

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
RICHARD WEST.

..... simplex nec despice carmen,
Nec vatem : non illa leves primordia motus,
Quanquam parva, dabunt. GRAY, *de Princip. Cogit.*

Just Heaven ! what sin, ere life begins to bloom,
Devotes my head untimely to the tomb ?
Did e'er this hand against a brother's life
Drag the dire bowl, or point the mar'rous knife ?
Did e'er this tongue the slanderer's tale proclaim,
Or madly violate my Maker's name ?
Did e'er this heart betray a friend or foe,
Or know a thought but all the world might know ?----
But why repine ? does life deserve my sigh ?
Few will lament my loss whene'er I die----
Yet some there are (ere spent my vital days)
Within whose breasts my tomb I wish to raise :
Lov'd in my life, lamented in my end,
Their praise would crown me as their precepts mend :
To them may these fond lines my name endear,
Not from the poet but the friend sincere. AD AMICOS.

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MISCELLANIES.

Advertisement.

THE life of Mr. West was so short, and the events of it so few, that it was judged better to insert the anecdotes which remain of this hopeful youth in the preceding account of his friend than to reserve them for a detached article. Mr. Walpole wished to see their Works united in one volume. The only objection of Mr. Gray to this wish no longer now remains. Had he complied with Mr. Walpole's desire, it is the opinion of Mr. Mason that he would have given only the poems which follow.

AD AMICOS.

[Imitated from Tibullus, book iii. elegy 5, and Mr. Pope's letter in sickness to Mr. Steele.]

Yes, happy youths! on Camus' sedgey side
You feel each joy that friendship can divide,
Each realm of science and of art explore,
And with the ancient blend the modern lore,
Studious alone to learn whate'er may tend 5
To raise the genius or the heart to mend;
Now pleas'd along the cloister'd walks you rove,
And trace the verdant mazes of the grove,
Where social oft' and oft' alone ye chuse
To catch the Zephir and to court the Muse; 10

Vos tenet, Etruscis manat quæ fontibus unda,
Unda sub æstivum non adcunda canem.
Nunc autem sacris Baiarum maxima lymphis,
Quum se purpureo vere remittit hiems.

Mean-time at me (while all devoid of art
 Their lines give back the image of my heart)
 At me the pow'r that comes or soon or late,
 Or aims or seems to aim the dart of Fate.
 From you remote methinks alone I stand 15
 Like some sad exile in a desert land,
 Around no friends their lenient care to join
 In mutual warmth, and mix their heart with mine.
 Or real pains, or those which fancy raise,
 For ever blot the sunshine of my days; 20
 To sickness still, and still to grief, a prey
 Health turns from me her rosy face away.

Just Heav'n! what sin, ere life begins to bloom,
 Devotes my head untimely to the tomb?
 Did e'er this hand against a brother's life 25
 Drug the dire bowl, or point the murd'rous knife?
 Did e'er this tongue the stand'rer's tale proclaim,
 Or madly violate my Maker's name?
 Did e'er this heart betray a friend or foe,
 Or know a thought but all the world might know? 30

At mihi Persephone nigram deununtiat horam
 Inmerito juveni parce nocere, Dea.
 Non ego tentavi nulli temeranda virorum
 Audax laudandæ sacra docere Deæ.
 Nec mea mortiferis infecit pocula succis
 Dexterâ, nec quiquam tætra venena dedi.
 Nec nos insana meditantès jurgia mente
 pupia in adversos solvimus ora Deos.

As yet just started from the lifts of time
 My growing years have scarcely told their prime;
 Useless as yet thro' life I've idly run,
 No pleasures tasted, and few duties done.
 Ah! who ere autumn's mellowing suns appear 35
 Would pluck the promise of the vernal year,
 Or ere the grapes their purple hue betray
 Tear the crude cluster from the mourning spray?
 Stern pow'r of Fate! whose ebon sceptre rules
 The Stygian deserts and Cimmerian pools, 40
 Forbear, nor rashly smite my youthful heart,
 A victim yet unworthy of thy dart;
 Ah! stay till age shall blast my with'ring face,
 Shake in my head and falter in my pace;
 Then aim the shaft, then meditate the blow, 45
 And to the dead my willing shade shall go.

Et nondum cani nigros læsere capillos,
 Nec venit tardo curva Senectæ pede.
 Natalem nostri primum videre parentes
 (Quum cecidit fato consul uterque pari.)
 Quid fraudare juvat vitem crescentibus uvis?
 Et modo nata mala vellere poma manu *?
 Parcite, pallentes undas quicumque tenetis,
 Duraque sortiti tertia regna Dei.

* "There is," says Mr. Mason, "a peculiar blemish in this line, arising from the synonymous *mala* and *poma*."---But who that can either construe or scan this line could have taken these words for *synonymous*?

How weak is man to Reason's judging eye!
 Born in this moment, in the next we die;
 Part mortal clay, and part ethereal fire,
 Too proud to creep, too humble to aspire.
 In vain our plans of happiness we raise;
 Pain is our lot, and patience is our praise:
 Wealth, lineage, honours, conquest, or a throne,
 Are what the wise would fear to call their own:
 Health is at best a vain precarious thing,
 And fair-fac'd youth* is ever on the wing:
 'Tis like the stream aside whose wat'ry bed
 Some blooming plant exalts his flow'ry head,
 Nurs'd by the wave the spreading branches rise,
 Shade all the ground and flourish to the skies;
 The waves the while beneath in secret flow,
 And undermine the hollow bank below;
 Wide and more wide the waters urge their way,
 Bare all the roots and on their fibres prey:

Elyfios olim liceat cognoscere campos,
 Letheamque ratem, Cimmeriosque lacus,
 Quum mea rugosa pallebunt ora senecta,

Atque utipam vano nequidquam terrear restu!

* "Youth, at the very best, is but a betrayer of human life
 "in a gentler and smoother manner than age; it is like the
 "stream that nourishes a plant upon a bank, and causes it to
 "flourish and blossom to the sight, but at the same time is un-
 "dermining it at the root in secret." Pope.

Too late the plant bewails his foolish pride,
And sinks untimely in the overwhelming tide. 65

But why repine? does life deserve my sigh?

Few will lament my loss whene'er I die.

For those the wretches* I despise or hate

I neither envy nor regard their fate. 70

For me whene'er all-conq'ring Death shall spread

His wings around my unrepining head

I care not †: tho' this face be seen no more

The world will pass as cheerful as before,

Bright as before the day-star will appear, 75

The fields as verdant and the skies as clear;

Nor storms nor comets will my doom declare,

Nor signs on earth nor portents in the air;

Unknown and silent will depart my breath,

Nor Nature e'er take notice of my death. 80

Yet some there are (ere spent my vital days)

Within whose breasts my tomb I wish to raise:

Lov'd in my life, lamented in my end,

Their praise would crown me as their precepts mend:

To them may these fond lines my name endear,

Not from the poet but the friend sincere ‡. 86

* "I am not at all uneasy at the thought that many men whom I never had any esteem for are likely to enjoy this world after me." *Pope.*

† "The morning after my exit the sun will rise as bright as ever, the flowers smell as sweet, the plants spring as green; people will laugh, &c." *Pope.*

‡ This Epistle was written from Christ-church Oxford, July 4th 1737, in the 21st year of his age.

ELEGIA.

Quod mihi tam gratæ misisti dona Camænæ,
 Qualia Mænalius Pan Deo ipse velit,
 Amplector te, Graie, et toto corde reposco,
 Oh desiderium jam nimis usque meum :
 Et mihi rura placent, et me quoq; sæpe volentem 5
 Duxerunt Dryades per sua prata Deæ ;
 Sicubi lymphæ fugit liquidæ pede, sive virentem,
 Magna decus nemoris, quercus opacat humum :
 Illuc mane novo vagor, illuc vespere fero,
 Et, noto ut jacui gramine, nota cano. 10
 Nec nostræ ignorant divinam Amaryllida sylvæ :
 Ah, si desit amor, nil mihi rura placent.
 Ille jugis habitat Deus, ille in vallibus imis,
 Regnat cæca Cælis, regnat et Oceano ;
 Ille gregem taurosq; domat, sæviq; leonem 15
 Seminis; ille feros, ultus Adonin, apros :
 Quin et fervet amore nemus, ramoq; sub omni
 Contentu tremula plurima gaudet avis.
 Duræ etiam in sylvis agitant connubia plantæ,
 Duræ etiam et fertur saxa animasse Venus. 20
 Durior et saxis, et robore durior ille est,
 Sincero si quis pectore amare vetat :
 Non illi in manibus sanctum deponere pignus,
 Non illi arcanum cor aperire velim ;
 Nescit amicitias, teneros qui nescit amores : 25
 Ah ! si nulla Venus, nil mihi rura placent.
 Me licet a patriâ longè in tellure juberent

Externâ positum ducere fata dies ;
 Si vultus modo amatus adesset, non ego contra
 Plorarem magnos voce querente Deos. 30
 At dulci in gremio curarum obliviam ducens
 Nil cuperem præter posse placere meæ ;
 Nec bona fortunæ aspiciens, neq; munera regum,
 Illâ intrâ optarem brachia cara mori. 34
Sept. 17th 1738.

ELEGIA.

[*Addressed to Mr. Gray.*]

ERGO desidiæ videor tibi crimine dignus ;
 Et meritò : victas do tibi sponte manus.
 Arguor et veteres nimium contemnere Musas,
 Irrita et nobis est Medicæ Venus.
 Mene igitur statuas et inania saxa vereri ! 5
 Stultule ! marmoreâ quid mihi cum Venere ?
 Hic veræ, hinc vivæ Veneres, et mille per urbem,
 Quarum nulla queat non placuisse Jovi.
 Cédite Romanæ formosæ et cédite Graiæ,
 Sintque oblita Helenæ nomen et Hermonia ! 10
 Et, quascunque refert ætas vetus, Heroinæ :
 Unus honor nostris jam venit Angliam.
 Oh quales vultus, Oh quantum numen ocellis !
 I nunc et Tuscas improbe confer opes.
 Ne tamen hæc obtusa nimis præcordia credas, 15
 Neû me adeo nullâ Pallade progenitum :
 Testor Picridumque umbras et flumina Pindi
 Me quoque Calliopes semper amasse choros ;

Et dudum Ausonias urbes, et visere Graias
 Cura est, ingenio si licet ire meo : 30
 Sive est Phidiacum marmor, seu mentoris æra,
 Seu paries Coo nobilis e calamo ;
 Nec minus artificum magna argumenta recentum
 Romanique decus nominis et Veneti :
 Quà Furor et Mavors et sævo in Marmore vultus, 25
 Quaque et formoso mollior ære Venus,
 Quaque loquax spirat fucus vivique labores,
 Et quicquid calamo dulciùs ausa manus :
 Hic nemora, et sola mærens Melibœus in umbrâ,
 Lymphaque muscofo profiliens lapide ; 30
 Illic majus opus, faciesque in pariete major
 Exurgens, Divum et numina Cœlicolum ;
 O vos sælices, quibus hæc cognoscere fas est,
 Et totâ Italiâ qua patet usque, frui !
 Nulla dies vobis eat injucunda, nec usquam
 Noritis quid sit tempora amara pati. 36

——— *It was the production of four o'clock in the morning,*
while I lay in my bed tossing and coughing, and all un-
able to sleep. ———

ANTE omnes morbos importunissima tussis,
 Quâ durare datur, traxitque sub illa vires :
 Dura etenim versans imo sub pectore regna,
 Perpetuo exercet teneras luctamine costas,
 Oraque distorquet, vocemque immutat anhelam : 5
 Nec cessare locus : sed sævo concita motu
 Molle domat latus, et corpus labor omne fatigat :

Unde molesta dies, noctemque insomnia turbant.
 Nec Tua, si mecum Comes hic jucundus adestes,
 Verba juvare queant, aut hunc lenire dolorem
 Sufficiant tua vox dulcis, nec vultus amatus.

ODE.

DEAR Gray! that always in my heart
 Possesses far the better part;
 What mean these sudden blasts that rise,
 And drive the zephyrs from the skies?
 O join with mine thy tuneful lay,
 And invoke the tardy May.

6

Come, fairest nymph! resume thy reign,
 Bring all the Graces in thy train:
 With balmy breath and flow'ry tread
 Rise from thy soft ambrosial bed,
 Where in Elysian slumber bound
 Embow'ring myrtles veil thee round.

12

Awake, in all thy glories drest,
 Recall the zephyrs from the west;
 Restore the sun, revive the skies,
 At mine and Nature's call arise!
 Great Nature's self upbraids thy stay,
 And misses her accustom'd May.

18

See! all her works demand thy aid,
 The labours of Pomona fade;
 A plaint is heard from ev'ry tree,
 Each budding flow'ret calls for thee;
 The birds forget to love and sing,
 With storms alone the forests ring.

24

Come then, with Pleasure at thy side,
 Diffuse thy vernal spirit wide;
 Create where'er thou turn'st thy eye
 Peace, plenty, love, and harmony,
 Till ev'ry being share its part
 And heav'n and earth be glad at heart.

30

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF POSIDIPPUS.

PERSPICUI puerum ludentem in margine rivi
 Immerfit vitreae limpidus error aquae:
 At gelido ut mater moribundum e flumine traxit
 Credula, et amplexu funus inane fovet;
 Paulatim puer in dilecto pectore, somno
 Languidus, aeternum lumina composuit.

6

Τὸν τρίτην παίζοντα περὶ φρέαρ Ἀσυνακία,
 εἶδων μορφῆς κωφὸν ἐπισπάσατο.
 Ἴεκ δ' ὕδατος τὸν παῖδα διάβροχον ἄρπασε μάτης,
 σκεπτομένα ζωᾶς εἴ τινα μοῖραν ἔχει.
 Νύμφας δ' ἔκ ἐμῆνεν ὁ νήπιος, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ γένων
 μακρὸς κοιμαθεὶς τὸν βαδύν ὕπνον ἔχει.

TO MR. GRAY.

O Mæx jucunda comes quietis!
Quæ fere ægrotum solita es levare
Pectus, et sensim ah! nimis ingruentes
Fallere curas:

4

Quid canes? quanto Lyra dic furore
Gesties, quando hac reducem sodalem
Glacciam* gaudere simul videbis
Meque sub umbra?

8

* Mr. Gray.

CÆTERA DESIDERANTUR.

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THE END.