

# RIVERSIDE LITERATURE SERIES

## THE RAPE OF THE LOCK AN ESSAY ON MAN AND EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT

BY  
ALEXANDER POPE

EDITED BY  
HENRY W. BOYNTON



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AN ESSAY ON MAN  
AND  
EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT

BY

ALEXANDER POPE

*EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES*

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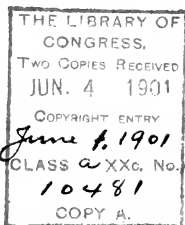
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## INTRODUCTION.

### I.

ALEXANDER POPE was born in London in 1688. He was the only son of parents who both came of respectable English stock. His father, a successful linen merchant, retired early from business, buying an estate at Binfield, on the edge of Windsor Forest. Here the family lived till 1716, when they removed to Chiswick, where a year later the father died. Soon afterwards Pope, then a man of note, leased the small estate at Twickenham, on which he lived till his death in 1744.

The Popes were Roman Catholics, and the boy was consequently debarred from public school and university; so that beyond the inferior instruction afforded by the small Catholic schools which he attended till his twelfth year, Pope had no formal education. At that age he had learned the rudiments of Greek, and could read Latin fluently, if not correctly. In the mean time, partly perhaps because he was thrown so much upon his own resources, his powers were already ripening. At twelve he wrote couplets which he afterwards inserted without change in the *Essay on Criticism*, and even in *The Dunciad*. The *Pastorals*, composed at sixteen, though conventional in conception and often mechanical in execution, contain passages in the poet's most mature and polished manner. With the *Essay on Criticism*, published five years later, Pope reached his maturity. Whatever development is to be found in his later work is the result of an increase in satirical power. His style was already formed.

At fourteen he learned to read French with some facility, but during the next five or six years seems to have given

most of the time not devoted to composition to the reading of English and Latin poets, Vergil, Statius, and Dryden being his favorites. For several years before the publication of the *Pastorals*, the manuscript was being circulated privately. Congreve, Garth, Wycherley, Walsh the critic, Halifax and Somers, eager patrons of letters, all predicted fame for the young author. In 1709 the little series was printed, and at once gave him a position which was strengthened greatly by the work of the years immediately following. The *Essay on Criticism*, published in 1711, was favorably noticed by Addison, as was *The Rape of the Lock*, which, in its simpler version, appeared a year later. The publication of the translations from Homer, the first instalment of which — the first four books of the *Iliad* — was published in 1715, brought Pope money enough to make him independent, and praise enough to satisfy even his hunger for approbation. The *Odyssey* was not completed till 1723. For his work in *Homer* he received nearly £9000, a small fortune in those days. In 1729 and the year following appeared three books of *The Dunciad*, and in 1739 the fourth book, the *Satires*, and the *Moral Essays*, including the *Essay on Man*. All of this mass of verse was written in the heroic couplets of which he had become master in boyhood; his latest work is marked by the same wit, conciseness, and hard brilliancy of finish which gained the attention and the praise of his earliest critics.

## II.

It may be doubted if Pope's lack of formal education has not been made too much of. He had no bent for accurate scholarship, nor was breadth and accuracy of scholarship an accomplishment of that age. Addison, whose literary career was preceded by a long period of university residence, knew very little of Greek literature, and had by no means a wide acquaintanceship with the literature of Rome. Yet scholarship in those days meant classical learning.

A far more potent factor in determining the conduct of Pope's life and the nature of his work lay in his bodily limitations. He was deformed from birth, stunted to dwarfishness, thin to emaciation, crooked and feeble so that he had to be stayed here and padded there; and at times subject to acute suffering. More serious than the physical inconveniences attending this condition was the morbid self-consciousness sure to be induced by deformity in one of the irritable family of poets. But the physical inconveniences in themselves were by no means small, especially as they affected his relations to other men. Masculine society in the eighteenth century laid no slight physical burden upon its members. Late hours and heavy drinking were more than the delicate constitution of Pope could endure. Consequently he was thrown back upon the companionship of women, always petted, always deferred to, always nursed. From such conditions might naturally develop the acid cleverness, the nervous brilliancy of the man Pope. We can expect from them no touch of the hearty, wholesome vigor which belonged, for example, to his master Dryden. As for emotion, we may look for the sharpness and intensity of prejudice rather than for the warmth and color of passion. Pope was not incapable of feeling; his affection for his mother was undoubtedly deep-rooted and genuine. But it is certain that neither deep passion for one nor broad sympathy for all was possible to the gifted valetudinarian. On the contrary, his keenest pleasure lay in the nursing of his vanity, and in the exercise of a certain petty virulence against those who had offended his self-esteem. Nor is he more profound in thought than in feeling. "He did not write because he thought, but thought in order to write," says M. Taine.

Pope numbered among his acquaintance all the prominent men of the time; that he had few friends was largely his own fault. His contemptuous scorn of inferiority exposed him to the hatred of minor men; to the favor and

liking of those whose opinion was of moment his road was open. Congreve gave him a gentlemanly hand of welcome; Addison and Steele praised him, and valued his few contributions to the *Spectator*. Against Addison presently Pope was able to reckon three several offences. He had preferred the pastorals of Philips; he disapproved of the changes in *The Rape of the Lock*. Finally, his disclaimer of Pope's officious and vulgar championship of *Cato* against the attacks of Dennis confirmed a grudge which years later found expression in the famous lines in the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*. Bolingbroke was a friend of whom he boasted, yet Pope did not hesitate to serve him shabbily in his turn. Arbuthnot claimed as much of his affection as any one, yet even he could not count upon the sincerity of the man who, it was said, "could hardly drink a cup of tea without a stratagem." With Swift his relations appear to have been unbroken, though at times strained. They wrote to each other regularly for years; from the savage dean Pope received much encouragement, especially in the writing of *The Dunciad*. Strange alliance of wasp and bloodhound, each venomous in his kind — for the good of the world!

There were two women, besides his mother, towards whom Pope showed some feeling. His relations with the one are known, to the other only surmised. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was a woman exceptional in her age rather than in her own right. It was an age remarkable for the frivolity of women, especially women of rank and fashion. The acquirements which brought fame then would pass unnoticed now, would have made her hardly exceptional in the reign of Elizabeth. A certain beauty, brilliancy in conversation, charm of manner, she must have had to command even a formal and half-fancied devotion from the cold-blooded Pope. Some such devotion he professed, and for years loaded its object with praises and attentions, literary and otherwise. The lady appears to have



been cool; willing to be flattered, but not willing to flatter in turn. In the end, some more obvious expression of her equable indifference stung the poet into one of his chill rages of malice. Thereafter he lost no chance to assail in prose and verse her personal appearance, her literary pretensions, her character; and when, as too often happened, she stooped to retort in kind, he received her with rounds of elegantly-balanced Billingsgate. Towards Martha Blount his feeling seems to have been more genuine, his relation to her faintly suggesting that of Swift to Stella. She belonged to one of the little circle of Catholic families in which Pope moved till success opened all circles to him. His early acquaintance with her ripened into an intimacy guarded, but real. He did not marry her, though there is a tradition that he offered her marriage shortly before his death. His feeling for her, whatever it was not, was certainly constant. To Martha Blount he wrote his tenderest lines, to her he bequeathed most of his property.

## III.

If, then, Pope was incapable of sustained thought or deep feeling, why is he still known as a great poet? Simply because he succeeded in doing one thing supremely well. He brought to the point of perfection a poetic instrument which, with all its limitations, is still unapproached in its own field. For elegance, for terseness, for antithetical force, for a sort of conventionalized grace, the Pope couplet is admirable; as the best thing of its kind, however little one may care for the kind, is always admirable. That Pope often forced it to improper uses is not the fault of the instrument. One cannot elicit harmony from a silver flute, no matter how neat its construction, how clear its tone. The service Pope did to English poetry was, on the whole, an ill one. Everybody found it possible to draw some sweetness from that little flute. The construction of heroic couplets became a mania. The eighteenth century

versifier collected them as his brother-connoisseur collected tulips ; and, oddly enough as it seems to us, found as ready a market for them.

A poem of Pope's is a collection of brilliant fragments. He kept a note-book full of clever distiches set down at random. Presently so many couplets are taken and classified, others are added, a title is found, and the world applauds. If we except *The Rape of the Lock* and possibly the *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, none of his poems can be called organic in structure. The patching is neatly done, but the result is patchwork. The *Essay on Man*, therefore, which most of his contemporaries considered his greatest work, appears to us a mosaic of cleverly phrased platitudes and epigrams. Many of the couplets have become proverbial ; the work as a whole cannot be taken seriously. "But the supposition is," says Lowell, "that in the *Essay on Man* Pope did not himself know what he was writing. He was only the condenser and epigrammatizer of Bolingbroke — a very fitting St. John for such a Gospel." It is to another and a less pretentious sort of work that we must turn to find the great versifier at his best.

*The Rape of the Lock* affords exactly the field in which Pope was fitted to excel. His artificiality, his sophistication, mar the Homer translations, at times almost to the point of burlesque. In place of the hearty surge and swing of the old pagan we are given the mincing neatness of a city-bred courtier. To illustrate the version properly we should have to picture Hector in ruffles and dress rapier, Achilles in a full-bottomed wig. It is these very qualities, on the other hand, which make the story of Belinda and her Baron a perfect thing of its kind. Here is the conventional society which Pope knew, and with which — however he might sneer at it — he really sympathized. The polished trivialities, the shallow gallantry, the hardly veiled coarseness of the London which Pope understood, are here to the life. And it is in this poem that we come closest to

the man himself. Depth of emotion, of imagination, of thought, are absent, and properly so. But here are the flashing wit, the ingenious fancy, the malicious innuendo, the epigrammatic thrust, which *are* Pope. The author of such a poem may be pitied, censured, disliked, but hardly despised or forgotten.



# THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

AN HEROI-COMICAL POEM.

Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos ;  
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.

MARTIAL.

TO MRS. ARABELLA FERMOR.

MADAM, —

It 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 humor 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 offer'd to a bookseller, you had the good-nature for my sake to consent to the publication of one more correct: This I was fore'd 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 't is 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 call'd *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. Accord-

ing to these gentlemen, the four elements are inhabited by Spirits, which they call Sylphs, Gnomes, Nymphs, and Salamanders. The Gnomes, or dæmons 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 Canto's, all the personages 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 would pass through the world half so uncensur'd 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.

## CANTO I.

WHAT dire offence from am'rous causes springs,  
 What mighty contests rise from trivial things,  
 I sing. This verse to CARYL, Muse! is due:  
 This, ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view:

3. Before Pope's successes in verse admitted him to the best society in England, he had moved in a small circle of Roman Catholic families in the immediate neighborhood of Windsor. To one of these families belonged Miss Arabella Fermor, the Belinda of *The Rape of the Lock*; to another, Lord Petre, called in the poem simply the Baron, the hero — or villain — of the story; and to a third belonged John Caryl. Lord Petre really stole a lock of Miss Fermor's hair, and some unpleasantness arose between the families in consequence. Caryl suggested to Pope that a humorous treatment of the incident in verse might help matters.

5 Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,  
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.

Say what strange motive, Goddess ! could compel  
A well-bred lord t' assault a gentle belle ?

O say what stranger cause, yet unexplor'd,  
10 Could make a gentle belle reject a lord ?

In tasks so bold, can little men engage,  
And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage ?

Sol thro' white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,  
And op'd those eyes that must eclipse the day ;

15 Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,  
And sleepless lovers just at twelve awake ;  
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,  
And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.

Belinda still her downy pillow prest,

20 Her guardian Sylph prolong'd the balmy rest :

'T was he had summon'd to her silent bed

The morning dream that hover'd o'er her head ;

A youth more glitt'ring than a Birth-night Beau,  
(That ev'n in slumber caused her cheek to glow)

25 Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay,

And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say :

“ Fairest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care  
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air !

If e'er one vision touch'd thy infant thought,

30 Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught —

Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,

The silver token, and the circled green,

Or virgins visited by Angel-pow'rs,

With golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly  
flow'rs —

23. Birth-night Beau, a fine gentleman such as might be seen at the state ball given on the anniversary of the royal birthday. — HALES.

- 35 Hear and believe ! thy own importance know,  
 Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.  
 Some secret truths, from learned pride conceal'd,  
 To maids alone and children are reveal'd.  
 What tho' no credit doubting Wits may give ?
- 40 The fair and innocent shall still believe.  
 Know, then, unnumber'd Spirits round thee fly,  
 The light militia of the lower sky :  
 These, tho' unseen, are ever on the wing,  
 Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.
- 45 Think what an equipage thou hast in air,  
 And view with scorn two pages and a chair.  
 As now your own, our beings were of old,  
 And once inclos'd in woman's beauteous mould ;  
 Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
- 50 From earthly vehicles to these of air.  
 Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,  
 That all her vanities at once are dead ;  
 Succeeding vanities she still regards,  
 And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.
- 55 Her joy in gilded chariots, when alive,  
 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
- 60 Mount up, and take a salamander's name.  
 Soft yielding minds to water glide away,  
 And sip, with nymphs, their elemental tea.

44. Box, at the opera. Ring, a "circus" or circular promenade, like that in Hyde Park.

54, 55.

" Quæ gratia currum  
 Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes  
 Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repositos."

*Æneid*, vi. — POPE.



The graver prude sinks downward to a Gnome,  
In search of mischief still on earth to roam.

65 The light coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,  
And sport and flutter in the fields of air.

“ Know further yet : whoever fair and chaste  
Rejects mankind, is by some Sylph embrac'd ;  
For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease

70 Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.

What guards the purity of melting maids,  
In courtly balls and midnight masquerades,  
Safe from the treach'rous friend, the daring spark,  
The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,

75 When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,  
When music softens, and when dancing fires ?

'T is but their Sylph, the wise celestials know,  
Tho' honor is the word with men below.

Some nymphs there are too conscious of their face,

80 For life predestin'd to the Gnome's embrace.

These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,  
When offers are disdain'd, and love deny'd ;  
Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,

While peers, and dukes, and all their sweeping  
train,

85 And garters, stars, and coronets appear,

And in soft sounds, 'Your Grace' salutes their  
ear.

'T is these that early taint the female soul,  
Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,  
Teach infant-cheeks a hidden blush to know,

90 And little hearts to flutter at a Beau.

“ Oft, when the world imagine women stray,  
The Sylphs thro' mystic mazes guide their way ;  
Thro' all the giddy circle they pursue,  
And old impertinence expel by new.

95 What tender maid but must a victim fall  
 To one man's treat, but for another's ball?  
 When Florio speaks what virgin could withstand,  
 If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?  
 With varying vanities, from ev'ry part,  
 100 They shift the moving toyshop of their heart;  
 Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-  
       knots strive,  
 Beaus banish beaus, and coaches coaches drive.  
 This erring mortals levity may call;  
 Oh blind to truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.  
 105 "Of these am I, who thy protection claim,  
 A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.  
 Late, as I rang'd the crystal wilds of air,  
 In the clear mirror of thy ruling star  
 I saw, alas! some dread event impend,  
 110 Ere to the main this morning sun descend,  
 But heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where.  
 Warn'd by the Sylph, oh pious maid, beware!  
 This to disclose is all thy guardian can:  
 Beware of all, but most beware of Man!"  
 115 He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too  
       long,  
 Leap'd up, and wak'd his mistress with his tongue.  
 'T was then, Belinda! if report say true,  
 Thy eyes first open'd on a billet-doux;  
 Wounds, charms, and ardors were no sooner read,  
 120 But all the vision vanish'd from thy head.  
       And now, unveil'd, the toilet stands display'd,  
 Each silver vase in mystic order laid.  
 First, rob'd in white, the nymph intent adores,  
 With head uncover'd, the cosmetic pow'rs.  
 125 A heav'nly image in the glass appears;

To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears.  
 Th' inferior priestess, at her altar's side,  
 Trembling begins the sacred rites of Pride.  
 Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here  
 130 The various off'rings of the world appear ;  
 From each she nicely culls with curious toil,  
 And decks the goddess with the glitt'ring spoil.  
 This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,  
 And all Arabia breathes from yonder box ;  
 135 The tortoise here and elephant unite,  
 Transform'd to combs, the speckled and the white.  
 Here files of pins extend their shining rows,  
 Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billet-doux.  
 Now awful beauty puts on all its arms ;  
 140 The Fair each moment rises in her charms,  
 Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,  
 And calls forth all the wonders of her face ;  
 Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,  
 And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.  
 145 The busy Sylphs surround their darling care,  
 These set the head, and those divide the hair,  
 Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown ;  
 And Betty 's prais'd for labors not her own.

## CANTO II.

NOT with more glories, in th' ethereal plain,  
 The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,  
 Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams  
 Launch'd on the bosom of the silver Thames.  
 5 Fair nymphs, and well-drest youths around her  
     shone,  
 But ev'ry 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,  
 10 Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those.  
 Favors 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.  
 15 Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,  
 Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide ;  
 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,  
 20 Nourish'd two locks, which graceful hung behind  
 In equal curls, and well conspir'd to deck  
 With shining ringlets the smooth iv'ry neck.  
 Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,  
 And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.  
 25 With hairy springes we the birds betray,  
 Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,  
 Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,  
 And beauty draws us with a single hair.

Th' advent'rous baron the bright locks admir'd ;  
 30 He saw, he wish'd, and to the prize aspir'd.  
 Resolv'd 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 attain'd his ends.

35 For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implor'd  
 Propitious heav'n, and ev'ry pow'r ador'd,  
 But chiefly Love — to Love an altar built

28. In allusion to those lines of Hudibras, applied to the same purpose, —

“ And tho' it be a two-foot trout,  
 'Tis with a single hair pull'd out.”

WARBURTON.

Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.  
 There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,  
 40 And all the trophies of his former loves ;  
 With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,  
 And breathes three am'rous sighs to raise the fire.  
 Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes  
 Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize :  
 45 The pow'rs gave ear, and granted half his pray'r ;  
 The rest the winds dispers'd in empty air.

But now secure the painted vessel glides,  
 The sun-beams trembling on the floating tides,  
 While melting music steals upon the sky,  
 50 And soften'd sounds along the waters die.  
 Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,  
 Belinda smil'd, and all the world was gay.  
 All but the Sylph ; with careful thoughts opprest,  
 Th' impending woe sat-heavy on his breast.  
 55 He summons strait his denizens of air ;  
 The lucid squadrons round the sails repair :  
 Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,  
 That seem'd but zephyrs to the train beneath.  
 Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,  
 60 Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold ;  
 Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,  
 Their fluid bodies half dissolv'd in light,  
 Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,  
 Thin glitt'ring textures of the filmy dew,  
 65 Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,  
 Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,  
 While ev'ry beam new transient colors flings,  
 Colors that change whene'er they wave their wings.

38. Clelie, one of the popular French romances of the period, appeared in ten volumes of 800 pages each. — HALES.

45. See *Æneid*, xi. 794, 795. — POPE.

Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,

70 Superior by the head, was Ariel plac'd ;

His purple pinions op'ning 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!

75 Ye know the spheres and various tasks assign'd

By laws eternal to th' ærial kind.

Some in the fields of purest ether play,

And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.

Some guide the course of wand'ring orbs on high,

80 Or roll the planets thro' the boundless sky.

Some, less refin'd, 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,

85 Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,

Or o'er the glebe distill 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,

90 And guard with arms divine the British Throne.

“Our humbler province is to tend the Fair,

Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious care ;

To save the powder from too rude a gale,

Nor let th' imprison'd essences exhale ;

95 To draw fresh colors from the vernal flow'rs ;

To steal from rainbows, ere they drop in show'rs

A brighter wash ; to curl their waving hairs,

Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs :

Nay, oft, in dreams invention we bestow,

100 To change a flounce, or add a furbelow.

74. This line evidently imitates Satan's address to his followers : —

“Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers.”

*Paradise Lost*, v. 601.

“This day black omens threat the brightest Fair  
 That e'er deserv'd a watchful spirit's care ;  
 Some dire disaster, or by force, or slight ;  
 But what, or where, the fates have wrapt in night.  
 105 Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,  
 Or some frail China jar receive a flaw ;  
 Or stain her honor, or her new brocade,  
 Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade,  
 Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball ;  
 110 Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must  
       fall.

Haste, then, ye spirits ! to your charge repair :  
 The flutt'ring fan be Zephyretta's care ;  
 The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign ;  
 And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine ;  
 115 Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite lock ;  
 Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.  
 To fifty chosen sylphs, of special note,  
 We trust the important charge, the petticoat :  
 Form a strong line about the silver bound,  
 120 And guard the wide circumference around.

“Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,  
 His post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,  
 Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his  
       sins :  
 Be stopp'd in vials, or transfix'd with pins,  
 125 Or plung'd in lakes of bitter washes lie,  
 Or wedg'd whole ages in a bodkin's eye ;  
 Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,  
 While clogg'd he beats his silken wings in vain ;  
 Or alum styptics with contracting pow'r  
 130 Shrink his thin essence like a rivell'd flow'r ;  
 Or, as Ixion fix'd, the wretch shall feel  
 The giddy motion of the whirling mill,

106. Pope repeats this anti-climax in canto iii. 159.

In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,  
And tremble at the sea that froths below!"

135 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.  
With beating hearts the dire event they wait,  
140 Anxious, and trembling for the birth of Fate.

## CANTO III.

CLOSE by those meads, for ever crown'd with flow'rs  
Where Thames with pride surveys his rising tow'rs,  
There stands a structure of majestic frame,  
Which from the neighb'ring Hampton takes its  
name.

5 Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom  
Of foreign tyrants, and of nymphs at home;  
Here thou, great ANNA! whom three realms obey,  
Dost sometimes counsel take — and sometimes tea.

Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,  
10 To taste awhile the pleasures of a court.  
In various talk th' instructive hours they past,  
Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;  
One speaks the glory of the British Queen,  
And one describes a charming Indian screen;  
15 A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;  
At ev'ry 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,  
20 The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;  
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,  
And wretches hang that jury-men may dine;



The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace,  
 And the long labors of the toilet cease.

25 Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,  
 Burns to encounter two advent'rous 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,

30 Each band the number of the sacred nine.  
 Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aërial guard  
 Descend, and sit on each important card :  
 First Ariel perch'd upon a Matadore,  
 Then each according to the rank they bore ;

35 For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,  
 Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.  
 Behold four Kings in majesty rever'd,  
 With hoary whiskers and a forky beard ;  
 And four fair Queens; whose hands sustain a flow'r,

40 Th' expressive emblem of their softer pow'r ;  
 Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,  
 Caps on their heads, and halberds in their hand ;  
 And particolor'd troops, a shining train,  
 Drawn forth to combat on the velvet plain.

45 The skilful nymph reviews her force with care ;  
 Let Spades be trumps ! she said ; and trumps they  
 were.

Now move to war her sable Matadores,  
 In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.  
 Spadillio first, unconquerable lord !

27. Ombre and Piquet were the fashionable card games of Queen Anne's day. Ombre was a game of Spanish origin. The three principal trumps were called Matadores ; these are, in the order of their rank, Spadillio, the ace of spades; Manillio, the deuce of clubs when trumps are black, the seven when they are red; and Basto, the ace of clubs.

- 50 Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.  
 As many more Manillio forced to yield,  
 And march'd a victor from the verdant field.  
 Him Basto follow'd, but his fate more hard  
 Gain'd but one trump and one plebeian card.
- 55 With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,  
 The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,  
 Puts forth one manly leg, to sight reveal'd ;  
 The rest his many-color'd robe conceal'd.  
 The rebel Knave, who dares his prince engage,
- 60 Proves the just victim of his royal rage.  
 Ev'n mighty Pam, that Kings and Queens o'er-  
 threw  
 And mow'd down armies in the fights of Loo,  
 Sad chance of war ! now destitute of aid,  
 Falls undistinguish'd by the victor Spade !
- 65 Thus far both armies to Belinda yield ;  
 Now to the Baron fate inclines the field.  
 His warlike amazon her host invades,  
 Th' imperial consort of the crown of Spades.  
 The Club's black tyrant first her victim dy'd,
- 70 Spite of his haughty mien, and barb'rous pride :  
 What boots the regal circle on his head,  
 His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread,  
 That long behind he trails his pompous robe,  
 And of all monarchs only grasps the globe ?
- 75 The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace ;  
 Th' embroider'd King who shows but half his face,  
 And his refulgent Queen, with pow'rs combin'd,  
 Of broken troops an easy conquest find.  
 Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,
- 80 With throngs promiscuous strow the level green.
61. Pam, the knave of clubs, is the highest card in the game  
 of Loo.

Thus when dispers'd 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 ;  
 85 The pierc'd battalions disunited fall,  
 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,  
 90 A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look ;  
 She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,  
 Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.  
 And now (as oft in some distemper'd state)  
 On one nice trick depends the gen'ral fate ;  
 95 An Ace of Hearts steps forth ; The King unseen  
 Lurk'd in her hand, and mourn'd 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 ;  
 100 The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.

Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,  
 Too soon dejected, and too soon elate,  
 Sudden these honors shall be snatch'd away,  
 And curs'd for ever this victorious day.  
 105 For lo! the board with cups and spoons is  
 crown'd,  
 The berries crackle, and the mill turns round ;  
 On shining altars of Japan they raise

92. Each has won four tricks. If the Baron, who is "defending the pool," takes more tricks than Belinda, who is "defending the game," he will "win the Codille."

107. Altars of Japan, small japanned tables.

The silver lamp ; the fiery spirits blaze :  
 From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,  
 110 While China's earth receives the smoking tide.  
 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 sipp'd, the fuming liquor fann'd,  
 115 Some o'er her lap their careful plumes display'd,  
 Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.  
 Coffee (which makes the politician wise,  
 And see thro' all things with his half-shut eyes)  
 Sent up in vapors to the Baron's brain  
 120 New stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain.  
 Ah cease, rash youth ! desist ere 't is too late,  
 Fear the just gods, and think of Scylla's fate !  
 Chang'd to a bird, and sent to flit in air,  
 She dearly pays for Nisus' injur'd hair !  
 125 But when to mischief mortals bend their will,  
 How soon they find fit instruments of ill !  
 Just then Clarissa drew with tempting grace  
 A two-edg'd weapon from her shining case ;  
 So ladies in romance assist their knight,  
 130 Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.  
 He takes the gift with rev'rence, 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.  
 135 Swift to the Lock a thousand sprites repair ;  
 A thousand wings by turns blow back the hair ;  
 And thrice they twitch'd the diamond in her ear ;  
 Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the foe drew  
 near.

Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought  
 140 The close recesses of the virgin's thought ;

As on the nosegay in her breast reclin'd,  
 He watch'd th' ideas rising in her mind,  
 Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her art,  
 An earthly lover lurking at her heart.

145 Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his pow'r expir'd,  
 Resign'd to fate, and with a sigh retir'd.

The Peer now spreads the glitt'ring forfex wide,  
 T' inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.

Ev'n then, before the fatal engine clos'd,

150 A wretched Sylph too fondly interpos'd;  
 Fate urg'd the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain  
 (But airy substance soon unites again):

The meeting points the sacred hair dissever  
 From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

155 Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,  
 And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.  
 Not louder shrieks to pitying heav'n are cast,  
 When husbands, or when lapdogs breathe their  
 last;

Or when rich China vessels fall'n from high,

160 In glittering dust and painted fragments lie!

“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,

Or in a coach and six the British Fair,

165 As long as Atalantis shall be read,

152. Pope, in a note, refers us to the following passage:—

“But the ethereal substance closed,  
 Not long divisible; and from the gash  
 A stream of nectarous humor issuing flow'd  
 Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed.”

*Paradise Lost*, vi. 330-334.

163-170.

“Dum juga montis aper, fluvios dum piscis amabit,  
 Semper honos nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt.”

VERGIL, *Eclogues*, v. 76, 77.

165. *Atalantis* was a notorious book written by a notorious woman, and consisted mainly of scandal and scurrility.

Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed ;  
 While visits shall be paid on solemn days,  
 When num'rous waxlights in bright order blaze ;  
 While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,  
 170 So long my honor, name, and praise shall live !  
 What Time would spare, from Steel receives its  
     date,  
 And monuments, like men, submit to fate !  
 Steel could the labor of the gods destroy,  
 And strike to dust th' imperial tow'rs of Troy ;  
 175 And hew triumphal arches to the ground.  
 What wonder then, fair nymph ! thy hair should  
     feel  
 The conqu'ring force of unresisted steel ? ”

## CANTO IV.

BUT anxious cares the pensive nymph oppress'd,  
 And secret passions labor'd in her breast.  
 Not youthful kings in battle seiz'd alive,  
 Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,  
 5 Not ardent lovers robb'd of all their bliss,  
 Not ancient ladies when refus'd a kiss,  
 Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,  
 Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinn'd awry,  
 E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,  
 10 As thou, sad virgin ! for thy ravish'd hair.  
     For, that sad moment when the Sylphs with-  
     drew

176, 177.

“ Quid faciant crines, cum ferro talia cedant ? ”

*Catullus, de Com. Berenice.* —WARD.“ At regina gravi jamdudum saucia cura  
 Vulnus alit venis, et caeco carpitur igni.”*Æneid, iv. 1.* —POPE.

And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,  
 Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,  
 As ever sullied the fair face of light,  
 15 Down to the central earth, his proper scene,  
 Repairs to search the gloomy cave of Spleen.  
 Swift on his sooty pinions flits the Gnome,  
 And in a vapor reach'd the dismal dome.  
 No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,  
 20 The dreaded East is all the wind that blows.  
 Here in a grotto, sheltered close from air,  
 And screen'd in shades from day's detested glare,  
 She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,  
 Pain at her side, and Megrims at her head.  
 25 Two handmaids wait the throne; alike in place,  
 But diff'ring far in figure and in face.  
 Here stood Ill-nature like an ancient maid,  
 Her wrinkled form in black and white array'd;  
 With store of pray'rs for mornings, nights, and  
 noons,  
 30 Her hand is fill'd; her bosom with lampoons.  
 There Affectation, with a sickly mien,  
 Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,  
 Practis'd to lisp and hang the head aside,  
 Faints into airs and languishes with pride;  
 35 On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,  
 Wrapt 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 vapor o'er the palace flies,  
 40 Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise,  
 Dreadful as hermit's dreams in haunted shades,

24. "The megrims" and "the vapors" (line 59) were fashionable terms in Queen Anne's day for what we call "the blues."

Or bright as visions of expiring maids :  
 Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,  
 Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires ;

45 Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,  
 And crystal domes, and angels in machines.

Unnumber'd throngs on every side are seen,  
 Of bodies chang'd to various forms by Spleen.  
 Here living Tea-pots stand, one arm held out,  
 50 One bent ; the handle this, and that the spout ;  
 A Pipkin there, like Homer's tripod, walks ;  
 Here sighs a Jar, and there a Goose-pie talks ;  
 Men prove with child, as pow'rful fancy works,  
 And maids turn'd bottles call aloud for corks.

55 Safe pass'd the Gnome thro' this fantastic band,  
 A branch of healing spleenwort in his hand.  
 Then thus address'd the pow'r — “ Hail, wayward  
 Queen !

Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen ;  
 Parent of Vapors, and of female wit,  
 60 Who give th' hysteric, or poetic fit ;  
 On various tempers act by various ways,  
 Make some take physic, others scribble plays ;  
 Who cause the proud their visits to delay,  
 And send the godly in a pet to pray !

65 A nymph there is, that all thy pow'r 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,  
 70 Or change complexions at a losing game ;

51. See *Iliad*, xviii. 372-381.

52. A goose-pie talks. Alludes to a real fact; a lady of distinction imagined herself in this condition. — POPE.

69. Citron-waters, spirits distilled from citron-rind.



Or caus'd suspicion when no soul was rude,  
 Or discompos'd the head-dress of a prude,  
 Or e'er to costive lapdog gave disease,  
 Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease,  
 75 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, tho' she grants his pray'r.  
 A wond'rous Bag with both her hands she binds,  
 80 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,  
 Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.  
 85 The Gnome rejoicing bears her gift away,  
 Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.

Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,  
 Her eyes dejected, and her hair unbound.  
 Full o'er their heads the swelling Bag he rent,  
 90 And all the furies issued at the vent.  
 Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,  
 And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.  
 "O wretched maid!" she spread her hands, and  
 cry'd,  
 (While Hampton's echoes "Wretched maid!"  
 replied,)

95 "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 tort'ring irons wreath'd around?  
 For this with fillets strain'd your tender head,  
 100 And bravely bore the double loads of lead?  
 Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,  
 While the fops envy, and the ladies stare?"

Honor forbid! at whose unrivall'd shrine  
 Ease, pleasure, virtue, all, our sex resign.  
 105 Methinks already I your tears survey,  
 Already hear the horrid things they say,  
 Already see you a degraded toast,  
 And all your honor in a whisper lost!  
 How shall I then your helpless fame defend?  
 110 'T will then be infamy to seem your friend!  
 And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,  
 Expos'd through crystal to the gazing eyes,  
 And heighten'd by the diamond's circling rays,  
 On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?  
 115 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,  
 Men, monkeys, lapdogs, parrots, perish all!"  
 She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,  
 120 And bids the 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,  
 He first the snuff-box open'd, then the case,  
 125 And thus broke out — "My Lord! why, what the  
 devil!  
 Zounds! damn the Lock! 'fore Gad, you must be  
 civil!  
 Plague on 't! 't is past a jest — nay prithee, pox!  
 Give her the hair" — he spoke, and rapp'd his box.

116. Within the sound of Bow-bells lay the least fashionable quarter, containing Grubstreet, and other bohemian haunts, as well as the dwellings of tradesmen.

119. Sir Plume, Sir George Brown. He was the only one of the party who took the thing seriously. He was angry that the poet should make him talk nothing but nonsense. — *WARBURTON*.  
 Thalestris (line 87) was Mrs. Morley, Sir George's sister.

"It grieves me much," reply'd the peer again,  
 130 "Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain ;  
 But by this Lock, this sacred Lock I swear,  
 (Which never more shall join its parted hair ;  
 Which never more its honors shall renew,  
 Clipp'd from the lovely head where late it grew,)  
 135 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 honors of her head.

But Umbriel, hateful Gnome ! forbears not so ;  
 140 He breaks the Vial whence the sorrows flow.  
 Then see ! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,  
 Her eyes half-languishing, half-drown'd in tears ;  
 On her heav'd bosom hung her drooping head,  
 Which, with a sigh, she rais'd ; and thus she said :  
 145 "For ever curs'd be this detested day,  
 Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite curl away !  
 Happy ! ah ten times happy had I been,  
 If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen !  
 Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,  
 150 By love of courts to num'rous ills betray'd.  
 Oh had I rather unadmir'd remain'd  
 In some lone isle, or distant northern land,  
 Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,  
 Where none learn Ombre, none e'er taste Bohea !  
 155 There kept my charms conceal'd from mortal eye,  
 Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.  
 What mov'd my mind with youthful lords to roam ?  
 Oh had I stay'd, and said my pray'rs at home !  
 'T was this, the morning omens seem'd to tell :  
 160 Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell ;  
 The tottering china shook without a wind ;  
 Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind !  
 A Sylph too warn'd me of the threats of fate,

In mystic visions, now believ'd too late!  
 165 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;  
 The sister lock now sits uncouth, alone,  
 170 And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;  
 Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal shears demands,  
 And tempts once more thy sacrilegious hands.  
 Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize  
 Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!"

## CANTO V.

SHE said: the pitying audience melt in tears;  
 But Fate and Jove had stopp'd the Baron's ears.  
 In vain Thalestris with reproach assails;  
 For who can move when fair Belinda fails?  
 5 Not half so fix'd the Trojan could remain,  
 While Anna begg'd and Dido rag'd in vain.  
 Then grave Clarissa graceful wav'd her fan;  
 Silence ensu'd, and thus the nymph began:  
 "Say, why are beauties prais'd and honor'd most,  
 10 The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?  
 Why deck'd with all that land and sea afford,  
 Why angels call'd, and angel-like ador'd?  
 Why round our coaches crowd the white-glov'd  
 beaux?  
 Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?  
 15 How vain are all these glories, all our pains,  
 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,

- 20 Charm'd the small-pox, or chas'd old age away ;  
 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.
- 25 But since, alas ! frail beauty must decay ;  
 Curl'd or uncurl'd, since locks will turn to gray ;  
 Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,  
 And she who scorns a man, must die a maid ;  
 What then remains but well our pow'r to use,
- 30 And keep good-humor still whate'er we lose ?  
 And trust me, dear ! good-humor can prevail,  
 When airs, and flights, and screams, and scolding  
     fail.

Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll ;  
 Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul."

- 35 So spoke the dame, but no applause ensu'd ;  
 Belinda frowned, Thalestris call'd her prude.  
 "To arms, to arms !" the fierce virago cries,  
 And swift as lightning to the combat flies.  
 All side in parties, and begin th' attack ;
- 40 Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack ;  
 Heroes' and heroines' shouts confus'dly rise,  
 And bass, and treble voices strike the skies.  
 No common weapons in the hands are found ;  
 Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.
- 45 So when bold Homer makes the gods engage,  
 And heav'nly breasts with human passions rage ;  
 'Gainst Pallas, Mars ; Latona, Hermes arms ;

35. It is a verse frequently repeated in Homer after any speech : —

"So spoke —, and all the heroes applauded." — POPE.

45. See Homer, *Iliad*, xx. — POPE.

And all Olympus rings with loud alarms ;  
 Jove's thunder roars, heav'n trembles all around ;  
 50 Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound ;  
 Earth shakes her nodding tow'rs, the ground gives  
 way,

And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day !

Triumphant Umbriel, on a sconce's height,  
 Clapp'd his glad wings, and sate to view the fight.  
 55 Propp'd on their bodkin spears, the sprites survey  
 The growing combat, or assist the fray.

While thro' the press enrag'd Thalestris flies,  
 And scatters death around from both her eyes,  
 A beau and witling perish'd in the throng ;  
 60 One died in metaphor, and one in song.

“ O cruel nymph ! a living death I bear,”  
 Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.  
 A mournful glance Sir Fopling upward cast ;  
 “ Those eyes are made so killing ” — was his last.  
 65 Thus on Mæander's flow'ry margin lies  
 Th' expiring swan, and as he sings he dies.

When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,  
 Chloe stepp'd in, and kill'd him with a frown ;  
 She smil'd to see the doughty hero slain,  
 70 But, at her smile, the beau reviv'd again.

Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,  
 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.

53. Minerva in like manner, during the battle of Ulysses with  
 the suitors, perches on a beam of the roof to behold it. — POPE.  
 65.

“ Sic ubi fata vocant, udis abjectus in herbis,  
 Ad vada Mæandri concinit albus olor.”

Ovid, *Epistle*, vii. 2. — POPE.

71. See Homer, *Iliad*, viii., and Vergil, *Æneid*, xii. — POPE.

75 See, fierce Belinda on the Baron flies,  
 With more than usual lightning in her eyes ;  
 Nor fear'd the chief th' unequal fight to try,  
 Who sought no more than on his foe to die.  
 But this bold lord, with manly strength endu'd,  
 80 She with one finger and a thumb subdu'd :  
 Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,  
 A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw ;  
 The Gnomes direct, to ev'ry atom just,  
 The pungent grains of titillating dust.  
 85 Sudden with starting tears each eye o'erflows,  
 And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.

“ Now meet thy fate,” incens'd Belinda cry'd,  
 And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.

(The same, his ancient personage to deck,

90 Her great-great-grandsire wore about his neck,  
 In three seal-rings ; which after, melted down,  
 Form'd a vast buckle for his widow's gown ;  
 Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,  
 The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew ;  
 95 Then in a bodkin grac'd her mother's hairs,  
 Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)

“ Boast not my fall,” he cried, “ insulting foe !

Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.

Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind :

100 All that I dread is leaving you behind !

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 rebound.

105 Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain

Roar'd for the handkerchief that caus'd his pain.

89. In imitation of the progress of Agamemnon's sceptre in Homer, *Iliad*, ii. — POPE.

But see how oft ambitious aims are cross'd,  
 And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!  
 The Lock, obtain'd with guilt, and kept with pain,  
 110 In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain.

With such a prize no mortal must be blest,  
 So heav'n decrees! with heav'n who can contest?

Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,  
 Since all things lost on earth are treasur'd there.  
 115 There heroes' wits are kept in pond'rous vases,  
 And beaux in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases.  
 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 pray'rs,  
 120 The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,  
 Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,  
 Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.

But trust the Muse — she saw it upward rise,  
 Tho' mark'd by none but quick poetic eyes;  
 125 (So Rome's great founder to the heav'ns withdrew,  
 To Proculus alone confess'd in view)  
 A sudden star, it shot thro' liquid air,  
 And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.  
 Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,  
 130 The heav'ns bespangling with dishevel'd light.  
 The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,  
 And pleas'd pursue its progress thro' the skies.

This the beau monde shall from the Mall survey,  
 And hail with music its propitious ray.  
 135 This the blest lover shall for Venus take,  
 And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake;

113. See Ariosto, canto xxxiv. — POPE.

128.

“Flaminiferumque trahens spatioso limite crinem  
 Stella micat.”

Ovid, *Metam.*, xv. 849, 850. — POPE.



This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,  
When next he looks thro' Galileo's eyes ;  
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom  
140 The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.

Then cease, bright nymph ! to mourn thy ravish'd  
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 :  
145 For after all the murders of your eye,  
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,  
150 And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

137. 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. — POPE.

Partridge was the butt of Swift's famous hoax in 1707. See Macaulay's *Essay on Addison*.

# AN ESSAY ON MAN

TO H. ST. JOHN LORD BOLINGBROKE.

## THE DESIGN.

HAVING proposed to write some pieces on Human Life and Manners, such as, to use my Lord Bacon's expression, come home to men's business and bosoms, I thought it more satisfactory to begin with considering Man in the abstract, his nature and his state; since to prove any moral duty, to enforce any moral precept, or to examine the perfection or imperfection of any creature whatsoever, it is necessary first to know what condition and relation it is placed in, and what is the proper end and purpose of its being.

The science of Human Nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a few clear points: there are not many certain truths in this world. It is therefore in the anatomy of the mind as in that of the body; more good will accrue to mankind by attending to the large, open, and perceptible parts, than by studying too much such finer nerves and vessels, the conformations and uses of which will forever escape our observation. The disputes are all upon these last, and, I will venture to say, they have less sharpened the wits than the hearts of men against each other, and have diminished the practice more than advanced the theory of morality. If I could flatter myself that this essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a temperate, yet not inconsistent, and a short, yet not imperfect, system of ethics.

This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons. The one will appear obvious;

that principles, maxims, or precepts so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards. The other may seem odd, but is true: I found I could express them more shortly this way than in prose itself; and nothing is more certain, than that much of the force as well as grace of arguments or instructions depends on their conciseness. I was unable to treat this part of my subject more in detail, without becoming dry and tedious; or more poetically, without sacrificing perspicuity to ornament, without wandering from the precision, or breaking the chain of reasoning. If any man can unite all these, without diminution of any of them, I freely confess he will compass a thing above my capacity.

What is now published is only to be considered as a general Map of Man, marking out no more than the greater parts, their extent, their limits, and their connection, but leaving the particular to be more fully delineated in the charts which are to follow. Consequently, these Epistles, in their progress (if I have health and leisure to make any progress) will be less dry, and more susceptible of poetical ornament. I am here only opening the fountains, and clearing the passage. To deduce the rivers, to follow them in their course, and to observe their effects, may be a task more agreeable.

#### ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE I.

*Of the Nature and State of Man, with Respect to the Universe.*

Of Man in the abstract — I. That we can judge only with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the relations of systems and things, verse 17, etc. II. That Man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a being suited to his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the general order of things, and conformable to ends and relations to him unknown, verse 35, etc. III. That it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in

the present depends, verse 77, etc. IV. The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of Man's error and misery. The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice of his dispensations, verse 113, etc. V. The absurdity of conceiting himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world which is not in the natural, verse 131, etc. VI. The unreasonableness of his complaints against Providence, while on the one hand he demands the perfections of the angels, and on the other the bodily qualifications of the brutes; though, to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree would render him miserable, verse 173, etc. VII. That throughout the whole visible world, a universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to Man. The gradations of sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that Reason alone countervails all the other faculties, verse 207, etc. VIII. How much farther this order and subordination of living creatures may extend, above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation, must be destroyed, verse 233, etc. IX. The extravagance, madness, and pride of such a desire, verse 259, etc. X. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state, verse 281, etc., to the end.

### EPISTLE I.

AWAKE, my ST. JOHN! leave all meaner things  
 To low ambition and the pride of kings.  
 Let us, since life can little more supply  
 Than just to look about us and to die,  
 Expatriate free o'er all this scene of man;

1. Henry St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke (1678-1751), was the most intimate friend of Pope's later years. The themes treated in the *Essay on Man* had been much discussed between them; it is, indeed, the shallow and self-centred philosophy of Bolingbroke which supplies the substance of Pope's argument.

A mighty maze! but not without a plan;  
 A wild, where weeds and flowers promiscuous shoot;  
 Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.  
 Together let us beat this ample field,  
 10 Try what the open, what the covert yield;  
 The latent tracts, the giddy heights, explore,  
 Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar;  
 Eye Nature's walks, shoot Folly as it flies,  
 And catch the manners living as they rise;  
 15 Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;  
 But vindicate the ways of God to man.

I. Say first, of God above or man below,  
 What can we reason but from what we know?  
 Of man, what see we but his station here,  
 20 From which to reason, or to which refer?  
 Through worlds unnumber'd though the God be  
     known,  
 'T is ours to trace him only in our own.  
 He, who through vast immensity can pierce,  
 See worlds on worlds compose one universe,  
 25 Observe how system into system runs,  
 What other planets circle other suns,  
 What varied being peoples every star,  
 May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.  
 But of this frame, the bearings and the ties,  
 30 The strong connections, nice dependencies,  
 Gradations just, has thy pervading soul  
 Looked through, or can a part contain the whole?  
 Is the great chain that draws all to agree,

6. "The last verse, as it stood in the original editions, was —

'A mighty maze of walks without a plan;'

and perhaps this came nearer Pope's real opinion than the verse he substituted for it." — LOWELL.

29. This frame, the universe.

And drawn supports, upheld by God or thee?

35 II. Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou  
find,

Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?

First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,

Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less?

Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made

40 Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade!

Or ask of yonder argent fields above

Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove!

Of systems possible, if 't is confest

That wisdom infinite must form the best,

45 Where all must full or not coherent be,

And all that rises rise in due degree,

Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 't is plain

There must be somewhere such a rank as Man:

And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)

50 Is only this, if God has placed him wrong?

Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,

May, must be right, as relative to all.

In human works, though labor'd on with pain,

A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;

55 In God's, one single can its end produce;

Yet serves to second too some other use.

So Man, who here seems principal alone,

Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,

Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;

60 'T is but a part we see, and not a whole.

When the proud steed shall know why man restrains

His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;

When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,

Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god;

42. Satellites has four syllables, as in the Latin.

64. Apis was the sacred bull of Egypt.

65 Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend  
 His actions', passions', being's, use and end ;  
 Why doing, suff'ring, check'd, impell'd ; and why  
 This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault ;  
 70 Say rather man's as perfect as he ought :  
 His knowledge measur'd to his state and place,  
 His time a moment, and a point his space.  
 If to be perfect in a certain sphere,  
 What matter soon or late, or here or there ?

75 The blest to-day is as completely so,  
 As who began a thousand years ago.

III. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of  
 fate,

All but the page prescrib'd, their present state :  
 From brutes what men, from men what spirits  
 know :

80 Or who could suffer being here below ?  
 The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,  
 Had he thy reason, would he skip and play ?  
 Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,  
 And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.

85 Oh blindness to the future ! kindly giv'n,  
 That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n :  
 Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,  
 A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,  
 Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,

90 And now a bubble burst, and now a world.

Hope humbly then ; with trembling pinions soar ;  
 Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore.  
 What future bliss he gives not thee to know,  
 But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.

95 Hope springs eternal in the human breast ;  
 Man never is, but always to be, blest.

The soul, uneasy, and confin'd from home,  
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind  
100 Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;  
His soul proud Science never taught to stray  
Far as the solar walk or milky way;  
Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,  
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;  
105 Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,  
Some happier island in the watery waste.  
Where slaves once more their native land behold,  
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.  
To be, contents his natural desire;  
110 He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;  
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,  
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

IV. Go, wiser thou! and in thy scale of sense,  
Weigh thy opinion against Providence;  
115 Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such,  
Say, Here he gives too little, there too much!  
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,  
Yet cry, If man's unhappy, God's unjust;  
If man alone engross not Heav'n's high care,  
120 Alone made perfect here, immortal there:  
Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,  
Rejudge his justice, be the God of God.  
In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies;  
All quit their sphere and rush into the skies!  
125 Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,  
Men would be angels, angels would be Gods.  
Aspiring to be Gods if angels fell,

102. The solar walk is the sun's orbit. Pope cites in this connection "the ancient opinion that the souls of the just went thither."



Aspiring to be angels men rebel :  
 And who but wishes to invert the laws  
 130 Of order, sins against the Eternal Cause.

V. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,  
 Earth for whose use, Pride answers, "'T is for  
 mine !

For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,  
 Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r ;  
 135 Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew  
 The juice nectareous and the balmy dew ;  
 For me the mine a thousand treasures brings ;  
 For me health gushes from a thousand springs ;  
 Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise ;  
 140 My footstool earth, my canopy the skies !"

But errs not Nature from this gracious end,  
 From burning suns when livid deaths descend,  
 When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep  
 Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep ?  
 145 " No," 't is reply'd, " the first Almighty Cause  
 Acts not by partial but by gen'ral laws :  
 Th' exceptions few ; some change since all began ;  
 And what created perfect ?" — Why then man ?  
 If the great end be human happiness,  
 150 Then Nature deviates ; and can man do less ?  
 As much that end a constant course requires  
 Of show'rs and sunshine, as of man's desires :  
 As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,  
 As men forever temp'rate, calm, and wise.  
 155 If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's  
 design,  
 Why then a Borgia or a Catiline ?

156. Cæsar Borgia, a natural son of Pope Alexander VI., and one of the most infamous characters in history. Catiline was the author of the Roman conspiracy made famous by Sallust and Cicero.

Who knows but he, whose hand the lightning forms,  
 Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms,  
 Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,  
 160 Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?  
 From pride, from pride our very reas'ning springs;  
 Account for moral, as for natural things:  
 Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?  
 In both, to reason right is to submit.  
 165 Better for us, perhaps, it might appear,  
 Were there all harmony, all virtue here;  
 That never air or ocean felt the wind;  
 That never passion discompos'd the mind.  
 But all subsists by elemental strife;  
 170 And passions are the elements of life.  
 The gen'ral order, since the whole began,  
 Is kept in nature, and is kept in man.

VI. What would this man? Now upward will  
 he soar,  
 And little less than angel, would be more!  
 175 Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears,  
 To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.  
 Made for his use, all creatures if he call,  
 Say what their use, had he the pow'rs of all?  
 Nature to these without profusion kind,  
 180 The proper organs, proper pow'rs assign'd;  
 Each seeming want compensated of course,  
 Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force:  
 All in exact proportion to the state;  
 Nothing to add, and nothing to abate;

160. Alexander the Great was saluted by the priests of the Libyan Jupiter Ammon as the son of their god.

170. See this subject extended in Epistle II., from verse 100 to 122. — POPE.

174. See Psalm viii. 5.

185 Each beast, each insect happy in its own :  
 ' Is Heav'n unkind to man, and man alone ?  
 Shall he alone, whom rational we call,  
 Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all ?  
 The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find),  
 190 Is not to act or think beyond mankind ;  
 No powers of body or of soul to share,  
 But what his nature and his state can bear.  
 Why has not man a microscopic eye ?  
 For this plain reason, man is not a fly.  
 195 Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,  
 To inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n ?  
 Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,  
 To smart and agonize at every pore ?  
 Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,  
 200 Die of a rose in aromatic pain ?  
 If Nature thunder'd in his opening ears,  
 And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,  
 How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still  
 The whisp'ring zephyr and the purling rill !  
 205 Who finds not Providence all good and wise,  
 Alike in what it gives, and what denies ?  
 VII. Far as creation's ample range extends,  
 The scale of sensual, mental powers ascends.  
 Mark how it mounts to man's imperial race,  
 210 From the green myriads in the peopled grass ;  
 What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,  
 The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam :  
 Of smell, the headlong lioness between,  
 And hound sagacious on the tainted green :

213. The manner of the lion's hunting . . . is this : at their first going out in the night-time, they set up a loud roar, and then listen to the noise made by the beasts in their flight, pursuing them by the ear, and not by the nostril. — POPE.

- 215 Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,  
 To that which warbles through the vernal wood!  
 The spider's touch how exquisitely fine!  
 Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:  
 In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true  
 220 From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew?  
 How instinct varies in the grov'ling swine,  
 Compar'd, half-reas'ning elephant, with thine!  
 'Twi'x't that and reason, what a nice barrier!  
 Forever sep'rate, yet forever near!  
 225 Remembrance and reflection, how ally'd;  
 What thin partitions sense from thought divide;  
 And middle natures, how they long to join,  
 Yet never pass th' insuperable line!  
 Without this just gradation, could they be  
 230 Subjected, these to those, or all to thee?  
 The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,  
 Is not thy Reason all these pow'rs in one?  
 VIII. See, through this air, this ocean, and this  
 earth,  
 All matter quick, and bursting into birth.  
 235 Above, how high progressive life may go!  
 Around, how wide! how deep extend below!  
 Vast chain of being! which from God began,  
 Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,  
 Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,  
 240 No glass can reach; from infinite to thee,  
 From thee to nothing. / On superior pow'rs  
 Were we to press, inferior might on ours:  
 Or in the full creation leave a void,  
 Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:  
 245 From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,  
 Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.  
 And if each system in gradation roll

Alike essential to the amazing Whole,  
 The least confusion but in one, not all  
 250 That system only, but the Whole must fall.  
 Let earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,  
 Planets and suns run lawless through the sky ;  
 Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,  
 Being on being wreck'd, and world on world ;  
 255 Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod,  
 And Nature tremble to the throne of God !  
 All this dread Order break — for whom ? for thee ?  
 Vile worm ! — Oh ! madness ! pride ! impiety !

IX. What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,  
 260 Or hand, to toil, aspir'd to be the head ?  
 What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd  
 To serve mere engines to the ruling mind ?  
 Just as absurd for any part to claim  
 To be another in this gen'ral frame ;  
 265 Just as absurd to mourn the tasks or pains  
 The great directing Mind of all ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
 Whose body Nature is, and God the soul ;  
 That, chang'd through all, and yet in all the same,  
 270 Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame,  
 Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
 Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,  
 Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent ;  
 275 Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,  
 As full, as perfect in a hair as heart ;  
 As full, as perfect in vile man that mourns,  
 As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns :

259. See 1 Corinthians xii. 15–21.

278. The rapt seraph, alluding to the name seraphim, signifying *burners*. — WARBURTON.

To him no high, no low, no great, no small ;

280 He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

X. Cease then, nor Order imperfection name :

Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.

Know thy own point: this kind, this due degree

Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.

285 Submit: in this or any other sphere,

Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear ;

Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,

Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.

All nature is but art unknown to thee ;

290 All chance, direction which thou canst not see ;

All discord, harmony not understood ;

All partial evil, universal good ;

And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,

One truth is clear, *Whatever is, is right.*

#### ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE II.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with Respect to Himself, as an Individual.*

I. The business of Man not to pry into God, but to study himself. His middle nature: his powers and frailties, verses 1 to 19. The limits of his capacity, verse 19, etc. II. The two principles of Man, Self-love and Reason, both necessary, verses 53, etc. Self-love the stronger, and why, verse 67, etc. Their end the same, verse 81, etc. III. The Passions, and their use, verses 93 to 130. The predominant passion, and its force, verses 132 to 160. Its necessity, in directing men to different purposes, verse 165, etc. Its providential use, in fixing our principle, and ascertaining our virtue, verse 177. IV. Virtue and Vice joined in our mixed nature; the limits near, yet the things separate and evident: what is the office of Reason, verses 203 to 216. V. How odious Vice in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it, verse 217. VI. That, however, the ends of Providence and general good are answered in our passions and imperfections,

verse 238, etc. How usefully these are distributed to all orders of men, verse 241. How useful they are to Society, verse 251. And to individuals, verse 263. In every state, and every age of life, verse 273, etc.

## EPISTLE II.

I. KNOW then thyself, presume not God to scan :  
 The proper study of mankind is Man.  
 Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,  
 A being darkly wise and rudely great :  
 5 With too much knowledge for the Skeptic side,  
 With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,  
 He hangs between ; in doubt to act, or rest ;  
 In doubt to deem himself a god or beast ;  
 In doubt his mind or body to prefer ;  
 10 Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err ;  
 Alike in ignorance, his-reason such,  
 Whether he thinks too little or too much :  
 Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd ;  
 Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd ;  
 15 Created half to rise, and half to fall ;  
 Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all ;  
 Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd ;  
 The glory, jest, and riddle of the world !  
 Go, wondrous creature ; mount where science  
 guides,  
 20 Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides ;  
 Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,  
 Correct old Time, and regulate the sun ;  
 Go, soar with Plato to th' empyreal sphere,

5-6. The Skeptics "always considered and never discovered;" the Stoics held that nothing was of account but duty.

22. This alludes to Sir Isaac Newton's Grecian Chronology. —  
 WARBURTON.

To the first good, first perfect, and first fair ;  
 25 Or tread the mazy round his foll'wers trod,  
 And quitting sense call imitating God ;  
 As Eastern priests in giddy circles run,  
 And turn their heads to imitate the sun.  
 Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule —  
 30 Then drop into thyself, and be a fool !

Superior beings, when of late they saw  
 A mortal man unfold all Nature's law,  
 Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,  
 And show'd a *Newton*, as we show an ape,  
 35 Could he, whose rules the rapid comet bind,  
 Describe or fix one movement of his mind ?  
 Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,  
 Explain his own beginning or his end ?  
 Alas ! what wonder ! Man's superior part  
 40 Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art ;  
 But when his own great work is but begun,  
 What Reason weaves, by Passion is undone.

Trace science, then, with modesty thy guide ;  
 First strip off all her equipage of pride ;  
 45 Deduct what is but vanity or dress,  
 Or learning's luxury, or idleness,  
 Or tricks to show the stretch of human brain,  
 Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain ;  
 Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts  
 50 Of all our vices have created arts ;  
 Then see how little the remaining sum,  
 Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come !

II. Two principles in human nature reign ;  
 Self-love to urge, and Reason to restrain ;  
 55 Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,  
 Each works its end to move or govern all :  
 And to their proper operation still  
 Ascribe all good ; to their improper, ill.



Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul ;  
 60 Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.  
 Man, but for that, no action could attend,  
 And, but for this, were active to no end :  
 Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,  
 To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot ;  
 65 Or, meteor-like, flame lawless thro' the void,  
 Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

Most strength the moving principle requires ;  
 Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires :  
 Sedate and quiet, the comparing lies,  
 70 Form'd but to check, deliberate, and advise.  
 Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh ;  
 Reason's at distance and in prospect lie :  
 That sees immediate good by present sense ;  
 Reason, the future and the consequence.  
 75 Thicker than arguments, temptations throng,  
 At best more watchful this, but that more strong.  
 The action of the stronger to suspend,  
 Reason still use, to reason still attend.  
 Attention, habit and experience gains ;  
 80 Each strengthens Reason, and Self-love restrains.

Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,  
 More studious to divide than to unite ;  
 And grace and virtue, sense and reason split,  
 With all the rash dexterity of wit.  
 85 Wits, just like fools, at war about a name,  
 Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.  
 Self-love and Reason to one end aspire,

59. Acts, actuates.

71-74. From Bacon: "The affections carry even an appetite to good, as reason doth. The difference is, that the affection beholdeth merely the present; reason beholdeth the future and sum of time." — BOWLES.

Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire ;  
 But greedy that, its object would devour,  
 90 This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r :  
 Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,  
 Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

III. Modes of Self-love the passions we may call ;  
 'T is real good, or seeming, moves them all :  
 95 But since not every good we can divide,  
 And Reason bids us for our own provide,  
 Passions, though selfish, if their means be fair,  
 List under Reason, and deserve her care ;  
 Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,  
 100 Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name.

In lazy apathy let Stoics boast  
 Their virtue fixed : 't is fixed as in a frost ;  
 Contracted all, retiring to the breast ;  
 But strength of mind is Exercise, not Rest :  
 105 The rising tempest puts in act the soul,  
 Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.  
 On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,  
 Reason the card, but Passion is the gale ;  
 Nor God alone in the still calm we find,  
 110 He mounts the storms, and walks upon the wind.

Passions, like elements, though born to fight,  
 Yet, mix'd and soften'd, in his work unite :  
 These 't is enough to temper and employ ;  
 But what composes man, can man destroy ?  
 115 Suffice that Reason keep to Nature's road,  
 Subject, compound them, follow her and God.  
 Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure's smiling train,  
 Hate, Fear, and Grief, the family of Pain,  
 These, mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd,  
 120 Make and maintain the balance of the mind :

The lights and shades, whose well-accorded strife  
Gives all the strength and color of our life.

Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes ;  
And when in act they cease, in prospect rise :

125 Present to grasp, and future still to find,

The whole employ of body and of mind.

All spread their charms, but charm not all alike ;

On diff'rent senses diff'rent objects strike ;

Hence diff'rent passions more or less inflame,

130 As strong or weak the organs of the frame ;

And hence one Master-passion in the breast,

Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

As man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,  
Receives the lurking principle of death ;

135 The young disease, that must subdue at length,

Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his  
strength :

So, cast and mingled with his very frame,

The mind's disease, its ruling passion, came ;

Each vital humor which should feed the whole,

140 Soon flows to this, in body and in soul :

Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,

As the mind opens, and its functions spread,

Imagination plies her dang'rous art,

And pours it all upon the peccant part.

145 Nature its mother, Habit is its nurse ;

Wit, spirit, faculties, but make it worse ;

Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r ;

As Heav'n's bless'd beam turns vinegar more sour.

We, wretched subjects, though to lawful sway,

150 In this weak queen some fav'rite still obey ;

Ah ! if she lend not arms as well as rules,

What can she more than tell us we are fools ?

Teach us to mourn our nature, not to mend ;

A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend !  
 155 Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade  
 The choice we make, or justify it made ;  
 Proud of an easy conquest all along,  
 She but removes weak passions for the strong.  
 So, when small humors gather to a gout,  
 160 The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.  
 Yes, Nature's road must ever be preferr'd ;  
 Reason is here no guide, but still a guard ;  
 'Tis hers to rectify, not overthrow,  
 And treat this passion more as friend than foe :  
 165 A mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends,  
 And sev'ral men impels to sev'ral ends :  
 Like varying winds by other passions toss'd,  
 This drives them constant to a certain coast.  
 Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,  
 170 Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease ;  
 Through life 't is follow'd, even at life's expense ;  
 The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,  
 The monk's humility, the hero's pride,  
 All, all alike find Reason on their side.  
 175 The Eternal Art, educing good from ill,  
 Grafts on this passion our best principle :  
 'T is thus the mercury of man is fix'd,  
 Strong grows the virtue with his nature mix'd ;  
 The dross cements what else were too refin'd,  
 180 And in one int'rest body acts with mind.  
 As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,  
 On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear,  
 The surest virtues thus from passions shoot,  
 Wild Nature's vigor working at the root.  
 185 What crops of wit and honesty appear  
 From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear !  
 See anger, zeal and fortitude supply ;

Ev'n avarice, prudence ; sloth, philosophy ;  
 Lust, through some certain strainers well refin'd,  
 190 Is gentle love, and charms all womankind ;  
 Env'y, to which the ignoble mind 's a slave,  
 Is emulation in the learn'd or brave ;  
 Nor virtue, male or female, can we name,  
 But what will grow on pride, or grow on shame.  
 205 Thus Nature gives us (let it check our pride)  
 The virtue nearest to our vice ally'd ;  
 Reason the bias turns to good from ill,  
 And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.  
 The fiery soul abhorr'd in Catiline,  
 200 In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine :  
 The same ambition can destroy or save,  
 And make a patriot as it makes a knave.

IV. This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,  
 What shall divide ? The God within the mind.

205 Extremes in nature equal ends produce,  
 In man they join to some mysterious use ;  
 Though each by turns the other's bound invade,  
 As, in some well-wrought picture, light and shade,  
 And oft so mix, the diff'rence is too nice  
 210 Where ends the virtue, or begins the vice.

Fools ! who from hence into the notion fall,  
 That vice or virtue there is none at all.  
 If white and black blend, soften, and unite  
 A thousand ways, is there no black or white ?  
 215 Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain ;  
 'T is to mistake them costs the time and pain.

200. Decius and Curtius both sacrificed themselves for the good of Rome; Decius by plunging into the thick of the enemy at the battle of Vesuvius; Curtius by leaping into a chasm which had opened in the Forum, and which boded ill for Rome which could be warded off only by the sacrifice of her best.

V. Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
 As to be hated needs but to be seen ;  
 Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
 220 We first endure, then pity, then embrace :  
 But where the extreme of vice was ne'er agreed :  
 Ask where 's the north ? at York, 't is on the Tweed ;  
 In Scotland, at the Orcades ; and there,  
 At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.  
 225 No creature owns it in the first degree,  
 But thinks his neighbor farther gone than he ;  
 Even those who dwell beneath its very zone,  
 Or never feel the rage, or never own ;  
 What happier natures shrink at with affright  
 230 The hard inhabitant contends is right.  
 Virtuous and vicious every man must be ;  
 Few in the extreme, but all in the degree :  
 The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise ;  
 And ev'n the best, by fits, what they despise.  
 235 'T is but by parts we follow good or ill ;  
 For, vice or virtue, self directs it still ;  
 Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal ;

VI. But Heav'n's great view is one, and that  
 the whole.

That counterworks each folly and caprice ;  
 240 That disappoints the effect of every vice ;  
 That, happy frailties to all ranks apply'd,  
 Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,  
 Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,  
 To kings presumption, and to crowds belief :  
 245 That virtue's ends from vanity can raise,  
 Which seeks no int'rest, no reward but praise ;  
 And build on wants, and on defects of mind,  
 The joy, the peace, the glory of mankind.  
 Heav'n, forming each on other to depend,

250 A master, or a servant, or a friend,  
 Bids each on other for assistance call,  
 Till one man's weakness grows the strength of  
 all.

Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally  
 The common int'rest, or endear the tie.

255 To these we owe true friendship, love sincere,  
 Each home-felt joy that life inherits here ;  
 Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,  
 Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign :  
 Taught half by Reason, half by mere decay,  
 260 To welcome death, and calmly pass away.

Whate'er the passion, — knowledge, fame, or  
 pelf, —

Not one will change his neighbor with himself.  
 The learn'd is happy nature to explore,  
 The fool is happy that he knows no more ;

265 The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n,  
 The poor contents him with the care of Heav'n.  
 See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,  
 The sot a hero, lunatic a king ;  
 The starving chemist in his golden views  
 270 Supremely blest, the poet in his muse.

See some strange comfort ev'ry state attend,  
 And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend :  
 See some fit passion every age supply,  
 Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die.

275 Behold the child, by Nature's kindly law,  
 Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw ;  
 Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,  
 A little louder, but as empty quite ;  
 Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,  
 280 And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age :

269. Chemist, alchemist.

Pleas'd with this bauble still, as that before ;  
Till tir'd he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.

Meanwhile opinion gilds, with varying rays,  
Those painted clouds that beautify our days ;  
285 Each want of happiness by hope supply'd,  
And each vacuity of sense by pride :  
These build as fast as knowledge can destroy ;  
In Folly's cup still laughs the bubble joy ;  
One prospect lost, another still we gain ;  
290 And not a vanity is giv'n in vain ;  
Even mean self-love becomes, by force divine,  
The scale to measure others' wants by thine.  
See, and confess, one comfort still must rise ;  
'T is this, *Though man's a fool, yet God is wise !*

#### ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE III.

##### *Of the Nature and State of Man with Respect to Society.*

I. The whole Universe one system of Society, verse 7, etc. Nothing made wholly for itself, nor yet wholly for another, verse 27. The happiness of animals mutual, verse 49. II. Reason or Instinct operate alike to the good of each individual, verse 79. III. Reason or instinct operates also to Society in all animals, verse 109. How far Society carried by instinct, verse 115. How much farther by Reason, 131. IV. Of that which is called the state of Nature, verse 144. Reason instructed by Instinct in the invention of arts, verse 169; and in the forms of Society, verse 179. V. Origin of political societies, verse 199. Origin of Monarchy, verse 207. VI. Patriarchal government, verse 215. Origin of true Religion and Government, from the same principle of Love, verse 231, etc. Origin of Superstition and Tyranny, from the same principle of Fear, verse 241, etc. The influence of Self-love operating to the social and public good, verse 269. Restoration of true Religion and Government on their first principle, verse 283. Mixed government, verse 288. Various forms of each, and the true end of all, verse 303, etc.



## EPISTLE III.

I. HERE then we rest: "The Universal Cause  
Acts to one end, but acts by various laws."

In all the madness of superfluous health,  
The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,

5 Let this great truth be present night and day:  
But most be present, if we preach or pray.

Look round our world, behold the chain of love  
Combining all below and all above.

See plastic Nature working to this end:

10 The single atoms each to other tend;

Attract, attracted to, the next in place

Form'd and impell'd its neighbor to embrace.

See matter next with various life endu'd,

Press to one centre still, the gen'ral good.

15 See dying vegetables life sustain,

See life dissolving vegetate again:

All forms that perish other forms supply,

(By turns we catch the vital breath, and die,)

Like bubbles on the sea of Matter borne,

20 They rise, they break, and to that sea return.

Nothing is foreign; parts relate to whole;

One all-extending, all-preserving soul

Connects each being, greatest with the least;

Made beast in aid of man, and man of beast;

25 All serv'd, all serving: nothing stands alone;

The chain holds on, and where it ends unknown.

Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good,

Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?

Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,

30 For him as kindly spreads the flow'ry lawn:

Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?

Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.

Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat ?

Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.

35 The bounding steed you pompously bestride  
Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.

Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain ?

The birds of heav'n shall vindicate their grain.

Thine the full harvest of the golden year ?

40 Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer ;

The hog, that ploughs not, nor obeys thy call,

Lives on the labors of this lord of all.

Know, Nature's children all divide her care ;

The fur that warms a monarch warm'd a bear.

45 While man exclaims, " See all things for my use ! "

" See man for mine ! " replies a pamper'd goose

And just as short of reason he must fall,

Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

Grant that the pow'rful still the weak control ;

50 Be man the wit and tyrant of the whole :

Nature that tyrant checks ; he only knows,

And helps, another creature's wants and woes.

Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,

Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove ?

55 Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings ?

Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings ?

Man cares for all : to birds he gives his woods,

To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods.

For some his int'rest prompts him to provide,

60 For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride :

All feed on one vain patron, and enjoy

Th' extensive blessing of his luxury.

That very life his learned hunger craves,

He saves from famine, from the savage saves ;

56. Philomela was a mythical Athenian princess, who was changed into a nightingale.

65 Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast,  
 And, till he ends the being, makes it blest,  
 Which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,  
 Than favor'd man by touch ethereal slain.  
 The creature had his feast of life before ;

70 Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er !  
 To each unthinking being, Heav'n, a friend,  
 Gives not the useless knowledge of its end :  
 To man imparts it ; but with such a view  
 As, while he dreads it, makes him hope it too ;  
 75 The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear,  
 Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.  
 Great standing miracle ! that Heav'n assign'd  
 Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

II. Whether with Reason, or with Instinct blest,  
 80 Know, all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best :  
 To bliss alike by that direction tend,  
 And find the means proportion'd to their end.  
 Say, where full Instinct is the unerring guide,  
 What pope or council can they need beside ?  
 85 Reason, however able, cool at best,  
 Cares not for service, or but serves when prest,  
 Stays till we call, and then not often near ;  
 But honest Instinct comes a volunteer,  
 Sure never to o'ershoot, but just to hit,  
 90 While still too wide or short is human wit ;  
 Sure by quick nature happiness to gain,  
 Which heavier Reason labors at in vain.  
 This too serves always, Reason never long ;  
 One must go right, the other may go wrong.  
 95 See, then, the acting and comparing pow'rs,

68. Several of the ancients, and many of the orientals since, esteemed those who were struck by lightning as favored persons, and the particular favorites of Heaven. — POPE.

One in their nature, which are two in ours ;  
 And Reason raise o'er Instinct as you can,  
 In this 't is God directs, in that 't is man.

Who taught the nations of the field and flood  
 100 To shun their poison, and to choose their food ?  
 Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,  
 Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand ?  
 Who made the spider parallels design,  
 Such as Demoivre, without rule or line ?  
 105 Who bid the stork, Columbus-like, explore  
 Heav'ns not his own, and worlds unknown before ?  
 Who calls the council, states the certain day ?  
 Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way ?

III. God, in the nature of each being, founds  
 110 Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds :  
 But, as He framed a whole the whole to bless,  
 On mutual wants built mutual happiness :  
 So, from the first, eternal order ran,  
 And creature link'd to creature, man to man.  
 115 Whate'er of life all-quick'ning ether keeps,  
 Or breathes through air, or shoots beneath the  
       deeps,  
 Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds  
 The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds.  
 Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,  
 120 Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood,  
 Each loves itself, but not itself alone,  
 Each sex desires alike, till two are one.  
 Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace :  
 They love themselves, a third time, in their race :  
 125 Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,  
 The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend ;

104. Demoivre was a noted French mathematician, and a friend of Sir Isaac Newton's.

The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,  
 There stops the instinct, and there ends the care :  
 The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,  
 130 Another love succeeds, another race.  
 A longer care man's helpless kind demands ;  
 That longer care contracts more lasting bands :  
 Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,  
 At once extend the int'rest and the love ;  
 135 With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn ;  
 Each virtue in each passion takes its turn ;  
 And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,  
 That graft benevolence on charities.  
 Still as one brood, and as another rose,  
 140 These nat'ral love maintain'd, habitual those :  
 The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect man,  
 Saw helpless him from whom their life began :  
 Mem'ry and forecast just returns engage,  
 That pointed back to youth, this on to age ;  
 145 While pleasure, gratitude, and hope combin'd,  
 Still spread the interest, and preserv'd the kind.  
 IV. Nor think in Nature's state they blindly  
 trod ;  
 The state of Nature was the reign of God :  
 Self-love and Social at her birth began,  
 150 Union the bond of all things, and of man.  
 Pride then was not ; nor arts, that pride to aid ;  
 Man walked with beast joint-tenant of the shade ;  
 The same his table, and the same his bed ;  
 No murder cloth'd him, and no murder fed.  
 155 In the same temple, the resounding wood,  
 All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God :  
 The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undrest,  
 Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless priest :  
 Heav'n's attribute was universal care,

160 And man's prerogative to rule, but spare.

Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!

Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;

Who, foe to Nature, hears the gen'ral groan,

Murders their species, and betrays his own.

165 But just disease to luxury succeeds,

And ev'ry death its own avenger breeds;

The fury-passions from that blood began,

And turn'd on man a fiercer savage, man.

See him from Nature rising slow to Art!

170 To copy instinct then was Reason's part;

Thus, then, to man the voice of Nature spake —

“Go, from the creatures thy instructions take:

Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield,

Learn from the beasts the physic of the field;

175 Thy arts of building from the bee receive;

Learn of the mole to plow, the worm to weave;

Learn of the little nautilus to sail,

Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.

Here, too, all forms of social union find,

180 And hence let Reason, late, instruct mankind:

Here subterranean works and cities see;

There towns aërial on the waving tree.

Learn each small people's genius, policies,

The ants' republic, and the realm of bees:

185 How those in common all their wealth bestow,

And anarchy without confusion know;

And these forever, though a monarch reign,

Their sep'rate cells and properties maintain.

Mark what unvary'd laws preserve each state,

174. See Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* viii. 27, where several instances are given of animals discovering the medicinal efficacy of herbs, by their own use of them; and pointing out some operations of healing, by their own practice. — WARBURTON.

190 Laws wise as Nature, and as fix'd as fate.  
 In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,  
 Entangle Justice in her net of law,  
 And right, too rigid, harden into wrong;  
 Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.

195 Yet go! and thus o'er all the creatures sway,  
 Thus let the wiser make the rest obey;  
 And, for those arts mere instinct could afford,  
 Be crown'd as monarchs, or as gods ador'd."

V. Great Nature spoke; observant man obey'd;  
 200 Cities were built, societies were made:  
 Here rose one little state; another near  
 Grew by like means, and join'd, through love or  
 fear.

Did here the trees with ruddier burdens bend,  
 And there the streams in purer rills descend?  
 205 What war could ravish, commerce could bestow;  
 And he return'd a friend, who came a foe.  
 Converse and love mankind might strongly draw,  
 When love was liberty, and Nature law.  
 Thus states were form'd: the name of king un-  
 known,

210 Till common int'rest plac'd the sway in one.  
 'T was virtue only (or in arts or arms,  
 Diffusing blessings, or averting harms),  
 The same which in a sire the sons obey'd,  
 A prince the father of a people made.

215 VI. Till then, by Nature crown'd, each patriarch  
 sate,

King, priest, and parent of his growing state;  
 On him, their second Providence, they hung,  
 Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.  
 He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,  
 220 Taught to command the fire, control the flood,

Draw forth the monsters of the abyss profound,  
 Or fetch th' aërial eagle to the ground ;  
 Till, drooping, sick'ning, dying, they began  
 Whom they rever'd as god to mourn as man :  
 225 Then, looking up from sire to sire, explor'd  
 One great first Father, and that first ador'd ;  
 Or plain tradition, that this all begun,  
 Convey'd unbroken faith from sire to son ;  
 The worker from the work distinct was known,  
 230 And simple reason never sought but one.  
 Ere wit oblique had broke that steady light,  
 Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right ;  
 To virtue, in the paths of pleasure trod,  
 And own'd a father when he own'd a God,  
 235 LOVE all the faith and all th' allegiance then,  
 For Nature knew no right divine in men,  
 No ill could fear in God ; and understood  
 A sov'reign being but a sov'reign good.  
 True faith, true policy, united ran,  
 240 That was but love of God, and this of man.

Who first taught souls enslav'd and realms un-  
 done,  
 The enormous faith of many made for one ;  
 That proud exception to all Nature's laws,  
 T' invert the world, and counterwork its cause ?  
 245 Force first made conquest, and that conquest, law ;  
 Till superstition taught the tyrant awe,  
 Then shar'd the tyranny, then lent it aid,  
 And gods of conqu'rors, slaves of subjects made.  
 She, midst the lightning's blaze and thunder's  
 sound,  
 250 When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd the  
 ground,  
 She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray



To Pow'r unseen, and mightier far than they :  
 She, from the rending earth and bursting skies,  
 Saw gods descend, and fiends infernal rise :  
 255 Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest abodes ;  
 Fear made her devils, and weak hope her gods ;  
 Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,  
 Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust ;  
 Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,  
 260 And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe.  
 Zeal, then, not charity, became the guide ;  
 And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.  
 Then sacred seem'd th' ethereal vault no more ;  
 Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore :  
 265 Then first the Flamen tasted living food ;  
 Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood ;  
 With Heav'n's own thunders shook the world below,  
 And play'd the god an engine on his foe.  
 So drives Self-love, through just, and through  
 unjust,  
 270 To one man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust :  
 The same self-love, in all, becomes the cause  
 Of what restrains him, government and laws.  
 For what one likes, if others like as well,  
 What serves one will, when many wills rebel ?  
 275 How shall he keep what, sleeping or awake,  
 A weaker may surprise, a stronger take ?  
 His safety must his liberty restrain :  
 All join to guard what each desires to gain.  
 Forc'd into virtue thus, by self-defence,  
 280 Ev'n kings learn'd justice and benevolence :  
 Self-love forsook the path it first pursu'd,  
 And found the private in the public good.  
 'T was then the studious head or gen'rous mind,  
 Foll'wer of God, or friend of human-kind,

- 285 Poet or patriot, rose but to restore  
 The faith and moral Nature gave before ;  
 Relum'd her ancient light, not kindled new ;  
 If not God's image, yet His shadow drew ;  
 Taught pow'r's due use to people and to kings ;  
 290 Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings,  
 The less, or greater, set so justly true,  
 That touching one must strike the other too ;  
 Till jarring int'rests of themselves create  
 Th' according music of a well-mix'd state.
- 295 Such is the world's great harmony, that springs  
 From order, union, full consent of things ;  
 Where small and great, where weak and mighty made  
 To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade ;  
 More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,  
 300 And, in proportion as it blesses, blest ;  
 Draw to one point, and to one centre bring  
 Beast, man, or angel, servant, lord, or king.  
 For forms of government let fools contest ;  
 Whate'er is best administer'd is best :
- 305 For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight ;  
 His can't be wrong whose life is in the right :  
 In Faith and Hope the world will disagree,  
 But all mankind's concern is Charity :  
 All must be false that thwart this one great end ;  
 310 And all of God, that bless mankind, or mend.  
 Man, like the gen'rous vine, supported lives ;  
 The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.  
 On their own axis as the planets run,  
 Yet make at once their circle round the sun,
- 315 So two consistent motions act the soul,  
 And one regards itself, and one the Whole.  
 Thus God and Nature link'd the gen'ral frame,  
 And bade Self-love and Social be the same.

## ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE IV.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with Respect to Happiness.*

I. False notions of Happiness, philosophical and popular, answered from verses 19 to 26. II. It is the end of all men, and attainable by all, verse 29. God intends Happiness to be equal ; and, to be so, it must be social, since all particular Happiness depends on general, and since he governs by general, not particular laws, verse 35. As it is necessary for Order, and the peace and welfare of Society, that external goods should be unequal, Happiness is not made to consist in these, verse 49. But notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of Happiness among mankind is kept even by Providence, by the two passions of Hope and Fear, verse 67. III. What the Happiness of individuals is, as far as is consistent with the constitution of this world ; and that the good man has here the advantage, verse 77. The error of imputing to Virtue what are only the calamities of Nature or of Fortune, verse 93. IV. The folly of expecting that God should alter his general laws in favor of particulars, verse 123. V. That we are not judges who are good ; but that whoever they are, they must be happiest, verse 131, etc. VI. That external goods are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of Virtue, verse 149. That even these can make no man happy without Virtue : instanced in Riches, verse 185 ; Honors, verse 193 ; Nobility, verse 205 ; Greatness, verse 217 ; Fame, verse 237 ; Superior Talents, verse 259, etc., with pictures of human infelicity in men possessed of them all, verse 269, etc. VII. That Virtue only constitutes a Happiness whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal, verse 309. That the perfection of Virtue and Happiness consists in a conformity to the Order of Providence here, and a resignation to it here and hereafter, verse 327, etc.

## EPISTLE IV.

O HAPPINESS ! our being's end and aim !  
 Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content ! whate'er thy name :  
 That something still which prompts th' eternal  
 sigh,

For which we bear to live, or dare to die ;  
 5 Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,  
 O'erlook'd, seen double by the fool and wise :  
 Plant of celestial seed ! if dropt below,  
 Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow ?  
 Fair op'ning to some court's propitious shine,  
 10 Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine ?  
 Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,  
 Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field ?  
 Where grows ? — where grows it not ? If vain our  
 toil,  
 We ought to blame the culture, not the soil :  
 15 Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere,  
 'T is nowhere to be found, or ev'rywhere :  
 'T is never to be bought, but always free ;  
 And, fled from monarchs, ST. JOHN ! dwells with  
 thee.

I. Ask of the learn'd the way ! the learn'd are  
 blind ;

20 This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind ;  
 Some place the bliss in Action, some in Ease,  
 Those call it Pleasure, and Contentment these ;  
 Some, sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in Pain ;  
 Some, swell'd to gods, confess ev'n Virtue vain ;  
 25 Or, indolent, to each extreme they fall,  
 To trust in ev'rything, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less  
 Than this, that happiness is happiness ?

II. Take Nature's path, and mad Opinion's  
 leave ;

30 All states can reach it, and all heads conceive ;  
 Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell ;

15. Sincere, unalloyed.

21-26. Pope said that he was speaking in this passage of the Epicurean, Stoic, and Sceptic schools.

There needs but thinking right, and meaning well ;  
 And mourn our various portions as we please,  
 Equal is common sense, and common ease.

35 Remember, man, "the Universal Cause  
 Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws,"  
 And makes what happiness we justly call,  
 Subsist, not in the good of one, but all.  
 There 's not a blessing individuals find,  
 40 But some way leans and hearkens to the kind ;  
 No bandit fierce, no tyrant mad with pride,  
 No cavern'd hermit rests self-satisfy'd :  
 Who most to shun or hate mankind pretend,  
 Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend.

45 Abstract what others feel, what others think,  
 All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink :  
 Each has his share ; and who would more obtain,  
 Shall find the pleasure pays not half the pain.

ORDER is Heav'n's first law ; and, this confest,  
 50 Some are, and must be, greater than the rest,  
 More rich, more wise ; but who infers from hence  
 That such are happier, shocks all common sense.  
 Heav'n to mankind impartial we confess,  
 If all are equal in their happiness :

55 But mutual wants this happiness increase ;  
 All Nature's diff'rence keeps all Nature's peace.

Condition, circumstance is not the thing ;  
 Bliss is the same in subject or in king,  
 In who obtain defence, or who defend,  
 60 In him who is, or him who finds a friend :  
 Heav'n breathes through ev'ry member of the whole  
 One common blessing, as one common soul.  
 But Fortune's gifts if each alike possest,  
 And each were equal, must not all contest ?

65 If then to all men happiness was meant,  
 God in externals could not place content.

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,  
 And these be happy call'd, unhappy those ;  
 But Heav'n's just balance equal will appear,  
 70 While those are plac'd in hope, and these in fear :  
 Not present good or ill, the joy or curse,  
 But future views of better, or of worse.

O sons of earth ! attempt ye still to rise,  
 By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies ?  
 75 Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys,  
 And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

III. Know, all the good that individuals find,  
 Or God and Nature meant to mere mankind,  
 Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,  
 80 Lie in three words, Health, Peace, and Competence,  
 But health consists with temperance alone ;  
 And peace ! O virtue ; peace is all thy own.  
 The good or bad the gifts of fortune gain ;  
 But these less taste them, as they worse obtain.

85 Say, in pursuit of profit or delight,  
 Who risk the most, that take wrong means or right ?  
 Of vice or virtue, whether blest or curs'd,  
 Which meets contempt, or which compassion first ?  
 Count all th' advantage prosp'rous vice attains,  
 90 'Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains :  
 And grant the bad what happiness they would,  
 One they must want, which is to pass for good.

Oh ! blind to truth, and God's whole scheme be-  
 low,

Who fancy bliss to Vice, to Virtue woe !  
 95 Who sees and follows that great scheme the best,  
 Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.  
 But fools the good alone unhappy call,

74. Alluding to the Titans' attempt to scale Olympus. —  
 WARD.

For ills or accidents that chance to all.  
 See *Falkland* dies, the virtuous and the just!  
 100 See godlike *Turenne* prostrate on the dust!  
 See *Sidney* bleeds amid the martial strife!  
 Was this their virtue, or contempt of life?  
 Say, was it virtue, more though Heav'n ne'er  
     gave,  
 Lamented *Digby!* sunk thee to the grave?  
 105 Tell me, if virtue made the son expire,  
 Why, full of days and honor, lives the sire?  
 Why drew *Marseilles'* good bishop purer breath,  
 When Nature sicken'd, and each gale was death?  
 Or why so long (in life if long can be)  
 110 Lent Heav'n a parent to the poor and me?  
     What makes all physical or moral ill?  
 There deviates Nature, and here wanders Will.  
 God sends not ill, if rightly understood,  
 Or partial ill is universal good,  
 115 Or change admits, or Nature lets it fall  
     Short, and but rare, till man improv'd it all,

99. Lucius Cary Lord Falkland (1610–1643), a brilliant young statesman and versifier, was killed in the battle of Newburg, at the age of thirty-three.

100–101. Henry, Vicomte de Turenne, and Sir Philip Sidney both fell in battle before their extraordinary powers had reached full maturity.

104. The Hon. Robert Digby, third son of Lord Digby, was a personal friend and correspondent of Pope's. He died in 1726.

107. M. de Belsance was made bishop of Marseilles in 1709. In the plague of that city, in the year 1720, he distinguished himself by his zeal and activity, being the pastor, the physician, and the magistrate of his flock whilst that horrid calamity prevailed. — WARBURTON.

110. Pope's mother died in 1733, shortly before this epistle was written, at the age of ninety-one.

We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain  
That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,  
As that the virtuous son is ill at ease

120 When his lewd father gave the dire disease. \*  
Think we, like some weak prince, th' Eternal Cause  
Prone for His fav'rites to reverse His laws?

IV. Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,  
Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?

125 On air or sea new motions be imprest,  
O blameless Bethel! to relieve thy breast?  
When the loose mountain trembles from on high,  
Shall gravitation cease if you go by?  
Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,

130 For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall?

V. But still this world, so fitted for the knave,  
Contents us not. A better shall we have?

A kingdom of the Just then let it be:

But first consider how those Just agree.

135 The good must merit God's peculiar care;  
But who, but God, can tell us who they are?  
One thinks on Calvin Heav'n's own spirit fell;  
Another deems him instrument of hell;  
If Calvin feel Heav'n's blessing or its rod,

140 This cries there is, and that, there is no God.

What shocks one part will edify the rest,

Nor with one system can they all be blest.

123. Alluding to the fate of those two great naturalists, Empedocles and Pliny, who both perished by too near an approach to Ætna and Vesuvius, while they were exploring the cause of their eruptions. — WARBURTON.

126. Hugh Bethel was a friend of Pope's, to whom the *Imitations of Horace* are addressed.

130. Francis Chartres was a notorious adventurer of Pope's day, who, by usury and swindling, accumulated an enormous fortune. He died in 1731.



The very best will variously incline,  
And what rewards your virtue, punish mine.

145 *Whatever is, is right.* This world, 't is true,  
Was made for Cæsar, but for Titus too :  
And which more blest ? who chain'd his country, say,  
Or he whose virtue sigh'd to lose a day ?

VI. "But sometimes Virtue starves, while Vice  
is fed."

150 What then ? Is the reward of virtue bread ?  
That Vice may merit, 't is the price of toil ;  
The knave deserves it when he tills the soil ;  
The knave deserves it when he tempts the main,  
Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.

155 The good man may be weak, be indolent ;  
Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.

But grant him riches, your demand is o'er.

"No : shall the good want health, the good want  
pow'r ?"

Add health, and pow'r, and every earthly thing :

160 "Why bounded pow'r ? why private ? why no king ?  
Nay, why external for internal giv'n ?

Why is not man a god, and earth a heav'n ?"

Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive  
God gives enough, while he has more to give :

165 Immense the power, immense were the demand ;  
Say, at what part of Nature will they stand ?

What nothing earthly gives or can destroy,  
The soul's calm sunshine, and the heartfelt joy,  
Is Virtue's prize. A better would you fix ?

170 Then give humility a coach and six,

Justice a conqu'ror's sword, or truth a gown,  
Or public spirit its great cure, a crown.

Weak, foolish man ! will Heav'n reward us there,  
With the same trash mad mortals wish for here ?

- 175 The boy and man an individual makes,  
 Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes?  
 Go, like the Indian, in another life  
 Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife,  
 As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,  
 180 As toys and empires, for a godlike mind:  
 Rewards, that either would to virtue bring  
 No joy, or be destructive of the thing:  
 How oft, by these, at sixty are undone  
 The virtues of a saint at twenty-one!
- 185 To whom can riches give repute or trust,  
 Content or pleasure, but the good and just?  
 Judges and senates have been bought for gold,  
 Esteem and love were never to be sold.  
 O fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,  
 190 The lover and the love of human kind,  
 Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,  
 Because he wants a thousand pounds a year.  
 ✓ Honor and shame from no condition rise;  
 Act well your part: there all the honor lies.
- 195 Fortune in men has some small diff'rence made:  
 One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;  
 The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,  
 The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd.  
 "What differ more," you cry, "than crown and  
 cowl?"
- 200 I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a fool.  
 You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,  
 Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,  
 Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow;  
 The rest is all but leather or prunella.
- . . . . .

204. Prunella was a coarse material from which clergymen's gowns were often made.

Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,  
 In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece :  
 But by your fathers' worth if yours you rate,  
 210 Count me those only who were good and great.  
 Go! if your ancient but ignoble blood  
 Has crept through scoundrels ever since the flood,  
 Go! and pretend your family is young,  
 Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.  
 215 What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards ?  
 Alas! not all the blood of all the *Howards*.

Look next on greatness : say where greatness lies.  
 "Where but among the heroes and the wise!"  
 Heroes are much the same, the point 's agreed,  
 220 From Macedonia's madman to the Swede :  
 The whole strange purpose of their lives to find,  
 Or make, an enemy of all mankind !  
 Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,  
 Yet ne'er looks forward farther than his nose.  
 225 No less alike the politic and wise ;  
 All sly slow things, with circumspective eyes :  
 Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,  
 Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.  
 But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat,  
 230 'T is phrase absurd to call a villain great :  
 Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,  
 Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.

220. "An epigrammatic expression will also tempt him into saying something without basis in truth; as where he ranks together 'Macedonia's madman and the Swede,' and says that neither of them 'looked forward farther than his nose,' a slang phrase which may apply well enough to Charles XII., but certainly not to the pupil of Aristotle, who showed himself capable of a large political forethought. So, too [line 236], the rhyme, if correct, is sufficient apology for want of propriety in phrase, as where he makes Socrates 'bleed.'" — LOWELL.

Who noble ends by noble means obtains,  
 Or, failing, smiles in exile or in chains,  
 235 Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed,  
 Like Socrates : that man is great indeed !  
 What 's fame ? A fancy'd life in others' breath,  
 A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.  
 Just what you hear, you have, and what 's unknown  
 240 The same, my lord, if Tully's, or your own.  
 All that we feel of it begins and ends  
 In the small circle of our foes or friends ;  
 To all beside as much an empty shade  
 A Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead ;  
 245 Alike, or when or where they shone or shine,  
 Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.  
 A wit 's a feather, and a chief a rod ;  
 An honest man 's the noblest work of God.  
 Fame but from death a villain's name can save,  
 250 As justice tears his body from the grave ;  
 When what t' oblivion better were resign'd,  
 Is hung on high, to poison half mankind.  
 All fame is foreign, but of true desert,  
 Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart :  
 255 One self-approving hour whole years outweighs  
 Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas ;  
 And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,  
 Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.  
 In parts superior what advantage lies ?  
 260 Tell (for you can) what 'is it to be wise ?

235. Aurelius, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

240. My lord, Bolingbroke.

244. Prince Eugene of Savoy, who shared with Marlborough the glory of Blenheim and Malplaquet.

257. M. Marcellus, an enemy of Julius Cæsar, after the battle of Pharsalus, fled to Mitylene.

'T is but to know how little can be known ;  
 To see all others' faults, and feel our own ;  
 Condemn'd in bus'ness or in arts to drudge,  
 Without a second, or without a judge :

265 Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land ?  
 All fear, none aid you, and few understand.  
 Painful præminence ! yourself to view  
 Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

Bring, then, these blessings to a strict account.  
 270 Make fair deductions : see to what they mount :  
 How much of other each is sure to cost ;  
 How each for other oft is wholly lost ;  
 How inconsistent greater goods with these ;  
 How sometimes life is risk'd, and always ease.

275 Think, and, if still the things thy envy call,  
 Say, would'st thou be the man to whom they fall ?  
 To sigh for ribbands if thou art so silly,  
 Mark how they grace Lord Umbra, or Sir Billy.  
 Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life ?

280 Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus' wife.  
 If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,  
 The wisest, brightest, meanest, of mankind :  
 Or ravish'd with the whistling of a name,  
 See Cromwell damn'd to everlasting fame !

285 If all, united, thy ambition call,  
 From ancient story learn to scorn them all.  
 There, in the rich, the honor'd, fam'd, and great ;  
 See the false scale of happiness complete !  
 In hearts of kings, or arms of queens who lay,  
 290 How happy those to ruin, these betray !

275. Call, demand.

278. Lord Umbra, Bubb Dodington, a courtier and patron of letters, is called Bubo in the *Epistle to Arbuthnot* (line 280), where Sir William Yonge's name is again coupled with his.

Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,  
 From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose ;  
 In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,  
 And all that rais'd the hero sunk the man :  
 295 Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold,  
 But stain'd with blood, or ill-exchang'd for gold :  
 Then see them broke with toils or sunk in ease,  
 Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.  
 O wealth ill-fated ! which no act of fame  
 300 E'er taught to shine, or sanctify'd from shame  
 What greater bliss attends their close of life ?  
 Some greedy minion, or imperious wife  
 The trophy'd arches, story'd halls invade,  
 And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.  
 305 Alas ! not dazzled with their noontide ray,  
 Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day ;  
 The whole amount of that enormous fame,  
 A tale that blends their glory with their shame !  
 VII. Know, then, this truth, enough for man to  
 know,  
 310 " Virtue alone is happiness below."  
 The only point where human bliss stands still,  
 And tastes the good without the fall to ill ;  
 Where only merit constant pay receives,  
 Is blest in what it takes and what it gives ;  
 315 The joy unequal'd if its end it gain,  
 And if it lose, attended with no pain :  
 Without satiety, though e'er so blest,  
 And but more relish'd as the more distress'd :

297-302. These lines evidently refer to the Duke of Marlborough. One of the dubious acts of Pope's life was the suppression of a satire upon Lady Marlborough for a consideration. After collecting his blackmail, Pope kept the satire, and had it printed shortly before his death.

The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,  
 320 Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears :  
 Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,  
 Forever exercis'd, yet never tir'd ;  
 Never elated, while one man 's opprest ;  
 Never dejected, while another 's blest ;  
 325 And where no wants, no wishes can remain,  
 Since but to wish more virtue is to gain.

See the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow !  
 Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can  
     know ;  
 Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,  
 330 The bad must miss, the good, untaught will find ;  
 Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,  
 But looks through nature up to nature's God ;  
 Pursues that chain which links th' immense de-  
     sign,  
 Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine ;  
 335 Sees that no being any bliss can know,  
 But touches some above and some below ;  
 Learns from this union of the rising whole,  
 The first, last purpose of the human soul ;  
 And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,  
 340 All end, — in *love of God* and *love of man*.

For him alone, hope leads from goal to goal,  
 And opens still, and opens on his soul ;  
 Till lengthen'd on to faith, and unconfin'd,  
 It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.  
 345 He sees why Nature plants in man alone,  
 Hope of known bliss, and faith in bliss unknown :  
 (Nature, whose dictates to no other kind  
 Are given in vain, but what they seek they find ;)  
 Wise is her present : she connects in this  
 350 His greatest virtue with his greatest bliss ;

At once his own bright prospect to be blest,  
And strongest motive to assist the rest.

Self-love, thus push'd to Social, to Divine,  
Gives thee to make thy neighbor's blessing thine.

355 Is this too little for the boundless heart ?

Extend it, let thy enemies have part :

Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,  
In one close system of benevolence :

Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,

360 And height of bliss but height of charity.

God loves from whole to parts : but human soul  
Must rise from individual to the whole.

Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,  
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;

365 The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,

Another still, and still another spreads ;

Friend, parent, neighbor, first it will embrace ;

His country next ; and next all human race ;

Wide and more wide, the o'erflowings of the mind

370 Take every creature in, of every kind ;

Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,

And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

Come, then, my friend ! my genius, come along,  
O master of the poet and the song !

375 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 ;

Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer

380 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,



- 385 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
- 390 Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?  
That, urged by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art  
From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;  
For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's light;  
Show'd erring pride, *Whatever is, is right*;
- 395 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*.
389. Pretend, make plain.

# EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT.<sup>1</sup>

## PROLOGUE TO THE SATIRES.

### ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS paper is a sort of bill of complaint, begun many years since, and drawn up by snatches, as the several occasions offered. I had no thoughts of publishing it, till it pleased some Persons of Rank and Fortune (the Authors of *Verses to the Imitator of Horace*, and of an *Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity from a Nobleman at Hampton Court*)<sup>2</sup> to attack, in a very extraordinary manner, not only my Writings (of which, being public, the Public is judge), but my Person, Morals, and Family, whereof, to those who know me not, a truer information may be requisite. Being divided between the necessity to say something of myself, and my own laziness to undertake so awkward a task, I thought it the shortest way to put the last hand to this Epistle. If it have anything pleasing, it will be that by which I am most desirous to please, the Truth and the Sentiment; and if anything offensive, it will be only to those I am least sorry to offend, the vicious or the ungenerous.

Many will know their own pictures in it, there being not a circumstance but what is true; but I have, for the most part, spared their names, and they may escape being laughed at, if they please.

I would have some of them know, it was owing to the request of the learned and candid Friend to whom it is inscribed, that I

<sup>1</sup> John Arbuthnot (1675–1735) was an eminent physician, scholar, and satirist, and an intimate friend of Pope, Gay, and Swift. “He has more wit than we all have,” said Swift; “and more humanity than wit.”

<sup>2</sup> Of these papers the former was said to be a joint production of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Lord Hervey; the latter was written by Hervey alone. See Carruthers’ *Life of Pope*, ch. viii.

make not as free use of theirs as they have done of mine. However, I shall have this advantage, and honor, on my side, that whereas, by their proceeding, any abuse may be directed at any man, no injury can possibly be done by mine, since a nameless character can never be found out, but by its truth and likeness.

*P.* SHUT, shut the door, good John! fatigu'd, I  
said,

Tie up the knocker, say I'm sick, I'm dead.

The Dog-star rages! nay, 't is past a doubt,

All Bedlam, or Parnassus, is let out:

5 Fire in each eye, and papers in each hand,

They rave, recite, and madden round the land.

What walls can guard me, or what shades can hide?

They pierce my thickets, thro' my Grot they glide;

By land, by water, they renew the charge;

10 They stop the chariot, and they board the barge.

No place is sacred, not the church is free;

Ev'n Sunday shines no Sabbath-day to me;

Then from the Mint walks forth the man of rhyme,

Happy to catch me just at dinner-time.

15 Is there a Parson, much bemus'd in beer,

A maudlin Poetess, a rhyming Peer,

A Clerk, foredoom'd his father's soul to cross,

Who pens a stanza, when he should engross?

Is there, who, lock'd from ink and paper, scrawls

1. John Searl, Pope's body-servant for many years.

8. An artificial grotto, constructed under a road, was one of Pope's fanciful improvements of his little estate at Twickenham. Twitnam or Twit'nam (line 21) are forms of the name affected by Pope.

13. The Mint, a place to which insolvent debtors retired, to enjoy an illegal protection, which they were there suffered to afford one another, from the persecution of their creditors. —

WARBURTON.

20 With desp'rate charcoal round his darken'd walls?  
 All fly to TWIT'NAM, and in humble strain  
 Apply to me, to keep them mad or vain.

Arthur, whose giddy son neglects the laws,  
 Imputes to me and my damn'd works the cause:

25 Poor Cornus sees his frantic wife elope,  
 And curses Wit, and Poetry, and Pope.

Friend to my Life! (which did not you prolong,  
 The world had wanted many an idle song)

What Drop or Nostrum can this plague remove?

30 Or which must end me, a fool's wrath or love?

A dire dilemma! either way I'm sped.

If foes, they write, if friends, they read me dead.

Seiz'd and tied down to judge, how wretched I!

Who can't be silent, and who will not lie.

35 To laugh, were want of goodness and of grace,

And to be grave, exceeds all pow'r of face.

I sit with sad civility, I read

With honest anguish, and an aching head;

And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,

40 This saving counsel, "Keep your piece nine years."

"Nine years!" cries he, who high in Drury-lane,  
 Lull'd by soft zephyrs thro' the broken pane,

Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before Term ends,

Oblig'd by hunger, and request of friends:

45 "The piece, you think, is incorrect? why, take it,

I'm all submission, what you'd have it, make it."

Three things another's modest wishes bound,

My friendship, and a Prologue, and ten pound.

23. Arthur Moore, a prominent politician, whose son's attempts at verse aroused Pope's scorn.

40. Nonumque prematur in annum. Horace, *De Arte Poetica*, 388.

43. Term, the London "season."

Pitholeon sends to me : “ You know his Grace,  
 50 I want a patron ; ask him for a place.”

‘ Pitholeon libel’d me,’ — “ but here ’s a letter  
 Informs you, Sir, ’t was when he knew no better.  
 Dare you refuse him ? Curll invites to dine,  
 He ’ll write a *Journal*, or he ’ll turn divine.”

55 Bless me ! a packet. — “ ’T is a stranger sues,  
 A Virgin Tragedy, an Orphan Muse.”

If I dislike it, “ Furies, death and rage ! ”

If I approve, “ Commend it to the stage.”

There (thank my stars) my whole commission  
 ends,

60 The play’rs and I are, luckily, no friends.

Fir’d that the house reject him, “ ’Sdeath I ’ll print  
 it,

And shame the fools — Your int’rest, Sir, with  
 Lintot ! ”

“ Lintot, dull rogue ! will think your price too  
 much : ”

51. Pitholeon, the name taken from a foolish poet of Rhodes, who pretended much to Greek. — POPE.

53. Edmund Curll was a piratical bookseller who did Pope several ill turns, as in publishing some of his private letters (see 113 below), and printing in his name various sorts of rubbish (see 351 below, and Pope’s note).

54. The *London Journal* favored the Whigs. Pope was very little of a politician, but his leaning was toward the Tories.

60. In the early editions the line read —

“ Cibber and I are luckily no friends.”

Pope’s one attempt at dramatic writing, *Three Hours after Marriage*, written in connection with Gay and Arbuthnot, was a flat failure. The legitimate fun made of it by Colby Cibber was the source of a feud between them, which ended only in Cibber’s being made the main figure in *The Dunciad*.

62. Bernard Lintot, after 1712, published much of Pope’s work.

“Not, Sir, if you revise it and retouch.”

65 All my demurs but double his attacks ;  
At last he whispers, “Do ; and we go snacks.”  
Glad of a quarrel, straight I clap the door,  
Sir, let me see your works and you no more.

’T is sung, when Midas’ ears began to spring,  
70 (Midas, a sacred person and a king)  
His very Minister who spy’d them first,  
(Some say his Queen) was forc’d to speak, or burst.  
And is not mine, my friend, a sorer case,  
When ev’ry coxcomb perks them in my face ?  
75 A. Good friend, forbear ! you deal in dang’rous  
things.

I’d never name Queens, Ministers, or Kings ;  
Keep close to ears, and those let asses prick ;  
’T is nothing — P. Nothing ? if they bite and kick ?  
Out with it, DUNCIAD ! let the secret pass,  
80 That secret to each fool, that he’s an ass :  
The truth once told (and wherefore should we lie ?)  
The Queen of Midas slept, and so may I.

You think this cruel ? take it for a rule,  
No creature smarts so little as a fool.  
85 Let peals of laughter, Codrus ! round thee break,  
Thou unconcern’d canst hear the mighty crack :  
Pit, Box, and gall’ry in convulsions hurl’d,  
Thou stand’st unshook amidst a bursting world.  
Who shames a Scribbler ? break one cobweb thro’,

69. See Persius, *Satire* i. 120.

72. The story is told by some of his Barber, but by Chaucer  
of his Queen. See *Wife of Baths Tale*. — POPE.

88. Alluding to Horace, *Ode* iii. 3 : —

Si fractus illabatur orbis  
Impavidum ferient ruinæ. — POPE.

In translating this ode, Addison had used the phrase, “the  
mighty crack” (86 above), and Pope had ridiculed him for it.

- 90 He spins the slight, self-pleasing thread anew :  
 Destroy his fib or sophistry, in vain,  
 The creature 's at his dirty work again,  
 Thron'd in the centre of his thin designs,  
 Proud of a vast extent of flimsy lines !
- 95 Whom have I hurt? has Poet yet, or Peer,  
 Lost the arch'd eyebrow, or Parnassian sneer ?  
 . . . . .  
 Does not one table Bavius still admit ?
- 100 Still to one Bishop Philips seem a wit ?  
 Still Sappho — *A.* Hold ! for God's sake — you 'll  
 offend,  
 No names ! — be calm ! — learn prudence of a friend !  
 I too could write, and I am twice as tall ;  
 But foes like these — *P.* One flatt'rer 's worse than  
 all.
- 105 Of all mad creatures, if the learn'd are right,  
 It is the slaver kills, and not the bite.  
 A fool quite angry is quite innocent :  
 Alas ! 't is ten times worse when they repent.  
 One dedicates in high heroic prose,
- 110 And ridicules beyond a hundred foes :  
 One from all Grubstreet will my fame defend,  
 And more abusive, calls himself my friend.  
 This prints my *Letters*, that expects a bribe,  
 And others roar aloud, " Subscribe, subscribe ! "
- 115 There are, who to my person pay their court :  
 I cough like Horace, and, tho' lean, am short ;

100. Ambrose Philips was a protégé of Addison's and a writer of sugary pastorals, which gained him the nickname of Namby-pamby Philips. A Bishop Boulter became his patron.

101. Sappho is the name which Pope applies to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. In 369, below, he alludes plainly to his early attachment to her.

Ammon's great son one shoulder had too high ;  
 Such Ovid's nose, and " Sir ! you have an eye " —  
 Go on, obliging creatures, make me see  
 120 All that disgrac'd my betters, met in me.  
 Say for my comfort, languishing in bed,  
 " Just so immortal Maro held his head."  
 And when I die, be sure you let me know  
 Great Homer died three thousand years ago.  
 125 Why did I write ? what sin to me unknown  
 Dipt me in ink, my parents', or my own ?  
 As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,  
 I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.  
 I left no calling for this idle trade,  
 130 No duty broke, no father disobey'd.  
 The Muse but serv'd to ease some friend, not wife,  
 To help me thro' this long disease, my life,  
 To second, ARBUTHNOT ! thy art and care,  
 And teach the being you preserv'd, to bear.  
 135 But why then publish ? *Granville* the polite,  
 And knowing *Walsh*, would tell me I could write ;  
 Well-natur'd *Garth* inflam'd with early praise ;  
 And *Congreve* lov'd, and *Swift* endur'd my lays ;

118. It is remarkable that, amongst these complaints on his infirmities and deformities, he mentions his eye, which was fine and piercing. — WARBURTON.

128.

Sponte sua Carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos,  
 Et, quod tentabam dicere, versus erat.

OVID, *Tristia*, 4, x. 25, 26.

135. *Granville*, George *Granville*, afterwards Lord *Lansdowne*, known for his poems, most of which he composed very young. — POPE.

*Granville*, Mr. *Walsh*, and Dr. *Garth* are mentioned in Pope's first note to the *Pastorals* as among those who encouraged him in his earliest efforts.



The courtly *Talbot*, *Somers*, *Sheffield*, read ;  
 140 Ev'n mitred *Rochester* would nod the head,  
 And *St. John's* self (great *Dryden's* friends be-  
 fore)

With open arms receiv'd one poet more.  
 Happy my studies, when by these approv'd !  
 Happier their author, when by these belov'd !  
 145 From these the world will judge of men and books,  
 Not from the *Burnets*, *Oldmixon's*, and *Cookes*.

Soft were my numbers ; who could take offence,  
 While pure Description held the place of Sense ?  
 Like gentle *Fanny's* was my flow'ry theme,  
 150 A painted mistress, or a purling stream.

Yet then did *Gildon* draw his venal quill ; —  
 I wish'd the man a dinner, and sat still.  
 Yet then did *Dennis* rave in furious fret ;  
 I never answer'd, — I was not in debt.

155 If want provok'd, or madness made them print,  
 I wag'd no war with *Bedlam* or the *Mint*.

Did some more sober critic come abroad ;  
 If wrong, I smil'd ; if right, I kiss'd the rod.  
 Pains, reading, study, are their just pretence,

139. These are the persons to whose account the author charges the publication of his first pieces, persons with whom he was conversant (and he adds beloved) at sixteen or seventeen years of age; an early period for such acquaintance. The catalogue might have been made yet more illustrious had he not confined it to that time when he writ the *Pastorals* and *Windsor Forest*, on which he passes a sort of censure in the lines following [147–150]. — POPE.

146. Authors of secret and scandalous history. — POPE.

149. Fauny, Lord Hervey, the Sporus of lines 305–333 below.

151. Gildon, a critic who had abused Pope.

153. John Dennis, a free-lance in letters, and one of the favorite butts of Pope's satire. It was he who indirectly caused the difference between Pope and Addison.

- 160 And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense.  
 Commas and points they set exactly right,  
 And 't were a sin to rob them of their mite.  
 Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel grac'd these ribalds,  
 From slashing *Bentley* down to pidling *Tibalds* :
- 165 Each wight, who reads not, and but scans and  
 spells,  
 Each word-catcher, that lives on syllables,  
 Ev'n such small critics some regard may claim,  
 Preserv'd in *Milton's* or in *Shakespeare's* name.  
 Pretty ! in amber to observe the forms,
- 170 Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms !  
 The things, we know, are neither rich nor rare,  
 But wonder how the devil they got there.  
 Were others angry : I excus'd them too ;  
 Well might they rage, I gave them but their due.
- 175 A man's true merit 't is not hard to find ;  
 But each man's secret standard in his mind,  
 That casting-weight pride adds to emptiness,  
 This, who can gratify ? for who can guess ?  
 The bard whom pilfer'd Pastorals renown,
- 180 Who turns a Persian tale for half a crown,  
 Just writes to make his barrenness appear,  
 And strains, from hard-bound brains, eight lines a  
 year ;  
 He, who still wanting, tho' he lives on theft,  
 Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing left :
- 185 And he, who now to sense, now nonsense leaning,

164. Richard Bentley's edition of *Paradise Lost*, which appeared in 1732, was at once the last and least worthy effort of his critical prowess; as to Theobald's *Shakespeare*, it was an honest and not wholly unsuccessful piece of work, and a better edition than Pope's own. — WARD.

179. Pope means Ambrose Philips.

Means not, but blunders round about a meaning :  
 And he, whose fustian 's so sublimely bad,  
 It is not poetry, but prose run mad :  
 All these, my modest satire bade translate,  
 190 And own'd that nine such poets made a *Tate*.  
 How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and  
 chafe !

And swear, not ADDISON himself was safe.

Peace to all such ! but were there one whose fires  
 True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires ;  
 195 Blest with each talent and each art to please,  
 And born to write, converse, and live with ease :  
 Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,  
 Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne.  
 View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,  
 200 And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise ;  
 Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
 And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer ;  
 Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,  
 Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike ;  
 205 Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,  
 A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend ;  
 Dreading ev'n fools, by flatterers besieg'd,  
 And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd ;  
 Like Cato, give his little Senate laws,  
 210 And sit attentive to his own applause ;

190. Nahum Tate was then poet laureate, "the author of the worst alterations of *Shakespeare*," says Professor Craik, "the worst version of the Psalms of David, and the worst continuation of a great poem [Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*] extant."

193-214. The famous passage on Addison had been published twelve years before the *Epistle to Arbuthnot* was written. Addison's name appeared in the earlier version.

While Wits and Templars ev'ry sentence raise,  
 And wonder with a foolish face of praise: —  
 Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?  
 Who would not weep, if ATTICUS were he?

215 What tho' my name stood rubric on the walls  
 Or plaister'd posts with claps in capitals?  
 Or smoking forth, a hundred hawkers' load,  
 On wings of winds came flying all abroad?  
 I sought no homage from the race that write;  
 220 I kept, like Asian Monarchs, from their sight;  
 Poems I heeded (now be-rhym'd so long)  
 No more than thou, great GEORGE! a birth-day  
 song.

I ne'er with wits or witlings pass'd my days,  
 To spread about the itch of verse and praise;  
 225 Nor like a puppy, daggled thro' the town,  
 To fetch and carry sing-song up and down;  
 Nor at rehearsals sweat, and mouth'd and cry'd,  
 With handkerchief and orange at my side;  
 But sick of fops, and poetry, and prate,  
 230 To *Bufo* left the whole Castalian state.

Proud as Apollo on his forked hill,  
 Sat full-blown *Bufo*, puff'd by ev'ry quill;  
 Fed with soft Dedication all day long,  
 Horace and he went hand in hand in song.  
 235 His library (where busts of poets dead  
 And a true Pindar stood without a head)  
 Receiv'd of wits an undistinguish'd race,

218. Pope credits this line to Hopkins's paraphrase of Psalm civ.

232. *Bufo* probably stands for Lord Halifax.

236. Ridicules the affectation of Antiquaries, who frequently exhibit the headless trunks and terms of statues, for Plato, Homer, Pindar, etc. — POPE.

Who first his judgment ask'd, and then a place :  
 Much they extoll'd his pictures, much his seat,  
 240 And flatter'd ev'ry day, and some days eat :  
 Till grown more frugal in his riper days,  
 He paid some bards with port, and some with  
     praise ;  
 To some a dry rehearsal was assign'd,  
 And others (harder still) he paid in kind.  
 245 *Dryden* alone (what wonder ?) came not nigh,  
*Dryden* alone escap'd this judging eye :  
 But still the great have kindness in reserve ;  
 He help'd to bury whom he help'd to starve.  
 May some choice patron bless each gray goose  
     quill !  
 250 May ev'ry *Bavius* have his *Bufo* still !  
 So, when a statesman wants a day's defence,  
 Or Envy holds a whole week's war with Sense,  
 Or simple Pride for flatt'ry makes demands,  
 May dunce by dunce be whistled off my hands !  
 255 Blest be the great ! for those they take away,  
 And those they left me ; for they left me GAY ;  
 Left me to see neglected Genius bloom,  
 Neglected die, and tell it on his tomb :  
 Of all thy blameless life the sole return  
 260 My verse and QUEENSB'RY weeping o'er thy urn.  
     Oh let me live my own, and die so too !  
     (To live and die is all I have to do :)  
     Maintain a poet's dignity and ease,

248. Mr. Dryden, after having lived in exigencies, had a magnificent funeral bestowed upon him by the contribution of several persons of quality. — POPE.

256. John Gay (1688–1732), author of the famous *Beggar's Opera*, and one of Pope's best friends. In his last years he was taken excellent care of by the Duke of Queensbury (260, below), and died by no means a pauper.

- And see what friends, and read what books I  
 please ;
- 265 Above a patron, tho' I condescend  
 Sometimes to call a minister my friend.  
 I was not born for courts or great affairs ;  
 I pay my debts, believe, and say my pray'rs ;  
 Can sleep without a poem in my head ;
- 270 Nor know, if *Dennis* be alive or dead.  
 Why am I ask'd what next shall see the light ?  
 Heav'ns ! was I born for nothing but to write ?  
 Has life no joys for me ? or, (to be grave)  
 Have I no friend to serve, no soul to save ?
- 275 ' I found him close with *Swift* ' — ' Indeed ? no  
 doubt,'  
 (Cries prating *Balbus*) ' something will come out.'  
 'Tis all in vain, deny it as I will.  
 ' No, such a Genius never can lie still ;'  
 And then for mine obligingly mistakes
- 280 The first lampoon Sir *Will*, or *Bubo* makes.  
 Poor guiltless I ! and can I choose but smile,  
 When ev'ry coxcomb knows me by my *Style* ?  
 Curst be the verse, how well soe'er it flow,  
 That tends to make one worthy man my foe,
- 285 Give Virtue scandal, Innocence a fear,  
 Or from the soft-eyed virgin steal a tear.  
 But he who hurts a harmless neighbor's peace,  
 Insults fall'n worth, or Beauty in distress,  
 Who loves a lie, lame Slander helps about,
- 290 Who writes a libel, or who copies out :  
 That fop, whose pride affects a patron's name,  
 Yet absent, wounds an author's honest fame ;  
 Who can your merit selfishly approve,

280. See *Essay on Man*, iv. 278, and note.

And show the sense of it without the love ;  
 275 Who has the vanity to call you friend,  
 Yet wants the honor, injur'd, to defend ;  
 Who tells whate'er you think, whate'er you say,  
 And, if he lie not, must at least betray :  
 Who to the *Dean*, and *silver bell* can swear,  
 300 And sees at *Canons* what was never there ;  
 Who reads, but with a lust to misapply,  
 Make satire a lampoon, and fiction, lie.  
 A lash like mine no honest man shall dread,  
 But all such babbling blockheads in his stead,  
 305 Let *Sporus* tremble — A. What? that thing of  
     silk,  
     *Sporus*, that mere white curd of Ass's milk ?  
 Satire or sense, alas ! can *Sporus* feel ?  
 Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel ?  
*P.* Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,  
 310 This painted child of dirt, that stinks and stings ;  
 Whose buzz the witty and the fair annoys,  
 Yet wit ne'er tastes, and beauty ne'er enjoys :  
 So well-bred spaniels civilly delight  
 In mumbling of the game they dare not bite.  
 315 Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,  
 As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.  
 Whether in florid impotence he speaks,  
 And, as the prompter breathes, the puppet squeaks ;

299. Pope had been accused of ridiculing, in the *Essay on Taste*, the furniture and appointments of Canons, the seat of the Duke of Chandos, where Pope had been received. Pope's denial of the charge was accepted by the Duke.

305. *Sporus* is John Lord Hervey, a well-known court favorite. He seems to have been at least harmless. Pope, for some unknown reason, conceived one of his violent antipathies for him, and the following lines, hardly less celebrated than those on Addison, are the result.

Or at the ear of Eve, familiar toad,  
 320 Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad,  
 In puns, or politics, or tales, or lies,  
 Or spite, or smut, or rhymes, or blasphemies.  
 His wit all see-saw, between *that* and *this*,  
 Now high, now low, now master up, now miss,  
 325 And he himself one vile Antithesis.  
 Amphibious thing! that acting either part,  
 The trifling head or the corrupted heart,  
 Fop at the toilet, flatt'rer at the board,  
 Now trips a lady, and now struts a lord.  
 330 Eve's tempter thus the Rabbins have exprest,  
 A Cherub's face, a reptile all the rest;  
 Beauty that shocks you, parts that none will trust;  
 Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust.  
 Not fortune's worshipper, nor fashion's fool,  
 335 Not Lucre's madman, nor Ambition's tool,  
 Not proud nor servile; — be one poet's praise,  
 That, if he pleas'd, he pleas'd by manly ways:  
 That flatt'ry, ev'n to kings, he held a shame,  
 And thought a lie in verse or prose the same.  
 340 That not in fancy's maze he wander'd long,  
 But stoop'd to truth, and moraliz'd his song:  
 That not for Fame, but Virtue's better end,  
 He stood the furious foe, the timid friend,  
 The damning critic, half approving wit,  
 345 The coxcomb hit, or fearing to be hit;  
 Laugh'd at the loss of friends he never had,  
 The dull, the proud, the wicked, and the mad;  
 The distant threats of vengeance on his head,  
 The blow unfelt, the tear he never shed;  
 350 The tale reviv'd, the lie so oft o'erthrown,

350. As that he received subscriptions to *Shakespeare*, that he set his name to Mr. Broome's verses, etc., which, though publicly



Th' imputed trash, and dulness not his own ;  
 The morals blacken'd when the writings scape,  
 The libel'd person, and the pictur'd shape ;  
 Abuse, on all he lov'd, or lov'd him, spread,  
 355 A friend in exile, or a father dead ;  
 The whisper, that to greatness still too near,  
 Perhaps, yet vibrates on his SOV'REIGN'S ear : —  
 Welcome for thee, fair Virtue ! all the past ;  
 For thee, fair Virtue ! welcome ev'n the last !  
 360 A. But why insult the poor, affront the  
       great ?  
 P. A knave's a knave, to me, in ev'ry state :  
 Alike my scorn, if he succeed or fail,  
*Sporus* at court, or *Japhet* in a jail,  
 A hireling scribbler, or a hireling peer,  
 365 Knight of the post corrupt, or of the shire,  
 If on a Pillory, or near a Throne,  
 He gain his Prince's ear, or lose his own.  
 Yet soft by nature, more a dupe than wit,  
*Sappho* can tell you how this man was bit ;  
 370 This dreaded Sat'rist *Dennis* will confess  
 Foe to his pride, but friend to his distress :  
 So humble, he has knock'd at *Tibbald's* door,  
 Has drunk with *Cibber*, nay has rhym'd for *Moore*.

disproved, were nevertheless shamelessly repeated in the libels. —  
 POPE.

351. This imputed Trash, such as profane psalms, court poems, and other scandalous things, printed in his name by Curll and others. — POPE.

365. The so-called Knights of the Post stood about the sheriff's pillars near the courts, in readiness to swear anything for pay. — WARD.

371. Friend to his distress. In 1733 Pope wrote a prologue to a play given for the benefit of Dennis, who was then old, blind, and not far from death.

Full ten years slander'd, did he once reply?

375 Three thousand suns went down on *Welsted's*  
lie.

To please a Mistress one aspers'd his life ;

He lash'd him not, but let her be his wife.

Let *Budgel* charge low *Grubstreet* on his quill,

And write whate'er he pleas'd, except his will ;

380 Let the two *Curlls* of Town and Court, abuse

His father, mother, body, soul, and muse.

Yet why? that Father held it for a rule,

It was a sin to call our neighbor fool :

385 Hear this, and spare his family, James Moore !

Unspotted names, and memorable long !

If there be force in virtue, or in song.

Of gentle blood (part shed in honor's cause,

While yet in Britain honor had applause)

390 Each parent sprung — *A.* What fortune, pray? —

*P.* Their own,

And better got, than *Bestia's* from the throne.

Born to no pride, inheriting no strife,

374. Ten years. It was so long after many libels before the author of the *Dunciad* published that poem, till when he never writ a word in answer to the many scurrilities and falsehoods concerning him. — POPE.

375. *Welsted's* lie. This man had the impudence to tell in print that Mr. P. had occasioned a lady's death, and to name a person he never heard of. — POPE.

379. *Budgel* was charged with forging a will, with profit to himself.

381. Pope has a long note on this passage, in which he goes much into detail to prove the respectability of his parents.

391. *L. Calpurnius Bestia*, who here seems to signify the Duke of Marlborough, was a Roman proconsul, bribed by *Jugurtha* into a dishonorable peace. — WARD.

Nor marrying discord in a noble wife ;  
 Stranger to civil and religious rage,  
 395 The good man walk'd innoxious thro' his age.  
 Nor courts he saw, no suits would ever try,  
 Nor dar'd an oath, nor hazarded a lie.  
 Unlearn'd, he knew no schoolman's subtle art,  
 No language, but the language of the heart.  
 400 By nature honest, by experience wise,  
 Healthy by temp'rance, and by exercise ;  
 His life, tho' long, to sickness past unknown,  
 His death was instant, and without a groan.  
 O grant me thus to live, and thus to die !  
 405 Who sprung from kings shall know less joy than I.  
     O Friend ! may each domestic bliss be thine !  
 Be no unpleasing melancholy mine :  
 Me, let the tender office long engage,  
 To rock the cradle of reposing Age,  
 410 With lenient arts extend a Mother's breath,  
 Make Languor smile, and smooth the bed of Death,  
 Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,  
 And keep a while one parent from the sky !  
 On cares like these if length of days attend,  
 415 May Heav'n, to bless those days, preserve my  
     friend,  
 Preserve him social, cheerful, and serene,  
 And just so rich as when he serv'd a Queen.  
 A. Whether that blessing be deny'd or giv'n,  
 Thus far was right, the rest belongs to Heav'n.

393. Dryden had married Lady Howard, and Addison the Countess of Warwick.

397. He was a non-juror, and would not take the oath of allegiance or supremacy, or the oath against the Pope. — BOWLES.

417. Dr. Arbuthnot had been the favorite physician of Queen Anne.



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