though blind,
behold;

Tisiphone, that oft hast heard my prayer, 85

¹ Parthenopæus.—P.

Assist, if *Cædipus* deserve thy care!
 If you received me from *Jocasta's* womb,
 And nursed the hope of mischiefs yet to come :
 If leaving *Polybus*, I took my way
 To *Cyrrha's* temple, on that fatal day, 90
 When by the son the trembling father died,
 Where the three roads the *Phocian* fields divide :
 If I the *Sphinx's* riddles durst explain,
 Taught by thyself to win the promised reign :
 If wretched I, by baleful furies led, 95
 With monstrous mixture stained my mother's
 bed,
 For hell and thee begot an impious brood,
 And with full lust those horrid joys renewed ;
 Then self-condemned to shades of endless night,
 Forced from these orbs the bleeding balls of
 sight : 100
 Oh hear ! and aid the vengeance I require,
 If worthy thee, and what thou mightst inspire.
 My sons their old, unhappy sire despise,
 Spoiled of his kingdom, and deprived of eyes ;
 Guideless I wander, unregarded mourn, 105
 While these exalt their sceptres o'er my urn ;
 These sons, ye gods ! who with flagitious pride
 Insult my darkness, and my groans deride.
 Art thou a father, unregarding *Jove* !
 And sleeps thy thunder in the realms above ? 110
 Thou *Fury*, then some lasting curse entail,
 Which o'er their children's children shall pre-
 vail :
 Place on their heads that crown distained with
 gore,
 Which these dire hands from my slain father
 tore ;
 Go, and a parent's heavy curses bear ; 115
 Break all the bonds of nature, and prepare
 Their kindred souls to mutual hate and war.

Give them to dare, what I might wish to see,
 Blind as I am, some glorious villainy !
 Soon shalt thou find, if thou but arm their
 hands, 120
 Their ready guilt preventing thy commands :
 Couldst thou some great, proportioned mischief
 frame,
 They'd prove the father from whose loins they
 came."

The Fury heard, while on Cocytus' brink
 Her snakes, untied, sulphureous waters drink ;
 But at the summons rolled her eyes around, 126
 And snatched the starting serpents from the
 ground.

Not half so swiftly shoots along in air,
 The gliding lightning, or descending star.
 Through crowds of airy shades she winged her
 flight, 130

And dark dominions of the silent night ;
 Swift as she passed, the flitting ghosts withdrew,
 And the pale spectres trembled at her view :
 To the iron gates of Tænarus she flies,
 There spreads her dusky pinions to the skies.
 The day beheld, and sickening at the sight, 136
 Veiled her fair glories in the shades of night.
 Affrighted Atlas, on the distant shore,
 Trembled, and shook the heavens and gods he
 bore.

Now from beneath Malea's airy height 140
 Aloft she sprung, and steered to Thebes her
 flight ;

With eager speed the well-known journey took,
 Nor here regrets the hell she late forsook.
 A hundred snakes her gloomy visage shade,
 A hundred serpents guard her horrid head, 145
 In her sunk eyeballs dreadful meteors glow ;
 Such rays from Phœbe's bloody circle flow,

When labouring with strong charms, she shoots
from high

A fiery gleam, and reddens all the sky.

Blood stained her cheeks, and from her mouth
there came 150

Blue steaming poisons, and a length of flame.

From every blast of her contagious breath

Famine and drought proceed, and plagues, and
death.

A robe obscene was o'er her shoulders thrown,
A dress by Fates and Furies worn alone. 155

She tossed her meagre arms; her better hand

In waving circles whirled a funeral brand:

A serpent from her left was seen to rear

His flaming crest, and lash the yielding air.

But when the Fury took her stand on high,
Where vast Citharon's top salutes the sky, 161

A hiss from all the snaky tire went round;

The dreadful signal all the rocks rebound,

And through the Achaian cities send the sound.

Cete, with high Parnassus, heard the voice;

Eurotas' banks remurmured to the noise; 166

Again Leucothea shook at these alarms,

And pressed Palæmon closer in her arms.

Headlong from thence the glowing Fury
springs,

And o'er the Theban palace spreads her wings,

Once more invades the guilty dome, and
shrouds 171

Its bright pavilions in a veil of clouds.

Straight with the rage of all their race possessed,

Stung to the soul, the brothers start from rest,

And all their furies wake within their breast.

Their tortured minds repining Envy tears, 176

And Hate, engendered by suspicious fears;

And sacred thirst of sway; and all the ties

Of nature broke; and royal perjuries;

And impotent desire to reign alone, 180
 That scorns the dull reversion of a throne ;
 Each would the sweets of sovereign rule devour,
 While Discord waits upon divided power.

As stubborn steers by brawny ploughmen
 broke,

And joined reluctant to the galling yoke, 185
 Alike disdain with servile necks to bear
 The unwonted weight, or drag the crooked
 share,

But rend the reins, and bound a different way,
 And all the furrows in confusion lay :
 Such was the discord of the royal pair, 190
 Whom fury drove precipitate to war.

In vain the chiefs contrived a specious way,
 To govern Thebes by their alternate sway :
 Unjust decree ! while this enjoys the state,
 That mourns in exile his unequal fate, 195
 And the short monarch of a hasty year
 Foresees with anguish his returning heir.

Thus did the league their impious arms restrain,
 But scarce subsisted to the second reign. 199

Yet then, no proud aspiring piles were raised,
 No fretted roofs with polished metals blazed ;
 No laboured columns in long order placed,
 No Grecian stone the pompous arches graced ;
 No nightly bands in glittering armour wait
 Before the sleepless tyrant's guarded gate ; 205
 No chargers then were wrought in burnished
 gold,

Nor silver vases took the forming mould ;
 Nor gems on bowls embossed were seen to
 shine,

Blaze on the brims, and sparkle in the wine.
 Say, wretched rivals ! what provokes your
 rage ? 210

Say, to what end your impious arms engage ?

Not all bright Phœbus views in early morn,
 Or when his evening beams the west adorn,
 When the south glows with his meridian ray,
 And the cold north receives a fainter day; 215
 For crimes like these, not all those realms
 suffice,

Were all those realms the guilty victor's prize!

But fortune now (the lots of empire thrown)
 Decrees to proud Eteocles the crown:

What joys, oh, tyrant! swelled thy soul that
 day, 220

When all were slaves thou couldst around
 survey,

Pleased to behold unbounded power thy own,
 And singly fill a feared and envied throne!

But the vile vulgar, ever discontent, 224
 Their growing fears in secret murmurs vent;
 Still prone to change, though still the slaves of
 state,

And sure the monarch whom they have, to
 hate;

New lords they madly make, then tamely bear,
 And softly curse the tyrants whom they fear.

And one of those who groan beneath the sway
 Of kings imposed, and grudgingly obey, 231
 (Whom envy to the great, and vulgar spite,
 With scandal armed, the ignoble mind's de-
 light),

Exclaimed—"O Thebes! for thee what fates
 remain,

What woes attend this inauspicious reign? 235

Must we, alas! our doubtful necks prepare,
 Each haughty master's yoke by turns to bear,
 And still to change whom changed we still
 must fear?

These now control a wretched people's fate, 239
 These can divide, and these reverse the state:

Ev'n fortune rules no more!—O servile land,
 Where exiled tyrants still by turns command!
 Thou sire of gods and men, imperial Jove!
 Is this the eternal doom decreed above?
 On thy own offspring hast thou fixed this fate,
 From the first birth of our unhappy state; 246
 When banished Cadmus, wandering o'er the
 main,
 For lost Europa searched the world in vain,
 And fated in Bœotian fields to found
 A rising empire on a foreign ground, 250
 First raised our walls on that ill-omened plain,
 Where earth-born brothers were by brothers
 slain?
 What lofty looks the unrivalled monarch bears!
 How all the tyrant in his face appears!
 What sullen fury clouds his scornful brow! 255
 Gods! how his eyes with threatening ardour
 glow!
 Can this imperious lord forget to reign,
 Quit all his state, descend, and serve again?
 Yet, who, before, more popularly bowed?
 Who more propitious to the suppliant crowd?
 Patient of right, familiar in the throne? 261
 What wonder then? he was not then alone.
 O wretched we, a vile, submissive train,
 Fortune's tame fools, and slaves in every reign!
 As when two winds with rival force contend,
 This way and that, the wavering sails they
 bend, 266
 While freezing Boreas and black Eurus blow,
 Now here, now there, the reeling vessel throw:
 Thus on each side, alas! our tottering state
 Feels all the fury of resistless fate, 270
 And doubtful still, and still distracted stands,
 While that prince threatens, and while this
 commands."

And now the almighty Father of the gods
 Convenes a council in the blest abodes.
 Far in the bright recesses of the skies, 275
 High o'er the rolling heavens, a mansion lies,
 Whence, far below, the gods at once survey
 The realms of rising and declining day,
 And all the extended space of earth, and air,
 and sea.

Full in the midst, and on a starry throne, 280
 The Majesty of heaven superior shone;
 Serene he looked, and gave an awful nod,
 And all the trembling spheres confessed the
 god.

At Jove's assent, the deities around
 In solemn state the consistory crowned. 285
 Next a long order of inferior powers
 Ascend from hills, and plains, and shady
 bowers;

Those from whose urns the rolling rivers flow;
 And those that give the wandering winds to
 blow:

Here all their rage, and ev'n their murmurs
 cease, 290

And sacred silence reigns, and universal peace.
 A shining synod of majestic gods
 Gilds with new lustre the divine abodes;
 Heaven seems improved with a superior ray,
 And the bright arch reflects a double day. 295
 The monarch then his solemn silence broke,
 The still creation listened while he spoke,
 Each sacred accent bears eternal weight,
 And each irrevocable word is fate:

“How long shall man the wrath of Heaven
 defy, 300

And force unwilling vengeance from the sky!
 Oh race confederate into crimes, that prove
 Triumphant o'er the eluded rage of Jove!

This wearied arm can scarce the bolt sustain,
And unregarded thunder rolls in vain: 305
The o'erlaboured Cyclops from his task retires,
The Æolian force exhausted of its fires.
For this, I suffered Phœbus' steeds to stray,
And the mad ruler to misguide the day.
When the wide earth to heaps of ashes turned,
And heaven itself the wandering chariot
burned. 311

For this, my brother of the watery reign
Released the impetuous sluices of the main:
But flames consumed, and billows raged in
vain.

Two races now, allied to Jove, offend; 315
To punish these, see Jove himself descend.
The Theban kings their line from Cadmus
trace,

From godlike Perseus those of Argive race.
Unhappy Cadmus' fate who does not know,
And the long series of succeeding woe? 320
How oft the Furies, from the deeps of night,
Arose, and mixed with men in mortal fight:
The exulting mother, stained with filial blood;
The savage hunter and the haunted wood;
The direful banquet why should I proclaim,
And crimes that grieve the trembling gods to
name? 326

Ere I recount the sins of these profane,
The sun would sink into the western main,
And rising gild the radiant east again.
Have we not seen (the blood of Laius shed) 330
The murdering son ascend his parent's bed,
Through violated nature force his way,
And stain the sacred womb where once he lay?
Yet now in darkness and despair he groans,
And for the crimes of guilty fate atones. 335
His sons with scorn their eyeless father view,

Insult his wounds, and make them bleed anew.
Thy curse, oh Œdipus, just Heaven alarms,
And sets the avenging Thunderer in arms.

I from the root thy guilty race will tear, 340
And give the nations to the waste of war.

Adrastus soon, with gods averse, shall join
In dire alliance with the Theban line ;

Hence strife shall rise, and mortal war succeed ;
The guilty realms of Tantalus shall bleed ; 345

Fixed is their doom : this all-remembering
breast

Yet harbours vengeance for the tyrant's feast."

He said ; and thus the Queen of heaven re-
turned ;

(With sudden grief her labouring bosom
burned) :

" Must I, whose cares Phoroneus' towers de-
fend, 350

Must I, oh Jove, in bloody wars contend ?

Thou know'st those regions my protection
claim,

Glorious in arms, in riches, and in fame ;

Though there the fair Egyptian heifer fed,

And there deluded Argus slept, and bled ; 355

Though there the brazen tower was stormed of
old,

When Jove descended in almighty gold :

Yet I can pardon those obscurer rapes,

Those bashful crimes disguised in borrowed
shapes ;

But Thebes, where shining in celestial charms

Thou cam'st triumphant to a mortal's arms, 361

When all my glories o'er her limbs were spread,

And blazing lightnings danced around her bed ;

Cursed Thebes the vengeance it deserves, may
prove :

Ah why should Argos feel the rage of Jove ? 365

Yet since thou wilt thy sister-queen control,
 Since still the lust of discord fires thy soul,
 Go, raze my Samos, let Mycene fall,
 And level with the dust the Spartan wall ;
 No more let mortals Juno's power invoke, 370
 Her fanes no more with eastern incense smoke,
 Nor victims sink beneath the sacred stroke ;
 But to your Isis all my rites transfer,
 Let altars blaze, and temples smoke for her ;
 For her, through Egypt's fruitful clime re-
 nowned, 375

Let weeping Nilus hear the timbrel sound.
 But if thou must reform the stubborn times,
 Avenging on the sons the fathers' crimes,
 And from the long records of distant age
 Derive incitements to renew thy rage ; 380
 Say, from what period then has Jove designed
 To date his vengeance ; to what bounds con-
 fined ?

Begin from thence, where first Alpheus hides
 His wandering stream, and through the briny
 tides

Unmixed to his Sicilian river glides. 385
 Thy own Arcadians there the thunder claim,
 Whose impious rites disgrace thy mighty name ;
 Who raise thy temples where the chariot stood
 Of fierce CEnomaus, defiled with blood ;
 Where once his steeds their savage banquet
 found, 390

And human bones yet whiten all the ground.
 Say, can those honours please ; and canst thou
 love

Presumptuous Crete, that boasts the tomb of
 Jove ?

And shall not Tantalus's kingdoms share
 Thy wife and sister's tutelary care ? 395
 Reverse, O Jove, thy too severe decree,

Nor doom to war a race derived from thee ;
 On impious realms and barbarous kings impose
 Thy plagues, and curse them with such sons as
 those." ¹

Thus, in reproach and prayer, the Queen ex-
 pressed 400
 The rage and grief contending in her breast ;
 Unmoved remained the ruler of the sky,
 And from his throne returned this stern reply :
 " 'Twas thus I deemed thy haughty soul would
 bear

The dire, though just, revenge which I prepare
 Against a nation thy peculiar care : 406
 No less Dione might for Thebes contend,
 Nor Bacchus less his native town defend ;
 Yet these in silence see the Fates fulfil
 Their work, and reverence our superior will. 410
 For by the black infernal Styx I swear,
 (That dreadful oath which binds the Thun-
 derer)

'Tis fixed ; the irrevocable doom of Jove ;
 No force can bend me, no persuasion move. 414
 Haste then, Cyllenius, through the liquid air ;
 Go mount the winds, and to the shades repair ;
 Bid hell's black monarch my commands obey,
 And give up Laius to the realms of day,
 Whose ghost yet shivering on Cocytus' sand,
 Expects its passage to the farther strand : 420
 Let the pale sire revisit Thebes, and bear
 These pleasing orders to the tyrant's ear ;
 That, from his exiled brother, swelled with
 pride

Of foreign forces, and his Argive bride,
 Almighty Jove commands him to detain 425
 The promised empire, and alternate reign :

¹ Eteocles and Polynices.—P.

Be this the cause of more than mortal hate :
 'The rest, succeeding times shall ripen into
 fate.'

The god obeys, and to his feet applies
 Those golden wings that cut the yielding skies.
 His ample hat his beamy locks o'erspread, 431
 And veiled the starry glories of his head.
 He seized the wand that causes sleep to fly,
 Or in soft slumbers seals the wakeful eye ; 434
 That drives the dead to dark Tartarean coasts,
 Or back to life compels the wandering ghosts.
 Thus, through the parting clouds, the son of
 May

Wings on the whistling winds his rapid way ;
 Now smoothly steers through air his equal
 flight,
 Now springs aloft, and towers the ethereal
 height ; 440
 Then wheeling down the steep of heaven he
 flies,
 And draws a radiant circle o'er the skies.

Meantime the banished Polynices roves
 (His Thebes abandoned) through the Aonian
 groves,
 While future realms his wandering thoughts
 delight, 445
 His daily vision and his dream by night ;
 Forbidden Thebes appears before his eye,
 From whence he sees his absent brother fly,
 With transport views the airy rule his own,
 And swells on an imaginary throne. 450
 Fain would he cast a tedious age away,
 And live out all in one triumphant day.
 He chides the lazy progress of the sun,
 And bids the year with swifter motion run.
 With anxious hopes his craving mind is tossed
 And all his joys in length of wishes lost. 456

The hero then resolves his course to bend
 Where ancient Danaus' fruitful fields extend,
 And famed Mycene's lofty towers ascend,
 (Where late the sun did Atreus' crimes detest,
 And disappeared in horror of the feast). 461
 And now by chance, by fate, or furies led,
 From Bacchus' consecrated caves he fled,
 Where the shrill cries of frantic matrons sound,
 And Pentheus' blood enriched the rising
 ground. 465

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

'Twas now the time when Phœbus yields to
 night,
 And rising Cynthia sheds her silver light, 475
 Wide o'er the world in solemn pomp she drew
 Her airy chariot hung with pearly dew;
 All birds and beasts lie hushed; sleep steals away
 The wild desires of men, and toils of day,
 And brings, descending through the silent air,
 A sweet forgetfulness of human care. 481
 Yet no red clouds, with golden borders gay,
 Promise the skies the bright return of day;
 No faint reflections of the distant light
 Streak with long gleams the scattering shades
 of night; 485
 From the damp earth impervious vapours rise,
 Increase the darkness, and involve the skies.
 At once the rushing winds with roaring sound
 Burst from the Æolian caves, and rend the
 ground,

With equal rage their airy quarrel try, 490
 And win by turns the kingdom of the sky :
 But with a thicker night black Auster shrouds
 The heavens, and drives on heaps the rolling
 clouds,

From whose dark womb a rattling tempest pours,
 Which the cold North congeals to haily showers.
 From pole to pole the thunder roars aloud, 496
 And broken lightnings flash from every cloud.
 Now smokes with showers the misty mountain-
 ground,

And floated fields lie undistinguished round.
 The Inachian streams with headlong fury run,
 And Erasinus rolls a deluge on : 501
 The foaming Lerna swells above its bounds,
 And spreads its ancient poisons o'er the grounds :
 Where late was dust, now rapid torrents play,
 Rush through the mounds, and bear the dams
 away : 505

Old limbs of trees from crackling forests torn,
 Are whirled in air, and on the winds are borne :
 The storm the dark Lycæan groves displayed,
 And first to light exposed the sacred shade.
 The intrepid Theban hears the bursting sky, 510
 Sees yawning rocks in massy fragments fly,
 And views astonished, from the hills afar,
 The floods descending, and the watery war,
 That, driven by storms, and pouring o'er the
 plain, 514

Swept herds, and hinds, and houses to the main.
 Through the brown horrors of the night he fled,
 Nor knows, amazed, what doubtful path to
 tread ;

His brother's image to his mind appears,
 Inflames his heart with rage, and wings his feet
 with fears.

So fares a sailor on the stormy main, 520

When clouds conceal Boötes' golden wain,
 When not a star its friendly lustre keeps,
 Nor trembling Cynthia glimmers on the deeps;
 He dreads the rocks, and shoals, and seas, and
 skies,

While thunder roars, and lightning round him
 flies. 525

Thus strove the chief, on every side distressed,
 Thus still his courage with his toils increased;
 With his broad shield opposed, he forced his
 way

Through thickest woods, and roused the beasts
 of prey;

Till he beheld, where from Larissa's height 530

The shelving walls reflect a glancing light:

Thither with haste the Theban hero flies;

On this side Lerna's poisonous water lies,

On that Prosymna's grove and temple rise:

He passed the gates which then unguarded lay,

And to the regal palace bent his way; 536

On the cold marble, spent with toil, he lies,

And waits till pleasing slumbers seal his eyes.

Adrastus here his happy people sways,

Blessed with calm peace in his declining days;

By both his parents of descent divine, 541

Great Jove and Phœbus graced his noble line:

Heaven had not crowned his wishes with a son,

But two fair daughters heired his state and

throne.

To him Apollo (wondrous to relate! 545

But who can pierce into the depths of fate?)

Had sung—"Expect thy sons on Argos' shore,

A yellow lion and a bristly boar."

This long revolved in his paternal breast;

Sate heavy on his heart, and broke his rest; 550

This, great Amphiaraus, lay hid from thee,

Though skilled in fate, and dark futurity.

The father's care and prophet's art were vain,
For thus did the predicting god ordain.

Lo hapless Tydeus, whose ill-fated hand 555
Had slain his brother, leaves his native land,
And seized with horror in the shades of night,
Through the thick deserts headlong urged his
flight :

Now by the fury of the tempest driven, 559
He seeks a shelter from the inclement heaven,
Till, led by fate, the Theban's steps he treads,
And to fair Argos' open court succeeds.

When thus the chiefs from different lands
resort
To Adrastus' realms, and hospitable court ; 564
The King surveys his guests with curious eyes,
And views their arms and habit with surprise.

A lion's yellow skin the Theban wears,
Horrid his mane, and rough with curling hairs ;
Such once employed Alcides' youthful toils,
Ere yet adorned with Nemea's dreadful spoils.

A boar's stiff hide, of Calydonian breed, 571
CEnides' manly shoulders overspread :
Oblique his tusks, erect his bristles stood,
Alive, the pride and terror of the wood.

Struck with the sight, and fixed in deep
amaze, 575
The King the accomplished oracle surveys,
Reveres Apollo's vocal caves, and owns
The guiding godhead, and his future sons.

O'er all his bosom secret transports reign,
And a glad horror shoots through every vein. 580
To heaven he lifts his hands, erects his sight,
And thus invokes the silent Queen of night.

“ Goddess of shades, beneath whose gloomy
reign

You spangled arch glows with the starry train :
You who the cares of heaven and earth allay,

Till Nature quickened by the inspiring ray 586
 Wakes to new vigour with the rising day :
 Oh thou who freest me from my doubtful state,
 Long lost and wildered in the maze of fate !
 Be present still, oh goddess ! in our aid ; 590
 Proceed, and firm those omens thou hast made.
 We to thy name our annual rites will pay,
 And on thy altars sacrifices lay ;
 The sable flock shall fall beneath the stroke,
 And fill thy temples with a grateful smoke. 595
 Hail, faithful Tripos ! hail, ye dark abodes
 Of awful Phœbus : I confess the gods ! ”

Thus, seized with sacred fear, the monarch
 prayed ;
 Then to his inner court the guests conveyed ;
 Where yet thin fumes from dying sparks arise,
 And dust yet white upon each altar lies, 601
 The relics of a former sacrifice.

The King once more the solemn rites requires,
 And bids renew the feasts, and wake the fires.
 His train obey, while all the courts around 605
 With noisy care and various tumult sound.
 Embroidered purple clothes the golden beds ;
 This slave the floor, and that the table spreads
 A third dispels the darkness of the night, 609
 And fills depending lamps with beams of light.
 Here loaves in canisters are piled on high,
 And there in flames the slaughtered victims
 fry.

Sublime in regal state Adrastus shone,
 Stretched on rich carpets on his ivory throne
 A lofty couch receives each princely guest ; 615
 Around, at awful distance, wait the rest.

And now the King, his royal feast to grace,
 Aestis calls, the guardian of his race,
 Who first their youth in arts of virtue trained,
 And their ripe years in modest grace maintained.

Then softly whispered in her faithful ear, 621
 And bade his daughters at the rites appear.
 When from the close apartments of the night,
 The royal nymphs approach divinely bright ;
 Such was Diana's, such Minerva's face ; 625
 Nor shine their beauties with superior grace,
 But that in these a milder charm endears,
 And less of terror in their looks appears.
 As on the heroes first they cast their eyes, 629
 O'er their fair cheeks the glowing blushes rise,
 Their downcast looks a decent shame confessed,
 Then on their father's reverend features rest.

The banquet done, the monarch gives the sign
 To fill the goblet high with sparkling wine,
 Which Danaus used in sacred rites of old, 635
 With sculpture graced, and rough with rising
 gold.

Here to the clouds victorious Perseus flies,
 Medusa seems to move her languid eyes,
 And even in gold turns paler as she dies.
 There from the chase Jove's towering eagle
 bears, 640

On golden wings, the Phrygian to the stars :
 Still as he rises in the ethereal height,
 His native mountains lessen to his sight ;
 While all his sad companions upward gaze,
 Fixed on the glorious scene in wild amaze ; 645
 And the swift hounds, affrighted as he flies,
 Run to the shade, and bark against the skies.

This golden bowl with generous juice was
 crowned,
 The first libations sprinkled on the ground,
 By turns on each celestial power they call ; 650
 With Phœbus' name resounds the vaulted hall.
 The courtly train, the strangers, and the rest,
 Crowned with chaste laurel, and with garlands
 dressed,

While with rich gums the fuming altars blaze,
Salute the god in numerous hymns of praise.

Then thus the King: "Perhaps, my noble
guests, 656

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

"When by a thousand darts the Python
slain 664

With orbs unrolled lay covering all the plain,
(Transfixed as o'er Castalia's streams he hung,
And sucked new poisons with his triple tongue)
To Argos' realms the victor god resorts,
And enters old Crotopus' humble courts.
This rural prince one only daughter blessed, 670
That all the charms of blooming youth pos-
sessed;

Fair was her face, and spotless was her mind,
Where filial love with virgin sweetness joined.
Happy! and happy still she might have proved,
Were she less beautiful, or less beloved! 675

But Phœbus loved, and, on the flowery side
Of Nemea's stream, the yielding fair enjoyed:
Now, ere ten moons their orb with light adorn,
The illustrious offspring of the god was born.

The nymph, her father's anger to evade, 680
Retires from Argos to the sylvan shade;
To woods and wilds the pleasing burden bears,
And trusts her infant to a shepherd's cares.

"How mean a fate, unhappy child! is thine!
Ah how unworthy those of race divine! 685
On flowery herbs in some green covert laid,
His bed the ground, his canopy the shade,

He mixes with the bleating lambs his cries,
 While the rude swain his rural music tries
 To call soft slumbers on his infant eyes. 690
 Yet even in those obscure abodes to live,
 Was more, alas ! than cruel fate would give,
 For on the grassy verdure as he lay,
 And breathed the freshness of the early day,
 Devouring dogs the helpless infant tore, 695
 Fed on his trembling limbs, and lapped the gore.
 The astonished mother, when the rumour came,
 Forgets her father, and neglects her fame ;
 With loud complaints she fills the yielding air,
 And beats her breast, and rends her flowing
 hair ; 700
 Then, wild with anguish, to her sire she flies :
 Demands the sentence, and contented dies.

“ But touched with sorrow for the deed too
 late,
 The raging god prepares to avenge her fate.
 He sends a monster, horrible and fell, 705
 Begot by furies in the depths of hell.
 The pest a virgin’s face and bosom bears ;
 High on her crown a rising snake appears,
 Guards her black front, and hisses in her hairs :
 About the realm she walks her dreadful round,
 When night with sable wings o’erspreads the
 ground, 711
 Devours young babes before their parents’ eyes,
 And feeds and thrives on public miseries.

. “ But generous rage the bold Choroëbus
 warms,
 Choroëbus, famed for virtue as for arms. 715
 Some few like him, inspired with martial flame,
 Thought a short life well lost for endless fame.
 These, where two ways in equal parts divide,
 The direful monster from afar desried ;
 Two bleeding babes depending at her side ; 720

Whose panting vitals, warm with life, she draws,
And in their hearts imbrues her cruel claws.

The youths surround her with extended spears;
But brave Chorcæbus in the front appears,
Deep in her breast he plunged his shining
sword, 725

And hell's dire monster back to hell restored.
The Inachians view the slain with vast surprise,
Her twisting volumes and her rolling eyes,
Her spotted breast, and gaping womb imbrued
With livid poison, and our children's blood. 730
The crowd in stupid wonder fixed appear,
Pale even in joy, nor yet forget to fear.

Some with vast beams the squalid corpse en-
gage,

And weary all the wild efforts of rage.
The birds obscene, that nightly flocked to taste,
With hollow screeches fled the dire repast: 736
And ravenous dogs, allured by scented blood,
And starving wolves, ran howling to the wood.

“ But fired with rage, from cleft Parnassus’
brow

Avenging Phœbus bent his deadly bow, 740
And hissing flew the feathered fates below:
A night of sultry clouds involved around
The towers, the fields, and the devoted ground:
And now a thousand lives together fled,
Death with his scythe cut off the fatal thread,
And a whole province in his triumph led. 746

“ But Phœbus, asked why noxious fires ap-
pear,

And raging Sirius blasts the sickly year,
Demands their lives by whom his monster fell,
And dooms a dreadful sacrifice to hell. 750

“ Blessed be thy dust, and let eternal fame
Attend thy manes, and preserve thy name,
Undaunted hero! who, divinely brave,

In such a cause disdained thy life to save ;
 But viewed the shrine with a superior look, 755
 And its upbraided godhead thus bespoke :

“ ‘ With piety, the soul’s securest guard,
 And conscious virtue, still its own reward,
 Willing I come, unknowing how to fear ;
 Nor shalt thou, Phœbus, find a suppliant here.
 Thy monster’s death to me was owed alone, 761
 And ’tis a deed too glorious to disown.

Behold him here, for whom, so many days,
 Impervious clouds concealed thy sullen rays ;
 For whom, as man no longer claimed thy care,
 Such numbers fell by pestilential air ! 766

But if the abandoned race of human kind
 From gods above no more compassion find ;
 If such inclemency in heaven can dwell,
 Yet why must unoffending Argos feel 770
 The vengeance due to this unlucky steel ?

On me, on me, let all thy fury fall,
 Nor err from me, since I deserve it all ;
 Unless our desert cities please thy sight,
 Or funeral flames reflect a grateful light. 775

Discharge thy shafts, this ready bosom rend,
 And to the shades a ghost triumphant send ;
 But for my country let my fate atone,
 Be mine the vengeance, as the crime my own ! ’

“ Merit distressed, impartial Heaven relieves :
 Unwelcome life relenting Phœbus gives ; 781
 For not the vengeful power, that glowed with
 rage,

With such amazing virtue durst engage.
 The clouds dispersed, Apollo’s wrath expired,
 And from the wondering god the unwilling
 youth retired. 785

Thence we these altars in his temple raise,
 And offer annual honours, feasts, and praise ;
 These solemn feasts propitious Phœbus please :

These honours, still renewed, his ancient wrath
appease.

“But say, illustrious guest (adjoined the
King) 790

What name you bear, from what high race you
spring ?

The noble Tydeus stands confessed, and known
Our neighbour prince, and heir of Calydon.

Relate your fortunes, while the friendly night
And silent hours to various talk invite.” 795

The Theban bends on earth his gloomy eyes,
Confused, and sadly thus at length replies :

“Before these altars how shall I proclaim,
O generous prince ! my nation, or my name,
Or through what veins our ancient blood has
rolled ? 800

Let the sad tale for ever rest untold !

Yet if propitious to a wretch unknown,
You seek to share in sorrows not your own ;
Know then from Cadmus I derive my race,
Jocasta's son, and Thebes my native place.” 805

To whom the King (who felt his generous
breast

Touched with concern for his unhappy guest)
Replies : “Ah ! why forbears the son to name
His wretched father, known too well by fame ?
Fame, that delights around the world to stray,
Scorns not to take our Argos in her way. 811
Ev'n those who dwell where suns at distance
roll,

In northern wilds, and freeze beneath the pole ;
And those who tread the burning Lybian lands,
The faithless Syrtes, and the moving sands ; 815
Who view the western sea's extremest bounds,
Or drink of Ganges in their eastern grounds ;
All these the woes of Œdipus have known,
Your fates, your furies, and your haunted town.

If on the sons the parent's crimes descend, 820
 What prince from those his lineage can defend?

Be this thy comfort, that 'tis thine to efface
 With virtuous acts thy ancestor's disgrace,
 And be thyself the honour of thy race.

But see! the stars begin to steal away, 825
 And shine more faintly at approaching day;
 Now pour the wine; and in your tuneful lays
 Once more resound the great Apollo's praise."

"Oh father Phœbus! whether Lycia's coast,
 And snowy mountains, thy bright presence
 boast; 830

Whether to sweet Castalia thou repair,
 And bathe in silver dews thy yellow hair;
 Or pleased to find fair Delos float no more,
 Delight in Cynthus, and the shady shore;
 Or choose thy seat in Ilion's proud abodes, 835
 The shining structures raised by labouring gods:
 By thee the bow and mortal shafts are borne;
 Eternal charms thy blooming youth adorn:
 Skilled in the laws of secret fate above,
 And the dark counsels of almighty Jove, 840
 'Tis thine the seeds of future war to know,
 The change of sceptres, and impending woe;
 When direful meteors spread through glowing
 air

Long trails of light, and shake their blazing
 hair.


Thy rage the Phrygian felt, who durst aspire
 To excel the music of thy heavenly lyre; 846
 Thy shafts avenged lewd Tityus' guilty flame,
 The immortal victim of thy mother's fame;
 Thy hand slew Python, and the dame who lost
 Her numerous offspring for a fatal boast. 850
 In Phlegyas' doom thy just revenge appears,
 Condemned to furies and eternal fears;

He views his food, but dreads, with lifted eye,
The mouldering rock that trembles from on
high.

“Propitious hear our prayer, O Power divine !
And on thy hospitable Argos shine, 856
Whether the style of Titan please thee more,
Whose purple rays the Achæmenes adore ;
Or great Osiris, who first taught the swain
In Pharian fields to sow the golden grain ; 860
Or Mitra, to whose beams the Persian bows,
And pays, in hollow rocks, his awful vows ;
Mitra, whose head the blaze of light adorns,
Who grasps the struggling heifer’s lunar horns.”

THE FABLE OF DRYOPE.

FROM THE NINTH BOOK OF OVID’S METAMORPHOSES.¹

 HE said, and for her lost Galanthis
sighs,
When the fair consort of her son
replies :
Since you a servant’s ravished form bemoan,
And kindly sigh for sorrows not your own ;
Let me (if tears and grief permit) relate 5
A nearer woe, a sister’s stranger fate.
No nymph of all Echalia could compare
For beauteous form with Dryope the fair,

¹ Upon occasion of the death of Hercules, his mother Alcmena recounts her misfortunes to Iole, who answers with a relation of those of her own family, in particular the transformation of her sister Dryope, which is the subject of the ensuing fable.
—P.

Her tender mother's only hope and pride,
 (Myself the offspring of a second bride). 10
 This nymph, compressed by him who rules the
 day,

Whom Delphi and the Delian isle obey,
 Andræmon loved; and blessed in all those
 charms

That pleased a god, succeeded to her arms. 14

A lake there was, with shelving banks around,
 Whose verdant summit fragrant myrtles
 crowned.

These shades, unknowing of the fates, she
 sought,

And to the Naiads flowery garlands brought;
 Her smiling babe (a pleasing charge) she pressed
 Within her arms, and nourished at her breast.

Not distant far, a watery lotos grows; 21

The spring was new, and all the verdant boughs,
 Adorned with blossoms, promised fruits that vie
 In glowing colours with the Tyrian dye:

Of these she cropped to please her infant son,
 And I myself the same rash act had done: 26

But lo! I saw (as near her side I stood)

The violated blossoms drop with blood;

Upon the tree I cast a frightful look;

The trembling tree with sudden horror shook.

Lotis the nymph (if rural tales be true) 31

As from Priapus' lawless lust she flew,

Forsook her form; and fixing here became

A flowery plant, which still preserves her name.

This change unknown, astonished at the
 sight, 35

My trembling sister strove to urge her flight:

And first the pardon of the nymphs implored,

And those offended sylvan powers adored;

But when she backward would have fled, she
 found

Her stiffening feet were rooted in the ground :
 In vain to free her fastened feet she strove, 41
 And as she struggles only moves above :
 She feels the encroaching bark around her
 grow

By quick degrees, and cover all below : 44
 Surprised at this, her trembling hand she heaves
 To rend her hair ; her hand is filled with leaves :
 Where late was hair, the shooting leaves are
 seen

To rise, and shade her with a sudden green.
 The child Amphissus, to her bosom pressed,
 Perceived a colder and a harder breast, 50
 And found the springs, that ne'er till then
 denied

Their milky moisture, on a sudden dried.
 I saw, unhappy ! what I now relate,
 And stood the helpless witness of thy fate, 54
 Embraced thy boughs, thy rising bark delayed,
 There wished to grow, and mingle shade with
 shade.

Behold Andræmon and the unhappy sire
 Appear, and for their Dryope inquire ;
 A springing tree for Dryope they find,
 And print warm kisses on the panting rind ; 60
 Prostrate, with tears their kindred plant bedew,
 And close embrace as to the roots they grew.
 The face was all that now remained of thee,
 No more a woman, nor yet quite a tree ;
 Thy branches hung with humid pearls appear,
 From every leaf distils a trickling tear, 66
 And straight a voice, while yet a voice remains,
 Thus through the trembling boughs in sighs
 complains :

“ If to the wretched any faith be given,
 I swear by all the unpitying powers of heaven,
 No wilful crime this heavy vengeance bred ; 71

In mutual innocence our lives we led :
 If this be false, let these new greens decay,
 Let sounding axes lop my limbs away, 74
 And crackling flames on all my honours prey.
 But from my branching arms this infant bear,
 Let some kind nurse supply a mother's care :
 And to this mother let him oft be led,
 Sport in her shades, and in her shades be fed ;
 Teach him, when first his infant voice shall
 frame 80

Imperfect words, and lisp his mother's name,
 To hail this tree ; and say, with weeping eyes,
 Within this plant my hapless parent lies :
 And when in youth he seeks the shady woods,
 Oh, let him fly the crystal lakes and floods, 85
 Nor touch the fatal flowers ; but, warned by
 me,

Believe a goddess shrined in every tree.
 My sire, my sister, and my spouse, farewell !
 If in your breasts or love or pity dwell,
 Protect your plant, nor let my branches feel 90
 The browsing cattle or the piercing steel.
 Farewell ! and since I cannot bend to join
 My lips to yours, advance at least to mine.
 My son, thy mother's parting kiss receive,
 While yet thy mother has a kiss to give. 95
 I can no more ; the creeping rind invades
 My closing lips, and hides my head in shades :
 Remove your hands, the bark shall soon suffice
 Without their aid to seal these dying eyes."

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

VERTUMNUS AND POMONA.

FROM THE FOURTEENTH BOOK OF OVID'S
METAMORPHOSES.



HE fair Pomona flourished in his
reign ;¹

Of all the virgins of the sylvan
train,

None taught the trees a nobler race to bear,
Or more improved the vegetable care.

To her the shady grove, the flowery field, 5
The streams and fountains, no delights could
yield ;

'Twas all her joy the ripening fruits to tend,
And see the boughs with happy burthens bend.
The hook she bore instead of Cynthia's spear,
To lop the growth of the luxuriant year, 10
To decent form the lawless shoots to bring,
And teach the obedient branches where to
spring.

Now the cleft rind inserted graffs receives,
And yields an offspring more than Nature gives ;
Now sliding streams the thirsty plants renew,
And feed their fibres with reviving dew. 16

These cares alone her virgin breast employ,
Averse from Venus and the nuptial joy.
Her private orchards, walled on every side,
To lawless sylvans all access denied. 20
How oft the satyrs and the wanton fauns,
Who haunt the forests, or frequent the lawns,
The god² whose ensign scares the bird of prey,
And old Silenus, youthful in decay,

¹ In the reign of Procas, a fabulous king of Latium.

² Priapus.

Employed their wiles and unavailing care, 25
To pass the fences, and surprise the fair.

Like these, Vertumnus owned his faithful flame,
Like these, rejected by the scornful dame.

To gain her sight, a thousand forms he wears ;
And first a reaper from the field appears ; 30
Sweating he walks, while loads of golden grain
O'ercharge the shoulders of the seeming swain.
Oft o'er his back a crooked scythe is laid,
And wreaths of hay his sunburnt temples
shade :

Oft in his hardened hand a goad he bears, 35
Like one who late unyoked the sweating steers.
Sometimes his pruning-hook corrects the vines,
And the loose stragglers to their ranks con-
fines.

Now gathering what the bounteous year
allows,

He pulls ripe apples from the bending boughs.
A soldier now, he with his sword appears ; 41
A fisher next, his trembling angle bears ;
Each shape he varies, and each art he tries,
On her bright charms to feast his longing eyes.

A female form at last Vertumnus wears, 45
With all the marks of reverend age appears,
His temples thinly spread with silver hairs ;
Propped on his staff, and stooping as he goes,
A painted mitre shades his furrowed brows.
The god in this decrepit form arrayed, 50
The gardens entered, and the fruit surveyed ;
And, " Happy you ! " (he thus addressed the
maid,)

" Whose charms as far all other nymphs out-
shine,

As other gardens are excelled by thine ! "

Then kissed the fair ; (his kisses warmer grow
Than such as women on their sex bestow) ; 56

Then placed beside her on the flowery ground,
Beheld the trees with autumn's bounty crowned.
An elm was near, to whose embraces led, 59
The curling vine her swelling clusters spread :
He viewed her twining branches with delight,
And praised the beauty of the pleasing sight.

“ Yet this tall elm, but for his vine (he
said)

Had stood neglected, and a barren shade ;
And this fair vine, but that her arms surround
Her married elm, had crept along the ground. 66
Ah, beauteous maid ! let this example move
Your mind, averse from all the joys of love.
Deign to be loved, and every heart subdue !
What nymph could e'er attract such crowds as
you ? 70

Not she whose beauty urged the Centaur's
arms,

Ulysses' queen, nor Helen's fatal charms.
Even now, when silent scorn is all thy gain,
A thousand court you, though they court in
vain,
A thousand sylvans, demigods, and gods, 75
That haunt our mountains and our Alban
woods.

But if you'll prosper, mark what I advise,
Whom age and long experience render wise,
And one whose tender care is far above
All that these lovers ever felt of love, 80
(Far more than e'er can by yourself be guessed)
Fix on Vertumnus, and reject the rest.
For his firm faith I dare engage my own ;
Scarce to himself, himself is better known.
To distant lands Vertumnus never roves ; 85
Like you, contented with his native groves ;
Nor at first sight, like most, admires the fair ;
For you he lives ; and you alone shall share


His last affection, as his early care.
Besides, he's lovely far above the rest, 90
With youth immortal, and with beauty blessed.
Add, that he varies every shape with ease,
And tries all forms that may Pomona please.
But what should most excite a mutual flame,
Your rural cares and pleasures are the same: 95
To him your orchard's early fruits are due,
(A pleasing offering when 'tis made by you).
He values these; but yet, alas! complains,
That still the best and dearest gift remains.
Not the fair fruit that on your branches
glows 100
With that ripe red the autumnal sun bestows;
Nor tasteful herbs that in these gardens rise,
Which the kind soil with milky sap supplies;
You, only you, can move the god's desire:
Oh crown so constant and so pure a fire! 105
Let soft compassion touch your gentle mind;
Think, 'tis Vertumnus begs you to be kind!
So may no frost, when early buds appear,
Destroy the promise of the youthful year;
Nor winds, when first your florid orchard
blows, 110
Shake the light blossoms from their blasted
boughs!"

This when the various god had urged in
vain,
He straight assumed his native form again;
Such, and so bright an aspect now he bears,
As when through clouds the emerging sun
appears, 115
And thence exerting his refulgent ray,
Dispels the darkness, and reveals the day.
Force he prepared, but checked the rash design;
For when, appearing in a form divine,
The nymph surveys him, and beholds the grace

Of charming features, and a youthful face, 121
 In her soft breast consenting passions move,
 And the warm maid confessed a mutual love.

SAPPHO TO PHAON.

TRANSLATED FROM OVID. (HEROID. XV.)

AY, lovely youth, that dost my heart
 command,
 Can Phaon's eyes forget his Sappho's
 hand ?

Must then her name the wretched writer prove
 To thy remembrance lost, as to thy love ?

Ask not the cause that I new numbers choose, 5
 The lute neglected, and the lyric muse ;

Love taught my tears in sadder notes to flow,
 And tuned my heart to elegies of woe.

I burn, I burn, as when through ripened corn
 By driving winds the spreading flames are
 borne ! 10

Phaon to Ætna's scorching field retires ;
 While I consume with more than Ætna's fires !
 No more my soul a charm in music finds ;
 Music has charms alone for peaceful minds.

Soft scenes of solitude no more can please, 15
 Love enters there, and I'm my own disease.

No more the Lesbian dames my passion move,
 Once the dear objects of my guilty love ;

All other loves are lost in only thine,
 Ah youth ungrateful to a flame like mine ! 20

Whom would not all those blooming charms
 surprise,

Those heavenly looks, and dear deluding eyes ?

The harp and bow would you like Phœbus bear,
 A brighter Phœbus Phaon might appear ; 24
 Would you with ivy wreath your flowing hair,
 Not Bacchus' self with Phaon could compare :
 Yet Phœbus loved, and Bacchus felt the flame,
 One Daphne warmed, and one the Cretan dame ;¹
 Nymphs that in verse no more could rival me,
 Than ev'n those gods contend in charms with
 thee. 30

The Muses teach me all their softest lays,
 And the wide world resounds with Sappho's
 praise.

Though great Alcæus more sublimely sings,
 And strikes with bolder rage the sounding
 strings,

No less renown attends the moving lyre, 35
 Which Venus tunes, and all her loves inspire.

To me what Nature has in charms denied,
 Is well by wit's more lasting flame supplied.
 Though short my stature, yet my name extends
 To heaven itself, and earth's remotest ends. 40

Brown as I am, an Ethiopian dame
 Inspired young Perseus with a generous flame ;
 Turtles and doves of differing hues unite,
 And glossy jet is paired with shining white.

If to no charms thou wilt thy heart resign, 45
 But such as merit, such as equal thine,
 By none, alas ! by none thou canst be moved,
 Phaon alone by Phaon must be loved !

Yet once thy Sappho could thy cares employ,
 Once in her arms you centred all your joy : 50
 No time the dear remembrance can remove,
 For oh ! how vast a memory has love !

My music, then, you could for ever hear,
 And all my words were music to your ear.

¹ Ariadne.

You stopped with kisses my enchanting tongue,
And found my kisses sweeter than my song. 56
In all I pleased, but most in what was best ;
And the last joy was dearer than the rest.
Then with each word, each glance, each motion
 fired,
You still enjoyed, and yet you still desired, 60
Till all dissolving in the trance we lay,
And in tumultuous raptures died away.
The fair Sicilians now thy soul inflame ;
Why was I born, ye gods, a Lesbian dame ?
But ah ! beware, Sicilian nymphs ! nor boast 65
That wandering heart which I so lately lost ;
Nor be with all those tempting words abused,
Those tempting words were all to Sappho used.
And you that rule Sicilia's happy plains,
Have pity, Venus, on your poet's pains ! 70
Shall fortune still in one sad tenor run,
And still increase the woes so soon begun ?
Inured to sorrow from my tender years,
My parent's ashes drank my early tears :
My brother next, neglecting wealth and fame, 75
Ignobly burned in a destructive flame :
An infant daughter late my griefs increased,
And all a mother's cares distract my breast.
Alas ! what more could Fate itself impose,
But thee, the last and greatest of my woes ? 80
No more my robes in waving purple flow,
Nor on my hands the sparkling diamonds glow ;
No more my locks in ringlets curled diffuse
The costly sweetness of Arabian dews,
Nor braids of gold the varied tresses bind, 85
That fly disordered with the wanton wind :
For whom should Sappho use such arts as these ?
He's gone, whom only she desired to please !
Cupid's light darts my tender bosom move,
Still is there cause for Sappho still to love : 90

So from my birth the Sisters fixed my doom,
 And gave to Venus all my life to come ;
 Or, while my Muse in melting notes complains,
 My yielding heart keeps measure to my strains.
 By charms like thine which all my soul have

won, 95

Who might not — ah ! who would not be
 undone ?

For those Aurora Cephalus might scorn,
 And with fresh blushes paint the conscious
 morn.

For those might Cynthia lengthen Phaon's
 sleep,

And bid Endymion nightly tend his sheep. 100

Venus for those had rapt thee to the skies,

But Mars on thee might look with Venus' eyes.

O scarce a youth, yet scarce a tender boy !

O useful time for lovers to employ !

Pride of thy age, and glory of thy race, 105

Come to these arms, and melt in this embrace !

The vows you never will return, receive ;

And take at least the love you will not give.

See, while I write, my words are lost in tears !

The less my sense, the more my love appears.

Sure 'twas not much to bid one kind adieu, 111

(At least to feign was never hard to you) ;

Farewell, my Lesbian love, you might have said ;

Or coldly thus, Farewell, O Lesbian maid !

No tear did you, no parting kiss receive, 115

Nor knew I then how much I was to grieve.

No lover's gift your Sappho could confer,

And wrongs and woes were all you left with
 her.

No charge I gave you, and no charge could
 give,

But this, Be mindful of our loves, and live. 120

Now by the Nine, those powers adored by me,

And Love, the god that ever waits on thee,
 When first I heard (from whom I hardly knew)
 That you were fled, and all my joys with you,
 Like some sad statue, speechless, pale, I stood,
 Grief chilled my breast, and stopped my freezing
 blood; 126

No sigh to rise, no tear had power to flow,
 Fixed in a stupid lethargy of woe :
 But when its way the impetuous passion found,
 I rend my tresses, and my breast I wound; 130
 I rave, then weep ; I curse, and then complain;
 Now swell to rage, now melt in tears again.
 Not fiercer pangs distract the mournful dame,
 Whose first-born infant feeds the funeral flame.
 My scornful brother with a smile appears, 135
 Insults my woes, and triumphs in my tears.
 His hated image ever haunts my eyes,
 And, Why this grief? thy daughter lives, he
 cries.

Stung with my love, and furious with despair,
 All torn my garments, and my bosom bare, 140
 My woes, thy crimes, I to the world proclaim ;
 Such inconsistent things are love and shame !
 'Tis thou art all my care, and my delight,
 My daily longing, and my dream by night :
 Oh night more pleasing than the brightest day,
 When fancy gives what absence takes away, 146
 And, dressed in all its visionary charms,
 Restores my fair deserter to my arms !
 Then round your neck in wanton wreaths I
 twine ;

Then you, methinks, as fondly circle mine: 150
 A thousand tender words I hear and speak ;
 A thousand melting kisses give and take :
 Then fiercer joys, I blush to mention these,
 Yet, while I blush, confess how much they
 please.

But when, with day, the sweet delusions fly, 155
 And all things wake to life and joy, but I,
 As if once more forsaken, I complain,
 And close my eyes to dream of you again :
 Then frantic rise, and like some fury rove
 Through lonely plains, and through the silent
 grove, 160

As if the silent grove, and lonely plains,
 That knew my pleasures, could relieve my
 pains.

I view the grotto, once the scene of love,
 The rocks around, the hanging roofs above,
 That charmed me more, with native moss o'er-
 grown, 165

Than Phrygian marble, or the Parian stone.

find the shades that veiled our joys before ;
 But, Phaon gone, those shades delight no more.
 Here the pressed herbs with bending tops
 betray 169

Where oft entwined in amorous folds we lay ;
 I kiss that earth which once was pressed by
 you,

And all with tears the withering herbs bedew.
 For thee the fading trees appear to mourn,
 And birds defer their songs till thy return :
 Night shades the groves, and all in silence lie,
 All but the mournful Philomel and I : 176
 With mournful Philomel I join my strain,
 Of Tereus she, of Phaon I complain.

A spring there is, whose silver waters show,
 Clear as a glass, the shining sands below : 180
 A flowery lotos spreads its arms above,
 Shades all the banks, and seems itself a grove ;
 Eternal greens the mossy margin grace,
 Watched by the sylvan genius of the place.
 Here as I lay, and swelled with tears the flood,
 Before my sight a watery virgin stood : 186

She stood, and cried, "O you that love in vain!
Fly hence, and seek the fair Leucadian main;
There stands a rock, from whose impending
steep

Apollo's fane surveys the rolling deep; 190
There injured lovers, leaping from above,
Their flames extinguish, and forget to love.
Deucalion once with hopeless fury burned,
In vain he loved, relentless Pyrrha scorned:
But when from hence he plunged into the
main, 195

Deucalion scorned, and Pyrrha loved in vain.
Haste, Sappho, haste, from high Leucadia throw
Thy wretched weight, nor dread the deeps
below!"

She spoke, and vanished with the voice—I rise,
And silent tears fall trickling from my eyes. 200

I go, ye nymphs! those rocks and seas to prove;
How much I fear! but ah, how much I love!
I go, ye nymphs, where furious love inspires;
Let female fears submit to female fires.

To rocks and seas I fly from Phaon's hate, 205
And hope from seas and rocks a milder fate.

Ye gentle gales, beneath my body blow,
And softly lay me on the waves below!

And thou, kind Love, my sinking limbs sustain,
Spread thy soft wings, and waft me o'er the
main, 210

Nor let a lover's death the guiltless flood pro-
fane!

On Phœbus' shrine my heart I'll then bestow,
And this inscription shall be placed below:

"Here she who sung, to him that did inspire,
Sappho to Phœbus consecrates her lyre; 215
What suits with Sappho, Phœbus, suits with
thee;

The gift, the giver, and the god agree."

But why, alas, relentless youth, ah! why
 To distant seas must tender Sappho fly?
 Thy charms than those may far more powerful
 be, 220

And Phoebus' self is less a god to me.

Ah! canst thou doom me to the rocks and sea,
 Oh! far more faithless and more hard than
 they?

Ah! canst thou rather see this tender breast
 Dashed on these rocks, than to thy bosom
 pressed? 225

This breast, which once, in vain! you liked so
 well;

Where the Loves played, and where the Muses
 dwell.

Alas! the Muses now no more inspire,
 Untuned my lute, and silent is my lyre;
 My languid numbers have forgot to flow, 230
 And fancy sinks beneath a weight of woe.

Ye Lesbian virgins, and ye Lesbian dames,
 Themes of my verse, and objects of my flames,
 No more your groves with my glad songs shall
 ring,

No more these hands shall touch the trembling
 string: 235

My Phaon's fled, and I those arts resign;
 (Wretch that I am, to call that Phaon mine!)
 Return, fair youth, return, and bring along
 Joy to my soul, and vigour to my song:

Absent from thee, the poet's flame expires; 240
 But ah! how fiercely burn the lover's fires!

Gods! can no prayers, no sighs, no numbers
 move,

One savage heart, or teach it how to love?

The winds my prayers, my sighs, my numbers
 bear,

The flying winds have lost them all in air! 245

Oh when, alas ! shall more auspicious gales
 To these fond eyes restore thy welcome sails ?
 If you return—ah ! why these long delays ?
 Poor Sappho dies, while careless Phaon stays.
 O launch thy bark, nor fear the watery
 plain ; 250
 Venus for thee shall smoothe her native main.
 O launch thy bark, secure of prosperous gales ;
 Cupid for thee shall spread the swelling sails.
 If you will fly—(yet ah ! what cause can be,
 Too cruel youth, that you should fly from me ?)
 If not from Phaon I must hope for ease, 256
 Ah let me seek it from the raging seas :
 To raging seas unpitied I'll remove,
 And either cease to live or cease to love !

JANUARY AND MAY ;
 OR, THE MERCHANT'S TALE.¹

FROM CHAUCER.

THERE lived in Lombardy, as authors
 write,
 In days of old, a wise and worthy
 knight ;
 Of gentle manners, as of generous race,
 Blessed with much sense, more riches, and some
 grace ;
 Yet led astray by Venus' soft delights, 5
 He scarce could rule some idle appetites :
 For long ago, let priests say what they could,
 Weak sinful laymen were but flesh and blood.

¹ This translation was done at sixteen or seventeen years of age.—P.

But in due time, when sixty years were o'er,
 He vowed to lead this vicious life no more ; 10
 Whether pure holiness inspired his mind,
 Or dotage turned his brain, is hard to find :
 But his high courage pricked him forth to
 wed,

And try the pleasures of a lawful bed.
 This was his nightly dream, his daily care, 15
 And to the heavenly powers his constant prayer,
 Once ere he died, to taste the blissful life
 Of a kind husband and a loving wife.

These thoughts he fortified with reasons still,
 For none want reasons to confirm their will. 20
 Grave authors say, and witty poets sing,
 That honest wedlock is a glorious thing :
 But depth of judgment most in him appears,
 Who wisely weds in his maturer years.
 Then let him choose a damsel young and fair, 25
 To bless his age, and bring a worthy heir ;
 To soothe his cares, and free from noise and
 strife,

Conduct him gently to the verge of life.
 Let sinful bachelors their woes deplore,
 Full well they merit all they feel, and more : 30
 Unawed by precepts human or divine,
 Like birds and beasts, promiscuously they join ;
 Nor know to make the present blessing last,
 To hope the future, or esteem the past ;
 But vainly boast the joys they never tried, 35
 And find divulged the secrets they would hide.
 The married man may bear his yoke with ease,
 Secure at once himself and Heaven to please ;
 And pass his inoffensive hours away,
 In bliss all night, and innocence all day : 40
 Though Fortune change, his constant spouse
 remains,
 Augments his joys, or mitigates his pains.

But what so pure, which envious tongues
will spare?

Some wicked wits have libelled all the fair.
With matchless impudence they style a wife, 45
The dear-bought curse, and lawful plague of
life;

A bosom serpent, a domestic evil,
A night invasion, and a mid-day devil.
Let not the wise these slanderous words regard,
But curse the bones of every lying bard. 50

All other goods by Fortune's hand are given,
A wife is the peculiar gift of Heaven.

Vain Fortune's favours, never at a stay,
Like empty shadows, pass, and glide away ;
One solid comfort, our eternal wife, 55

Abundantly supplies us all our life :
This blessing lasts, if those who try, say true,
As long as heart can wish—and longer too.

Our grandsire Adam, ere of Eve possessed,
Alone, and even in Paradise unblest, 60
With mournful looks the blissful scenes sur-
veyed,

And wandered in the solitary shade.
The Maker saw, took pity, and bestowed
Woman, the last, the best reserved of God.

A wife! ah gentle deities, can he 65
That has a wife e'er feel adversity?
Would men but follow what the sex advise,
All things would prosper, all the world grow
wise.

'Twas by Rebecca's aid that Jacob won
His father's blessing from an elder son : 70
Abusive Nabal owed his forfeit life
To the wise conduct of a prudent wife:
Heroic Judith, as old Hebrews show,
Preserved the Jews, and slew the Assyrian
foe :

At Hester's suit, the persecuting sword 75
 Was sheathed, and Israel lived to bless the
 Lord.

These weighty motives, January the sage
 Maturely pondered in his riper age ;
 And charmed with virtuous joys, and sober life,
 Would try that Christian comfort called a
 wife. 80

His friends were summoned on a point so nice,
 To pass their judgment, and to give advice ;
 But fixed before, and well resolved was he,
 (As men that ask advice are wont to be).

“ My friends,” he cried, (and cast a mournful
 look 85

Around the room, and sighed before he spoke),
 “ Beneath the weight of threescore years I bend,
 And, worn with cares, am hastening to my end ;
 How I have lived, alas ! you know too well,
 In worldly follies, which I blush to tell ; 90
 But gracious Heaven has oped my eyes at last,
 With due regret I view my vices past,
 And, as the precept of the church decrees,
 Will take a wife, and live in holy ease.

But since by counsel all things should be
 done, 95

And many heads are wiser still than one,
 Choose you for me, who best shall be content
 When my desire's approved by your consent.

“ One caution yet is needful to be told,
 To guide your choice ; this wife must not be
 old : 100

There goes a saying, and 'twas shrewdly said,
 ‘ Old fish at table, but young flesh in bed.’
 My soul abhors the tasteless, dry embrace,
 Of a stale virgin with a winter face :
 In that cold season Love but treats his guest 105
 With bean-straw, and tough forage at the best.

No crafty widows shall approach my bed ;
 Those are too wise for bachelors to wed.
 As subtle clerks by many schools are made,
 'Twice married dames are mistresses o' th'
 trade: 110

But young and tender virgins, ruled with ease,
 We form like wax, and mould them as we
 please.

“ Conceive me, sirs, nor take my sense amiss ;
 'Tis what concerns my soul's eternal bliss ;
 Since if I found no pleasure in my spouse, 115
 As flesh is frail, and who (God help me)
 knows ?

Then should I live in lewd adultery,
 And sink downright to Satan when I die.
 Or were I cursed with an unfruitful bed,
 The righteous end were lost for which I wed ; 120
 To raise up seed to bless the powers above,
 And not for pleasure only, or for love.

Think not I dote ; 'tis time to take a wife,
 When vigorous blood forbids a chaster life :
 Those that are blessed with store of grace
 divine, 125

May live like saints, by Heaven's consent and
 mine.

“ And since I speak of wedlock, let me say,
 (As, thank my stars, in modest truth I may),
 My limbs are active, still I'm sound at heart,
 And a new vigour springs in every part. 130
 Think not my virtue lost, though time has
 shed

These reverend honours on my hoary head :
 Thus trees are crowned with blossoms white as
 snow,

The vital sap then rising from below.
 Old as I am, my lusty limbs appear 135
 Like winter greens, that flourish all the year.

Now, sirs, you know to what I stand inclined,
Let every friend with freedom speak his mind."

He said ; the rest in different parts divide ;
The knotty point was urged on either side : 140
Marriage, the theme on which they all de-
claimed,

Some praised with wit, and some with reason
blamed.

Till, what with proofs, objections, and replies,
Each wondrous positive, and wondrous wise,
There fell between his brothers a debate, 145
Placebo this was called, and Justin that.

First to the knight Placebo thus begun,
(Mild were his looks, and pleasing was his tone) :
" Such prudence, sir, in all your words appears,
As plainly proves, experience dwells with years !
Yet you pursue sage Solomon's advice, 151
To work by counsel when affairs are nice :
But, with the wise man's leave, I must protest,
So may my soul arrive at ease and rest,
As still I hold your old advice the best. 155

" Sir, I have lived a courtier all my days,
And studied men, their manners, and their
ways ;

And have observed this useful maxim still,
To let my betters always have their will.

Nay, if my lord affirmed that black was white,
My word was this, ' Your honour's in the
right.' 161

The assuming wit, who deems himself so wise,
As his mistaken patron to advise,
Let him not dare to vent his dangerous thought,
A noble fool was never in a fault. 165

' This, sir, affects not you, whose every word
Is weighed with judgment, and befits a lord :
Your will is mine ; and is, I will maintain,
Pleasing to God, and should be so to man ;

At least, your courage all the world must praise,
 Who dare to wed in your declining days. 171
 Indulge the vigour of your mounting blood,
 And let grey fools be indolently good,
 Who, past all pleasure, damn the joys of sense,
 With reverend dulness and grave impotence."

Justin, who silent sat, and heard the man, 176
 Thus, with a philosophic frown, began :

" A heathen author, of the first degree,
 Who, though not faith, had sense as well as we,
 Bids us be certain our concerns to trust 180
 To those of generous principles, and just.
 The venture's greater, I'll presume to say,
 To give your person, than your goods away :
 And therefore, sir, as you regard your rest,
 First learn your lady's qualities, at least ; 185
 Whether she's chaste or rampant, proud or civil,
 Meek as a saint, or haughty as the devil ;
 Whether an easy, fond, familiar fool,
 Or such a wit as no man e'er can rule.
 'Tis true, perfection none must hope to find 190
 In all this world, much less in woman-kind ;
 But if her virtues prove the larger share,
 Bless the kind fates, and think your fortune
 rare.

Ah, gentle sir, take warning of a friend,
 Who knows too well the state you thus com-
 mend ; 195

And, spite of all his praises, must declare,
 All he can find is bondage, cost, and care.
 Heaven knows, I shed full many a private
 tear,

And sigh in silence, lest the world should hear ;
 While all my friends applaud my blissful life,
 And swear no mortal's happier in a wife ; 201
 Demure and chaste as any vestal nun,
 The meekest creature that beholds the sun !

But, by the immortal powers, I feel the pain,
 And he that smarts has reason to complain. 205
 Do what you list, for me ; you must be sage,
 And cautious sure ; for wisdom is in age :
 But at these years to venture on the fair !
 By him, who made the ocean, earth, and air,
 To please a wife, when her occasions call, 210
 Would busy the most vigorous of us all.
 And trust me, sir, the chastest you can choose
 Will ask observance, and exact her dues.
 If what I speak my noble lord offend,
 My tedious sermon here is at an end." 215

“ ’Tis well, ’tis wondrous well, (the knight
 replies,)
 Most worthy kinsman, ’faith you’re mighty
 wise !

We, sirs, are fools ; and must resign the cause
 To heathenish authors, proverbs, and old saws.
 (He spoke with scorn, and turned another
 way,) 220

What does my friend, my dear Placebo, say ? ”
 “ I say, (quoth he,) by Heaven the man’s to
 blame,

To slander wives, and wedlock’s holy name.”

At this the council rose without delay :
 Each, in his own opinion, went his way ; 225
 With full consent, that, all disputes appeased,
 The knight should marry, when and where he
 pleased.

Who now but January exults with joy ?
 The charms of wedlock all his soul employ :
 Each nymph by turns his wavering mind pos-
 sessed, 230
 And reigned the short-lived tyrant of his breast ;
 While fancy pictured every lively part,
 And each bright image wandered o’er his heart.
 Thus, in some public forum fixed on high,

A mirror shows the figures moving by ; 235
 Still one by one, in swift succession, pass
 The gliding shadows o'er the polished glass.
 This lady's charms the nicest could not blame,
 But vile suspicions had aspersed her fame ;
 That was with sense, but not with virtue, blessed ;
 And one had grace, that wanted all the rest. 241
 Thus doubting long what nymph he should
 obey,

He fixed at last upon the youthful May.
 Her faults he knew not, Love is always blind,
 But every charm revolved within his mind : 245
 Her tender age, her form divinely fair,
 Her easy motion, her attractive air,
 Her sweet behaviour, her enchanting face,
 Her moving softness, and majestic grace.

Much in his prudence did our knight re-
 joice, 250
 And thought no mortal could dispute his choice :
 Once more in haste he summoned every friend,
 And told them all, their pains were at an end.
 " Heaven, that (said he) inspired me first to
 wed,

Provides a consort worthy of my bed : 255
 Let none oppose the election, since on this
 Depends my quiet, and my future bliss.

" A dame there is, the darling of my eyes,
 Young, beauteous, artless, innocent, and wise :
 Chaste, though not rich ; and, though not nobly
 born, 260

Of honest parents, and may serve my turn.
 Her will I wed, if gracious Heaven so please ;
 To pass my age in sanctity and ease :
 And thank the powers, I may possess alone
 The lovely prize, and share my bliss with none !
 If you, my friends, this virgin can procure, 266
 My joys are full, my happiness is sure.

"One only doubt remains: Full oft I've
 heard,
 By casuists grave, and deep divines averred;
 That 'tis too much for human race to know 270
 The bliss of Heaven above, and earth below.
 Now, should the nuptial pleasures prove so
 great,
 To match the blessings of the future state,
 Those endless joys were ill exchanged for these:
 Then clear this doubt, and set my mind at
 ease." 275

This Justin heard, nor could his spleen con-
 trol,
 Touched to the quick, and tickled at the soul.
 "Sir knight, (he cried,) if this be all you dread,
 Heaven put it past your doubt whene'er you
 wed;
 And to my fervent prayers so far consent, 280
 That, ere the rites are o'er, you may repent!
 Good Heaven, no doubt, the nuptial state
 approves,
 Since it chastises still what best it loves.

"Then be not, sir, abandoned to despair;
 Seek, and perhaps you'll find among the fair,
 One that may do your business to a hair; 286
 Not even in wish your happiness delay,
 But prove the scourge to lash you on your way:
 Then to the skies your mounting soul shall go,
 Swift as an arrow soaring from the bow! 290
 Provided still, you moderate your joy,
 Nor in your pleasures all your might employ;
 Let Reason's rule your strong desires abate,
 Nor please too lavishly your gentle mate. 294
 Old wives there are, of judgment most acute,
 Who solve these questions beyond all dispute;
 Consult with those, and be of better cheer:
 Marry, do penance, and dismiss your fear."

So said, they rose, nor more the work
delayed;

The match was offered, the proposals made. 300
The parents, you may think, would soon comply;
The old have interest ever in their eye.

Nor was it hard to move the lady's mind;
When Fortune favours, still the fair are kind.

I pass each previous settlement and deed, 305
Too long for me to write, or you to read;
Nor will with quaint impertinence display
The pomp, the pageantry, the proud array.
The time approached, to church the parties
went,

At once with carnal and devout intent: 310
Forth came the priest, and bade the obedient
wife

Like Sarah or Rebecca lead her life;
Then prayed the powers the fruitful bed to
bless,

And made all sure enough with holiness.

And now the palace-gates are opened wide,
The guests appear in order, side by side, 316
And placed in state, the bridegroom and the
bride.

The breathing flute's soft notes are heard
around,

And the shrill trumpets mix their silver sound;
The vaulted roofs with echoing music ring, 320
These touch the vocal stops, and those the
trembling string.

Not thus Amphion tuned the warbling lyre,
Nor Joab the sounding clarion could inspire,
Nor fierce Theodomas, whose sprightly strain
Could swell the soul to rage, and fire the
martial train. 325

Bacchus himself, the nuptial feast to grace,
(So poets sing), was present on the place:

Damian alone, the knight's obsequious squire,
 Consumed at heart, and fed a secret fire. 360
 His lovely mistress all his soul possessed,
 He looked, he languished, and could take no
 rest :

His task performed, he sadly went his way,
 Fell on his bed, and loathed the light of day.
 There let him lie ; till his relenting dame 365
 Weep in her turn, and waste in equal flame.

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

The foe once gone, our knight prepared to
 undress,
 So keen he was, and eager to possess :
 But first thought fit the assistance to receive 375
 Which grave physicians scruple not to give ;
 Satyrion near, with hot eringos stood,
 Cantharides, to fire the lazy blood,
 Whose use old bards describe in luscious
 rhymes,
 And critics learned explain to modern times. 380
 By this the sheets were spread, the bride un-
 dressed,

The room was sprinkled, and the bed was
 blessed.

What next ensued beseems not me to say ;
 'Tis sung, he laboured till the dawning day,
 Then briskly sprung from bed with heart so
 light, 385

As all were nothing he had done by night ;
 And sipped his cordial as he sat upright.
 He kissed his balmy spouse with wanton play,

And feebly sung a lusty roundelay :
 Then on the couch his weary limbs he cast ; 390
 For every labour must have rest at last.

But anxious cares the pensive squire op-
 pressed,
 Sleep fled his eyes, and peace forsook his breast ;
 The raging flames that in his bosom dwell,
 He wanted art to hide, and means to tell. 395
 Yet hoping time the occasion might betray,
 Composed a sonnet to the lovely May ;
 Which writ and folded with the nicest art,
 He wrapped in silk, and laid upon his heart.

When now the fourth revolving day was
 run, 400
 ('Twas June, and Cancer had received the sun,)
 Forth from her chamber came the beauteous
 bride ;

The good old knight moved slowly by her side.
 High mass was sung ; they feasted in the hall ;
 The servants round stood ready at their call. 405
 The squire alone was absent from the board,
 And much his sickness grieved his worthy lord,
 Who prayed his spouse, attended with her
 train,

To visit Damian, and divert his pain.
 The obliging dames obeyed with one consent ;
 They left the hall, and to his lodging went. 411
 The female tribe surround him as he lay,
 And close beside him sat the gentle May :
 Where, as she tried his pulse, he softly drew
 A heaving sigh, and cast a mournful view ; 415
 Then gave his bill, and bribed the powers
 divine,

With secret vows to favour his design.

Who studies now but discontented May ?
 On her soft conch uneasily she lay :
 The lumpish husband snored away the night, 420

Till coughs awaked him near the morning
light.

What then he did, I'll not presume to tell,
Nor if she thought herself in heaven or hell :
Honest and dull in nuptial bed they lay,
Till the bell tolled, and all arose to pray. 425

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

And wasted in the soft infectious fire.
Ye fair, draw near, let May's example move
Your gentle minds to pity those who love ! 435
Had some fierce tyrant in her stead been found,
The poor adorer sure had hanged, or drowned ;
But she, your sex's mirror, free from pride,
Was much too meek to prove a homicide.

But to my tale : Some sages have defined 440
Pleasure the sovereign bliss of human-kind :
Our knight (who studied much, we may suppose)

Derived his high philosophy from those ;
For, like a prince, he bore the vast expense
Of lavish pomp, and proud magnificence : 445
His house was stately, his retinue gay,
Large was his train, and gorgeous his array.
His spacious garden made to yield to none,
Was compassed round with walls of solid stone ;
Priapus could not half describe the grace 450
(Though god of gardens) of this charming
place ;

A place to tire the rambling wits of France
In long descriptions, and exceed romance ;

Enough to shame the gentlest bard that sings
Of painted meadows, and of purling springs. 455

Full in the centre of the flowery ground,
A crystal fountain spread its streams around,
The fruitful banks with verdant laurels crowned :
About this spring, if ancient fame say true,
The dapper elves their moon-light sports pursue :
Their pigmy king, and little fairy queen, 461
In circling dances gambolled on the green,
While tuneful sprites a merry concert made,
And airy music warbled through the shade.

Hither the noble knight would oft repair, 465
(His scene of pleasure, and peculiar care)
For this he held it dear, and always bore
The silver key that locked the garden door.
To this sweet place, in summer's sultry heat,
He used from noise and business to retreat ; 470
And here in dalliance spend the livelong day,
Solus cum sola, with his sprightly May.

For whate'er work was undischarged a-bed,
The duteous knight in this fair garden sped.

But ah! what mortal lives of bliss secure? 475
How short a space our worldly joys endure !
O Fortune, fair, like all thy treacherous kind,
But faithless still, and wavering as the wind !
O painted monster, formed mankind to cheat,
With pleasing poison, and with soft deceit! 480
This rich, this amorous, venerable knight,
Amidst his ease, his solace, and delight,
Struck blind by thee, resigns his days to grief,
And calls on death, the wretch's last relief.

The rage of jealousy then seized his mind, 485
For much he feared the faith of woman-kind.
His wife, not suffered from his side to stray,
Was captive kept, he watched her night and
day,
Abridged her pleasures, and confined her sway.

Full oft in tears did hapless May complain, 490
 And sighed full oft; but sighed and wept in
 vain :

She looked on Damian with a lover's eye;
 For oh, 'twas fixed; she must possess or die!
 Nor less impatience vexed her amorous squire,
 Wild with delay, and burning with desire. 495
 Watched as she was, yet could he not refrain,
 By secret writing to disclose his pain:
 The dame by signs revealed her kind intent,
 Till both were conscious what each other meant.

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

Argus himself, so cautious and so wise,
 Was overwatched for all his hundred eyes: 505
 So many an honest husband may, 'tis known,
 Who, wisely, never thinks the case his own.

The dame at last, by diligence and care,
 Procured the key her knight was wont to bear;
 She took the wards in wax before the fire, 510
 And gave the impression to the trusty squire.
 By means of this, some wonder shall appear,
 Which, in due place and season, you may hear.

Well sung sweet Ovid, in the days of yore,
 What sleight is that, which love will not
 explore? 515

And Pyramus and Thisbe plainly show,
 The feats true lovers, when they list, can do:
 Though watched and captive, yet, in spite of all,
 They found the art of kissing through a wall.

But now no longer from our tale to stray; 520
 It happed, that once, upon a summer's day,
 Our reverend knight was urged to amorous
 play;

He raised his spouse ere matin-bell was rung,
And thus his morning canticle he sung :

“ Awake, my love, disclose thy radiant eyes ;
Arise, my wife, my beauteous lady, rise ! 526
Hear how the doves with pensive notes complain,
And in soft murmurs tell the trees their pain ;
The winter’s past ; the clouds and tempests fly ;
The sun adorns the fields, and brightens all the
sky. 530

Fair without spot, whose every charming part
My bosom wounds, and captivates my heart ;
Come, and in mutual pleasures let’s engage,
Joy of my life, and comfort of my age ! ”

This heard, to Damian straight a sign she
made, 535

To haste before ; the gentle squire obeyed :
Secret, and undescried, he took his way,
And ambushed close behind an arbour lay.

It was not long ere January came,
And hand in hand with him his lovely dame ;
Blind as he was, not doubting all was sure, 541
He turned the key, and made the gate secure.

“ Here let us walk (he said,) observed by
none,

Conscious of pleasures to the world unknown :
So may my soul have joy, as thou, my wife, 545
Art far the dearest solace of my life ;

And rather would I choose, by Heaven above !
To die this instant, than to lose thy love.

Reflect what truth was in my passion shown,
When, unendowed, I took thee for my own, 550
And sought no treasure but thy heart alone.

Old as I am, and now deprived of sight,
Whilst thou art faithful to thy own true knight,
Nor age nor blindness rob me of delight.

Each other loss with patience I can bear, 555
The loss of thee is what I only fear.

“ Consider then, my lady and my wife,
 The solid comforts of a virtuous life.
 As, first, the love of Christ himself you gain ;
 Next, your own honour undefiled maintain ; 560
 And lastly, that which sure your mind must
 move,

My whole estate shall gratify your love :
 Make your own terms, and, ere to-morrow's sun
 Displays his light, by Heaven, it shall be done !
 I seal the contract with a holy kiss, 565
 And will perform, by this—my dear, and this.
 Have comfort, spouse, nor think thy lord unkind ;
 'Tis love, not jealousy, that fires my mind.
 For when thy charms my sober thoughts
 engage,

And joined to them my own unequal age, 570
 From thy dear side I have no power to part,
 Such secret transports warm my melting heart.
 For who that once possessed those heavenly
 charms,

Could live one moment absent from thy arms ? ”

He ceased ; and May with modest grace
 replied : 575
 (Weak was her voice, as while she spoke she
 cried :)

“ Heaven knows (with that a tender sigh she
 drew,)

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

“ First may the yawning earth her bosom
 rend, 585
 And let me hence to hell alive descend ;

Or die the death I dread no less than hell,
 Sewed in a sack, and plunged into a well ;
 Ere I my fame by one lewd act disgrace,
 Or once renounce the honour of my race. 590
 For know, sir knight, of gentle blood I came ;
 I loathe a whore, and startle at the name.
 But jealous men on their own crimes reflect,
 And learn from thence their ladies to suspect :
 Else, why these needless cautions, sir, to me ? 595
 These doubts and fears of female constancy !
 This chime still rings in every lady's ear,
 The only strain a wife must hope to hear."

Thus while she spoke, a sidelong glance she
 cast,
 Where Damian, kneeling, worshipp'd as she
 passed. 600

She saw him watch the motions of her eye,
 And singled out a pear-tree, planted nigh :
 'Twas charg'd with fruit that made a goodly
 show,

And hung with dangling pears was every bough.
 Thither the obsequious squire address'd his
 pace, 605

And, climbing, in the summit took his place ;
 The knight and lady walk'd beneath in view ;
 Where let us leave them, and our tale pursue.

'Twas now the season when the glorious sun
 His heavenly progress through the Twins had
 run ; 610

And Jove, exalted, his mild influence yields,
 To glad the glebe, and paint the flowery fields ;
 Clear was the day, and Phœbus, rising bright,
 Had streaked the azure firmament with light ;
 He pierc'd the glittering clouds with golden
 streams, 615

And warm'd the womb of earth with genial
 beams.

It so befel, in that fair morning tide,
 The fairies sported on the garden side,
 And in the midst their monarch and his bride.
 So featly tripped the lightfoot ladies round, 620
 The knights so nimbly o'er the greensward
 bound,

That scarce they bent the flowers, or touched
 the ground.

The dances ended, all the fairy train
 For pinks and daisies searched the flowery
 plain ;

While on a bank reclined of rising green, 625
 Thus, with a frown, the King bespoke his Queen :

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

“ Heaven rest thy spirit, noble Solomon, 631
 A wiser monarch never saw the sun :
 All wealth, all honours, the supreme degree
 Of earthly bliss, was well bestowed on thee !
 For sagely hast thou said, ‘ Of all mankind, 635
 One only just and righteous hope to find :
 But shouldst thou search the spacious world
 around,

Yet one good woman is not to be found.’

“ Thus says the King who knew your wicked-
 ness :

The son of Sirach testifies no less. 640
 So may some wildfire on your bodies fall,
 Or some devouring plague consume you all ;
 As well you view the lecher in the tree,
 And well this honourable knight you see : 644
 But since he's blind and old (a helpless case)
 His squire shall cuckold him before your face.

“ Now by my own dread majesty I swear,
 And by this awful sceptre which I bear,

No impious wretch shall 'scape unpunished
long,

That in my presence offers such a wrong. 650

I will this instant undeceive the knight,

And in the very act restore his sight :

And set the strumpet here in open view,

A warning to these ladies, and to you, 654

And all the faithless sex, for ever to be true."

"And will you so, (replied the Queen), in-
deed ?

Now, by my mother's soul, it is decreed,

She shall not want an answer at her need.

For her, and for her daughters, I'll engage,

And all the sex in each succeeding age ; 660

Art shall be theirs to varnish an offence,

And fortify their crimes with confidence.

Nay, were they taken in a strict embrace,

Seen with both eyes, and pinioned on the place ;

All they shall need is to protest and swear, 665

Breathe a soft sigh, and drop a tender tear ;

Till their wise husbands, gulled by arts like
these,

Grow gentle, tractable, and tame as geese.

"What though this slanderous Jew, this
Solomon, 669

Called women fools, and knew full many a one ;

The wiser wits of later times declare,

How constant, chaste, and virtuous women are :

Witness the martyrs, who resigned their breath,

Serene in torments, unconcerned in death ;

And witness next what Roman authors tell, 675

How Arria, Portia, and Lucretia fell.

"But since the sacred leaves to all are free,

And men interpret texts, why should not we ?

By this no more was meant, than to have
shown,

That sovereign goodness dwells in him alone

Who only Is, and is but only One. 681

But grant the worst; shall women then be
weighed

By every word that Solomon has said?

What though this King (as ancient story boasts)

Built a fair temple to the Lord of Hosts; 685

He ceased at last his Maker to adore,

And did as much for idol gods, or more.

Beware what lavish praises you confer

On a rank lecher and idolater;

Whose reign indulgent God, says Holy Writ,

Did but for David's righteous sake permit; 691

David, the monarch after Heaven's own mind,

Who loved our sex, and honoured all our kind.

“Well, I'm a woman, and as such must speak;
Silence would swell me, and my heart would
break. 695

Know then, I scorn your dull authorities,

Your idle wits, and all their learned lies.

By Heaven, those authors are our sex's foes,

Whom, in our right, I must, and will oppose.”

“Nay, (quoth the King,) dear madam, be not
wroth: 700

I yield it up; but since I gave my oath,

That this much-injured knight again should
see;

It must be done—I am a King, (said he,)

And one whose faith has ever sacred been.”

“And so has mine (she said); I am a Queen:
Her answer she shall have, I undertake; 706

And thus an end of all dispute I make.

Try when you list; and you shall find, my lord,
It is not in our sex to break our word.”

We leave them here, in this heroic strain,
And to the knight our story turns again; 711
Who in the garden, with his lovely May,

Sung merrier than the cuckoo or the jay :
 This was his song: " Oh kind and constant be ;
 Constant and kind I'll ever prove to thee." 715

Thus singing as he went, at last he drew,
 By easy steps, to where the pear-tree grew :
 The longing dame looked up, and spied her
 love

Full fairly perched among the boughs above.
 She stopped, and sighing: " Oh good gods! (she
 cried) 720

What pangs, what sudden shoots distend my
 side ?

O for that tempting fruit, so fresh, so green ;
 Help, for the love of Heaven's immortal Queen !
 Help, dearest lord, and save at once the life
 Of thy poor infant, and thy longing wife !" 725

Sore sighed the knight to hear his lady's
 cry,

But could not climb, and had no servant nigh :
 Old as he was, and void of eye-sight too,
 What could, alas ! a helpless husband do ?

" And must I languish, then, (she said,) and
 die, 730

Yet view the lovely fruit before my eye ?
 At least, kind sir, for charity's sweet sake,
 Vouchsafe the trunk between your arms to
 take ;

Then from your back I might ascend the tree ;
 Do you but stoop, and leave the rest to
 me." 735

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

Now prove your patience, gentle ladies all !
 Nor let on me your heavy anger fall : 741
 'Tis truth I tell, though not in phrase refined ;

Though blunt my tale, yet honest is my mind.
 What feats the lady in the tree might do,
 I pass, as gambols never known to you; 745
 But sure it was a merrier fit, she swore,
 Than in her life she ever felt before.

In that nice moment, lo! the wondering
 knight
 Looked out, and stood restored to sudden sight.
 Straight on the tree his eager eyes he bent, 750
 As one whose thoughts were on his spouse
 intent.

But when he saw his bosom-wife so dressed,
 His rage was such as cannot be expressed :
 Not frantic mothers, when their infants die,
 With louder clamours rend the vaulted sky: 755
 He cried, he roared, he stormed, he tore his
 hair;

“Death! Hell! and Furies! what dost thou
 do there?”

“What ails my lord? (the trembling dame
 replied,)

I thought your patience had been better tried :
 Is this your love, ungrateful and unkind, 760
 This my reward for having cured the blind ?
 Why was I taught to make my husband see,
 By struggling with a man upon a tree ?
 Did I for this the power of magic prove ?
 Unhappy wife, whose crime was too much
 love! ” 765

“If this be struggling, by this holy light,
 ’Tis struggling with a vengeance (quoth the
 knight).

So Heaven preserve the sight it has restored,
 As with these eyes I plainly saw thee whored ;
 Whored by my slave—perfidious wretch ! may
 hell 770

As surely seize thee, as I saw too well.”

“ Guard me, good angels ! (cried the gentle
May,)

Pray Heaven this magic work the proper way !
Alas, my love ! 'tis certain, could you see,
You ne'er had used these killing words to me :
So help me, Fates, as 'tis no perfect sight, 776
But some faint glimmering of a doubtful light.”

“ What I have said (quoth he), I must main-
tain,
For by the immortal powers it seemed too
plain—”

“ By all those powers, some frenzy seized
your mind, 780
(Replied the dame) ; are these the thanks I
find ?

Wretch that I am, that e'er I was so kind !”
She said ; a rising sigh expressed her woe,
The ready tears apace began to flow,
And, as they fell, she wiped from either eye 785
The drops ; for women, when they list, can cry.

The knight was touched ; and in his looks
appeared
Signs of remorse, while thus his spouse he
cheered :

“ Madam, 'tis past, and my short anger o'er !
Come down, and vex your tender heart no
more : 790

Excuse me, dear, if aught amiss was said ;
For, on my soul, amends shall soon be made :
Let my repentance your forgiveness draw ;
By Heaven, I swore but what I thought I
saw.”

“ Ah, my loved lord ! 'twas much unkind
(she cried,) 795
On bare suspicion thus to treat your bride.
But, till your sight's established, for a while,
Imperfect objects may your sense beguile.

Thus when from sleep we first our eyes display,
 The balls are wounded with the piercing ray, 800
 And dusky vapours rise, and intercept the day.
 So just recovering from the shades of night,
 Your swimming eyes are drunk with sudden
 light,

Strange phantoms dance around, and skim be-
 fore your sight.

“Then, sir, be cautious, nor too rashly deem ;
 Heaven knows how seldom things are what
 they seem ! 806

Consult your reason, and you soon shall find
 ’Twas you were jealous, not your wife unkind :
 Jove ne’er spoke oracle more true than this,
 None judge so wrong as those who think
 amiss.” 810

With that she leaped into her lord’s embrace,
 With well-dissembled virtue in her face.
 He hugged her close, and kissed her o’er and
 o’er,
 Disturbed with doubts and jealousies no more:
 Both, pleased and blessed, renewed their mutual
 vows, 815

A fruitful wife, and a believing spouse.

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

Shall die, and leave his woeful wife behind,
I'll take the next good Christian I can find.

Paul, knowing one could never serve our
turn,

Declared 'twas better far to wed than burn.

There's danger in assembling fire and tow; 30

I grant 'em that, and what it means you know.

The same apostle too has elsewhere owned,

No precept for virginity he found :

'Tis but a counsel, and we women still

Take which we like, the counsel, or our will. 35

I envy not their bliss, if he or she

Think fit to live in perfect chastity ;

Pure let them be, and free from taint or vice ;

I, for a few slight spots, am not so nice.

Heaven calls us different ways, on these bestows

One proper gift, another grants to those; 41

Not every man's obliged to sell his store,

And give up all his substance to the poor ;

Such as are perfect, may, I can't deny ;

But, by your leaves, divines, so am not I. 45

Full many a saint, since first the world began,

Lived an unspotted maid, in spite of man :

Let such (a God's name) with fine wheat be fed,

And let us honest wives eat barley-bread.

For me, I'll keep the post assigned by Heaven,

And use the copious talent it has given : 51

Let my good spouse pay tribute, do me right,

And keep an equal reckoning every night :

His proper body is not his, but mine ;

For so said Paul, and Paul's a sound divine. 55

Know then, of those five husbands I have had,

Three were just tolerable, two were bad.

The three were old, but rich, and fond beside,

And toiled most piteously to please their bride :

But since their wealth, the best they had, was

mine,

60

The rest, without much loss, I could resign.
 Sure to be loved, I took no pains to please,
 Yet had more pleasure far than they had ease.
 Presents flowed in apace : with showers of
 gold

They made their court, like Jupiter of old. 65
 If I but smiled, a sudden youth they found,
 And a new palsy seized them when I frowned.

Ye sovereign wives ! give ear, and understand,

Thus shall ye speak, and exercise command.
 For never was it given to mortal man, 70
 To lie so boldly as we women can :

Forswear the fact, though seen with both his
 eyes,

And call your maids to witness how he lies.

“Hark, old Sir Paul ; ('twas thus I used to
 say)

Whence is our neighbour's wife so rich and
 gay ? 75

Treated, caressed, where'er she's pleased to
 roam—

I sit in tatters, and immured at home.

Why to her house dost thou so oft repair ?

Art thou so amorous ? and is she so fair ?

If I but see a cousin or a friend, 80

Lord ! how you swell with rage like any fiend !

But you reel home, a drunken beastly bear,

Then preach till midnight in your easy chair ;

Cry, wives are false, and every woman evil,

And give up all that's female to the devil. 85

“If poor, (you say) she drains her husband's
 purse ;

If rich, she keeps her priest, or something worse ;

If highly born, intolerably vain,

Vapours and pride by turns possess her brain,

Now gaily mad, now sourly splenetic, 90

Freakish when well, and fretful when she's
sick.

If fair, then chaste she cannot long abide,
By pressing youth attacked on every side ;
If foul, her wealth the lusty lover lures,
Or else her wit some fool-gallant procures, 95
Or else she dances with becoming grace,
Or shape excuses the defects of face.
There swims no goose so gray, but soon or late,
She finds some honest gander for her mate.

“Horses, thou say'st, and asses, men may
try, 100

And ring suspected vessels ere they buy :
But wives, a random choice, untried they take,
They dream in courtship, but in wedlock wake :
Then, not till then, the veil's removed away,
And all the woman glares in open day. 105

“You tell me, to preserve your wife's good
grace,

Your eyes must always languish on my face,
Your tongue with constant flatteries feed my
ear,

And tag each sentence with, My life! my dear!
If, by strange chance, a modest blush be
raised, 110

Be sure my fine complexion must be praised.
My garments must be always new and gay,
And feasts still kept upon my wedding-day.
Then must my nurse be pleased, and favourite
maid ;

And endless treats, and endless visits paid, 115
To a long train of kindred, friends, allies :
All this thou say'st, and all thou say'st are lies.

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

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

“Why are thy chests all locked? on what
 design?”

Are not thy worldly goods and treasure mine?
 Sir, I'm no fool: nor shall you, by St. John, 126
 Have goods and body to yourself alone.

One you shall quit, in spite of both your eyes;
 I heed not, I, the bolts, the locks, the spies.
 If you had wit, you'd say, ‘Go where you will,
 Dear spouse, I credit not the tales they tell; 131
 Take all the freedoms of a married life;
 I know thee for a virtuous, faithful wife.’

“Lord! when you have enough, what need
 you care

How merrily soever others fare? 135

Though all the day I give and take delight,
 Doubt not, sufficient will be left at night.

'Tis but a just and rational desire,
 To light a taper at a neighbour's fire.

“There's danger too, you think, in rich
 array, 140

And none can long be modest that are gay.

The cat, if you but singe her tabby skin,
 The chimney keeps, and sits content within;
 But once grown sleek, will from her corner
 run,

Sport with her tail, and wanton in the sun: 145
 She licks her fair round face, and frisks abroad,
 To show her fur, and to be caterwawed.”

Lo thus, my friends, I wrought to my desires
 These three right ancient venerable sires.

I told 'em, Thus you say, and thus you do, 150
 And told 'em false, but Jenkin swore 'twas true.
 I, like a dog, could bite as well as whine,

And first complained whenc'er the guilt was
mine.

I taxed them oft with wenching and amours,
When their weak legs scarce dragged 'em out of
doors ; 155

And swore the rambles that I took by night,
Were all to spy what damsels they bedight.
That colour brought me many hours of mirth ;
For all this wit is given us from our birth.

Heaven gave to woman the peculiar grace 160
To spin, to weep, and cully human race.

By this nice conduct, and this prudent course,
By murmuring, wheedling, stratagem, and force,
I still prevailed, and would be in the right,
Or curtain lectures made a restless night. 165

If once my husband's arm was o'er my side,
"What ! so familiar with your spouse ?" I
cried :

I levied first a tax upon his need ;
Then let him—'twas a nicety indeed !
Let all mankind this certain maxim hold, 170
Marry who will, our sex is to be sold.

With empty hands no tassels you can lure,
But fulsome love for gain we can endure ;
For gold we love the impotent and old,
And heave, and pant, and kiss, and cling for
gold. 175

Yet with embraces, curses oft I mixed,
Then kissed again, and chid and railed betwixt.
Well, I may make my will in peace, and die,
For not one word in man's arrears am I.

To drop a dear dispute I was unable, 180
Ev'n though the Pope himself had sat at table.
But when my point was gained, then thus I
spoke,

"Billy, my dear, how sheepishly you look !
Approach, my spouse, and let me kiss thy cheek ;

Thou shouldst be always thus, resigned and
meek! 185

Of Job's great patience since so oft you preach,
Well should you practise, who so well can teach.

'Tis difficult to do, I must allow,

But I, my dearest, will instruct you how.

Great is the blessing of a prudent wife, 190

Who puts a period to domestic strife.

One of us two must rule, and one obey ;

And since in man right reason bears the sway,

Let that frail thing, weak woman, have her way.

The wives of all my family have ruled 195

Their tender husbands, and their passions cooled.

Fie, 'tis unmanly thus to sigh and groan ;

What! would you have me to yourself alone ?

Why take me, love! take all and every part!

Here's your revenge! you love it at your
heart. 200

Would I vouchsafe to sell what nature gave,

You little think what custom I could have.

But see! I'm all your own—nay hold—for shame!

What means my dear—indeed—you are to
blame."

Thus with my first three lords I passed my
life; 205

A very woman, and a very wife.

What sums from these old spouses I could raise,
Procured young husbands in my riper days.

Though past my bloom, not yet decayed was I,
Wanton and wild, and chattered like a pye. 210

In country dances still I bore the bell,

And sung as sweet as evening Philomel.

To clear my quail-pipe, and refresh my soul,

Full oft I drained the spicy nut-brown bowl ;

Rich luscious wines, that youthful blood
improve, 215

And warm the swelling veins to feats of love :

For 'tis as sure as cold engenders hail,
 A liquorish mouth must have a lecherous tail ;
 Wine lets no lover unrewarded go,
 As all true gamesters by experience know. 220

But oh, good gods ! whene'er a thought I
 cast

On all the joys of youth and beauty past,
 To find in pleasures I have had my part,
 Still warms me to the bottom of my heart. 224
 This wicked world was once my dear delight ;
 Now all my conquests, all my charms, good
 night !

The flour consumed, the best that now I can,
 Is e'en to make my market of the bran.

My fourth dear spouse was not exceeding
 true ; 229

He kept, 'twas thought, a private miss or two :
 But all that score I paid—as how ? you'll say,
 Not with my body, in a filthy way :
 But I so dressed, and danced, and drank, and
 dined ;

And viewed a friend, with eyes so very kind,
 As stung his heart, and made his marrow fry,
 With burning rage, and frantic jealousy. 236
 His soul, I hope, enjoys eternal glory,
 For here on earth I was his purgatory.

Oft, when his shoe the most severely wrung,
 He put on careless airs, and sat and sung. 240
 How sore I galled him, only Heaven could know,
 And he that felt, and I that caused the woe.

He died, when last from pilgrimage I came,
 With other gossips, from Jerusalem ;
 And now lies buried underneath a rood, 245
 Fair to be seen, and reared of honest wood.

A tomb indeed, with fewer sculptures graced,
 Than that Mausolus' pious widow placed,
 Or where inshrined the great Darius lay ;

But cost on graves is merely thrown away. 250
 The pit filled up, with turf we covered o'er ;
 So bless the good man's soul, I say no more.

Now for my fifth loved lord, the last and best ;
 (Kind Heaven afford him everlasting rest)

Full hearty was his love, and I can shew 255

The token on my ribs in black and blue ;

Yet, with a knack, my heart he could have won,

While yet the smart was shooting in the bone.

How quaint an appetite in woman reigns !

Free gifts we scorn, and love what costs us

pains : 260

Let men avoid us, and on them we leap ;

A glutted market makes provision cheap.

In pure good will I took this jovial spark,

Of Oxford he, a most egregious clerk.

He boarded with a widow in the town, 265

A trusty gossip, one dame Alison.

Full well the secrets of my soul she knew,

Better than e'er our parish priest could do.

To her I told whatever could befall :

Had but my husband pissed against a wall, 270

Or done a thing that might have cost his life,

She, and my niece, and one more worthy wife,

Had known it all: what most he would conceal,

To these I made no scruple to reveal.

Oft has he blushed from ear to ear with shame,

That e'er he told a secret to his dame. 276

It so befel, in holy time of Lent,

That oft a day I to this gossip went :

(My husband, thank my stars, was out of town)

From house to house we rambled up and

down, 280

This clerk, myself, and my good neighbour Alse,

To see, be seen, to tell and gather tales.

Visits to every church we daily paid,

And marched in every holy masquerade,

The stations duly, and the vigils kept ; 285
 Not much we fasted, but scarce ever slept.
 At sermons too I shone in scarlet gay ;
 The wasting moth ne'er spoiled my best array ;
 The cause was this, I wore it every day.

'Twas when fresh May her early blossom
 yields, 290

This clerk and I were walking in the fields.
 We grew so intimate, I can't tell how,
 I pawned my honour, and engaged my vow,
 If e'er I laid my husband in his urn,
 That he, and only he, should serve my turn. 295
 We straight struck hands, the bargain was
 agreed ;

I still have shifts against a time of need :
 The mouse that always trusts to one poor hole,
 Can never be a mouse of any soul.

I vowed, I scarce could sleep since first I
 knew him, 300
 And durst be sworn he had bewitched me to
 him ;

If e'er I slept I dreamed of him alone,
 And dreams foretell, as learned men have shown :
 All this I said : but dreams, sirs, I had none ;
 I followed but my crafty crony's lore, 305
 Who bid me tell this lie, and twenty more.

Thus day by day, and month by month we
 passed ;

It pleased the Lord to take my spouse at last.
 I tore my gown, I soiled my locks with dust,
 And beat my breasts, as wretched widows
 must. 310

Before my face, my handkerchief I spread,
 To hide the flood of tears I did not shed.
 The good man's coffin to the church was borne ;
 Around, the neighbours, and my clerk too,
 mourn.

But as he marched, good gods! he showed a
 pair 315
 Of legs and feet, so clean, so strong, so fair!
 Of twenty winters' age he seemed to be;
 I, to say truth, was twenty more than he;
 But vigorous still, a lively buxom dame;
 And had a wondrous gift to quench a flame. 320
 A conjuror once, that deeply could divine,
 Assured me, Mars in Taurus was my sign.
 As the stars ordered, such my life has been:
 Alas, alas, that ever love was sin!
 Fair Venus gave me fire, and sprightly grace, 325
 And Mars assurance, and a dauntless face.
 By virtue of this powerful constellation,
 I followed always my own inclination.

But to my tale: A month scarce passed away,
 With dance and song we kept the nuptial day.
 All I possessed I gave to his command, 331
 My goods and chattels, money, house, and land:
 But oft repented, and repent it still;
 He proved a rebel to my sovereign will:
 Nay once, by Heaven! he struck me on the
 face; 335
 Hear but the fact, and judge yourself the case.

Stubborn as any lioness was I;
 And knew full well to raise my voice on high;
 As true a rambler as I was before,
 And would be so, in spite of all he swore. 34
 He against this right sagely would advise,
 And old examples set before my eyes;
 Tell how the Roman matrons led their life,
 Of Gracchus' mother and Duilius' wife;
 And chose the sermon, as beseemed his wit, 345
 With some grave sentence out of Holy Writ.
 Oft would he say, who builds his house on
 sands,
 Pricks his blind horse across the fallow lands,

Or lets his wife abroad with pilgrims roam,
 Deserves a fool's-cap and long ears at home. 350
 All this availed not : for who'er he be
 That tells my faults, I hate him mortally :
 And so do numbers more, I'll boldly say,
 Men, women, clergy, regular, and lay.

My sponse, who was, you know, to learning
 bred, 355

A certain treatise oft at evening read,
 Where divers authors, whom the devil confound
 For all their lies, were in one volume bound.

Valerius, whole ; and of St. Jerome, part ;
 Chrysippus and Tertullian, Ovid's Art, 360
 Solomon's Proverbs, Eloïsa's loves ;

And many more than sure the church approves.
 More legends were there here, of wicked wives,
 Than good, in all the Bible and saints' lives.

Who drew the lion vanquished ? 'Twas a man.
 But could we women write as scholars can, 366
 Men should stand marked with far more wicked-
 ness,

Than all the sons of Adam could redress.
 Love seldom haunts the breast where learning
 lies,

And Venus sets ere Mercury can rise. 370
 Those play the scholars who can't play the men,
 And use that weapon which they have, their
 pen ;

When old, and past the relish of delight,
 Then down they sit, and in their dotage write,
 That not one woman keeps her marriage-vow.
 This by the way, but to my purpose now. 376

It chanced my husband, on a winter's night,
 Read in this book, aloud, with strange delight,
 How the first female, as the Scriptures show,
 Brought her own spouse and all his race to
 woe : 380

How Sampson fell; and he whom Dejanire
 Wrapped in the envenomed shirt, and set on
 fire.

How cursed Eryphile her lord betrayed,
 And the dire ambush Clytemnestra laid.
 But what most pleased him was the Cretan
 dame, 385
 And husband-bull—oh, monstrous! fie, for
 shame!

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

He read, how Arius to his friend complained,
 A fatal tree was growing in his land,
 On which three wives successively had twined
 A sliding noose, and wavered in the wind. 396
 “Where grows this plant, (replied the friend),
 oh where?

For better fruit did never orchard bear.
 Give me some slip of this most blissful tree,
 And in my garden planted shall it be!” 400

Then, how two wives their lords’ destruction
 prove,
 Through hatred one, and one through too much
 love;

That for her husband mixed a poisonous draught,
 And this for lust an amorous philtre bought:
 The nimble juice soon seized his giddy head,
 Frantic at night, and in the morning dead. 406

How some with swords their sleeping lords
 have slain,
 And some have hammered nails into their
 brain,

And some have drenched them with a deadly
 potion ; 409

All this he read, and read with great devotion.
 Long time I heard, and swelled, and blushed,
 and frowned :

But when no end of these vile tales I found,
 When still he read, and laughed, and read
 again,

And half the night was thus consumed in vain ;
 Provoked to vengeance, three large leaves I
 tore, 415

And with one buffet felled him on the floor.

With that my husband in a fury rose,
 And down he settled me with hearty blows.

I groaned, and lay extended on my side ;

“ Oh ! thou hast slain me for my wealth, (I
 cried,) 420

Yet I forgive thee—take my last embrace”—

He wept, kind soul ! and stooped to kiss my
 face ;

I took him such a box as turned him blue,

Then sighed, and cried, “ Adieu, my dear,
 adieu ! ”

But after many a hearty struggle past, 425
 I condescended to be pleased at last.

Soon as he said, “ My mistress and my wife,
 Do what you list, the term of all your life,”

I took to heart the merits of the cause,

And stood content to rule by wholesome laws ;
 Received the reins of absolute command, 431

With all the government of house and land,

And empire o’er his tongue, and o’er his hand.

As for the volume that reviled the dames,

’Twas torn to fragments, and condemned to
 flames. 435

Now Heaven, on all my husbands gone, be-
 stow

Pleasures above, for tortures felt below :
 That rest they wished for, grant them in the
 grave,
 And bless those souls my conduct helped to
 save !

THE TEMPLE OF FAME.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1711.

ADVERTISEMENT.

“The hint of the following piece was taken from Chaucer’s House of Fame. The design is in a manner entirely altered, the descriptions and most of the particular thoughts my own : yet I could not suffer it to be printed without this acknowledgment. The reader who would compare this with Chaucer, may begin with his third Book of Fame, there being nothing in the two first books that answers to their title. Whenever any hint is taken from him, the passage itself is set down in the marginal notes.”—P.



N that soft season,¹ when descending
 showers
 Call forth the greens, and wake the
 rising flowers ;
 When opening buds salute the welcome day,
 And earth relenting feels the genial ray ;
 As balmy sleep had charmed my cares to rest, 5
 And love itself was banished from my breast,

¹ This poem is introduced in the manner of the Provençal poets, whose works were for the most part visions, or pieces of imagination, and constantly descriptive. From these, Petrarch and Chaucer frequently borrow the idea of their poems. See the *Trionfi* of the former, and the *Dream*, *Flower*, and the *Leaf*, &c., of the latter. The author of this therefore chose the same sort of exordium.—P.

(What time the morn mysterious visions brings,
While purer slumbers spread their golden
wings)

A train of phantoms in wild order rose,
And joined, this intellectual scene compose. 10

I stood, methought, betwixt earth, seas, and
skies :¹

The whole creation open to my eyes :
In air self-balanced hung the globe below,
Where mountains rise, and circling oceans flow ;
Here naked rocks, and empty wastes were
seen, 15

There towery cities, and the forests green ;
Here sailing ships delight the wandering eyes ;
There trees, and intermingled temples rise :
Now a clear sun the shining scene displays ;
The transient landscape now in clouds decays. 20

O'er the wide prospect as I gazed around,
Sudden I heard a wild promiscuous sound,
Like broken thunders that at distance roar,
Or billows murmuring on the hollow shore :
Then, gazing up, a glorious pile beheld, 25
Whose towering summit ambient clouds con-
cealed,

High on a rock of ice the structure lay,²

¹ These verses are hinted from the following of
Chaucer, book ii. :

“ Tho beheld I fields and plains,
And now hills, and now mountains,
Now valeys, and now forestes,
And now unnethes great bestes,
Now riveres, now citees,
Now townes, and now great trees,
Now shippes sayling in the see.”—P.

² Chaucer's third book of Fame :

“ It stood upon so high a rock,
Higher standeth none in Spayne—

Steep its ascent, and slippery was the way :
 The wondrous rock like Parian marble shone,
 And seemed, to distant sight, of solid stone. 30
 Inscriptions here of various names I viewed,¹
 The greater part by hostile time subdued ;
 Yet wide was spread their fame in ages past,
 And poets once had promised they should last.
 Some fresh engraved appeared of wits re-
 nowned ; 35
 I looked again, nor could their trace be found.
 Critics I saw, that other names deface,
 And fix their own, with labour, in their place :
 Their own, like others, soon their place re-
 signed,
 Or disappeared, and left the first behind. 40
 Nor was the work impaired by storms alone,²

What manner stone this rock was,
 For it was like a lymed glass,
 But that it shone full more clere ;
 But what of congeled matere
 It was, I niste redily ;
 But at the last espied I,
 And found that it was every dele,
 A rock of ice, and not of stele."—P.

¹ "Tho saw I all the hill y-grave
 With famous folkes names fele,
 That had been in muchel wele,
 And her fames wide y-blow ;
 But well unneth might I know,
 Any letters for to rede
 Their names by, for, out of drede
 They weren almost off-thawen so,
 That of the letters one or two
 Were molte away of every name,
 So unfamous was wexe their fame ;
 But men said what may ever last."—P.

² "Tho gan I in myne harte cast,
 That they were molte away for heate
 And not away with stormes beate."—P.

But felt the approaches of too warm a sun ;
 For Fame, impatient of extremes, decays
 Not more by envy than excess of praise.
 Yet part no injuries of heaven could feel,¹ 45
 Like crystal faithful to the graving steel :
 The rock's high summit, in the temple's shade,
 Nor heat could melt, nor beating storm invade.
 Their names inscribed unnumbered ages past
 From Time's first birth, with Time itself shall
 last ; 50
 These ever new, nor subject to decays,
 Spread, and grow brighter with the length of
 days.

So Zembla's rocks (the beauteous work of
 frost)

Rise white in air, and glitter o'er the coast ;
 Pale suns, unfelt, at distance roll away, 55
 And on the impassive ice the lightnings play ;
 Eternal snows the growing mass supply,
 Till the bright mountains prop the incumbent
 sky :

As Atlas fixed, each hoary pile appears,
 The gathered winter of a thousand years. 60
 On this foundation Fame's high temple stands ;
 Stupendous pile ! not reared by mortal hands.

¹ " For on that other side I sey
 Of that hill which northward ley,
 How it was written full of names
 Of folke, that had afore great fames
 Of olde time, and yet they were
 As fresh as men had written hem there
 The self day, or that houre
 That I upon hem gan to poure ;
 But well I wiste what it made ;
 It was conserved with the shade
 (All the writing that I sye)
 Of the castle that so stood on high,
 And stood eke in so cold a place,
 That heate might not it deface."—P.

Whate'er prond Rome or artful Greece beheld,
 Or elder Babylon, its frame excelled.
 Four faces had the dome, and every face ¹ 65
 Of various structure, but of equal grace:
 Four brazen gates, on columns lifted high,
 Salute the different quarters of the sky.
 Here fabled chiefs in darker ages born,
 Or worthies old, whom arms or arts adorn, 70
 Who cities raised, or tamed a monstrous race,
 The walls in venerable order grace.
 Heroes in animated marble frown,
 And legislators seem to think in stone.

Westward, a sumptuous frontispiece ap-
 peared, 75
 On Doric pillars of white marble reared,
 Crowned with an architrave of antique mould,
 And sculpture rising on the roughened gold.
 In shaggy spoils here Theseus was beheld,
 And Perseus dreadful with Minerva's shield: 80
 There great Alcides stooping with his toil,²
 Rests on his club, and holds the Hesperian
 spoil.
 Here Orpheus sings; trees moving to the sound,
 Start from their roots, and form a shade around:
 Amphion there the loud-creating lyre 85
 Strikes, and beholds a sudden Thebes aspire!
 Cithæron's echoes answer to his call,
 And half the mountain rolls into a wall:

¹ The temple is described to be square, the four fronts with open gates facing the different quarters of the world, as an intimation that all nations of the earth may alike be received into it. The western front is of Grecian architecture: the Doric order was peculiarly sacred to heroes and worthies. Those whose statues are after mentioned, were the first names of old Greece in arms and arts.—P.

² This figure of Hercules is drawn with an eye to the position of the famous statue of Farnese.—P.

There might you see the lengthening spires
ascend,

The domes swell up, the widening arches bend,
The growing towers, like exhalations rise, 91
And the huge columns heave into the skies.

The Eastern front was glorious to behold,
With diamond flaming, and barbaric gold.
There Ninus shone, who spread the Assyrian
fame, 95

And the great founder of the Persian name :¹
There in long robes the royal Magi stand,
Grave Zoroaster waves the circling wand,
The sage Chaldeans robed in white appeared,
And Brachmans, deep in desert woods revered.
These stopped the moon, and called the unbodied
shades 101

To midnight banquets in the glimmering glades;
Made visionary fabrics round them rise,
And airy spectres skim before their eyes;
Of talismans and sigils knew the power, 105
And careful watched the planetary hour.
Superior, and alone, Confucius stood,
Who taught that useful science, to be good.

But on the South, a long majestic race
Of Egypt's priests the gilded niches grace,² 110

¹ Cyrus was the beginning of the Persian, as Ninus was of the Assyrian monarchy. The Magi and Chaldeans (the chief of whom was Zoroaster) employed their studies upon magic and astrology, which was, in a manner, almost all the learning of the ancient Asian people. We have scarce any account of a moral philosopher, except Confucius, the great law-giver of the Chinese, who lived about two thousand years ago.—P.

² The learning of the old Egyptian priests consisted for the most part in geometry and astronomy. They also preserved the history of their nation. Their greatest hero upon record is Sesostris, whose

Who measured earth, described the starry
spheres,

And traced the long records of lunar years.

High on his car, Sesostris struck my view,

Whom sceptred slaves in golden harness drew :

His hands a bow and pointed javelin hold ; 115

His giant limbs are armed in scales of gold.

Between the statues obelisks were placed,

And the learned walls with hieroglyphics graced.

Of Gothic structure was the Northern side,¹

O'erwrought with ornaments of barbarous
pride. 120

There huge Colosses rose, with trophies crowned,

And Runic characters were graved around.

There sat Zamolxis with erected eyes,

And Odin here in mimic trances dies.

There on rude iron columns, smeared with
blood, 125

The horrid forms of Scythian heroes stood,

Druids and bards² (their once loud harps un-
strung),

actions and conquests may be seen at large in Diodorus, &c. He is said to have caused the kings he vanquished to draw him in his chariot. The posture of his statue, in these verses, is correspondent to the description which Herodotus gives of one of them remaining in his own time.—P.

¹ The architecture is agreeable to that part of the world. The learning of the northern nations lay more obscure than that of the rest. Zamolxis was the disciple of Pythagoras, who taught the immortality of the soul to the Scythians. Odin, or Woden, was the great legislator and hero of the Goths. They tell us of him, that, being subject to fits, he persuaded his followers, that during those trances he received inspirations, from whence he dictated his laws. He is said to have been the inventor of the Runic characters.—P.

² These were the priests and poets of those people,

And youths that died to be by poets sung.
 These, and a thousand more, of doubtful
 fame,
 To whom old fables gave a lasting name, 130
 In ranks adorned the temple's outward face;
 The wall in lustre and effect like glass,¹
 Which o'er each object casting various dyes,
 Enlarges some, and others multiplies:
 Nor void of emblem was the mystic wall, 135
 For thus romantic Fame increases all.

The temple shakes, the sounding gates un-
 fold,
 Wide vaults appear, and roofs of fretted gold:
 Raised on a thousand pillars, wreathed around
 With laurel-foliage, and with eagles crowned:
 Of bright, transparent beryl were the walls, 141
 The friezes gold, and gold the capitals:
 As heaven with stars, the roof with jewels
 glows,
 And ever-living lamps depend in rows.
 Full in the passage of each spacious gate, 145
 The sage historians in white garments wait;
 Graved o'er their seats the form of Time was
 found,
 His scythe reversed, and both his pinions
 bound.
 Within stood heroes, who through loud alarms
 In bloody fields pursued renown in arms. 150

so celebrated for their savage virtue. Those heroic barbarians accounted it a dishonour to die in their beds, and rushed on to certain death in the prospect of an after-life, and for the glory of a song from their bards in praise of their actions.—P.

¹ "It shone lighter than a glass,
 And made well more than it was,
 To semen everything, ywis,
 As kind of thinge Fames is."—P.

High on a throne, with trophies charged, I
viewed

The youth that all things but himself sub-
dued;¹

His feet on sceptres and tiaras trod,

And his horned head belied the Libyan god.

There Cæsar, graced with both Minervas,
shone; 155

Cæsar, the world's great master, and his own;

Unmoved, superior still in every state,

And scarce detested in his country's fate.

But chief were those, who not for empire
fought,

But with their toils their people's safety
bought: 160

High o'er the rest Epaminondas stood;

Timoleon, glorious in his brother's blood;²

Bold Scipio, saviour of the Roman state,

Great in his triumphs, in retirement great; 164

And wise Aurelius, in whose well-taught mind

With boundless power unbounded virtue joined,

His own strict judge, and patron of mankind.

Much-suffering heroes next their honours
claim,

Those of less noisy, and less guilty fame,

Fair Virtue's silent train: supreme of these 170

Here ever shines the godlike Socrates:

¹ Alexander the Great. The tiara was the crown peculiar to the Asian princes. His desire to be thought the son of Jupiter Ammon caused him to wear the horns of that god, and to represent the same upon his coins; which was continued by several of his successors.—P.

² Timoleon had saved the life of his brother Timophanes, in the battle between the Argives and Corinthians; but afterwards killed him when he affected the tyranny, preferring his duty to his country to all the obligations of blood.—P.

He whom ungrateful Athens could expel,¹
 At all times just, but when he signed the shell:
 Here his abode the martyred Phocion claims,
 With Agis, not the last of Spartan names: 175
 Unconquered Cato shows the wound he tore,
 And Brutus his ill Genius meets no more.

But in the centre of the hallowed choir,²
 Six pompous columns o'er the rest aspire;³
 Around the shrine itself of Fame they stand, 180
 Hold the chief honours, and the fane command.
 High on the first, the mighty Homer shone;¹

¹ Aristides, who, for his great integrity, was distinguished by the appellation of "the Just." When his countrymen would have banished him by the ostracism, where it was the custom for every man to sign the name of the person he voted to exile in an oyster-shell, a peasant, who could not write, came to Aristides to do it for him, who readily signed his own name.—P.

² In the midst of the temple, nearest the throne of Fame, are placed the greatest names in learning of all antiquity. These are described in such attitudes as express their different characters: the columns on which they are raised are adorned with sculptures, taken from the most striking subjects of their works; which sculpture bears a resemblance, in its manner and character, to the manner and character of their writings.—P.

³ "From the dees many a pillere,
 Of metal that shone not full clere, &c.
 Upon a pillere saw I stonde
 That was of lede and iron fine,
 Him of the sect Saturnine,
 The Ebraike Josephus the old, &c.
 Upon an iron piller strong,
 That painted was all endelong,
 With tigers' blood in every place,
 The Tholosan that highte Stace,
 That bare of Thebes up the name," &c.—P.

⁴ Full wonder hye on a pillere
 Of iron, he the great Omer,
 And with him Dares and Titus," &c.—P.

Eternal adamant composed his throne ;
 Father of verse ! in holy fillets dressed, 184
 His silver beard waved gently o'er his breast ;
 Though blind, a boldness in his looks appears ;
 In years he seemed, but not impaired by years.
 The wars of Troy were round the pillar seen :
 Here fierce Tydides wounds the Cyprian queen ;
 Here Hector, glorious from Patroclus' fall, 190
 Here dragged in triumph round the Trojan
 wall :

Motion and life did every part inspire,
 Bold was the work, and proved the master's
 fire ;

A strong expression most he seemed to affect,
 And here and there disclosed a brave neglect,
 A golden column next in rank appeared,¹ 196
 On which a shrine of purest gold was reared ;
 Finished the whole, and laboured every part,
 With patient touches of unwearied art :
 The Mantuan there in sober triumph sate, 200
 Composed his posture, and his look sedate ;

¹ " There saw I stand on a pillere
 That was of tinned iron cleere,
 The Latin poete Virgyle,
 That hath bore up of a great while
 The fame of pius Æneas.

And next him on a pillere was
 Of copper, Venus' clerk Ovide,
 That hath y-sowen wondrous wide
 The great God of Love's fame—

Tho saw I on a pillere by
 Of iron wrought fully sternely,
 The greate poet Dan Luean,
 That on his shoulders bore up then
 As high as that I mighte see,
 The fame of Julius and Pompee.

And next him on a pillere stoode
 Of sulphur, like as he were woode,
 Dan Claudian, sothe for to tell,
 That bare up all the fame of hell," &c.—P.

On Homer still he fixed a reverent eye,
 Great without pride, in modest majesty.
 In living sculpture on the sides were spread
 The Latian wars, and haughty Turnus dead; 205
 Eliza¹ stretched upon the funeral pyre,
 Æneas bending with his aged sire;
 Troy flamed in burnished gold, and o'er the
 throne

ARMS AND THE MAN in golden ciphers shone.

Four swans sustain a car of silver bright,² 210
 With heads advanced, and pinions stretched for
 flight :

Here, like some furious prophet, Pindar rode,
 And seemed to labour with the inspiring god.
 Across the harp a careless hand he flings,
 And boldly sinks into the sounding strings. 215
 The figured games of Greece the column grace,
 Neptune and Jove survey the rapid race.
 The youths hang o'er their chariots as they
 run ;

The fiery steeds seem starting from the stone ;
 The champions in distorted postures threat ; 220
 And all appeared irregularly great.

Here happy Horace tuned the Ausonian lyre
 To sweeter sounds, and tempered Pindar's
 fire ;

Pleased with Alcæus' manly rage to infuse³

¹ Elissa (Dido).—*Ward*.

² Pindar being seated in a chariot, alludes to the chariot races he celebrated in the Grecian games. The swans are emblems of poetry, their soaring posture intimates the sublimity and activity of his genius. Neptune presided over the Isthmian, and Jupiter over the Olympian games.—*P*.

³ This expresses the mixed character of the odes of Horace: the second of these verses alludes to that line of his,

“ Spiritum Graiæ tenuem camœnæ,”

The softer spirit of the Sapphic muse. 225
 The polished pillar different sculptures grace ;
 A work ontlasting monumental brass.
 Here smiling Loves and Bacchanals appear,
 The Julian star, and great Augustus here.
 The doves that round the infant poet spread 230
 Myrtles and bays, hung hovering o'er his
 head.

Here in a shrine that cast a dazzling light,
 Sate fixed in thought the mighty Stagirite ;
 His sacred head a radiant zodiac crowned,
 And various animals his sides surround ; 235
 His piercing eyes, erect, appear to view
 Superior worlds, and look all nature through.

With equal rays immortal Tully shone,
 The Roman rostra decked the consul's throne :

as another which follows, to

“Exegi monumentum ære perennius.”

The action of the doves hints at a passage in the
 fourth ode of his third book :

“Me fabulosæ Vulture in Apulo
 Altricis extra limen Apuliæ,
 Ludo fatigatumque somno,
 Fronde nova puerum palumbes
 Texere ; mirum quod foret omnibus—
 Ut tuto ab atris corpore viperis
 Dormirem et ursis ; ut premerer sacra
 Lauroque, collataque myrto,
 Non sine dis animosus infans.”

Which may be thus Englished :

“While yet a child, I chanced to stray,
 And in a desert sleeping lay ;
 The savage race withdrew, nor dared
 To touch the Muses' future bard ;
 But Cytherea's gentle dove
 Myrtles and bays around me spread,
 And crowned your infant poet's head,
 Sacred to music and to love.”—P.

Gathering his flowing robe, he seemed to
stand 240

In act to speak, and graceful stretched his hand.
Behind, Rome's genius waits with civic crowns,
And the great father of his country owns.

These massy columns in a circle rise, 244
O'er which a pompous dome invades the skies:
Scarce to the top I stretched my aching sight,
So large it spread, and swelled to such a height.
Full in the midst proud Fame's imperial seat
With jewels blazed, magnificently great;
The vivid emeralds there revive the eye, 250
The flaming rubies show their sanguine dye,
Bright azure rays from lively sapphires stream,
And lucid amber casts a golden gleam.

With various-coloured light the pavement
shone,

And all on fire appeared the glowing throne; 255
The dome's high arch reflects the mingled
blaze,

And forms a rainbow of alternate rays.

When on the goddess first I cast my sight,
Scarce seemed her stature of a cubit's height; ¹
But swelled to larger size, the more I gazed, 260
Till to the roof her towering front she raised.

With her, the temple every moment grew,
And ampler vistas opened to my view:

Upward the columns shoot, the roofs ascend,
And arches widen, and long aisles extend. 265
Such was her form, as ancient bards have told,

¹ "Methought that she was so lite,
That the length of a cubite
Was longer than she seemed be;
But thus soon in a while she,
Herself tho wonderly straight,
That with her feet she the earthe reight,
And with her head she touched heaven"—P.

Wings raise her arms, and wings her feet infold;
 A thousand busy tongues the goddess bears,
 And thousand open eyes, and thousand listen-
 ing ears.

Beneath, in order ranged, the tuneful Nine¹ 270
 (Her virgin handmaids) still attend the shrine:
 With eyes on Fame for ever fixed, they sing:
 For Fame they raise the voice, and tune the
 string:

With Time's first birth began the heavenly lays,
 And last, eternal, through the length of days.

Around these wonders as I cast a look,² 276
 The trumpet sounded, and the temple shook,
 And all the nations, summoned at the call,
 From different quarters fill the crowded hall:
 Of various tongues the mingled sounds were
 heard; 280

In various garbs promiscuous throngs appeared;
 Thick as the bees, that with the spring renew
 Their flowery toils, and sip the fragrant dew,
 When the winged colonies first tempt the sky,
 O'er dusky fields and shaded waters fly, 285
 Or settling, seize the sweets the blossoms yield,

¹ "I heard about her throne y-sung
 That all the palays walles rung;
 So sung the mighty Muse, she
 That cleped is Calliope,
 And her eighte sisters eke"—P.

² "I heard a noise approchen blive,
 That fared as bees done in a hive,
 Against their time of out flying;
 Right such a manere murmuring,
 For all the world it seemed me.
 Tho gan I look about and see
 That there came entring into th' hall,
 A right great company withal;
 And that of sundry regions,
 Of all kind of conditions," &c.—P.

And a low murmur runs along the field.
 Millions of suppliant crowds the shrine attend,
 And all degrees before the goddess bend ;
 The poor, the rich, the valiant, and the sage, 290
 And boasting youth, and narrative old age.
 Their pleas were different, their request the
 same :

For good and bad alike are fond of fame.
 Some she disgraced, and some with honours
 crowned ;¹

Unlike successes equal merits found. 295
 Thus her blind sister, fickle Fortune, reigns,
 And, undiscerning, scatters crowns and chains.

First at the shrine the learned world appear,
 And to the goddess thus prefer their prayer.
 " Long have we sought to instruct and please
 mankind, 300

With studies pale, with midnight vigils blind ;
 But thanked by few, rewarded yet by none,
 We here appeal to thy superior throne :
 On wit and learning the just prize bestow,
 For fame is all we must expect below." 305

The goddess heard, and bade the Muses raise
 The golden trumpet of eternal praise :
 From pole to pole the winds diffuse the sound,
 That fills the circuit of the world around ;
 Not all at once, as thunder breaks the cloud ; 310
 The notes at first were rather sweet than loud :
 By just degrees they every moment rise,
 Fill the wide earth, and gain upon the skies.
 At every breath were balmy odours shed, 314
 Which still grew sweeter as they wider spread ;

¹ " And some of them she granted sone,
 And some she warn'd well and fair,
 And some she granted the contrair—
 Right as her sister dame Fortune,
 Is wont to serven in commune."—P.

Less fragrant scents the unfolding rose exhales,
Or spices breathing in Arabian gales.

Next these the good and just, an awful
train,¹

Thus on their knees address the sacred fane.

“ Since living virtue is with envy cursed, 320

And the best men are treated like the worst,

Do thou, just goddess, call our merits forth,

And give each deed the exact intrinsic worth.”

“ Not with bare justice shall your act be
crowned, 324

(Said Fame), but high above desert renowned :

Let fuller notes the applauding world amaze,

And the loud clarion labour in your praise.”

This band dismissed, behold another crowd

Preferred the same request, and lowly bowed ;

The constant tenor of whose well spent days

No less deserved a just return of praise. 331

But straight the direful trump of slander sounds ;

Through the big dome the doubling thunder
bounds ;

Loud as the burst of cannon rends the skies,

¹ “ Tho came the thirde companye,
And gan up to the dees to hye,
And down on knees they fell anone,
And saiden : We ben everichone
Folke that han full truely
Deserved fame rightfully,
And prayen you it might be knowe
Right as it is, and forthe blowe.

“ I grant, (quoth she,) for now me list
That your good works shall be wist.
And yet ye shall have better loos,
Right in despite of all your foos,
Than worthy is, and that anone.
Let now (quoth she) thy trumpe gone—
And certes all the breath that went
Out of his trumpes mouthe smel'd
As men a pot of banne held
Among a basket full of roses.”—P.

The dire report through every region flies, 335
 In every ear incessant rumours rung,
 And gathering scandals grew on every tongue.
 From the black trumpet's rusty concave broke
 Sulphureous flames, and clouds of rolling
 smoke :¹

The poisonous vapour blots the purple skies,
 And withers all before it as it flies. 341

A troop came next, who crowns and armour
 wore,
 And proud defiance in their looks they bore :
 "For thee (they cried), amidst alarms and
 strife,

We sailed in tempests down the stream of
 life ; 345

For thee whole nations filled with flames and
 blood,

And swam to empire through the purple
 flood.

Those ills we dared, thy inspiration own,
 What virtue seemed, was done for thee alone."

"Ambitious fools! (the Queen replied, and
 frowned,) 350

Be all your acts in dark oblivion drowned ;
 There sleep forgot, with mighty tyrants gone,

¹ "Therewithal there came anone
 Another huge companye
 Of good folke—
 What did this Eolus, but he
 Took out his trump of brass,
 That fouler than the devil was :
 And gan this trump for to blowe,
 As all the world should overthrowe.
 Throughout every regione
 Went this foule trumpes sounne,
 As swift as pellet out of gunne,
 When fire is in the powder runne.
 And such a smoke gan oute wende,
 Out of the foule trumpes ende," &c.—P.

Your statues mouldered, and your names unknown !”

A sudden cloud straight snatched them from my sight,

And each majestic phantom sunk in night. 355

Then came the smallest tribe I yet had seen ;¹
Plain was their dress, and modest was their mien.

“ Great idol of mankind ! we neither claim

The praise of merit, nor aspire to fame !

But safe in deserts from the applause of men,

Would die unheard of, as we lived unseen ; 361

’Tis all we beg thee, to conceal from sight

Those acts of goodness, which themselves requite.

O let us still the secret joy partake,

To follow virtue ev’n for virtue’s sake.” 365

¹ “ I saw anone the fifth route,
That to this lady gan loute,
And down on knees anone to fall,
And to her they besoughten all,
To hiden their good workes eke
And said, they yeve not a leke
For no fame ne such renowne ;
For they for contemplaeyoune,
And Goddes love hadde ywrought,
Ne of fame would they ought.

“ What (quoth she), and be ye wood ?
And ween ye for to do good,
And for to have it of no fame ?
Have ye despite to have my name ?
Nay ye shall lien everichone :
Blowe thy trump and that anone,
(Quoth she,) thou Eolus yhote,
And ring these folkes works be note,
That all the world may of it heare ;
And he gan blow their loos so cleare,
In his golden clarioune,
Through the world went the soune,
All so kenely, and eke so soft,
That their fame was blowen aloft.”—P.

“ And live there men, who slight immortal
fame ?

Who then with incense shall adore our name ?
But, mortals ! know, 'tis still our greatest pride
To blaze those virtues, which the good would
hide. 369

Rise ! Muses, rise ! add all your tuneful breath,
These must not sleep in darkness and in death.”

She said : in air the trembling music floats,
And on the winds triumphant swell the notes ;
So soft, though high, so loud, and yet so clear,
Ev'n listening angels leaned from heaven to
hear : 375

To farthest shores the ambrosial spirit flies,
Sweet to the world, and grateful to the skies.

Next these a youthful train their vows ex-
pressed,¹

With feathers crowned, with gay embroidery
dressed :

“ Hither, (they cried,) direct your eyes, and see
The men of pleasure, dress, and gallantry ; 381
Ours is the place at banquets, balls, and plays,
Sprightly our nights, polite are all our days ;
Courts we frequent, where 'tis our pleasing
care

To pay due visits, and address the fair : 385

In fact, 'tis true, no nymph we could persuade,
But still in fancy vanquished every maid ;
Of unknown duchesses lewd tales we tell,
Yet, would the world believe us, all were well.

¹ The reader might compare these twenty-eight lines following, which contain the same matter, with eighty-four of Chaucer, beginning thus :

“ Tho came the sixthe companye,
And gan faste to Fame cry,”

being too prolix to be here inserted.—P.

The joy let others have, and we the name, 390
 And what we want in pleasure grant in fame."

The Queen assents, the trumpet rends the
 skies,

And at each blast a lady's honour dies.

Pleased with the strange success, vast numbers
 pressed

Around the shrine, and made the same re-
 quest: 395

"What! you, (she cried) unlearned in arts to
 please,

Slaves to yourselves, and ev'n fatigued with
 ease,

Who lose a length of undeserving days,

Would you usurp the lover's dear-bought
 praise?

To just contempt, ye vain pretenders, fall, 400

The people's fable, and the scorn of all."

Straight the black clarion sends a horrid sound,
 Loud laughs burst out, and bitter scoffs fly
 round,

Whispers are heard, with taunts reviling loud,
 And scornful hisses run through all the crowd.

Last, those who boast of mighty mischiefs
 done,¹ 406

Enslave their country, or usurp a throne;

Or who their glory's dire foundation laid

On sovereigns ruined, or on friends betrayed;

Calm, thinking villains, whom no faith could
 fix, 410

Of crooked counsels and dark politics;

Of these a gloomy tribe surround the throne,

And beg to make the immortal treasons known.

The trumpet roars, long flaky flames expire,

¹ "Tho came another company,
 That had ydone the treachery," &c.—P.

With sparks, that seemed to set the world on
fire. 415

At the dread sound, pale mortals stood aghast,
And startled Nature trembled with the blast.

This having heard and seen, some power un-
known¹

Straight changed the scene, and snatched me
from the throne.

Before my view appeared a structure fair, 420

Its site uncertain, if in earth or air ;

With rapid motion turned the mansion round ;

With ceaseless noise the ringing walls resound ;

Not less in number were the spacious doors,

Than leaves on trees, or sands upon the shores ;

Which still unfolded stand, by night, by day, 426

Pervious to winds, and open every way.

¹ The scene here changes from the Temple of
Fame to that of Rumour, which is almost entirely
Chancer's. The particulars follow :

“ Tho saw I stonde in a valey,
Under the castle faste by
A house, that Domus Dedali,
That Labyrinthus cleped is,
Nas made so wonderly, I wis,
Ne half so queintly ywrought ;
And evermo, as swift as thought,
This queinte house aboute went,
That never more stille it stent—
And eke this house hath of entrees
As fele as of leaves ben on trees
In summer when they grene ben ;
And in the roof yet men may sene
A thousand holes and well mo,
To letten well the sounne out go ;
And by day in every tide
Ben all the doores open wide,
And by night each one unshet ;
No porter is there one to let,
No manner tydings in to pace :
Ne never rest is in that place.”—P.

As flames by nature to the skies ascend,¹
 As weighty bodies to the centre tend,
 As to the sea returning rivers roll, 430
 And the touched needle trembles to the pole ;
 Hither, as to their proper place, arise
 All various sounds from earth, and seas, and
 skies,
 Or spoke aloud, or whispered in the ear ;
 Nor ever silence, rest, or peace is here. 435
 As on the smooth expanse of crystal lakes,
 The sinking stone at first a circle makes ;
 The trembling surface by the motion stirred,
 Spreads in a second circle, then a third ;
 Wide, and more wide, the floating rings ad-
 vance, 440
 Fill all the watery plain, and to the margin
 dance :
 Thus every voice and sound, when first they
 break,
 On neighbouring air a soft impression make ;
 Another ambient circle then they move ;
 That, in its turn, impels the next above ; 445
 Through undulating air the sounds are sent,
 And spread o'er all the fluid element.
 There various news I heard of love and
 strife,²

¹ This thought is transferred hither out of the second book of Fame, where it takes up no less than one hundred and twenty verses, beginning thus :

“ Geffray, thou wottest well this,” &c.—P.

² “ Of werres, of peace, of marriages,
 Of rest, of labour, of voyages,
 Of abode, of dethe, and of life,
 Of love and hate, accord and strife,
 Of loss, of lore, and of winnings,
 Of hele, of sickness, and lessings,
 Of divers transmutations

Of peace and war, health, sickness, death, and
 life,
 Of loss and gain, of famine, and of store, 450
 Of storms at sea, and travels on the shore,
 Of prodigies, and portents seen in air,
 Of fires and plagues, and stars with blazing
 hair,
 Of turns of fortune, changes in the state,
 The falls of favourites, projects of the great, 455
 Of old mismanagements, taxations new :
 All neither wholly false, nor wholly true.

Above, below, without, within, around,¹
 Confused, unnumbered multitudes are found,
 Who pass, repass, advance, and glide away ; 460
 Hosts raised by fear, and phantoms of a day :
 Astrologers, that future fates foreshew,
 Projectors, quacks, and lawyers not a few

Of estates and eke of regions,
 Of trust, of drede, of jealousy,
 Of wit, of winning, and of folly,
 Of good or bad government,
 Of fire, and of divers accident."—P.

¹ " But such a grete congregation
 Of folke as I saw roame about,
 Some within, and some without,
 Was never seen, ne shall be eft—
 " And every wight that I saw there
 Rowned everich in others ear
 A new tyding privily,
 Or else he told it openly
 Right thus, and said, Knowst not thou
 That is betide to-night now ?
 No, (quoth he,) tell me what ?
 And then he told him this and that, &c.
 ——— Thus north and south
 Went every tyding fro mouth to mouth,
 And that encreasing evermo,
 As fire is wont to quicken and go
 From a sparkle sprong amiss,
 Till all the citee brent up is."—P.

And priests, and party-zealots, numerous bands
 With home-born lies, or tales from foreign
 lands ; 465

Each talked aloud, or in some secret place,
 And wild impatience stared in every face.
 The flying rumours gathered as they rolled,
 Scarce any tale was sooner heard than told ;
 And all who told it added something new, 470
 And all who heard it made enlargements too ;
 In every ear it spread, on every tongue it
 grew.

Thus flying east and west, and north and south,
 News travelled with increase from mouth to
 mouth.

So from a spark, that kindled first by chance, 475
 With gathering force the quickening flames
 advance ;

Till to the clouds their curling heads aspire,
 And towers and temples sink in floods of fire.

When thus ripe lies are to perfection sprung,
 Full grown, and fit to grace a mortal tongue, 480
 Through thousand vents, impatient, forth they
 flow,

And rush in millions on the world below.
 Fame sits aloft, and points them out their
 course,

Their date determines, and prescribes their
 force :

Some to remain, and some to perish soon ; 485
 Or wane and wax alternate like the moon.

Around, a thousand winged wonders fly,
 Borne by the trumpet's blast, and scattered
 through the sky.

There, at one passage, oft you might survey ¹

¹ " And sometime I saw there at once,
 A lesing and a sad sooth saw
 That gonnen at adventure draw

A lie and truth contending for the way ; 490
 And long 'twas doubtful, both so closely pent,
 Which first should issue through the narrow
 vent :

At last agreed, together out they fly,
 Inseparable now, the truth and lie ;
 The strict companions are for ever joined, 495
 And this or that unmixed, no mortal e'er shall
 find.

While thus I stood, intent to see and hear,¹
 One came, methought, and whispered in my
 ear :

“ What could thus high thy rash ambition
 raise ?

Art thou, fond youth, a candidate for praise ? ”

“ 'Tis true,” said I, “ not void of hopes I
 came, 501

For who so fond as youthful bards of fame ?

But few, alas ! the casual blessing boast,

So hard to gain, so easy to be lost.

How vain that second life in others' breath, 505

The estate which wits inherit after death !

Ease, health, and life, for this they must resign,

Unsure the tenure, but how vast the fine !

The great man's curse, without the gains, en-
 dure,

Be envied, wretched, and be flattered, poor ; 510

Out of a window forth to pace—

And no man be he ever so wrothe,

Shall have one of these two, but bothe,” &c.—P.

¹ The hint is taken from a passage in another part of the third book, but here more naturally made the conclusion, with the addition of a moral to the whole. In Chaucer he only answers, “ he came to see the place ; ” and the book ends abruptly, with his being surprised at the sight of a man of great authority, and awaking in a fright.—P.

All luckless wits their enemies professed,
And all successful, jealous friends at best.
Nor Fame I slight, nor for her favours call ;
She comes unlooked for, if she comes at all.
But if the purchase cost so dear a price, 515
As soothing folly, or exalting vice :
Oh ! if the Muse must flatter lawless sway,
And follow still where fortune leads the way ;
Or if no basis bear my rising name,
But the fallen ruins of another's fame ; 520
Then teach me, Heaven ! to scorn the guilty
 bays,
Drive from my breast that wretched lust of
 praise ;
Unblemished let me live, or die unknown ;
Oh ! grant an honest fame, or grant me none ! ”





IMITATIONS OF ENGLISH POETS.

DONE BY THE AUTHOR IN HIS YOUTH.

I.

CHAUCER.

WOMEN ben full of Ragerie,
Yet swinken not sans secresie.
Thilke Moral shall ye understand,
From Schoole-boy's Tale of fayre
Ireland ;

Which to the Fennes hath him betake, 5
To filch the gray Ducke fro the Lake.

Right then, there passen by the Way
His Aunt, and eke her Daughters tway.

Ducke in his Trowses hath he hent,
Not to be spied of Ladies gent. 10

“ But ho ! our Nephew,” (crieth one)

“ Ho ! ” quoth another, “ Cozen John ; ”

And stoppen, and lough, and callen out,—

This sely Clerke full low doth lout :

They asken that, and talken this, 15

“ Lo, here is Coz, and here is Miss.”

But, as he glozeth with Speeches soote,

The Ducke sore tickleth his Erse-roote :

Fore-piece and buttons all-to-brest,

Forth thrust a white neck, and red crest. 20

“ Te-hee ! ” cry’d Ladies : Clerke nought
spake :

Miss star’d, and gray Ducke crieth Quake.

“ O Moder, Moder ! ” (quoth the daughter),

“ Be thilke same thing Maids longen a’ter ?

Bette is to pine on coals and chalke, 25

Then trust on Mon, whose yerde can talke.”

II.

SPENSER.

THE ALLEY.

I.



N ev’ry town where Thamis rolls his
Tyde,

A narrow pass there is, with Houses
low ;

Where ever and anon, the Stream is cy’d,

And many a Boat soft sliding to and fro :

There oft are heard the notes of Infant Woe, 5

The short thick Sob, loud Scream, and
shriller Squall :

How can ye, Mothers, vex your Children so ?

Some play, some cat, some cack against the
wall,

And as they crouchen low, for bread and
butter call.

II.

And on the broken pavement, here and
there, 10

Doth many a stinking sprat and herring lie ;

A brandy and tobacco shop is near,

And hens, and dogs, and hogs are feeding by;
 And here a sailor's jacket hangs to dry.
 At ev'ry door are sunburnt matrons seen 15
 Mending old nets to catch the scaly fry;
 Now singing shrill, and scolding eft between;
 Scolds answer foul-mouth'd scolds; bad neigh-
 bourhood I ween.

III.

The snappish cur (the passengers' annoy)
 Close at my heel with yelping treble flies; 20
 The whimp'ring girl, and hoarser-screaming
 boy,
 Join to the yelping treble shrilling cries;
 The scolding Quean to louder notes doth rise,
 And her full pipes those shrilling cries con-
 found;
 To her full pipes the grunting hog replies: 25
 The grunting hogs alarm the neighbours
 round,
 And curs, girls, boys, and scolds, in the deep
 base are drown'd.

IV.

Hard by a Sty, beneath a roof of thatch,
 Dwelt Obloquy, who in her early days
 Baskets of fish at Billingsgate did watch, 30
 Cod, whiting, oyster, mackrel, sprat, or
 plaice:
 There learn'd she speech from tongues that
 never cease.
 Slander beside her, like a Mag-pie, chatters,
 With Envy (spitting Cat), dread foe to
 peace; 34
 Like a curs'd Cur, Malice before her clatters,
 And, vexing ev'ry wight, tears clothes and all
 to tatters.

V.

Her dug's were mark'd by ev'ry Collier's
 hand ;
 Her mouth was black as bull-dog's, at the
 stall :
 She scratched, bit, and spar'd ne lace ne
 hand,
 And bitch and rogue her answer was to all ; 40
 Nay, e'en the parts of shame by name would
 call :
 Yea, when she passed by or lane or nook,
 Would greet the man who turn'd him to the
 Wall,
 And by his hand obscene the porter took,
 Nor ever did askance like modest Virgin look. 45

VI.

Such place hath Deptford, navy-building
 town,
 Woolwich and Wapping, smelling strong of
 pitch ;
 Such Lambeth, envy of each band and gown,
 And Twick'nam such, which fairer scenes
 enrich,
 Grots, statues, urns, and Jo—n's¹ Dog and
 Bitch, 50
 Ne village is without, on either side,
 All up the silver Thames, or all adown ;
 Ne Richmond's self, from whose tall front
 are ey'd
 Vales, spires, meand'ring streams, and Wind-
 sor's tow'ry pride.

¹ Old Mr. Johnston, the retired Scotch Secretary of State, who lived at Twickenham.—*Carruthers*.

III.

WALLER.

ON A LADY SINGING TO HER LUTE.

AIR Charmer, cease, nor make your
 voice's prize,
 A heart resign'd, the conquest of
 your eyes :

Well might, alas ! that threaten'd vessel fail,
 Which winds and light'ning both at once
 assail.

We were too blest with these enchanting lays, 5
 Which must be heav'nly when an Angel plays :
 But killing charms your lover's death contrive,
 Lest heav'nly music should be heard alive.

Orpheus could charm the trees, but thus a tree,
 Taught by your hand, can charm no less than
 he : 10

A poet made the silent wood pursue,
 This vocal wood had drawn the Poet too.

ON A FAN OF THE AUTHOR'S DESIGN,

*In which was painted the story of Cephalus and Procris,
 with the motto, "Auræ veni."*

"Come, gentle Air!" th' Æolian shepherd
 said,

While Procris panted in the secret shade ;

"Come, gentle Air," the fairer Delia cries,

While at her feet her swain expiring lies.

Lo the glad gales o'er all her beauties stray, 5

Breathe on her lips, and in her bosom play !

In Delia's hand this toy is fatal found,

Nor could that fabled dart more surely wound :

Both gifts destructive to the givers prove ;
 Alike both lovers fall by those they love. 10
 Yet guiltless too this bright destroyer lives,
 At random wounds, nor knows the wound she
 gives :

She views the story with attentive eyes,
 And pities Procris, while her lover dies.

IV.

COWLEY.

THE GARDEN.

FAIN would my Muse the flow'ry
 Treasures sing,
 And humble glories of the youthful
 Spring ;

Where opening Roses breathing sweets diffuse,
 And soft Carnations show'r their balmy dews ;
 Where Lilies smile in virgin robes of white, 5
 The thin Undress of superficial Light,
 And vary'd Tulips show so dazzling gay,
 Blushing in bright diversities of day.

Each painted flow'ret in the lake below
 Surveys its beauties, whence its beauties grow ;
 And pale Narcissus on the bank, in vain 11
 Transformed, gazes on himself again.

Here aged trees Cathedral Walks compose,
 And mount the Hill in venerable rows :
 There the green Infants in their beds are laid,
 The Garden's Hope, and its expected shade. 16
 Here Orange-trees with blooms and pendants
 shine,

And vernal honours to their autumn join ;
 Exceed their promise in the ripen'd store,
 Yet in the rising blossom promise more. 20

There in bright drops the crystal Fountains
play,

By Laurels shielded from the piercing day :
Where Daphne, now a tree as once a maid,
Still from Apollo vindicates her shade,
Still turns her Beauties from th' invading
beam, 25

Nor seeks in vain for succour to the Stream.
The stream at once preserves her virgin leaves,
At once a shelter from her boughs receives,
Where Summer's beauty midst of Winter stays,
And Winter's Coolness spite of Summer's
rays. 30

WEEPING.

While Celia's Tears make sorrow bright,
Proud Grief sits swelling in her eyes ;
The Sun, next those the fairest light,
Thus from the Ocean first did rise :
And thus thro' Mists we see the Sun, 5
Which else we durst not gaze upon.

These silver drops, like morning dew,
Foretell the fervour of the day :
So from one Cloud soft show'rs we view,
And blasting lightnings burst away. 10
The Stars that fall from Celia's eye
Declare our Doom in drawing nigh.


The Baby in that sunny Sphere
So like a Phaëthon appears,
That Heav'n, the threaten'd World to spare, 15
Thought fit to drown him in her tears ;
Else might th' ambitious Nymph aspire
To set, like him, Heav'n too on fire.

V.

E. OF ROCHESTER.

ON SILENCE.

I.

ILENCE! coeval with Eternity,
 Thou wert, ere Nature's-self began
 to be,
 'Twas one vast Nothing, all, and all
 slept fast in thee.

II.

Thine was the sway, ere heav'n was form'd,
 or earth,
 Ere fruitful Thought conceiv'd creation's
 birth, 5
 Or midwife Word gave aid, and spoke the
 infant forth.

III.

Then various elements against thee join'd,
 In one more various animal combin'd,
 And fram'd the clam'rous race of busy Human-
 kind.

IV.

The tongue mov'd gently first, and speech
 was low, 10
 'Till wrangling Science taught it noise and
 show,
 And wicked Wit arose, thy most abusive foe.

V.

But rebel Wit deserts thee oft' in vain;
 Lost in the maze of words he turns again,
 And seeks a surer state, and courts thy gentle
 reign. 15

VI.

Afflicted Sense thou kindly dost set free,
Oppress'd with argumental tyranny,
And routed Reason finds a safe retreat in thee.

VII.

With thee in private modest Dulness lies,
And in thy bosom lurks in Thought's disguise;
Thou varnisher of Fools, and cheat of all the
Wise! 21

VIII.

Yet thy indulgence is by both confest;
Folly by thee lies sleeping in the breast,
And 'tis in thee at last that Wisdom seeks for
rest.

IX.

Silence! the knave's repute, the whore's
good name, 25
The only honour of the wishing dame;
Thy very want of tongue makes thee a kind of
Fame.

X.

But could'st thou seize some tongues that now
are free,
How Church and State should be oblig'd to
thee!
At Senate, and at Bar, how welcome would'st
thou be! 30

XI.

Yet speech ev'n there, submissively with-
draws
From rights of subjects, and the poor man's
cause:
Then pompous Silence reigns, and stills the
noisy Laws.

XII.

Past services of friends, good deeds of foes,
 What Fav'rites gain, and what the Nation
 owes, 35
 Fly the forgetful world, and in thy arms repose.

XIII.

The country wit, religion of the town,
 The courtier's learning, policy o' th' gown,
 Are best by thee express'd; and shine in thee
 alone.

XIV.

The parson's cant, the lawyer's sophistry, 40
 Lord's quibble, critic's jest; all end in thee,
 All rest in peace at last, and sleep eternally.

VI.

E. OF DORSET.

ARTEMISIA.



HO' Artemisia talks, by fits,
 Of councils, classics, fathers, wits;
 Reads Malbranche, Boyle, and
 Loeke;
 Yet in some things methinks she fails,
 'Twere well if she would pare her nails, 5
 And wear a cleaner smock.

Haughty and huge as High-Dutch bride,
 Such nastiness and so much pride
 Are oddly join'd by fate:
 On her large squab you find her spread, 10
 Like a fat corpse upon a bed,
 That lies and stinks in state.

She wears no colours (sign of grace)
 On any part except her face :
 All white and black beside : 15
 Dauntless her look, her gesture proud,
 Her voice theatrically loud,
 And masculine her stride.

So have I seen, in black and white,
 A prating thing, a Magpye hight, 20
 Majestically stalk ;
 A stately, worthless animal,
 That plies the tongue, and wags the tail,
 All flutter, pride, and talk.

PHRYNE.

PHRYNE had talents for mankind,
 Open she was and unconfin'd,
 Like some free port of trade :
 Merchants unloaded here their
 freight,
 And Agents from each foreign state, 5
 Here first their entry made.

Her learning and good breeding such,
 Whether th' Italian or the Dutch,
 Spaniards or French came to her ;
 To all obliging she'd appear ; 10
 'Twas *Si, Signior*, 'twas *Yaw, Mynheer*,
 'Twas *S'il vous plaist, Monsieur*.

Obscure by birth, renown'd by crimes,
 Still changing names, religions, climes,
 At length she turns a Bride : 15
 In di'monds, pearls, and rich brocades,
 She shines the first of batter'd jades,
 And flutters in her pride.

So have I known those Insects fair
 (Which curious Germans hold so rare) 20
 Still vary shapes and dyes;
 Still gain new Titles with new forms;
 First grubs obscene, then wriggling worms,
 Then painted butterflies.

VII.

DR. SWIFT.

THE HAPPY LIFE OF A COUNTRY PARSON.

PARSON, these things in thy possessing
 Are better than the Bishop's blessing.
 A Wife that makes conserves; a
 Steed

That carries double when there's need;
 October store, and best Virginia, 5
 Tithe-Pig, and mortuary Guinea;
 Gazettes sent gratis down, and frank'd,
 For which thy Patron's weekly thank'd;
 A large Concordance, bound long since;
 Sermons to Charles the First, when Prince; 10
 A Chronicle of ancient standing;
 A Chrysostom to smoothe thy band in.
 The Polyglot—three parts,—my text,
 Howbeit,—likewise—now to my next.
 Lo here the Septuagint,—and Paul, 15
 To sum the whole,—the close of all.

He that has these, may pass his life,
 Drink with the 'Squire, and kiss his wife;
 On Sundays preach, and eat his fill,
 And fast on Fridays—if he will; 20
 Toast Church and Queen, explain the News,
 Talk with Church-Wardens about Pews,
 Pray heartily for some new Gift,
 And shake his head at Doctor S—t.



PASTORALS,
WITH
A DISCOURSE ON PASTORAL.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1704.

“Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes
Flumina amem, sylvasque, inglorius !”—*Virg.*





A DISCOURSE ON PASTORAL POETRY.¹

THERE are not, I believe, a greater number of any sort of verses than of those which are called Pastorals; nor a smaller, than of those which are truly so. It therefore seems necessary to give some account of this kind of poem, and it is my design to comprise in this short paper the substance of those numerous dissertations the critics have made on the subject, without omitting any of their rules in my own favour. You will also find some points reconciled, about which they seem to differ, and a few remarks, which, I think, have escaped their observation.

The original of poetry is ascribed to that age which succeeded the creation of the world: and as the keeping of flocks seems to have been the first employment of mankind, the most ancient sort of poetry was probably *pastoral*.² It is natural to imagine, that the leisure of those ancient shepherds admitting and inviting some diversion, none was so proper to that solitary and sedentary life as singing; and that in their

¹ Written at sixteen years of age.—P.

² Fontenelle's Disc. on Pastorals.—P.

songs they took occasion to celebrate their own felicity. From hence a poem was invented, and afterwards improved to a perfect image of that happy time; which, by giving us an esteem for the virtues of a former age, might recommend them to the present. And since the life of shepherds was attended with more tranquillity than any other rural employment, the poets chose to introduce their persons, from whom it received the name of Pastoral.

A Pastoral is an imitation of the action of a shepherd, or one considered under that character. The form of this imitation is dramatic, or narrative, or mixed of both; ¹ the fable simple; the manners not too polite, nor too rustic: the thoughts are plain, yet admit a little quickness and passion, but that short and flowing: the expression humble, yet as pure as the language will afford; neat, but not florid; easy, and yet lively. In short, the fable, manners, thoughts, and expressions are full of the greatest simplicity in nature.

The complete character of this poem consists in simplicity, ² brevity, and delicacy; the two first of which render an eclogue natural, and the last delightful.

If we would copy Nature, it may be useful to take this idea along with us, that Pastoral is an image of what they call the Golden Age. So that we are not to describe our shepherds as shepherds at this day really are, but as they may be conceived then to have been; when the best of men followed the employment. To carry this resemblance yet further, it would not be amiss to give these shepherds some skill in

¹ Heinsius in Theocr.—P.

² Rapin, de Carm. Past. p. ii.—P.

astronomy, as far as it may be useful to that sort of life. And an air of piety to the gods should shine through the poem, which so visibly appears in all the works of antiquity: and it ought to preserve some relish of the old way of writing; the connection should be loose, the narrations and descriptions short,¹ and the periods concise. Yet it is not sufficient that the sentences only be brief, the whole eclogue should be so too. For we cannot suppose poetry in those days to have been the business of men, but their recreation at vacant hours.

But with a respect to the present age, nothing more conduces to make these composures natural, than when some knowledge in rural affairs is discovered.² This may be made to appear rather done by chance than on design, and sometimes is best shown by inference; lest by too much study to seem natural, we destroy that easy simplicity from whence arises the delight. For what is inviting in this sort of poetry, proceeds not so much from the idea of that business, as of the tranquillity of a country life.

We must therefore use some illusion to render a Pastoral delightful; and this consists in exposing the best side only of a shepherd's life, and in concealing its miseries.³ Nor is it enough to introduce shepherds discoursing together in a natural way; but a regard must be had to the subject; that it contain some particular beauty in itself, and that it be different in every eclogue. Besides, in each of them a

¹ Rapin, Reflex. sur l'Art Poet. d'Arist. p. ii. Reflex. xxvii.—P.

² Pref. to Virg. Past. in Dryd. Virg.—P.

³ Fontenelle's Disc. of Pastorals.—P.

designed scene or prospect is to be presented to our view, which should likewise have its variety.¹ This variety is obtained in a great degree by frequent comparisons, drawn from the most agreeable objects of the country; by interrogations to things inanimate; by beautiful digressions, but those short; sometimes by insisting a little on circumstances; and, lastly, by elegant turns on the words, which render the numbers extremely sweet and pleasing. As for the numbers themselves, though they are properly of the heroic measure, they should be the smoothest, the most easy and flowing imaginable.

It is by rules like these that we ought to judge of Pastoral. And since the instructions given for any art are to be delivered as that art is in perfection, they must of necessity be derived from those in whom it is acknowledged so to be. It is therefore from the practice of Theocritus and Virgil (the only undisputed authors of Pastoral), that the critics have drawn the foregoing notions concerning it.

Theocritus excels all others in nature and simplicity. The subjects of his *Idyllia* are purely pastoral; but he is not so exact in his persons, having introduced reapers² and fishermen as well as shepherds. He is apt to be too long in his descriptions, of which that of the cup in the first Pastoral is a remarkable instance. In the manners he seems a little defective, for his swains are sometimes abusive and immodest, and perhaps too much inclining to rusticity; for instance, in his fourth and fifth *Idyllia*. But it is enough that all others learned their excellences from him, and that his dialect

¹ See the forementioned Preface.—P.

² ΟΕΡΙΣΤΑΙ, *Idyl.* x. and ΛΑΙΕΙΣ, *Idyl.* xxi.—P.

alone has a secret charm in it, which no other could ever attain.

Virgil, who copies Theocritus, refines upon his original: and in all points, where judgment is principally concerned, he is much superior to his master. Though some of his subjects are not pastoral in themselves, but only seem to be such, they have a wonderful variety in them, which the Greek was a stranger to.¹ He exceeds him in regularity and brevity, and falls short of him in nothing but simplicity and propriety of style; the first of which perhaps was the fault of his age, and the last of his language.

Among the moderns, their success has been greatest who have most endeavoured to make these ancients their pattern. The most considerable genius appears in the famous Tasso, and our Spenser. Tasso in his *Aminta* has as far excelled all the pastoral writers, as in his *Gierusalemme* he has outdone the epic poets of his country. But as this piece seems to have been the original of a new sort of poem, the Pastoral Comedy, in Italy, it cannot so well be considered as a copy of the ancients. Spenser's *Calendar*, in Mr. Dryden's opinion, is the most complete work of this kind which any nation has produced ever since the time of Virgil.² Not but that he may be thought imperfect in some few points. His *Eclogues* are somewhat too long, if we compare them with the ancients. He is sometimes too allegorical, and treats of matters of religion in a pastoral style, as the Mantuan had done before him. He has employed the Lyric measure, which is contrary to the

¹ Rapin, *Refl. on Arist.* part ii. *Refl.* xxvii.—
Pref. to the *Ecl.* in Dryden's *Virg.*—P.

² Dedication to *Virg. Ecl.*—P.

practice of the old poets. His stanza is not still the same, nor always well chosen. This last may be the reason his expression is sometimes not concise enough: for the Tetrastie has obliged him to extend his sense to the length of four lines, which would have been more closely confined in the couplet.

In the manners, thoughts, and characters, he comes near to Theocritus himself; though, notwithstanding all the care he has taken, he is certainly inferior in his dialect: for the Doric had its beauty and propriety in the time of Theocritus; it was used in part of Greece, and frequent in the mouths of many of the greatest persons: whereas the old English and country phrases of Spenser were either entirely obsolete, or spoken only by people of the lowest condition. As there is a difference betwixt simplicity and rusticity, so the expression of simple thoughts should be plain, but not clownish. The addition he has made of a Calendar to his Eclogues, is very beautiful; since by this, besides the general moral of innocence and simplicity, which is common to other authors of Pastoral, he has one peculiar to himself; he compares human life to the several seasons, and at once exposes to his readers a view of the great and little worlds, in their various changes and aspects. Yet the scrupulous division of his Pastorals into months, has obliged him either to repeat the same description, in other words, for three months together; or, when it was exhausted before, entirely to omit it: whence it comes to pass that some of his Eclogues (as the sixth, eighth, and tenth, for example) have nothing but their titles to distinguish them. The reason is evident, because the year has not that

variety in it to furnish every month with a particular description, as it may every season.

Of the following Eclogues I shall only say, that these four comprehend all the subjects which the critics upon Theocritus and Virgil will allow to be fit for Pastoral: that they have as much variety of description, in respect of the several seasons, as Spenser's: that in order to add to this variety, the several times of the day are observed, the rural employments in each season or time of day, and the rural scenes or places proper to such employments; not without some regard to the several ages of man, and the different passions proper to each age.

But after all, if they have any merit, it is to be attributed to some good old authors, whose works, as I had leisure to study, so I hope I have not wanted care to imitate.

SPRING : THE FIRST PASTORAL,
OR
DAMON.¹

TO SIR WILLIAM TRUMBULL.²

FIRST in these fields I try the sylvan
strains,³
Nor blush to sport on Windsor's
blissful plains :
Fair Thames, flow gently from thy sacred
spring,

¹ These Pastorals were written at the age of sixteen, and then passed through the hands of Mr.

² Our author's friendship with this gentleman commenced at very unequal years : he was under sixteen, but Sir William above sixty, and had lately resigned his employment of Secretary of State to King William. Sir W. Trumbull was born in Windsor Forest, to which he retired, after he had resigned the post of Secretary of State to King William III.—P.

³ “Prima Syracosio dignata est ludere versu,
Nostra nec erubuit sylvas habitare Thalia.”

This is the general exordium and opening of the Pastorals, in imitation of the sixth of Virgil, which some have, therefore, not improbably thought to have been the first originally. In the beginnings of the other three Pastorals, he imitates expressly those which now stand first of the three chief poets in this kind, Spenser, Virgil, Theocritus :

“A shepherd's boy (he seeks no better name)”—
“Beneath the shade a spreading beech displays,”—
“Thyrsis, the Music of that murm'ring Spring,”—

are manifestly imitations of

“A shepherd's boy (no better do him call)”—
“Tityre, tu patula recubans sub tegmine fagi”—
“Ἄδύ τι τὸ ψιθίρισμα καὶ ἡ πίτυς, αἰπύλε, τίηρα.”—P.

While on thy banks Sicilian Muses sing ;
 Let vernal airs through trembling osiers play ; 5
 And Albion's cliffs resound the rural lay.

You, that too wise for pride, too good for
 power,
 Enjoy the glory to be great no more,
 And carrying with you all the world can boast,
 To all the world illustriously are lost ! 10

Walsh, Mr. Wycherley, G. Granville, afterwards Lord Lansdowne, Sir William Trumbull, Dr. Garth, Lord Halifax, Lord Somers, Mr. Mainwaring, and others. All these gave our author the greatest encouragement, and particularly Mr. Walsh, whom Mr. Dryden, in his Postscript to Virgil, calls the best critic of his age. "The author," says he, "seems to have a particular genius for this kind of poetry, and a judgment that much exceeds his years. He has taken very freely from the ancients. But what he has mixed of his own with theirs is no way inferior to what he has taken from them. It is not flattery at all to say, that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age. His Preface is very judicious and learned." *Letter to Mr. Wycherley*, Apr. 1705. The Lord Lansdowne, about the same time, mentioning the youth of our poet, says (in a printed Letter of the Character of Mr. Wycherley), "that if he goes on as he has begun in the pastoral way, as Virgil first tried his strength, we may hope to see English poetry vie with the Roman," &c. Notwithstanding the early time of their production, the author esteemed these as the most correct in the versification, and musical in the numbers, of all his works. The reason for his labouring them into so much softness, was, doubtless, that this sort of poetry derives almost its whole beauty from a natural ease of thought and smoothness of verse ; whereas that of most other kinds consists in the strength and fulness of both. In a letter of his to Mr. Walsh about this time, we find an enumeration of several niceties in versification, which, perhaps, have never been strictly observed in any English poem, except in these Pastorals. They were not printed till 1709.—P.

O let my Muse her slender reed inspire,
 Till in your native shades you tune the lyre :
 So when the nightingale to rest removes,
 The thrush may chant to the forsaken groves,
 But, charmed to silence, listens while she sings,
 And all the ærial audience clap their wings. 16

Soon as the flocks shook off the nightly dews,¹
 Two swains, whom love kept wakeful and the
 Muse,

Poured o'er the whitening vale their fleecy care,
 Fresh as the morn, and as the season fair : 20
 The dawn now blushing on the mountain's side,
 Thus Daphnis spoke, and Strephon thus replied.

DAPHNIS.

Hear how the birds, on every bloomy spray,
 With joyous music wake the dawning day !
 Why sit we mute, when early linnets sing, 25
 When warbling Philomel salutes the spring ?
 Why sit we sad, when Phosphor shines so clear,
 And lavish Nature paints the purple year ?

STREPHON.

Sing then, and Damon shall attend the strain,
 While yon slow oxen turn the furrowed plain. 30
 Here the bright crocus and blue violet glow ;
 Here western winds on breathing roses blow.
 I'll stake yon lamb, that near the fountain
 plays,
 And from the brink his dancing shade surveys.

DAPHNIS.

And I this bowl, where wanton ivy twines, 35
 And swelling clusters bend the curling vines :

¹ The scene of this Pastoral, a valley ; the time, the morning.—P.

Four figures rising from the work appear,
 The various seasons of the rolling year;¹
 And what is that, which binds the radiant sky,
 Where twelve fair signs in beauteous order
 lie? 40

DAMON.

Then sing by turns, by turns the Muses sing,²
 Now hawthorns blossom, now the daisies spring,
 Now leaves the trees, and flowers adorn the
 ground;
 Begin, the vales shall every note rebound.

STREPHON.

Inspire me, Phœbus, in my Delia's praise, 45
 With Waller's strains, or Granville's moving
 lays!³
 A milk-white bull shall at your altars stand,⁴
 That threatens a fight, and spurns the rising sand.

DAPHNIS.

O Love! for Sylvia let me gain the prize,
 And make my tongue victorious as her eyes: 50

¹ The subject of these Pastorals, engraven on the bowl, is not without its propriety. The shepherd's hesitation at the name of the zodiac imitates that in Virgil:

“Et quis fuit alter
 Descripsit radio totum qui gentibus orbem?”—P.

² Literally from Virgil:

“Alternis dicetis, amant alterna Camœnæ:
 Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos,
 Nunc frondent sylvæ, nunc formosissimus annus.”—P.

³ George Granville, afterwards Lord Lansdowne, known for his poems, most of which he composed very young, and proposed Waller as his model.—P.

⁴ Virg. :

“Pascite taurum,
 Qui cornu petat, et pedibus jam spargat arenam.”—P.

No lambs or sheep for victims I'll impart,
Thy victim, Love, shall be the shepherd's heart.

STREPHON.

Me gentle Delia beckons from the plain,
Then hid in shades, eludes her eager swain ;
But feigns a laugh, to see me search around, 55
And by that laugh the willing fair is found.

DAPHNIS.

The sprightly Sylvia trips along the green,
She runs, but hopes she does not run unseen ;¹
While a kind glance at her pursuer flies,
How much at variance are her feet and eyes ! 60

STREPHON.

O'er golden sands let rich Pactolus flow,
And trees weep amber on the banks of Po ;
Blest Thames's shores the brightest beauties
yield,
Feed here, my lambs, I'll seek no distant field.

DAPHNIS.

Celestial Venus haunts Idalia's groves ; 65
Diana Cynthus, Ceres Hybla loves,
If Windsor-shades delight the matchless maid,
Cynthus and Hybla yield to Windsor-shade.

STREPHON.

All Nature mourns, the skies relent in
showers,²

¹ Imitation of Virgil :

“Malo me Galatea petit, lasciva puella,
Et fugit ad salices, et se cupit ante videri.”—P.

² Virg. :

“Aret ager, vitio moriens sitit aëris herba, &c.
Phyllidis adventu nostræ nemus omne virebit.”—P.

Hushed are the birds, and closed the drooping
 flowers ; 70
 If Delia smile, the flowers begin to spring,
 The skies to brighten, and the birds to sing.

DAPHNIS.

All Nature laughs, the groves are fresh and
 fair,
 The sun's mild lustre warms the vital air ;
 If Sylvia smiles, new glories gild the shore, 75
 And vanquished Nature seems to charm no
 more.

STREPHON.

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

DAPHNIS.

Sylvia's like autumn ripe, yet mild as May, 81
 More bright than noon, yet fresh as early day ;
 Ev'n spring displeases, when she shines not
 here ;
 But blessed with her, 'tis spring throughout the
 year.

STREPHON.

Say, Daphnis, say, in what glad soil ap-
 pears, 85
 A wondrous tree that sacred monarchs bears : ¹
 Tell me but this, and I'll disclaim the prize,
 And give the conquest to thy Sylvia's eyes.

¹ An allusion to the Royal Oak, in which Charles II. had been hid from the pursuit after the battle of Worcester.—P.

SUMMER: THE SECOND PASTORAL,
OR
ALEXIS.

TO DR. GARTH.



SHEPHERD'S boy (he seeks no
better name)

Led forth his flocks along the silver
Thame,

Where dancing sunbeams on the waters played,¹
And verdant alders formed a quivering shade.
Soft as he mourned, the streams forgot to flow, 5
The flocks around a dumb compassion show,
The Naiads wept in every watery bower,
And Jove consented in a silent shower.²

Accept, O GARTH, the Muse's early lays,³
That adds this wreath of ivy to thy bays; 10
Hear what from love unpractised hearts en-
dure,
From love, the sole disease thou canst not
cure.

Ye shady beeches, and ye cooling streams,
Defence from Phœbus', not from Cupid's beams,

¹ The scene of this Pastoral by the river's side, suitable to the heat of the season; the time, noon.—P.

² "Jupiter et læto descendet plurimus imbri."
Virg.—P.

³ Dr. Samuel Garth, author of the *Dispensary*, was one of the best friends of the author, whose acquaintance with him began at fourteen or fifteen. Their friendship continued from the year 1703 to 1718, which was that of his death.—P.

To you I mourn, nor to the deaf I sing,¹ 15
 "The woods shall answer, and their echo
 ring."²

The hills and rocks attend my doleful lay,
 Why art thou prouder and more hard than
 they?

The bleating sheep with my complaints agree,
 They parched with heat, and I inflamed by
 thee. 20

The sultry Sirius burns the thirsty plains,
 While in thy heart eternal winter reigns.

Where stray ye, Muses, in what lawn or
 grove,³

While your Alexis pines in hopeless love?
 In those fair fields where sacred Isis glides, 25
 Or else where Cam his winding vales divides?
 As in the crystal spring I view my face,⁴
 Fresh rising blushes paint the watery glass;
 But since those graces please thy eyes no more,
 I shun the fountains which I sought before. 30
 Once I was skilled in every herb that grew,
 And every plant that drinks the morning dew;
 Ah, wretched shepherd, what avails thy art,
 To cure thy lambs, but not to heal thy heart!

¹ "Non canimus surdis, respondent omnia sylvæ."
Virg.—P.

² A line out of Spenser's *Epithalamion*.—P.

³ "Quæ nemora, aut qui vos saltus habuere, puellæ
 Naiades, indigno cum Gallus amore periret?
 Nam neque Parnassi vobis juga, nam neque Pindi
 Ulla moram fecere, neque, Aoniæ Aganippe."
Virg. out of Theocr.—P.

⁴ Virgil again, from the *Cyclops* of Theocritus:

"nuper me in littore vidi,
 Cum placidum ventis staret mare; non ego Daphnim,
 Judice te, metuam, si nunquam fallit imago."—P.

Let other swains attend the rural care, 35
 Feed fairer flocks, or richer fleeces shear :
 But nigh yon mountain let me tune my lays,
 Embrace my love, and bind my brows with bays.
 That flute is mine which Colin's tuneful breath¹
 Inspired when living, and bequeathed in
 death :² 40

He said, " Alexis, take this pipe, the same
 That taught the groves my Rosalinda's name : "
 But now the reeds shall hang on yonder tree,
 For ever silent, since despised by thee. 44
 Oh ! were I made by some transforming power,
 The captive bird that sings within thy bower !
 Then might my voice thy listening ears employ,
 And I those kisses he receives enjoy.

And yet my numbers please the rural throng,
 Rough satyrs dance, and Pan applauds the
 song : 50

The nymphs, forsaking every cave and spring,
 Their early fruit, and milk-white turtles bring !
 Each amorous nymph prefers her gifts in vain,
 On you their gifts are all bestowed again.
 For you the swains the fairest flowers design, 55
 And in one garland all their beauties join ;
 Accept the wreath which you deserve alone,
 In whom all beauties are comprised in one.

See what delights in sylvan scenes appear !
 Descending gods have found Elysium here.³ 60

¹ The name taken by Spenser in his Eclogues, where his mistress is celebrated under that of Rosalinda.—P.

² Virg. Ecl. ii. :

" Est mihi disparibus septem compacta cicutis
 Fistula, Damocetas dono mihi quam dedit olim,
 Et dixit moriens, Te nunc habet ista secundum."—P.

³ " Habitarunt di quoque sylvas."—*Virg.*

" Et formosus oves ad flumina pavit Adonis."
Idem.—P.

The moving mountains hear the powerful call,
And headlong streams hang listening in their
fall!

But see, the shepherds shun the noonday
heat, 85

The lowing herds to murmuring brooks retreat,
To closer shades the panting flocks remove;
Ye gods! and is there no relief for love? ¹

But soon the sun with milder rays descends
To the cool ocean, where his journey ends: 90
On me Love's fiercer flames for ever prey,
By night he scorches, as he burns by day.

AUTUMN: THE THIRD PASTORAL,

OR

HYLAS AND ÆGON.²

TO MR. WYCHERLEY.³

BENEATH the shade a spreading beech
displays,
Hylas and Ægon sung their rural
lays:

This mourned a faithless, that an absent love,

¹ "Me tamen urit amor, quis enim modus adsit
amori?"—*Virg.*—P.

² This Pastoral consists of two parts, like the eighth
of Virgil: the scene, a hill; the time, at sunset.—P.

³ Mr. Wycherley, a famous author of Comedies, of
which the most celebrated were the Plain-Dealer
and Country-Wife. He was a writer of infinite
spirit, satire, and wit: the only objection made to
him was that he had too much. However, he was
followed in the same way by Mr. Congreve; though
with a little more correctness.—P.

And Delia's name and Doris' filled the grove.
 Ye Mantuan nymphs, your sacred succour
 bring ; 5

Hylas and Ægon's rural lays I sing.

Thou, whom the Nine with Plautus' wit
 inspire,

The art of Terence, and Menander's fire ;

Whose sense instructs us, and whose humour
 charms,

Whose judgment sways us, and whose spirit
 warms ! 10

Oh, skilled in nature ! see the hearts of swains,
 Their artless passions, and their tender pains.

Now setting Phœbus shone serenely bright,
 And fleecy clouds were streaked with purple
 light :

When tuneful Hylas with melodious moan, 15
 Taught rocks to weep, and made the mountains
 groan.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs away !
 To Delia's ear the tender notes convey.

As some sad turtle his lost love deploras,

And with deep murmurs fills the sounding
 shores ; 20

Thus, far from Delia, to the winds I mourn,
 Alike unheard, unpitied, and forlorn.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs along !

For her, the feathered quires neglect their
 song :

For her, the limes their pleasing shades deny ; 25

For her, the lilies hang their heads and die.

Ye flowers that droop, forsaken by the spring,

Ye birds that, left by summer, cease to sing,

Ye trees that fade when autumn-heats remove,

Say, is not absence death to those who love ? 30

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs away !

Cursed be the fields that cause my Delia's stay ;

Fade every blossom, wither every tree,
 Die every flower, and perish all, but she.
 What have I said? where'er my Delia flies, 35
 Let spring attend, and sudden flowers arise;
 Let opening roses knotted oaks adorn,¹
 And liquid amber drop from every thorn.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs along!
 The birds shall cease to tune their evening
 song, 40
 The winds to breathe, the waving woods to
 move,

And streams to murmur, ere I cease to love.
 Not bubbling fountains to the thirsty swain,²
 Not balmy sleep to labourers faint with pain,
 Not showers to larks, or sunshine to the bee, 45
 Are half so charming as thy sight to me.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs away!
 Come, Delia, come; ah, why this long delay?
 Through rocks and caves the name of Delia
 sounds,
 Delia, each cave and echoing rock rebounds. 50
 Ye powers, what pleasing frenzy soothes my
 mind!

Do lovers dream, or is my Delia kind?³
 She comes, my Delia comes!—Now cease my
 lay,
 And cease, ye gales, to bear my sighs away!

¹ “Aurea duræ
 Mala ferant quercus; narcisso floreat alnus,
 Pinguia corticibus sudent electra myricæ.”
Virg. Ecl. viii.—P.

² “Quale sopor fessis in gramine, quale per æstum
 Dulcis aquæ saliente sitim restinguere rivo.”
Virg. Ecl. v.—P.

³ “An qui amant, ipsi sibi somnia fingunt?”
Virg. Ecl. viii.—P.

Next *Ægon* sung, while *Windsor groves*
 admired: 55

Rehearse, ye *Muses*, what yourselves inspired.

Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful
 strain!

Of perjured *Doris*, dying I complain:

Here where the mountains, lessening as they
 rise,

Lose the low vales, and steal into the skies; 60

While labouring oxen, spent with toil and heat,
 In their loose traces from the field retreat;

While curling smokes from village-tops are
 seen,

And the fleet shades glide o'er the dusky green.

Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful lay!

Beneath yon poplar oft we passed the day: 66

Oft on the rind I carved her amorous vows,

While she with garlands hung the bending
 boughs:

The garlands fade, the vows are worn away;

So dies her love, and so my hopes decay. 70

Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful
 strain!

Now bright *Arcturus* glads the teeming grain,

Now golden fruits on loaded branches shine,

And grateful clusters swell with floods of wine;

Now blushing berries paint the yellow grove; 75

Just *Gods*! shall all things yield returns but
 love?

Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful lay!

The shepherds cry, "Thy flocks are left a
 prey."—

Ah! what avails it me, the flocks to keep,

Who lost my heart while I preserved my
 sheep? 80

Pan came, and asked, what magic caused my
 smart,

Or what ill eyes malignant glances dart ?¹
 What eyes but hers, alas, have power to move ?
 And is there magic but what dwells in love ?

Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful
 strains ! 85

I'll fly from shepherds, flocks, and flowery plains.
 From shepherds, flocks, and plains, I may re-
 move,

Forsake mankind, and all the world—but love !
 I know thee, Love! on foreign mountains bred,²
 Wolves gave thee suck, and savage tigers fed. 90
 Thou wert from *Ætna's* burning entrails torn,
 Got by fierce whirlwinds, and in thunder born !

Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful lay !
 Farewell, ye woods, adieu the light of day ! 94
 One leap from yonder cliff shall end my pains,
 No more, ye hills, no more resound my strains !

Thus sung the shepherds till the approach of
 night,

The skies yet blushing with departing light,
 When falling dews with spangles decked the
 glade,

And the low sun had lengthened every shade. 100

¹ “Nescio quis teneros oculus mihi fascinat agnos.”
 P.

² “Nunc scio quid sit Amor: duris in cotibus
 illum,” &c.—P.

WINTER: THE FOURTH PASTORAL,
OR
DAPHNE.

TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. TEMPEST.¹

LYCIDAS.



HYRSIS, the music of that murmur-
ing spring
Is not so mournful as the strains you
sing.

Nor rivers winding through the vales below,
So sweetly warble, or so smoothly flow.
Now sleeping flocks on their soft fleeces lie, 5
The moon, serene in glory, mounts the sky,
While silent birds forget their tuneful lays,
Oh sing of Daphne's fate, and Daphne's praise!

THYRSIS.

Behold the groves that shine with silver frost,
Their beauty withered, and their verdure lost. 10
Here shall I try the sweet Alexis' strain,
That called the listening Dryads to the plain?

¹ This lady was of an ancient family in Yorkshire, and particularly admired by the author's friend, Mr. Walsh, who, having celebrated her in a Pastoral Elegy, desired his friend to do the same, as appears from one of his letters, dated Sept. 9, 1706: "Your last Eclogue being on the same subject with mine on Mrs. Tempest's death, I should take it very kindly in you to give it a little turn, as if it were to the memory of the same lady." Her death, having happened on the night of the great storm in 1703, gave a propriety to this Eclogue, which in its general turn alludes to it. The scene of the Pastoral lies in a grove; the time at midnight.—P.

Thames heard the numbers, as he flowed along,¹
 And bade his willows learn the moving song.

LYCIDAS.

So may kind rains their vital moisture yield,
 And swell the future harvest of the field. 16
 Begin ; this charge the dying Daphne gave,
 And said, "Ye shepherds, sing around my
 grave!"
 Sing, while beside the shaded tomb I mourn,
 And with fresh bays her rural shrine adorn. 20

THYRSIS.

Ye gentle Muses, leave your crystal spring,
 Let Nymphs and Sylvans cypress garlands
 bring ;
 Ye weeping Loves, the stream with myrtles hide,²
 And break your bows as when Adonis died ;
 And with your golden darts, now useless grown,
 Inscribe a verse on this relenting stone : 26
 "Let nature change, let heaven and earth
 deplore,
 Fair Daphne's dead, and love is now no more!"
 'Tis done, and nature's various charms decay,
 See gloomy clouds obscure the cheerful day! 30
 Now hung with pearls the dropping trees appear,
 Their faded honours scattered on her biër.
 See, where on earth the flowery glories lie,
 With her they flourished, and with her they die.
 Ah what avail the beauties nature wore? 35
 Fair Daphne's dead, and beauty is no more!

¹ "Audiit Eurotas, jussitque ediscere lauros."
Virg.—P.

² "Inducite fontibus umbras—
 Et tumulum facite, et tumulo superaddite carmen."
Virg.—P.

The winds and trees and floods her death deplore,

Daphne, our grief! our glory now no more!

But see! where Daphne wondering mounts
on high ¹

Above the clouds, above the starry sky! 70

Eternal beauties grace the shining scene,

Fields ever fresh, and groves for ever green!

There while you rest in Amaranthine bowers,

Or from those meads select unfading flowers,

Behold us kindly, who your name implore, 75

Daphne, our goddess, and our grief no more!

LYCIDAS.

How all things listen, while thy Muse complains!

Such silence waits on Philomela's strains,

In some still evening, when the whispering
breeze

Pants on the leaves, and dies upon the trees. 80

To thee, bright goddess, oft a lamb shall bleed,²

If teeming ewes increase my fleecy breed.

While plants their shade, or flowers their odours
give,

Thy name, thy honour, and thy praise shall live!

THYRSIS.

But see, Orion sheds unwholesome dews; 85
Arise, the pines a noxious shade diffuse;³

¹ "Miratur limen Olympi,
Sub pedibusque videt nubes et sidera Daphnis."
Virg.—P.

² "Illius aram
Sæpe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus."
Virg.—P.

³ "Solet esse gravis cantantibus umbra,
Juniperi gravis umbra."—*Virg.*—P.

Sharp Boreas blows, and nature feels decay,
Time conquers all, and we must time obey.
Adieu, ye vales, ye mountains, streams and
 groves ;
Adieu, ye shepherds' rural lays and loves ; 90
Adieu, my flocks ; farewell ye sylvan crew ;
Daphne, farewell ; and all the world adieu !¹

¹ These four last lines allude to the several subjects of the four Pastorals, and to the several scenes of them particularized before in each.—P.



WINDSOR FOREST.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE LORD
LANSDOWN.

“ Non injussa cano : Te nostræ, Vare, myricæ,
Te Nemus omne canet ; nec Phœbo gratior ulla est,
Quam sibi quæ Vari præscripsit pagina nomen.”

Virg.





WINDSOR FOREST.¹

THY forest, Windsor! and thy green
retreats,
At once the Monarch's and the
Muse's seats,

Invite my lays. Be present, sylvan maids!
Unlock your springs, and open all your shades.
Granville commands; your aid, O Muses, bring!
What Muse for Granville can refuse to sing? 6

The groves of Eden, vanished now so long,
Live in description, and look green in song:
These, were my breast inspired with equal flame,
Like them in beauty, should be like in fame. 10
Here hills and vales, the woodland and the
plain,

Here earth and water, seem to strive again;
Not chaos-like together crushed and bruised,
But, as the world, harmoniously confused:
Where order in variety we see, 15
And where, though all things differ, all agree.
Here waving groves a chequered scene display,
And part admit, and part exclude the day;

¹ "This poem was written at two different times: the first part of it, which relates to the country, in the year 1704, at the same time with the Pastorals; the latter part was not added till the year 1713, in which it was published."—P.

As some coy nymph her lover's warm address
 Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress. 20
 There, interspersed in lawns and opening glades,
 Thin trees arise that shun each other's shades.
 Here in full light the russet plains extend :
 There wrapt in clouds the blueish hills ascend.
 Ev'n the wild heath displays her purple dyes, 25
 And 'midst the desert fruitful fields arise,
 That crowned with tufted trees and springing
 corn,
 Like verdant isles the sable waste adorn.
 Let India boast her plants, nor envy we
 The weeping amber, or the balmy tree, 30
 While by our oaks the precious loads are borne,
 And realms commanded which those trees adorn.
 Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight,
 Though gods assembled grace his towering
 height, 34
 Than what more humble mountains offer here,
 Where, in their blessings, all those gods appear.
 See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crowned,
 Here blushing Flora paints the enamelled ground,
 Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,
 And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand; 40
 Rich Industry sits smiling on the plains,
 And peace and plenty tell, a Stuart reigns.
 Not thus the land appeared in ages past,
 A dreary desert, and a gloomy waste,
 To savage beasts and savage laws a prey,¹ 45
 And kings more furious and severe than they ;
 Who claimed the skies, dispeopled air and floods,
 The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods :
 Cities laid waste, they stormed the dens and
 caves, 49
 (For wiser brutes were backward to be slaves).

¹ The Forest Laws.—P.

What could be free, when lawless beasts obeyed,
And ev'n the elements a tyrant swayed ?

In vain kind seasons swelled the teeming grain,
Soft showers distilled, and suns grew warm in
vain ;

The swain with tears his frustrate labour yields,
And famished dies amidst his ripened fields. 56

What wonder then, a beast or subject slain
Were equal crimes in a despotic reign ?

Both doomed alike, for sportive tyrants bled,
But while the subject starved, the beast was fed.

Proud Nimrod first the bloody chase began, 61
A mighty hunter, and his prey was man :

Our haughty Norman boasts that barbarous
name,

And makes his trembling slaves the royal game.
The fields are ravished from the industrious

swains, 65

From men their cities, and from gods their fanes :¹

The levelled towns with weeds lie covered o'er ;

The hollow winds through naked temples roar ;

Round broken columns clasping ivy twined ;

O'er heaps of ruin stalked the stately hind ; 70

The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,

And savage howlings fill the sacred quires.

Awed by his nobles, by his commons cursed,

The oppressor ruled tyrannic where he durst,

Stretched o'er the poor and church his iron rod,

And served alike his vassals and his God. 76

Whom ev'n the Saxon spared, and bloody Dane,

The wanton victims of his sport remain.

¹ Alluding to the destruction made in the New Forest, and the tyrannies exercised there by William I. Translated from

“*Templa adimit divis, fora civibus, arva colonis,*”
an old monkish writer, I forget who.—P.

But see, the man who spacious regions gave
 A waste for beasts, himself denied a grave! 80
 Stretched on the lawn his second hope survey,¹
 At once the chaser, and at once the prey :
 Lo Rufus, tugging at the deadly dart,
 Bleeds in the forest like a wounded hart.
 Succeeding monarchs heard the subjects' cries,
 Nor saw displeas'd the peaceful cottage rise. 86
 Then gathering flocks on unknown mountains
 fed,

O'er sandy wilds were yellow harvests spread,
 The forests wondered at the unusual grain,
 And sacred transport touch'd the conscious
 swain. 90

Fair Liberty, Britannia's goddess, rears
 Her cheerful head, and leads the golden years.

Ye vigorous swains! while youth ferments
 your blood,

And purer spirits swell the sprightly flood, 94
 Now range the hills, the gameful woods beset,
 Wind the shrill horn, or spread the waving net.
 When milder autumn summer's heat succeeds,
 And in the new-shorn field the partridge feeds,
 Before his lord the ready spaniel bounds, 99
 Panting with hope, he tries the furrowed grounds;
 But when the tainted gales the game betray,
 Conched close he lies, and meditates the prey :
 Secure they trust the unfaithful field beset,
 Till hovering o'er them sweeps the swelling net.
 Thus (if small things we may with great com-
 pare) 105

When Albion sends her eager sons to war,
 Some thoughtless town, with ease and plenty
 blessed,

¹ Richard, second son of William the Conqueror.
 —P.

Near, and more near, the closing lines invest ;
 Sudden they seize the amazed, defenceless prize,
 And high in air Britannia's standard flies. 110

See! from the brake the whirring pheasant
 springs,

And mounts exulting on triumphant wings :
 Short is his joy ; he feels the fiery wound,
 Flutters in blood, and panting beats the ground,
 Ah ! what avail his glossy, varying dyes, 115
 His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes,
 The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
 His painted wings, and breast that flames with
 gold ?

Nor yet, when moist Areturus clouds the sky,
 The woods and fields their pleasing toils deny. 120
 To plains with well-breathed beagles we repair,
 And trace the mazes of the circling hare :
 Beasts, urged by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,
 And learn of man each other to undo.

With slaughtering guns the unwearied fowler
 roves, 125

When frosts have whitened all the naked groves ;
 Where doves in flocks the leafless trees o'er shade,
 And lonely woodcocks haunt the watery glade.
 He lifts the tube, and levels with his eye ;
 Straight a short thunder breaks the frozen sky :
 Oft, as in airy rings they skim the heath, 131
 The clamorous lapwings feel the leaden death :
 Oft, as the mounting larks their notes prepare,
 They fall, and leave their little lives in air.

. In genial spring, beneath the quivering shade,
 Where cooling vapours breathe along the mead,
 The patient fisher takes his silent stand, 137
 Intent, his angle trembling in his hand :
 With looks unmoved, he hopes the scaly breed,
 And eyes the dancing cork and bending reed.
 Our plenteous streams a various race supply, 141

The bright-eyed perch with fins of Tyrian dye,
 The silver eel, in shining volumes rolled,
 The yellow carp, in scales bedropped with gold,
 Swift trouts, diversified with crimson stains, 145
 And pikes, the tyrants of the watery plains.

Now Cancer glows with Phœbus' fiery car :
 The youth rush eager to the sylvan war,
 Swarm o'er the lawns, the forest walks surround,
 Rouse the fleet hart, and cheer the opening
 hound. 150

The impatient courser pants in every vein,
 And pawing, seems to beat the distant plain :
 Hills, vales, and floods appear already crossed,
 And ere he starts a thousand steps are lost.
 See the bold youth strain up the threatening
 steep, 155
 Rush through the thickets, down the valleys
 sweep,

Hang o'er their coursers' heads with eager speed,
 And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed.
 Let old Arcadia boast her ample plain, 159
 The immortal huntress, and her virgin-train ;
 Nor envy, Windsor ! since thy shades have seen
 As bright a goddess, and as chaste a queen ;
 Whose care, like hers, protects the sylvan reign,
 The earth's fair light, and empress of the
 main.

Here too, 'tis sung, of old Diana strayed, 165
 And Cynthus' top forsook for Windsor shade ;
 Here was she seen o'er airy wastes to rove,
 Seek the clear spring, or haunt the pathless
 grove ;

Here armed with silver bows, in early dawn,
 Her buskined virgins traced the dewy lawn. 170

Above the rest a rural nymph was famed,
 Thy offspring, Thames ! the fair Lodona named ;
 (Lodona's fate, in long oblivion cast,

The Muse shall sing, and what she sings shall
last.)

Scarce could the goddess from her nymph be
known, 175

But by the crescent, and the golden zone.
She scorned the praise of beauty, and the
care ;

A belt her waist, a fillet binds her hair ;
A painted quiver on her shoulder sounds,
And with her dart the flying deer she wounds.
It chanced, as eager of the chase, the maid 181
Beyond the forest's verdant limits strayed,
Pan saw and loved, and, burning with desire,
Pursued her flight, her flight increased his fire.
Not half so swift the trembling doves can fly, 185
When the fierce eagle cleaves the liquid sky ;
Not half so swiftly the fierce eagle moves,
When through the clouds he drives the trem-
bling doves ;

As from the god she flew with furious pace,
Or as the god, more furious, urged the chase. 190
Now fainting, sinking, pale, the nymph appears ;
Now close behind, his sounding steps she hears ;
And now his shadow reached her as she run,
His shadow lengthened by the setting sun ;
And now his shorter breath, with sultry air, 195
Pants on her neck, and fans her parting hair.
In vain on father Thames she calls for aid,
Nor could Diana help her injured maid.
Faint, breathless, thus she prayed, nor prayed
in vain :

“ Ah Cynthia ! ah—though banished from thy
train, 200

Let me, O let me, to the shades repair,
My native shades—there weep, and murmur
there.”

She said, and melting as in tears she lay,

In a soft silver stream dissolved away.
 The silver stream her virgin coldness keeps, 205
 For ever murmurs, and for ever weeps ;
 Still bears the name the hapless virgin bore,¹
 And bathes the forest where she ranged before.
 In her chaste current oft the goddess laves,
 And with celestial tears augments the waves. 210
 Oft in her glass the musing shepherd spies²
 The headlong mountains and the downward
 skies,
 The watery landscape of the pendant woods,
 And absent trees that tremble in the floods ;
 In the clear azure gleam the flocks are seen, 215
 And floating forests paint the waves with green,
 Through the fair scene roll slow the lingering
 streams,
 Then foaming pour along, and rush into the
 Thames.

Thou, too, great father of the British floods !
 With joyful pride survey'st our lofty woods ; 220
 Where towering oaks their growing honours
 rear,
 And future navies on thy shores appear.
 Not Neptune's self from all his streams receives
 A wealthier tribute, than to thine he gives.
 No seas so rich, so gay no banks appear, 225
 No lake so gentle, and no spring so clear.
 Nor Po so swells the fabling poet's lays,
 While led along the skies his current strays,
 As thine, which visits Windsor's famed abodes,
 To grace the mansion of our earthly gods : 230
 Nor all his stars above a lustre show,
 Like the bright beauties on thy banks below ;

¹ The River Loddon.—P.

² These six lines were added after the first writing of this poem.—P.

Where Jove, subdued by mortal passion still,
Might change Olympus for a nobler hill.

Happy the man whom this bright court ap-
proves, 235

His sovereign favours, and his country loves ;
Happy next him, who to these shades retires,
Whom nature charms, and whom the Muse
inspires ;

Whom humbler joys of home-felt quiet please,
Successive study, exercise, and ease. 240

He gathers health from herbs the forest yields,
And of their fragrant physic spoils the fields :

With chemic art exalts the mineral powers,
And draws the aromatic souls of flowers : 244

Now marks the course of rolling orbs on high ;
O'er figured worlds now travels with his eye ;

Of ancient writ unlocks the learned store,
Consults the dead, and lives past ages o'er :

Or wandering thoughtful in the silent wood,
Attends the duties of the wise and good, 250

To observe a mean, be to himself a friend,
To follow Nature, and regard his end ;

Or looks on Heaven with more than mortal
eyes,

Bids his free soul expatiate in the skies,
Amid her kindred stars familiar roam, 255

Survey the region, and confess her home !
Such was the life great Scipio once admired,

Thus Atticus, and Trumbull thus retired.

Ye sacred Nine ! that all my soul possess,
Whose raptures fire me, and whose visions
bless, 260

Bear me, oh bear me to sequestered scenes,
The bowery mazes and surrounding greens :

To Thames's banks which fragrant breezes
fill,

Or where ye Muses sport on Cooper's Hill.

On Cooper's Hill eternal wreaths shall grow, 265
While lasts the mountain, or while Thames
shall flow.

I seem through consecrated walks to rove,
I hear soft music die along the grove :
Led by the sound, I roam from shade to shade,
By god-like poets venerable made : 270
Here his first lays majestic Denham sung ;
There the last numbers flowed from Cowley's
tongue.¹

O early lost ! what tears the river shed,
When the sad pomp along his banks was led !
His drooping swans on every note expire, 275
And on his willows hung each Muse's lyre.

Since fate relentless stopped their heavenly
voice,
No more the forests ring, or groves rejoice ;
Who now shall charm the shades, where Cowley
strung

His living harp, and lofty Denham sung ? 280
But hark ! the groves rejoice, the forest rings !
Are these revived ? or is it Granville sings ?
'Tis yours, my lord, to bless our soft retreats,
And call the Muses to their ancient seats ;
To paint anew the flowery sylvan scenes, 285
To crown the forests with immortal greens,
Make Windsor-hills in lofty numbers rise,
And lift her turrets nearer to the skies ;
To sing those honours you deserve to wear,
And add new lustre to her silver star.² 290

¹ Mr. Cowley died at Chertsey, on the borders of the Forest, and was from thence conveyed to Westminster.—P.

² All the lines that follow were not added to the poem till the year 1710. What immediately followed this, and made the conclusion, were these :

“ My humble Muse, in unambitious strains,” &c.—P.

Here noble Surrey felt the sacred rage,¹
 Surrey, the Granville of a former age :
 Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance,
 Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance :
 In the same shades the Cupids tuned his lyre,
 To the same notes, of love and soft desire : 296
 Fair Geraldine, bright object of his vow,
 Then filled the groves as heavenly Mira now.²

Oh wouldst thou sing what heroes Windsor
 bore,
 What kings first breathed upon her winding
 shore, 300
 Or raise old warriors, whose adored remains
 In weeping vaults her hallowed earth contains !
 With Edward's acts adorn the shining page,³
 Stretch his long triumphs down through every
 age,
 Draw monarchs chained, and Crecy's glorious
 field, 305
 The lilies blazing on the regal shield :
 Then, from her roofs where Verrio's colours fall,⁴
 And leave inanimate the naked wall,
 Still in thy song should vanquished France
 appear,
 And bleed for ever under Britain's spear. 310
 Let softer strains ill-fated Henry mourn,⁵
 And palms eternal flourish round his urn.

¹ Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, one of the first refiners of the English poetry ; famous in the time of Henry VIII. for his sonnets, the scene of many of which is laid at Windsor.—P.

² The Fair Geraldine of Surrey was a daughter of the Earl of Kildare. The Mira of Granville was the Countess of Newburgh.—*Warton*.

³ Edward III. born here.—P.

⁴ For Verrio, see "Moral Essays," Ep. iv. 146, note.

⁵ Henry VI.—P.

Here o'er the martyr-king the marble weeps,
And, fast beside him, once feared Edward
sleeps :¹

Whom not the extended Albion could contain,
From old Belerium to the northern main,² 316
The grave unites ; where ev'n the great find
rest,

And blended lie the oppressor and the oppressed !
Make sacred Charles's tomb for ever known,
(Obscure the place, and uninscribed the stone,)³
Oh fact accurst ! what tears has Albion shed, 321
Heavens, what new wounds ! and how her old
have bled !

She saw her sons with purple deaths expire,
Her sacred domes involved in rolling fire,
A dreadful series of intestine wars, 325
Inglorious triumphs and dishonest scars.
At length great Anna said : " Let discord
cease ! "

She said, the world obeyed, and all was peace !
In that blest moment, from his oozy bed 329
Old father Thames advanced his reverend head ;
His tresses dropped with dews, and o'er the
stream

His shining horns diffused a golden gleam :
Graved on his urn, appeared the moon that
guides

His swelling waters, and alternate tides ;
The figured streams in waves of silver rolled,
And on their banks Augusta rose in gold.⁴ 336

¹ Edward IV.—P.

² The Land's End in Cornwall is called by Diodorus Siculus *Belerium Promontorium*.

³ The exact spot in St. George's Chapel where Charles I. was buried was not discovered until 1813.

⁴ Augusta was the name which the Romans at one period gave to London.—*Elwin*.

Around his throne the sea-born brothers stood,
 Who swell with tributary urns his flood :
 First the famed authors of his ancient name,
 The winding Isis, and the fruitful Thame :¹ 340
 The Kennet swift, for silver eels renowned ;
 The Loddon slow, with verdant alders crowned ;
 Cole, whose dark streams his flowery islands lave ;
 And chalky Wey, that rolls a milky wave ;
 The blue, transparent Vandalis appears ;² 345
 The gulphy Lee his sedgy tresses rears ;
 And sullen Mole, that hides his diving flood ;³
 And silent Darent, stained with Danish blood.

High in the midst, upon his urn reclined,
 (His sea-green mantle waving with the wind,)
 The god appeared : he turned his azure eyes 351
 Where Windsor-domes and pompous turrets
 rise ;
 Then bowed and spoke ; the winds forget to
 roar,
 And the hushed waves glide softly to the shore.

“ Hail, sacred Peace ! hail, long-expected
 days, 355
 That Thames’s glory to the stars shall raise !
 Though Tiber’s streams immortal Rome behold,
 Though foaming Hermus swells with tides of
 gold,
 From heaven itself though sevenfold Nilus
 flows,
 And harvests on a hundred realms bestows ; 360
 These now no more shall be the Muse’s themes,
 Lost in my fame, as in the sea their streams.

¹ Elwin says it was a common notion that the name “ Tamesis ” was formed from joining the words Thames and Isis.

² The Wandle.—*Croker*.

³ The Mole sinks through its sands in dry summers into an invisible channel underground.—*Bowles*.

Let Volga's banks with iron squadrons shine,
 And groves of lances glitter on the Rhine,
 Let barbarous Ganges arm a servile train; 365
 Be mine the blessings of a peaceful reign.
 No more my sons shall dye with British blood
 Red Iber's sands, or Ister's foaming flood :
 Safe on my shore each unmolested swain
 Shall tend the flocks, or reap the bearded
 grain ; 370

The shady empire shall retain no trace
 Of war or blood, but in the sylvan chase ;
 The trumpet sleep, while cheerful horns are
 blown,

And arms employed on birds and beasts alone.
 Behold ! the ascending villas on my side 375
 Project long shadows o'er the crystal tide ;
 Behold ! Augusta's glittering spires increase,
 And temples rise, the beauteous works of peace.¹
 I see, I see, where two fair cities bend²
 Their ample bow, a new Whitehall ascend ! 380
 There mighty nations shall inquire their doom,
 The world's great oracle in times to come ;
 There kings shall sue, and suppliant states be
 seen

Once more to bend before a British Queen.

“Thy trees, fair Windsor ! now shall leave
 their woods, 385
 And half thy forests rush into thy floods,
 Bear Britain's thunder, and her cross display,
 To the bright regions of the rising day :
 Tempt icy seas, where scarce the waters roll,
 Where clearer flames glow round the frozen
 pole ; 390

¹ The fifty new churches.—P.

² The two cities are London and Westminster.
 Inigo Jones had prepared designs for a new palace at
 Whitehall.

Or under southern skies exalt their sails,
 Led by new stars, and borne by spicy gales!
 For me the balm shall bleed, and amber flow,
 The coral redden, and the ruby glow,
 The pearly shell its lucid globe infold, 395
 And Phœbus warm the ripening ore to gold.
 The time shall come, when free as seas or wind,
 Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind,
 Whole nations enter with each swelling tide,¹
 And seas but join the regions they divide; 400
 Earth's distant ends our glory shall behold,
 And the new world launch forth to seek the
 old.

Then ships of uncouth form shall stem the
 tide,

And feathered people crowd my wealthy side,
 And naked youths and painted chiefs admire 405
 Our speech, our colour, and our strange attire!
 O stretch thy reign, fair Peace! from shore to
 shore,

Till conquest cease, and slavery be no more;
 Till the freed Indians in their native groves
 Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable
 loves, 410

Peru once more a race of kings behold,
 And other Mexicos be roofed with gold.
 Exiled by thee from earth to deepest hell,
 In brazen bonds, shall barbarous Discord dwell:
 Gigantic Pride, pale Terror, gloomy Care, 415
 And mad Ambition shall attend her there:
 There purple Vengeance bathed in gore retires,
 Her weapons blunted, and extinct her fires:
 There hateful Envy her own snakes shall feel,
 And Persecution mourn her broken wheel: 420

¹ A wish that London may be made a FREE PORT.
 —P.

There Faction roar, Rebellion bite her chain,
 And gasping Furies thirst for blood in vain."

Here cease thy flight, nor with unhallowed
 lays

Touch the fair fame of Albion's golden days:
 The thoughts of gods let Granville's verse re-
 cite, 425

And bring the scenes of opening fate to light:
 My humble Muse in unambitious strains,
 Paints the green forests and the flowery plains,
 Where Peace descending bids her olive spring,
 And scatters blessings from her dove-like wing.
 Ev'n I more sweetly pass my careless days, 431
 Pleased in the silent shade with empty praise;
 Enough for me, that to the listening swains
 First in these fields I sung the sylvan strains.



MESSIAH.

A SACRED ECLOGUE.

IN IMITATION OF VIRGIL'S "POLLIO."



ADVERTISEMENT.

In reading several passages of the Prophet Isaiah, which foretell the coming of Christ and the felicities attending it, I could not but observe a remarkable parity between many of the thoughts and those in the 'Pollio' of Virgil. This will not seem surprising, when we reflect that the eclogue was taken from a Sibylline prophecy on the same subject. One may judge that Virgil did not copy it line by line, but selected such ideas as best agreed with the nature of pastoral poetry, and disposed them in that manner which served most to beautify his piece. I have endeavoured the same in this imitation of him, though without admitting anything of my own; since it was written with this particular view, that the reader, by comparing the several thoughts, might see how far the images and descriptions of the Prophet are superior to those of the Poet. But as I fear I have prejudiced them by my management, I shall subjoin the passages of Isaiah, and those of Virgil, under the same disadvantage of a literal translation.—P.



MESSIAH.¹

YE Nymphs of Solyma!² begin the
song:
To heavenly themes sublimer strains
belong.

The mossy fountains, and the sylvan shades,
The dreams of Pindus and the Aonian maids,
Delight no more—O Thou my voice inspire 5
Who touched Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire!

Rapt into future times, the bard begun:
A Virgin shall conceive,³ a Virgin bear a Son!

¹ First published in the "Spectator," May 14, 1712.

² A contraction of Hierosolyma (Jerusalem).

³ "Jam redit et Virgo, redempt Saturnia regna;
Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto.—
Te duce, si qua manent seeleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras—
Pacatumque reget patrius virtutibus orbem."

Virg. Ecl. iv. 6.

"Now the Virgin returns, now the kingdom of Saturn returns, now a new progeny is sent down from high heaven. By means of thee, whatever reliques of our crimes remain shall be wiped away, and free the world from perpetual fears. He shall

With all the incense of the breathing spring :
 See lofty Lebanon¹ his head advance ; 25
 See nodding forests on the mountains dance :
 See spicy clouds from lowly Saron rise,
 And Carmel's flowery top perfumes the skies !
 Hark ! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers :
 Prepare the way !² a God, a God appears : 30
 A God, a God ! the vocal hills reply,
 The rocks proclaim the approaching Deity.

with Baccar, and Colocasia, with smiling Acanthus.
 Thy cradle shall pour forth pleasing flowers about
 thee."

Isa. xxxv. 1.—“The wilderness and the solitary
 place shall be glad ; and the desert shall rejoice and
 blossom as the rose.” Ch. lx. 13.—“The glory of
 Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-
 tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of
 my sanctuary.”—P.

¹ Isa. xxxv. 2.—P.

² Virg. Ecl. iv. 48 :

“Aggredere, o magnos, aderit jam tempus, honores,
 Cara deum soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum—”

Ecl. v. 62 :

“Ipsi lætitia voces ad sidera jactant
 Intonsi montes, ipsæ jam carmina rupes,
 Ipsa sonant arbusta, Deus, deus ille, Menalca !”—P.

“Oh come and receive the mighty honours ; the
 time draws nigh, O beloved offspring of the gods, O
 great increase of Jove : The uncultivated mountains
 send shouts of joy to the stars, the very rocks sing in
 verse, the very shrubs cry out, A god, a god !”

Isa. xl. 3, 4.—“The voice of him that crieth in the
 wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord ! make
 straight in the desert a high way for our God ! Every
 valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill
 shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made
 straight, and the rough places plain.” Ch. xlv. 23.—
 “Break forth into singing, ye mountains ! O forest,
 and every tree therein ! for the Lord hath redeemed
 Israel.”—P.

Lo, earth receives him from the bending skies !
 Sink down, ye mountains, and ye valleys, rise ;
 With heads declined, ye cedars, homage pay ; 35
 Be smooth, ye rocks ; ye rapid floods, give way !
 The Saviour comes ! by ancient bards foretold !
 Hear ¹ him, ye deaf, and all ye blind, behold !
 He from thick films shall purge the visual ray,
 And on the sightless eye-ball pour the day : 40
 'Tis he the obstructed paths of sound shall clear,
 And bid new music charm the unfolding ear :
 The dumb shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,
 And leap exulting like the bounding roe.
 No sigh, no murmur the wide world shall hear,
 From every face he wipes off every tear. 46
 In adamantine chains shall Death be bound,²
 And Hell's grim tyrant feel the eternal wound.
 As the good shepherd tends his fleecy care,
 Seeks freshest pasture and the purest air, 50
 Explores the lost, the wandering sheep directs,
 By day o'ersees them, and by night protects ;
 The tender lambs he raises in his arms,³
 Feeds from his hand, and in his bosom warms ;
 Thus shall mankind his guardian care engage, 55
 The promised ⁴ Father of the future age.
 No more shall ⁵ nation against nation rise,
 Nor ardent warriors meet with hateful eyes,
 Nor fields with gleaming steel be covered o'er,
 The brazen trumpets kindle rage no more ; 60
 But useless lances into scythes shall bend,
 And the broad falchion in a plough-share end.
 Then palaces shall rise ; the joyful ⁶ son
 Shall finish what his short-lived sire begun ;
 Their vines a shadow to their race shall yield, 65

¹ Isa. xlii. 18 ; xxxv. 5, 6.—P.

² *Ibid.* xxv. 8.—P.

³ *Ibid.* xl. 11.—P.

⁴ *Ibid.* ix. 6.—P.

⁵ *Ibid.* ii. 4.—P.

⁶ *Ibid.* lxxv. 21, 22.—P.

And the same hand that sowed, shall reap the
field.

The swain in barren ¹ deserts with surprise
Sees lilies spring, and sudden verdure rise ; ²
And starts, amidst the thirsty wilds to hear
New falls of water murmuring in his ear. 70
On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes,
The green reed trembles, and the bulrush nods.
Waste sandy ³ valleys, once perplexed with
thorn,

The spiry fir and shapely box adorn ;
To leafless shrubs the flowering palms succeed,
And odorous myrtle to the noisome weed. 76
The lambs with wolves shall graze the verdant
mead, ⁴

¹ Isa. xxxv. 1, 7.—P.

² Virg. Ecl. iv. 28 :

“ *Molli paulatim flaveseet campus arista,
Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva,
Et duræ quereus sudabunt roscida mella.*”

“ The fields shall grow yellow with ripened ears,
and the red grape shall hang upon the wild brambles,
and the hard oaks shall distil honey like dew.”

Isa. xxxv. 7.—“ The parched ground shall become
a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. In the
habitation where dragons lay, shall be grass with
reeds and rushes.” Ch. lv. 13.—“ Instead of the thorn
shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier
shall come up the myrtle-tree.”—P.

³ Isa. xli. 19, and lv. 13.—P.

⁴ Virg. Ecl. iv. 21 :

“ *Ipsæ lacte domum referent distenta capellæ
Ubera, nec magnos metuent armenta leones—
Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni
Occidet.*”—

“ The goats shall bear to the fold their udders dis-
tended with milk : nor shall the herds be afraid of
the greatest lions. The serpent shall die, and the
herb that conceals poison shall die.”

Isa. xi. 6, 7, 8.—“ The wolf shall dwell with the

And boys in flowery bands the tiger lead ;
 The steer and lion at one crib shall meet,¹
 And harmless serpents lick the pilgrim's feet.
 The smiling infant in his hand shall take 81
 The crested basilisk and speckled snake,
 Pleased, the green lustre of the scales survey,
 And with their forky tongue shall innocently
 play.

Rise, crowned with light, imperial Salem,
 rise !² 85

Exalt thy towery head, and lift thy eyes !
 See, a long³ race thy spacious courts adorn ;
 See future sons, and daughters yet unborn,
 In crowding ranks on every side arise,
 Demanding life, impatient for the skies ! 90
 See barbarous⁴ nations at thy gates attend,
 Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend ;
 See thy bright altars thronged with prostrate
 kings,

lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together ; and a little child shall lead them. And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the den of the cockatrice." —P.

¹ Isa. lxxv. 25.—P.

² *Ibid.* lx. 1. The thoughts of Isaiah, which compose the latter part of the poem, are wonderfully elevated, and much above those general exclamations of Virgil, which make the loftiest parts of his "Pollio :

"Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo !

—toto surget gens aurea mundo !

—incipient magni procedere menses !

Aspice, venturo lætentur ut omnia sæclo !" &c.

The reader needs only to turn to the passages of Isaiah here cited.—P.

³ Isa. lx. 4.—P.

⁴ *Ibid.* lx. 3.—P.

And heaped with products of Sabæan springs !¹
 For thee Idume's spicy forest's blow, 95
 And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountains glow.
 See heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
 And break upon thee in a flood of day.
 No more the rising sun shall gild the morn,²
 Nor evening Cynthia fill her silver horn ; 100
 But lost, dissolved in thy superior rays,
 One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze
 O'erflow thy courts : the Light himself shall
 shine
 Revealed, and God's eternal day be thine ! 104
 The seas shall waste, the skies in smoke decay,³
 Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away ;
 But fixed his word, his saving power remains :
 Thy realm for ever lasts, thy own MESSIAH
 reigns !

¹ Isa. lx. 6.—P.² *Ibid.* lx. 19, 20.—P.³ *Ibid.* li. 6 ; liv. 10.—P.



AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1709.

“—— Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum.”
Horat.



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AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM.¹

TIS hard to say, if greater want of
skill
Appear in writing or in judging ill ;
But, of the two, less dangerous is
the offence

To tire our patience, than mislead our sense.
Some few in that, but numbers err in this, 5
Ten censure wrong for one who writes amiss ;
A fool might once himself alone expose,
Now one in verse makes many more in prose.

'Tis with our judgments as our watches,
none

Go just alike, yet each believes his own. 10
In poets as true genius is but rare,
True taste as seldom is the critic's share ;
Both must alike from Heaven derive their light,
These born to judge, as well as those to write.
Let such teach others who themselves excel,² 15
And censure freely who have written well.
Authors are partial to their wit, 'tis true,
But are not critics to their judgment too ?

Yet, if we look more closely, we shall find

¹ Published in 1711. See the Memoir, p. xiii.

² "Qui scribit artificiose, ab aliis commode scripta facile intelligere poterit." *Cic. ad Herenn. lib. iv.*
"De pictore, sculptore, fictore, nisi artifex, judicare non potest."—*Pliny.*—P.

Most have the seeds of judgment in their
mind :¹ 20

Nature affords at least a glimmering light ;
The lines, though touched but faintly, are drawn
right.

But as the slightest sketch, if justly traced,
Is by ill-colouring but the more disgraced,
So by false learning is good sense defaced ;² 25
Some are bewildered in the maze of schools,
And some made coxcombs nature meant but
fools.

In search of wit these lose their common sense,
And then turn critics in their own defence :
Each burns alike, who can, or cannot write, 30
Or with a rival's, or an eunuch's spite.
All fools have still an itching to deride,
And fain would be upon the laughing side.
If Mævius scribble in Apollo's spite,
There are who judge still worse than he can
write. 35

Some have at first for wits, then poets passed,
Turned critics next, and proved plain fools at
last.

Some neither can for wits nor critics pass,
As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass.
Those half-learned witlings, numerous in our
isle, 40

As half-formed insects on the banks of Nile ;
Unfinished things, one knows not what to call,
Their generation's so equivocal :
To tell 'em would a hundred tongues require,
Or one vain wit's, that might a hundred tire. 45

¹ " Omnes tacito quodam sensu, sine ulla arte, aut ratione, que sint in artibus ac rationibus, recta et prava dijudicant."—*Cic. de Orat. lib. iii.*—P.

² " Plus sine doctrina prudentia, quam sine prudentia valet doctrina."—*Quint.*—P.

But you who seek to give and merit fame,
 And justly bear a critic's noble name,
 Be sure yourself and your own reach to know,
 How far your genius, taste, and learning go ;
 Launch not beyond your depth, but be discreet,
 And mark that point where sense and dulness
 meet. 51

Nature to all things fixed the limits fit,
 And wisely curbed proud man's pretending wit.
 As on the land while here the ocean gains,
 In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains ; 55
 Thus in the soul while memory prevails,
 The solid power of understanding fails ;
 Where beams of warm imagination play,
 The memory's soft figures melt away.
 One science only will one genius fit ; 60
 So vast is art, so narrow human wit :
 Not only bounded to peculiar arts,
 But oft in those confined to single parts.
 Like kings we lose the conquests gained before,
 By vain ambition still to make them more : 65
 Each might his several province well command,
 Would all but stoop to what they understand.

First follow Nature, and your judgment
 frame

By her just standard, which is still the same :
 Unerring Nature, still divinely bright, 70
 One clear, unchanged, and universal light,
 Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
 At once the source, and end, and test of Art.
 Art from that fund each just supply provides ;
 Works without show, and without pomp pre-
 sides : 75

In some fair body thus the informing soul
 With spirits feeds, with vigour fills the whole,
 Each motion guides, and every nerve sustains ;
 Itself unseen, but in the effects remains.

Some, to whom Heaven in wit has been profuse,
 Want as much more, to turn it to its use; 81
 For wit and judgment often are at strife,
 Though meant each other's aid, like man and wife.
 'Tis more to guide, than spur the Muse's steed;
 Restrain his fury, than provoke his speed: 85
 The winged courser, like a generous horse,
 Shows most true mettle when you check his
 course.

Those Rules of old discovered, not devised,
 Are Nature still, but Nature methodised:
 Nature, like liberty, is but restrained 90
 By the same laws which first herself ordained.

Hear how learn'd Greece her useful rules in-
 dited,
 When to repress, and when indulge our flights:
 High on Parnassus' top her sons she showed,
 And pointed out those arduous paths they trod;
 Held from afar, aloft, the immortal prize, 96
 And urged the rest by equal steps to rise.
 Just precepts thus from great examples given,¹
 She drew from them what they derived from
 Heaven.

The generous critic fanned the poet's fire, 100
 And taught the world with reason to admire.
 Then criticism the Muse's handmaid proved,
 To dress her charms, and make her more beloved:
 But following wits from that intention strayed,
 Who could not win the mistress, wooed the
 maid; 105
 Against the poets their own arms they turned,
 Sure to hate most the men from whom they
 learned.

¹ "Nec enim artibus editis factum est ut argu-
 menta inveniremus, sed dicta sunt omnia antequam
 preciperentur; mox ea scriptores observata et collecta
 ediderunt."—*Quint.*—P.

So modern 'pothecaries, taught the art
 By doctors' bills to play the doctor's part,
 Bold in the practice of mistaken rules, 110
 Prescribe, apply, and call their masters fools.
 Some on the leaves of ancient authors prey,
 Nor time nor moths e'er spoiled so much as
 they :

Some drily plain, without invention's aid, 114
 Write dull receipts how poems may be made.
 These leave the sense, their learning to display,
 And those explain the meaning quite away.

You then whose judgment the right course
 would steer,

Know well each Ancient's proper character :
 His fable, subject, scope in every page ; 120
 Religion, country, genius of his age :
 Without all these at once before your eyes,
 Cavil you may, but never criticise.

Be Homer's works your study and delight,
 Read them by day, and meditate by night ; 125
 Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims
 bring,

And trace the Muses upward to their spring.
 Still with itself compared, his text peruse ;
 And let your comment be the Mantuan Muse.

When first young Maro in his boundless
 mind ¹ 130

A work to outlast immortal Rome designed,
 Perhaps he seemed above the critic's law,

¹ Virg. Ecl. vi. :

“ Cum canerem reges et prælia, Cynthia aurem
 Vellit.”

It is a tradition preserved by Servius, that Virgil began with writing a poem of the Alban and Roman affairs, which he found above his years, and descended first to imitate Theocritus on rural subjects, and afterwards to copy Homer in heroic poetry.—P.

And but from Nature's fountains scorned to
draw :

But when to examine every part he came, 134
Nature and Homer were, he found, the same.
Convinced, amazed, he checks the bold design ;
And rules as strict his laboured work confine,
As if the Stagyrite o'erlooked each line.
Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem ;
To copy Nature is to copy them. 140

Some beauties yet no precepts can declare,
For there's a happiness as well as care.
Music resembles poetry ; in each
Are nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master hand alone can reach. 145
If, where the rules not far enough extend,¹
(Since rules were made but to promote their
end)

Some lucky licence answer to the full
The intent proposed, that licence is a rule.
Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take, 150
May boldly deviate from the common track.
Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,²
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend :
From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art, 155
Which, without passing through the judgment,
gains
The heart, and all its end at once attains.

¹ "Neque enim rogationibus plebisve scitis sancta sunt ista præcepta, sed hoc, quicquid est, Utilitas excogitavit. Non negabo autem sic utile esse ple-rumque ; verum si eadem illa nobis aliud suadebit Utilitas, hanc, relictis magistrorum autoritatibus, sequemur."—*Quint.* lib. ii. c. 13.—P.

² This couplet was placed in the 1743 edition after line 160, a variation which would make the lines, "From vulgar bounds," &c., refer to Pegasus. It was put back into its original position by Warton.

In prospects thus, some objects please our eyes,
 Which out of nature's common order rise,
 The shapeless rock, or hanging precipice. 160
 But though the ancients thus their rules invade,
 (As kings dispense with laws themselves have
 made)

Moderns, beware ! or if you must offend
 Against the precept, ne'er transgress its end ;
 Let it be seldom, and compelled by need ; 165
 And have, at least, their precedent to plead.
 The critic else proceeds without remorse,
 Seizes your fame, and puts his laws in force.

I know there are, to whose presumptuous
 thoughts 169
 Those freer beauties, even in them, seem faults.
 Some figures monstrous and mis-shaped appear,
 Considered singly, or beheld too near,
 Which, but proportioned to their light, or place,
 Due distance reconciles to form and grace.
 A prudent chief not always must display 175
 His powers, in equal ranks, and fair array,
 But with the occasion and the place comply,
 Conceal his force, nay seem sometimes to fly.
 Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,
 Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream.¹ 180

Still green with bays each ancient altar
 stands,
 Above the reach of sacrilegious hands ;
 Secure from flames, from envy's fiercer rage,
 Destructive war, and all-involving age.
 See, from each clime the learn'd their incense
 bring ! 185

¹ "Modeste, et circumspetto judicio de tantis viris pronuntiandum est, ne (quod plerisque accidit) damnent quod non intelligunt. Ac si necesse est in alteram errare partem, omnia eorum legentibus placere, quam multa displicere maluerim."—*Quint.*—P.

Hear, in all tongues consenting Pæans ring!
 In praise so just let every voice be joined,
 And fill the general chorus of mankind.
 Hail, bards triumphant! born in happier days;
 Immortal heirs of universal praise! 190
 Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
 As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;
 Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,
 And worlds applaud, that must not yet be
 found!

O may some spark of your celestial fire, 195
 The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,
 (That on weak wings, from far, pursues your
 flights;
 Glows while he reads, but trembles as he writes)
 To teach vain wits a science little known,
 To admire superior sense, and doubt their
 own! 200

II.

Of all the causes which conspire to blind
 Man's erring judgment, and misguide the
 mind,
 What the weak head with strongest bias
 rules,
 Is Pride, the never-failing vice of fools.
 Whatever Nature has in worth denied, 205
 She gives in large recruits of needful pride;
 For as in bodies, thus in souls we find
 What wants in blood and spirits, swelled with
 wind:
 Pride, where wit fails, steps in to our defence,
 And fills up all the mighty void of sense. 210
 If once right reason drives that cloud away,
 Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.
 Trust not yourself; but your defects to know,
 Make use of every friend, and every foe.

A little learning is a dangerous thing ; 215
 Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring :
 There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
 And drinking largely sobers us again.

Fired at first sight with what the Muse im-
 parts,

In fearless youth we tempt the heights of
 arts, 220

While from the bounded level of our mind,
 Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind ;
 But more advanced, behold with strange sur-
 prise

New distant scenes of endless science rise !
 So pleased at first the towering Alps we try,
 Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the
 sky, 226

The eternal snows appear already past,
 And the first clouds and mountains seem the
 last :

But, those attained, we tremble to survey
 The growing labours of the lengthened way,
 The increasing prospect tires our wandering
 eyes, 231

Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise !

A perfect judge will read each work of wit¹
 With the same spirit that its author writ :
 Survey the Whole, nor seek slight faults to
 find 235

Where nature moves, and rapture warms the
 mind ;

Nor lose, for that malignant dull delight,
 The generous pleasure to be charmed with wit.
 But in such lays as neither ebb nor flow,

¹ "Diligenter legendum est ac pæne ad scribendi sollicitudinem ; nec per partes modo scrutanda sunt omnia, sed perfectus liber utique ex integro resumendus."—*Quint.*—P.

Correctly cold, and regularly low, 240
 That, shunning faults, one quiet tenour keep,
 We cannot blame indeed, but we may sleep.
 In wit, as nature, what affects our hearts
 Is not the exactness of peculiar parts;
 'Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call, 245
 But the joint force and full result of all.
 Thus when we view some well-proportioned
 dome,
 ('The world's just wonder, and ev'n thine, O
 Rome!)

No single parts unequally surprise,
 All comes united to the admiring eyes; 250
 No monstrous height, or breadth or length
 appear;
 The whole at once is bold and regular.

Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
 Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.
 In every work regard the writer's end, 255
 Since none can compass more than they intend;
 And if the means be just, the conduct true,
 Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due.
 As men of breeding, sometimes men of wit,
 To avoid great errors, must the less commit:
 Neglect the rules each verbal critic lays, 261
 For not to know some trifles is a praise.
 Most critics, fond of some subservient art,
 Still make the whole depend upon a part:
 They talk of principles, but notions prize, 265
 And all to one loved folly sacrifice.

Once on a time, La Mancha's knight, they
 say,¹

¹ The incident is taken from the Second Part "Don Quixote," first written by Don Alonzo Fernandez de Avellanada, and afterwards translated, or rather imitated and new-modelled, by no less an author than the celebrated Le Sage.—*Warton*.

A certain bard encountering on the way,
Discours'd in terms as just, with looks as sage,
As e'er could Dennis, of the Grecian stage; 270
Concluding all were desperate sots and fools,
Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules.

Our author, happy in a judge so nice,
Produced his play, and begged the knight's
advice;

Made him observe the subject and the plot, 275
The manners, passions, unities; what not?
All which, exact to rule, were brought about,
Were but a combat in the lists left out.

"What! leave the combat out!" exclaims the
knight;

Yes, or we must renounce the Stagyrite. 280

"Not so, by Heaven!" he answers in a rage,
"Knights, squires, and steeds, must enter on
the stage."

So vast a throng the stage can ne'er contain.

"Then build a new, or act it in a plain."

Thus critics of less judgment than caprice, 285

Curious, not knowing, not exact but nice,

Form short ideas; and offend in arts

As most in manners, by a love to parts.

Some to Conceit alone their taste confine,

And glittering thoughts struck out at every
line; 290

Pleased with a work where nothing's just or fit;

One glaring chaos and wild heap of wit.

Poets, like painters, thus, unskilled to trace

The naked nature, and the living grace,

With gold and jewels cover every part, 295

And hide with ornaments their want of art.

True Wit is Nature to advantage dressed;¹

¹ "Naturam intueamur, hanc sequamur; id facillimè accipiunt animi quod agnoscunt."—*Quint.* lib. viii. c. 3.—P.

What oft was thought, but ne'er so well ex-
 pressed ;
 Something, whose truth convinced at sight we
 find,
 That gives us back the image of our mind. 300
 As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
 So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit.
 For works may have more wit than does 'em
 good,
 As bodies perish through excess of blood. 304
 Others for Language all their care express,
 And value books, as women men, for dress :
 Their praise is still,—the style is excellent ;
 The sense, they humbly take upon content.
 Words are like leaves ; and where they most
 abound,
 Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found. 310
 False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
 Its gaudy colours spreads on every place ;
 The face of Nature we no more survey,
 All glares alike, without distinction gay :
 But true expression, like the unchanging sun, 315
 Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon,
 It gilds all objects, but it alters none.
 Expression is the dress of thought, and still
 Appears more decent, as more suitable ;
 A vile conceit in pompous words expressed 320
 Is like a clown in regal purple dressed :
 For different styles with different subjects sort,
 As several garbs, with country, town, and court.
 Some by old words to fame have made pre-
 tence,¹

¹ “ Abolita et abrogata retinere, insolentiae ejus-
 dam est, et frivolae in parvis jactantiae.”—*Quint.* lib.
 i. c. 6.—P.

“ Opus est, ut verba a vetustate repetita neque
 crebra sint, neque manifesta, quia nil est odiosius

Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their
sense ; 325

Such laboured nothings, in so strange a style,
Amaze the unlearn'd, and make the learned
smile.

Unlucky, as Fungoso in the play,¹
These sparks with awkward vanity display
What the fine gentleman wore yesterday ; 330
And but so mimic ancient wits at best,
As apes our grandsires, in their doublets dressed.
In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold ;
Alike fantastic, if too new or old :
Be not the first by whom the new are tried, 335
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

But most by Numbers judge a poet's song :²
And smooth or rough, with them, is right or
wrong :

In the bright Muse, though thousand charms
conspire,
Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire ; 340
Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
Not mend their minds ; as some to church re-
pair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.
These equal syllables alone require,

*affectatione, nec utique ab ultimis repetita tempo-
ribus. Oratio cujus summa virtus est perspicuitas,
quam sit vitiosa, si egeat interprete? Ergo ut novo-
rum optima erunt maxime vetera, ita veterum maxime
nova.*"—*Idem.*—P.

¹ See Ben Jonson's "Every Man out of his Humour."
—P.

² "Quis populi sermo est? quis enim? nisi carmina
mollia

Nunc demum numero fluere, ut per læve severos
Effundat junctura ungues: scit tendere versum
Non secus ac si oculo rubricam dirigat uno."

Pers. Sat. i.—P.

Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire ; ¹ 345
 While expletives their feeble aid do join ;
 And ten low words oft creep in one dull line :
 While they ring round the same unvaried
 chimes,
 With sure returns of still expected rhymes ;
 Where'er you find "the cooling western
 breeze," 350
 In the next line, it "whispers through the
 trees :"
 If crystal streams "with pleasing murmurs
 creep,"
 The reader's threatened (not in vain) with
 "sleep."
 Then, at the last and only couplet fraught
 With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
 A needless Alexandrine ends the song, 356
 That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow
 length along.
 Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and
 know
 What's roundly smooth, or languishingly slow ;
 And praise the easy vigour of a line, 360
 Where Denham's strength, and Waller's sweet-
 ness join.
 True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
 As those move easiest who have learned to
 dance.
 'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense : 365
 Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers
 flows ;
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,

¹ "Fugiemus crebras vocalium concursiones, quæ
 vastam atque hiantem orationem reddunt."—*Cic. ad
 Herenn. lib. iv. Vide etiam Quint. lib. ix. c. 4.—P.*

The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent
 roar :

When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to
 throw, 370

The line too labours, and the words move slow :
 Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
 Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along
 the main.¹

Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,²
 And bid alternate passions fall and rise ! 375

While, at each change, the son of Libyan Jove
 Now burns with glory, and then melts with
 love ;

Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
 Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow :
 Persians and Greeks like turns of nature
 found, 380

And the world's victor stood subdued by sound !
 The power of music all our hearts allow,
 And what Timotheus was, is Dryden now.

Avoid extremes ; and shun the fault of such,
 Who still are pleased too little or too much. 385
 At every trifle scorn to take offence,
 That always shows great pride, or little sense ;
 Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best,

¹ The following imitations in this passage, from Vida's "Art of Poetry," are pointed out by Warburton :

Ver. 366. Tum si læta canunt, &c. *Vida*, l. iii. v. 403.

Ver. 368. Tum longe sale saxa sonant, &c. *Vida*, ib. 388.

Ver. 370. Atque ideo si quid geritur molimine magno, &c. *Vida*, ib. 417.

Ver. 372. At mora si fuerit damno, properare jubebo, &c. *Vida*, ib. 420.

² See "Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music," an Ode by Mr. Dryden.—P.

Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.
 Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move ; 390
 For fools admire, but men of sense approve :
 As things seem large which we through mists
 descry,

Dulness is ever apt to magnify.

Some foreign writers, some our own despise ;
 The ancients only, or the moderns prize. 395
 Thus wit, like faith, by each man is applied
 To one small sect, and all are damned beside.
 Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,
 And force that sun but on a part to shine,
 Which not alone the southern wit sublimes, 400
 But ripens spirits in cold northern climes ;
 Which from the first has shone on ages past,
 Enlights the present, and shall warm the last ;
 Though each may feel increases and decays,
 And see now clearer and now darker days. 405
 Regard not then if wit be old or new,
 But blame the false, and value still the true.

Some ne'er advance a judgment of their own,
 But catch the spreading notion of the town ;
 They reason and conclude by precedent, 410
 And own stale nonsense which they ne'er invent.
 Some judge of authors' names, not works, and
 then

Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men.
 Of all this servile herd, the worst is he
 That in proud dulness joins with quality. 415
 A constant critic at the great man's board,
 To fetch and carry nonsense for my lord.
 What woeful stuff this madrigal would be,
 In some starved hackney sonneteer, or me !
 But let a lord once own the happy lines, 420
 How the wit brightens ! how the style refines !
 Before his sacred name flies every fault,
 And each exalted stanza teems with thought !

The vulgar thus through imitation err ;
 As oft the learn'd by being singular ; 425
 So much they scorn the crowd, that if the throng
 By chance go right, they purposely go wrong :
 So schismatics the plain believers quit,
 And are but damned for having too much wit.
 Some praise at morning what they blame at
 night ; 430
 But always think the last opinion right.
 A Muse by these is like a mistress used,
 This hour she's idolized, the next abused ;
 While their weak heads, like towns unfortified,
 'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their
 side. 435
 Ask them the cause ; they're wiser still, they
 say ;
 And still to-morrow's wiser than to-day.
 We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow ;
 Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.
 Once school-divines this zealous isle o'er-
 spread ; 440
 Who knew most Sentences, was deepest read :¹
 Faith, Gospel, all, seemed made to be disputed,
 And none had sense enough to be confuted :
 Scotists and Thomists, now, in peace remain,²
 Amidst their kindred cobwebs in Duck-lane.³ 445
 If Faith itself has different dresses worn,
 What wonder modes in wit should take their
 turn ?

¹ The "Liber Sententiarum" of Peter Lombard is referred to. It was a collection of "sentences" or propositions from the fathers.

² The followers of Duns Scotus (d. 1308), and Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274).

³ A place where old and second-hand books were sold formerly, near Smithfield.—P. Now Duke Street.

Oft, leaving what is natural and fit,
 The current folly proves the ready wit ;
 And authors think their reputation safe, 450
 Which lives as long as fools are pleased to
 laugh.

Some valuing those of their own side or
 mind,
 Still make themselves the measure of mankind :
 Fondly we think we honour merit then,
 When we but praise ourselves in other men. 455
 Parties in wit attend on those of state,
 And public faction doubles private hate.
 Pride, malice, folly, against Dryden rose,
 In various shapes of parsons, critics, beaux ;¹
 But sense survived when merry jests were
 past ; 460
 For rising merit will buoy up at last.
 Might he return, and bless once more our
 eyes,
 New Blackmores and new Milbourns must
 arise :²

Nay, should great Homer lift his awful head,
 Zoilus again would start up from the dead.³ 465
 Envy will merit, as its shade, pursue ;
 But like a shadow, proves the substance true :
 For envied wit, like Sol eclipsed, makes known
 The opposing body's grossness, not its own.

¹ The parson alluded to was Jeremy Collier ; the critic was the Duke of Buckingham.—*Warton*.

² Sir Richard Blackmore attacked Dryden in a poem called "A Satire on Wit." See Note to "Dunciad," ii. 268 ; and for the Rev. Luke Milbourn, see "Dunciad," ii. 349.

³ Zoilus fared worse than even the false critics and detractors gibbeted in the "Dunciad." Ptolemy is said to have put him to death for his strictures on Homer ; and the name of the Thracian rhetorician has become a proverb for literary infamy.—*Carruthers*.

When first that sun too powerful beams displays, 470

It draws up vapours which obscure its rays ;
But ev'n those clouds at last adorn its way,
Reflect new glories, and augment the day.

Be thou the first true merit to defend ;
His praise is lost, who stays till all commend.
Short is the date, alas ! of modern rhymes, 476
And 'tis but just to let them live betimes.
No longer now that golden age appears,
When patriarch-wits survived a thousand
years : 479

Now length of fame (our second life) is lost,
And bare threescore is all ev'n that can boast ;
Our sons their fathers' failing language see,
And such as Chaucer is, shall Dryden be.
So when the faithful pencil has designed
Some bright idea of the master's mind, 485
Where a new word leaps out at his command,
And ready Nature waits upon his hand ;
When the ripe colours soften and unite,
And sweetly melt into just shade and light ;
When mellow years their full perfection give,
And each bold figure just begins to live, 491
The treacherous colours the fair art betray,
And all the bright creation fades away !

Unhappy wit, like most mistaken things,
Atones not for that envy which it brings. 495
In youth alone its empty praise we boast,
But soon the short-lived vanity is lost :
Like some fair flower the early spring supplies,
That gaily blooms, but even in blooming dies.
What is this wit, which must our cares employ ?
The owner's wife, that other men enjoy ; 501
Then most our trouble still when most admired,
And still the more we give, the more required ;

Whose fame with pains we guard, but lose
with ease,

Sure some to vex, but never all to please; 505
'Tis what the vicious fear, the virtuous shun,
By fools 'tis hated, and by knaves undone!

If wit so much from ignorance undergo,
Ah let not learning too commence its foe!
Of old those met rewards who could excel, 510
And such were praised who but endeavoured
well;

Though triumphs were to generals only due,
Crowns were reserved to grace the soldiers too.
Now, they who reach Parnassus' lofty crown,
Employ their pains to spurn some others down;
And while self-love each jealous writer rules, 516
Contending wits become the sport of fools:
But still the worst with most regret commend,
For each ill author is as bad a friend.

To what base ends, and by what abject ways, 520
Are mortals urged through sacred lust of
praise!

Ah ne'er so dire a thirst of glory boast,
Nor in the critic let the man be lost.
Good-nature and good sense must ever join;
To err is human, to forgive, divine. 525

But if in noble minds some dregs remain,
Not yet purged off, of spleen and sour disdain;
Discharge that rage on more provoking crimes,
Nor fear a dearth in these flagitious times.
No pardon vile obscenity should find, 530
Though wit and art conspire to move your
mind;

But dulness with obscenity must prove
As shameful sure as impotence in love.
In the fat age of pleasure, wealth, and ease,
Sprung the rank weed, and thrived with large
increase: 535

When love was all an easy monarch's care ;
 Seldom at council, never in a war :
 Jilts ruled the state, and statesmen farces writ ;
 Nay wits had pensions, and young lords had
 wit :

The fair sat panting at a courtier's play, 540
 And not a mask went unimproved away ;
 The modest fan was lifted up no more,
 And virgins smiled at what they blushed before.
 The following licence of a foreign reign
 Did all the dregs of bold Socinus drain ;¹ 545
 Then unbelieving priests reformed the nation,
 And taught more pleasant methods of salva-
 tion ;

Where Heaven's free subjects might their
 rights dispute,
 Lest God himself should seem too absolute :
 Pulpits their sacred satire learned to spare, 550
 And vice admired to find a flatterer there !
 Encouraged thus, Wit's Titans braved the skies,
 And the press groaned with licensed blas-
 phemies.

These monsters, critics ! with your darts engage,
 Here point your thunder, and exhaust your
 rage ! 555

Yet shun their fault, who, scandalously nice,
 Will needs mistake an author into vice ;

¹ The author has omitted two lines which stood here, as containing a national reflection, which in his stricter judgment he could not but disapprove on any people whatever.—P.

The lines were :

“Then first the Belgian morals were extolled ;
 We their religion had, and they our gold.”

This sneer was dictated by the poet's dislike to William III. and the Dutch, for displacing the Popish king James II.—*Croker*.

All seems infected that the infected spy,
As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.

III.

Learn then what morals critics ought to
show, 560

For 'tis but half a judge's task, to know.

'Tis not enough, taste, judgment, learning,
join;

In all you speak, let truth and candour shine :

That not alone what to your sense is due

All may allow, but seek your friendship
too. 565

Be silent always, when you doubt your sense ;
And speak, though sure, with seeming diffi-
dence :

Some positive, persisting fops we know,

Who, if once wrong, will needs be always so ;

But you with pleasure own your errors past,

And make each day a critic on the last. 571

'Tis not enough your counsel still be true ;

Blunt truths more mischief than nice false-
hoods do ;

Men must be taught as if you taught them
not,

And things unknown proposed as things for-
got. 575

Without good-breeding truth is disapproved ;

That only makes superior sense beloved.

Be niggards of advice on no pretence ;

For the worst avarice is that of sense.

With mean complaisance ne'er betray your
trust, 580

Nor be so civil as to prove unjust.

Fear not the anger of the wise to raise ;

Those best can bear reproof who merit praise.

'Twere well might critics still this freedom
 take,
 But Appius reddens at each word you speak, 585
 And stares, tremendous, with a threatening eye,
 Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry.¹
 Fear most to tax an Honourable fool,
 Whose right it is, uncensured, to be dull;
 Such, without wit, are poets when they please,
 As without learning they can take degrees.² 591
 Leave dangerous truths to unsuccessful satires,
 And flattery to fulsome dedicators,
 Whom, when they praise, the world believes no
 more,
 Than when they promise to give scribbling
 o'er. 595
 'Tis best sometimes your censure to restrain,
 And charitably let the dull be vain :
 Your silence there is better than your spite,
 For who can rail so long as they can write ?
 Still humming on, their drowsy course they
 keep, 600
 And lashed so long, like tops, are lashed asleep.
 False steps but help them to renew the race,
 As, after stumbling, jades will mend their pace.

¹ This picture was taken to himself by John Dennis, a furious old critic by profession, who, upon no other provocation, wrote against this Essay, and its author, in a manner perfectly lunatic : for, as to the mention made of him in ver. 270, he took it as a compliment, and said it was treacherously meant to cause him to overlook this abuse of his person.—P. [In edition of 1743.]

Dennis produced his tragedy, "Appius and Virginia," in 1709; hence the name "Appius." The word "tremendous" occurs very frequently in his writings.

² The sons of noblemen used to be allowed to take the M.A. degree after two years' residence at a University, without examination.

What crowds of these, impenitently bold,
 In sounds and jingling syllables grown old, 605
 Still run on poets in a raging vein,
 Ev'n to the dregs and squeezings of the brain,
 Strain out the last dull droppings of their
 sense,

And rhyme with all the rage of impotence.

Such shameless bards we have; and yet 'tis
 true, 610

There are as mad, abandoned critics too.
 The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,
 With loads of learned lumber in his head,
 With his own tongue still edifics his ears,
 And always listening to himself appears. 615
 All books he reads, and all he reads assails,
 From Dryden's Fables down to Durfey's Tales :
 With him, most authors steal their works, or
 buy ;

Garth did not write his own Dispensary.¹
 Name a new play, and he's the poet's friend, 620
 Nay showed his faults—but when would poets
 mend ?

No place so sacred from such fops is barred,
 Nor is Paul's church more safe than Paul's
 churchyard :

Nay, fly to altars; there they'll talk you dead ;
 For fools rush in where angels fear to tread. 625
 Distrustful sense with modest caution speaks,
 It still looks home, and short excursions makes ;
 But rattling nonsense in full volleys breaks,
 And, never shocked, and never turned aside,
 Bursts out, resistless, with a thundering tide. 630

¹ A common slander at that time in prejudice of that deserving author. Our poet did him this justice, when that slander most prevailed; and it is now (perhaps the sooner for this very verse) dead and forgotten.—P.

But where's the man who counsel can bestow,
Still pleased to teach, and yet not proud to
know ?

Unbiassed, or by favour, or by spite ;
Not dully prepossessed, nor blindly right ;
Though learn'd, well-bred : and though well-
bred, sincere ; 635

Modestly bold, and humanly severe.¹

Who to a friend his faults can freely show,
And gladly praise the merit of a foe ?
Blessed with a taste exact, yet unconfined ; 639
A knowledge both of books and human kind ;
Generous converse ; a soul exempt from pride ;
And love to praise, with reason on his side ?

Such once were critics ; such the happy few,
Athens and Rome in better ages knew.

The mighty Stagyrte first left the shore, 645
Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps ex-
plore ;

He steered securely, and discovered far,
Led by the light of the Mæonian star.
Poets, a race long unconfined, and free,
Still fond and proud of savage liberty, 650
Received his laws ; and stood convinced 'twas
fit,

Who conquered Nature, should preside o'er Wit.

Horace still charms with graceful negligence,
And without method talks us into sense ;
Will, like a friend, familiarly convey 655
The truest notions in the easiest way.

He, who supreme in judgment, as in wit,
Might boldly censure, as he boldly writ,
Yet judged with coolness, though he sung with
fire ;

His precepts teach but what his works inspire.

¹ "Humanly" for "humanely."

Our critics take a contrary extreme, 661
 They judge with fury, but they write with
 phlegm :

Nor suffers Horace more in wrong translations
 By wits, than critics in as wrong quotations.

See Dionysius Homer's thoughts refine,¹ 665
 And call new beauties forth from every line !

Fancy and art in gay Petronius please,
 The scholar's learning, with the courtier's ease.

In grave Quintilian's copious works we find
 The justest rules and clearest method joined :
 Thus useful arms in magazines we place, 671
 All ranged in order, and disposed with grace,
 But less to please the eye, than arm the hand,
 Still fit for use, and ready at command.

Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire, 675
 And bless their critic with a poet's fire.

An ardent judge, who, zealous in his trust,
 With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just :
 Whose own example strengthens all his laws :
 And is himself that great Sublime he draws. 680

Thus long succeeding critics justly reigned,
 Licence repressed, and useful laws ordained.
 Learning and Rome alike in empire grew ;
 And arts still followed where her eagles flew ;
 From the same foes, at last, both felt their
 doom, 685

And the same age saw Learning fall, and Rome.
 With Tyranny, then Superstition joined,
 As that the body, this enslaved the mind ;
 Much was believed, but little understood,
 And to be dull was construed to be good ; 690
 A second deluge learning thus o'er-run,
 And the monks finished what the Goths begun.

At length Erasmus, that great injured name,

¹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus.—P.

Of those who less presumed, and better knew,
 Who durst assert the juster ancient cause, 721
 And here restored Wit's fundamental laws.
 Such was the Muse, whose rules and practice
 tell,¹

“Nature's chief Master-piece is writing well.”
 Such was Roscommon, not more learn'd than
 good, 725

¹ “Essay on Poetry” by the Duke of Buckingham. Our poet is not the only one of his time who complimented this Essay, and its noble author. Mr. Dryden had done it very largely in the Dedication to his Translation of the *Aeneid*; and Dr. Garth, in the first edition of his “Dispensary,” says:

“The Tiber now no courtly Gallus sees,
 But smiling Thames enjoys his Normanby:”

though afterwards omitted, when parties were carried so high in the reign of Queen Anne, as to allow no commendation to an opposite in politics. The Duke was all his life a steady adherent of the Church of England party, yet an enemy to the extravagant measures of the court in the reign of Charles II. On which account, after having strongly patronized Mr. Dryden, a coolness succeeded between them on that poet's absolute attachment to the court, which carried him some lengths beyond what the Duke could approve of. This nobleman's true character had been very well marked by Mr. Dryden before:

“The Muse's friend,
 Himself a Muse. In Sanadrin's debate,
 True to his prince, but not a slave of state.”

Abs. and Achit.

Our author was more happy: he was honoured very young with his friendship, and it continued till his death in all the circumstances of a familiar esteem.—P.

John Sheffield, Marquis of Normanby and Duke of Buckinghamshire, died 1720. Wentworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon, author of “An Essay on Translated Verse,” died 1684. William Walsh, “a flimsy and frigid writer” (*Warton*), died 1709.

With manners generous as his noble blood ;
 To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,
 And every author's merit, but his own.
 Such late was Walsh, the Muse's judge and
 friend,
 Who justly knew to blame or to commend : 730
 To failings mild, but zealous for desert ;
 The clearest head, and the sincerest heart.
 This humble praise, lamented shade ! receive,
 This praise at least a grateful Muse may give :
 The Muse, whose early voice you taught to
 sing, 735
 Prescribed her heights, and pruned her tender
 wing,
 (Her guide now lost) no more attempts to rise,
 But in low numbers short excursions tries :
 Content, if hence the unlearn'd their wants
 may view,
 The learn'd reflect on what before they knew ;
 Careless of censure, nor too fond of fame ; 741
 Still pleased to praise, yet not afraid to blame ;
 Averse alike to flatter, or offend ;
 Not free from faults, nor yet too vain to mend.



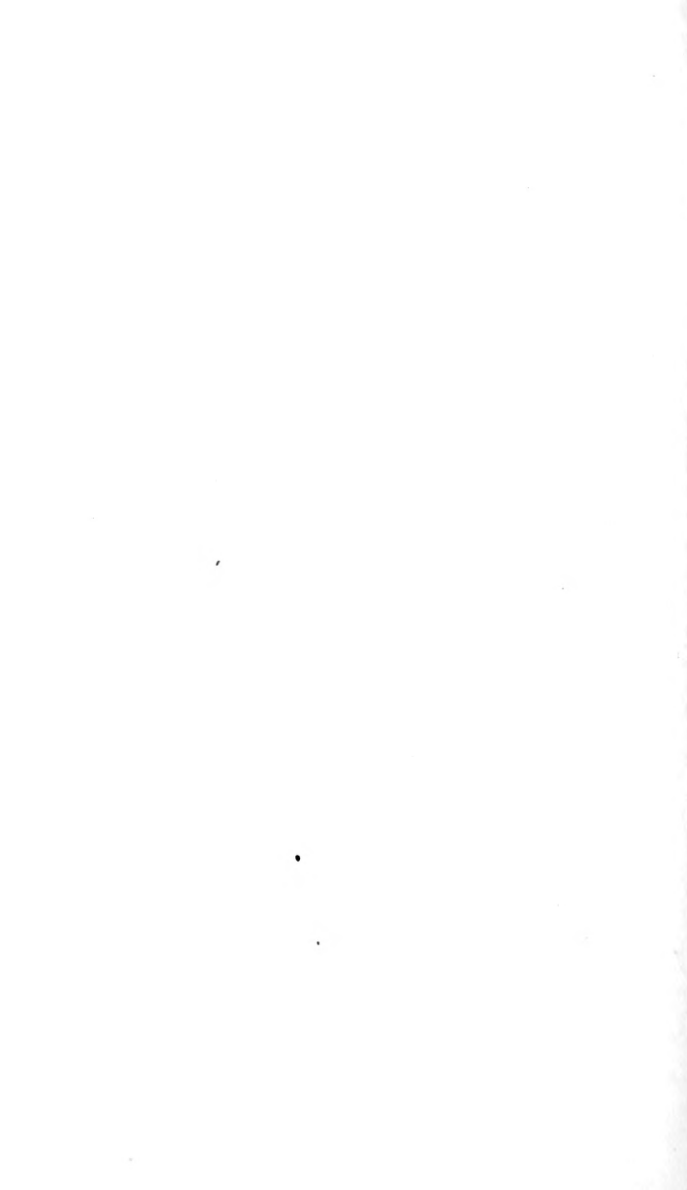
THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

AN

HEROI-COMICAL POEM.


WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1712.





DEDICATION
TO
MRS. ARABELLA FERMOR.

MADAM,

T will be in vain to deny that I have some regard for this piece, since I dedicate it to you. Yet you may bear me witness, it was intended only to divert a few young ladies, who have good sense and good humour enough to laugh not only at their sex's little unguarded follies, but at their own. But as it was communicated with the air of a secret, it soon found its way into the world. An imperfect copy having been offered to a bookseller, you had the good nature for my sake to consent to the publication of one more correct: this I was forced to before I had executed half my design, for the machinery was entirely wanting to complete it.

The machinery, Madam, is a term invented by the critics, to signify that part which the Deities, Angels, or Demons, are made to act in a Poem. For the ancient Poets are in one respect like many modern ladies: let an action be never so trivial in itself, they always make it appear of the utmost importance. These machines I determined to raise on a very new and odd foundation, the Rosicrucian doctrine of Spirits.

I know how disagreeable it is to make use of hard words before a lady; but 'tis so much the concern of a Poet to have his works understood,

and particularly by your sex, that you must give me leave to explain two or three difficult terms.

The Rosicrucians are a people I must bring you acquainted with. The best account I know of them is in a French book called *Le Comte de Gabalis*, which, both in its title and size, is so like a novel, that many of the fair sex have read it for one by mistake. According to these gentlemen, the four elements are inhabited by Spirits which they call *Sylphs*, *Gnomes*, *Nymphs*, and *Salamanders*. The Gnomes, or Demons of Earth, delight in mischief; but the Sylphs, whose habitation is in the air, are the best conditioned creatures imaginable. For they say, any mortals may enjoy the most intimate familiarities with these gentle Spirits, upon a condition very easy to all true adepts, an inviolate preservation of chastity.

As to the following Cantos, all the passages of them are as fabulous as the vision at the beginning, or the transformation at the end, except the loss of your hair, which I always mention with reverence. The human persons are as fictitious as the airy ones; and the character of Belinda, as it is now managed, resembles you in nothing but in beauty.

If this Poem had as many graces as there are in your person, or in your mind, yet I could never hope it should pass through the world half so uncensured as you have done. But let its fortune be what it will, mine is happy enough, to have given me this occasion of assuring you that I am, with the truest esteem,

Madam,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

A. POPE.



THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.¹

Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos ;
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.—MART.

CANTO I.

WHAT dire offence from amorous causes
springs,
What mighty contests rise from
trivial things,

I sing—this verse to Caryll, Muse! is due :
This, ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view ;
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise, 5
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.

Say what strange motive, goddess! could
compel
A well-bred lord to assault a gentle belle ?
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord? 10

¹ The first sketch of this poem was written in less than a fortnight's time in 1711, in two cantos, and so printed in a miscellany without the name of the author. The machines were not inserted till a year after, when he published it, and annexed the dedication.—P.

The original poem was published in 1712, and the revised form not till 1714. For an account of the origin of this poem see the Memoir, p. xiv.

In tasks so bold, can little men engage,
 And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage?
 Sol through white curtains shot a timorous
 ray,
 And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day :
 Now lapdogs give themselves the rousing shake,
 And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake : 16
 Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knocked the
 ground,
 And the pressed watch returned a silver sound.
 Belinda still her downy pillow pressed,¹
 Her guardian Sylph prolonged the balmy rest :
 'Twas he had summoned to her silent bed 21
 The morning dream that hovered o'er her head ;
 A youth more glittering than a birth-night beau,²
 (That even in slumber caused her cheek to glow)
 Seemed to her ear his winning lips to lay, 25
 And thus in whispers said, or seemed to say :
 " Fairest of mortals, thou distinguished care
 Of thousand bright inhabitants of air !
 If e'er one vision touched thy infant thought,
 Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught ;
 Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen, 31
 The silver token, and the circled green,
 Or virgins visited by angel-powers,
 With golden crowns and wreaths of heavenly
 flowers ; 34
 Hear and believe ! thy own importance know,
 Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
 Some secret truths, from learned pride con-
 cealed,
 To maids alone and children are revealed :

¹ All the verses from hence to the end of this Canto were added afterwards.—P.

² Alluding to the custom of wearing exceptionally fine dresses at court on the birthdays of any of the royal family.

What though no credit doubting wits may give ?
 The fair and innocent shall still believe. 40
 Know, then, unnumbered spirits round thee fly,
 The light militia of the lower sky :
 These, though unseen, are ever on the wing,
 Hang o'er the box, and hover round the ring.
 Think what an equipage thou hast in air, 45
 And view with scorn two pages and a chair.
 As now your own, our beings were of old,
 And once inclosed in woman's beauteous mould ;
 Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
 From earthly vehicles to these of air. 50
 Think not, when woman's transient breath is
 fled,
 That all her vanities at once are dead ;
 Succeeding vanities she still regards,
 And though she plays no more, o'erlooks the
 cards.

Her joy in gilded chariots, when alive,¹ 55
 And love of ombre, after death survive.
 For when the fair in all their pride expire,
 To their first elements their souls retire :
 The sprites of fiery termagants in flame
 Mount up, and take a salamander's name. 60
 Soft yielding minds to water glide away,
 And sip, with nymphs, their elemental tea.
 The graver prude sinks downward to a gnome,
 In search of mischief still on earth to roam.
 The light coquettes in sylphs aloft repair, 65
 And sport and flutter in the fields of air.

“ Know further yet : whoever fair and chaste
 Rejects mankind, is by some sylph embraced :
 For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease

¹ “ Quæ gratia currûm
 Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
 Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repostos.”
Virg. Æn. vi.—P.

Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.
 What guards the purity of melting maids, 71
 In courtly balls, and midnight masquerades,
 Safe from the treacherous friend, the daring
 spark,

The glance by day, the whisper in the dark, 74
 When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,
 When music softens, and when dancing fires?
 'Tis but their Sylph, the wise celestials know,
 Though Honour is the word with men below.

“Some nymphs there are, too conscious of
 their face, 79

For life predestined to the gnome's embrace.
 These swell their prospects and exalt their
 pride,

When offers are disdained and love denied:
 Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,
 While peers and dukes, and all their sweeping
 train,

And garters, stars, and coronets appear, 85
 And in soft sounds 'Your Grace' salutes their
 ear.

'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
 Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,
 Teach infant-cheeks a bidden blush to know,
 And little hearts to flutter at a beau. 90

“Oft, when the world imagine women stray,
 The Sylphs through mystic mazes guide their
 way,

Through all the giddy circle they pursue,
 And old impertinence expel by new.
 What tender maid but must a victim fall 95
 To one man's treat, but for another's ball?
 When Florio speaks, what virgin could with-
 stand,

If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?
 With varying vanities, from every part,

They shift the moving toy-shop of their heart ;
 Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots
 sword-knots strive, 101
 Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches
 drive.

This erring mortals levity may call ;
 Oh blind to truth ! the Sylphs contrive it all.

“ Of these am I, who thy protection claim,
 A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name. 106
 Late, as I ranged the crystal wilds of air,
 In the clear mirror of thy ruling star¹
 I saw, alas ! some dread event impend,
 Ere to the main this morning sun descend ; 110
 But Heaven reveals not what, or how, or
 where :

Warned by the Sylph, oh, pious maid, beware !
 This to disclose is all thy guardian can :
 Beware of all, but most beware of man ! ”

He said : when Shock, who thought she slept
 too long, 115
 Leaped up, and waked his mistress with his
 tongue.

’Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,
 Thy eyes first opened on a billet-doux ;
 Wounds, charms, and ardours, were no sooner
 read,

But all the vision vanished from thy head. 120
 And now, unveiled, the toilet stands dis-
 played,

Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
 First, robed in white, the nymph intent adores,
 With head uncovered, the cosmetic powers.
 A heavenly image in the glass appears, 125
 To that she bends, to that her eye she rears ;
 The inferior priestess, at her altar’s side,

¹ The language of the Platonists, the writers of the intelligible world of Spirits, &c.—P.

Trembling begins the sacred rites of pride.
 Unnumbered treasures ope at once, and here
 The various offerings of the world appear; 130
 From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
 And decks the goddess with the glittering
 spoil.

This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
 And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.
 The tortoise here and elephant unite, 135
 Transformed to combs, the speckled and the
 white.

Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
 Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billets-doux.
 Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
 The fair each moment rises in her charms, 140
 Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,¹
 And calls forth all the wonders of her face:
 Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
 And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes. 144
 The busy Sylphs surround their darling care,¹
 These set the head, and those divide the hair,
 Some fold the sleeve, while others plait the
 gown;
 And Betty's praised for labours not her own.

CANTO II.

NOT with more glories, in the ethereal plain,
 The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
 Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams

¹ Ancient traditions of the Rabbis relate, that several of the fallen angels became amorous of women, and particularize some; amongst the rest, Asael, who lay with Naamah, the wife of Noah, or of Ham; and who, continuing impenitent, still presides over the women's toilets. Bereshi Rabbi in Genes. vi. 2.—P.

Launched on the bosom of the silver Thames.¹
 Fair nymphs and well-dressed youths around
 her shone, 5

But every eye was fixed on her alone.
 On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
 Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.
 Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
 Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those: 10
 Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;
 Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
 Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
 And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
 Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
 Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to
 hide: 16

If to her share some female errors fall,
 Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all.
 This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
 Nourished two locks, which graceful hung
 behind 20

In equal curls, and well conspired to deck,
 With shining ringlets, the smooth ivory neck.
 Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
 And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
 With hairy springes we the birds betray, 25
 Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
 Fair tresses man's imperial race insnare,
 And beauty draws us with a single hair.

The adventurous Baron the bright locks
 admired; ^{outsid} 2
 He saw, he wished, and to the prize aspired. 30

¹ From hence the poem continues, in the first edition, to ver. 46.

“The rest the winds dispersed in empty air;”
 all after, to the end of this Canto, being additional.
 —P.

² The Baron was Lord Petre.

Resolved to win, he meditates the way,
 By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;
 For when success a lover's toil attends,
 Few ask, if fraud or force attained his ends.

For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implored
 Propitious Heaven, and every power adored; 36
 But chiefly Love—to Love an altar built,
 Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.
 There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves;
 And all the trophies of his former loves: 40
 With tender billets-doux he lights the pyre,
 And breathes three amorous sighs to raise the
 fire.

Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
 Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:
 The powers gave ear, and granted half his
 prayer, 45
 The rest, the winds dispersed in empty air.

But now secure the painted vessel glides,
 The sunbeams trembling on the floating tides;
 While melting music steals upon the sky,
 And softened sounds along the waters die; 50
 Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
 Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay.
 All but the Sylph—with careful thoughts
 oppressed,

The impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
 He summons straight his denizens of air; 55
 The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:
 Soft o'er the shrouds ærial whispers breathe,
 That seemed but zephyrs to the train beneath,
 Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
 Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;
 Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight, 61
 Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light.

¹ Virg. Æn. xi. 798.—P.

Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,
Dipped in the richest tincture of the skies, 65
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes;
While every beam new transient colours flings,
Colours that change whene'er they wave their
wings.

Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
Superior by the head, was Ariel placed; 70
His purple pinions opening to the sun,
He raised his azure wand, and thus begun:

“Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give
ear!

Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Demons, hear!
Ye know the spheres, and various tasks as-
signed 75

By laws eternal to the aërial kind.

Some in the fields of purest ether play,
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.

Some guide the course of wandering orbs on
high,

Or roll the planets through the boundless
sky. 80

Some, less refined, beneath the moon's pale
light

Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
Or suck the mists in grosser air below,
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main, 85
Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain.

Others on earth o'er human race preside,
Watch all their ways, and all their actions
guide:

Of these the chief the care of nations own,
And guard with arms divine the British throne.

“Our humbler province is to tend the fair, 91
Not a less pleasing, though less glorious care;

His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,
 Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his
 sins, 125

Be stopped in vials, or transfixed with pins;
 Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie,
 Or wedged whole ages in a bodkin's eye:
 Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
 While clogged he beats his silken wings in
 vain: 130

Or alum styptics with contracting power
 Shrink his thin essence like a rivelled flower:
 Or, as Ixion fixed, the wretch shall feel
 The giddy motion of the whirling mill,
 In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow, 135
 And tremble at the sea that froths below!"

He spoke: the spirits from the sails descend;
 Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;
 Some thrid the mazy ringlets of her hair;
 Some hang upon the pendants of her ear: 140
 With beating hearts the dire event they wait,
 Anxious, and trembling for the birth of Fate.

CANTO III.

CLOSE by those meads, for ever crowned with
 flowers,¹

Where Thames with pride surveys his rising
 towers,

There stands a structure of majestic frame,
 Which from the neighbouring Hampton takes
 its name.

Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom 5
 Of foreign tyrants, and of nymphs at home;

¹ The first edition continues from this line to ver. 24 of this canto.—P.

Here thou, great ANNA! whom three realms
 obey,
 Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes
 tea.

Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,
 To taste awhile the pleasures of a Court; 10
 In various talk the instructive hours they
 passed,
 Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;
 One speaks the glory of the British Queen,
 And one describes a charming Indian screen;
 A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes; 15
 At every word a reputation dies.
 Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,
 With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.

Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,
 The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray; 20
 The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
 And wretches hang that jury-men may dine;
 The merchant from the Exchange returns in
 peace,
 And the long labours of the toilet cease.¹
 Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites, 25
 Burns to encounter two adventurous knights,
 At ombre singly to decide their doom;
 And swells her breast with conquests yet to
 come.

Straight the three bands prepare in arms to
 join,
 Each band the number of the sacred nine. 30
 Soon as she spreads her hand, the aërial guard
 Descend, and sit on each important card:

¹ All that follows of the game at ombre was added since the first edition, till ver. 105, which connected thus:

‘Sudden the board with cups and spoons is crowned.’
 -P.

First Ariel perched upon a Matadore,
 Then each according to the rank they bore ;
 For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race, 35
 Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.

Behold, four Kings in majesty revered,
 With hoary whiskers and a forky beard ;
 And four fair Queens, whose hands sustain a
 flower,

The expressive emblem of their softer power ; 40
 Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band ;
 Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand ;
 And parti-coloured troops, a shining train,
 Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.

The skilful nymph reviews her force with
 care : 45

Let Spades be trumps ! she said, and trumps
 they were.¹

Now move to war her sable Matadores,²
 In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.
 Spadillio first, unconquerable lord !

Led off two captive trumps, and swept the
 board. 50

As many more Manillio forced to yield,
 And marched a victor from the verdant field.
 Him Basto followed ; but his fate more hard
 Gained but one trump and one plebeian card.

¹ The usual number of players at ombre was three, and one of them, called the "ombre," played against the other two. The ombre decided which suit should be trumps.

² The whole idea of this description of a game at ombre is taken from Vida's description of a game at chess, in his poem entitled *Scacchia Ludus*.—*Warburton*. Spadillio is the ace of spades ; manillio is either the two or the seven of trumps, according to whether trumps are black or red ; basto is the ace of clubs. These are the three highest cards in ombre, all ranking as trumps, and called matadores. Pam, the highest card at loo, is the knave of clubs.

With his broad sabre next, a chief in years, 55
 The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,
 Puts forth one manly leg, to sight revealed,
 The rest, his many-coloured robe concealed.
 The rebel Knave, who dares his prince engage,
 Proves the just victim of his royal rage. 60
 Ev'n mighty Pam, that kings and queens o'er-
 threw,

And mowed down armies in the fights of Loo,
 Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
 Falls undistinguished by the victor Spade!

Thus far both armies to Belinda yield; 65
 Now to the Baron fate inclines the field.

His warlike Amazon her host invades,
 The imperial consort of the crown of Spades.
 The Club's black tyrant first her victim died,
 Spite of his haughty mien, and barbarous pride:
 What boots the regal circle on his head, 71
 His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread;
 That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
 And of all monarchs only grasps the globe?

The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace!
 The embroidered King who shows but half his
 face, 76
 And his refulgent Queen, with powers com-
 bined,

Of broken troops an easy conquest find.
 Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,
 With throngs promiscuous strow the level
 green. 80

Thus when dispersed a routed army runs,
 Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,
 With like confusion different nations fly,
 Of various habit, and of various dye,
 The pierced battalions disunited fall, 85
 In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them
 all.

The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the Queen of
Hearts.

At this, the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look; 90
She sees, and trembles at the approaching ill,
Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.¹

And now (as oft in some distempered state)
On one nice trick depends the general fate:
An Ace of Hearts steps forth: the King
unseen 95
Lurked in her hand, and mourned his captive
Queen:

He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.
The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky;
The walls, the woods, and long canals reply. 100

Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate.
Sudden these honours shall be snatched away,
And cursed for ever this victorious day.

For lo! the board with cups and spoons is
crowned,² 105
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round:
On shining altars of Japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze:
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoking
tide: 110

At once they gratify their scent and taste,
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.
Straight hover round the fair her airy band;
Some, as she sipped, the fuming liquor fanned,

¹ Codille, a term used when the opponents made more tricks than the ombre, who then lost the pool.

² From hence, the first edition continues to ver. 134.—P.

Some o'er her lap their careful plumes displayed,
 Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.
 Coffee (which makes the politician wise,
 And see through all things with his half-shut
 eyes)

Sent up in vapours to the Baron's brain
 New stratagems, the radiant lock to gain. 115
 Ah cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late,
 Fear the just gods, and think of Scylla's fate! ¹
 Changed to a bird, and sent to flit in air,
 She dearly pays for Nisus' injured hair!

But when to mischief mortals bend their
 will, 125

How soon they find fit instruments of ill!
 Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace
 A two-edged weapon from her shining case:
 So ladies in romance assist their knight,
 Present the spear, and arm him for the fight. 130
 He takes the gift with reverence, and extends
 The little engine on his fingers' ends;
 This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
 As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her
 head.²

Swift to the lock a thousand Sprites repair, 135
 A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the
 hair;
 And thrice they twitched the diamond in her
 ear;

¹ Vide Ovid, *Metam.* viii.—P.

² In the first edition it was thus:

“As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head,
 First he expands the glittering forfex wide
 To inclose the lock; then joins it to divide:
 The meeting points the sacred hair dis sever
 From the fair head, for ever and for ever.”

All that is between was added afterwards.—P.

Thrice she looked back, and thrice the foe drew
near.

Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought
The close recesses of the virgin's thought: 140
As on the nosegay in her breast reclined,
He watched the ideas rising in her mind,
Sudden he viewed, in spite of all her art,
An earthly lover lurking at her heart.

Amazed, confused, he found his power expired,
Resigned to fate, and with a sigh retired. 146

The peer now spreads the glittering forfex
wide,

To inclose the lock; now joins it, to divide.
Ev'n then, before the fatal engine closed,
A wretched Sylph too fondly interposed; 150
Fate urged the shears, and cut the Sylph in
twain,

(But airy substance soon unites again) ¹
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

Then flashed the living lightning from her
eyes, 155

And screams of horror rend the affrighted skies.
Not louder shrieks to pitying heaven are cast,
When husbands or when lap-dogs breathe their
last;

Or when rich china vessels, fallen from high,
In glittering dust and painted fragments lie! 160

“Let wreaths of triumph now my temples
twine,

(The victor cried,) the glorious prize is mine!
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,²

¹ See Milton, lib. vi., 330, of Satan cut asunder by the Angel Michael.—P.

² “Dum jugamontis aper, fluvios dum piscis amabit,
Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt.”—*Virg.*—P.

Or in a coach and six the British fair,
 As long as Atalantis shall be read,¹ 165
 Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed,
 While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
 When numerous wax-lights in bright order
 blaze,
 While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,
 So long my honour, name, and praise shall
 live!" 170

What time would spare, from steel receives its
 date,
 And monuments, like men, submit to fate!
 Steel could the labour of the gods destroy,
 And strike to dust the imperial towers of Troy;
 Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,
 And hew triumphal arches to the ground. 176
 What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hairs
 should feel²
 The conquering force of unresisted steel?

CANTO IV.

BUT anxious cares the pensive nymph oppressed,³
 And secret passions laboured in her breast.
 Not youthful kings in battle seized alive,
 Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,
 Not ardent lovers robbed of all their bliss, 5

¹ A famous book written about that time by a woman: full of court and party scandal; and in a loose effeminacy of style and sentiment, which well suited the debauched taste of the better vulgar.—*Warburton*. The author was Mrs. Mauley.

² "Ille quoque eversus mons est, &c.
 Quid faciant crines, cum ferro talia cedant?"
Catull. de Com. Berenices.—P.

³ "At regina gravi," &c.—*Virg. Æn. iv. l.*—P.

Not ancient ladies when refused a kiss,
 Not tyrants fierce that nurepending die,
 Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinned awry,
 E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,
 As thou, sad virgin! for thy ravished hair. 10

For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs with-
 drew,¹

And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
 Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,
 As ever sullied the fair face of light,
 Down to the central earth, his proper scene, 15
 Repaired to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen.

Swift on his sooty³ pinions flits the Gnome,
 And in a vapour reached the dismal dome.
 No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,
 The dreaded east is all the wind that blows. 20
 Here in a grotto, sheltered close from air,
 And screened in shades from day's detested
 glare,

She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,
 Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.

Two handmaids wait the throne: alike in
 place, 25

But differing far in figure and in face.
 Here stood Ill-nature like an ancient maid,
 Her wrinkled form in black and white arrayed;
 With store of prayers, for mornings, nights, and
 noons,

Her hand is filled; her bosom with lampoons.

There Affectation, with a sickly mien, 31
 Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,

¹ All the lines from hence to the 94th verse, that describe the House of Spleen, are not in the first edition; instead of them followed only these:

“While her racked soul repose and peace requires,
 The fierce Thalestris fans the rising fires,”

and continued at the 94th verse of this Canto.—P.

Practised to lisp, and hang the head aside,
 Faints into airs, and languishes with pride,
 On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe, 35
 Wrapped in a gown, for sickness, and for show.
 The fair ones feel such maladies as these,
 When each new night-dress gives a new disease.

A constant vapour o'er the palace flies ;
 Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise ; 40
 Dreadful, as hermits' dreams in haunted shades,
 Or bright, as visions of expiring maids.
 Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,
 Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires :
 Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes, 45
 And crystal domes, and angels in machines.

Unnumbered throngs on every side are seen,
 Of bodies changed to various forms by Spleen.
 Here living tea-pots stand, one arm held out,
 One bent ; the handle this, and that the spout :
 A pipkin there, like Homer's tripod walks ;¹ 51
 Here sighs a jar, and there a goose-pie talks :²
 Men prove with child, as powerful fancy works,
 And maids turned bottles call aloud for corks.

Safe passed the Gnome through this fantastic
 band, 55
 A branch of healing spleenwort in his hand.
 Then thus addressed the power : " Hail, way-
 ward Queen !

Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen ;
 Parent of vapours, and of female wit,
 Who give the hysteric, or poetic fit, 60
 On various tempers act by various ways,
 Make some take physic, others scribble plays ;
 Who cause the proud their visits to delay,

¹ See Hom. *Iliad*, xviii. of Vulcan's walking tripods.—P.

² Alludes to a real fact, a lady of distinction imagined herself in this condition.—P.

And send the godly in a pet to pray ; 64
 A nymph there is, that all thy power disdains,
 And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.
 But oh ! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a grace,
 Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,
 Like citron-waters matrons' cheeks inflame,
 Or change complexions at a losing game ; 70
 If e'er with airy horns I planted heads,
 Or rumpled petticoats, or tumbled beds,
 Or caused suspicion when no soul was rude,
 Or discomposed the head-dress of a prude,
 Or e'er to costive lap-dog gave disease, 75
 Which not the tears of brightest eyes could
 ease ;

Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin,
 That single act gives half the world the spleen."

The Goddess with a discontented air
 Seems to reject him, though she grants his
 prayer. 80

A wondrous bag with both her hands she binds,
 Like that where once Ulysses held the winds ;
 There she collects the force of female lungs,
 Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues.
 A vial next she fills with fainting fears, 85
 Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.
 The Gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,
 Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to
 day.

Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he
 found,¹

Her eyes dejected, and her hair unbound. 90
 Full o'er their heads the swelling bag he rent,
 And all the Furies issued at the vent.
 Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,
 And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.

¹ Thalestris was Mrs. Morley.

“ O wretched maid ! ” she spread her hands, and
 cried, 95
 (While Hampton’s echoes, “ Wretched maid ! ”
 replied)

“ Was it for this you took such constant care
 The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare ?
 For this your locks in paper durance bound ?
 For this with torturing irons wreathed around ?
 For this with fillets strained your tender head, 101
 And bravely bore the double loads of lead ?
 Gods ! shall the ravisher display your hair,
 While the fops envy and the ladies stare !
 Honour forbid ! at whose unrivalled shrine 105
 Ease, pleasure, virtue, all our sex resign.
 Methinks already I your tears survey,
 Already hear the horrid things they say,
 Already see you a degraded toast,
 And all your honour in a whisper lost ! 110
 How shall I, then, your helpless fame defend ?
 ’Twill then be infamy to seem your friend !
 And shall this prize, the inestimable prize,
 Exposed through crystal to the gazing eyes,
 And heightened by the diamond’s circling rays,
 On that rapacious hand for ever blaze ? 116
 Sooner shall grass in Hyde-park Circus grow,
 And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow ;
 Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall, 119
 Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all ! ”

She said : then raging to Sir Plume repairs,¹
 And bids her beau demand the precious hairs :
 (Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
 And the nice conduct of a clouded cane)
 With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,

¹ Sir Plume was Sir George Brown, Mrs. Morley’s brother : “ He was angry that the poet should make him talk nothing but nonsense ; and in truth one could not well blame him.”—*Warburton*.

He first the snuff-box opened, then the case, 126
 And then broke out—"My Lord, why, what
 the devil!

Z—ds! damn the lock! 'fore Gad, you must be
 civil!

Plague on't! 'tis past a jest—nay prithee, pox!
 Give her the hair"—he spoke, and rapped his
 box. 130

"It grieves me much (replied the peer again)
 Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain,
 But by this lock, this sacred lock, I swear,¹
 (Which never more shall join its parted hair;
 Which never more its honours shall renew, 135
 Clipped from the lovely head where late it
 grew)

That while my nostrils draw the vital air,
 This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear."
 He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread
 The long-contended honours of her head. 140

But Umbriel, hateful Gnome! forbears not
 so;²

He breaks the vial whence the sorrows flow.
 Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,
 Her eyes half languishing, half drowned in
 tears;

On her heaved bosom hung her drooping head,
 Which, with a sigh, she raised; and thus she
 said: 146

"For ever cursed be this detested day,
 Which snatched my best, my favourite curl
 away!

¹ In allusion to Achilles' oath in Homer, II. i.—P.

² These two lines are additional; and assign the cause of the different operation on the passions of the two ladies. The poem went on before without that distinction, as without any machinery, to the end of the Canto.—P.

Happy! ah ten times happy had I been,
 If Hampton-Court these eyes had never seen!
 Yet am not I the first mistaken maid, 151
 By love of courts to numerous ills betrayed.
 Oh had I rather unadmired remained
 In some lone isle, or distant northern land;
 Where the gilt chariot never marks the way, 155
 Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste bohea!
 There kept my charms concealed from mortal
 eye,
 Like roses that in deserts bloom and die.
 What moved my mind with youthful lords to
 roam?
 Oh had I stayed, and said my prayers at
 home! 160
 'Twas this the morning omens seemed to tell:
 Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box
 fell;
 The tottering china shook without a wind,
 Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most un-
 kind!
 A Sylph too warned me of the threats of Fate,
 In mystic visions, now believed too late! 166
 See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!
 My hands shall rend what ev'n thy rapine spares:
 These in two sable ringlets taught to break,
 Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck; 170
 The sister-lock now sits uncouth, alone,
 And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;
 Uncurled it hangs, the fatal shears demands,
 And tempts, once more, thy sacrilegious hands.
 Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize 175
 Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!"

CANTO V.

SHE said: the pitying audience melt in tears;
 But Fate and Jove had stopped the Baron's ears.
 In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,
 For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
 Not half so fixed the Trojan could remain, 5
 While Anna begged and Dido raged in vain.
 Then grave Clarissa graceful waved her fan;¹
 Silence ensued, and thus the nymph began:

“ Say, why are Beauties praised and honoured
 most,
 The wise man's passion, and the vain man's
 toast? 10
 Why decked with all that land and sea afford,
 Why angels called, and angel-like adored?
 Why round our coaches crowd the white-gloved
 beaux?
 Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?
 How vain are all these glories, all our pains, 15
 Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains;
 That men may say, when we the front-box grace,
 ‘ Behold the first in virtue as in face!’
 Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,
 Charmed the small-pox, or chased old age
 away; 20
 Who would not scorn what housewife's cares
 produce,
 Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?
 To patch, nay ogle, might become a saint,
 Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.

¹ A new character introduced in the subsequent editions, to open more clearly the moral of the poem, in a parody of the speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus in Homer.—P. The lines from verse 7 to 36 were added in the 1717 edition of the Works.

But since, alas ! frail beauty must decay, 25
 Curled or uncurled, since locks will turn to
 grey ;

Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
 And she who scorns a man, must die a maid ;
 What then remains, but well our power to use,
 And keep good-humour still, whate'er we lose ?
 And trust me, dear ! good-humour can prevail, 31
 When airs, and flights, and screams, and scold-
 ing fail.

Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll ;
 Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the
 soul."

So spoke the dame, but no applause ensued ;¹
 Belinda frowned, Thalestris called her prude. 36

" To arms, to arms !" the fierce virago cries,
 And swift as lightning to the combat flies.²

All side in parties, and begin the attack :
 Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones
 crack ; 40

Heroes' and heroines' shouts confusedly rise,
 And bass and treble voices strike the skies.

No common weapons in their hands are found,
 Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.

So when bold Homer makes the gods en-
 gage,³ 45

And heavenly breasts with human passions rage ;
 'Gainst Pallas, Mars ; Latona, Hermes arms ;
 And all Olympus rings with loud alarms :

¹ It is a verse frequently repeated in Homer after any speech :

"—So spoke—and all the heroes applauded."—P.

² From hence the first edition goes on to the conclusion, except a very few short insertions added to keep the machinery in view to the end of the poem.—P.

³ Homer, Il. xx.—P.

Jove's thunder roars, heaven trembles all
around,

Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps re-
sound: 50

Earth shakes her nodding towers, the ground
gives way,

And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!

Triumphant Umbriel on a sconce's height¹
Clapped his glad wings, and sate to view the
fight:

Propped on their bodkin spears, the Sprites
survey 55

The growing combat, or assist the fray.

While through the press enraged Thalestris
flies,

And scatters death around from both her eyes,

A beau and witling perished in the throng,

One died in metaphor, and one in song. 60

"O cruel nymph! a living death I bear,"

Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.

A mournful glance Sir Fopling upwards cast,
"Those eyes are made so killing"—was his
last.²

Thus on Mæander's flowery margin lies³ 65

The expiring swan, and as he sings he dies.

When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa
down,

Chloe stepped in, and killed him with a frown;

¹ These four lines added, for the reason before mentioned. Minerva, in like manner, during the battle of Ulysses with the suitors in the *Odyssey*, perches on a beam of the roof to behold it.—P.

² The words of a song in the Opera of "*Camilla*."—P.

³ "Sic ubi fata vocant, udis abjectus in herbis,
Ad vada Mæandri concinit albus olor."

Ov. Ep.—P.

She smiled to see the doughty hero slain,
 But, at her smile, the beau revived again. 70

Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,¹
 Weighs the men's wits against the lady's
 hair:

The doubtful beam long nods from side to
 side;

At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.

See fierce Belinda on the Baron flies, 75
 With more than usual lightning in her eyes:
 Nor feared the chief the unequal fight to try,
 Who sought no more than on his foe to die.

But this bold lord with manly strength endued,
 She with one finger and a thumb subdued: 80

Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,
 A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw;

The Gnomes direct, to every atom just,²

The pungent grains of titillating dust.

Sudden, with starting tears each eye o'erflows,
 And the high dome re-echoes to his nose. 86

"Now meet thy fate," incensed Belinda
 cried,

And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.

(The same, his ancient personage to deck,³

Her great-great-grandsire wore about his
 neck, 90

In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,
 Formed a vast buckle for his widow's gown:

Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,

The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;

Then in a bodkin graced her mother's hairs, 95

Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)

"Boast not my fall (he cried) insulting foe!

¹ Vide Homer, Il. viii. and Virg. Æn. xii.—P.

² These two lines added for the above reason.—P.

³ In imitation of the progress of Agamemnon's
 sceptre in Homer, Il. ii.—P.

Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.
 Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind :
 All that I dread is leaving you behind ! 100
 Rather than so, ah let me still survive,
 And burn in Cupid's flames—but burn alive."

"Restore the Lock!" she cries; and all
 around
 "Restore the Lock!" the vaulted roofs re-
 bound.

Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain 105
 Roared for the handkerchief that caused his
 pain.

But see how oft ambitious aims are crossed,
 And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost !
 The lock, obtained with guilt, and kept with
 pain,

In every place is sought, but sought in vain : 110
 With such a prize no mortal must be blessed,
 So Heaven decrees ! with Heaven who can con-
 test ?

Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
 Since all things lost on earth are treasured
 there.¹

There heroes' wits are kept in ponderous vases,
 And beaus' in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases. 116
 There broken vows, and death-bed alms are
 found,

And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound,
 The courtier's promises, and sick man's prayers,
 The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs, 120
 Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
 Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.

But trust the Muse—she saw it upward rise,
 Though marked by none but quick, poetic
 eyes:

¹ Vide Ariosto, Canto xxxiv.—P

(So Rome's great founder to the heavens with-
drew, 125

To Proculus alone confessed in view)
A sudden star, it shot through liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.¹
Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,
The heavens bespangling with dishevelled light.
The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,² 131
And pleased pursue its progress through the
skies.

This the beau monde shall from the Mall
survey,
And hail with music its propitious ray ;
This the blest lover shall for Venus take, 135
And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake.³
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless
skies,⁴

When next he looks through Galileo's eyes ;
And hence the egregious wizard shall foredoom
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome. 140

Then cease, bright nymph ! to mourn thy
ravished hair,
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere !
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast
Shall draw such envy as the lock you lost.
For after all the murders of your eye, 145

¹ " Flammiferumque trahens spatioso limite erinem
Stella micat."—*Ovid*.—P.

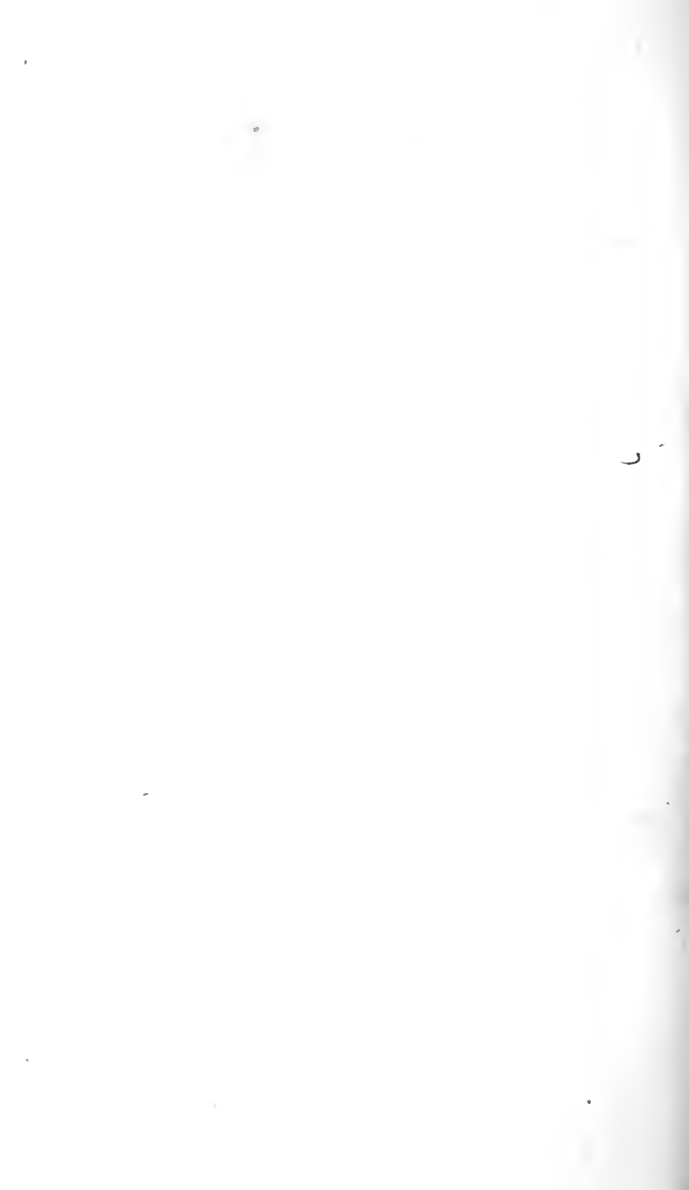
² These two lines added for the same reason, to
keep in view the machinery of the poem.—P.

³ Rosamond's lake was a small oblong piece of
water near the Pimlico gate of St. James's Park. It was
done away with about the middle of the last century.
—*Croker*.

⁴ John Partridge was a ridiculous star-gazer, who
in his almanacks every year never failed to predict
the downfall of the Pope, and the King of France,
then at war with the English.—P.

When, after millions slain, yourself shall die ;
When those fair suns shall set, as set they
 must,
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
This lock, the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name. 150

END OF VOL. I.







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