

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
ALEXANDER POPE,
WITH HIS LAST
CORRECTIONS, ADDITIONS,
AND
IMPROVEMENTS.
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

821

FROM THE TEXT OF DR. WARBURTON.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

But see, at length, the British Genius smile,
And show'r her bounties o'er her favour'd isle:
Behold, for POPE she twines the laurel crown,
And centres ev'ry poet's pow'r in one-----
Each Muse for thee with kind contention strove,
For thee the Graces left th' Idalian grove,
With watchful fondness o'er thy cradle hung,
Attun'd thy voice, and form'd thy infant tongue. BROWN.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

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THE PRINCE OF WALES.

1787.

POETICAL WORKS
OF
ALEXANDER POPE.
VOL. II.
CONTAINING HIS

ESSAY ON MAN,	WIFE OF BATH,
ESSAY ON CRITICISM,	STATIUS' THEBAIS,
MORAL ESSAYS,	BOOK FIRST,

&c. &c. &c.

Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come along;
 Oh, master of the poet and the song!
 And while the Muse now stoops, or now ascends,
 To man's low passions or their glorious ends,
 Teach me, like thee, in various Nature wise,
 To fall with dignity, with temper rise----
 Oh! while along the stream of time thy name
 Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,
 Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
 Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?
 Shall then this Verse to future age pretend
 Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?
 That, urg'd 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,
 Shew'd erring Pride whatever is its right----
 That virtue only makes our bliss below,
 And all our knowledge is ourselves to know. ESS. ON MAN.

LONDON:
 PRINTED FOR J. BELL, BOOKSELLER TO HIS
 ROYAL HIGHNESS
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1787.

AN ESSAY ON SATIRE,

Occasioned by the
DEATH OF MR. POPE.

Inscribed to
MR. WARBURTON.

BY J. BROWN, A. M.

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AN ESSAY ON SATIRE.

PART I.

FATE gave the word; the cruel arrow sped,
And Pope lies number'd with the mighty dead!
Resign'd he fell; superior to the dart
That quench'd its rage in Your's and Britain's heart.
You mourn; but Britain, lull'd in rest profound, 5
(Unconscious Britain!) slumbers o'er her wound.
Exulting Dulness ey'd the setting light,
And flapp'd her wing, impatient for the night:
Rous'd at the signal Guilt collects her train,
And counts the triumphs of her growing reign: 10
With inextinguishable rage they burn,
And snake-hung' Envy hisses o'er his urn:
Th' envenom'd monsters spit their deadly foam
To blast the laurel that surrounds his tomb.

But you, O Warburton! whose eye refin'd 15
Can see the greatness of an honest mind;
Can see each virtue and each grace unite,
And taste the raptures of a pure delight;
You visit oft' his awful page with care,
And view that bright assemblage treasur'd there; 20
You trace the chain that links his deep design,
And pour new lustre on the glowing line.
Yet deign to hear the efforts of a Muse.
Whose eye, not wing, his ardent flight pursues:

Intent from this great archetype to draw 25
Satire's bright form, and fix her equal law;
Pleas'd if from hence th' unlearn'd may comprehend,
And rev'rence his and Satire's gen'rous end.

In ev'ry breast there burns an active flame,
The love of glory, or the dread of shame: 30
The passion one, tho' various it appear,
As brighten'd into hope, or dimm'd by fear.
The lisping infant and the hoary sire,
And youth and manhood, feel the heart-born fire:
The charms of praise the coy, the modest, woo, 35
And only fly that glory may pursue:
She, pow'r resistless, rules the wise and great,
Bends ev'n reluctant hermits at her feet;
Haunts the proud city and the lowly shade,
And sways alike the sceptre and the spade. 40

Thus Heav'n in pity wakes the friendly flame,
To urge mankind on deeds that merit fame:
But man, vain man! in folly only wise,
Rejects the manna sent him from the skies:
With rapture hears corrupted Passion's call, 45
Still proudly prone to mingle with the stall.
As each deceitful shadow tempts his view,
He for the imag'd substance quits the true;
Eager to catch the visionary prize,
In quest of glory plunges deep in vice; 50
Till madly zealous, impotently vain,
He forfeits ev'ry praise he pants to gain.

Thus still imperious Nature plies her part,
And still her dictates work in ev'ry heart.

Each pow'r that sov'reign Nature bids enjoy 55
Man may corrupt, but man can ne'er destroy :
Like mighty rivers, with resistless force
The passions rage, obstructed in their course ;
Swell to new heights, forbidden paths explore,
And drown those virtues which they fed before. 60

And sure the deadliest foe to virtue's flame,
Or worst of evils, is perverted shame :
Beneath this load what abject numbers groan,
Th' entangled slaves, to folly not their own !
Meanly by fashionable fear opprest, 65
We seek our virtues in each other's breast ;
Blind to ourselves, adopt each foreign vice,
Another's weakness, int'rest, or caprice.
Each fool to low ambition, poorly great,
That pines in splendid wretchedness of state, 70
Tir'd in the treach'rous chase, would nobly yield,
And, but for shame, like Sylla, quit the field :
The dæmon Shame paints strong the ridicule,
And whispers close, " The world will call you fool."

Behold yon' wretch, by impious fashion driv'n, 75
Believes and trembles while he scoffs at Heav'n.
By weakness strong, and bold thro' fear alone,
He dreads the sneer by shallow coxcombs thrown ;
Dauntless pursues the path Spinoza trod,
To man a coward, and a brave to God. 80

Faith, Justice, Heav'n itself, now quit their hold,
When to false fame the captiv'd heart is sold :
Hence, blind to truth, relentless Cato dy'd ;
Nought could subdue his virtue but his pride :

Hence chaste Lucretia's innocence betray'd 85
Fell by that honour which was meant its aid.
Thus Virtue sinks beneath unnumber'd woes
When passions, born her friends, revolt her foes.

Hence Satire's pow'r : 'tis her corrective part
To calm the wild disorders of the heart. 90
She points the arduous height where glory lies,
And teaches mad Ambition to be wise ;
In the dark bosom wakes the fair desire,
Draws good from ill, a brighter flame from fire ;
Strips black Oppression of her gay disguise, 95
And bids the hag in native horror rise ;
Strikes tow'ring Pride and lawless Rapine dead,
And plants the wreath on Virtue's awful head.

Nor boasts the Muse a vain imagin'd pow'r,
Tho' oft' she mourns those ills she cannot cure. 100
The worthy court her, and the worthless fear ;
Who shun her piercing eye that eye revere.
Her awful voice the vain and vile obey,
And ev'ry foe to wisdom feels her sway.
Smarts, pedants, as she smiles, no more are vain ;
Desponding Fops resign the clouded cane : 106
Hush'd at her voice, pert Folly's self is still,
And Dulness wonders while she drops her quill.
Like the arm'd bee, with art most subtly true
From pois'nous vice she draws a healing dew. 110
Weak are the ties that civil arts can find
To quell the ferment of the tainted mind :
Cunning evades, securely wrapt in wiles,
And Force strong-sinew'd rends th' unequal toils :

The stream of vice impetuous drives along, 115
Too deep for Policy, for Pow'r too strong.
Ev'n fair Religion, native of the skies,
Scorn'd by the crowd, seeks refuge with the wise;
The crowd with laughter spurns her awful train,
And Mercy courts and Justice frowns in vain. 120
But Satire's shaft can pierce the harden'd breast;
She plays a ruling passion on the rest;
Undaunted storms the batt'ry of his pride,
And awes the brave that earth and heav'n defy'd.
When fell Corruption, by her vassals crown'd, 125
Derides fall'n Justice prostrate on the ground,
Swift to redress an injur'd people's groan,
Bold Satire shakes the tyrant on her throne;
Pow'rful as Death, defies the sordid train,
And slaves and sycophants surround in vain. 130

But with the friends of Vice, the foes of Satire,
All truth is spleen, all just reproof ill-nature.

Well may they dread the Muse's fatal skill;
Well may they tremble when she draws her quill:
Her magic quill, that, like Ithuriel's spear, 135
Reveals the cloven hoof or lengthen'd ear;
Bids Vice and Folly take their nat'ral shapes,
Turns duchesses to strumpets, beaus to apes;
Drags the vile whisp'rer from his dark abode,
Till all the dæmon starts up from the toad. 140

O sordid maxim, form'd to screen the vile,
That true Good-nature still must wear a smile!
In frowns array'd her beauties stronger rise,
When love of virtue wakes her scorn of vice.

Where justice calls 'tis cruelty to save, 145
And 'tis the law's good-nature hangs the knave.
Who combats virtue's foe is virtue's friend;
Then judge of Satire's merit by her end :
To guilt alone her vengeance stands confin'd;
The object of her love is all mankind. 150
Scarce more the friend of man, the wise must own,
Ev'n Allen's bounteous hand than Satire's frown:
This to chastise, as that to bless, was giv'n,
Alike the faithful ministers of Heav'n.

Oft' in unfeeling hearts the shaft is spent; 155
Tho' strong th' example, weak the punishment.
They least are paid who merit Satire most;
Folly the Laureat's, vice was Chartres' boast :
Then where's the wrong to gibbet high the name
Of fools and knaves already dead to shame? 160
Oft' Satire acts the faithful surgeon's part;
Gen'rous and kind, tho' painful, is her art :
With caution bold, she only strikes to heal,
Tho' Folly raves to break the friendly steel :
Then sure no fault impartial Satire knows, 165
Kind ev'n in vengeance, kind to Virtue's foes.
Whose is the crime the scandal too be theirs :
The Knave and Fool are their own libellers.

PART II.

DARE nobly then : but, conscious of your trust,
As ever warm and bold, be ever just ; 170
Nor court applause in these degen'rate days :
The villain's censure is extorted praise.

But chief, be steady in a noble end,
And shew mankind that truth has yet a friend,
'Tis mean for empty praise of wit to write, 175
As foplings grin to show their teeth are white.
To brand a doubtful folly with a smile,
Or madly blaze unknown defects, is vile:
'Tis doubly vile when, but to prove your art,
You fix an arrow in a blameless heart. 180
O lost to Honour's voice, O doom'd to shame,
Thou fiend accurs'd, thou murderer of fame!
Fell ravisher, from innocence to tear
That name than liberty, than life, more dear!
Where shall thy baseness meet its just return? 185
Or what repay thy guilt but endless scorn?
And know, immortal Truth shall mock thy toil;
Immortal Truth shall bid the shaft recoil:
With rage retorted wing the deadly dart,
And empty all its poison in thy heart. 190

With caution next the dang'rous pow'r apply;
An eagle's talon asks an eagle's eye:
Let Satire then her proper object know,
And ere she strike be sure she strike a foe.
Nor fondly deem the real fool confest, 195
Because blind Ridicule conceives a jest;
Before whose altar Virtue oft' hath bled,
And oft' a destin'd victim shall be led:
Lo! Shaftsb'ry rears her high on Reason's throne,
And loads the slave with honours not her own: 200
Big-swoln with folly, as her smiles provoke,
Profaneness spawns, pert dunces nurse the joke!

Come, let us join a while this titt'ring crew,
And own the idiot guide for once is true;
Deride our weak forefathers' musty rule, 205
Who therefore smil'd because they saw a fool;
Sublimier logic now adorns our isle,
We therefore see a fool because we smile.
Truth in her gloomy cave why fondly seek?
Lo! gay she sits in Laughter's dimpled cheek; 210
Contemns each surly academic foe,
And courts the spruce freethinker and the beau.
Dædalian arguments but few can trace,
But all can read the language of grimace.
Hence mighty Ridicule's all-conqu'ring hand 215
Shall work Herculean wonders thro' the land:
Bound in the magic of her cobweb chain
You, mighty Warburton! shall rage in vain;
In vain the trackless maze of truth you scan,
And lend th' informing clue to erring man. 220
No more shall Reason boast her pow'r divine,
Her base eternal shook by Folly's mine!
Truth's sacred fort th' exploded laugh shall win,
And coxcombs vanquish Berkley by a grin.
But you, more sage, reject th' inverted rule, 225
That truth is e'er explor'd by ridicule:
On truth, on falsehood, let her colours fall,
She throws a dazzling glare alike on all;
As the gay prism but mocks the flatter'd eye,
And gives to ev'ry object ev'ry dye. 230
Beware the mad advent'rer: bold and blind
She hoists her sail, and drives with ev'ry wind;

Deaf as the storm to sinking Virtue's groan,
Nor heeds a friend's destruction or her own.
Let clear-ey'd Reason at the helm preside, 235
Bear to the wind, or stem the furious tide;
Then mirth may urge when reason can explore,
This point the way, that waft us glad to shore.

Tho' distant times may rise in Satire's page,
Yet chief 'tis her's to draw the present age: 240
With Wisdom's lustre Folly's shade contrast,
And judge the reigning manners by the past;
Bid Britain's heroes (awful shades!) arise,
And ancient honour beam on modern vice;
Point back, to minds ingenuous, actions fair, 245
Till the sons blush at what their fathers were:
Ere yet 'twas beggary the great to trust,
Ere yet 'twas quite a folly to be just;
When low-born sharpers only dar'd a lie,
Or falsify'd the card, or cogg'd the die; 250
Ere Lewdness the stain'd garb of Honour wore,
Or Chastity was carted for the whore;
Vice flutter'd, in the plumes of Freedom drest,
Or public spirit was the public jest.

Be ever in a just expression bold, 255
Yet ne'er degrade fair Satire to a scold:
Let no unworthy mien her form debase,
But let her smile and let her frown with grace;
In mirth be temp'rate, temp'rate in her spleen,
Nor, while she preaches modesty, obscene. 260
Deep let her wound, not rankle to a sore,
Nor call his Lordship —, her Grace a —.

The Muse's charms resistless then assail
When wrapp'd in Irony's transparent veil:
Her beauties half-conceal'd the more surprise, 265
And keener lustre sparkles in her eyes.
Then be your line with sharp encomiums grac'd;
Style Clodius Honourable, Bufa Chaste.

Dart not on Folly an indignant eye:
Whoe'er discharg'd artillery on, a fly? 270
Deride not Vice; absurd the thought and vain
To bind the tiger in so weak a chain.
Nay more; when flagrant crimes your laughter move,
The knave exults: to smile is to approve.
The Muse's labour then success shall crown 275
When Folly feels her smile, and Vice her frown.

Know next what measures to each theme belong,
And suit your thoughts and numbers to your song:
On wing proportion'd to your quarry rise,
And stoop to earth, or soar among the skies. 280
Thus when a modish folly you rehearse,
Free the expression, simple be the verse:
In artless numbers paint th' ambitious peer
That mounts the box, and shines a charioteer:
In strains familiar sing the midnight toil 285
Of camps and senates disciplin'd by Hoyle;
Patriots and chiefs, whose deep design invades
And carries off the captive king---of Spades!
Let Satire here in milder vigour shine,
And gaily graceful sport along the line; 290
Bid courtly Fashion quit her thin pretence,
And smile each affectation into sense.

Not so when Virtue, by her guards betray'd,
Spurn'd from her throne, implores the Muses' aid;
When crimes, which erst in kindred darkness lay, 295
Rise frontless, and insult the eye of Day;
Indignant Hymen veils his hallow'd fires,
And white-rob'd Chastity with tears retires:
When rank Adult'ry on the genial bed,
Hot from Cocytus, rears her baleful head; 300
When private faith and public trust are sold,
And traitors barter liberty for gold;
When fell Corruption dark and deep, like Fate,
Saps the foundation of a sinking state;
When giant Vice and Irreligion rise 305
On mountain'd falsehoods to invade the skies;
Then warmer numbers glow thro' Satire's page,
And all her smiles are darken'd into rage;
On eagle wings she gains Parnassus' height,
Not lofty Epic soars a nobler flight: 310
Then keener indignation fires her eye;
Then flash her lightnings, and her thunders fly;
Wide and more wide her flaming bolts are hurl'd,
Till all her wrath involves the guilty world.
Yet Satire oft' assumes a gentler mien, 315
And beams on Virtue's friends a smile serene:
She wounds reluctant, pours her balm with joy,
Glad to commend where worth attracts her eye:
But chief when virtue, learning, arts, decline,
She joys to see unconquer'd Merit shine; 320
Where bursting glorious with departing ray
True genius gilds the close of Britain's day:

With joy she sees the stream of Roman art
From Murray's tongue flow purer to the heart;
Sees Yorke to fame e'er yet to manhood known, 325
And just to ev'ry virtue but his own;
Hears unstain'd Cam with gen'rous pride proclaim
A sage's, critic's, and a poet's, name;
Beholds where Widcombe's happy hills ascend
Each orphan'd art and virtue find a friend; 330
To Hagley's honour'd shade directs her view,
And culls each flow'r to form a wreath for you.

But tread with cautious step this dang'rous ground,
Beset with faithless precipices round:
Truth be your guide; disdain Ambition's call; 335
And if you fall with Truth you greatly fall.
'Tis Virtue's native lustre that must shine;
The poet can but set it in his line:
And who, unmov'd with laughter, can behold
A sordid pebble meanly grac'd with gold? 340
Let real merit then adorn your lays,
For shame attends on prostituted praise;
And all your wit, your most distinguish'd art,
But makes us grieve you want an honest heart.

Nor think the Muse by Satire's law confin'd; 345
She yields description of the noblest kind.
Inferior art the landscape may design,
And paint the purple ev'ning in the line:
Her daring thought essays a higher plan;
Her hand delineates passion, pictures man. 350
And great the toil the latent soul to trace,
To paint the heart, and catch internal grace;

By turns bid Vice or Virtue strike our eyes,
Now bid a Wolsey or a Cromwell rise;
Now, with a touch more sacred and refin'd, 355
Call forth a Chesterfield's or Lonsdale's mind.
Here sweet or strong may ev'ry colour flow,
Here let the pencil warm, the canvass glow;
Of light and shade provoke the noble strife,
And wake each striking feature into life. 360

PART III.

THRO' ages thus has Satire keenly shin'd,
The friend to truth, to virtue, and mankind:
Yet the bright flame from virtue ne'er had sprung,
And man was guilty ere the poet sung.
This Muse in silence joy'd each better age, 365
Till glowing crimes had wak'd her into rage:
Truth saw her honest spleen with new delight,
And bade her wing her shafts and urge their flight.
First on the sons of Greece she prov'd her art,
And Sparta felt the fierce Iambic dart; 370
To Latium next avenging Satire flew;
The flaming falchion rough Lucilius drew,
With dauntless warmth in Virtue's cause engag'd,
And conscious villains trembled as he rag'd.
Then sportive Horace caught the gen'rous fire,
For Satire's bow resign'd the sounding lyre; 376
Each arrow polish'd in his hand was seen,
And as it grew more polish'd grew more keen.
His art, conceal'd in study'd negligence,
Politely sly, cajoll'd the foes of sense: 380

He seem'd to sport and trifle with the dart,
But while he sported drove it to the heart.

In graver strains majestic Persius wrote,
Big with a ripe exuberance of thought ;
Greatly sedate, condemn'd a tyrant's reign, 385
And lash'd Corruption with a calm disdain.

More ardent eloquence and boundless rage
Inflame bold Juvenal's exalted page ;
His mighty numbers aw'd corrupted Rome,
And swept audacious Greatness to its doom : 390
The headlong torrent thund'ring from on high
Rent the proud rock that lately brav'd the sky.

But, lo ! the fatal victor of mankind,
Swoln Luxury!--pale Ruin stalks behind !
As countless insects from the north-east pour, 395
To blast the spring and ravage ev'ry flow'r,
So barb'rous millions spread contagious death,
The sick'ning laurel wither'd at their breath :
Deep Superstition's night the skies o'erhung,
Beneath whose baleful dews the poppy sprung : 400
No longer Genius woo'd the Nine to love,
But Dulness nodded in the Muse's grove ;
Wit, spirit, freedom, were the sole offence,
Nor aught was held so dangerous as sense.

At length, again fair Science shot her ray, 405
Dawn'd in the skies, and spoke returning day.
Now, Satire ! triumph o'er thy flying foe,
Now load thy quiver, string thy slacken'd bow.
'Tis done---See ! great Erasmus breaks the spell,
And wounds triumphant Folly in her cell : 410

(In vain the solemn cowl surrounds her face,
Vain all her bigot cant, her sour grimace)
With shame compell'd her leaden throne to quit,
And own the force of reason urg'd by wit.

'Twas then plain Donne in honest vengeance rose,
His wit harmonious, tho' his rhyme was prose : 416
He 'midst an age of puns and pedants wrote
With genuine sense and Roman strength of thought.

Yet scarce had Satire well relum'd her flame
(With grief the Muse records her country's shame)
Ere Britain saw the foul revolt commence, 421
And treach'rous Wit began her war with Sense.

Then rose a shameless mercenary train,
Whom latest time shall view with just disdain :
A race fantastic, in whose gaudy line 425

Untutor'd thought and tinsel beauty shine ;
Wit's shatter'd mirror lies in fragments bright,
Reflects not nature, but confounds the sight.

Dry morals the court poet blush'd to sing ;
'Twas all his praise to say " the oddest thing : " 430
Proud for a jest obscene, a patron's nod,
To martyr Virtue, or blaspheme his God.

Ill-fated Dryden ! who unmov'd can see
Th' extremes of wit and meanness join'd in thee !
Flames that could mount, and gain their kindred skies,
Low creeping in the putrid sink of Vice ; 436
A Muse whom Wisdom woo'd, but woo'd in vain,
The pimp of Pow'r, the prostitute to Gain :
Wreaths that should deck fair Virtue's form alone
To strumpets, traitors, tyrants, vilely thrown : 440

Unrivall'd parts, the scorn of honest fame,
And genius rise a monument of shame !

More happy France : immortal Boileau there
Supported Genius with a sage's care ;
Him with her love propitious Satire blest, 445
And breath'd her airs divine into his breast :
Fancy and sense to form his line conspire,
And faultless judgment guides the purest fire.

But see, at length, the British Genius smile,
And show'r her bounties o'er her favour'd isle : 450
Behold, for Pope she twines the laurel crown,
And centres ev'ry poet's pow'r in one !
Each Roman's force adorns his various page,
Gay smiles, collected strength, and manly rage.
Despairing Guilt and Dulness loath the sight, 455
As spectres vanish at approaching light :
In this clear mirror with delight we view
Each image justly fine and boldly true :
Here Vice, dragg'd forth by Truth's supreme decree,
Beholds and hates her own deformity : 460

While self-seen Virtue in the faithful line
With modest joy surveys her form divine.
But, oh ! what thoughts, what numbers, shall I find
But faintly to express the poet's mind ?
Who yonder star's effulgence can display, 465
Unless he dip his pencil in the ray ?
Who paint a god unless the god inspire ?
What catch the lightning but the speed of fire ?
So, mighty Pope ! to make thy genius known,
All pow'r is weak, all numbers---but thy own. 470

Each Muse for thee with kind contention strove,
For thee the Graces left th' Idalian grove,
With watchful fondness o'er thy cradle hung,
Attun'd thy voice, and form'd thy infant tongue.
Next to her bard majestic Wisdom came; 475
The bard enraptur'd caught the heav'nly flame;
With taste superior scorn'd the venal tribe;
Whom fear can sway, or guilty greatness bribe;
At Fancy's call who rear the wanton sail,
Sport with the stream, and trifle in the gale: 480
Sublimar views thy daring spirit bound;
Thy mighty voyage was creation's round;
Intent new worlds of wisdom to explore,
And bless mankind with Virtue's sacred store;
A nobler joy than wit can give, impart, 485
And pour a moral transport o'er the heart.
Fantastic wit shoots momentary fires,
And, like a meteor, while we gaze expires:
Wit kindled by the sulph'rous breath of Vice,
Like the blue lightning, while it shines destroys;
But Genius, fir'd by Truth's eternal ray, 491
Burns clear and constant, like the source of day:
Like this its beam prolific and refin'd,
Feeds, warms, inspirits, and exalts the mind;
Mildly dispels each wintry passion's gloom, 495
And opens all the virtues into bloom.
This praise, immortal Pope! to thee be giv'n;
Thy genius was indeed a gift from Heav'n.
Hail, Bard unequall'd! in whose deathless line
Reason and wit with strength collected shine; 500

Where matchless wit but wins the second praise,
Lost, nobly lost, in truth's superior blaze.
Did friendship e'er mislead thy wand'ring Muse?
That friendship sure may plead the great excuse:
'That sacred friendship which inspir'd thy song, 505
Fair in defect, and amiably wrong.
Error like this ev'n truth can scarce reprove;
'Tis almost virtue when it flows from love.

Ye deathless names! ye sons of endless praise!
By Virtue crown'd with never-fading bays! 510
Say, shall an artless Muse, if you inspire,
Light her pale lamp at your immortal fire?
Or if, O Warburton! inspir'd by you,
'The daring Muse a nobler path pursue,
By you inspir'd on trembling pinions soar, 515
The sacred founts of social bliss explore,
In her bold numbers chain the tyrant's rage,
And bid her country's glory fire her page:
If such her fate, do thou, fair Truth! descend,
And watchful guard her in an honest end: 520
Kindly severe, instruct her equal line
To court no friend, nor own a foe, but thine.
But if her giddy eye should vainly quit
Thy sacred paths, to run the maze of wit;
If her apostate heart should e'er incline 525
To offer incense at Corruption's shrine;
Urge, urge thy pow'r, the black attempt confound,
And dash the smoking censer to the ground.
Thus aw'd to fear instructed bards may see
That guilt is doom'd to sink in infamy. 530

AN ESSAY ON MAN:

IN FOUR EPISTLES.

TO H. ST. JOHN, L. 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 for ever escape our observation.

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C

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 it 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.

RECOMMENDATORY POEMS.

TO

THE AUTHOR OF THE ESSAY ON MAN.

WHEN Love's * great goddess, anxious for her son,
Beheld him wand'ring on a coast unknown,
A huntress in the wood she feign'd to stray,
To cheer his drooping mind, and point his way:
But Venus' charms no borrow'd form could hide: 5
He knew and worshipp'd his celestial guide.

Thus vainly, Pope, unseen you would dispense
Your glorious system of benevolence;
And, heav'nly taught, explain the angels' song,
That praise to God and peace to men belong. 10
Conceal'd in vain the bard divine we know,
From whence such truths could spring, such lines
could flow.

Applause, which justly so much worth pursues,
You only can deserve, or could refuse. 14

TO THE CONCEALED

AUTHOR OF THE ESSAY ON MAN.

YES, friend! thou art conceal'd. Conceal'd! but
Ever the brightest, more refulgent now, [how?
By thy own lustre hid! each nervous line,
Each melting verse, each syllable, is thine:
But such philosophy, such reason strong, 5
Has never yet adorn'd thy loftiest song.

* Æneid I.

Dost thou, satiric, vice and folly brand,
 Intent to purge the town, the court, the land?
 Is thy design to make men good and wise,
 Exposing the deformity of vice? 10
 Dost thou thy wit at once and courage show,
 Strike hard, and bravely vindicate the blow?
 Dost thou delineate God, or trace out man,
 The vast immensity, or mortal span?
 Thy hand is known; nor needs thy work a name, 15
 The Poem loudly must the pen proclaim.
 I see, my friend! O, sacred Poet, hail!
 The brightness of thy face defeats the veil.

Write thou, and let the world the writing view;
 The world will know, and will pronounce it you. 20
 Dark in thy grove, or in thy closet sit,
 We see thy wisdom, harmony, and wit:
 Forth breaks the blaze, astonishing our sight,
 Enshrin'd in clouds, we see, we see thee write.

So the sweet warbler of the spring, alone, 25
 Sings darkling, but unseen her note is known;
 And so the lark, inhabiting the skies,
 Thrills unconceal'd, tho' wrapt from mortal eyes.

J. R.

TO

THE AUTHOR OF THE ESSAY ON MAN.

As when some student first with curious eye
 Thro' Nature's wondrous frame attempts to pry,
 His doubtful reason seeming faults surprise,
 He asks if this be just, if that be wise?

C ij

Storms, tempests, earthquakes, virtue in distress, 5
And vice unpunish'd, with strange thoughts oppress;
Till thinking on, unclouded by degrees,
His mind he opens, fair is all he sees; [plight,
Storms, tempests, earthquakes, Virtue's ragged
And Vice's triumph, all are just and right; 10
Beauty is found, and order, and design,
And the whole scheme acknowledg'd all divine.
So when at first I view'd thy wondrous plan,
Leading thro' all the winding maze of Man,
Bewilder'd, weak, unable to pursue, 15
My pride would fain have laid the fault on you.
This false, that ill-express'd, this thought not good,
And all was wrong which I misunderstood:
But reading more attentive, soon I found
The diction nervous, and the doctrine sound; 20
Saw man a part of that stupendous whole,
"Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;"
Saw in the scale of things his middle state,
And all his pow'rs adapted just to that;
Saw reason, passion, weakness, how of use, 25
How all to good, to happiness, conduce;
Saw my own weakness, thy superior pow'r,
And still the more I read admire the more. 28

R. D.

TO MR. POPE.

BY A LADY.

FATHER of verse! indulge an artless Muse,
Just to the warmth thy envy'd lays infuse.
Rais'd by the soul that breathes in ev'ry line,
(My Phœbus thou, thy awful works my shrine!)
Grateful I bow, thy mighty genius own, 5
And hail thee seated on thy natal throne.
Stung by thy fame, tho' aided by thy light,
See bards, till now unknown, essay to write:
Rous'd by thy heat, unnumber'd swarms arise,
As insects live beneath autumnal skies; 10
While Envy pines with unappeas'd desire,
And each mean breast betrays th'invidious fire.

Yet thou, great Leader of the sacred train!
(Whose Parthian shaft ne'er took its flight in vain)
Go on, like Juvenal, arraign the age, 15
Let wholesome Satire loose thro' ev'ry page,
Born for the task, whom no mean views inflame,
Who lance to cure, and scourge but to reclaim.

Yet not on Satire all your hours bestow;
Oft' from your lyre let gentler numbers flow; 20
Such strains as breath'd thro' Windsor's lov'd re-
treats,

"And call'd the Muses to their ancient seats."
Thy manly force, and genius unconfin'd,
Shall mould to future fame the growing mind;

To ripen'd souls more solid aids impart, 25
 And while you touch the sense correct the heart:
 Yet tho' o'er all you shed diffusive light,
 Base minds will envy still, and scribblers write.

Thus the imperial source of genial heat
 Gilds the aspiring dome and mean retreat; 30
 Bids gems a semblance of himself unfold,
 And warms the purer ductile ore to gold:
 Yet the same heat assists each reptile birth,
 And draws infectious vapours from the earth. 34

AN

ODE TO THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD.

IN ALLUSION TO HORACE.

Pindarum quisquis, &c.

FOR me how vain to urge my vent'rous flight,
 Where only Pope's strong pinion can aspire!
 Horace, great source of true poetic light,
 Would melt my waxen wings before his fire.
 As Thames' clear stream thro' flow'ry margins flows,
 At first the humbler treasure of the plain, 6
 Till with each spring the swelling current grows,
 And rolls his pow'r and commerce o'er the main:
 So soft descending from the Muses' hill
 Pope's spreading genius passes ev'ry bound, 10
 Big with experience, knowledge, taste, and skill,
 And flows uncheck'd o'er all poetic ground.

Fresh wreaths on ev'ry side await his head,
 Whether in Fancy's wilds * he youthful stray,
 In Humour's † frolic round new measures tread, 15
 Or boldly follow Pindar's ‡ pathless way.

Religious he maintains the Muse's trust;
 Pure in his breast he guards the sacred fire;
 To his progressive genius strictly just,
 Its use dilating as its pow'rs aspire. 20

Whether from antique rust, with pious toil,
 He polish Britain's ancient poets' || praise,
 Or planting careful in his better soil,
 Preserve more green the Greek and Roman bays §.

Whether the nobler monument ** he frame 25
 To those whom virtues, arts, or arms, adorn;
 Or snatch from Envy ††, or the grave, their fame,
 Whom Pride oppresses, or the virtuous mourn;

Fill (as of old, some heav'n-instructed bard) 29
 To Man ‡‡ he pleads in Truth and Wisdom's cause;
 Chastises Vice, deals Virtue her reward,
 Supports the pulpit, and supplies the laws.

High on the swelling gale of constant praise
 We see this Swan of Thames sublimely rise, 34
 Ev'n Envy's ||| breath but serves his flight to raise,
 And lift his spotless plumage to the skies.

While on the humble banks, far, far below!
 Unmark'd, my tuneless reed I painful try;

* Pastorals, and Windsor Forest.

|| Chaucer and Donne.

†† Epistles.

§ Homer,

‡‡ Essay on Man,

† Rape of the Lock.

Horace, Ovid.

||| The Dunciad.

‡ Odes.

** Epitaphs.

Like the small bee, with toil collecting slow
The faint perfume which lowly shrubs supply. 40

To move our absent Prince* (the realm's desire),
Then let his skill compose th' attractive song ;
Or you, my Lord, may boldly strike the lyre,
You, to whose call the willing Muses throng.

Persuasion decks your words with ev'ry art 45
'To lead the social band in sportive wit,
To guide the judgment, and to warm the heart,
While senates held in rapt'rous silence sit.

Or (tho' each bard in rev'rence mute should wait)
A joyful people his return shall greet ; 50
The busy hall shall cease from loud debate ;
Contending parties bow at George's feet.

Applauding senates shall record his fame,
And hail the arbiter of Europe home :
Him haughty Gallia's dread they shall proclaim : 55
From him the Turk and Tartar wait their doom.

Fate never gave a king so great before ;
A king so good no nation shall behold :
For him the grateful realm shall Heav'n adore ;
For him, whose reign revives the Age of Gold. 60

To peaceful congress when his arts have led
Europe's contending lords, inur'd to war,
The sacred olive wreath shall grace his head,
That wreath so often purchas'd by his care.

* This ode was written when his Majesty was expected from Hanover, in the year 1736-7.

My voice unheard would join the gen'ral praise, 65
When well-plac'd Eloquence exhausts the theme ;
When mitred lords their hands to heav'n shall raise,
And give God thanks with piety extreme.

With loyal luxury to crowd the board
Artists shall vie, th' eternal feast succeed ; 70
Woods, lakes, and seas, their plenty shall afford,
And slaughter'd hecatombs profusely bleed.

But far from kings and courts, my humbler fate
Blesses with health and peace my homely fare,
Where my calm wishes frame no schemes of state,
But still for Britain's welfare form the pray'r. 76

TO

THE AUTHOR OF THE ESSAY ON MAN.

BY MR. SOMERVILE.

Was ever Work to such perfection wrought !
How elegant the diction ! pure the thought !
Not sparingly adorn'd with scatter'd rays,
But one bright beauty, one collected blaze !
So breaks the day upon the shades of night, 5
Enliv'ning all with one unbounded light.

To humble man's proud heart thy great design :
But who can read this wondrous work divine,
So justly plann'd, and so politely writ,
And not be proud, and boast of human wit? 10

Yet just to thee, and to thy precepts true,
Let us know man, and give to God his due ;

His image we, but mix'd with coarse allay,
Our happiness to love, adore, obey;
To praise him for each gracious boon bestow'd, 15
For this thy Work, for ev'ry lesser good;
With prostrate hearts before his throne to fall,
And own the great Creator all in all.

The Muse which should instruct now entertains
On trifling subjects, in enervate strains; 20
Be it thy task to set the wand'rer right,
Point out her way in her ærial flight;
Her noble mien, her honours lost restore,
And bid her deeply think, and proudly soar:
Thy theme sublime and easy verse will prove 25
Her high descent, and mission from above.

Let others now translate; thy abler pen
Shall vindicate the ways of God to Men;
In Virtue's cause shall gloriously prevail,
When the bench frowns in vain, and pulpits fail. 30
Made wise by thee, whose happy style conveys
The purest morals in the softest lays,
As angels once, so now we mortals bold
Shall climb the ladder Jacob view'd of old;
Thy kind reforming Muse shall lead the way
To the bright regions of eternal day. 36

AN ESSAY ON MAN.

EPISTLE I.

Of the nature and state of Man with respect to the universe.

The Argument.

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, v. 17, &c. 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, v. 35, &c. 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, v. 77, &c. 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 of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice, of his dispensations, v. 113, &c. V. The absurdity of conceiving himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world which is not in the natural, v. 131, &c. 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, v. 173, &c. VII. That throughout the whole visible world an 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, v. 207. VIII. How much further 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, v. 233. IX. The extravagance, madness, and pride, of such a desire, v. 259. X. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state, v. 281, &c. to the end.

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)

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D

Expatiate free o'er all this scene of Man; 5
A mighty maze! but not without a plan:
A wild where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot,
Or garden tempting with forbidden fruit.
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open what the covert yield; 10
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;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can, 15
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,
From which to reason or to which refer? 20
Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.
He who thro' vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs, 25
What other planets circle other suns,
What vary'd being peoples ev'ry star,
May tell why Heav'n has made us we are:
But of this frame, the bearings and the ties,
The strong connections, nice dependencies, 30
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd thro'? or can a part contain the whole?

Is the great chain that draws all to agree,
And drawn supports, upheld by God or thee? 34

II. Presumptuous Man! the reason wouldst thou
Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind? [find
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
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade! 40
Or ask of yonder argent fields above
Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove!

Of systems possible, if 'tis confess
That Wisdom infinite must form the best,
Where all must full or not coherent be, 45
And all that rises rise in due degree;
Then in the scale of reas'ning life 'tis plain
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man;
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this, If God has plac'd him wrong? 50

Respecting Man whatever wrong we call
May, must be right, as relative to all.
In human works, tho' labour'd on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
In God's one single can its end produce, 55
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:
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole. 60

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;

Then shall Man's pride and dulness comprehend 65
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;
Say rather Man's as perfect as he ought; 70
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?
The bless'd to-day is as completely so 75
As who began a thousand years ago. [Fate,

III. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of
All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know;
Or who could suffer being here below? 80

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.

Oh! blindness to the future! kindly giv'n, 85
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,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world. 90

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.

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
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind; 100
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-topp'd hill, an humbler heav'n;
Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd, 105
Some happier island in the wat'ry waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
To be contents his natural desire;
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire; 110
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;
Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such; 115
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,
Alone made perfect here, immortal there; 120
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.

Pride still is aiming at the bless'd abodes, 125
Men would be angels, angels would be gods.
Aspiring to be gods if angels fell,
Aspiring to be angels men rebel :
And who but wishes to invert the laws
Of Order, sins against th' Eternal Cause. 130

V. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use? Pride answers, "'Tis for mine :
" For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,
" Suckles each herb and spreads out ev'ry flow'r ;
" Annual for me the grape, the rose, renew 135
" 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 my rise ;
" My footstool earth, my canopy the skies." 140

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 nation to the deep ?
" No," it's reply'd ; " the first almighty Cause 145
" 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,
Then Nature deviates ; and can Man do less ? 150
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 for ever temp'rate, calm, and wise.

If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,
Why then a Borgia or a Catiline? 156

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, 159

Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?
From pride, from pride, our very reas'ning springs;
Account for moral as for nat'ral things:

Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?
In both to reason right is to submit.

Better for us, perhaps, it might appear, 165
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;
And passions are the elements of life. 170

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
And little less than angel, would be more; [soar,

Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears 175
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,
The proper organs proper pow'rs assign'd; 180

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.

Each beast, each insect, happy in its own: 185

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)

Is not to act or think beyond Mankind; 190

No pow'rs 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.

Say what the use were finer optics giv'n, 195

T'inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?

Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,

To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?

Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,

Die of a rose in aromatic pain? 200

If Nature thunder'd in his op'ning 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?

Who finds not Providence all good and wise, 205

Alike in what it gives and what denies?

VII. Far as creation's ample range extends

The scale of sensual, mental, pow'rs ascends:

Mark how it mounts to Man's imperial race

From the green myriads in the peopled grass: 210

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?

Of hearing from the life that fills the flood 215
To that which warbles thro' 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,
From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew! 220
How instinct varies in the grov'ling swine
Compar'd, half-reas'ning elephant, with thine!
'Twixt that and reason what a nice barrier!
For ever sep'rate, yet for ever near!
Remembrance and reflection how ally'd! 225
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
Subjected these to those, or all to thee? 230
The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,
Is not thy reason all these pow'rs in one?

VIII. See thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth,
All matter quick, and bursting into birth.
Above, how high progressive life may go! 235
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,
No glass can reach; from infinite to thee; 240
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:

From Nature's chain whatever link you strike, 245
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And if each system in gradation roll
Alike essential to th' amazing whole,
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only, but the whole must fall. 250
Let earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,
Planets and suns run lawless thro' the sky;
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,
Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;
Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod, 255
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,
Or hand to toil, aspir'd to be the head? 260
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;
Just as absurd to mourn the tasks or pains 265
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 thro' all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth as in th' ethereal frame, 270
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glow's in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;

Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part, 275

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 :

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

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

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.

Submit---In this or any other sphere, 285

Secure to be as bless'd 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 ;

All chance direction, which thou canst not see ; 290

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.* 294

EPISTLE II.

*Of the nature and state of Man with respect to himself
as an individual.*

The Argument.

I. THE business of Man not to pry into God, but to study himself; his middle nature; his powers and frailties, v. 1, to 19. The limits of his capacity, v. 19, &c. II. The two principles of Man, self-love and reason, both necessary, v. 53, &c. Self-love the stronger, and why, v. 67, &c. Their end the same, v. 81, &c. III. The passions, and their use, v. 93, to 130. The predominant passion, and its force, v. 132, to 160. Its necessity, in directing Men to different purposes, v. 165, &c. Its providential use in fixing our principle, and ascertaining our virtue, v. 177. Virtue and vice joined in our mixed nature; the limits near, yet the things separate and evident; what is the office of Reason, v. 203, to 216. V. How odious vice in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it, v. 217. VI. That, however, the ends of Providence and general good are answered in our passions and imperfections, v. 238, &c. How usefully these are distributed to all orders of men, v. 241; how useful they are to society, v. 251; and to individuals, v. 263; in every state, and every age, of life, v. 273, &c.

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;
With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side, 5
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;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err; 10
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;
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! [guides;

Go, wondrous creature! mount where science
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,
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;
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---
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 shew'd a Newton as we shew an ape.

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
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 ;
Deduct what is but vanity or dress, 45
Or learning's luxury, or idleness ;
Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,
Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain ;
Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts
Of all our vices have created arts ; 50
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 ;
Nor this a good nor that a bad we call, 55
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 ;
Reason's comparing balance rules the whole. 60
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 ;
Or, meteor-like, flame lawless thro' the void, 65
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,
Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise. 70
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.
Thicker than arguments temptations throng ; 75
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 ;
Each strengthens reason, and self-love restrains. 80
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.
Wits, just like fools, at war about a name, 85
Have full as oft' no meaning, or the same.
Self-love and reason to one end aspire,
Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire ;
But greedy that its object would devour,
This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r : 90
Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,
Our greatest evil or our greatest good.

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

In lazy apathy let Stoics boast
Their virtue fix'd ; 'tis fix'd as in a frost ;

Contracted all, retiring to the breast ;
But strength of mind is exercise, not rest ;
The rising tempest puts in act the soul ; 105
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,
He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind. 110

Passions, like elements, tho' born to fight,
Yet mix'd and soften'd in his work unite :
These 'tis enough to temper and employ ;
But what composes Man can Man destroy ?
Suffice that Reason keep to Nature's road ; 115
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,
Make and maintain the balance of the mind ; 120
The lights and shades, whose well-accorded strife
Gives all the strength and colour of our life.

Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes,
And when in act they cease, in prospect rise ;
Present to grasp, and future still to find ; 125
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,
As strong or weak the organs of the frame ; 130
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,
The young disease, that must subdue at length, 135
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his
So, cast and mingled with his very frame, [strength;
The mind's disease, its ruling passion came.
Each vital humour which should feed the whole
Soon flows to this in body and in soul: 140
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.

Nature its mother, Habit is its nurse; 145
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, tho' to lawful sway,
In this weak queen some fav'rite still obey: 150
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!
Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade 155
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 humours gather to a gout,
The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out. 160

Yes, Nature's road must ever be preferr'd;
Reason is here no guide, but still a guard:

'Tis her's to rectify, not overthrow,
And treat this passion more as friend than foe :
A mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends, 165
And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral ends :
Like varying winds, by other passions tost,
This drives them constant to a certain coast.
Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,
Or (oft' more strong than all) the love of ease ; 170
Thro' life 'tis follow'd, ev'n at life's expence,
The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,
The monk's humility, the hero's pride ;
All, all alike, find Reason on their side.

Th' eternal Art educing good from ill, 175
Grafts on this passion our best principle :
'Tis 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,
And in one int'rest body acts with mind. 180

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 vigour working at the root.
What crops of wit and honesty appear 185
From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear !
See anger zeal and fortitude supply ;
Ev'n av'rice prudence, sloth philosophy ;
Lust, thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,
Is gentle love, and charms all womankind ; 190
Envy, to which th' 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.

Thus nature gives us (let it check our pride) 195
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,
In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine: 200
The same ambition can destroy or save,
And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.

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

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

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?
Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain; 215
'Tis to mistake them costs the time and pain.

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,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace. 220
But where th' extreme of vice was ne'er agreed:
Ask where's the North? at York 'tis on the Tweed;

In Scotland at the Orcaæ; and there
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where,
No creature owns it in the first degree, 225
But thinks his neighbour further gone than he;
Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone
Or never feel the rage or never own;
What happier natures shrink at with affright,
The hard inhabitant contends is right. 230

Virtuous and vicious ev'ry man must be,
Few in th' 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.
'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill; 235
For vice or virtue self directs it still;
Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal;
But Heav'n's great view is one, and that the whole:
That counterworks each folly and caprice;
That disappoints th' effect of ev'ry vice; 240
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:
That virtue's ends from vanity can raise, 245
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,
A master, or a servant, or a friend, 250
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.
To these we owe true friendship, love sincere, 255
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,
To welcome death, and calmly pass away. 260

Whate'er the passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,
Not one will change his neighbour with himself.
The learn'd is happy Nature to explore,
The fool is happy that he knows no more;
The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n, 265
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 chymist in his golden views
Supremely bless'd, the poet in his Muse. 270

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

Behold the child, by Nature's kindly law 275
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,
And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age: 280
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;
Each want of happiness by hope supply'd, 285
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,
And not a vanity is giv'n in vain : 290
Ev'n mean self-love becomes, by force divine,
'The scale to measure others' wants by thine.
See ! and confess one comfort still must rise ;
'Tis this, Tho' Man's a fool, yet God is wise. 294

EPISTLE III.

Of the nature and state of Man with respect to society.

The Argument.

I. THE whole universe one system of society, v. 7, &c. Nothing made wholly for itself, nor yet wholly for another, v. 27. The happiness of animals mutual, v. 49. II. Reason or instinct operate alike to the good of each individual, v. 79. Reason or instinct operate also to society in all animals, v. 99. III. How far society carried by instinct, v. 109; how much farther by reason, v. 128. IV. Of that which is called the State of Nature, v. 147. Reason instructed by instinct in the invention of arts, v. 166; and in the forms of society, v. 176. V. Origin of political societies, v. 199; origin of monarchy, v. 207; Patriarchal government, v. 212. VI. Origin of true religion and government, from the same principle, of love, v. 215, &c; origin of superstition and tyranny, from the same principle, of fear, v. 237, &c. The influence of self-love operating to the social and public good, v. 265. Restoration of true religion and government on their first principle, v. 285. Mixed government, v. 288. Various forms of each, and the true end of all, v. 300, &c.

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

In all the madness of superfluous health,
The train of pride, the impudence of wealth,
Let this great truth be present night and day, 5
But most be present if we preach or pray.

I. Look round our world; behold the chain of
Combining all below and all above. [love.
See plastic Nature working to this end,
The single atoms each to other tend; 10
Attract, attracted to, the next in place
Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.
See matter next, with various life endu'd,
Press to one centre still, the gen'ral good:

See dying vegetables life sustain,
See life dissolving vegetate again. 15
All forms that perish other forms supply,
(By turns we catch the vital breath, and die)
Like bubbles on the sea of matter borne,
They rise, they break, and to that sea return. 20
Nothing is foreign ; parts relate to whole ;
One all-extending, all-preserving, soul
Connects each being, greatest with the least,
Made beast an aid of Man, and Man of beast ;
All serv'd, all serving ; nothing stands alone ; 25
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,
For him as kindly spread the flow'ry lawn : 30
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.
The bounding steed you pompously bestride 35
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 ?
Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer. 40
The hog that ploughs not, nor obeys thy call,
Lives on the labours of this Lord of all.

Know Nature's children all divide her care ;
The fur that warms a monarch warm'd a bear.

While Man exclaims, "See all things for my use!"
"See Man for mine!" replies a pamper'd goose. 46
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;
Be Man the wit and tyrant of the whole: 50

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?
Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings? 55
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,
For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride: 60
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;
Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast, 65
And till he ends the being makes it blest;
Which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,
Than favour'd Man by touch ethereal slain.
The creature had his feast of life before;

Thou, too, must perish when thy feast is o'er! 70

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:

The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear, 75
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,
Know all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best; 80
To bliss alike by that direction tend,
And find the means proportion'd to their end.
Say, where full instinct is th' unerring guide,
What pope or council can they need beside?
Reason, however able, cool at best, 85
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,
While still too wide or short is human wit; 90
Sure by quick Nature happiness to gain,
Which heavier reason labours at in vain.
This, too, serves always, reason never long;
One must go right, the other may go wrong.
See then the acting and comparing pow'rs 95
One in their nature, which are two in ours;
And reason raise o'er instinct as you can,
In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis Man.

Who taught the nations of the field and wood
To shun their poison, and to chuse their food? 100
Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?
Who made the spider parallels design,
Sure as De Moivre, without rule or line?

Who bid the stork, Columbus like, explore 105
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
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds; 110
But as he fram'd the 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.
Whate'er of life all-quick'ning ether keeps, 115
Or breathes thro' 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,
Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood, 120
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.
Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,
The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend; 126
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,
Another love succeeds another race. 130
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;

With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn ; 135
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,
These nat'ral love maintain'd, habitual those : 140
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 ;
While pleasure, gratitude, and hope, combin'd, 145
Still spread the int'rest, 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,
Union the bond of all things, and of Man. 150
Pride then was not, nor arts that pride to aid ;
Man walk'd 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 :
In the same temple, the resounding wood, 155
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,
And Man's prerogative to rule, but spare. 160
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.

But just disease to luxury succeeds, 165

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!
To copy instinct then was Reason's part: 170
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;
"Thy arts of building from the bee receive; 175
"Learn of the mole to plough, 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,
"And hence let Reason, late, instruct Mankind:
"Here subterranean works and cities see; 181
"There towns'aërial on the waving tree.
"Learn each small people's genius, policies,
"The ants' republic, and the realm of bees;
"How those in common all their wealth bestow,
"And anarchy without confusion know; 186
"And these for ever, tho' a monarch reign,
"Their sep'rate cells and properties maintain.
"Mark what unvary'd laws preserve each state,
"Laws wise as Nature, and as fix'd as Fate. 190
"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.

“ Yet go! and thus o’er all the creatures sway, 195

“ 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;

Cities were built, societies were made: 200

Here rose one little state; another near

Grew by like means, and join’d thro’ love or fear.

Did here the trees with ruddier burthens bend,

And there the streams in purer rills descend?

What war could ravish commerce could bestow,

And he return’d a friend who came a foe. 206

Converse and love mankind might strongly draw,

When love was liberty, and Nature law. [known,

Thus states were form’d, the name of King un-

Till common int’rest plac’d the sway one. 210

’Twas 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. [sate

VI. Till then, by Nature crown’d, each patriarch

King, priest, and parent, of his growing state; 216

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,

Taught to command the fire, control the flood, 220

Draw forth the monsters of th’ abyss profound,

Or fetch the aërial eagle to the ground;

Till drooping, sick’ning, dying, they began

Whom they rever’d as God to mourn as Man:

Then looking up from sire to sire, explor'd 225
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,
And simple reason never sought but one. 230

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.
Love all the faith and all th' allegiance then, 235
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 ;
That was but love of God, and this of Man. 240

Who first taught souls enslav'd, and realms un-
Th' enormous faith of many made for one ; [done,
That proud exception to all Nature's laws,
T' invert the world, and counterwork its cause.
Force first made conquest, and that conquest law,
Till Superstition taught the tyrant awe, 246
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,
When rock'd the mountains and when groan'd the
ground, 250

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;
Here fix'd the dreadful, there the bless'd abodes; 255
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,
And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe.
Zeal then, not Charity, became the guide, 261
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:
Then first the flamen tasted living food, 265
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 thro' just and thro' unjust,
To one man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust: 270
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?
How shall he keep what, sleeping or awake, 275
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,
Ev'n kings learn'd justice and benevolence: 280
Self-love forsook the path it first pursu'd,
And found the private in the public good.

'Twas then the studious head or gen'rous mind,
Foll'wer of God, or friend of human-kind,
Poet or patriot, rose but to restore 285
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,
Taught nor to slack nor strain its tender strings,
The less or greater set so justly true, 291
That touching one must strike the other too,
Till jarring int'rests of themselves create
Th' according music of a well-mix'd state.
Such is the world's great harmony, that springs 295
From order, union, full consent of things ; [made
Where small and great, where weak and mighty,
To serve, not suffer ; strengthen, not invade ;
More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,
And in proportion as it blesses blest ; 300
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 :
For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight ; 305
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 ;
And all of God that bless mankind or mend. 310
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 ;
So two consistent motions act the soul, 315
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. 218

EPISTLE IV.

*Of the nature and state of Man with respect to
happiness.*

The Argument.

I. FALSE notions of happiness, philosophical and popular, answered, from v. 19, to 27. II. It is the end of all Men, and attainable by all, v. 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, v. 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, v. 51: but, notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of happiness among mankind is kept even by Providence by the two passions of hope and fear, v. 70. 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, v. 77. The error of imputing to virtue what are only the calamities of nature, or of fortune, v. 94. IV. The folly of expecting that God should alter his general laws in favour of particulars, v. 121. V. That we are not judges who are good; but that whoever they are, they must be happiest, v. 131, &c. VI. That external goods are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of, virtue, v. 167. That even these can make no man happy without virtue, instanced in Riches, v. 185. Honours, v. 193. Nobility, v. 205. Greatness, v. 217. Fame, v. 237. Superior talents, v. 259, &c. with pictures of human infelicity in Men possessed of them all, v. 269, &c. VII. That virtue only constitutes a happiness, whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal, v. 309, &c. 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, v. 327, &c.

OH, 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;
Which still so near us yet beyond us lies, 5
O'erlook'd, seen double by the fool and wise.
Plant of celestial seed! if dropp'd below,
Say in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?
Fair op'ning to some court's propitious shine,
Or deep with di'monds in the flaming mine? 10

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:

Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere; 15

'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where:

'Tis never to be bought, but always free,

And fled from monarchs, St. John! dwells with thee.

Ask of the learn'd the way? the learn'd are blind;

This bids to serve and that to shun mankind; 20

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!

Or indolent; to each extreme they fall, 25

To trust in ev'ry thing, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less

Than this, that happiness is happiness?

Take Nature's path and mad Opinion's leave;

All states can reach it, and all heads conceive; 30

Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;

There needs but thinking right and meaning well;

And mourn our various portions as we please,

Equal is common sense and common ease.

Remember, Man, "the Universal Cause 35

"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

But some way leans and hearkens to the kind; 40

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.
Abstract what others feel, what others think, 45
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 confess,
Some are and must be greater than the rest; 50
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:
But mutual wants this happiness increase; 55
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,
In him who is or him who finds a friend: 60
Heav'n breathes thro' 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?
If then to all men happiness was meant, 65
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
While those are plac'd in hope and these in fear: 70

Not present good or ill the joy or curse,
But future views of better or of worse,

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

Know all the good that individuals find,
Or God and Nature meant to mere mankind,
Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words, Health, Peace, and Competence.
But health consists with temperance alone; 81

And peace, oh, Virtue! peace is all thy own.
The good or bad the gifts of Fortune gain;
But these less taste them as they worse obtain.
Say, in pursuit of profit or delight, 85

Who risk the most that take wrong means or right?
Of vice or virtue, whether bless'd or curst,
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first?
Count all th' advantage prosp'rous vice attains,
'Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains: 90
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-
Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue woe! [low,
Who sees and follows that great scheme the best, 95
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.
But fools the good alone unhappy call,
For ills or accidents that chance to all.

See Falkland dies, the virtuous and the just!
See godlike Turenne prostrate on the dust! 100

See Sidney bleeds amid the martial strife!
Was this their virtue or contempt of life?
Say, was it virtue, more tho' Heav'n ne'er gave,
Lamented Digby! sunk thee to the grave?
Tell me if virtue made the son expire, 105
Why full of days and honour 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)
Lent Heav'n a parent to the poor and me? 110

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,
Or Change admits, or Nature lets it fall, 115
Short and but rare till Man improv'd it all.
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
When his lewd father gave the dire disease. 120
Think we, like some weak prince, th' Eternal Cause
Prone for his fav'rites to reverse his laws?

Shall burning *Ætna*, if a sage requires,
Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?
On air or sea new motions be imprest, 125
Oh, 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,
For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall? 130

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.
The good must merit God's peculiar care ; 135
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,
This cries There is, and that There is no God. 140
What shocks one part will edify the rest ;
Nor with one system can they all be blest.
The very best will variously incline,
And what rewards your virtue punish mine.
Whatever is is right.---This world, 'tis true, 145
Was made for Cæsar---but for Titus too :
And which more bless'd ? who chain'd his country
Or he whose virtue sigh'd to lose a day ? [say,
“ But sometimes virtue starves while vice is fed.”
What then ? is the reward of virtue bread ? 150
That vice may merit ; 'tis 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.
The good man may be weak, be indolent ; 155
Nor is his claim to plenty but content.
But grant him riches, your demand is o'er ? [pow'r ?”
“ No---shall the good want health, the good want
Add health and pow'r, and ev'ry earthly thing ;
“ Why bounded pow'r ? why private ? why no king ?”

Nay, why external for internal giv'n? 161

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:

Immense the pow'r, immense were the demand;

Say at what part of Nature will they stand? 166

What nothing earthly gives or can destroy,

The soul's calm sunshine and the heart-felt joy

Is virtue's prize. A better would you fix?

Then give Humility a coach and six, 170

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?

The Boy and Man an individual makes, 175

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,

As toys and empires, for a godlike mind: 180

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!

To whom can riches give repute or trust, 185

Content or pleasure, but the good and just?

Judges and senates have been bought for gold;

Esteem and love were never to be sold.

Oh! fool, to think God hates the worthy mind,

The lover and the love of human-kind, 190

Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,
Because he wants a thousand pounds a-year.

Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
Fortune in Men has some small diff'rence made, 195

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 coul?"

I'll tell you, friend, a wise man and a fool. 200

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.

Stuck o'er with titles, and hung round with strings,
That thou mayst be by kings, or whores of kings, 206

Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,

In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece:

But by your father's worth if your's you rate,

Count me those only who were good and great. 210

Go! if your ancient but ignoble blood

Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood,

Go! and pretend your family is young,

Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.

What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards? 215

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,

From Macedonia's madman to the Swede; 220

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 further than his nose.

No less alike the politic and wise; 225

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,

'Tis phrase absurd to call a villain great : 230

Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,

Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.

Who noble ends by noble means obtains,

Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,

Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed 235

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

The same (my Lord) if Tully's or your own. 240

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

An Eugene living as a Cæsar dead :

Alike or when or where they shone or shine, 245

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,

As Justice tears his body from the grave ; 250

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 :
One self-approving hour whole years outweighs 255
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 ?
Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise ? 260
'Tis 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,
Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land ?
All fear, none aid you, and few understand. 266
Painful pre-eminence ! yourself to view
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

Bring then these blessings to a strict account ;
Make fair deductions ; see to what they 'mount ;
How much of other each is sure to cost ; 271
How each for other oft' is wholly lost ;
How inconsistent greater goods with these ;
How sometimes life is risk'd, and always ease :
'Think, and if still the things thy envy call, 275
Say, wouldst thou be the Man to whom they fall ?
To sigh for ribands if thou art so silly,
Mark how they grace Lord Umbra or Sir Billy.
Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life ?
Look but on Gripus or on Gripus' wife, 280

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!
If all united thy ambition call, 285
From ancient story learn to scorn them all :
There in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,
See the false scale of happiness complete!
In hearts of kings or arms of queens who lay,
How happy ! those to ruin, these betray. 290
Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,
From dirt and seaweed, as proud Venus rose;
In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,
And all that raise the hero sunk the Man;
Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold, 295
But stain'd with blood, or ill exchange'd for gold ;
Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,
Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.
Oh, wealth ill-fated ! which no act of fame
E'er taught to shine, or sanctify'd from shame ! 300
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.
Alas ! not dazzled with their noontide ray, 305
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 !
Know then this truth (enough for man to know),
" Virtue alone is happiness below." 310

The only point where human bliss stands still,
And tastes the good without the fall to ill;
Where only Merit constant pay receives,
Is bless'd in what it takes and what it gives;
The joy unequall'd if its end it gain, 315
And if it lose attended with no pain:
Without satiety, tho' e'er so bless'd,
And but more relish'd as the more distress'd:
The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,
Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears: 320
Good from each object, from each place, acquir'd,
For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd;
Never elated while one man's oppress'd;
Never dejected while another's bless'd;
And where no wants no wishes can remain, 325
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,
The bad must miss, the good untaught will find;
Slave to no sect who takes no private road, 331
But looks thro' Nature up to Nature's God;
Pursues that chain which links th' immense design,
Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine;
Sees that no being any bliss can know, 335
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,
All end in love of God and love of Man. 340

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.
He sees why Nature plants in Man alone 545
Hope of known bliss, and Faith in bliss unknown:
(Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find)
Wise is her present; she connects in this
His greatest virtue with his greatest bliss; 350
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 neighbour's blessing thine.
Is this too little for the boundless heart? 355
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,
And height of bliss but height of charity. 360

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;
The centre mov'd, a circle straight succeeds, 365
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;
His country next, and next all human race:
Wide and more wide th'o'erflowings of the mind
Take ev'ry creature in of ev'ry kind: 370

Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come along;
Oh, master of the poet and the song!

And while the Muse now stoops, or now ascends, 375

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

From grave to gay, from lively to severe; 380

Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,

Intent to reason, or polite to please.

Oh! while along the stream of Time thy name

Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,

Say, shall my little bark attendant sail, 385

Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?

When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,

Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,

Shall then this Verse to future age pretend

Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend? 390

That, urg'd 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,

Shew'd erring Pride whatever is is right;

That reason, passion, answer one great aim; 395

That true self-love and social are the same;

That virtue only makes our bliss below,

And all our knowledge is ourselves to know. 398

[As some passages in the Essay on Man have been suspected of favouring the schemes of Leibnitz and Spinoza, or of a tendency towards Fate and Naturalism, it is thought proper here to insert the two following Letters, to show how ill-grounded such a suspicion is.---These letters are not in any London edition.]

Mr. Pope to the Younger Racine, a celebrated French writer, occasioned by his animadversions on his Essay on Man, in a poem called Religion.

SIR,

London, Sept. 1, 1742.

THE expectation in which I have been for some time past of receiving the present you have honoured me with, was the occasion of my delaying so long to answer your letter. I am at length favoured with your poem upon Religion, and should have received, from the perusal of it, a pleasure unmixed with pain, had I not the mortification to find that you impute several principles to me which I abhor and detest. My uneasiness met some alleviation from a passage in your preface, where you declare your inability, from a want of knowledge of the English language, to give your own judgment on The Essay on Man. You add, that you do not controvert my tenets, but the evil consequences deducible from them, and the maxims which some persons of notable sagacity have imagined that they have discovered in my poem. This declara-

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tion is a shining proof of your candour, your discretion, and your charity. I must take leave to assure you, Sir, that your unacquaintance with the original has not proved more fatal to me than the imperfect conceptions of my translators, who have not sufficiently informed themselves of my real sentiments. The many additional embellishments which my Piece has received from the version of M. D. R---, have not done an honour to The Essay on Man equal to the prejudice it has suffered from his frequent misapprehension of the principles it inculcates. These mistakes, you will perceive, are totally refuted in the English piece which I have transmitted to you. It is a critical and philosophic commentary, written by the learned author of the Divine Legation of Moses. I flatter myself that the Chevalier Ramsay will, from his zeal for truth, take the trouble to explain the contents of it. I shall then persuade myself that your suspicions will be effaced, and I shall have no appeal from your candour and justice.

In the mean time, I shall not hesitate to declare myself very cordially in regard to some particulars about which you have desired an answer.

I must avow then, openly and sincerely, that my principles are diametrically opposite to the sentiments of Spinoza and Leibnitz; they are perfectly coincident with the tenets of M. Paschal and the Archbishop of Cambray; and I shall always esteem it an honour to me to imitate the moderation with

which the latter submitted his private opinions to the decisions of the church of which he professed himself a member.

I have the honour to be, &c.

A. POPE.

M. Racine's answer to Mr. Pope.

SIR,

Paris, Oct. 25, 1742.

THE mildness and humility with which you justify yourself is a convincing proof of your religion; the more so, as you have done it to one on whom it is incumbent to make his own apology for his rash attack upon your character. Your manner of pardoning me is the more delicate, as it is done without any mixture of reproach: but though you acquit me with so much politeness, I shall not so easily forgive myself.

Certain it is, a precipitance of zeal hurried me away. As I had often heard positions, said to be your's, or at least consequences resulting from your Essay, cited against certain truths which I now find you respect as much as myself, I thought I had a right to enter the lists with you. The passage in my preface was extorted from me by a degree of remorse which I felt in writing against you. This remorse, Sir, was awakened in me by the consideration that the greatest men are always the most susceptible of the truths of Revelation. I was really grieved to think that Mr. Pope should

oppose a religion whose enemies have ever been contemptible; and it appeared strange that, in a Work which points out the road to happiness, you should furnish arms to those who are industrious to misguide us in the research.

Your letter, at the same time that it does honour to your character, must bring a blush in my face for having entertained unjust suspicions: but notwithstanding this I think myself obliged to make it public. The injury which I have done you was so, the reparation should be the same. I owe this to you, I owe it to myself, I owe it to justice.

Whatever may be said in your favour in the commentary you have sent me, it is now rendered unnecessary by your own declaration. The respect which you avow for the religion you profess, is a sufficient vindication of your doctrine. I will add, that, for the future, those among us who shall feel the laudable ambition of making their poetry subservient to religion, ought to take you for their model; and it should ever be remembered that the greatest poet in England is one of the humblest sons of the church.

I am, &c.

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

DEO. OPT. MAX.

FATHER of All! in ev'ry age,
In ev'ry clime, ador'd,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou Great First Cause, least understood, 5
Who all my sense confin'd
To know but this, that Thou art Good,
And that myself am blind:

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill; 10
And binding Nature fast in Fate,
Left free the human will.

What Conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This teach me more than hell to shun, 15
That more than heav'n pursue.

What blessings thy free bounty gives
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when Man receives:
T' enjoy is to obey. 20

Yet not to Earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think thee Lord alone of Man,
When thousand worlds are round.

Let not this weak unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw, 25
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge thy foe.

If I am right, thy grace impart,
Still in the right to stay ; 30
If I am wrong, oh ! teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride
Or impious discontent ;
At aught thy wisdom has deny'd, 35
Or aught thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see ;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me. 40

Mean tho' I am, not wholly so,
Since quicken'd by thy breath ;
O lead me, wheresoe'er I go,
'Thro' this day's life or death !

This day be bread and peace my lot : 45
All else beneath the sun
Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,
And let thy will be done.

To Thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar earth, sea, skies ! 50
One chorus let all Being raise !
All Nature's incense rise !

AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

[*Written in the year 1709.*]

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AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

PART I.

'Tis hard to say if greater want of skill
Appear in writing or in judging ill ;
But of the two less dang'rous is th' offence
To tire our patience than mislead our sense :
Some few in that, but numbers err in this, 5
Ten censure wrong for one who writes amiss ;
A fool might once himself alone expose ;
Now one in verse makes many more in prose.

'Tis with our judgments as our watches, none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own. 10
In poets as true genius is but rare,
True taste as seldom is the critic's share ;
Both must alike from Heav'n derive their light,
These born to judge as well as those to write.
Let such teach others who themselves excel, 15
And censure freely who have written well.
Authors are partial to their wit, 'tis true,
But are not critics to their judgment too ?

Yet if we look more closely we shall find
Most have the seeds of judgment in their mind : 20
Nature affords at least a glimm'ring light ;
The lines tho' touch'd but faintly are drawn right :
But as the slightest sketch, if justly trac'd,
Is by ill-colouring but the more disgrac'd,
So by false learning is good sense defac'd : 25
Some are bewilder'd in the maze of schools,
And some made coxcombs Nature meant but fools :

In search of wit these lose their common sense,
And then turn critics in their own defence :
Each burns alike who can or cannot write, 30
Or with a rival's or an eunuch's spite.
All fools have still an itching to deride,
And fain would be upon the laughing side.
If Mævius scribble in Apollo's spite,
There are who judge still worse than he can write.

Some have at first for wits, then poets, past, 36
Turn'd critics next, and prov'd plain fools at last.
Some neither can for wits nor critics pass,
As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass.
Those half-learn'd witlings, num'rous in our isle, 40
As half-form'd insects on the banks of Nile ;
Unfinish'd things, one knows not what to call,
Their generation 's so equivocal ;
To tell them would an hundred tongues require,
Or one vain wit's, that might an hundred tire. 45

But you who seek to give and merit fame,
And justly bear a Critic's noble name,
Be sure yourself and your own reach to know,
How far your genius, taste, and learning, go ;
Lanch not beyond your depth, but be discreet, 50
And mark that point where sense and dulness meet.

Nature to all things fix'd the limits fit,
And wisely curb'd proud man's pretending wit.
As on the land while here the ocean gains
In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains ; 55
Thus in the soul while memory prevails,
The solid pow'r of understanding fails ;

Where beams of warm imagination play,
The memory's soft figures melt away.
One science only will one genius fit ; 60
So vast is art, so narrow human wit :
Not only bounded to peculiar arts,
But oft' in those confin'd to single parts.
Like kings we lose the conquests gain'd before,
By vain ambition still to make them more : 65
Each might his sev'ral province well command,
Would all but stoop to what they understand.

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same :
Unerring Nature ! still divinely bright, 70
One clear, unchang'd, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test, of art.
Art from that fund each just supply provides,
Works without show, and without pomp presides :
In some fair body thus th' informing soul 76
With spirits feeds, with vigour fills, the whole ;
Each motion guides, and ev'ry nerve sustains,
Itself unseen, but in th' effects remains.
Some to whom Heav'n in wit has been profuse 80
Want as much more to turn it to its use ;
For wit and judgment often are at strife,
Tho' meant each other's aid, like man and wife.
'Tis more to guide than spur the Muses' steed,
Restrain his fury than provoke his speed : 85
The winged courser, like a gen'rous horse,
Shows most true mettle when you check his course.

Those Rules of old, discover'd not devis'd,
Are Nature still, but Nature methodiz'd :
Nature, like liberty, is but restrain'd 90
By the same laws which first herself ordain'd.

Hear how learn'd Greece her useful rules indites,
When to repress and when indulge our flights :
High on Parnassus' top her sons she show'd,
And pointed out those arduous paths they trod ; 95
Held from afar, aloft, th' immortal prize,
And urg'd the rest by equal steps to rise.
Just precepts thus from great examples giv'n,
She drew from them what they deriv'd from Heav'n ;
The gen'rous critic fann'd the poet's fire, 100
And taught the world with reason to admire.
Then Criticism the Muse's handmaid prov'd
To dress her charms, and make her more belov'd ;
But following wits from that intention stray'd ;
Who could not win the mistress woo'd the maid ;
Against the poets their own arms they turn'd, 106
Sure to hate most the men from whom they learn'd.
So modern 'pothecaries, taught the art
By doctors' bills to play the doctor's part,
Bold in the practice of mistaken rules, 110
Prescribe, apply, and call their masters fools.
Some on the leaves of ancient authors prey ;
Nor time nor moths e'er spoil'd so much as they :
Some dryly plain, without Invention's aid,
Write dull receipts how poems may be made ; 115
These leave the sense their learning to display,
And those explain the meaning quite away.

You then whose judgment the right course would
Know well each Ancient's proper character; [steer,
His fable, subjects, scope in ev'ry page; 120
Religion, country, genius of his age:

Without all these at once before your eyes
Cavil you may, but never criticise.

Be Homer's works your study and delight,
Read them by day, and meditate by night; 125
Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims
And trace the Muses upward to their spring. [bring,
Still with itself compar'd his text peruse;
And let your comment be the Mantuan Muse.

When first young Maro in his boundless mind
A work t' outlast immortal Rome design'd, 131
Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,
And but from Nature's fountains scorn'd to draw:
But when t' examine ev'ry part he came,

Nature and Homer were, he found, the same. 135
Convinc'd, amaz'd, he checks the bold design,
And rules as strict his labour'd work confine
As if the Stagirite o'erlook'd each line. }

Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
To copy Nature is to copy them. 140

Some beauties yet no precepts can declare,
For there's a happiness as well as care.

Music resembles poetry; in each
Are nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master-hand alone can reach. 145 }
If, where the rules not far enough extend,
(Since rules were made but to promote their end)

Some lucky license answer to the full
Th' intent propos'd, that license is a rule.
Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take, 150
May boldly deviate from the common track.
Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend;
From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art, 155
Which, without passing thro' the judgment, gains
The heart, and all its end at once attains.
In prospects thus some objects please our eyes, }
Which out of Nature's common order rise, }
The shapeless rock, or hanging precipice. 160 }
But tho' the Ancients thus their rules invade,
(As kings dispense with laws themselves have made)
Moderns, beware! or if you must offend
Against the precept, ne'er transgress its end;
Let it be seldom, and compell'd by need; 165
And have at least their precedent to plead;
The critic else proceeds without remorse,
Seizes your fame, and puts his laws in force.

I know there are to whose presumptuous thoughts
Those freer beauties ev'n in them seem faults. 170
Some figures monstrous and mis-shap'd appear
Consider'd singly or beheld too near,
Which but proportion'd to their light or place,
Due distance reconciles to form and grace.
A prudent chief not always must display 175
His pow'rs in equal ranks and fair array,

But with th' occasion and the place comply,
Conceal his force, may seem sometimes to fly.
Those oft' are stratagems which errors seem,
Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream. 180

Still green with bays each ancient altar stands
Above the reach of sacrilegious hands,
Secure from flames, from envy's fiercer rage,
Destructive war, and all-involving age.
See from each clime the learn'd their incense bring!
Hear in all tongues consenting pæans ring! 186
In praise so just let ev'ry voice be join'd,
And fill the gen'ral chorus of mankind.
Hail, Bards triumphant! born in happier days,
Immortal heirs of universal praise! 190
Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;
Nations unborn your mighty name shall sound,
And worlds applaud that must not yet be found!
O may some spark of your celestial fire 195
The last, the meanest, of your sons inspire,
(That on weak wings, from far, pursues your flights,
Glow while he reads, but trembles as he writes)
To teach vain wits a science little known,
T' admire superior sense, and doubt their own! 200

PART II.

OF all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is pride, the never-failing vice of fools.

Whatever Nature has in worth deny'd 205
She gives in large recruits of needful pride:
For as in bodies thus in souls we find
What wants in blood and spirits swell'd with wind:
Pride, where wit fails steps in to our defence,
And fills up all the mighty void of sense: 210
If once right reason drives that cloud away,
Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.
Trust not yourself; but, your defects to know,
Make use of ev'ry friend---and ev'ry foe.
A little learning is a dang'rous thing; 215
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fir'd at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts, 220
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanc'd, behold with strange surprise
New distant scenes of endless science rise!
So pleas'd at first the tow'ring Alps we try, 225
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky!
Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last:
But those attain'd, we tremble to survey
The growing labours of the lengthen'd way; 230
Th' increasing prospect tires our wand'ring eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

A perfect judge will read each work of wit
With the same spirit that its author writ;

Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find 235
Where Nature moves, and rapture warms the mind;
Nor lose, for that malignant dull delight,
The gen'rous pleasure to be charm'd with wit.
But in such lays as neither ebb nor flow,
Correctly cold, and regularly low, 240
That shunning faults one quiet tenor keep,
We cannot blame indeed---but we may sleep.
In wit, as nature, what affects our hearts
Is not th' exactness of peculiar parts ;
'Tis not a lip, or eye we beauty call, 245
But the joint force and full result of all.
Thus when we view some well-proportion'd dome,
(The world's just wonder, and even thine, O Rome!)
No single parts unequally surprise,
All comes united to th' admiring eyes ; 250
No monstrous height, or breadth, or length, appear;
The whole at once is bold and regular.

Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.
In ev'ry work regard the writer's end, 255
Since none can compass more than they intend ;
And if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due.
As men of breeding, sometimes men of wit,
To avoid great errors must the less commit ; 260
Neglect the rules each verbal critic lays,
For not to know some trifles is a praise.
Most critics, fond of some subservient art,
Still make the whole depend upon a part :

They talk of principles, but notions prize, 265
And all to one lov'd folly sacrifice.

Once on a time La Mancha's Knight, they say,
A certain bard encount'ring on the way,
Discours'd in terms as just, with looks as sage,
As e'er could Dennis of the Grecian stage, 270
Concluding all were desp'rate sots and fools
Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules.

Our Author, happy in a judge so nice,
Produc'd his play, and begg'd the Knight's advice;
Made him observe the subject and the plot, 275
The manners, passions, unities; what not?
All which exact to rule were brought about,
Were but a combat in the lists left out.

"What! leave the combat out?" exclaims the Knight.

"Yes, or we must renounce the Stagirite." 280

"Not so, by Heav'n! (he answers in a rage) [stage."

"Knights, squires, and steeds, must enter on the

"So vast a throng the stage can ne'er contain."

"Then build a new, or act it on a plain."

Thus critics of less judgment than caprice, 285

Curious, not knowing, not exact, but nice,

Form short ideas, and offend in arts

(As most in manners) by a love to parts.

Some to Conceit alone their taste confine,

And glitt'ring thoughts struck out at ev'ry line; 290

Pleas'd with a work where nothing's just or fit,

One glaring choas and wild heap of wit.

Poets, like painters, thus unskill'd to trace

The naked nature and the living grace,

With gold and jewels cover ev'ry part, 295
And hide with ornaments their want of art.
True wit is Nature to advantage dress'd,
What oft' was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;
Something whose truth convinc'd at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind. 300
As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit :
For works may have more wit than does them good,
As bodies perish thro' excess of blood.

Others for Language all their care express, 305
And value books as women men, for dress :
Their praise is still---the style is excellent ;
The sense they humbly take upon content.
Words are like leaves, and where they most abound ;
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found. 310
False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on ev'ry place ;
The face of Nature we no more survey,
All glares alike, without distinction gay ;
But true expression, like th' unchanging sun, 315 }
Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon ; }
It gilds all objects, but it alters none. }
Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent as more suitable.
A vile conceit in pompous words express'd 320
Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd :
For diff'rent styles with diff'rent subjects sort,
As several garbs with country, town, and court.

Some by old words to fame have made pretence,
 Ancients in phrase, mere Moderns in their sense;
 Such labour'd nothings in so strange a style 326
 Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.

Unlucky as Fungoso in the play,
 These sparks with awkward vanity display
 What the fine gentleman wore yesterday; 330

And but so mimic ancient wits at best
 As apes our grandsires in their doublets drest.
 In words as fashions the same rule will hold,
 Alike fantastic if too new or old :

Be not the first by whom the new are try'd, 335
 Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

But most by Numbers judge a poet's song,
 And smooth or rough with them is right or wrong :
 In the bright Muse tho' thousand charms conspire,
 Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire; 340

Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
 Not mend their minds, as some to church repair
 Not for the doctrine but the music there.

These equal syllables alone require,
 Tho' oft' the ear the open vowels tire, 345
 While expletives their feeble aid do join,

And ten low words oft' creep in one dull line :
 While they ring round the same unvary'd chimes,
 With sure returns of still expected rhymes ;

Where'er you find " the cooling western breeze,"
 In the next line, it " whispers thro' the trees : " 351
 If crystal streams " with pleasing murmurs creep,"
 The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with " sleep : "

Then, at the last and only couplet, fraught
With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
A needless Alexandrine ends the song, [along:
That like a wounded snake drags its slow length
Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
What's roundly smooth, or languishingly slow,
And praise the easy vigour of a line 360
Where Denham's strength and Waller's sweetness
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance, [join.
As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence;
The sound must seem an echo to the sense. 365
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows;
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow: 371
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain, [main.
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the
Hear how Timotheus' vary'd lays surprise,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise, 375
While at each change the son of Lybian Jove
Now burns with glory and then melts with love;
Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow:
Persians and Greeks like turns of Nature found, 380
And the world's victor stood subdu'd by sound!
The pow'r of music all our hearts allow,
And what Timotheus was is Dryden now.

Avoid extremes, and shun the fault of such
Who still are pleas'd too little or too much. 385
At ev'ry trifle scorn to take offence;
That always shews great pride or little sense :
Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best
Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.
Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move ; 390
For fools admire, but men of sense approve.
As things seem large which we thro' mists descry,
Dulness is ever apt to magnify.

Some foreign writers some our own despise ;
The Ancients only or the Moderns prize. 395
Thus wit, like faith, by each man is apply'd
To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside.
Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,
And force that sun but on a part to shine,
Which not alone the southern wit sublimes, 400
But ripens spirits in cold northern climes ;
Which from the first has shone on ages past,
Enlights the present, and shall warm the last ;
Tho' each may feel increases and decays,
And see now clearer and now darker days : 405
Regard not then if wit be old or new,
But blame the false, and value still the true.

Some ne'er advance a judgment of their own,
But catch the spreading notion of the Town ;
They reason and conclude by precedent, 410
And own stale nonsense which they ne'er invent.
Some judge of authors' names, not works, and then
Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men.

Of all this servile herd the worst is he
That in proud dulness joins with quality ; 415
A constant critic at the great man's board,
To fetch and carry nonsense for my Lord.
What woful stuff this madrigal would be
In some starv'd hackney sonneteer or me!
But let a lord once own the happy lines, 420
How the wit brightens ! how the style refines !
Before his sacred name flies ev'ry fault,
And each exalted stanza teems with thought !

The vulgar thus thro' imitation err,
As oft the learn'd by being singular ; 425
So much they scorn the crowd, that if the throng
By chance go right they purposely go wrong.
So schismatics the plain believers quit,
And are but damn'd for having too much wit.
Some praise at morning what they blame at night,
But always think the last opinion right. 431
A Muse by these is like a mistress us'd,
This hour she's idoliz'd, the next abus'd ;
While their weak heads, like towns unfortify'd,
'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their side.
Ask them the cause ; they're wiser still they say ;
And still to-morrow's wiser than to-day.
We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow ;
Our wiser sons no doubt will think us so.
Once school-divines this zealous isle o'erspread ; 440
Who knew most sentences was deepest read :
Faith, gospel, all seem'd made to be disputed,
And none had sense enough to be confuted.

Scotists and Thomists now in peace remain
Amidst their kindred cobwebs in Duck Lane. 445
If faith itself has diff'rent dresses worn,
What wonder modes in wit should take their turn?
Oft' leaving what is natural and fit,
The current folly proves the ready wit;
And authors think their reputation safe 450
Which lives as long as fools are pleas'd to laugh.

Some, valuing those of their own side or mind,
Still make themselves the measure of mankind:
Fondly we think we honour merit then,
When we but praise ourselves in other men. 455
Parties in wit attend on those of state,
And public faction doubles private hate.
Pride, malice, folly, against Dryden rose
In various shapes of parsons, critics, beaux;
But sense surviv'd when merry jests were past; 460
For rising merit will buoy up at last.
Might he return and bless once more our eyes,
New Blackmores and new Milbourns must arise:
Nay, should great Homer lift his awful head,
Zoilus again would start up from the dead. 465
Envy will Merit as its shade pursue,
But like a shadow proves the substance true;
For envy'd wit, like Sol eclips'd, makes known
Th' opposing body's grossness, not its own.
When first that sun too pow'rful beams displays,
It draws up vapours which obscure it rays; 471
But ev'n those clouds at last adorn its way,
Reflect new glories, and augment the day.

Be thou the first true merit to befriend;
His praise is lost who stays till all commend. 475
Short is the date, alas! of modern rhymes,
And 'tis but just to let them live betimes.
No longer now that golden age appears
When patriarch wits surviv'd a thousand years:
Now length of fame (our second life) is lost, 480
And bare threescore is all ev'n that can boast:
Our sons their fathers' failing language see,
And such as Chaucer is shall Dryden be.
So when the faithful pencil has design'd
Some bright idea of the master's mind, 485
Where a new world leaps out at his command,
And ready Nature waits upon his hand;
When the ripe colours soften and unite,
And sweetly melt into just shade and light;
When mellowing years their full perfection give,
And each bold figure just begins to live, 491
The treach'rous colours the fair art betray,
And all the bright creation fades away!

Unhappy wit, like most mistaken things,
Atones not for that envy which it brings: 495
In youth alone its empty praise we boast,
But soon the short-liv'd vanity is lost;
Like some fair flow'r the early spring supplies,
That gaily blooms, but ev'n in blooming dies.
What is this wit which must our cares employ?
The owner's wife that other men enjoy; 501
Then most our trouble still when most admir'd,
And still the more we give the more requir'd;

Whose fame with pains we guard, but lose with ease,
Sure some to vex, but never all to please; 505
'Tis what the vicious fear, the virtuous shun;
By fools 'tis hated, and by knaves undone!

If wit so much from ign'rance undergo,
Ah! let not learning too commence its foe.
Of old those met rewards who could excel, 510
And such were prais'd who but endeavour'd well:
Tho' triumphs were to gen'als only due,
Crowns were reserv'd to grace the soldiers too.
Now they who reach Parnassus' lofty crown
Employ their pains to spurn some others down; 515
And while self-love each jealous writer rules,
Contending wits become the sport of fools;
But still the worst with most regret commend,
For each ill author is as bad a friend.

To what base ends and by what abject ways 520
Are mortals urg'd thro' sacred lust of praise!
Ah! ne'er so dire a thirst of glory boast,
Nor in the critic let the man be lost.
Good nature and good sense must ever join;
To err is human, to forgive divine. 525

But if in noble minds some dregs remain,
Not yet purg'd off, of spleen and sour disdain,
Discharge that rage on more provoking crimes,
Nor fear a dearth in these flagitious times.
No pardon vile obscenity should find, 530
Tho' wit and art conspire to move your mind;
But dulness with obscenity must prove
As shameful sure as impotence in love.

In the fat age of pleasure, wealth, and ease,
Sprang the rank weed, and thriv'd with large increase:
When love was all an easy monarch's care, 536
Seldom at council, never in a war,
Jilts rul'd the state, and statesmen farces writ;
Nay wits had pensions, and young lords had wit;
The fair sat panting at a courtier's play, 540
And not a mask went unimprov'd away;
The modest fan was lifted up no more,
And virgins smil'd at what they blush'd before.
The foll'wing license of a foreign reign
Did all the dregs of bold Socinus drain; 545
Then unbelieving priests reform'd the nation,
And taught more pleasant methods of salvation;
Where Heav'n's free subjects might their rights dis-
Lest God himself should seem too absolute: [pute,
Pulpits their sacred satire learn'd to spare, 550
And Vice admir'd to find a flatt'rer there!
Encourag'd thus, Wit's Titans brav'd the skies,
And the press groan'd with licens'd blasphemies.
These monsters, Critics! with your darts engage,
Here point your thunder, and exhaust your rage!
Yet shun their fault who, scandalously nice, 556
Will needs mistake an author into vice:
All seems infected that th' infected spy,
As all looks yellow to the jaundic'd eye.

PART III.

LEARN then what morals critics ought to show, 560
For 'tis but half a judge's task to know.

'Tis not enough taste, judgment, learning, join;
In all you speak let truth and candour shine;
That not alone what to your sense is due
All may allow, but seek your friendship too. 565

Be silent always when you doubt your sense,
And speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence:
Some positive persisting fops we know,
Who if once wrong will needs be always so;
But you with pleasure own your errors past, 570
And make each day a critique on the last.

'Tis not enough your counsel still be true,
Blunt truths more mischief than nice falsehoods do:
Men must be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown propos'd as things forgot. 575
Without good-breeding truth is disapprov'd;
That only makes superior sense belov'd.

Be niggards of advice on no pretence,
For the worst avarice is that of sense.
With mean complacence ne'er betray your trust,
Nor be so civil as to prove unjust. 581
Fear not the anger of the wise to raise;
Those best can bear reproof who merit praise.

'Twere well might critics still this freedom take,
But Appius reddens at each word you speak, 585
And stares tremendous, with a threat'ning eye,
Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry.
Fear most to tax an honourable fool,
Whose right it is, uncensur'd, to be dull:
Such without wit are poets when they please, 590
As without learning they can take degrees.

Leave dang'rous truths to unsuccessful satires,
And flattery to fulsome dedicators,
Whom, when they praise, the world believes no more
Than when they promise to give scribbling o'er. 595
'Tis best sometimes your censure to restrain,
And charitably let the dull be vain;
Your silence there is better than your spite,
For who can rail so long as they can write?
Still humming on their drowsy course they keep,
And lash'd so long, like tops are lash'd asleep. 601
False steps but help them to renew their race,
As after stumbling jades will mend their pace.
What crowds of these, impenitently bold,
In sounds and jingling syllables grown old, 605
Still run on poets in a raging vein,
Ev'n to the dregs and squeezings of the brain,
Strain out the last dull droppings of their sense,
And rhyme with all the rage of impotence!

Such shameless bards we have; and yet 'tis true
There are as mad abandon'd critics too. 611
The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,
With loads of learned lumber in his head,
With his own tongue still edifies his ears,
And always list'ning to himself appears : 615
All books he reads, and all he reads assails,
From Dryden's Fables down to Durfey's Tales.
With him most authors steal their works or buy;
Garth did no write his own Dispensary.
Name a new play, and he's the poet's friend; 620
Nay, show'd his faults--but when would poets mend?

No place so sacred from such fops is barr'd,
Nor is Paul's Church more safe than Paul's Church-
yard :

Nay, fly to altars, there they'll talk you dead ;
For fools rush in where angels fear to tread. 625
Distrustful sense with modest caution speaks,
It still looks home, and short excursions makes ; }
But rattling nonsense in full vollies breaks,
And never shock'd, and never turn'd aside,
Bursts out, resistless, with a thund'ring tide. 630

But where's the man who counsel can bestow,
Still pleas'd to teach, and yet not proud to know ?
Unbiass'd or by favour or by spite,
Not dully prepossess'd nor blindly right :
Tho' learn'd well-bred, and tho' well-bred sincere ;
Modestly bold, and humanely severe ; 636
Who to a friend his faults can freely show,
And gladly praise the merit of a foe ?
Bless'd with a taste exact, yet unconfin'd,
A knowledge both of books and human-kind ; 640
Gen'rous converse ; a soul exempt from pride ;
And love to praise, with reason on his side ?

Such once were Critics ; such the happy few
Athens and Rome in better ages knew.
The mighty Stagirite first left the shore, 645
Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps explore ;
He steer'd securely, and discover'd far,
Led by the light of the Mæonian star.
Poets, a race long unconfin'd and free,
Still fond and proud of savage liberty, 650

Receiv'd his laws, and stood convinc'd 'twas fit,
Who conquer'd Nature should preside o'er wit.

Horace still charms with graceful negligence,
And without method talks us into sense ;
Will, like a friend, familiarly convey 655
The truest notions in the easiest way.

He who, supreme in judgment as in wit,
Might boldly censure as he boldly writ,
Yet judg'd with coolness, tho' he sung with fire ;
His precepts teach but what his works inspire. 660
Our critics take a contrary extreme,
They judge with fury, but they write with phlegm ;
Nor suffers Horace more in wrong translations
By wits, than critics in as wrong quotations.

See Dionysius Homer's thoughts refine, 665
And call new beauties forth from ev'ry line !

Fancy and art in gay Petronius please,
The scholar's learning with the courtier's ease.

In grave Quintilian's copious work we find
The justest rules and clearest method join'd. 670
Thus useful arms in magazines we place,
All rang'd in order, and dispos'd with grace ;
But less to please the eye than arm the hand,
Still fit for use, and ready at command.

Thee, bold Longinus ! all the Nine inspire, 675
And bless their critic with a poet's fire :
An ardent judge, who, zealous in his trust,
With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just ;
Whose own example strengthens all his laws,
And is himself that great Sublime he draws. 680

Thus long succeeding critics justly reign'd,
License repress'd, and useful laws ordain'd:
Learning and Rome alike in empire grew,
And arts still follow'd where her Eagles flew;
From the same foes at last both felt their doom, 685
And the same age saw Learning fall and Rome.
With tyranny then Superstition join'd,
As that the body, this enslav'd the mind;
Much was believ'd, but little understood,
And to be dull was constru'd to be good: 690
A second deluge Learning thus o'er-ran,
And the Monks finish'd what the Goths began.

At length Erasmus, that great injur'd name,
(The glory of the priesthood, and the shame!)
Stemm'd the wild torrent of a barb'rous age, 695
And drove those holy Vandals off the stage.

But see! each Muse in Leo's golden days
Starts from her trance, and trims her wither'd bays;
Rome's ancient Genius o'er its ruins spread,
Shakes off the dust, and rears his rev'rend head. 700
Then Sculpture and her sister arts revive;
Stones leap'd to form, and rocks began to live;
With sweeter notes each rising temple rung;
A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung:
Immortal Vida! on whose honour'd brow 705
The poet's bays and critic's ivy grow!
Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,
As next in place to Mantua, next in fame!

But soon by impious arms from Latium chas'd,
Their ancient bounds the banish'd Muses pass'd: 710

Thence arts o'er all the northern world advance,
But critic learning flourish'd most in France :
The rules a nation born to serve obeys,
And Boileau still in right of Horace sways.
But we, brave Britons ! foreign laws despis'd, 715
And kept unconquer'd and unciviliz'd ;
Fierce for the liberties of wit, and bold,
We still defy'd the Romans, as of old.
Yet some there were, among the sounder few
Of those who less presum'd and better knew, 720
Who durst assert the juster ancient cause,
And here restor'd Wit's fundamental laws.
Such was the Muse whose rules and practice tell
" Nature's chief masterpiece is writing well."
Such was Roscommon, not more learn'd than good,
With manners gen'rous as his noble blood ; 726
To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,
And ev'ry author's merit but his own.
Such late was Walsh---the Muse's judge and friend,
Who justly knew to blame or to commend ; 730
To failings mild, but zealous for desert,
The clearest head, and the sincerest heart.
This humble praise, lamented Shade ! receive ;
This praise at least a grateful Muse may give :
The Muse whose early voice you taught to sing, 735
Prescrib'd her heights, and prun'd her tender wing,
(Her guide now lost) no more attempts to rise,
But in low numbers short excursions tries ;
Content if hence th' unlearn'd their wants may view,
The learn'd reflect on what before they knew : 740

Careless of censure, nor too fond of fame;
Still pleas'd to praise, yet not afraid to blame;
Averse alike to flatter or offend;
Not free from faults, nor yet too vain to mend. 744

MORAL ESSAYS,
IN
FOUR EPISTLES.
TO
SEVERAL PERSONS.

Est brevitæ opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
Impediat verbis lassas onerantibus aures:
Et sermone opus est modo tristi, sæpe jocoso,
Defendente vicem modo rhetoris atque poetæ,
Interdum urbani parentis viribus, atque
Extenuantis eas consulto.

HOR.

Advertisement.

THE Essay on Man was intended to have been comprised in Four Books:

The First of which the Author has given us under that title in Four Epistles.

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

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

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

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

But as this was the Author's favourite work, which more exactly reflected the image of his strong capacious mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the disjecta membra poetæ that now remain, it may not be amiss to be a little more particular concerning each of these projected Books.

The First, as it treats of Man in the abstract, and considers him in general under every of his relations,

becomes the foundation, and furnishes out the subjects of the three following: so that

The Second Book was to take up again the first and second Epistles of the First Book, and treats of Man in his intellectual capacity at large, as has been explained above. Of this only a small part of the conclusion (which, as we said, was to have contained a satire against the misapplication of wit and learning) may be found in the Fourth Book of the *Dunciad*, and up and down, occasionally, in the other Three.

The Third Book, in like manner, was to reassume the subject of the Third Epistle of the First, which treats of Man in his social, political, and religious capacity. But this part the Poet afterwards conceived might be best executed in an epic poem, as the action would make it more animated, and the fable less invidious; in which all the great principles of true and false governments and religions should be chiefly delivered in feigned examples.

The Fourth and last Book was to pursue the subject of the Fourth Epistle of the First, and treats of ethics, or practical morality, and would have consisted of many members; of which the Four following Epistles were detached portions: the two first, on the characters of Men and Women, being the introductory part of this concluding Book.

MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE I.

TO SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, LORD COBHAM.

Of the knowledge and characters of Men.

The Argument.

I. THAT it is not sufficient for this knowledge to consider Man in the abstract: books will not serve the purpose, nor yet our own experience singly, v. 1. General maxims, unless they be formed upon both, will be but notional, v. 10. Some peculiarity in every man, characteristic to himself, yet varying from himself, v. 15. Difficulties arising from our own passions, fancies, faculties, &c. v. 31. The shortness of life to observe in, and the uncertainty of the principles of action in men to observe by, v. 37. &c. Our own principle of action often hid from ourselves, v. 41. Some few characters plain, but in general confounded, dissembled, or inconsistent, v. 51. The same man utterly different in different places and seasons, v. 71. Unimaginable weaknesses in the greatest, v. 77, &c. Nothing constant and certain but God and Nature, v. 95. No judging of the motives from the actions; the same actions proceeding from contrary motives, and the same motives influencing contrary actions, v. 100. II. Yet to form characters we can only take the strongest actions of a man's life, and try to make them agree: the utter uncertainty of this, from Nature itself, and from policy, v. 120. Characters given according to the rank of men of the world, v. 135; and some reason for it, v. 140. Education alters the nature, or at least character, of many, v. 149. Actions, passions, opinions, manners, humours, or principles, all subject to change. No judging by Nature, from v. 153, to 174. III. It only remains to find (if we can) his ruling passion: that will certainly influence all the rest, and can reconcile the seeming or real inconsistency of all his actions, v. 175. Instanced in the extraordinary character of Clodio, v. 179. A caution against mistaking second qualities for first, which will destroy all possibility of the knowledge of mankind, v. 210. Examples of the strength of the ruling passion, and its continuation to the last breath, v. 222, &c.

PART I.

YES, you despise the man to books confin'd,
Who from his study rails at human-kind;
Tho' what he learns he speaks, and may advance
Some gen'ral maxims, or be right by chance.

The coxcomb bird, so talkative and grave, 5
That from his cage cries Cuckold, Whore, and
Tho' many a passenger he rightly call, [Knave,
You hold him no philosopher at all.

And yet the fate of all extremes is such,
Men may be read, as well as books, too much. 10
To observations which ourselves we make
We grow more partial for th' observer's sake;
To written wisdom, as another's, less :
Maxims are drawn from notions, these from guess.
There's some peculiar in each leaf and grain, 15
Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein.
Shall only man be taken in the gross ?
Grant but as many sorts of mind as moss.

That each from other differs first confess,
Next, that he varies from himself no less; 20
Add Nature's, Custom's, Reason's, Passion's, strife,
And all Opinion's colours cast on life.

Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds ?
Quick whirls and shifting eddies of our minds.
On human actions reason 'ho' you can, 25
It may be reason, but it is not man :
His principle of action once explore,
That instant 'tis his principle no more.
Like following life thro' creatures you dissect,
You lose it in the moment you detect. 30

Yet more; the diff'rence is as great between
The optics seeing as the objects seen.
All manners take a tincture from our own,
Or come discolour'd thro' our passions shown ;

Or Fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies, 35
Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.

Nor will life's stream for observation stay,
It hurries all too fast to mark their way :
In vain sedate reflections we would make,
When half our knowledge we must snatch, not take.
Oft' in the passions' wild rotation tost, 41

Our spring of action to ourselves is lost :
Tir'd, not determin'd, to the last we yield,
And what comes then is master of the field.

As the last image of that troubled heap, 45
When sense subsides, and fancy sports in sleep,
(Tho' past the recollection of the thought)
Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought:
Something as dim to our internal view
Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do. 50

True, some are open, and to all men known ;
Others so very close they're hid from none ;
(So darkness strikes the sense no less than light)
Thus gracious Chandos is belov'd at sight ;
And ev'ry child hates Shylock, tho' his soul 55
Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole.

At half mankind when gen'rous Manly raves,
All know 'tis virtue, for he thinks them knaves :
When universal homage Umbra pays,
All see 'tis vice, and itch of vulgar praise. 60

When flatt'ry glares all hate it in a queen,
While one there is who charms us with his spleen.

But these plain characters we rarely find ;
Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind :

Or puzzling contraries confound the whole, 65
Or affectations quite reverse the soul.

The dull flat falsehood serves for policy ;
And in the cunning truth itself's a lie :
Unthought-of frailties cheat us in the wise ;
The fool lies hid in inconsistencies. 70

See the same man in vigour, in the gout,
Alone, in company, in place, or out,
Early at bus'ness, and at hazard late,
Mad at a fox-chase, wise at a debate,
Drunk at a borough, civil at a ball, 75
Friendly at Hackney, faithless at Whitehall.

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

Who would not praise Patricio's high desert,
His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,
His comprehensive head ! all int'rests weigh'd,
All Europe sav'd, yet Britain not betray'd.
He thanks you not, his pride is in Picquette, 85
New-market fame, and judgment at a bett.

What made (say Montaigne, or more sage Charron)
Otho a warrior, Cromwell a buffoon ?

A perjur'd prince a leaden saint revere,
A godless regent tremble at a star ? 90

The throne a bigot keep, a genius quit,
Faithless thro' piety, and dup'd thro' wit ?
Europe a woman, child, or dotard, rule,
And just her wisest monarch made a fool ?

Know, God and Nature only are the same. 95
 In man the judgment shoots at flying game;
 A bird of passage! gone as soon as found,
 Now in the moon, perhaps now under ground.

PART II.

IN vain the sage, with retrospective eye, 99
 Would from th' apparent what conclude the why,
 Infer the motive from the deed, and show
 That what we chanc'd was what we meant to do.
 Behold! if Fortune or a mistress frowns,
 Some plunge in bus'ness, others shave their crowns:
 To ease the soul of one oppressive weight 105
 This quits an empire, that embroils a state.
 The same adust complexion has impell'd
 Charles to the convent, Philip to the field.

Not always actions shew the man: we find
 Who does a kindness is not therefore kind: 110
 Perhaps prosperity becalm'd his breast;
 Perhaps the wind just shifted from the east:
 Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat;
 Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great.
 Who combats bravely is not therefore brave; 115
 He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave.
 Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise;
 His pride in reas'ning, not in acting, lies.

But grant that actions best discover man;
 Take the most strong, and sort them as you can:
 The few that glare each character must mark; 121
 You balance not the many in the dark.

What will you do with such as disagree?
Suppress them, or miscall them policy?
Must then at once (the character to save) 125
The plain rough hero turn a crafty knave?
Alas! in truth the man but chang'd his mind,
Perhaps was sick, in love, or had not din'd.
Ask why from Britain Cæsar would retreat?
Cæsar himself might whisper, he was beat. 130
Why risk the world's great empire for a punk?
Cæsar perhaps might answer, he was drunk.
But, sage Historians! 'tis your task to prove
One action conduct, one heroic love.

'Tis from high life high characters are drawn;
A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn: 136
A judge is just, a chanc'llor juster still;
A gownman learn'd; a bishop what you will:
Wise if a minister; but if a king,
Morewise, more learn'd, more just, more ev'ry thing.
Court-virtues bear, like gems, the highest rate, 141
Born where Heav'n's influence scarce can penetrate.
In Life's low vale, the soil the virtues like,
They please as beauties, here as wonders strike.
Tho' the same sun with all-diffusive rays 145
Blush in the rose, and in the di'mond blaze,
We prize the stronger effort of his pow'r,
And justly set the gem above the flow'r.

'Tis education forms the common mind;
Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclin'd. 150
Boastful and rough, your first son is a 'squire,
The next a tradesman, meek, and much a liar.

Tom struts a soldier, open, bold, and brave;
 Will sneaks a scriv'ner, an exceeding knave.
 Is he a Churchman? then he's fond of pow'r: 155
 A Quaker? sly: a Presbyterian? sour:
 A smart Free-thinker? all things in an hour. }
 Ask men's opinion: Scoto now shall tell
 How trade increases, and the world goes well:
 Strike off his pension by the setting sun, 160
 And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

That gay Free-thinker, a fine talker once,
 What turns him now a stupid silent dunce?
 Some god or spirit he has lately found,
 Or chanc'd to meet a minister that frown'd. 165

Judge we by Nature? habit can efface,
 Int'rest o'ercome, or policy take place.
 By actions? those uncertainty divides.
 By Passions? these dissimulation hides.
 Opinions? they still take a wider range. 170
 Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.

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

PART III.

SEARCH then the ruling passion: there, alone, 174
 The wild are constant, and the cunning known;
 The fool consistent, and the false sincere;
 Priests, princes, women, no dissemblers here.
 This clue once found unravels all the rest,
 The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confess.

Wharton! the scorn and wonder of our days, 180
Whose ruling passion was the lust of praise:
Born with whate'er could win it from the wise,
Women and fools must like him, or he dies:
Tho' wond'ring senates hung on all he spoke,
The club must hail him master of the joke. 185
Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too:
Then turns repentant, and his God adores
With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;
Enough if all around him but admire, 190
And now the punk applaud and now the frier.
Thus with each gift of Nature and of Art,
And wanting nothing but an honest heart;
Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt,
And most contemptible to shun contempt; 195
His passion still to covet gen'ral praise,
His life to forfeit it a thousand ways;
A constant bounty which no friend has made;
An angel tongue which no man can persuade;
A fool with more of wit than half mankind, 200
Too rash for thought, for action too refin'd;
A tyrant to the wife his heart approves;
A rebel to the very king he loves;
He dies, sad outcast of each church and state,
And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great! 205
Ask you why Wharton broke thro' ev'ry rule?
'Twas all for fear the knaves should call him fool.
Nature well known no prodigies remain;
Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.

Yet in this search the wisest may mistake, 210
If second qualities for first they take.

When Catiline by rapine swell'd his store,
When Cæsar made a noble dame a whore,
In this the lust, in that the avarice,
Were means, not ends; ambition was the vice. 215
That very Cæsar, born in Scipio's days,
Had aim'd, like him, by chastity at praise.
Lucullus, when frugality could charm,
Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm.
In vain th' observer eyes the builder's toil, 220
But quite mistakes the scaffold for the pile.

In this one passion man can strength enjoy,
As fits give vigour just when they destroy.
Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,
Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand. 225
Consistent in our follies and our sins,
Here honest Nature ends as she begins.

Old politicians chew on wisdom past,
And totter on in bus'ness to the last;
As weak as earnest, and as gravely out 230
As sober Lanesb'row dancing in the gout.

Behold a rev'rend sire, whom want of grace
Has made the father of a nameless race,
Shov'd from the wall perhaps, or rudely press'd
By his own son that passes by unblest'd; 235
Still to his wench he crawls on knocking knees,
And envies ev'ry sparrow that he sees.

A salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate;
The doctor call'd, declares all help too late.

"Mercy!" cries Helluo, "mercy on my soul! 240
"Is there no hope?---Alas!---then bring the jowl."

The frugal Crone, whom praying priests attend,
Still strives to save the hallow'd taper's end,
Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,
For one puff more, and in that puff expires. 245

"Odious! in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke,
(Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke!)

"No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
"Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:

"One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead--

"And---Betty---give this cheek a little red." 251

The Courtier smooth, who forty years had shin'd
An humble servant to all human-kind, [stir,

Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could

"If---where I'm going---I could serve you, Sir?"

"I give and I devise" (old Euclio said, 156

And sigh'd) "my lands and tenements to Ned."

"Your money, Sir?"--"My money, Sir, what, all?

"Why--if I must--(then wept) I give it Paul." 259

"The manor, Sir?"--"The manor! hold," he cry'd;

"Not that---I cannot part with that"---and dy'd.

And you, brave Cobham! to the latest breath

Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death;

Such in those moments as in all the past, 264

"Oh! save my country, Heav'n!" shall be your last.

EPISTLE II.

TO A LADY.

Of the characters of Women.

The Argument.

THAT the particular characters of Women are not so strongly marked as those of Men, seldom so fix'd, and still more inconsistent with themselves, v. 1, &c. Instances of contrarieties, given even from such characters as are more strongly marked, and seemingly, therefore, most consistent as I. In the affected, v. 21, &c.. II. In the soft-natur'd, v. 29, and 37. III. In the cunning and artful, v. 45. IV. In the whimsical, v. 53. V. In the lewd and vicious, v. 69. VI. In the witty and refined, v. 87. VII. In the stupid and simple, v. 101. The former part having shewn that the particular characters of Women are more various than those of Men, it is nevertheless observed, that the general characteristic of the sex, as to the ruling passion, is more uniform, v. 207. This is occasioned partly by their nature, partly by their education, and in some degree by necessity, v. 211. What are the aims and the fate of this sex:---I. As to power, v. 219. II. As to pleasure, v. 231. Advice for their true interest, v. 249. The picture of an estimable Woman, with the best kind of contrarieties, v. 269.

NOTHING so true as what you once let fall,
"Most women have no characters at all:"
Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.
How many pictures of one nymph we view,
All how unlike each other, all how true!
Arcadia's Countess here, in ermin'd pride,
Is there Pastora by a fountain side:
Here Fannia leering on her own good man,
And there a naked Leda with a swan. 10
Let then the fair-one beautifully cry,
In Magdalene's loose hair and lifted eye,
Or dress'd in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,
With simp'ring angels, palms, and harps divine,

Whether the charmer sinner it or saint it, 15
If folly grow romantic I must paint it.

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

Rufa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the Park,
Attracts each light gay meteor of a spark,
Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke
As Sappho's di'monds with her dirty smock,
Or Sappho at her toilette's greasy task 25
With Sappho fragrant at an ev'ning mask:
So morning insects, that in muck begun,
Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting sun.

How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;
The frail one's advocate, the weak one's friend: 30
To her Calista prov'd her conduct nice,
And good Simplicius asks of her advice.
Sudden she storms! she raves! you tip the wink;
But spare your censure; Silia does not drink.
All eyes may see from what the change arose; 35
All eyes may see---a pimple on her nose.

Papillia, wedded to her am'rous spark,
Sighs for the shades---"How charming is a park!"
A park is purchas'd; but the fair he sees
All bath'd in tears---"Oh, odious, odious trees!"

Ladies like variegated tulips show; 41
'Tis to their changes half their charms we owe:
Fine by defect, and delicately weak,
Their happy spots the nice admirer take.

'Twas thus Calypso once each heart alarm'd, 45
Aw'd without virtue, without beauty charm'd;
Her tongue bewitch'd as oddly as her eyes;
Less wit than mimic, more a wit than wise:
Strange graces still, and stranger flights, she had;
Was just not ugly, and was just not mad; 50
Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create
As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Narcissa's nature, tolerable mild,
To make a wash would hardly stew a child,
Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a lover's pray'r, 55
And paid a tradesman once to make him stare;
Gave alms at Easter in a Christian trim,
And made a widow happy for a whim.
Why then declare good-nature is her scorn,
When 'tis by that alone she can be borne? 60
Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name,
A fool to pleasure, yet a slave to fame?
Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,
Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres:
Now Conscience chills her, and now Passion burns,
And Atheism and Religion take their turns; 66
A very Heathen in the carnal part,
Yet still a sad good Christian at her heart.

See Sin in state, majestically drunk,
Proud as a peeress, prouder as a punk; 70
Chaste to her husband, frank to all beside,
A teeming mistress, but a barren bride.
What then? let blood and body bear the fault,
Her head's untouch'd, that noble seat of thought.

Such this day's doctrine---in another fit 75
She sins with poets thro' pure love of wit.
What has not fir'd her bosom or her brain?
Cæsar and Tallboy, Charles and Charlemagne.
As Helluo, late dictator of the feast,
The nose of haut-goût, and the tip of taste, 80
Critiqu'd your wine, and analyz'd your meat,
Yet on plain pudding deign'd at home to eat;
So Philomédé, leſt'ring all mankind
On the soft passion, and the taste refin'd,
Th' address, the delicacy---stoops at once, 85
And makes her hearty meal upon a dunce.

Flavia's a wit, has too much sense to pray :
To toast our wants and wishes is her way ;
Nor asks of God, but of her stars, to give
The mighty blessing " while we live to live." 90
Then all for death, that opiate of the soul!
Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl.
Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?
A spark too fickle, or a spouse too kind.
Wise wretch ! with pleasures too refin'd to please :
With too much spirit to be e'er at ease ; 96
With too much quickness ever to be taught ;
With too much thinking to have common thought ;
You purchase pain with all that joy can give,
And die of nothing but a rage to live. 100

Turn then from wits, and look on Simo's mate ;
No ass so meek, no ass so obstinate ;
Or her that owns her faults but never mends,
Because she's honest and the best of friends ;

Or her whose life the church and scandal share, 105
For ever in a passion or a pray'r;
Or her who laughs at hell, but (like her Grace)
Cries, "Ah! how charming if there's no such place!"
Or who in sweet vicissitude appears
Of mirth and opium, ratafie and tears, 110
The daily anodyne and nightly draught,
To kill those foes to fair-ones, Time and Thought.
Woman and fool are too hard things to hit;
For true no-meaning puzzles more than wit.
But what are these to great Atossa's mind? 115
Scarce once herself, by turns all womankind!
Who with herself, or others, from her birth
Finds all her life one warfare upon earth;
Shines in exposing knaves and painting fools,
Yet is whate'er she hates and ridicules: 120
No thought advances, but her eddy brain
Whisks it about, and down it goes again.
Full sixty years the world has been her trade;
The wisest fool much time has ever made:
From loveless youth to unrespected age 125
No passion gratify'd except her rage:
So much the fury still outran the wit,
The pleasure miss'd her, and the scandal hit.
Who breaks with her provokes revenge from Hell,
But he's a bolder man who dares be well. 130
Her ev'ry turn with violence pursu'd,
Nor more a storm her hate than gratitude:
To that each passion turns or soon or late;
Love if it makes her yield must make her hate,

Superiors? death! and equals? what a curse! 135

But an inferior not dependent? worse.

Offend her, and she knows not to forgive;

Oblige her, and she'll hate you while you live;

But die, and she'll adore you---then the bust

And temple rise---then fall again to dust. 140

Last night her lord was all that's good and great;

A knave this morning, and his will a cheat.

Strange! by the means defeated of the ends,

By spirit robb'd of pow'r, by warmth of friends,

By wealth of foll'wers! without one distress 145

Sick of herself thro' very selfishness!

Atossa, curs'd with ev'ry granted pray'r,

Childless with all her children, wants an heir:

To heirs unknown descends th' unguarded store,

Or wanders, Heav'n directed, to the poor. 150

• Pictures like these, dear Madam! to design,

Asks no firm hand and no unerring line;

Some wand'ring touches, some reflected light,

Some flying stroke, alone can hit them right:

For how should equal colours do the knack? 155

Chameleons who can paint in white and black?

“ Yet Chloe sure was form'd without a spot.”---

Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot.

“ With ev'ry pleasing, ev'ry prudent, part,

“ Say, what can Chloe want?”--She wants a heart.

She speaks, behaves, and acts, just as she ought, 161

But never, never, reach'd one gen'rous thought.

Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,

Content to dwell in decencies for ever.

So very reasonable, so unmov'd, 165
As never yet to love or to be lov'd.
She while her lover pants upon her breast,
Can mark the figures on an Indian chest;
And when she sees her friend in deep despair,
Observes how much a chintz exceeds mohair. 170
Forbid it, Heav'n! a favour or a debt
She e'er should cancel!---but she may forget.
Safe is your secret still in Chloe's ear;
But none of Chloe's shall you ever hear.
Of all her dears she never slander'd one, 175
But cares not if a thousand are undone.
Would Chloe know if you're alive or dead?
She bids her footman put it in her head.
Chloe is prudent---Would you too be wise?
Then never break your heart when Chloe dies. 180
One certain portrait may (I grant) be seen,
Which Heav'n has varnish'd out and made a queen;
The same for ever! and describ'd by all
With truth and goodness as with crown and ball.
Poets heap virtues, painters gems, at will, 185
And shew their zeal, and hide their want of skill.
'Tis well---but, Artists! who can paint or write,
To draw the naked is your true delight.
That robe of quality so struts and swells,
None see what parts of Nature it conceals: 190
Th' exactest traits of body or of mind
We owe to models of an humble kind.
If Queensberry to strip there's no compelling,
'Tis from a handmaid we must take a Helen.

From peer or bishop 'tis no easy thing 195
To draw the man who loves his God or king.
Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)
From honest Mah'met or plain Parson Hale.

But grant in public men sometimes are shown,
A Woman's seen in private life alone: 200
Our bolder talents in full light display'd,
Your virtues open fairest in the shade.
Bred to disguise, in public 'tis you hide;
There none distinguish 'twixt your shame or pride,
Weakness or delicacy; all so nice, 205
That each may seem a virtue or a vice.

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

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

Men some to bus'ness some to pleasure take, 215
But ev'ry Woman is at heart a rake:
Men some to quiet some to public strife,
But ev'ry lady would be queen for life.

Yet mark the fate of a whole sex of queens!
Pow'r all their end, but beauty all the means. 220
In youth they conquer with so wild a rage
As leaves them scarce a subject in their age:
For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;
No thought of peace or happiness at home.

But Wisdom's triumph is well tim'd retreat, 225
As hard a science to the fair as great !
Beauties, like tyrants, old and friendless grown,
Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone ;
Worn out in public, weary ev'ry eye,
Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die. 230

Pleasures the sex as children birds pursue,
Still out of reach, yet never out of view ;
Sure if they catch to spoil the toy at most,
To covet flying, and regret when lost :
At last to follies youth could scarce defend 235
It grows their age's prudence to pretend ;
Asham'd to own they gave delight before,
Reduc'd to feign it when they give no more.
As hags hold sabbaths less for joy than spight,
So these their merry miserable night ; 240
Still round and round the ghosts of Beauty glide,
And haunt the places where their honour dy'd.

See how the World its veterans rewards !
A youth of frolics, an old age of cards ;
Fair to no purpose, artful to no end, 245
Young without lovers, old without a friend ;
A fop their passion, but their prize a sot,
Alive ridiculous, and dead forgot !

Ah ! Friend ! to dazzle let the vain design ; 249
To raise the thought and touch the heart be thine !
That charm shall grow, while what fatigues the ring
Flaunts and goes down an unregarded thing.
So when the sun's broad beam has tir'd the sight,
All mild ascends the moon's more sober light,

Serene in virgin modesty she shines, 255
And unobserv'd the glaring orb declines.

Oh! bless'd with temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;
She who can love a sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear; 260
She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or if she rules him never shows she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most when she obeys;
Let fops or fortune fly which way they will, 265
Disdains all loss of tickets or codille;
Spleen, vapours, or small-pox, above them all,
And mistress of herself tho' china fall.

And yet believe me, good as well as ill,
Woman's at best a contradiction still. 270
Heav'n, when it strives to polish all it can
Its last best work, but forms a softer man;
Picks from each sex to make the fav'rite blest,
Your love of pleasure, our desire of rest;
Blends, in exception to all gen'ral rules, 275
Your taste of follies with our scorn of fools;
Reserve with frankness, art with truth ally'd,
Courage with softness, modesty with pride;
Fix'd principles, with fancy ever new,
Shakes all together, and produces---you. 280

Be this a Woman's fame; with this unblest
Toasts live a scorn, and queens may die a jest.
This Phœbus promis'd (I forget the year)
When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere;

Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care, 285

Averted half your parents' simple pray'r,

And gave you beauty, but deny'd the pelf

That buys your sex a tyrant o'er itself.

The gen'rous god who wit and gold refines,

And ripens spirits as he ripens mines, 290

Kept dross for duchesses, the world shall know it,

To you gave sense, good humour, and a poet.

EPISTLE III.

TO ALLEN LORD BATHURST.

Of the use of Riches.

The Argument.

THAT it is known to few, most falling into one of the extremes, avarice or profusion, v. 1, &c. The point discussed, whether the invention of money has been more commodious or pernicious to mankind, v. 21, to 77. That Riches, either to the avaricious or the prodigal, cannot afford happiness, scarcely necessities, v. 89, to 160. That avarice is an absolute frenzy, without an end or purpose, v. 113, &c. 152. Conjectures about the motives of avaricious men, v. 121, to 153. That the conduct of men with respect to Riches can only be accounted for by the order of Providence, which works the general good out of extremes, and brings all to its great end by perpetual revolutions, 161, to 178. How a miser acts upon principles which appear to him reasonable, v. 179. How a prodigal does the same, v. 199. The due medium and true use of Riches, v. 219. The Man of Ross, v. 250. The fate of the profuse and the covetous, in two examples; both miserable in life and in death, v. 300, &c. The story of Sir Balaam, v. 339, to the end.

P. WHO shall decide when doctors disagree,
And soundest casuists doubt, like you and me?
You hold the word from Jove to Momus giv'n,
That Man was made the standing jest of Heav'n,
And gold but sent to keep the fools in play, 5
For some to heap and some to throw away.

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

Like doctors thus, when much dispute has past,
We find our tenets just the same at last; 16
Both fairly owning Riches, in effect,
No grace of Heav'n, or token of th' elect;
Giv'n to the fool, the mad, the vain, the evil,
To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the Devil. 20

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

P. But how unequal it bestows observe;
'Tis thus we riot while who sow it starve:
What nature wants (a phrase I much distrust) 25
Extends to luxury, extends to lust:

Useful I grant, it serves what life requires,
But dreadful too, the dark assassin hires.

B. Trade it may help, society extend:

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

B. It raises armies in a nation's aid: 31

P. But bribes a senate, and the land's betray'd.

In vain may heroes fight and patriots rave
If secret gold sap on from knave to knave.

Once, we confess, beneath the patriot's cloak 35
From the crack'd bag the dropping guinea spoke,
And jingling down the back-stairs, told the crew,
"Old Cato is as great a rogue as you."

Bless'd paper credit! last and best supply!
That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly! 40
Gold imp'd by thee can compass hardest things,
Can pocket states, can fetch or carry kings;
A single leaf shall waft an army o'er,
Or ship off senates to some distant shore;

A leaf, like Sibyl's scatter to and fro 45
Our fates and fortunes as the winds shall blow;
Pregnant with thousands flits the scrap unseen,
And silent sells a king or buys a queen.

Oh! that such bulky bribes as all might see
Still, as of old, incumber'd villany! 50
Could France or Rome divert our brave designs
With all their brandies or with all their wines?
What could they more than knights and 'squires con-
Or water all the quorum ten miles round? [found,
A statesman's slumbers how this speech would spoil!
"Sir, Spain has sent a thousand jars of oil; 56
"Huge bales of British cloth blockade the door;
"A hundred oxen at your levee roar."

Poor Avarice one torment more would find,
Nor could Profusion squander all in kind, 60
Astride his cheese Sir Morgan might we meet,
And Worldly crying coals from street to street,
Whom with a wig so wild and mien so maz'd
Pity mistakes for some poor tradesman craz'd.
Had Colepepper's whole wealth been hops and hogs,
Could he himself have sent it to the dogs? 66
His Grace will game; to White's a bull be led,
With spurning heels and with a butting head:
To White's be carry'd, as to ancient games,
Fair coursers, vases, and alluring dames. 70
Shall then Uxorio, if the stakes he sweep,
Bear home six whores, and make his lady weep?
Or soft Adonis, so perfum'd and fine,
Drive to St. James's a whole herd of swine?

Oh! filthy check on all industrious skill, 75
To spoil the nation's last great trade, Quadrille!
Since then, my Lord, on such a world we fall,
What say you? B. Say? Why, take it, gold and all.

P. What Riches give us let us then inquire:
Meat, fire, and clothes? B. What more? P. Meat,
clothes, and fire. 80

Is this too little? would you more than live?
Alas! 'tis more than Turner finds they give;
Alas! 'tis more than (all his visions past)
Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last!
What can they give? To dying Hopkins heirs? 85
To Chartres vigour? Japhet nose and ears?
Can they in gems bid pallid Hippias glow?
In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below?
Or heal, old Narses, thy obscener ail,
With all th' embroid'ry plaster'd at thy tail? 90
They might (were Harpax not too wise to spend)
Give Harpax' self the blessing of a friend,
Or find some doctor that would save the life
Of wretched Shylock spite of Shylock's wife.
But thousands die without or this or that, 95
Die, and endow a college or a cat.

To some indeed Heav'n grants the happier fate
T' enrich a bastard, or a son they hate.

Perhaps you think the poor might have their part:
Bond damns the poor, and hates them from his heart.
The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule 101
That ev'ry man in want is knave or fool.

“ God cannot love (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)
“ The wretch he starves”---and piously denies:
But the good Bishop, with a meeker air, 105
Admits and leaves them Providence’s care.

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

B. Who suffer thus mere Charity should own
Must act on motives pow’rful tho’ unknown.

P. Some war, some plague or famine, they foresee,
Some revelation hid from you and me.
Why Shylock wants a meal the cause is found; 115
He thinks a loaf will rise to fifty pound.
What made Directors cheat in South-sea year?
To live on ven’son when it sold so dear.

Ask you why Phryne the whole auction buys?
Phryne foresees a general excise. 120
Why she and Sappho raise that monstrous sum?
Alas! they fear a man will cost a plum.

Wise Peter sees the world’s respect for gold,
And therefore hopes this nation may be sold.
Glorious ambition! Peter, swell thy store, 125
And be what Rome’s great Didius was before.

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

Much-injur'd Blunt! why bears he Britain's hate?
A wizard told him in these words our fate:

"At length corruption, like a gen'ral flood, 135

"(So long by watchful ministers withstood)

"Shall deluge all: and av'rice creeping on

"Spread like a low-born mist and blot the sun;

"Statesman and patriot ply alike the stocks,

"Peers and butler share alike the box, 140

"And judges job, and bishops bite the Town,

"And mighty dukes pack cards for half a crown:

"See Britain sunk in Lucre's sordid charms, [arms!"]

"And France reveng'd of Anne's and Edward's

'Twas no court badge, great Scriv'ner! fir'd thy brain,

Nor lordly luxury, nor city gain: 146

No, 'twas thy righteous end, ashamed to see

Senates degen'rate, patriots disagree,

And nobly wishing party-rage to cease,

To buy both sides, and give thy country peace. 150

"All this is madness," cries a sober sage:

But who, my Friend! has reason in his rage?

"The ruling passion, be it what it will,

"The ruling passion, conquers reason still."

Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame 155

Than ev'n that passion if it has no aim;

For tho' such motives Folly you may call,

The folly's greater to have none at all. [sends,

Hear then the truth: "'Tis Heav'n each passion

"And diff'rent men directs to diff'rent ends.

"Extremes in Nature equal good produce; 161

"Extremes in man concur to gen'ral use."

Ask we what makes one keep and one bestow?
That Pow'r who bids the ocean ebb and flow,
Bids seedtime, harvest, equal course maintain 165
Thro' reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain;
Builds life on death, on change duration founds,
And gives th' eternal wheels to know their rounds.

Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,
Wait but for wings, and in their season fly. 170
Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,
Sees but a backward steward for the poor;
This year a reservoir to keep and spare,
The next a fountain spouting thro' his heir,
In lavish streams to quench a country's thirst, 175
And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.

Old Cotta sham'd his fortune and his birth,
Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth:
What tho' (the use of barb'rous spits forgot)
His kitchen vy'd in coolness with his grot? 180
His court with nettles, moats with cresses stor'd,
With soups unbought, and sallads, bless'd his board?
If Cotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more
Than Bramins, saints, and sages, did before:
To cram the rich was prodigal expence; 185
And who would take the poor from Providence?
Like some lone chartreux stands the good old hall,
Silence without, and fasts within the wall;
No rafter'd roofs with dance and tabor sound,
No noontide bell invites the country round; 190
Tenants with sighs the smokeless tow'rs survey,
And turn th' unwilling steeds another way;

Benighted wanderers the forest o'er
Curse the sav'd candle and unop'ning door ;
While the gaunt mastiff, growling at the gate, 195
Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.

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

Yet sure of qualities deserving praise
More go to ruin fortunes than to raise.
What slaughter'd hecatombs, what floods of wine,
Fill the capacious 'squire and deep divine !

Yet no mean motive this profusion draws ; 205
His oxen perish in his country's cause ;

'Tis George and Liberty that crowns the cup,
And zeal for that great house which eats him up.

The woods recede around the naked seat,
The Sylvens groan---no matter---for the fleet: 210
Next goes his wool---to clothe our valiant bands ;

Last, for his country's love, he sells his lands.

To Town he comes, completes the nation's hope,

And heads the bold trainbands, and burns a pope :

And shall not Britain now reward his toils, 215

Britain ! that pays her patriots with her spoils ?

In vain at court the bankrupt pleads his cause ;

His thankless country leaves him to her laws.

The sense to value Riches, with the art
T' enjoy them, and the virtue to impart, 220

Not meanly nor ambitiously pursu'd,

Not sunk by sloth, nor rais'd by servitude ;

To balance fortune by a just expence,
Join with economy magnificence;
With splendour charity, with plenty health, 225
Oh! teach us, Bathurst! yet unspoil'd by wealth!
That secret rare, between th' extremes to move
Of mad good-nature and of mean self-love.

B. To worth or want well-weigh'd be bounty giv'n,
And ease or emulate the care of Heav'n; 230
(Whose measure full o'erflows on human race)
Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.
Wealth in the gross is death, but life diffus'd,
As poison heals in just proportion us'd:
In heaps, like ambergris, a stink it lies, 235
But well dispers'd is incense to the skies.

P. Who starves by nobles, or with nobles eats?
The wretch that trusts them, and the rogue that
Is there a lord who knows a cheerful noon [cheats.
Without a fiddler, flatt'rer, or buffoon? 240
Whose table wit or modest merit share
Unelbow'd by a gamester, pimp, or play'r?
Who copies your's or Oxford's better part
To ease th' oppress'd, and raise the sinking heart?
Where'er he shines, oh, Fortune! gild the scene, 245
And angels guard him in the golden mean!
There English bounty yet a while may stand,
And honour linger ere it leaves the land.

But all our praises why should lords engross?
Rise, honest Muse! and sing The Man of Ross: 250
Pleas'd Vaga echoes thro' her winding bounds,
And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.

Who hung with woods yon' mountain's sultry brow?
From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?
Not to the skies in useless columns tost, 255
Or in proud falls magnificently lost,
But clear and artless, pouring thro' the plain
Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.
Whose causeway parts the vale with shady rows?
Whose seats the weary traveller repose? 260
Who taught that heav'n-directed spire to rise?
"The Man of Ross," each lisping babe replies.
Behold the market-place with poor o'erspread!
The Man of Ross divides the weekly bread:
He feeds yon' almshouse, neat, but void of state, 265
Where Age and Want sit smiling at the gate:
Him portion'd maids, apprentic'd orphans, blest,
The young who labour, and the old who rest.
Is any sick? The Man of Ross relieves,
Prescribes, attends, the med'cine makes and gives.
Is there a variance? enter but his door, 271
Baulk'd are the courts, and contest is no more:
Despairing quacks with curses fled the place,
And vile attornies, now an useless race.

B. Thrice happy Man! enabled to pursue 275
What all so wish, but want the pow'r to do!
Oh! say what sums that gen'rous hand supply?
What mines to swell that boundless charity? 278

P. Of debts and taxes, wife and children, clear,
This Man possess'd---five hundred pounds a-year.
Blush, Grandeur! blush; proud Courts! withdraw
your blaze;

Ye little Stars! hide your diminish'd rays.

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

P. Who builds a church to God, and not to Fame,
Will never mark the marble with his name. 286

Go! search it there, where to be born and die
Of rich and poor makes all the history;

Enough that virtue fill'd the space between,
Prov'd by the ends of being to have been. 290

When Hopkins dies a thousand lights attend

The wretch who living sav'd a candle's end:

Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,

Belies his features, nay, extends his hands;

That live-long wig, which Gorgon's self might own,
Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone. 296

Behold what blessings wealth to life can lend!

And see what comfort it affords our end. [hung,

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-
The floors of plaster, and the walls of dung, 300

On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,

With tape-ty'd curtains, never meant to draw,

The George and Garter dangling from that bed

Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,

Great Villiers lies---alas! how chang'd from him,

That life of pleasure and that soul of whim! 306

Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,

The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury and Love;

Or just as gay at council, in a ring

Of mimic'd statesmen and their merry king; 310

No wit to flatter, left of all his store!

No fool to laugh at, which he valu'd more;

There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends!

His Grace's fate sage Cutler could foresee, 315
And well (he thought) advis'd him, "Live like me."
As well his Grace reply'd, "Like you, Sir John?"
"That I can do when all I have is gone!"

Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse,
Want with a full or with an empty purse? 320

Thy life more wretched, Cutler! was confess'd;
Arise and tell me, was thy death more bless'd?

Cutler saw tenants break and houses fall;
For very want he could not build a wall.

His only daughter in a stranger's pow'r; 325
For very want he could not pay a dow'r.

A few gray hairs his rev'rend temples crown'd;
'Twas very want that sold them for two pound.

What! ev'n deny'd a cordial at his end,
Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend? 330

What but a want which you perhaps think mad,
Yet numbers feel the want of what he had!

Cutler and Brutus dying both exclaim,
"Virtue! and Wealth! what are ye but a name!"

Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd?
Or are they both in this their own reward? 336

A knotty point! to which we now proceed.

But you are tir'd---I'll tell a tale---B. Agreed.

P. Where London's column, pointing at the skies,
Like a tall bully lifts the head and lies, 340

There dwelt a citizen of sober fame,
A plain good man, and Balaam was his name;

Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth;
His word would pass for more than he was worth.
One solid dish his week-day meal affords, 345
An added pudding solemniz'd the Lord's:
Constant at church and 'Change; his gains were sure;
His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.

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

Rous'd by the Prince of Air, the whirlwinds sweep
The surge, and plunge his father in the deep;
Then full against his Cornish lands they roar, 355
And two rich shipwrecks bless the lucky shore.

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

Asleep and naked as an Indian lay
An honest factor stole a gem away:
He pledg'd it to the Knight; the Knight had wit,
So kept the di'mond, and the rogue was bit.
Some scruple rose, but thus he eas'd his thought, 365
"I'll now give sixpence where I gave a groat;
"Where once I went to church I'll now go twice---
"And am so clear too of all other vice!"

The Tempter saw his time, the work he ply'd;
Stocks and subscriptions pour on ev'ry side, 370
Till all the dæmon makes his full descent
In one abundant show'r of *cent. per cent.*

Sinks deep within him, and possesses whole,
'Then dubs Director, and secures his soul.

Behold, Sir Balaam, now a man of spirit, 375
Ascribes his gettings to his parts and merit;
What late he call'd a blessing now was wit,
And God's good providence a lucky hit.

Things change their titles as our manners turn;
His compting-house employ'd the Sunday morn:
Seldom at church ('twas such a busy life) 381
But duly sent his family and wife.

There (so the devil ordain'd) one Christmas-tide
My good old lady catch'd a cold and dy'd.

A nymph of quality admires our Knight; 385
He marries, bows at court, and grows polite;
Leaves the dull Cits, and joins (to please the fair)
The well-bred cuckolds in St. James's air:

First for his son a gay commission buys,
Who drinks, whores, fights, and in a duel dies: 390
His daughter flaunts a Viscount's tawdry wife;
She bears a coronet and p-x for life.

In Britain's senate he a seat obtains,
And one more pensioner St. Stephen gains.

My lady falls to play; so bad her chance 395
He must repair it; takes a bribe from France:

The House impeach him; Coningsby harangues;
The Court forsake him, and Sir Balaam hangs.

Wife, son, and daughter, Satan! are thy own,
His wealth, yet dearer, forfeit to the crown: 400

The devil and the king divide the prize,
And sad Sir Balaam curses God and dies.

EPISTLE IV.

TO RICHARD BOYLE, EARL OF BURLINGTON.

Of the use of Riches.

The Argument.

THE vanity of expence in people of wealth and quality. The abuse of the word Taste, v. 13. That the first principle and foundation in this, as in every thing else, is good sense, v. 40. The chief proof of it is to follow Nature, even in works of mere luxury and elegance. Instanced in architecture and gardening, where all must be adapted to the genius and use of the place, and the beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it, v. 50. How men are disappointed in their most expensive undertakings for want of this true foundation, without which nothing can please long, if at all; and the best examples and rules will be but perverted into something burthensome and ridiculous, v. 65; to 92. A description of the false taste of magnificence; the first grand error of which is to imagine that greatness consists in the size and dimension, instead of the proportion and harmony, of the whole, v. 97.; and the second, either in joining together parts incoherent, or too minutely resembling, or, in the repetition of the same, too frequently, v. 105, &c.: A word or two of false Taste in books, in music, in painting, even in preaching and prayer; and, lastly, in entertainments, v. 133, &c.: yet Providence is justified in giving wealth to be squandered in this manner, since it is dispersed to the poor and laborious part of mankind, v. 169. [recurring to what is laid down in the First Book, Ep. ii. and in the Epistle preceding this, v. 159, &c.] What are the proper objects of magnificence, and a proper field for the expence of great men, v. 177. &c.; and, finally, the great and public works which become a prince, v. 191, to the end.

'Tis strange the miser should his cares employ
To gain those Riches he can ne'er enjoy:
Is it less strange the prodigal should waste
His wealth to purchase what he ne'er can taste?
Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats; 5
Artists must chuse his pictures, music, meats:
He buys for Topham drawings and designs,
For Pembroke statues, dirty gods, and coins;
Rare monkish manuscripts for Hearne alone,
And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane. 10

Think we all these are for himself? no more
Than his fine wife, alas! or finer whore.

For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?
Only to show how many tastes he wanted.
What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste? 15
Some dæmon whisper'd, "Visto! have a taste."
Heav'n visits with a taste the wealthy fool,
And needs no rod but Ripley with a rule.
See! sportive Fate, to punish awkward pride,
Bids Bubo build, and sends him such a guide: 20
A standing sermon at each year's expence,
That never coxcomb reach'd magnificence!

You show us Rome was glorious, not profuse,
And pompous buildings once were things of use;
Yet shall, my Lord, your just, your noble, rules 25
Fill half the land with imitating fools,
Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,
And of one beauty many blunders make;
Load some vain church with old theatric state,
Turn arcs of triumph to a garden gate; 30
Reverse your ornaments, and hang them all
On some patch'd doghole ek'd with ends of wall,
Then clap four slices of pilaster on't,
That lac'd with bits of rustic makes a front:
Shall call the winds thro' long arcades to roar, 35
Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door;
Conscious they act a true Palladian part,
And if they starve they starve by rules of art.
Oft' have you hinted to your brother peer
A certain truth, which many buy too dear: 40

Something there is more needful than expence,
And something previous ev'n to taste---'tis sense;
Good sense, which only is the gift of Heav'n,
And tho' no science, fairly worth the sev'n;
A light which in yourself you must perceive; 45
Jones and Le Nôtre have it not to give.

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
To rear the column, or the arch to bend,
To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot,
In all let nature never be forgot; 50
But treat the goddess like a modest fair,
Nor overdress, nor leave her wholly bare;
Let not each beauty ev'ry where be spy'd,
Where half the skill is decently to hide.
He gains all points who pleasingly confounds, 55
Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.

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

Still follow sense, of ev'ry art the soul, 65
Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,
Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
Start ev'n from difficulty, strike from chance:
Nature shall join you; time shall make it grow
A work to wonder at---perhaps a Stow. 70

Without it, proud Versailles ! thy glory falls,
And Nero's terraces desert their walls :
The vast parterres a thousand hands shall make,
Lo ! Cobham comes and floats them with a lake :
Or cut wide views thro' mountains to the plain, 75
You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.
Ev'n in an ornament its place remark,
Nor in an hermitage set Dr. Clarke.

Behold Villario's ten years' toil complete,
His quincunx darkens, his espaliers meet, 80
The wood supports the plain, the parts unite,
And strength of shade contends with strength of
A waving glow the bloomy beds display, [light;
Blushing in bright diversities of day,
With silver-quiv'ring rills meander'd o'er--- 85
Enjoy them you ! Villario can no more :
Tir'd of the scene parterres and fountains yield,
He finds at last he better likes a field.

Thro' his young woods how pleas'd Sabinus stray'd,
Or sat delighted in the thick'ning shade, 90
With annual joy the redd'ning shoots to greet,
Or see the stretching branches long to meet !
His son's fine taste an op'ner visto loves,
Foe to the Dryads of his father's groves ;
One boundless green or flourish'd carpet views, 95
With all the mournful family of yews ;
The thriving plants, ignoble broomsticks made,
Now sweep those alleys they were born to shade.

At Timon's villa let us pass a day ;
Where all cry out, "What sums are thrown away !"

So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air 101
Soft and agreeable come never there.

Greatness with Timon dwells in such a draught
As brings all Brobdingnag before your thought.
To compass this his building is a town, 105

His pond an ocean, his parterre a down :
Who but must laugh the master when he sees,
A puny insect shiv'ring at a breeze!

Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around !
The whole a labour'd quarry above ground. 110

Two Cupids squirt before; a lake behind
Improves the keenness of the northern wind.

His gardens next your admiration call;
On ev'ry side you look behold the wall!
No pleasing intricacies intervene, 115

No artful wildness to perplex the scene;

Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.

The suff'ring eye inverted Nature sees,
Trees cut to statues, statues thick as trees; 120

With here a fountain never to be play'd,
And there a summerhouse that knows no shade;

Here Amphitrite sails thro' myrtle bow'rs,
There gladiators fight or die in flow'rs;

Unwater'd see the drooping seahorse mourn, 125
And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty urn.

My Lord advances with majestic mien,
Smit with the mighty pleasure to be seen :
But soft---by regular approach---not yet---
First thro' the length of yon' hot terrace sweat; 130

And when up ten steep slopes you've dragg'd your
Just at his study-door he'll bless your eyes. [thighs,

His study! with what authors is it stor'd?

In books, not authors, curious is my Lord;
To all their dated backs he turns you round; 135
These Aldus printed, those Du Sueil has bound!
Lo, some are vellum, and the rest as good,
For all his Lordship knows, but they are wood!
For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look;
These shelves admit not any modern book. 140

And now the chapel's silver bell you hear,
That summons you to all the pride of pray'r:
Light quirks of music, broken and unev'n,
Make the soul dance upon a jig to heav'n.
On painted ceilings you devoutly stare, 145
Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,
Or gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
And bring all Paradise before your eye.
To rest the cushion and soft Dean invite,
Who never mentions hell to ears polite. 150

But, hark! the chiming clocks to dinner call;
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall:
The rich buffet well-colour'd serpents grace,
And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.
Is this a dinner? this a genial room? 155
No, it's a temple and a hecatomb;
A solemn sacrifice perform'd in state,
You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.
So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear
Sancho's dread Doctor and his wand were there. 160

Between each act the trembling salvers ring,
From soup to sweet wine, and God bless the King.
In plenty starving, tantaliz'd in state,
And complaisantly help'd to all I hate,
Treated, caress'd, and tir'd, I take my leave 165
Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;
I curse such lavish cost and little skill,
And swear no day was ever past so ill.

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

Another age shall see the golden ear
Imbrown the slope, and nod on the parterre;
Deep harvests bury all his pride has plann'd, 175
And laughing Ceres reassume the land.

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

His father's acres who enjoys in peace,
Or makes his neighbours glad if he increase;
Whose cheerful tenants bless their yearly toil,
Yet to their lord owe more than to the soil;
Whose ample lawns are not asham'd to feed 185
The milky heifer and deserving steed;
Whose rising forests not for pride or show,
But future buildings, future navies, grow;
Let his plantations stretch from down to down,
First shade a country, and then raise a town. 190

You, too, proceed! make falling arts your care,
Erect new wonders, and the old repair;
Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,
And be whate'er Vitruvius was before:
Till kings call forth th' ideas of your mind, 195
(Proud to accomplish what such hands design'd)
Bid harbours open, public ways extend,
Bid temples worthier of the God ascend;
Bid the broad arch the dang'rous flood contain,
The mole projected break the roaring main; 200
Back to his bounds their subject sea command,
And roll obedient rivers thro' the land:
These honours Peace to happy Britain brings;
These are imperial works, and worthy kings. 204

EPISTLE V,
TO MR. ADDISON.

[*Occasioned by his Dialogues on Medals.*]

SEE the wild waste of all-devouring years !
How Rome her own sad sepulchre appears,
With nodding arches, broken temples, spread !
The very tombs now vanish'd like their dead !
Imperial wonders rais'd on nations spoil'd, 5
Where mix'd with slaves the groaning martyr toil'd :
Huge theatres, that now unpeopled woods,
Now drain'd a distant country of her floods ;
Fanes, which admiring gods with pride survey,
Statues of men scarce less alive than they ! 10
Some felt the silent stroke of mould'ring age,
Some hostile fury, some religious rage :
Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,
And Papal piety and Gothic fire.
Perhaps, by its own ruins sav'd from flame, 15
Some bury'd marble half preserves a name ;
That name the learn'd with fierce disputes pursue,
And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.

Ambition sigh'd ; she found it vain to trust
The faithless column and the crumbling bust ; 20
Huge moles, whose shadow stretch'd from shore to
Their ruins perish'd, and their place no more : [shore,
Convinc'd she now contracts her vast design,
And all her triumphs shrink into a Coin.
A narrow orb each crowded conquest keeps, 25
Beneath her palm here sad Judea weeps.

Now scantier limits the proud arch confine,
And scarce are seen the prostrate Nile or Rhine;
A small Euphrates thro' the piece is roll'd,
And little Eagles wave their wings in gold. 30

The Medal, faithful to its charge of fame,
Thro' climes and ages bears each form and name:
In one short view subjected to our eye,
Gods, emp'rors, heroes, sages, beauties, lie.
With sharpen'd sight pale Antiquaries pore, 35
Th' inscription value, but the rust adore.

This the blue varnish, that the green endears,
The sacred rust of twice ten hundred years!
To gain Pescennius one employs his schemes,
One grasps a Cecrops in ecstatic dreams. 40

Poor Vadius, long with learned spleen devour'd,
Can taste no pleasure since his shield was scour'd;
And Curio, restless by the fair-one's side,
Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride.

Theirs is the vanity, the learning thine: 45
Touch'd by thy hand again Rome's glories shine;
Her gods and godlike heroes rise to view,
And all her faded garlands bloom anew.

Nor blush these studies thy regard engage;
These pleas'd the fathers of poetic rage; 50
The verse and sculpture bore an equal part,
And art reflected images to art.

Oh! when shall Britain, conscious of her claim,
Stand emulous of Greek and Roman fame?
In living Medals see her wars enroll'd, 55
And vanquish'd realms supply recording gold?

Here, rising bold, the patriot's honest face,
There warriors frowning in historic brass;
Then future ages with delight shall see
How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's, looks agree; 60
Or in fair series laurell'd bards be shown,
A Virgil there, and here an Addison:
Then shall thy Craggs (and let me call him mine)
On the cast ore another Pollio shine;
With aspect open shall erect his head, 65
And round the orb in lasting notes be read,
"Statesman, yet friend to truth! of soul sincere,
"In action faithful, and in honour clear;
"Who broke no promise, serv'd no private end,
"Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend; 70
"Ennobled by himself, by all approv'd,
"And prais'd unenvy'd by the Muse he lov'd."

THE WIFE OF BATH

HER PROLOGUE.

FROM CHAUCER.

BEHOLD the woes of matrimonial life,
And hear with rev'rence an experienc'd wife;
To dear-bought wisdom give the credit due,
And think for once a woman tells you true.
In all these trials I have borne a part; 5
I was myself the scourge that caus'd the smart;
For since fifteen in triumph have I led
Five captive husbands from the church to bed.

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

But let them read, and solve me if they can,
The words address'd to the Samaritan;
Five times in lawful wedlock she was join'd, 15
And sure the certain stint was ne'er defin'd

"Increase and multiply" was Heav'n's command,
And that's a text I clearly understand.

This too, "Let men their sires and mothers leave,
"And to their dearer wives for ever cleave." 20

More wives than one by Solomon were try'd,
Or else the wisest of mankind's bely'd.

I've had myself full many a merry fit,
And trust in Heav'n I may have many yet;

For when my transitory spouse, unkind, 25
Shall die and leave his woful wife behind,
I'll take the next good Christian I can find. }

Paul, knowing one could never serve our turn,
Declar'd 'twas better far to wed than burn.
There's danger in assembling fire and tow; 30
I grant them that; and what it means you know.
The same apostle, too, has elsewhere own'd
No precept for virginity he found:
'Tis but a counsel---and we women still
Take which we like, the counsel or our will. 35

I envy not their bliss if he or she
Think fit to live in perfect chastity:
Pure let them be, and free from taint of vice;
I for a few slight spots am not so nice.
Heav'n calls us diff'rent ways, on these bestows 40
One proper gift, another grants to those:
Not ev'ry man's oblig'd to sell his store,
And give up all his substance to the poor:
Such as are perfect may, I can't deny;
But by your leaves, Divines! so am not I. 45

Full many a saint, since first the world began,
Liv'd an unspotted maid in spite of man:
Let such (a God's name) with fine wheat be fed,
And let us honest wives eat barley bread.
For me, I'll keep the post assign'd by Heav'n, 50
And use the copious talent it has giv'n:
Let my good spouse pay tribute, do me right,
'And keep an equal reck'ning ev'ry night:
His proper body is not his but mine;
For so said Paul, and Paul's a sound divine. 55

Know then, of those five husbands I have had
Three were just tolerable, two were bad.

The three were old, but rich, and fond beside,
And toil'd most piteously to please their bride;
But since their wealth (the best they had) was mine,
The rest without much loss I could resign: 61
Sure to be lov'd I took no pains to please,
Yet had more pleasure far than they had ease.

Presents flow'd in apace: with show'rs of gold
They made their court, like Jupiter of old: 65
If I but smil'd a sudden youth they found,
And a new palsy seiz'd them when I frown'd.

Ye sov'reign Wives! give ear, and understand,
Thus shall ye speak, and exercise command;
For never was it giv'n to mortal man 70
To lie so boldly as we women can;
Forswear the fact, tho' seen with both his eyes,
And call your maids to witness how he lies.

Hark, old Sir Paul! ('twas thus I us'd to say)
Whence is our neighbour's wife so rich and gay? 75
Treated, caress'd, where'er she's pleas'd to roam---
I sit in tatters, and immur'd at home.

Why to her house dost thou so oft' repair?
Art thou so am'rous? and is she so fair?
If I but see a cousin or a friend, 80
Lord! how you swell and rage like any fiend?
But you reel home, a drunken beastly bear,
Then preach till midnight in your easy chair;
Cry Wives are false, and ev'ry woman evil,
And give up all that's female to the devil. 85

If poor, (you say) she drains her husband's purse;
If rich, she keeps her priest, or something worse;

If highly born, intolerably vain,
 Vapours and pride by turns possess her brain;
 Now gaily mad, now sourly splenetic, 90
 Freakish when well, and fretful when she's sick:
 If fair, then chaste she cannot long abide,
 By pressing youth attack'd on ev'ry side;
 If foul, her wealth the lusty lover lures,
 Or else her wit some fool-gallant procures, 95
 Or else she dances with becoming grace,
 Or shape excuses the defects of face.
 There swims no goose so gray but soon or late
 She finds some honest gander for her mate.

Horses (thou say'st) and asses men may try, 100
 And ring suspected vessels ere they buy;
 But wives, a random choice, untry'd they take,
 They dream in courtship, but in wedlock wake;
 Then, nor till then, the veil's remov'd away,
 And all the woman glares in open day. 105

You tell me, to preserve your wife's good grace,
 Your eyes must always languish on my face,
 Your tongue with constant flatt'ries feed my ear,
 And tag each sentence with My life! my dear!
 If by strange chance a modest blush be rais'd, 110
 Be sure my fine complexion must be prais'd.
 My garments always must be new and gay,
 And feasts still kept upon my wedding-day.
 Then must my nurse be pleas'd, and fav'rite maid;
 And endless treats and endless visits paid 115
 To a long train of kindred, friends, allies:
 All this thou say'st, and all thou say'st are lies.

On Jenkin, too, you cast a squinting eye :
What ! can your 'prentice raise your jealousy ?
Fresh are his ruddy cheeks, his forehead fair, 120
And like the burnish'd gold his curling hair.
But clear thy wrinkled brow, and quit thy sorrow,
I'd scorn your 'prentice should you die to-morrow.

Why are thy chests all lock'd ? on what design ?
Are not thy wordly goods and treasure mine ? 125
Sir, I'm no fool ; nor shall you, by St. John,
Have goods and body to yourself alone.
One you shall quit in spite of both your eyes---
I heed not, I, the bolts, the locks, the spies.
If you had wit, you'd say, " Go where you will, 130
" Dear spouse ! I credit not the tales they tell :
" Take all the freedoms of a marry'd life ;
" I know thee for a virtuous faithful wife."

Lord ! when you have enough what need you care,
How merrily soever others fare ? 135
Tho' all the day I give and take delight,
Doubt not sufficient will be left at night.
'Tis but a just and rational desire
To light a taper at a neighbour's fire.

There's danger too, you think, in rich array, 140
And none can long be modest that are gay.
The cat, if you but singe her tabby skin,
The chimney keeps, and sits content within ;
But once grown sleek will from her corner run,
Sport with her tail, and wanton in the sun : 145
She licks her fair round face, and frisks abroad
To shew her fur, and to be caterwaul'd.

Lo thus, my friends, I wrought to my desires
These three right ancient venerable sires.
I told 'em, Thus you say and thus you do; 150
I told 'em false, but Jenkin swore 'twas true.
I, like a dog, could bite as well as whine,
And first complain'd whene'er the guilt was mine.
I tax'd them oft' with wenching and amours, [doors;
When their weak legs scarce dragg'd them out of
And swore the rambles that I took by night ' 156
Were all to spy what damsels they bedight:
That colour brought me many hours of mirth;
For all this wit is giv'n us from our birth.
Heav'n gave to woman the peculiar grace 160
To spin, to weep, and cully human race.
By this nice conduct and this prudent course,
By murm'ring, wheedling, stratagem, and force,
I still prevail'd, and would be in the right,
Or curtain-lectures made a restless night. 165
If once my husband's arm was o'er my side,
What! so familiar with your spouse? I cry'd:
I levy'd first a tax upon his need;
Then let him---'twas a nicety indeed!
Let all mankind this certain maxim hold, 170
Marry who will our sex is to be sold.
With empty hands no tassels you can lure,
But fulsome love for gain we can endure;
For gold we love the impotent and old,
And heave, and pant, and kiss, and cling, for gold.
Yet with embraces curses oft' I mixt, 176
Then kiss'd again, and chid, and rail'd betwixt.

Well, I may make my will in peace, and die,
 For not one word in man's arrears am I.
 To drop a dear dispute I was unable, 180
 Ev'n tho' the Pope himself had sat at table;
 But when my point was gain'd, then thus I spoke;
 " Billy, my dear! how sheepishly you look!
 " Approach, my spouse! and let me kiss thy cheek;
 " Thou shouldst be always thus, resign'd and meek.
 " Of job's great patience since so oft' you preach, 186
 " Well should you practice who so well can teach.
 " 'Tis difficult to do I must allow,
 " But I, my dearest! will instruct you how.
 " Great is the blessing of a prudent wife, 190
 " Who puts a period to domestic strife.
 " One of us two must rule and one obey;
 " And since in man right reason bears the sway, }
 " Let that frail thing, weak woman, have her way. }
 " The wives of all my family have rul'd 195
 " Their tender husbands, and their passions cool'd.
 " Fy! 'tis unmanly thus to sigh and groan:
 " What! would you have me to yourself alone?
 " Why, take me, Love! take all and ev'ry part!
 " Here's your revenge! you love it at your heart.
 " Would I vouchsafe to sell what Nature gave, 201
 " You little think what custom I could have.
 " But see! I'm all your own---nay hold---for shame!
 " What means my dear?--indeed--you are to blame."

Thus with my first three lords I pass'd my life,
 A very woman and a very wife. 206

What sums from these old spouses I could raise
Procur'd young husbands in my riper days.
Tho' past my bloom not yet decay'd was I,
Wanton and wild, and chatter'd like a pie. 210
In country dances still I bore the bell,
And sung as sweet as ev'ning Philomel.
To clear my quail-pipe and refresh my soul
Full oft' I drain'd the spicy nut-brown bowl;
Rich luscious wines, that youthful blood improve,
And warm the swelling veins to feats of love: 216
For 'tis as sure as cold engenders hail,
A liqu'rish mouth must have a lech'rous tail:
Wine lets no lover unrewarded go,
As all true gamesters by experience know. 220

But oh, good Gods! whene'er a thought I cast
On all the joys of youth and beauty past,
To find in pleasures I have had my part,
Still warms me to the bottom of my heart.
This wicked world was once my dear delight; 225
Now all my conquests, all my charms, good night!
The flour consum'd, the best that now I can
Is e'en to make my market of the bran.

My fourth dear spouse was not exceeding true;
He kept, 'twas thought, a private miss or two: 230
But all that score I paid.---As how? you'll say;
Not with my body in a filthy way;
But I so dress'd, and danc'd, and drank, and din'd,
And view'd a friend with eyes so very kind
As stung his heart, and made his marrow fry 235
With burning rage and frantic jealousy.

His soul, I hope, enjoys eternal glory,
For here on earth I was his purgatory.
Oft' when his shoe the most severely wrung
He put on careless airs, and sat and sung. 240
How sore I gall'd him only Heav'n could know,
And he that felt, and I that caus'd the woe.
He dy'd when last from pilgrimage I came,
With other gossips, from Jerusalem;
And now lies bury'd underneath a rood, 245
Fair to be seen, and rear'd of honest wood:
A tomb, indeed, with fewer sculptures grac'd
Than that Mausolus' pious widow plac'd,
Or where enshrin'd the great Darius lay;
But cost on graves is merely thrown away. 250
The pit fill'd up, with turf we cover'd o'er;
So bless the good man's soul! I say no more.

Now for my fifth lov'd lord, the last and best;
(Kind Heav'n afford him everlasting rest!)
Full hearty was his love, and I can shew 255
The tokens on my ribs in black and blue;
Yet with a knock my heart he could have won,
While yet the smart was shooting in the bone.
How quaint an appetite in woman reigns!
Free gifts we scorn, and love what costs us pains:
Let men avoid us and on them we leap; 260
A glutt'd market makes provision cheap.

In pure good-will I took this jovial spark,
Of Oxford he, a most egregious clerk.
He boarded with a widow in the town, 265
A trusty gossip, one Dame Alison;

Full well the secrets of my soul she knew,
Better than e'er our parish priest could do.
To her I told whatever could befall:
Had but my husband piss'd against a wall, 270
Or done a thing that might have cost his life,
She---and my niece---and one more worthy wife,
Had known it all: what most he would conceal
To these I made no scruple to reveal.
Oft' has he blush'd from ear to ear for shame 275
That e'er he told a secret to his dame.

It so befell, in holy time of Lent,
That oft' a-day I to this gossip went;
(My husband, thank my stars, was out of town)
From house to house we rambled up and down, 280
This clerk, myself, and my good neighbour Alse,
To see, be seen, to tell, and gather tales.
Visits to ev'ry church we daily paid,
And march'd in ev'ry holy masquerade;
The stations duly and the vigils kept, 285
Not much we fasted, but scarce ever slept.
At sermons, too, I shone in scarlet gay;
The wasting moth ne'er spoil'd my best array;
The cause was this, I wore it ev'ry day. }

'Twas when fresh May her early blossoms yields
This clerk and I were walking in the fields. 291
We grew so intimate, I can't tell how,
I pawn'd my honour and engag'd my vow,
If e'er I laid my husband in his urn
That he, and only he, should serve my turn. 295

We straight struck hands, the bargain was agreed;
I still have shifts against a time of need.

The mouse that always trusts to one poor hole
Can never be a mouse of any soul. 299

I vow'd I scarce could sleep since first I knew him,
And durst be sworn he had bewitch'd me to him;
If e'er I slept I dream'd of him alone,
And dreams foretell, as learned men have shown, }
All this I said; but dreams, Sirs, I had none: }
I follow'd but my crafty crony's lore, 305
Who bid me tell this lie---and twenty more.

Thus day by day and month by month we past;
It pleas'd the Lord to take my spouse at last.
I tore my gown, I soil'd my locks with dust,
And beat my breasts, as wretched widows---must.
Before my face my handkerchief I spread 311
To hide the floods of tears I did---not shed.
The good man's coffin to the church was borne;
Around the neighbours, and my clerk too, mourn:
But as he march'd, good Gods! he show'd a pair
Of legs and feet so clean, so strong, so fair! 316
Of twenty winters' age he seem'd to be;
I (to say truth) was twenty more than he;
But vig'rous still, a lively buxom dame,
And had a wondrous gift to quench a flame. 320
A conj'rer once, that deeply could divine,
Assur'd me Mars in Taurus was my sign.
As the stars order'd, such my life has been:
Alas, alas! that ever love was sin!

Fair Venus gave me fire and sprightly grace, 325
And Mars assurance and a dauntless face.
By virtue of this pow'rful constellation
I follow'd always my own inclination.

But to my tale. A month scarce pass'd away,
With dance and song we kept the nuptial day. 330
All I possess'd I gave to his command,
My goods and chattels, money, house, and land;
But oft' repented, and repent it still;
He prov'd a rebel to my sov'reign will:
Nay once, by Heav'n! he struck me on the face. 335
Hear but the fact, and judge yourselves the case.

Stubborn as any lioness was I,
And knew full well to raise my voice on high;
As true a rambler as I was before,
And would be so in spite of all he swore. 340
He against this right sagely would advise,
And old examples set before my eyes;
Tell how the Roman matrons led their life,
Of Gracchus' mother, and Duilius' wife;
And close the sermon, as beseem'd his wit, 345
With some grave sentence out of Holy Writ.
Oft' would he say, Who builds his house on sands
Pricks his blind horse across the fallow lands;
Or lets his wife abroad with pilgrims roam
Deserves a fool's cap and long ears at home. 350
All this avail'd not, for whoe'er he be
That tells my faults, I hate him mortally;
And so do numbers more I'll boldly say,
Men, women, clergy, regular, and lay.

My spouse (who was, you know, to learning bred)
A certain treatise oft' at ev'ning read, 356
Where divers authors (whom the devil confound
For all their lies) were in one volume bound :
Valerius whole, and of St. Jerome part ;
Chrysippus and Tertullian, Ovid's Art, 360
Solomon's Proverbs, Eloïsa's Loves,
And many more than sure the Church approves.
More legends were there here of wicked wives
Than good in all the Bible and Saints' Lives.
Who drew the lion vanquish'd? 'Twas a man ; 365
But could we women write as scholars can,
Men should stand mark'd with far more wickedness
Than all the sons of Adam could redress.
Love seldom haunts the breast where learning lies,
And Venus sets ere Mercury can rise. 370
Those play the scholars who can't play the men,
And use that weapon which they have, their pen :
When old, and past the relish of delight,
Then down they sit, and in their dotage write
That not one woman keeps her marriage-vow. 375
(This by the way, but to my purpose now.)

It chanc'd my husband, on a winter's night,
Read in this book aloud with strange delight,
How the first female (as the Scriptures show)
Brought her own spouse and all his race to woe ;
How Samson fell ; and he whom Dejanire 381
Wrapp'd in th' envenom'd shirt, and set on fire ;
How curs'd Eriphyle her lord betray'd,
And the dire ambush Clytemnestra laid ;

But what most pleas'd him was the Cretan dame 385
And husband-bull---Oh, monstrous! fy for shame!

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

He read how Arius to his friend complain'd
A fatal tree was growing in his land,
On which three wives successively had twin'd 395
A sliding noose, and waver'd in the wind.
Where grows this plant, reply'd the friend, oh! where?
For better fruit did never orchard bear:
Give me some slip of this most blissful tree,
And in my garden planted shall it be. 400

Then how two wives their lords' destruction prove,
Thro' hatred one, and one thro' too much love;
That for her husband mix'd a pois'nous draught,
And this for lust an am'rous philtre bought:
The nimble juice soon seiz'd his giddy head, 405
Frantic at night, and in the morning dead. [slain,

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

Long time I heard, and swell'd, and blush'd, and
But when no end of these vile tales I found, [frown'd;
When still he read, and laugh'd, and read again,
And half the night was thus consum'd in vain,

Provok'd to vengeance, three large leaves I tore,
And with one buffet fell'd him on the floor. 416

With that my husband in a fury rose,
And down he settled me with hearty blows.
I groan'd, and lay extended on my side;
Oh! thou hast slain me for my wealth, I cry'd: 420

Yet I forgive thee---take my last embrace---
He wept, kind soul! and stoop'd to kiss my face:
I took him such a box as turn'd him blue,
'Then sigh'd and cry'd, Adieu, my dear, adieu!

But after many a hearty struggle past 425
I condescended to be pleas'd at last.

Soon as he said, My mistress and my wife!
Do what you list the term of all your life,
I took to heart the merits of the cause,
And stood content to rule by wholesome laws; 430
Receiv'd the reins of absolute command,
With all the government of house and land,
And empire o'er his tongue and o'er his hand. }
As for the volume that revil'd the dames, 434
'Twas torn to fragments, and condemn'd to flames.

Now Heav'n on all my husbands gone bestow
Pleasures above for tortures felt below:
That rest they wish'd for grant them in the grave,
And bless those souls my conduct help'd to save. 439

STATIUS HIS THEBAIS.

BOOK I.

[*Translated in the year 1703.*]

The Argument.

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

FRATERNAL rage the guilty Thebes alarms,
Th' alternate reign destroy'd by impious arms
Demand our song; a sacred fury fires
My ravish'd breast, and all the Muse inspires.

FRATERNAS acies, alternaque regna profanis
Decertata odiis, sontesque evolvere Thebas,

O Goddess! say, shall I deduce my rhymes 5
 From the dire nation in its early times,
 Europa's rape, Agenor's stern decree,
 And Cadmus searching round the spacious sea?
 How with the serpent's teeth he sow'd the soil,
 And reap'd an iron harvest of his toil? 10
 Or how from joining stones the city sprung,
 While to his harp divine Amphion sung?
 Or shall I Juno's hate to Thebes resound,
 Whose fatal rage th' unhappy monarch found?
 The sire against the son his arrows drew; 15
 O'er the wide fields the furious mother flew,
 And while her arms a second hope contain,
 Sprung from the rocks, and plung'd into the main.
 But wave whate'er to Cadmus may belong,
 And fix, O Muse! the barrier of thy song 20

Pierius menti calor incidit. Unde jubetis 5
 Ire, deæ? gentisne canam primordia diræ?
 Sidonios raptus, et inexorabile pactum
 Legis Agenoreæ? scrutantemque æquora Cadmum?
 Longo retro series, trepidum si martis operti
 Agricolam infandis condentem prælia sulcis 10
 Expediam, penitusque sequar quo carmine muris
 Jusserit Amphion Tyrios accedere montes:
 Unde graves iræ cognata in mœnia Baccho
 Quod sævæ Junonis opus; cui sumpserit arcum
 Infelix Athamas, cur non expaverit ingens 15
 Ionium, socio casura Palæmone mater.
 Atque adeo jam nunc gemitus, et prospera Cadmi

At Oedipus---from his disasters trace
 The long confusions of his guilty race :
 Nor yet attempt to stretch thy bolder wing,
 And mighty Cæsar's conqu'ring Eagles sing ; 24
 How twice he tam'd proud Ister's rapid flood, [blood ;
 While Dacian mountains stream'd with barb'rous
 Twice taught the Rhine beneath his laws to roll,
 And stretch'd his empire to the frozen pole ;
 Or, long before, with early valour strove
 In youthful arms t'assert the cause of Jove. 30
 And thou, great heir of all thy father's fame,
 Increase of glory to the Latian name !
 Oh ! bless thy Rome with an eternal reign,
 Nor let desiring worlds entreat in vain.
 What tho' the stars contract their heav'nly space, 35
 And crowd their shining ranks to yield thee place ;

Præterisse sinam : limes mihi carminis esto 20
 Oedipodæ confusa domus : quando Itala nondum
 Signa, nec arctoos ausim sperare triumphos,
 Bisque jugo Rhenum, bis adauctum legibus Istrum, 25
 Et conjurato dejectos vertice Dacos :
 Aut defensa prius vix pubescentibus annis 30
 Bella Jovis. Tuque, O Latix, decus addite famæ,
 Quem nova maturi subeuntem exorsa parentis
 Æternum sibi Roma cupit : licet arctior omnes
 Limes agat stellas, et te plaga lucida cœli
 Pleiadum, Boreæque, et hiulci fulminis experts 35
 Sollicitet ; licet ignipedum frenator equorum

Tho' all the skies, ambitious of thy sway,
 Conspire to court thee from our world away;
 Tho' Phœbus longs to mix his rays with thine,
 And in thy glories more serenely shine; 40
 Tho' Jove himself no less content would be
 To part his throne and share his heav'n with
 thee?

Yet stay, great Cæsar! and vouchsafe to reign
 O'er the wide earth, and o'er the wat'ry main;
 Resign to Jove his empire of the skies, 45
 And people heav'n with Roman deities.

The time will come when a diviner flame
 Shall warm my breast to sing of Cæsar's fame;
 Mean-while permit that my preluding Muse
 In Theban wars an humbler theme may chuse: 50
 Of furious hate surviving death she sings,
 A fatal throne to two contending kings,
 And fun'ral flames that, parting wide in air,
 Express the discord of the souls they bear:

Ipse tuis alte radiantem crinibus arcum 40
Imprimat, aut magni cedat tibi Jupiter æqua.
Parte poli; maneat hominum contentus habenis,
Undarum terræque potens, et sidera dones. 45
Tempus erit, cum pierio tua fortior œstro
Facta canam: nunc tendo chelyn. satis arma referre
Aonia, et geminis sceptrum exitiale tyrannis, 50
Nec furiis post fata modum, flammasque rebelles
Seditione rogi, tumulisque carentia regum

Of towns dispeopled, and the wand'ring ghosts 55
 Of kings unbury'd in the wasted coasts;
 When Dirce's fountain blush'd with Grecian blood,
 And Thetis, near Ismenos' swelling flood,
 With dread beheld the rolling surges sweep
 In heaps his slaughter'd sons into the deep. 60

What hero, Clio! wilt thou first relate?
 The rage of Tydeus, or the Prophet's fate?
 Or how, with hills of slain on ev'ry side,
 Hippomedon repell'd the hostile tide?
 Or how the youth, with ev'ry grace adorn'd, 65
 Untimely fell, to be for ever mourn'd?
 Then to fierce Capaneus thy verse extend,
 And sing with horror his prodigious end.

Now wretched Oedipus, depriv'd of sight,
 Led a long death in everlasting night; 70

Funera, et egestas alternis mortibus urbes; 55
 Cæcula cum rubuit Lernæo sanguine Dirce,
 Et Thetis arentes assuetum stringere ripas,
 Horrui ingenti venientem Ismenon acervo. 60

Quem prius heroum Clio dabis? immodicum iræ
 Tydea? laurigeri subitos an vatis hiatus?
 Urget et hostilem prope'llens cædibus annem
 Turbidus Hippomedon, plorandaque bella protervi
 Arcados, atqui alio Capaneus horrore canendus, 66

Impia jam merita scrutatus lumina dextra
 Merserat æterna damnatum nocte pudorem
 Oedipodes, longaue animam sub morte tenebat. 70

But while he dwells where not a cheerful ray
Can pierce the darkness, and abhors the day,
The clear reflecting mind presents his sin
In frightful views, and makes it day within;
Returning thoughts in endless circles roll, 75
And thousand Furies haunt his guilty soul:
The wretch then lifted to th' un pitying skies
Those empty orbs from whence he tore his eyes,
Whose wounds, yet fresh, with bloody hands he
strook, 79

While from his breast these dreadful accents broke.

“Ye Gods! that o'er the gloomy regions reign,
Where guilty spirits feel eternal pain;
Thou, sable Styx! whose livid streams are roll'd
Thro' dreary coasts, which I tho' blind behold;
Tisiphone! that oft' hast heard my pray'r, 85
Assist, if Oedipus deserve thy care.

*Illum indulgentem tenebris, inæque recessu
Sedis, inaspectos cœlo, radiisque penates
Servantem, tamen assiduis circumvolat alis
Sæva dies animi, scelerumque in pectore diræ. 75
Tunc vacuos orbes, crudum ac miserabile vitæ
Supplicium, ostentat cœlo, manibusque cruentis
Pulsat inane solum, sævaque ita voce precatur: 80
Dî sontes animas, angustaque Tartara pœnis
Qui regitis, tuque umbrifero Styx livida fundo,
Quam video, multumque mihi consueta vocari
Annue Tisiphone, perversaque vota secunda, 85
Si bene quid merui, si me de matre cadentem*

If you receiv'd me from Jocasta's womb,
 And nurs'd the hope of mischiefs yet to come;
 If, leaving Polybus, I took my way
 To Cyrrha's temple, on that fatal day 90
 When by the son the trembling father dy'd,
 Where the three roads the Phocian fields divide;
 If I the Sphynx's riddles durst explain,
 Taught by thyself to win the promis'd reign;
 If wretched I, by baleful Furies led, 95
 With monstrous mixture stain'd my mother's bed,
 For hell and thee begot an impious brood,
 And with full lust those horrid joys renew'd;
 Then, self-condemn'd, to shades of endless night,
 Forc'd from these orbs the bleeding balls of sight;
 Oh, hear! and aid the vengeance I require, 101
 If worthy thee, and what thou might'st inspire.

Fovisti gremio, et trajectum vulnere plantas
 Firmâsti; si stagna peti Cyrrhæa bicorni 90
 Interfusa jugo, possem cum degere falso
 Contentus Polybo, trifidæque in Phocidos arce
 Longævum implicui regem, secuique trementis
 Ora senis, dum quæro patrem: si Sphingos iniquæ
 Callidus ambages, te præmonstrante, resolvi;
 Si dulces Furias, et lamentabile matris 95
 Connubium gavisus inî; noctemque nefandam
 Sæpe tuli, natosque tibi (scis ipsa) paravi;
 Mox avidus pœnæ digitis cedentibus ultro
 Incubui, miseraque oculos in matre reliqui: 100
 Exaudi, si digna precor, quæque ipsa furenti

My sons their old unhappy sire despise,
 Spoil'd of his kingdom, and depriv'd of eyes;
 Guideless I wander, unregarded mourn, 105
 While these exalt their sceptres o'er my urn;
 These sons, ye Gods! who with flagitious pride
 Insult my darkness and my groans deride.
 Art thou a father, unregarding Jove!
 And sleeps thy thunder in the realms above? 110
 Thou Fury! then some lasting curse entail,
 Which o'er their children's children shall prevail;
 Place on their heads that crown distain'd with gore
 Which these dire hands from my slain father tore;
 Go, and a parent's heavy curses bear 115
 Break all the bonds of Nature, and prepare
 Their kindred souls to mutual hate and war.
 Give them to dare, what I might wish to see,
 Blind as I am, some glorious villany!

Subjiceres : orbum visu regnisque parentem
 Non regere, aut dictis mœrentem flectere adorti
 Quos genui, quocunque toro: quin ecce superbi 105
 (Proh dolor!) et nostro jamdudum funere reges,
 Insultant tenebris, gemitusque odere paternos.
 Hisne etiam funestus ego? et videt ista deorum
 Ignavus genitor? tu saltem debita vindex 110
 Huc ades, et totos in pœnam ordire nepotes.
 Indue quod madidum tabo diadema cruentis
 Unguibus arripui, votisque instincta paternis
 I media in fratres, generis consortia ferro 115
 Dissiliant: da Tartarei regina barathri

Soon shalt thou find, if thou but arm their hands,
Their ready guilt preventing thy commands: 121
Couldst thou some great proportion'd mischief frame,
They'd prove the father from whose loins they came.

The Fury heard, while on Cocytus' brink
Her snakes unty'd sulphureous waters drink; 125
But at the summons roll'd her eyes around,
And snatch'd the starting serpents from the ground.
Not half so swiftly shoots along in air
The gliding lightning or descending star.
Thro' crowds of airy shades she wing'd her flight, 130
And dark dominions of the silent night;
Swift as she pass'd the flitting ghosts withdrew,
And the pale spectres trembled at her view:
To th' iron gates of Tenarus she flies,
There spreads her dusky pinions to the skies. 135

Quod cupiam vidisse nefas, nec tarda sequetur 120
Mens juvenum; modo digna veni, mea pignora
nosces.

Talia jactanti crudelis diva severos
Advertit vultus; inamoenum forte sedebat
Cocytum juxta, resolutaque vertice crines, 125
Lambere sulfureas permiserat anguibus undas.
Ilicet igne Jovis, lapsisque citatior astris
Tristibus exiliit ripis, discedit inane 130
Vulgus, et occursus dominæ pavet; illa per umbras
Et caligantes, animarum exanime campos,
Tænariæ limen petit irremeabile portæ.
Sensit adesse dies; piceo nox obvia nimbo 135

The day beheld, and, sick'ning at the sight,
 Veil'd her fair glories in the shades of night.
 Affrighted Atlas on the distant shore
 Trembled, and shook the heav'ns and gods he bore.
 Now from beneath Malea's airy height 140
 Aloft she sprung, and steer'd to Thebes her flight;
 With eager speed the well-known journey took,
 Nor here regrets the hell she late forsook.
 A hundred snakes her gloomy visage shade,
 A hundred serpents guard her horrid head; 145
 In her sunk eyeballs dreadful meteors glow;
 Such rays from Phœbe's bloody circles flow, [high
 When lab'ring with strong charms she shoots from
 A fiery gleam, and reddens all the sky. 149
 Blood stain'd her cheeks, and from her mouth there
 Blue steaming poisons, and a length of flame. [came
 From ev'ry blast of her contagious breath
 Famine and drought proceed, and plagues and death.

Lucentes turbavit equos. procul arduus Atlas
 Horruit, et dubia cœlum cervice remisit.
 Arripit extemplo Maleæ de valle resurgens 140
 Notum iter ad Thebas: neque enim velocior ullas
 Itque reditque vias, cognataque Tartara mavult.
 Centum illi stantes umbrabant ora cerastæ, 145
 Turba minor diri capitis: sedet intus abactis
 Ferrea lux oculis; qualis per nubila Phœbes
 Atracea rubet arte labor: suffusa veneno 150
 Tenditur, ac sanie gliscit cutis: igneus atro
 Ore vapor, quo longa sitis, morbique, famesque,

A robe obscene was o'er her shoulders thrown,
 A dress by Fates and Furies worn alone. 155
 She toss'd her meagre arms; her better hand
 In waving circles whirl'd a fun'ral brand:
 A serpent from her left was seen to rear
 His flaming crest and lash the yielding air.
 But when the Fury took her stand on high, 160
 Where vast Cithæron's top salutes the sky,
 A hiss from all the snaky tire went round,
 The dreadful signal all the rocks rebound,
 And thro' th' Achaian cities send the sound. }
 Oete, with high Parnassus, heard the voice, 165
 Eurotas' banks remurmur'd to the noise;
 Again Leucothoë shook at these alarms,
 And press'd Palæmon closer in her arms.

Et populis mors una venit. riget horrida tergo
 Palla et cærulei redeunt in pectore nodi.
 Atropos hos, atque ipsa novat Proserpina cultus. 155
 Tum geminas quatit illa manus: hæc igne rogali
 Fulgurat, hæc vivo manus aëra verberat hydro.
 Ut stetit, abrupta qua plurimus arce Cithæron 160
 Occurrit cœlo, fera sibila crine virenti
 Congeminat, signum terris, unde omnis Achæi
 Ora maris late, Pelopeiaque regna resultant.
 Audiit et medius cœli Parnassus et asper 165
 Eurotas, dubiamque jugo fragor impulit Oeten
 In latus, et geminis vix fluctibus obstitit Isthmos:
 Ipsa suum genitrix, curvo Delphine vagantem
 Arripuit frenis, gremioque Palæmona pressit.

Headlong from thence the glowing Fury springs,
 And o'er the Theban palace spreads her wings, 170
 Once more invades the guilty dome, and shrouds
 Its bright pavilions in a veil of clouds.

Straight with the rage of all their race possest,
 Stung to the soul the brothers start from rest,
 And all their furies wake within their breast: 175

Their tortur'd minds repining Envy tears,
 And Hate engender'd by suspicious fears;
 And sacred thirst of sway, and all the ties
 Of Nature broke, and royal perjuries;
 And impotent desire to reign alone, 180
 That scorns the dull reversion of a throne.

Each would the sweets of sov'reign rule devour,
 While Discord waits upon divided pow'r.

As stubborn steers, by brawny ploughmen broke,
 And join'd reluctant to the galling yoke, 185

Atque eâ Cadmæo præceps ubi limine primum 170
 Constitit, assuetaque infecit nube penates,
 Protinus attoniti fratrum sub pectore motus,
 Gentilesque animos subiit furor, ægraque lætis, 175

Invidia, atque parens odii metus; inde regendi
 Sævus amor: ruptæque vices, jurisque secundi
 Ambitus impatiens, et summo dulcius unum
 Stare loco, sociisque comes discordia regnis. 180.

Sic ubi delectos per torvâ armenta juvencos
 Agricola imposito sociare affectat aratro: 185
 Illi indignantes quîs nondum vomere multo

Alike disdain with servile necks to bear
 Th' unwonted weight, or drag the crooked share,
 But rend the reins, and bound a diff'rent way,
 And all the furrows in confusion lay;
 Such was the discord of the royal pair, 190
 Whom fury drove precipitate to war.

In vain the chiefs contriv'd a specious way
 To govern Thebes by their alternate sway:
 Unjust decree! while this enjoys the state,
 That mourns in exile his unequal fate, 195
 And the short monarch of a hasty year
 Foresees with anguish his returning heir.
 Thus did the league their impious arms restrain,
 But scarce subsisted to the second reign.

Yet then no proud aspiring piles were rais'd,
 No fretted roofs with polish'd metals blaz'd; 201

*Ardua nodosos cervix descendit in armos,
 In diversa trahunt, atque æquis vincula laxant
 Viribus, et vario confundunt limite sulcos:
 Haud secus indomitos præceps discordia fratres, 190
 Alperat. alterni placuit sub legibus anni
 Exilio mutare ducem. sic jure maligno
 Fortunam transire jubent, ut sceptrâ tenentem 195
 Fœdere præcipiti semper novus angeret hæres.
 Hæc inter fratres pietas erat; hæc mora pugnae
 Sola, nec in regem perduratura secundum.*

*Et nondum crasso laquearia fulva metallo, 200
 Montibus aut alte Graiis effulta nitebant*

No labour'd columns in long order plac'd,
 No Grecian stone the pompous arches grac'd;
 No nightly bands in glitt'ring armour wait
 Before the sleepless tyrant's guarded gate; 205
 No chargers then were wrought in burnish'd gold,
 Nor silver vases took the forming mould;
 Nor gems on bowls emboss'd were seen to shine,
 Blaze on the brims, and sparkle in the wine---
 Say, wretched rivals! what provokes your rage? 210
 Say to what end your impious arms engage?
 Not all bright Phœbus views in early morn,
 Or when his ev'ning beams the west adorn,
 When the south glows with his meridian ray,
 And the cold north receives a fainter day; 215

Atria, congestos satis explicitura clientes.
 Non impacatis regum advigilantia somnis 205
 Pila, nec alterna ferri statione gementes
 Excubiæ, nec cura mero committere gemmas,
 Atque aurum violare cibis. sed nuda potestas
 Armavit fratres: pugna est de paupere regno.
 Dumque uter angustæ squalentia jugera Dirces
 Verteret, aut Tyrii solio non altus ovaret
 Exulis, ambigitur; periit jus, fasque, bonumque,
 Et vitæ, mortisque pudor. Quo tenditis iras, 210
 Ah miseri? quid si peteretur crimine tanto
 Limes uterque poli, quem Sol emissus Eöo
 Cardine, quem porta vergens prospectat Ibera?
 Quasque procul terras obliquo sidere tangit
 Avius, aut Borea gelidas, madidive tepentes 215

For crimes like these not all those realms suffice,
Were all those realms the guilty victor's prize!

But Fortune now (the lots of empire thrown)
Decrees to proud Eteocles the crown; 219
What joys, oh, Tyrant! swell'd thy soul that day,
When all were slaves thou couldst around survey,
Pleas'd to behold unbounded pow'r thy own,
And singly fill a fear'd and envy'd throne!

But the vile vulgar, ever discontent,
Their growing fears in secret murmurs vent; 225
Still prone to change, tho' still the slaves of state,
And sure the monarch whom they have to hate;
New lords they madly make, then tamely bear,
And softly curse the tyrants whom they fear:
And one of those who groan beneath the sway 230
Of kings impos'd, and grudgingly obey,
(Whom envy to the great, and vulgar spite,
With scandal arm'd, th' ignoble mind's delight)

*Ignem Noti? quid si Tyriæ Phrygiæve sub unum
Convectentur opes? loca dira, arcesque nefandæ
Suffecere odio, furtisque immanibus emptum est
Oedipodæ sedisse loco. Jam sorte carebat
Dilatus Polynicis honos. quis tum tibi, sæve, 220
Quis fuit ille dies? vacua cum solus in aula
Respiceres jus omne tuum, cunctosque minores,
Et nusquam par stare caput? Jam murmura serpunt
Plebis Echionæ, tacitumque a principe vulgus 225
Dissidet, et (qui mos populis) venturus amatur.
Atque aliquis, cui mens humili læsisse veneno 230*

Exclaim'd--"O Thebes! for thee what fates remain,
 What woes attend this inauspicious reign? 235
 Must we, alas! our doubtful necks prepare
 Each haughty master's yoke by turns to bear,
 And still to change whom chang'd we still must
 fear? }

These now control a wretched people's fate,
 These can divide and these reverse the state: 240
 Ev'n Fortune rules no more--O servile land,
 Where exil'd tyrants still by turns command!
 Thou sire of gods and men, imperial Jove!
 Is this th' eternal doom decreed above?
 On thy own offspring hast thou fix'd this fate 245
 From the first birth of our unhappy state,
 When banish'd Cadmus, wand'ring o'er the main,
 For lost Europa search'd the world in vain,
 And fated in Bœotian fields to found
 A rising empire on a foreign ground, 250

Summa, nec impositos unquam cervice volenti
 Ferre duces: Hancne Ogygiis, ait, aspera rebus 235
 Fata tulere vicem? toties mutare timendos,
 Alternoque iugo dubitantia subdere colla!
 Partiti versant populorum fata, manaque 240
 Fortunam fecere levem, semperne vicissim
 Exulibus servire dabor? tibi, summe deorum,
 Terrarumque sator, sociis hanc addere mentem 245
 Sedit? an inde vetus Thebis extenditur omen,
 Ex quo Sidonii nequicquam blanda juvenci
 Pondera, Carpathio jussus sale quærere Cadmus

First rais'd our walls on that ill-omen'd plain
Where earth-born brothers were by brothers slain?
What lofty looks th' unrivall'd monarch bears!
How all the tyrant in his face appears!
What sullen fury clouds his scornful brow! 255
Gods! how his eyes with threat'ning ardour glow!
Can this imperious lord forget to reign,
Quit all his state, descend, and serve again?
Yet who before more popularly bow'd?
Who more propitious to the suppliant crowd? 260
Patient of right, familiar in the throne,
What wonder then? he was not then alone.
O wretched we! a vile submissive train,
Fortune's tame fools, and slaves in ev'ry reign!
As when two winds with rival force contend, 265
This way and that the wav'ring sails they bend,
While freezing Boreas and black Eurus blow,
Now here, now there, the reeling vessel throw;

Exul Hyanteos invenit regna per agros; 250
Fraternasque acies foetæ telluris hiatu,
Augurium, seros dimisit adusque nepotes?
Cernis ut erectum torvâ sub fronte minetur
Sævior assurgens dempto consorte potestas? 255
Quas gerit ore minas? quanto premit omnia fastu?
Hicne unquam privatus erit? tamen ille precanti
Mitis, et affatu bonus et patientior æqui, 260
Quid mirum? non solus erat. nos vilis in omnes
Prompta manus casus domino cuicunque parati.
Qualiter hinc gelidus Boreas, hinc nubifer Eurus 265

Thus on each side, alas! our tott'ring state
 Feels all the fury of resistless fate, 270
 And doubtful still, and still distracted stands,
 While that prince threatens, and while this com-
 And now th' almighty Father of the gods [mands."
 Convenes a council in the bless'd abodes.
 Far in the bright recesses of the skies, 275
 High o'er the rolling heav'ns, a mansion lies,
 Whence, far below, the gods at once survey
 The realms of rising and declining day,
 And all th' extended space of earth, and air, and sea. }
 Full in the midst, and on a starry throne, 280
 The Majesty of heav'n superior shone:
 Serene he look'd, and gave an awful nod,
 And all the trembling spheres confess'd the god.
 At Jove's assent the deities around
 In solemn state the consistory crown'd. 285

Vela trahunt, nutat mediæ fortuna carinæ.
 Heu dubio suspensa metu, tolerandaque nullis
 Aspera sors populis! hic imperat: ille minatur. 270
 At Jovis imperiis rapidi super atria cœli
 Lectus concilio divûm convenerat ordo
 Interiore polo. spatiis hinc omnia juxta 275
 Primæque occidûæque domus, effusa sub omni
 Terra atque unda die. mediis sese arduus infert 280
 Ipse deis, placido quatiens tamen omnia vultu,
 Stellantique locat solio. nec protinus ausi 285
 Cœlicolæ, veniam donec pater ipse sedendi
 Tranquilla jubet esse manu. mox turba vagorum

Next a long order of inferior pow'rs
 Ascend from hills, and plains, and shady bow'rs;
 Those from whose urns the rolling rivers flow,
 And those that give the wand'ring winds to blow:
 Here all their rage and ev'n their murmurs cease,
 And sacred silence reigns, and universal peace. 291
 A shining synod of majestic gods
 Gilds with new lustre the divine abodes;
 Heav'n seems improv'd with a superior ray,
 And the bright arch reflects a double day. 295
 The Monarch then, his solemn silence broke,
 The still creation listen'd while he spoke;
 Each sacred accent bears eternal weight,
 And each irrevocable word is fate.

“ How long shall man the wrath of Heav'n
 defy, 300

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

Semideûm, et summis cognati nubibus amnes,
 Et compressa metu servantes murmura venti, 290
 Aurea tecta replent; mixta convexa deorum
 Majestate tremunt: radiant majore sereno
 Culmina, et arcano florentes lumine postes. 295
 Postquam jussa quies, siluitque exterritus orbis,
 Incipit ex alto: (grave et immutabile sanctis
 Pondus adest verbis, et vocem fata sequuntur.)
 Terrarum delicta, nec exsuperabile diris 300
 Ingenium mortale queror. quonam usque nocentum

This weary'd arm can scarce the bolt sustain,
 And unregarded thunder rolls in vain: 305
 Th' o'erlabour'd Cyclop from his task retires,
 Th' Æolian forge exhausted of its fires.
 For this I suffer'd Phœbus' steeds to stray,
 And the mad ruler to misguide the day,
 When the wide earth to heaps of ashes turn'd, 310
 And heav'n itself the wand'ring chariot burn'd:
 For this my brother of the wat'ry reign
 Releas'd th' impetuous sluices of the main;
 But flames consum'd, and billows rag'd in vain. }
 Two races now, ally'd to Jove, offend; 315
 To punish these see Jove himself descend.
 The Theban kings their line from Cadmus trace,
 From godlike Perseus those of Argive race.
 Unhappy Cadmus' fate who does not know,
 And the long series of succeeding woe? 320

Exigar in pœnas? tædet sævire corusco 305
 Fulmine: jam pridem Cyclopum operosa fatiscunt
 Brachia, et Eoliis desunt incudibus ignes.
 Atque ideo tuleram falso rectore salutos
 Solis equos, cœlumque rotis errantibus uri,
 Et Phaëton tæa mundum squallere favilla. 310
 Nil actum est: neque tu valida quod cuspide late
 Ire per illicitum pelago, germane, dedisti.
 Nunc geminas punire domos, quîs sanguinis autor
 Ipse ego descendo. Perseos alter in Argos
 Scinditur, Aonias fluit hic ab origine Thebas.
 Mens cunctis impôsta manet. Quis funera Cadmi

How oft' the Furies from the deeps of night
 Arose, and mix'd with men in mortal fight;
 Th'exulting mother stain'd with filial blood,
 The savage hunter and the haunted wood?
 The direful banquet why should I proclaim, 325
 And crimes that grieve the trembling gods to name?
 Ere I recount the sins of these profane
 The sun would sink into the western main,
 And, rising, gild the radiant east again. }
 Have we not seen (the blood of Laius shed) 330
 The murd'ring son ascend his parent's bed,
 Thro' violated nature force his way,
 And stain the sacred womb where once he lay?
 Yet now in darkness and despair he groans,
 And for the crimes of guilty fate atones; 335
 His sons with scorn their eyeless father view,
 Insult his wounds, and make them bleed anew.

Nesciat? et toties excitam a sedibus imis 321
 Eumenidum bellâsse aciem? mala gaudia matrum,
 Erroresque feros nemorum, et reticenda deorum
 Crimina? vix lucis spatio, vix noctis abactæ 325
 Enumerare queam mores, gentemque profanam.
 Scandere quin etiam thalamos hic impius hæres
 Patris, et immeritæ gremium incestare parentis
 Apetiit, proprios monstro revolutus in ortus.
 Ille tamen superis æterna piacula solvit, 330
 Projecitque diem: nec jam amplius æthere nostro
 Vescitur: at nati (facinus sine more!) cadentes 335
 Calcavere oculos. jam jam rara vota tulisti,

Thy curse, oh, Oedipus! just Heav'n alarms,
 And sets th' avenging Thunderer in arms.
 I from the root thy guilty race will tear, 340
 And give the nations to the waste of war.
 Adrastus soon, with gods averse, shall join
 In dire alliance with the Theban line;
 Hence strife shall rise, and mortal war succeed;
 The guilty realms of Tantalus shall bleed: 345
 Fix'd is their doom. This all-rememb'ring breast
 Yet harbours vengeance for the tyrant's feast."

He said; and thus the queen of Heav'n return'd;
 (With sudden grief her lab'ring bosom burn'd)
 "Must I, whose cares Phoroneus' tow'rs defend, 350
 Must I, oh Jove! in bloody wars contend?
 Thou know'st those regions my protection claim,
 Glorious in arms, in riches, and in fame:

Dire senex; meruere tuæ, meruere tenebræ
 Ultorem sperare Jovem. nova sontibus arma
 Injiciam regnīs, totumque a stirpe revellam 340
 Exitiale genus. belli mihi semina sunt
 Adrastus socer, et superis adjuncta sinistris
 Connubia. Hanc etiam pœnis incessere gentem
 Decretum: neque enim arcano de pectore fallax 345
 Tantalus, et sævæ periit injuria mensæ.

Sic pater omnipotens. Ast illi saucia dictis,
 Flammato versans inopinum corde dolorem,
 Talia Juno refert; Mene, O justissime divūm,
 Me bello certare jubes? scis semper ut arces 350
 Cyclopum, magnique Phoroneos inclyta fama

Tho' there the fair Egyptian heifer fed,
 And there deluded Argus slept and bled; 355
 Tho' there the brazen tow'r was storm'd of old,
 When Jove descended in almighty gold;
 Yet I can pardon those obscurer rapes,
 Those bashful crimes disguis'd in borrow'd shapes;
 But Thebes, where, shining in celestial charms, 360
 Thou cam'st triumphant to a mortal's arms,
 When all my glories o'er her limbs were spread,
 And blazing lightnings danc'd around her bed;
 Curs'd Thebes the vengeance it deserves may prove--
 Ah! why should Argos feel the rage of Jove? 365
 Yet since thou wilt thy sister-queen control,
 Since still the lust of discord fires thy soul,
 Go, raise my Samos, let Mycenæ fall,
 And level with the dust the Spartan wall;
 Nor more let mortals Juno's pow'r invoke, 370
 Her fanes no more with eastern incense smoke,
 Nor victims sink beneath the sacred stroke;

*Sceptra viris, opibusque juvem; licet improbus illic
 Custodem Phariæ, somno letoque juvencæ* 355

Extinguas, septis et turribus aureus intres.

*Mentitis ignosco toris: illam odimus urbem,
 Quam vultu confessus adis: ubi conscia magni* 360

Signa tori, tonitrus agis, et mea fulmina torques.

Facta luant Thebæ: cur hostis eligis Argos? 365

Quin age, si tanta est thalami discordia sancti,

Et Samon, et veteres armis exscinde Mycenæ.

Verte solo Sparten. cur usquam sanguine festo

Conjugis ara tuæ, cumulo cur thuris Eoï 370

But to your Isis all my rights transfer,
 Let altars blaze and temples smoke for her;
 For her, thro' Egypt's fruitful clime renown'd, 375
 Let weeping Nilus hear the timbrel sound.
 But if thou must reform the stubborn times,
 Avenging on the sons the fathers' crimes,
 And from the long records of distant age
 Derive incitements to renew thy rage; 380
 Say, from what period then has Jove design'd
 To date his vengeance? to what bounds confin'd?
 Begin from thence, where first Alpheus hides
 His wand'ring stream, and thro' the briny tides }
 Unmix'd to his Sicilian river glides. 385 }
 Thy own Arcadians there the thunder claim,
 Whose impious rites disgrace thy mighty name;
 Who raise thy temples where the chariot stood
 Of fierce Oenomäus, defil'd with blood;

Læta calet? melius votis Mareotica fumat
 Coptos, ei ærisoni lugentia flumina Nili. 375
 Quod si prisca luunt autorum crimina gentes,
 Subvenitque tuis sera hæc sententia curis; 380
 Percensere ævi senium, quo tempore tandem
 Terrarum furias abolere, et secula retro
 Emendare sat est? jamdudum ab sedibus illis
 Incipe, fluctivaga qua præterlabitur unda 385
 Sicanos longe relegens Alpheus amores.
 Arcadis hic tua (nec pudor est) delubra nefastis
 Imposuere locis: illic Mavortius axis
 Oenomai, Getiquoque pecus stabulare sub Æmo

Where once his steeds their savage banquet found,
 And human bones yet whiten all the ground. 391
 Say, can those honours please? and canst thou love
 Presumptuous Crete, that boasts the tomb of Jove?
 And shall not Tantalus's kingdoms share
 Thy wife and sister's tutelary care? 395

Reverse, O Jove! thy too severe decree,
 Nor doom to war a race deriv'd from thee;
 On impious realms and barb'rous kings impose
 Thy plagues, and curse 'em with such sons as those."

Thus in reproach and pray'r the queen exprest
 The rage and grief contending in her breast; 401
 Unmov'd remain'd the ruler of the sky,
 And from his throne return'd this stern reply :
 "'Twas thus I deem'd thy haughty soul would bear
 'The dire tho' just revenge which I prepare 405 }
 Against a nation thy peculiar care:

Dignius: abruptis etiamnum inhumata procorum 390
 Reliquiis trunca ora rigent. tamen hic tibi templi
 Gratus honos. placet Ida nocens, mentitaque manes
 Creta tuos. me Tantaleis consistere tectis, 395
 Quæ tandem invidia est? belli deflecte tumultus,
 Et generis miseresce tui. sunt impia late
 Regna tibi, melius generos passura nocentes.

Finierat miscens precibus convicia Juno: 400
 At non ille gravis, dictis, quanquam aspera, motus
 Reddidithæc; Equidem haud rebar te mente secunda
 Laturam, quodcunque tuos (licet æquus) in Argos
 Consulerem, neque me (detur si copia) fallit

No less Dione might for Thebes contend,
 Nor Bacchus less his native town defend;
 Yet these in silence see the fates fulfil
 Their work, and rev'rence our superior will: 410
 For by the black infernal Styx I swear,
 (That dreadful oath which binds the Thunderer)
 'Tis fix'd; th' irrevocable doom of Jove;
 No force can bend me, no persuasion move.
 Haste then, Cyllenius, thro' the liquid air, 415
 Go, mount the winds, and to the shades repair;
 Bid hell's black monarch my commands obey,
 And give up Laius to the realms of day,
 Whose ghost yet shiv'ring on Cocytus' sand
 Expects its passage to the farther strand: 420
 Let the pale sire revisit Thebes, and bear
 These pleasing orders to the tyrant's ear;
 That from his exil'd brother, swell'd with pride
 Of foreign forces and his Argive bride,

Multa super Thebis Bacchum, ausuramque Dionem
 Dicere, sed nostri reverentia ponderis obstat. 410
 Horrendos etenim latices, Stygia æquora fratris
 Obtestor, mansurum et non revocabile verum,
 Nil fore quo dictis flectar. quare impiger ales 415
 Portantes præcede Notos Cyllenia proles:
 Aëra per liquidum, regnisque illapsus opacis
 Dic patruo, Superas senior se tollat ad auras
 Laius; extinctum nati quem vulnere, nondum
 Ulterior Lethes accepit ripa profundì 420
 Lege Erebi: ferat hæc diro mea jussa nepoti:

Almighty Jove commands him to detain 425
The promis'd empire, and alternate reign :
Be this the cause of more than mortal hate ;
The rest succeeding times shall ripen into fate ;
The god obeys, and to his feet applies
Those golden wings that cut the yielding skies : 430
His ample hat his beamy locks o'erspread,
And veil'd the starry glories of his head.
He seiz'd the wand that causes sleep to fly,
Or in soft slumbers seals the wakeful eye ;
That drives the dead to dark Tartarean coasts, 435
Or back to life compels the wand'ring ghosts.
Thus thro' the parting clouds the son of May
Wings on the whistling winds his rapid way ;
Now smoothly steers thro' air his equal flight, 439
Now springs aloft, and tow'rs th' ethereal height ;

Germanum exilio fretum, Argolicisque tumentem
Hospitiis, quod sponte cupit, procul impius aula 425
Arceat, alternum regni inficiatus honorem :
Hinc causæ irarum : certo reliqua ordine ducam.
Paret Atlantiades dictis genitoris, et inde
Summa pedum propere plantaribus illigat alis, 430
Obnubitque comas, et temperat astra galero.
Tum dextræ virgam inseruit, qua pellere dulces
Aut suadere iterum somnos, qua nigra subire 435
Tartara, et exangues animare assueverat umbras.
Desiluit ; tenuique exceptus inhorruit aura.
Nec mora, sublimes raptim per inani volatus 440

Then wheeling down the steep of heav'n he flies,
And draws a radiant circle o'er the skies.

Mean-time the banish'd Polynices roves
(His Thebes abandon'd) thro' th' Aonian groves,
While future realms his wand'ring thoughts delight,
His daily vision, and his dream by night ; 446
Forbidden Thebes appears before his eye,
From whence he sees his absent brother fly,
With transport views the airy rule his own,
And swells on an imaginary throne ; 450
Fain would he cast a tedious age away,
And live out all in one triumphant day :
He chides the lazy progress of the sun,
And bids the year with swifter motion run :
With anxious hopes his craving mind is tost, 455
And all his joys in length of wishes lost.

Carpit, et ingenti designat nubila gyro.

Interea patriis olim vagus exul ab oris
Oedipodionides furto deserta pererrat
Aoniæ. jam jamque animis male debita regna 445
Concipit, et longum signis cunctantibus annum
Stare gemit. tenet una dies noctesque recursans
Cura virum, si quando humilem decedere regno
Germanum, et semet Thebis, opibusque potitum,
Cerneret : hac ævum cupiat pro luce pacisci 450
Nunc queritur ceu tarda fugæ dispendia : sed mox
Attollit flatus ducis, et sedisse superbum
Dejecto se fratre putat. spes anxia mentem 455
Extrahit, et longo consumit gaudia voto.

The hero then resolves his course to bend
 Where ancient Danaus' fruitful fields extend,
 And fam'd Mycene's lofty tow'rs ascend,
 (Where late the sun did Atreus' crimes detest, 460
 And disappear'd in horror of the feast.)
 And now by Chance, by Fate, or Furies; led,
 From Bacchus' consecrated caves he fled,
 Where the shrill cries of frantic matrons sound,
 And Pentheus' blood enrich'd the rising ground, 465
 Then sees Cithæron tow'ring o'er the plain,
 And thence declining gently to the main.
 Next to the bounds of Nisus' realm repairs,
 Where treach'rous Scylla cut the purple hairs;
 The hanging cliffs of Scyron's rock explores, 470
 And hears the murmurs of the diff'rent shores;
 Passes the strait that parts the foaming seas,
 And stately Corinth's pleasing site surveys.

Tunc sedet Inachias urbes, Danaëque arva,
 Et caligantes abrupto sole Mycenæ, 460
 Ferre iter impavidum. seu prævia ducit Erinnyes,
 Seu fors illa viæ sive hac immota vocabat
 Atropos. Ogygiis ululata furoribus antra
 Deserit, et pingues Baccheo sanguine colles. 465
 Inde plagam, qua molle sedens in plana Cithæron
 Porrigitur, lassumque inclinat ad æquora montem;
 Præterit. hinc arcte scopuloso in limite pendens, 470
 Infames Scyrone petras, Scyllæque rura
 Purpureo regnata seni, mitemque Corinthon
 Linqvit, et in mediis audit duo littora campis.

'Twas now the time when Phœbus yields to Night,
 And rising Cynthia sheds her silver light ; 475
 Wide o'er the world in solemn pomp she drew
 Her airy chariot, hung with pearly dew :
 All birds and beasts lie hush'd : Sleep steals away
 The wild desires of men, and toils of day,
 And brings, descending thro' the silent air, 480
 A sweet forgetfulness of human care.
 Yet no red clouds, with golden borders gay,
 Promise the skies the bright return of day ;
 No faint reflections of the distant light [night :
 Streak with long gleams th' scatt'ring shades of
 From the damp earth impervious vapours rise, 486
 Increase the darkness, and involve the skies.
 At once the rushing winds with roaring sound
 Burst from th' Æolian caves, and rend the ground,

Jamque per emeriti surgens confinia Phœbi 475
 Titanis, late mundo subvecta silenti
 Rorifera gelidum tenuaverat aëra biga.
 Jam pecudes volucresque tacent ; jam Somnus avaris
 Inserpit curis, pronusque per aëra nutat, 480
 Grata laboratæ referens obliviam vitæ.
 Sed nec puniceo rediturum nubila cœlo
 Promisere jubar, nec rarescentibus umbris
 Longa repercusso nituere crepuscula Phœbo.
 Densior a terris, et nulli pervia flammæ 486
 Subtextit nox atra polos. jam claustra rigentis
 Æoliæ percussa sonant, venturaque rauco
 Ore minatur hiems ; venti transversa frementes

With equal rage their airy quarrel try, 490

And win by turns the kingdom of the sky :

But with a thicker night black Auster shrouds

The heav'ns, and drives on heaps the rolling clouds,

From whose dark womb a rattling tempest pours,

Which the cold North congeals to haily show'rs :

From pole to pole the thunder roars aloud, 496

And broken lightnings flash from every cloud.

Now smokes with show'rs the misty mountain
ground,

And floated fields lie undistinguish'd round:

Th' Inachian streams with headlong fury run, 500

And Erasinus rolls a deluge on ;

The foaming Lerna swells above its bounds,

And spreads its ancient poisons o'er the grounds :

Where late was dust, now rapid torrents play,

Rush thro' the mounds, and bear the dams away :

Confligunt, axemque emoto cardine vellunt, 490

Dum cœlum sibi quisque rapit. sed plurimus Auster

Inglomerat noctem, et tenebrosa volumina torquet,

Defunditque imbres, sicco quos asper hiatu

Persolidat Boreas. nec non abrupta tremiscunt 495

Fulgura, et atritus subita face rumpitur æther.

Jam Nemea, jam Tænareis contermina lucis

Arcadiæ capita alta madent: ruit agmine facto 500

Inachus, et gelidas surgens Erasinus ad Arctos.

Pulverulenta prius, calcandaque flumina nullæ.

Aggeribus tenuere moræ, stagnoque refusa est

Funditus. et veteri spumavit Lerna veneno.

Frangitur omne nemus; rapiunt antiqua procellæ

Old limbs of trees, from crackling forests torn, 506
 Are whirl'd in air, and on the winds are borne :
 The storm the dark Lycæan groves display'd,
 And first to light expos'd the sacred shade.

Th' intrepid Theban hears the bursting sky, 510
 Sees yawning rocks in massy fragments fly,
 And views astonish'd, from the hills afar,
 The floods descending, and the wat'ry war
 That, driv'n by storms, and pouring o'er the plain,
 Swept herds, and hinds, and houses, to the main.
 Thro' the brown horrors of the night he fled, 516
 Nor knows, amaz'd; what doubtful path to tread;
 His brother's image to his mind appears,
 Inflames his heart with rage, and wings his feet with

So fares the sailor on the stormy main, [fears.
 When clouds conceal Boötes' golden wain, 521
 When not a star its friendly lustre keeps,
 Nor trembling Cynthia glimmers on the deeps ;

Brachia sylvarum, nullisque aspecta per ævum 506
 Solibus umbrosi patuere æstiva Lycæi.

Ille tamen modo saxa jugis fugientia ruptis 510
 Miratur, modo nubigenas e montibus amnes
 Aure pavens, passimque insano turbine raptas 514
 Pastorum pecorumque domos. non segnius amens,
 Incertusque viæ, per nigra silentia, vastum
 Haurit iter : pulsat metus undique, et undique frater.

Ac velut hiberno deprensus navita ponto, 520
 Cui neque temo piger, neque amico sidere monstrat
 Luna vias, medio cœli pelagique tumultu

He dreads the rocks, and shoals, and seas, and skies,
While thunder roars, and lightning round him flies.

Thus strove the chief, on ev'ry side distress'd, 526

Thus still his courage with his toils increas'd ;
With his broad shield oppos'd, he forc'd his way
Thro' thickest woods, and rous'd the beasts of prey ;
Till he beheld where from Larissa's height 530

The shelving walls reflect a glancing light :

Thither with haste the Theban hero flies ;

On this side Lerna's pois'nous water lies,

On that Prosymna's grove and temple rise. }

He pass'd the gates, which then unguarded lay, 535

And to the regal palace bent his way ;

Stat rationis inops : jam jamque aut saxa malignis

Expectat submersa vadis, aut vertice acuto

Spumantes scopulos erectæ incurrere proræ :

Talis opaca legens nemorum Cadmeius heros

Accelerat, vasto metuenda umbone ferarum

Excutiens stabula, et prono virgulta refringit

Pectore : dat stimulos animo vis mœsta timoris.

Donec ab Inachiis victa caligine tectis 530

Emicuit lucem devexa in mœnia fundens

Larissæus apex. illò spe concitus omni

Evolat. hinc celsæ Junonia templa Prosymnæ

Lævus habet, hinc herculeo signata vapore 535

Lernæi stagna atra vadi. tandemque reclusis

Infertur portis. actutum regia cernit

Vestibula. hic artus imbri, ventoque rigentes

Proficit, ignotæque acclinis postibus aulæ

On the cold marble, spent with toil, he lies,
And waits till pleasing slumbers seal his eyes.

Adrastus here his happy people sways,
Bless'd with calm peace in his declining days: 540
By both his parents of descent divine,

Great Jove and Phœbus grac'd his noble line:
Heav'n had not crown'd his wishes with a son,
But two fair daughters heir'd his state and throne.
To him Apollo (wondrous to relate! 545

But who can pierce into the depths of Fate?)

Had sung---"Expect thy sons on Argos' shore,
"A yellow lion and a bristly boar."

This long revolv'd in his paternal breast,
Sat heavy on his heart, and broke his rest; 550

This, great Amphiaræus! lay hid from thee,
Tho' skill'd in fate and dark futurity.

Invitat tenues ad dura cubilia somnos.

*Rex ibi tranquillæ medio de limite vitæ
In senium vergens populos Adrastus habebat 540*

Dives avis, et utroque Jovem de sanguine ducens.

Hic sexûs melioris inops, sed prole virebat

Fœminea, gemino natarum pignore fultus.

Cui Phœbus generos (monstrum exitiabile dictu! 545

Mox adaperata fides) ævo ducente canebat

Setigerunq; suem, et fulvum adventare leonem.

Hæc volvens, non, ipse pater, non docte futuri 550

Amphiaræi, vides; etenim vetat autor Apollo.

Tantum in corde sedens ægrescit cura parentis.

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

Lo, hapless Tydeus! whose ill-fated hand 555
Had slain his brother, leaves his native land,
And, seiz'd with horror in the shades of night,
Thro' the thick deserts headlong urg'd his flight :
Now by the fury of the tempest driv'n,
He seeks a shelter from th' inclement heav'n, 560
Till, led by Fate, the Theban's steps he treads,
And to fair Argos' open courts succeeds.

When thus the chiefs from diff'rent lands resort
T' Adrastus' realms and hospitable court,
The king surveys his guests with curious eyes, 565
And views their arms and habit with surprise.
A lion's yellow skin the Theban wears,
Horrid his mane, and rough with curling hairs ;

Ecce autem antiquam fato Calydonia relinquens
Olenius Tydeus (fraterni sanguinis illum 556
Consciis horror agit) eadem sub nocte sopora
Lustra terit, similesque Notos dequestus et imbres,
Infusam tergo glaciem, et liquentia nimbis
Ora, comasque gerens, subit uno tegmine, cujus 560
Fusus humo gelida, partem prior hospes habebat.---

Hic primum lustrare oculis, cultusque virorum
Telaque magna vacat ; tergo videt hujus inanem
Impexis utrinque jubeis horrere leonem,
Illius in speciem, quem per Theumesia Tempe

Such once employ'd Alcides' youthful toils,
 Ere yet adorn'd with Nemea's dreadful spoils. 570
 A boar's stiff hide, of Calydonian breed,
 Oenides' manly shoulders overspread;
 Oblique his tusks, erect his bristles stood,
 Alive the pride and terror of the wood.

Struck with the sight, and fix'd in deep amaze,
 The king th' accomplish'd oracle surveys, 576
 Reveres Apollo's vocal caves, and owns
 The guiding godhead and his future sons:
 O'er all his bosom secret transports reign,
 And a glad horror shoots thro' ev'ry vein: 580
 To heav'n he lifts his hands, erects his sight,
 And thus invokes the silent queen of Night.

“ Goddess of shades! beneath whose gloomy reign
 Yon' spangled arch glows with the starry train;

Amphitryoniades fractum juvenilibus armis 570
 Ante Cleonæi vestitur prælia monstri.
 Terribiles contra setis, ac dente recurvo
 Tydea per latos humeros ambire laborant
 Exuviæ, Calydonis honos. stupet omine tanto 575
 Defixus senior, divina oraculo Phœbi
 Agnoscens, monitusque datos vocalibus antris.
 Obtutu gelida ora premit, letusque per artus
 Horror iit. sensit manifesto numine doctos 585
 Affore, quos nexis ambagibus augur Apollo
 Portendi generos, vultu fallente ferarum,
 Ediderat. tunc sic tendens ad sidera palmas:

You who the cares of heav'n and earth allay, 585 }
 Till nature, quicken'd by th' inspiring ray, }
 Wakes to new vigour with the rising day :
 Oh! thou who freest me from my doubtful state,
 Long lost and wilder'd in the maze of Fate!
 Be present still, oh Goddess! in our aid; 590
 Proceed, and firm those omens thou hast made.
 We to thy name our annual rites will pay,
 And on thy altars sacrifices lay;
 The sable flock shall fall beneath the stroke,
 And fill thy temples with a grateful smoke. 595
 Hail! faithful Tripos! hail! ye dark abodes
 Of awful Phœbus; I confess the gods!"
 Thus, seiz'd with sacred fear, the monarch pray'd;
 Then to his inner court the guests convey'd,

Nox, quæ terrarum coelique amplexa labores 585
 Ignea multivago transmittis sidera lapsu,
 Indulgens reparare animum, dum proximus ægris
 Infundat Titan agiles animantibus ortus,
 Tu mihi perplexis quæsitam erroribus ultro
 Advehis alma fidem, veterisque exordia fati 590
 Detegis. assistas operi, tuaque omnia firmes!
 Semper honoratam dimensis orbibus anni
 Te domus ista colet: nigri tibi, Diva, litabunt
 Electa service greges, lustraliaque exta
 Lacte nova perfusus edet vulcanius ignis. 595
 Salve, prisca fides tripodum, obscurique recessus;
 Deprendi, fortuna, deos. sic fatus; et ambos
 Innectens manibus, tecta ulterioris ad aula

Where yet thin fumes from dying sparks arise, 600
 And dust yet white upon each altar lies,
 The relics of a former sacrifice. }
 The king once more the solemn rites requires,
 And bids renew the feasts and wake the fires.
 His train obey, while all the courts around 605
 With noisy care and various tumult sound.
 Embroider'd purple clothes the golden beds;
 This slave the floor and that the table spreads;
 A third dispels the darkness of the night,
 And fills depending lamps with beams of light; 610
 Here loaves in canisters are pil'd on high,
 And there in flames the slaughter'd victims fly.
 Sublime in regal state Adrastus shone,
 Stretch'd on rich carpets on his iv'ry throne;

Progreditur. canis etiamnum altaribus ignes, 600
 Sopitum cinerem, et tepidi libamina sacri
 Servabant; adolere focos, epulasque recentes
 Instaurare jubet. dictis parere ministri 605
 Certatim accelerant. vario strepit icta tumultu
 Regia: pars ostro tenues, auroque sonantes
 Emunire toros, altosque inferre tapetas:
 Pars teretes levare manu, ac disponere mensas:
 Ast alii tenebras et opacam vincere noctem 610
 Agressi, tendunt auratis vincula lychnis.
 His labor inserto terrore exanguia ferro
 Viscera cæsarum pecudum: his, cumulare canistris
 Perdomitam saxo Cererem. lætatur Adrastus
 Obsequio fervere domum. jamque ipse superbis

A lofty couch receives each princely guest; 615
Around, at awful distance, wait the rest.

And now the king, his royal feast to grace,
Acestis calls, the guardian of his race,
Who first their youth in arts of virtue train'd,
And their ripe years in modest grace maintain'd;
Then softly whisper'd in her faithful ear, 621
And bade his daughters at the rites appear.
When from the close apartments of the night
The royal nymphs approach divinely bright,
Such was Diana's, such Minerva's, face, 625
Nor shine their beauties with superior grace,
But that in these a milder charm endears,
And less of terror in their looks appears.
As on the heroes first they cast their eyes,
O'er their fair cheeks the glowing blushes rise; 630

Fulgebat stratis, solioque effultus eburno.
Parte alia juvenes siccati vulnera lymphis 615
Discumbunt: simul ora notis foedata tuentur,
Inque vicem ignoscunt. tunc rex longævus Acesten
(Natarum hæc altrix, eadem et fidissima custos 620
Lecta sacrum justæ Veneri occultare pudorem)
Imperat acciri, tacitaque immurmurat aure.
Nec morâ præceptis; cum protinus utraque virgo
Arcano egressæ thalamo (mirabile visu)
Pallados armisonæ, pharetratæque ora Dianæ 625
Æqua ferunt, terrore minus. nova deinde pudori
Visa virûm facies: pariter, pallorque, ruborque
Purpureas hausere genas: oculique verentes 630

Their downcast looks a decent shame confest,
Then on their father's rev'rend features rest.

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

Here to the clouds victorious Perseus flies,
Medusa seems to move her languid eyes,
And, ev'n in gold, turns paler as she dies: }
There from the chase Jovè's tow'ring eagle bears,
On golden wings, the Phrygian to the stars: 641
Still as he rises in th' ethereal height,
His native mountains lessen to his sight;
While all his sad companions upward gaze,
Fix'd on the gl'orious scene in wild amaze; 645

*Ad sanctum rediere patrem. Postquam ordine
mensæ*

Victa fames, signis perfectam auroque nitentem
Iäsidea pateram famulos ex more poposcit,
Qua Danaüs libare deis seniorque Phoroneus 635
Assueti. tenet hæc operum cælata figuras:
Aureus anguicomam præsecto Gorgona collo
Ales habet. jam jamque vagas (ita visus) in auras
Exilit: illa graves oculos, languentiaque ora
Pene movet, vivoque etiam pallescit in auro.
Hinc Phrygius fulvis venator tollitur alis: 640
Gargara desidunt surgenti, et Troja recedit.
Stant mœsti comites, frustra que sonantia laxant 644

And the swift hounds, affrighted as he flies,
Run to the shade, and bark against the skies.

This golden bowl with gen'rous juice was crown'd.
The first libation sprinkled on the ground,
By turns on each celestial pow'r they call; 650
With Phœbus' name resounds the vaulted hall.
The courtly train, the strangers, and the rest,
Crown'd with chaste laurel, and with garlands drest,
While with rich gums the fuming altars blaze,
Salute the god in num'rous hymns of praise. 655

Then thus the king: "Perhaps, my noble guests!
These honour'd altars, and these annual feasts
To bright Apollo's awful name design'd,
Unknown, with wonder may perplex your mind.
Great was the cause: our old solemnities 660
From no blind zeal or fond tradition rise;

Ora canes, umbramque petunt, et nubila latrant.

Hanc undante mero fundens, vocat ordine cunctos
Cœlicolas: Phœbum ante alios, Phœbum omnis ad
aras 651

Laude ciet comitum, famulûmque, evincta pudica
Fronde, manus; cui festa dies, largoque reſecti
Thure vaporatis lucent altaribus ignes. 655

Forsitan, O juvenes, quæ sint ea sacra, quibusque
Præcipuum causis Phœbi obtestemur honorem,
Rex ait, exquirunt animi. non inscia suasit
Religio: magnis exercita cladibus olim 660

Plebs Argiva litant; animos advertite, pandam:

But sav'd from death, our Argives yearly pay
These grateful honours to the god of Day.

When by a thousand darts the Python slain
With orbs unroll'd lay cov'ring all the plain, 665
(Transfix'd as o'er Castalia's streams he hung,
And suck'd new poisons with his triple tongue)
To Argos' realms the victor god resorts,
And enters old Crotopos' humble courts.
This rural prince one only daughter bless'd, 670
That all the charms of blooming youth possess'd;

Fair was her face, and spotless was her mind,
Where filial love with virgin sweetness join'd:
Happy! and happy still she might have prov'd,
Were she less beautiful, or less belov'd! 675

Postquam cœrulei sinuosa volumina monstri,
Terrigenam Pythona, deus septem orbibus atris
Amplexum Delphos, squamisque annosa terentem
Robora; Castaliis dum fontibus ore trisulco 665
Fusus hiat, nigro sitiens alimenta veneno,
Perculit, absumptis numerosa in vulnera telis,
Cyrrhæique dedit centum per jugera campi
Vix tandem explicitum; nova deinde piacula cædi
Perquirens, nostri tecta haud opulenta Crotopi
Attigit. huic primis et pubem ineuntibus annis, 670
Mira decorè pio, servabat nata penates
Intemerata torris. felix, si Delia nunquam
Furta, nec occultum Phœbo sociasset amorem. 675

But Phœbus lov'd, and on the flow'ry side
 Of Nemea's stream the yielding fair enjoy'd.
 Now ere ten moons their orb with light adorn,
 Th' illustrious offspring of the god was born;
 The nymph, her father's anger to evade, 680
 Retires from Argos to the sylvan shade;
 To woods and wilds the pleasing burden bears,
 And trusts her infant to a shepherd's cares.

How mean a fate, unhappy child! is thine?
 Ah! how unworthy those of race divine! 685
 On flow'ry herbs in some green covert laid,
 His bed the ground, his canopy the shade,
 He mixes with the bleating lambs his cries,
 While the rude swain his rural music tries,
 To call soft slumbers on his infant eyes. 690
 Yet ev'n in those obscure abodes to live
 Was more, alas! than cruel Fate would give;

Namque ut passa deum Nemeæi ad fluminis undam,
 Bis quinos plena cum fronte resumeret orbes
 Cynthia, sidereum Latonæ foeta nepotem 679
 Edidit: ac pœnæ metuens (neque enim ille coactis
 Donasset thalamis veniam pater) avia rura
 Eligit: ac natum septa inter ovilia furtim
 Montivago pecoris custodi mandat alendum.

Non tibi digna, puer, generis cunabula tanti 685
 Gramineos dedit herba toros, et vimine querno
 Texta domus: clausa arbutei sub cortice libri 689
 Membra tepent, suadetque leves cava fistula somnos,
 Et pecori commune solum. sed fata nec illum

For on the grassy verdure as he lay,
 And breath'd the freshness of the early day,
 Devouring dogs the helpless infant tore, 695
 Fed on his trembling limbs, and lapp'd the gore.
 Th' astonish'd mother, when the rumour came,
 Forgets her father, and neglects her fame;
 With loud complaints she fills the yielding air,
 And beats her breast, and rends her flowing hair;
 Then wild with anguish to her sire she flies, 701
 Demands the sentence, and contented dies.

But touch'd with sorrow for the deed too late,
 The raging god prepares t' avenge her fate.
 He sends a monster, horrible and fell, 705
 Begot by Furies in the depths of hell.
 The pest a virgin's face and bosom bears;
 High on her crown a rising snake appears,
 Guards her black front, and hisses in her hairs: }

Concessere larem: viridi nam cespite terræ
 Projectum temere, et patulo cœlum ore trahentem,
 Dira canum rabies morsu depasta cruento 695
 Disjicit. hic vero attonitas ut nuntius aures
 Matris adit, pulsi ex animo genitorque, pudorque,
 Et metus. ipsa ultro sævis plangoribus amens
 Tecta replet, vacuumque ferens velamine pectus 700
 Occurrit confessa patri. nec motus, at atro
 Imperat, infandum! cupientem occumbere leto.

Sero memor thalami, mœstæ solatia morti, 704
 Phœbe, paras. monstrum infandis Acheronte sub imo
 Conceptum Eumenidum thalamis: cui virginis ora

About the realm she walks her dreadful round, 710
 When night with sable wings o'erspreads the ground,
 Devours young babes before their parents' eyes,
 And feeds and thrives on public miseries.

But gen'rous rage the bold Chorcæbus warms,
 Chorcæbus! fam'd for virtue as for arms; 715
 Some few like him, inspir'd with martial flame,
 Thought a short life well lost for endless fame.
 These, where two ways in equal parts divide,
 The direful monster from afar descry'd,
 Two bleeding babes depending at her side; 720
 Whose panting vitals, warm with life, she draws,
 And in their hearts imbrues her cruel claws.
 The youths surround her with extended spears,
 But brave Chorcæbus in the front appears;

Pectoraque, æternum stridens a vertice surgit
 Et ferrugineam frontem discriminat anguis:
 Hæc tam dira lues nocturno squalida passu 710
 Illabi thalamis animasque a stirpe recentes
 Abripere altricum gremiis, morsuque cruento
 Devesci et multum patrio pinguescere luctu.

Haud tulit armorum præstans animique Chorcæbus;
 Seque ultro lectis juvenum, qui robore primi 715
 Famam posthabita faciles extendere vita,
 Obtulit. illa novas ibat populata penates
 Portarum in bivio, lateri duo corpora parvum 720
 Dependent, et jam unca manus vitalibus hæret,
 Ferratique ungues tenero sub corde tepescunt.
 Obvius huic latus omne virum stipante coronâ,

Deep in her breast he plung'd his shining sword, 725
 And hell's dire monster back to hell restor'd.
 Th' Inachians view the slain with vast surprise,
 Her twisting volumes, and her rolling eyes,
 Her spotted breast and gaping womb imbru'd
 With livid poison and our children's blood. 730
 The crowd in stupid wonder fix'd appear,
 Pale ev'n in joy, nor yet forget to fear.
 Some with vast beams the squalid corpse engage,
 And weary all the wild efforts of rage.
 The birds obscene, that nightly flock'd to taste,
 With hollow screeches fled the dire repast; 736
 And rav'nous dogs, allur'd by scented blood,
 And starving wolves, ran howling to the wood.

It juvenis, ferrumque ingens sub pectore diro 725
 Condidit; atque imas animæ mucrone corusco
 Scrutatus latebras, tandem sua monstra profundo
 Reddit habere Jovi. juvat ire, et visere juxta
 Liventes in morte oculos, uterique nefandam
 Proluviam, et crasso squalentia pectora tabo,
 Qua nostræ cecidere animæ. stupet Inacha pubes, 730
 Magnaque post lachrymas etiamnum gaudia pallent.
 Hi trabibus duris, solatia vana dolori,
 Proterere exanimis artus, asprosque molares
 Deculcare genis; nequit iram explere potestas.
 Illam et nocturno circum stridore volantes 735
 Impastæ fugistis aves, rabidamque canum vim,
 Oraque sicca ferunt trepidorum inhiâsse luporum.

But fir'd with rage, from cleft Parnassus' brow }
 Avenging Phœbus bent his deadly bow, 740 }
 And hissing flew the feather'd fates below:
 A night of sultry clouds involv'd around
 The tow'rs, the fields, and the devoted ground:
 And now a thousand lives together fled,
 Death with his scythe cut off the fatal thread, 745 }
 And a whole province in his triumph led. }

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

Bless'd be thy dust, and let eternal fame
 Attend thy manes, and preserve thy name,

Sævior in miseros fatis ultrocis ademptæ
 Delius insurgit, summaque biverticis umbra 740
 Parnassi residens, arcu crudelis iniquo
 Pestifera arma jacit, camposque, et celsa Cyclopum
 Tecta, superjecto nebularum incendit amictu.
 Labuntur dulces animæ: Mors fila sororum 745
 Ense metit, captamque tenes fert manibus urbem.

Quærenti quæ causa duci, quis ab æthere lævus
 Ignis, et in totum regnaret Sirius annum!
 Idem autor Pæan rursus jubet ire cruento
 Inferias monstro juvenes, qui cæde potiti. 750

Fortunate animi, longumque in sæcula digne
 Promeriture diem! non tu pia degener arma
 Oculis, aut certæ trepidas occurrere morti.

Undaunted hero ! who, divinely brave,
 In such a cause disdain'd thy life to save,
 But view'd the shrine with a superior look, 755
 And its upbraided godhead thus bespoke :

“ With piety, the soul's securest guard,
 And conscious virtue, still its own reward,
 Willing I come, unknowing how to fear,
 Nor shalt thou, Phœbus, find a suppliant here : 760
 Thy monster's death to me was ow'd alone,
 And 'tis a deed too glorious to disown.

Behold him here for whom so many days,
 Impervious clouds conceal'd thy sullen rays ;
 For whom, as man no longer claim'd thy care, 765
 Such numbers fell by pestilential air !

But if the abandon'd race of human-kind
 From gods above no more compassion find ;

If such inclemency in heav'n can dwell,

Yet why must unoffending Argos feel 770

The vengeance due to this unlucky steel ?

Cominus ora ferens, Cyrrhæi in limine templi 755
 Constitit, et sacras ita vocibus asperat iras :

Non missus, Thymbræe, tuos supplexve penates
 Advenio : mea me pietas, et conscia virtus

Has egere vias, ego sum qui cæde subegi, 759

Phœbe, tuum mortale nefas ; quem nubibus atris,

Et squalente die, nigra quem tabe sinistri

Quæris, inique, poli. quod si monstra effera magnis

Cara adeo superis, jacturaque vilior orbis, 766

Mors hominum, et sævo tanta inclementio cœlo est ;

On me, on me, let all thy fury fall,
 Nor err from me, since I deserve it all,
 Unless our desert cities please thy sight,
 Or fun'ral flames reflect a grateful light. 775
 Discharge thy shafts, this ready bosom rend,
 And to the shades a ghost triumphant send;
 But for my country let my fate atone;
 Be mine the vengeance as the crime my own."

Merit distress'd impartial Heav'n relieves: 780
 Unwelcome life relenting Phœbus gives;
 For not the vengeful pow'r that glow'd with rage
 With such amazing virtue durst engage.
 The clouds dispers'd, Apollo's wrath expir'd, [tir'd.
 And from the wond'ring god th' unwilling youth re-

Quid meruere Argi? me, me, diviûm optime, solum
 Objecisse caput fatis præstabit, an illud 771
 Lene magis cordi, quod desolata domorum
 Tecta vides? ignique datis cultoribus omnis
 Lucet ager? sed quid fando tua tela manusque
 Demoror! expectant matres, supremaque fundunt
 Vota mihi. satis est: merui, ne parcere velles. 776
 Proinde move pharetras, arcusque intende sonoros,
 Insignemque animam leto demitte: sed illum
 Pallidus Inachiis qui desuper imminet Argis,
 Dum morior, depelle globum. Fors æqua merentès
 Respicit. ardentem tenuit reverentia cædis 780
 Latoïden, tristemque viro summissus honorem
 Largitur vitæ, nostro mala nubila cælo
 Diffugiunt, at tu stupefacti a limine Phœbi

Thence we these altars in his temple raise, 786
 And offer annual honours, feasts and praise;
 Those solemn feasts propitious Phœbus please;
 These honours still renew'd his ancient wrath appease.

But say, illustrious guest! (adjoin'd the King) 790
 What name you bear, from what high race you spring?
 The noble Tydeus stands confess'd, and known
 Our neighbour prince, and heir of Calydon.
 Relate your fortunes, while the friendly night
 And silent hours to various talk invite." 795

The Theban bends on earth his gloomy eyes,
 Confus'd, and sadly thus at length replies:
 "Before these altars how shall I proclaim
 (O gen'rous Prince!) my nation, or my name,
 Or thro' what veins our ancient blood has roll'd?
 Let the sad tale for ever rest untold!" 801

Exoratus abis. inde hæc stata sacra quotannis 785
 Solennes recolunt epulæ, Phœbeiaque placat
 Templâ novatus honos. has forte invisitis aras.
 Vos quæ progenies? quanquam Calydonius Oeneus
 Et Parthaoniæ (dudum si certus ad aures 791
 Clamor iit) tibi jura domûs: tu pande quis Argos
 Advenias? quando hæc variis sermonibus hora est.

Dejecit mœstos extemplo Ismenius heros 796
 In terram vultus, taciteque ad Tydea læsum
 Obliquare oculos. tum longa silentia movit:
 Non super hos divûm tibi sum quærendus honores
 Unde genus, quæ terra mihi: quis defluat ordo 800
 Sanguinis antiqui, piget inter sacra fateri.

Yet if, propitious to a wretch unknown,
 You seek to share in sorrows not your own,
 Know then, from Cadmus I derive my race,
 Jocasta's son, and Thebes my native place." 805
 To whom the King (who felt his gen'rous breast
 Touch'd with concern for his unhappy guest)
 Replies:---"Ah! why forbears the son to name
 His wretched father, known too well by fame?
 Fame that delights around the world to stray, 810
 Scorns not to take our Argos in her way.
 Ev'n those who dwell where suns at distance roll,
 In northern wilds, and freeze beneath the pole,
 And those who tread the burning Lybian lands,
 The faithless syrtes, and the moving sands; 815
 Who view the western sea's extremest bounds,
 Or drink of Ganges in their eastern grounds;
 All these the woes of Oedipus have known,
 Your Fates, your Furies, and your haunted town.

Sed si præcipitant miserum cognoscere curæ,
 Cadmus origo patrum, tellus Mavortia Thebæ,
 Et genetrix Jocasta mihi. tum motus Adrastus 805
 Hospitiis (agnovit enim) quid nota recondis?
 Seimus, ait; nec sic aversum fama Mycenis 810
 Volvit iter. regnum, et furias, oculosque pudentes
 Novit, et Arctoïis si quis de solibus horret,
 Quique bibit Gangem, aut nigrum occasibus intrat
 Oceanum, et si quos incerto littore syrtes 815
 Destituunt: ne perge queri, casusque priorum
 Annumerare tibi. nostro quoque sanguine multum

If on the sons the parents' crimes descend, 820
 What prince from those his lineage can defend?
 Be this thy comfort, that 'tis thine t'efface,
 With virtuous acts, thy ancestors' disgrace,
 And be thyself the honour of thy race. }
 But see! the stars begin to steal away, 825
 And shine more faintly at approaching day:
 Now pour the wine; and in your tuneful lays
 Once more resound the great Apollo's praise."

" Oh, Father Phœbus! whether Lycia's coast
 And snowy mountains thy bright presence boast;
 Whether to sweet Castalia thou repair, 831
 And bathe in silver dew's thy yellow hair;
 Or pleas'd to find fair Delos float no more,
 Delight in Cynthus and the shady shore;

Erravit pietas; nec culpa nepotibus obstat. 820
 Tu modo dissimilis rebus mereare secundis
 Excusare tuos. Sed jam temone supino
 Languet Hyperborææ glacialis portitor ursæ. 825
 Fundite vina focis, servatoremque parentum
 Latoiden votis iterumque iterumque canamus.

Phœbe parens, seu te Lyciæ Pataræa nivosis
 Exercent dumeta jugis, seu rore pudico 830
 Castaliæ flavos amor est tibi mergere crines;
 Seu Trojam Thymbræus habes, ubi fama volentem
 Ingratas Phrygios humeris subiisse molares:
 Seu juvat Ægæum feriens Latonius umbrâ
 Cynthus, et assiduam pelago non quærere Delon: 835
 Tela tibi, longæque feros lentandus in hostes

Or chuse thy seat in Ilion's proud abodes, 835
 The shining structures rais'd by lab'ring gods :
 By thee the bow and mortal shafts are borne ;
 Eternal charms thy blooming youth adorn :
 Skill'd in the laws of secret Fate above,
 And the dark counsels of almighty Jove, 840
 'Tis thine the seeds of future war to know,
 The change of sceptres and impending woe ;
 When direful meteors spread thro' glowing air
 Long trails of light, and shake their blazing hair.
 Thy rage the Phrygian felt, who durst aspire 845
 T' excel the music of thy heav'nly lyre ;
 Thy shafts aveng'd lewd Tityus' guilty flame,
 Th' immortal victim of thy mother's fame ;
 Thy hand slew Python, and the dame who lost
 Her num'rous offspring for a fatal boast. 850
 In Phlegyas' doom thy just revenge appears,
 Condemn'd to Furies and eternal fears ;

Arcus, et ætherii dono cessere parentes
 Æternum florere genas. tu doctus iniquas
 Parcarum prænosseminas, fatumque quod ultra est,
 Et summo placitura Jovi. quis letifer annus, 840
 Bella quibus populis, mutent quæ sceptræ cometæ.
 Tu Phryga submittis citharæ. tu matris honori 845
 Terrigenam Tityon Stygiis extendis arenis.
 Te viridis Python, Thebanaque mater ovanem
 Horruit in pharetris. ultrix tibi torva Megæra 850
 Jejunum Phlegyam subter cava saxa jacentem
 Æterno premit accubitu, dapibusque profanis

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

Propitious hear our pray'r, O Pow'r divine! 855
And on thy hospitable Argos shine;
Whether the style of Titan please thee more,
Whose purple rays th' Achæmenes adore;
Or great Osiris, who first taught the swain
In Pharian fields to sow the golden grain; 860
Or Mithra, to whose beams the Persian bows,
And pays, in hollow rocks, his awful vows;
Mithra! whose head the blaze of light adorns,
Who grasps the struggling heifer's lunar horns."

Instimulat: sed mista famem fastidia vincunt.
Adsis, O memor Hospitii, Junoniaque arva 855
Dexter ames; seu te roseum Titana vocari
Gentis Achæmeniae ritu, seu præstat Osirin
Frugiferum, seu Persei sub rupibus antri 860
Indignata sequi torquentem cornua Mitram.

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