Classic Poetry Series

Alexander Pope

- poems -

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Alexander Pope (21 May 1688 – 30 May 1744)

Pope was born in London to Alexander Pope (senior, a linen merchant) and Edith Pope (née Turner), who were both Catholics. Pope's education was affected by the penal law in force at the time upholding the status of the established Church of England, which banned Catholics from teaching on pain of perpetual imprisonment. Pope was taught to read by his aunt, then went to Twyford School in about 1698–9. He then went to two Catholic schools in London. Such schools, while illegal, were tolerated in some areas.

In 1700, his family moved to a small estate in Binfield, Berkshire, close to the royal Windsor Forest. This was due to strong anti-Catholic sentiment and a statute preventing Catholics from living within 10 miles (16 km) of either London or Westminster. Pope would later describe the countryside around the house in his poem Windsor Forest. Pope's formal education ended at this time, and from then on he mostly educated himself by reading the works of classical writers such as the satirists Horace and Juvenal, the epic poets Homer and Virgil, as well as English authors like Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare and John Dryden. He also studied many languages and read works by English, French, Italian, Latin, and Greek poets. After five years of study, Pope came into contact with figures from the London literary society such as William Wycherley, William Congreve, Samuel Garth, William Trumbull, and William Walsh.

At Binfield, he also began to make many important friends. One of them, John Caryll (the future dedicatee of The Rape of the Lock), was twenty years older than the poet and had made many acquaintances in the London literary world. He introduced the young Pope to the ageing playwright William Wycherley and to William Walsh, a minor poet, who helped Pope revise his first major work, The Pastorals. He also met the Blount sisters, Teresa and (his alleged future lover) Martha, both of whom would remain lifelong friends.

From the age of 12, he suffered numerous health problems, such as Pott's disease (a form of tuberculosis that affects the bone) which deformed his body and stunted his growth, leaving him with a severe hunchback. His tuberculosis infection caused other health problems including respiratory difficulties, high fevers, inflamed eyes, and abdominal pain. He never grew beyond 1.37 metres (4 feet, 6 inches) tall. Pope was already removed from society because he was Catholic; his poor health only alienated him further. Although he never married, he had many female friends whom he wrote witty letters. He did have one alleged lover, his lifelong friend, Martha Blount.

Alexander Pope became a Freemason (a mortal sin in the Catholic Church).

He was a member of the Premier Grand Lodge of England, and also belonged to the Spalding Gentlemen's Society.

In May, 1709, Pope's Pastorals was published in the sixth part of Tonson's Poetical Miscellanies. This brought instant fame to Pope. This was followed by An Essay on Criticism published in May 1711 , which was equally well received.

Around 1711, Pope made friends with Tory writers John Gay, Jonathan Swift, Thomas Parnell and John Arbuthnot, who together formed the satirical Scriblerus Club. The aim of the club was to satirise ignorance and pedantry in the form of the fictional scholar Martinus Scriblerus. He also made friends with Whig writers Joseph Addison and Richard Steele. In March of 1713, Windsor Forest was published and was a well known success.

Pope's next well known poem was The Rape of the Lock; first published in 1712, with a revised version published in 1714. This is sometimes considered Pope's most popular poem because it was a mock-heroic epic, written to make fun of a high society quarrel between Arabella Fermor (the "Belinda" of the poem) and Lord Petre, who had snipped a lock of hair from her head without her permission. In his poem he treats his characters in an epic style; when the Baron steals her hair and she tries to get it back, it flies into the air and turns into a star.

During Pope's friendship with Joseph Addison, he contributed to Addison's play Cato as well as writing for The Guardian and The Spectator. Around this time he began the work of translating the Iliad, which was a painstaking process - publication began in 1715 and did not end until 1720.

In 1714, the political situation worsened with the death of Queen Anne and the disputed succession between the Hanoverians and the Jacobites, leading to the attempted Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. Though Pope as a Catholic might be expected to have supported the Jacobites, because of his religious and political affiliations, according to Maynard Mack, "where Pope himself stood on these matters can probably never be confidently known". These events led to an immediate downturn in the fortunes of the Tories, and Pope's friend, Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke fled to France.

The money made from his translation of Homer allowed Pope to move to a villa at Twickenham in 1719, where he created his now famous grotto and gardens. Pope decorated the grotto with alabaster, marbles, and ores such as mundic and crystals. He also used Cornish diamonds, stalactites, spars, snakestones and spongestone. Here and there in the grotto he placed mirrors, expensive embellishments for the time. A camera obscura was installed to delight his visitors, of whom there were many. The serendipitous discovery of a spring during its excavations enabled the subterranean retreat to be filled with the relaxing sound of trickling water, which would quietly echo around the chambers. Pope was said to have remarked that: "Were it to have nymphs as well – it would be complete in everything." Although the house and gardens have long since been demolished, much of this grotto still survives. The grotto now lies beneath Radnor House Independent Co-ed School, and is occasionally opened to the public.

Poetry

An Essay on Criticism was first published anonymously on 15 May 1711. Pope began writing the poem early in his career and took about three years to finish it.

At the time the poem was published, the heroic couplet style in which it was written was a moderately new genre of poetry, and Pope's most ambitious work. An Essay on Criticism was an attempt to identify and refine his own positions as a poet and critic. The poem was said to be a response to an ongoing debate on the question of whether poetry should be natural, or written according to predetermined artificial rules inherited from the classical past.

The poem begins with a discussion of the standard rules that govern poetry by which a critic passes judgment. Pope comments on the classical authors who dealt with such standards, and the authority that he believed should be accredited to them. He discusses the laws to which a critic should adhere while critiquing poetry, and points out that critics serve an important function in aiding poets with their works, as opposed to the practice of attacking them.

The final section of An Essay on Criticism discusses the moral qualities and virtues inherent in the ideal critic, who, Pope claims, is also the ideal man.

Pope's most famous poem is The Rape of the Lock, first published in 1712, with a revised version published in 1714. A mock-epic, it satirises a high-society quarrel between Arabella Fermor (the "Belinda" of the poem) and Lord Petre, who had snipped a lock of hair from her head without her permission. The satirical style is tempered, however, by a genuine and almost voyeuristic interest in the "beau-monde" (fashionable world) of 18th-century English society. Critics pay special attention to the fictitious card game, 'Ombre', that Pope creates for the poem; much time has been spent trying to reconstruct the rules of the game, and the arcane obscurity of how it might actually be played reflects the Byzantine nature of 18th-century high society

Though the Dunciad was first published anonymously in Dublin, its authorship was not in doubt. As well as Theobald, it pilloried a host of other "hacks", "scribblers" and "dunces". Mack called its publication "in many ways the greatest act of folly in Pope's life". Though a masterpiece, "it bore bitter fruit. It brought the poet in his own time the hostility of its victims and their sympathizers, who pursued him implacably from then on with a few damaging truths and a host of slanders and lies...". The threats were physical too. According to his sister, Pope would never go for a walk without the company of his Great Dane, Bounce, and a pair of loaded pistols in his pocket.

In 1731, Pope published his "Epistle to Burlington", on the subject of architecture, the first of four poems which would later be grouped under the title Moral Essays (1731–35). In the epistle, Pope ridiculed the bad taste of the aristocrat "Timon". Pope's enemies claimed he was attacking the Duke of Chandos and his estate, Cannons. Though the charge was untrue, it did Pope a great deal of damage.

The Essay on Man is a philosophical poem, written in heroic couplets and published between 1732 and 1734. Pope intended this poem to be the centrepiece of a proposed system of ethics that was to be put forth in poetic form. It was a piece of work that Pope intended to make into a larger work; however, he did not live to complete it.

The poem is an attempt to "vindicate the ways of God to Man," a variation on Milton's attempt in Paradise Lost to "justify the ways of God to Man" (1.26). It challenges as prideful an anthropocentric world-view. The poem is not solely Christian; however, it makes an assumption that man has fallen and must seek his own salvation.

It consists of four epistles that are addressed to Lord Bolingbroke. Pope presents an idea or his view on the Universe; he says that no matter how imperfect, complex, inscrutable and disturbing the Universe appears to be, it functions in a rational fashion according to the natural laws. The natural laws consider the Universe as a whole a perfect work of God. To humans it appears to be evil and imperfect in many ways; however, Pope points out that this is due to our limited mindset and limited intellectual capacity. Pope gets the message across that humans must accept their position in the "Great Chain of Being" which is at a middle stage between the angels and the beasts of the world. If we are able to accomplish this then we potentially could lead happy and virtuous lives.

The poem is an affirmative poem of faith: life seems to be chaotic and

confusing to man when he is in the center of it, but according to Pope it is really divinely ordered. In Pope's world God exists and is what he centres the Universe around in order to have an ordered structure. The limited intelligence of man can only take in tiny portions of this order and can experience only partial truths, hence man must rely on hope which then leads into faith. Man must be aware of his existence in the Universe and what he brings to it, in terms of riches, power and fame. It is man's duty to strive to be good regardless of other situations: this is the message Pope is trying to get across to the reader

Later Works

The Imitations of Horace followed (1733–38). These were written in the popular Augustan form of the "imitation" of a classical poet, not so much a translation of his works as an updating with contemporary references. Pope used the model of Horace to satirise life under George II, especially what he regarded as the widespread corruption tainting the country under Walpole's influence and the poor quality of the court's artistic taste.

Pope also added a wholly original poem, An Epistle to Doctor Arbuthnot, as an introduction to the "Imitations". It reviews his own literary career and includes the famous portraits of Lord Hervey ("Sporus") and Addison ("Atticus"). In 1738 he wrote the Universal Prayer.

After 1738, Pope wrote little. He toyed with the idea of composing a patriotic epic in blank verse called Brutus, but only the opening lines survive. His major work in these years was revising and expanding his masterpiece The Dunciad. Book Four appeared in 1742, and a complete revision of the whole poem in the following year. In this version, Pope replaced the "hero", Lewis Theobald, with the poet laureate Colley Cibber as "king of dunces". By now Pope's health, which had never been good, was failing, and he died in his villa surrounded by friends on 30 May 1744. On the previous day, 29 May 1744, Pope called for a priest and received the Last Rites of the Catholic Church. He lies buried in the nave of the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Twickenham.

Reception

However, by the mid-18th century new fashions in poetry started to emerge. A decade after Pope's death, Joseph Warton claimed that Pope's style of poetry was not the most excellent form of the art. The Romantic movement that rose to prominence in early 19th-century England was more ambivalent towards his work. Though Lord Byron identified Pope as one of his chief influences (believing his scathing satire of contemporary English literature English Bards and Scotch Reviewers to be a continuance of Pope's tradition), William Wordsworth found Pope's style fundamentally too decadent to represent the human condition truly.

In the 20th century an effort to revive Pope's reputation began and was successful. Pope's work was now found to be full of references to the people and places of his time and these aided individuals' understanding of the past. The postwar period stressed the power of Pope's poetry and recognised that Pope's immersion in Christian and Biblical culture gave great depth to his poetry. Maynard Mack thought very highly of Pope's poetry. He argued that Pope's humane moral vision demanded as much respect as his technical excellence. In the years 1953–1967 the production of the definitive Twickenham edition of Pope's poems was published in ten volumes.

Modern Reception

Modern criticism of Pope focuses on the man, his circumstances and motivations, prompted by theoretical perspectives such as Marxism, feminism and other forms of post-structuralism. Brean Hammond focuses on Pope's singular achievement in making an independent living solely from his writing. Laura Brown (1985) adopts a Marxist approach and accuses Pope of

being an apologist for the oppressive upper classes. Hammond (1986) has studied Pope's work from the perspectives of cultural materialism and new historicism. Along Hammond's lines, Raymond Williams explains art as a set of practices influenced by broad cultural factors rather than simply the vague ideas of genius alone.

In 'Politics and Poetics of Transgression' (1985) Peter Stallybrass and Allon White charge that Pope drew upon the low culture which he despised in order to produce his own 'high art'. They assert Pope was implicated in the very material he was attempting to exclude, not dissimilar to observations made in Pope's time.

Feminists have also criticised Pope's works. Ellen Pollak's 'The Poetics of Sexual Myth' (1985) argues that Pope followed an anti-feminist tradition, that regarded women as inferior to men both intellectually and physically. Carolyn Williams contends that a crisis in the male role during the 18th century in Britain impacted Pope and his writing.

An Essay on Criticism

Part I

INTRODUCTION. That it is as great a fault to judge ill as to write ill, and a more dangerous one to the public. That a true Taste is as rare to be found as a true Genius. That most men are born with some Taste, but spoiled by false education. The multitude of Critics, and causes of them. That we are to study our own Taste, and know the limits of it. Nature the best guide of judgment. Improved by Art and rules, which are but methodized Nature. Rules derived from the practice of the ancient poets. That therefore the ancients are necessary to be studied by a Critic, particularly Homer and Virgil. Of licenses, and the use of them by the ancients. Reverence due to the ancients, and praise of them.

'Tis hard to say if greater want of skill
Appear in writing or in judging ill;
But of the two less dangerous is th'offence
To tire our patience than mislead our sense:
Some few in that, but numbers err in this;
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.
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,
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:
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 traced,
Is by ill col'ring but the more disgraced,
So by false learning is good sense defaced:
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,
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 pass'd;

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, numerous in our isle,
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 a hundred tongues required,
Or one vain Wit's, that might a hundred tire.

But you who seek to give and merit fame,
And justly bear a Critic's noble name,
Be sure yourself and your own reach to know,
How far your Genius, Taste, and Learning go,
Launch not beyond your depth, but be discreet,
And mark that point where Sense and Dulness meet.

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;
Thus in the soul while Memory prevails,
The solid power of Understanding fails;
Where beams of warm Imagination play,
The Memory's soft figures melt away.
One Science only will one genius fit;
So vast is Art, so narrow human wit:
Now 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:
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,
One clear, unchanged, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of Art.
Art from that fund each just supply provides,
Works without show, and without pomp presides.
In some fair body thus th'informing soul
With spirits feeds, with vigour fills the whole;
Each motion guides, and every nerve sustains,
Itself unseen, but in th' effects remains.
Some, to whom Heav'n in wit has been profuse,
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 Muse's steed,
Restrain his fury than provoke his speed:

The winged courser, like a gen'rous horse,
Shows most true mettel when you check his course.

Those rules of old, discover'd, not devised,
Are Nature still, but Nature methodized;
Nature, like Liberty, is but restrain'd
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;
Held from afar, aloft, th'immortal prize,
And urged the rest by equal steps to rise.
Just precepts thus from great examples giv'n,
She drew from them what they derived from Heav'n.
The gen'rous Critic fann'd the poet's fire,
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,
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,
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 drily plain, without invention's aid,
Write dull receipts how poems may be made;
These leave the sense their learning to display,
And those explain the meaning quite away.

You then whose judgment the right course would steer,
Know well each ancient's proper character;
His fable, subject, scope in every page;
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;
Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims bring,
And trace the Muses upward to their spring.
Still with itself compared, his text peruse;
And let your comment be the Mantuan Muse.

When first young Maro in his boundless mind
A work t'outlast immortal Rome design'd,
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.
Convinced, amazed, he checks the bold design,
And rules as strict his labour'd work confine
As if the Stagyrite o'erlook'd each line.
Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
To copy Nature is to copy them.

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.
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 proposed, that license is a rule.
Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take,
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,
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.
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;
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.
Some figures monstrous and misshaped 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
His powers in equal ranks and fair array,
But with th'occasion and the place comply,
Conceal his force, nay, seem sometimes to fly.
Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,
Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream.

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 Paeans ring!
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!
Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;
Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,
And worlds applaud that must not yet be found!
O may some spark of your celestial fire
The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,
(That on weak wings, from far, pursues your flights,
Glows while he reads, but trembles as he writes)
To teach vain Wits a science little known,
T'admire superior sense, and doubt their own.

Part II

Causes hindering a true judgement. Pride. Imperfect learning. Judging by parts, and not by the whole. Critics in wit, language, and versification only. Being too hard to please, or too apt to admire. Partiality--too much love to a sect--to the ancients or moderns. Prejudice or prevention. Singularity. Inconstancy. Party spirit. Envy. Against envy, and in praise of good-nature. When severity is chiefly to be used by critics.

Of all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is Pride, the never failing vice of fools.
Whatever Nature has in worth denied
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 deference,
And fills up all the mighty void of Sense:
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 dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind:

Bur more advanc'd, behold with strange surprise
New distant scenes of endliess science rise!
So pleas'd at first the tow'ring Alps we try,
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;
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, not seek slight faults to find
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,
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,
But the joint force and full result of all.
Thus when we view some well proportion'd dome,
(The world's just wonder, and ev'n thine, O Rome!)
No single parts unequally surprise,
All comes united to th'admiring eyes;
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 n'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.
In every work regard the writer's end,
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,
T'avoid great errors must the less commit;
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,
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 State;
Concluding all were desperate sots and fools

Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules.
Our author, happy in a judge so nice,
Produced his play, and begged the knight's advice;
Made him observe the Subject and the Plot,
The Manners, Passions, Unities; what not?
All which exact to rule were brought about,
Were but a combat in the lists left out.
``What! leave the combat out?'' exclaims the knight.
``Yes, or we must renounce the Stagyrite.''
``Not so, by Heaven!, (he answers in a rage)
Knights, squires, and steeds must enter on the stage.''
``So vast a throng the stage can n'er contain.''
``Then build a new, or act it in a plain.''

Thus critics of less judgement than caprice,
Curious, not knowing, not exact, but nice,
Form short ideas, and offend the Arts
(As most in Manners), by a love to parts.

Some to Conceit alone their taste confine,
And glitt'ring thoughts struck out at every line;
Pleas'd with a work where nothing's just or fit,
One glaring chaos 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 every part,
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 convinced at sight we find,
That give us back the image of our mind.
As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
So modest plainness sets of 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,
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.
False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on every place;
The face of Nature we no more survey,
All glares alike, without distinction gay;
But true expression, like th'unchanging sun,
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

Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd:
For diff'rent styles with diff'rent subjects sort,
As sev'ral 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,
Amaze th'unlearned, and make the learned smile;
Unlucky as Fungoso in the play,
These sparks with awkward vanity display
What the fine gentleman wore yesterday;
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 tried,
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;
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,
While expletives their feeble aid to join,
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line:
While they ring round the same unvaried chimes,
With sure returns of still expected rhymes;
Where'er you find ``the cooling western breeze,''
In the next line, it ``whispers thro' the trees;''
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,
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
What's roundly smooth, or languishingly slow;
And praise the easy vigour of a line
Where Denham's strength and Waller's sweetness join.
True ease in writing comes from Art, not Chance,
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.
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:

Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.
Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise!
While at each change the son of Libyan Jove
Now burns with glory, and then melts with love;
Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow:
Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,
And the world's Victor stood subdued by sound!
The power of music all our hearts allow,
And what Timotheus was is Dryden now.

Avoid extremes, and shun the fault of such
Who still are pleas'd too little or too much.
At ev'ry trifle scorn to take offence;
That always shows 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;
For fools admire, but men of sense approve:
As things seem large which we thro' mist descry,
Dulness is ever apt to magnify.

Some foreign writers, some our own despise;
The ancients only, or the moderns prize.
Thus Wit, like Faith, by each man is applied
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,
But ripens spirits in cold northern climes;
Which from the first has shone on ages past,
Enligths the present, and shall warm the last;
Tho' each may feel increases and decays,
And see now clearer and now darker days,
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,
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;
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,

How the Wit brightens! how the Style refines!
Before his sacred name flies every fault,
And each exalted stanza teems with thought!

The vulgar thus thro' imitation err,
As oft the learn'd by being singular;
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.
A Muse by these is like a mistress used,
This hour she's idolized, the next abused;
While their weak heads, like towns unfortified,
'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their side.
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 shool-divines this zealous isle o'erspread;
Who knew most sentences was deepest read.
Faith, Gospel, all seem'd made to be disputed,
And none has sense enough to be confuted.
Scotists and Thomists now in peace remain
Amidst their kindred cobwebs in Ducklane.
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,
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.
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 survived when merry jests were past;
For rising merit will bouy up at last.
Might he return and bless once more our eyes,
New Blackmores and new Milbournes must arise.
Nay, should great Homer lift his awful head,
Zoilus again would start up from the dead.
Envy will Merit as its shade pursue,
But like a shadow proves the substance true;
For envied Wit, like Sol eclips'd, makes known
Th'opposing body's grossness, not its own.
When first that sun too powerful beams displays,

It draws up vapours which obscure its rays;
But ev'n those clouds at last adorn its way,
Reflect new glories, and augment the day.

Be thou the first true merit to befriend;
His praise is lost who stays till all commend.
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 partiarch wits survived a thousand years:
Now length of fame (our second life) is lost,
And bare threescore is all ev'n that can boast:
Our sons their fathers' failing language see,
And such as Chaucer is shall Dryden be.
So when the faithful pencil has design'd
Some bright idea of the master's mind,
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,
The treach'rous colours the fair art betray,
And all the bright creations fades away!

Unhappy Wit, like most mistaken things,
Atones not for that envy which it brings:
In youth alone its empty praise we boast,
But soon the sort-lived vanity is lost;
Like some fair flower 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;
Then most our trouble still when most admired,
And still the more we give, the more required;
Whose fame with pains we guard, but lose with ease,
Sure some to vex, but never all to please,
'Tis what the vicious fear, the virtuous shun;
By fools 'tis hated, and by knaves undone!

If Wit so much from Ignorance undergo,
Ah, let not Learning too commence its foe!
Of old those met rewards who could excel,
And such were prais'd who but endevour'd well;
Tho' triumphs were to gen'rals 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;
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,
Are mortals urged 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.

But if in noble minds some dregs remain,
Not yet purged off, of spleen and sour disdain,
Discharge that rage on more provoking crimes,
Nor fear a dearth on these flagitious times.
No pardon vile obscenity should find,
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
Sprung the rank weed, and thrived with large increase:
When love was all in easy monarch's care,
Seldom at council, never in a war;
Jilts ruled the state, and statesmen farces writ;
Nay wits had pensions, and young lords had wit;
The Fair sat panting at a courtier's play,
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 following license of a foreign reign
Did all the dregs of bold Socinus drain;
Then unbelieving priests reform'd the nation,
And taught more pleasant methods of salvation;
Where Heav'n's free subjects might their rights dispute,
Lest God himself should seem too absolute;
Pulpits their sacred satire learn'd to spare,
And vice admired to find a flatt'rer there!
Encouraged thus, Wit's Titans braved 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,
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

Rules for the conduct and manners in a Critic. Candour. Modesty. Good breeding. Sincerity and freedom of advice. When one's counsel is to be restrained. Character of an incorrigible poet. And of an impertinent critic. Character of a good critic. The history of criticism, and characters of the best critics; Aristotle. Horace. Dionysius. Petronius. Quintiallian. Longinus. Of the decay of Criticism, and its revival. Erasmus. Vida. Boileau. Lord Roscommon, etc. Conclusion.

Learn then what morals Critics ought to show,
For 'tis but half a judge's task to know.
T'is 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.

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,
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 proposed as things forgot.
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.
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,
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, uncensured to be dull:
Such without Wit, are poets when they please,
As without Learning they can take degrees.
Leave dangerous truths to unsuccessful satires,
And flattery to fulsome dedicators;
Whom when the praise, the world believes no more
Than when they promise to give scribbling o'er.
'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.
False steps but help them to renew the race,
As, after stumbling, jades will mend their pace.
What crowds of these, impenitently bold,
In sounds and jingling syllables grown old,
Still run on poets, in a raging vein,

Ev'n to the 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.
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.
All books he reads, and all he reads assails,
From Dryden's Fables down to Durfey's Tales.
With him most authors steal their works, or buy;
Garth did not write his own Dispensary.
Name a new play, and he's the poet's friend;
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 churchyard:
Nay, fly to altars; there they'll talk you dead;
For fools rush in where angels fear t tread.
Distrustful sense with modest caution speaks,
It still looks home, and short excursions makes;
But rattling nonsense in full volleys breaks
And never shock'd, and never turn'd aside,
Bursts out, resistless, with a thund'ring tide.

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 humanly severe;
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 humankind;
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 Stagyrite first left the shore,
Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps explore;
He steer'd securely, and discover'd far,
Led by the light of the Maeonian star.
Poets, a race long unconfin'd and free,
Still fond and proud of savage liberty,
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

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, though he sung with fire;
His precepts teach but what his works inspire.
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,
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.
Thus useful arms in magazines we place,
All ranged in order, and disposed with grace;
But less to please the eye than arm the hand,
Still fit for use, and ready at command.

Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire,
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.

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,
And the same age saw learning fall and Rome.
With tyranny then superstition join'd,
As that the body, this enslaved the mind;
Much was believ'd, but little understood,
And to be dull was construed to be good;
A second deluge learning thus o'errun,
And the monks finish'd what the Goths begun.

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,
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.
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
The poet's bays and critics ivy grow:
Cremona now shall ever boast they name,
As next in place to Mantua, next in fame!

But soon by impious arms from Latium chased,
Their ancient bounds the banish'd Muses pass'd;
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 despised,
And kept unconquer'd and uncivilized;
Fierce for the liberties of wit, and bold,
We still defied the Romans, as of old.
Yet some there were, among the sounder few
Of those who less presumed and better knew,
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;
To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,
And every author's merit but his own.
Such late was Walsh--the Muse's judge and friend,
Who justly knew to blame or to commend;
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,
Prescribed her heights, and pruned her tender wing,
(Her guide now lost), no more attempts to rise,
But in low numbers short excursions tries;
Content if hence th'unlearn'd their wants may view,
The learn'd reflect on what before they knew;
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.

Alexander Pope

An Essay on Man in Four Epistles: Epistle 1

To Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke
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)
Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man;
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;
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;
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?
Through worlds unnumber'd though the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.
He, who through vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
What varied being peoples ev'ry star,
May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.
But of this frame the bearings, and the ties,
The strong connections, nice dependencies,
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd through? or can a part contain the whole?

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

Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou find,
Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,
Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less?
Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade?
Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove?

Of systems possible, if 'tis confest
That Wisdom infinite must form the best,
Where all must full or not coherent be,
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?

Respecting man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to all.
In human works, though labour'd on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
In God's, one single can its end produce;
Yet serves to second too some other use.
So man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

When the proud steed shall know why man restrains
His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains:
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's God:
Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend
His actions', passions', being's, use and end;
Why doing, suff'ring, check'd, impell'd; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;
Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought:
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place;
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matter, soon or late, or here or there?
The blest today is as completely so,
As who began a thousand years ago.III.

Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of fate,
All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:
Or who could suffer being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed today,
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,
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.

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;
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,
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;
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 fanciest such,
Say, here he gives too little, there too much:
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
Yet cry, if man's unhappy, God's unjust;
If man alone engross not Heav'n's high care,
Alone made perfect here, immortal there:
Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Rejudge his justice, be the God of God.
In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies;
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
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.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,
The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;
For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;
For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies."

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

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

Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all?

The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind;
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,
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 through the brain,
Die of a rose in aromatic pain?
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,
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:
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,
To that which warbles through the vernal wood:
The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:
In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true
From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew?
How instinct varies in the grov'lling 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 allied;
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?
The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,
Is not thy reason all these pow'rs in one?VIII.

See, through this air, this ocean, and this earth,

All matter quick, and bursting into birth.
Above, how high, progressive life may go!
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
Vast chain of being, which from God began,
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,
Beast, bird, fish, insect! what no eye can see,
No glass can reach! from infinite to thee,
From thee to nothing!--On superior pow'rs
Were we to press, inferior might on ours:
Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:
From nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And, if each system in gradation roll
Alike essential to th' amazing whole,
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only, but the whole must fall.
Let earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,
Planets and suns run lawless through the sky;
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,
Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;
Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod,
And nature trembles 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?
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,
The great directing Mind of All ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
That, chang'd through all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent,
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns;
To him no high, no low, no great, no small;

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

Cease then, nor order imperfection name:
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
Know thy own point: This kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.
Submit.--In this, or any other sphere,
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:
Safe in the hand of one disposing pow'r,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.
All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony, not understood;
All partial evil, universal good:
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.

Alexander Pope

An Essay on Man: Epistle II

I.
Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man.
Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise, and rudely great:
With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little, or too much:
Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd;
Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;
Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd:
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

Go, wondrous creature! mount where science guides,
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 follow'rs 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 showed 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,
Or learning's luxury, or idleness;
Or tricks to show the stretch of human brain,

Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;
Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts
Of all our Vices have created Arts;
Then see how little the remaining sum,
Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come!

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

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

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

Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,
More studious to divide than to unite,
And grace and virtue, sense and reason split,
With all the rash dexterity of wit:
Wits, just like fools, at war about a name,
Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.
Self-love and reason to one end aspire,
Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire;
But greedy that its object would devour,
This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r:
Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,
Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

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

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,
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.

Passions, like elements, though 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,
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:
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,
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;
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,
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength:
So, cast and mingled with his very frame,
The mind's disease, its ruling passion came;

Each vital humour which should feed the whole,
Soon flows to this, in body and in soul.
Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,
As the mind opens, and its functions spread,
Imagination plies her dang'rous art,
And pours it all upon the peccant part.

Nature its mother, habit is its nurse;
Wit, spirit, faculties, but make it worse;
Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r;
As Heav'n's blest beam turns vinegar more sour.
We, wretched subjects, though to lawful sway,
In this weak queen some fav'rite still obey:
Ah! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,
What can she more than tell us we are fools?
Teach us to mourn our nature, not to mend,
A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend!
Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade
The choice we make, or justify it made;
Proud of an easy conquest all along,
She but removes weak passions for the strong:
So, when small humours gather to a gout,
The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.

Yes, nature's road must ever be preferr'd;
Reason is here no guide, but still a guard:
'Tis hers to rectify, not overthrow,
And treat this passion more as friend than foe:
A mightier pow'r the strong direction sends,
And sev'ral men impels to sev'ral ends.
Like varying winds, by other passions toss'd,
This drives them constant to a certain coast.
Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,
Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease;
Through life 'tis followed, ev'n at life's expense;
The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,
The monk's humility, the hero's pride,
All, all alike, find reason on their side.

Th' eternal art educing good from ill,
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 interest body acts with mind.

As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,
On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear;
The surest virtues thus from passions shoot,
Wild nature's vigor working at the root.
What crops of wit and honesty appear
From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!

See anger, zeal and fortitude supply;
Ev'n av'rice, prudence; sloth, philosophy;
Lust, through some certain strainers well refin'd,
Is gentle love, and charms all womankind;
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)
The virtue nearest to our vice allied:
Reason the byass 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:
The same ambition can destroy or save,
And make a patriot as it makes a knave.

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

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

Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,
That vice or virtue there is none at all.
If white and black blend, soften, and unite
A thousand ways, is there no black or white?
Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;
'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.
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 Orcades; and there,
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where:
No creature owns it in the first degree,
But thinks his neighbour farther 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.

VI.
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,
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;
That, happy frailties to all ranks applied,
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,
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,
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,
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.

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,
The poor contents him with the care of heav'n.
See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
The sot a hero, lunatic a king;
The starving chemist in his golden views
Supremely blest, the poet in his Muse.

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

Behold the child, by nature's kindly law,
Pleas'd with a rattle, tickl'd 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:
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 supplied,
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;
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: Though man's a fool, yet God is wise.

Alexander Pope

Argus

When wise Ulysses, from his native coast
Long kept by wars, and long by tempests toss'd,
Arrived at last, poor, old, disguised, alone,
To all his friends, and ev'n his Queen unknown,
Changed as he was, with age, and toils, and cares,
Furrow'd his rev'rend face, and white his hairs,
In his own palace forc'd to ask his bread,
Scorn'd by those slaves his former bounty fed,
Forgot of all his own domestic crew,
The faithful Dog alone his rightful master knew!

Unfed, unhous'd, neglected, on the clay
Like an old servant now cashier'd, he lay;
Touch'd with resentment of ungrateful man,
And longing to behold his ancient lord again.
Him when he saw he rose, and crawl'd to meet,
('Twas all he could) and fawn'd and kiss'd his feet,
Seiz'd with dumb joy; then falling by his side,
Own'd his returning lord, look'd up, and died!

Alexander Pope

Celia

Celia, we know, is sixty-five,
Yet Celia's face is seventeen;
Thus winter in her breast must live,
While summer in her face is seen.

How cruel Celia's fate, who hence
Our heart's devotion cannot try;
Too pretty for our reverence,
Too ancient for our gallantry!

Alexander Pope

Chorus of Athenians

Strophe I.
Ye shades, where sacred truth is sought;
Groves, where immortal Sages taught;
Where heav'nly visions of Plato fir'd,
And Epicurus lay inspir'd!
In vain your guiltless laurels stood
Unspotted long with human blood.
War, horrid war, your thoughtful walks invades,
And steel now glitters in the Muses' shades.

Antistrophe I.
Oh heav'n-born sisters! source of art!
Who charm the sense, or mend the heart;
Who lead fair Virtue's train along,
Moral Truth, and mystic Song!
To what new clime, what distant sky,
Forsaken, friendless, shall ye fly?
Say, will you bless the bleak Atlantic shore?
Or bid the furious Gaul be rude no more?

Strophe II.
When Athens sinks by fates unjust,
When wild Barbarians spurn her dust;
Perhaps ev'n Britain's utmost shore,
Shall cease to blush with strager's gore.
See Arts her savage sons control,
And Athens rising near the pole!
'Till some new Tyrant lifts his purple hand,
And civil madness tears them from this land.

Antistrophe II.
Ye Gods! what justice rules the ball?
Freedom and Arts together fall;
Fools grant whate'er Ambition craves,
And men, once ignorant, are slaves.
Oh curs'd effects of civil hate,
In ev'ry age, in ev'ry state!
Still, when the lust of tyrant power succeeds,
Some Athens perishes, some Tully bleeds.

Alexander Pope

Chorus of Youths and Virgins

Semichorus.
Oh Tyrant Love! hast thou possest
The prudent, learn'd, and virtuous breast?
Wisdom and wit in vain reclaim,
And Arts but soften us to feel thy flame.
Love, soft intruder, enters here,
But ent'ring learns to be sincere.
Marcus with blushes owns he loves,
And Brutus tenderly reproves.
Why, Virtue, dost thou blame desire,
Which Nature has imprest?
Why, Nature, dost thou soonest fire
The mild and gen'rous breast?

Chorus.
Love's purer flames the Gods approve;
The Gods and Brutus bent to love:
Brutus for absent Portia sighs,
And sterner Cassius melts at Junia's eyes.
What is loose love? a transient gust,
Spent in a sudden storm of lust,
A vapour fed from wild desire,
A wand'ring, self-consuming fire,
But Hymen's kinder flames unite;
And burn for ever one;
Chaste as cold Cynthia's virgin light,
Productive as the Sun.

Semichorus.
Oh source of ev'ry social tie,
United wish, and mutual joy!
What various joys on one attend,
As son, as father, brother husband, friend?
Whether his hoary sire he spies,
While thousand grateful thoughts arise;
Or meets his spouse's fonder eye;
Or views his smiling progeny;
What tender passions take their turns,
What home-felt raptures move?
His heart now melts, now leaps, now burns,
With rev'rence, hope, and love.

Chorus.
Hence guilty joys, distastes, surmises,
Hence false tears, deceits, disguises,
Dangers, doubts, delays, surprises;
Fires that scorch, yet dare not shine
Purest love's unwasting treasure,
Constant faith, fair hope, long leisure,
Days of ease, and nights of pleasure;
Sacred Hymen! these are thine.

Alexander Pope

Couplets on Wit

I

But our Great Turks in wit must reign alone
And ill can bear a Brother on the Throne.

II

Wit is like faith by such warm Fools profest
Who to be saved by one, must damn the rest.

III

Some who grow dull religious strait commence
And gain in morals what they lose in sence.

IV

Wits starve as useless to a Common weal
While Fools have places purely for their Zea.

V

Now wits gain praise by copying other wits
As one Hog lives on what another sh---.

VI

Wou'd you your writings to some Palates fit
Purged all you verses from the sin of wit
For authors now are so conceited grown
They praise no works but what are like their own.

Alexander Pope

Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady

What beck'ning ghost, along the moon-light shade
Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?
'Tis she!--but why that bleeding bosom gor'd,
Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?
Oh ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,
Is it, in heav'n, a crime to love too well?
To bear too tender, or too firm a heart,
To act a lover's or a Roman's part?
Is there no bright reversion in the sky,
For those who greatly think, or bravely die?

Why bade ye else, ye pow'rs! her soul aspire
Above the vulgar flight of low desire?
Ambition first sprung from your blest abodes;
The glorious fault of angels and of gods;
Thence to their images on earth it flows,
And in the breasts of kings and heroes glows.
Most souls, 'tis true, but peep out once an age,
Dull sullen pris'ners in the body's cage:
Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years
Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres;
Like eastern kings a lazy state they keep,
And close confin'd to their own palace, sleep.

From these perhaps (ere nature bade her die)
Fate snatch'd her early to the pitying sky.
As into air the purer spirits flow,
And sep'rate from their kindred dregs below;
So flew the soul to its congenial place,
Nor left one virtue to redeem her race.

But thou, false guardian of a charge too good,
Thou, mean deserter of thy brother's blood!
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,
These cheeks now fading at the blast of death:
Cold is that breast which warm'd the world before,
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.
Thus, if eternal justice rules the ball,
Thus shall your wives, and thus your children fall;
On all the line a sudden vengeance waits,
And frequent hearses shall besiege your gates.
There passengers shall stand, and pointing say,
(While the long fun'rals blacken all the way)
"Lo these were they, whose souls the furies steel'd,
And curs'd with hearts unknowing how to yield.
Thus unlamented pass the proud away,
The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day!
So perish all, whose breast ne'er learn'd to glow
For others' good, or melt at others' woe."

What can atone (oh ever-injur'd shade!)
Thy fate unpitied, and thy rites unpaid?

No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear
Pleas'd thy pale ghost, or grac'd thy mournful bier.
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos'd,
By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos'd,
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn'd,
By strangers honour'd, and by strangers mourn'd!
What though no friends in sable weeds appear,
Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a year,
And bear about the mockery of woe
To midnight dances, and the public show?
What though no weeping loves thy ashes grace,
Nor polish'd marble emulate thy face?
What though no sacred earth allow thee room,
Nor hallow'd dirge be mutter'd o'er thy tomb?
Yet shall thy grave with rising flow'rs be drest,
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:
There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,
There the first roses of the year shall blow;
While angels with their silver wings o'ershade
The ground, now sacred by thy reliques made.

So peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,
What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame.
How lov'd, how honour'd once, avails thee not,
To whom related, or by whom begot;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee,
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be!

Poets themselves must fall, like those they sung,
Deaf the prais'd ear, and mute the tuneful tongue.
Ev'n he, whose soul now melts in mournful lays,
Shall shortly want the gen'rous tear he pays;
Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart,
Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
The Muse forgot, and thou belov'd no more!

Alexander Pope

Eloisa to Abelard

In these deep solitudes and awful cells,
Where heav'nly-pensive contemplation dwells,
And ever-musing melancholy reigns;
What means this tumult in a vestal's veins?
Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat?
Why feels my heart its long-forgotten heat?
Yet, yet I love!--From Abelard it came,
And Eloisa yet must kiss the name.

Dear fatal name! rest ever unreveal'd,
Nor pass these lips in holy silence seal'd.
Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,
Where mix'd with God's, his lov'd idea lies:
O write it not, my hand--the name appears
Already written--wash it out, my tears!
In vain lost Eloisa weeps and prays,
Her heart still dictates, and her hand obeys.

Relentless walls! whose darksome round contains
Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains:
Ye rugged rocks! which holy knees have worn;
Ye grots and caverns shagg'd with horrid thorn!
Shrines! where their vigils pale-ey'd virgins keep,
And pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep!
Though cold like you, unmov'd, and silent grown,
I have not yet forgot myself to stone.
All is not Heav'n's while Abelard has part,
Still rebel nature holds out half my heart;
Nor pray'rs nor fasts its stubborn pulse restrain,
Nor tears, for ages, taught to flow in vain.

Soon as thy letters trembling I unclose,
That well-known name awakens all my woes.
Oh name for ever sad! for ever dear!
Still breath'd in sighs, still usher'd with a tear.
I tremble too, where'er my own I find,
Some dire misfortune follows close behind.
Line after line my gushing eyes o'erflow,
Led through a sad variety of woe:
Now warm in love, now with'ring in thy bloom,
Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!
There stern religion quench'd th' unwilling flame,
There died the best of passions, love and fame.

Yet write, oh write me all, that I may join
Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.
Nor foes nor fortune take this pow'r away;
And is my Abelard less kind than they?
Tears still are mine, and those I need not spare,
Love but demands what else were shed in pray'r;
No happier task these faded eyes pursue;
To read and weep is all they now can do.

Then share thy pain, allow that sad relief;
Ah, more than share it! give me all thy grief.
Heav'n first taught letters for some wretch's aid,
Some banish'd lover, or some captive maid;
They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires,
The virgin's wish without her fears impart,
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole.

Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy flame,
When Love approach'd me under Friendship's name;
My fancy form'd thee of angelic kind,
Some emanation of th' all-beauteous Mind.
Those smiling eyes, attemp'ring ev'ry day,
Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day.
Guiltless I gaz'd; heav'n listen'd while you sung;
And truths divine came mended from that tongue.
From lips like those what precept fail'd to move?
Too soon they taught me 'twas no sin to love.
Back through the paths of pleasing sense I ran,
Nor wish'd an Angel whom I lov'd a Man.
Dim and remote the joys of saints I see;
Nor envy them, that heav'n I lose for thee.

How oft, when press'd to marriage, have I said,
Curse on all laws but those which love has made!
Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies,
Let wealth, let honour, wait the wedded dame,
August her deed, and sacred be her fame;
Before true passion all those views remove,
Fame, wealth, and honour! what are you to Love?
The jealous God, when we profane his fires,
Those restless passions in revenge inspires;
And bids them make mistaken mortals groan,
Who seek in love for aught but love alone.
Should at my feet the world's great master fall,
Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn 'em all:
Not Caesar's empress would I deign to prove;
No, make me mistress to the man I love;
If there be yet another name more free,
More fond than mistress, make me that to thee!
Oh happy state! when souls each other draw,
When love is liberty, and nature, law:
All then is full, possessing, and possess'd,
No craving void left aching in the breast:
Ev'n thought meets thought, ere from the lips it part,
And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart.
This sure is bliss (if bliss on earth there be)

And once the lot of Abelard and me.

Alas, how chang'd! what sudden horrors rise!
A naked lover bound and bleeding lies!
Where, where was Eloise? her voice, her hand,
Her poniard, had oppos'd the dire command.
Barbarian, stay! that bloody stroke restrain;
The crime was common, common be the pain.
I can no more; by shame, by rage suppress'd,
Let tears, and burning blushes speak the rest.

Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn day,
When victims at yon altar's foot we lay?
Canst thou forget what tears that moment fell,
When, warm in youth, I bade the world farewell?
As with cold lips I kiss'd the sacred veil,
The shrines all trembl'd, and the lamps grew pale:
Heav'n scarce believ'd the conquest it survey'd,
And saints with wonder heard the vows I made.
Yet then, to those dread altars as I drew,
Not on the Cross my eyes were fix'd, but you:
Not grace, or zeal, love only was my call,
And if I lose thy love, I lose my all.
Come! with thy looks, thy words, relieve my woe;
Those still at least are left thee to bestow.
Still on that breast enamour'd let me lie,
Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,
Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd;
Give all thou canst--and let me dream the rest.
Ah no! instruct me other joys to prize,
With other beauties charm my partial eyes,
Full in my view set all the bright abode,
And make my soul quit Abelard for God.

Ah, think at least thy flock deserves thy care,
Plants of thy hand, and children of thy pray'r.
From the false world in early youth they fled,
By thee to mountains, wilds, and deserts led.
You rais'd these hallow'd walls; the desert smil'd,
And Paradise was open'd in the wild.
No weeping orphan saw his father's stores
Our shrines irradiate, or emblaze the floors;
No silver saints, by dying misers giv'n,
Here brib'd the rage of ill-requited heav'n:
But such plain roofs as piety could raise,
And only vocal with the Maker's praise.
In these lone walls (their days eternal bound)
These moss-grown domes with spiry turrets crown'd,
Where awful arches make a noonday night,
And the dim windows shed a solemn light;
Thy eyes diffus'd a reconciling ray,
And gleams of glory brighten'd all the day.

But now no face divine contentment wears,
'Tis all blank sadness, or continual tears.
See how the force of others' pray'rs I try,
(O pious fraud of am'rous charity!)
But why should I on others' pray'rs depend?
Come thou, my father, brother, husband, friend!
Ah let thy handmaid, sister, daughter move,
And all those tender names in one, thy love!
The darksome pines that o'er yon rocks reclin'd
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind,
The wand'ring streams that shine between the hills,
The grots that echo to the tinkling rills,
The dying gales that pant upon the trees,
The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze;
No more these scenes my meditation aid,
Or lull to rest the visionary maid.
But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
Long-sounding aisles, and intermingled graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A death-like silence, and a dread repose:
Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
Shades ev'ry flow'r, and darkens ev'ry green,
Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
And breathes a browner horror on the woods.

Yet here for ever, ever must I stay;
Sad proof how well a lover can obey!
Death, only death, can break the lasting chain;
And here, ev'n then, shall my cold dust remain,
Here all its frailties, all its flames resign,
And wait till 'tis no sin to mix with thine.

Ah wretch! believ'd the spouse of God in vain,
Confess'd within the slave of love and man.
Assist me, Heav'n! but whence arose that pray'r?
Sprung it from piety, or from despair?
Ev'n here, where frozen chastity retires,
Love finds an altar for forbidden fires.
I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought;
I mourn the lover, not lament the fault;
I view my crime, but kindle at the view,
Repent old pleasures, and solicit new;
Now turn'd to Heav'n, I weep my past offence,
Now think of thee, and curse my innocence.
Of all affliction taught a lover yet,
'Tis sure the hardest science to forget!
How shall I lose the sin, yet keep the sense,
And love th' offender, yet detest th' offence?
How the dear object from the crime remove,
Or how distinguish penitence from love?
Unequal task! a passion to resign,
For hearts so touch'd, so pierc'd, so lost as mine.

Ere such a soul regains its peaceful state,
How often must it love, how often hate!
How often hope, despair, resent, regret,
Conceal, disdain--do all things but forget.
But let Heav'n seize it, all at once 'tis fir'd;
Not touch'd, but rapt; not waken'd, but inspir'd!
Oh come! oh teach me nature to subdue,
Renounce my love, my life, myself--and you.
Fill my fond heart with God alone, for he
Alone can rival, can succeed to thee.

How happy is the blameless vestal's lot!
The world forgetting, by the world forgot.
Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind!
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd;
Labour and rest, that equal periods keep;
"Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep;"
Desires compos'd, affections ever ev'n,
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to Heav'n.
Grace shines around her with serenest beams,
And whisp'ring angels prompt her golden dreams.
For her th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,
And wings of seraphs shed divine perfumes,
For her the Spouse prepares the bridal ring,
For her white virgins hymeneals sing,
To sounds of heav'nly harps she dies away,
And melts in visions of eternal day.

Far other dreams my erring soul employ,
Far other raptures, of unholy joy:
When at the close of each sad, sorrowing day,
Fancy restores what vengeance snatch'd away,
Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature free,
All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee.
Oh curs'd, dear horrors of all-conscious night!
How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight!
Provoking Daemons all restraint remove,
And stir within me every source of love.
I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,
And round thy phantom glue my clasping arms.
I wake--no more I hear, no more I view,
The phantom flies me, as unkind as you.
I call aloud; it hears not what I say;
I stretch my empty arms; it glides away.
To dream once more I close my willing eyes;
Ye soft illusions, dear deceits, arise!
Alas, no more--methinks we wand'ring go
Through dreary wastes, and weep each other's woe,
Where round some mould'ring tower pale ivy creeps,
And low-brow'd rocks hang nodding o'er the deeps.
Sudden you mount, you beckon from the skies;
Clouds interpose, waves roar, and winds arise.

I shriek, start up, the same sad prospect find,
And wake to all the griefs I left behind.

For thee the fates, severely kind, ordain
A cool suspense from pleasure and from pain;
Thy life a long, dead calm of fix'd repose;
No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows.
Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,
Or moving spirit bade the waters flow;
Soft as the slumbers of a saint forgiv'n,
And mild as opening gleams of promis'd heav'n.

Come, Abelard! for what hast thou to dread?
The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.
Nature stands check'd; Religion disapproves;
Ev'n thou art cold--yet Eloisa loves.
Ah hopeless, lasting flames! like those that burn
To light the dead, and warm th' unfruitful urn.

What scenes appear where'er I turn my view?
The dear ideas, where I fly, pursue,
Rise in the grove, before the altar rise,
Stain all my soul, and wanton in my eyes.
I waste the matin lamp in sighs for thee,
Thy image steals between my God and me,
Thy voice I seem in ev'ry hymn to hear,
With ev'ry bead I drop too soft a tear.
When from the censer clouds of fragrance roll,
And swelling organs lift the rising soul,
One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight,
Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight:
In seas of flame my plunging soul is drown'd,
While altars blaze, and angels tremble round.

While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,
Kind, virtuous drops just gath'ring in my eye,
While praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,
And dawning grace is op'ning on my soul:
Come, if thou dar'st, all charming as thou art!
Oppose thyself to Heav'n; dispute my heart;
Come, with one glance of those deluding eyes
Blot out each bright idea of the skies;
Take back that grace, those sorrows, and those tears;
Take back my fruitless penitence and pray'rs;
Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest abode;
Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God!

No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole;
Rise Alps between us! and whole oceans roll!
Ah, come not, write not, think not once of me,
Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee.
Thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign;

Forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.
Fair eyes, and tempting looks (which yet I view!)
Long lov'd, ador'd ideas, all adieu!
Oh Grace serene! oh virtue heav'nly fair!
Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care!
Fresh blooming hope, gay daughter of the sky!
And faith, our early immortality!
Enter, each mild, each amicable guest;
Receive, and wrap me in eternal rest!

See in her cell sad Eloisa spread,
Propp'd on some tomb, a neighbour of the dead.
In each low wind methinks a spirit calls,
And more than echoes talk along the walls.
Here, as I watch'd the dying lamps around,
From yonder shrine I heard a hollow sound.
"Come, sister, come!" (it said, or seem'd to say)
"Thy place is here, sad sister, come away!
Once like thyself, I trembled, wept, and pray'd,
Love's victim then, though now a sainted maid:
But all is calm in this eternal sleep;
Here grief forgets to groan, and love to weep,
Ev'n superstition loses ev'ry fear:
For God, not man, absolves our frailties here."

I come, I come! prepare your roseate bow'rs,
Celestial palms, and ever-blooming flow'rs.
Thither, where sinners may have rest, I go,
Where flames refin'd in breasts seraphic glow:
Thou, Abelard! the last sad office pay,
And smooth my passage to the realms of day;
See my lips tremble, and my eye-balls roll,
Suck my last breath, and catch my flying soul!
Ah no--in sacred vestments may'st thou stand,
The hallow'd taper trembling in thy hand,
Present the cross before my lifted eye,
Teach me at once, and learn of me to die.
Ah then, thy once-lov'd Eloisa see!
It will be then no crime to gaze on me.
See from my cheek the transient roses fly!
See the last sparkle languish in my eye!
Till ev'ry motion, pulse, and breath be o'er;
And ev'n my Abelard be lov'd no more.
O Death all-eloquent! you only prove
What dust we dote on, when 'tis man we love.

Then too, when fate shall thy fair frame destroy,
(That cause of all my guilt, and all my joy)
In trance ecstatic may thy pangs be drown'd,
Bright clouds descend, and angels watch thee round,
From op'ning skies may streaming glories shine,
And saints embrace thee with a love like mine.

May one kind grave unite each hapless name,
And graft my love immortal on thy fame!
Then, ages hence, when all my woes are o'er,
When this rebellious heart shall beat no more;
If ever chance two wand'ring lovers brings
To Paraclete's white walls and silver springs,
O'er the pale marble shall they join their heads,
And drink the falling tears each other sheds;
Then sadly say, with mutual pity mov'd,
"Oh may we never love as these have lov'd!"

From the full choir when loud Hosannas rise,
And swell the pomp of dreadful sacrifice,
Amid that scene if some relenting eye
Glance on the stone where our cold relics lie,
Devotion's self shall steal a thought from Heav'n,
One human tear shall drop and be forgiv'n.
And sure, if fate some future bard shall join
In sad similitude of griefs to mine,
Condemn'd whole years in absence to deplore,
And image charms he must behold no more;
Such if there be, who loves so long, so well;
Let him our sad, our tender story tell;
The well-sung woes will soothe my pensive ghost;
He best can paint 'em, who shall feel 'em most.

Alexander Pope

Epigram Engraved on the Collar of a Dog Which I Gave to His Royal Highness

I am his Highness' dog at Kew;
Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?

Alexander Pope

EPISTLE II: TO A LADY (Of the Characters of Women)

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.
Let then the Fair one beautifully cry,
In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye,
Or drest in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,
With simpering Angels, Palms, and Harps divine;
Whether the Charmer sinner it, or saint it,
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;
Choose a firm Cloud, before it fall, and in it
Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.

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 diamonds with her dirty smock;
Or Sappho at her toilet's greasy task,
With Sappho fragrant at an evening Masque:
So morning Insects that in muck begun,
Shine, buzz, and flyblow in the setting sun.

How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;
The Frail one's advocate, the Weak one's friend:
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,
All eyes may see--a Pimple on her nose.

Papillia, wedded to her amorous 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;
'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,
Aw'd without Virtue, without Beauty charmed;

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;
Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,
As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,
To make a wash, would hardly stew a child;
Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a Lover's pray'r,
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?
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;
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;
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
She sins with Poets thro' pure Love of Wit.
What has not fir'd her bosom or her brain?
Caesar and Tallboy, Charles and Charlemagne.
As Helluo, late Dictator of the Feast,
The Nose of Hautgout, and the Tip of Taste,
Critick'd your wine, and analyz'd your meat,
Yet on plain Pudding deign'd at home to eat;
So Philomede, lecturing all mankind
On the soft Passion, and the Taste refin'd,
Th' Address, the Delicacy--stoops at once,
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."
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;
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.

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,
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,
The daily Anodyne, and nightly Draught,
To kill those foes to Fair ones, Time and Thought.
Woman and Fool are two hard things to hit;
For true No-meaning puzzles more than Wit.

But what are these to great Atossa's mind?
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.
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,
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.
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!
But an Inferior not dependant? 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.
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 Followers! without one distress

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.

Pictures like these, dear Madam, to design,
Asks no firm hand, and no unerring line;
Some wandering touches, some reflected light,
Some flying stroke alone can hit 'em right:
For how should equal Colours do the knack?
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;
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,
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.
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,
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.

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,
And show 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:
Th' exactest traits of Body or of Mind,
We owe to models of an humble kind.
If QUEENSBURY to strip there's no compelling,
'Tis from a Handmaid we must take a Helen.

From Peer or Bishop 'tis no easy thing
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:
Our bolder Talents in full light displayed;
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,
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.

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 Business, some to pleasure take;
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:
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 a well-tim'd Retreat,
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.

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,
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 spite,
So these their merry, miserable Night;

Still round and round the Ghosts of Beauty glide,
And haunt the places where their Honour died.

See how the World its Veterans rewards!
A Youth of Frolics, an old Age of Cards;
Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,
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;
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,
And unobserv'd the glaring Orb declines.

Oh! blest with Temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make tomorrow cheerful as today;
She, who can love a Sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a Daughter with unwounded ear;
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;
Disdains all loss of Tickets, or Codille;
Spleen, Vapours, or Smallpox, above them all,
And Mistress of herself, though China fall.

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
Woman's at best a Contradiction still.
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 Favorite blest,
Your love of Pleasure, our desire of Rest:
Blends, in exception to all general rules,
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.

Be this a Woman's Fame: with this unblest,
Toasts live a scorn, and Queens may die a jest.
This Phoebus promis'd (I forget the year)
When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere;
Ascendant Phoebus watch'd that hour with care,
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 generous God, who Wit and Gold refines,
And ripens Spirits as he ripens Mines,
Kept Dross for Duchesses, the world shall know it,
To you gave Sense, Good Humour, and a Poet.

Alexander Pope

Epistle To Mrs Teresa Blount.[On Her Leaving The Town After The Coronation]

As some fond virgin, whom her mother's care
Drags from the town to wholesome country air,
Just when she learns to roll a melting eye,
And hear a spark, yet think no danger nigh;
From the dear man unwilling she must sever,
Yet takes one kiss before she parts for ever:
Thus from the world fair Zephalinda flew,
Saw others happy, and with sighs withdrew;
Not that their pleasures caused her discontent,
She sigh'd not that they staid, but that she went.

She went to plain-work, and to purling brooks,
Old-fashion'd halls, dull aunts, and croaking rooks:
She went from opera, park, assembly, play,
To morning-walks, and prayers three hours a-day:
To part her time 'twixt reading and bohea,
To muse, and spill her solitary tea;
Or o'er cold coffee trifle with the spoon,
Count the slow clock, and dine exact at noon;
Divert her eyes with pictures in the fire,
Hum half a tune, tell stories to the 'squire;
Up to her godly garret after seven,
There starve and pray, for that's the way to heaven.

Some 'squire, perhaps, you take delight to rack;
Whose game is whist, whose treat, a toast in sack;
Who visits with a gun, presents you birds,
Then gives a smacking buss, and cries--No words!
Or with his hound comes hallooing from the stable,
Makes love with nods, and knees beneath a table;
Whose laughs are hearty, though his jests are coarse,
And loves you best of all things--but his horse.

In some fair evening, on your elbow laid,
You dream of triumphs in the rural shade;
In pensive thought recall the fancied scene,
See coronations rise on every green;
Before you pass the imaginary sights
Of lords, and earls, and dukes, and garter'd knights,
While the spread fan o'ershades your closing eyes;
Then give one flirt, and all the vision flies.
Thus vanish sceptres, coronets, and balls,
And leave you in lone woods, or empty walls!

So when your slave, at some dear idle time,
(Not plagued with headaches, or the want of rhyme)
Stands in the streets, abstracted from the crew,
And while he seems to study, thinks of you;
Just when his fancy paints your sprightly eyes,
Or sees the blush of soft Parthenia rise,
Gay pats my shoulder, and you vanish quite,
Streets, chairs, and coxcombs rush upon my sight;

Vex'd to be still in town, I knit my brow,
Look sour, and hum a tune, as you do now.

Alexander Pope

Epistles to Several Persons: Epistle IV, To Richard Boyle,

Est brevitate opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
Impediat verbis lassas onerantibus aures:
Et sermone opus est modo tristi, saepe jocoso,
Defendente vicem modo Rhetoris atque Poetae,
Interdum urbani, parcentis viribus, atque
Extenuantis eas consulto.
(Horace, Satires, I, x, 17-22)

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

For what his Virro painted, built, and planted?
Only to show, how many tastes he wanted.
What brought Sir Visto's ill got wealth to waste?
Some daemon 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:
A standing sermon, at each year's expense,
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
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;
Reverse your ornaments, and hang them all
On some patch'd dog-hole ek'd with ends of wall;
Then clap four slices of pilaster on't,
That lac'd with bits of rustic, makes a front.
Or call the winds through long arcades to roar,
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:
Something there is more needful than expense,
And something previous ev'n to taste--'tis sense:
Good sense, which only is the gift of Heav'n,

And though no science, fairly worth the sev'n:
A light, which in yourself you must perceive;
Jones and Le Notre 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.
But treat the goddess like a modest fair,
Nor overdress, nor leave her wholly bare;
Let not each beauty ev'rywhere be spied,
Where half the skill is decently to hide.
He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,
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;
Calls in the country, catches opening 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,
Parts answ'ring 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 Stowe.

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 through mountains to the plain,
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;
The wood supports the plain, the parts unite,
And strength of shade contends with strength of light;
A waving glow his bloomy beds display,
Blushing in bright diversities of day,
With silver-quiv'ring rills meander'd o'er--
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.

Through his young woods how pleas'd Sabinus stray'd,

Or sat delighted in the thick'ning shade,
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 vista loves,
Foe to the dryads of his father's groves;
One boundless green, or flourish'd carpet views,
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,
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,
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.
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,
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;
With here a fountain, never to be play'd;
And there a summerhouse, that knows no shade;
Here Amphitrite sails through myrtle bow'rs;
There gladiators fight, or die in flow'rs;
Unwater'd see the drooping sea horse mourn,
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 through the length of yon hot terrace sweat;
And when up ten steep slopes you've dragg'd your thighs,
Just at his study door he'll bless your eyes.

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:
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.

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 uneven,
Make the soul dance upon a jig to heaven.
On painted ceilings you devoutly stare,
Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,
On 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.

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?
No, 'tis 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.
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,
Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;
I curse such lavish cost, and little skill,
And swear no day was ever pass'd so ill.

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

Another age shall see the golden ear
Embrown the slope, and nod on the parterre,
Deep harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,
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 expense,
And splendour borrows all her rays from sense.

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
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.

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,
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;
Back to his bounds their subject sea command,
And roll obedient rivers through the land;
These honours, peace to happy Britain brings,
These are imperial works, and worthy kings.

Alexander Pope

Epistles to Several Persons: Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot

Neque sermonibus vulgi dederis te, nec in præmiis spem posueris rerum tuarum; suiste oportet illecebris ipsa virtus trahat ad verum decus. Quid de te alii loquantur, ipsi videant,sed loquentur tamen.
(Cicero, De Re Publica VI.23)["... you will not any longer attend to the vulgar mob's gossip nor put your trust in human rewards for your deeds; virtue, through her own charms, should lead you to true glory. Let what others say about you be their concern; whatever it is, they will say it anyway."

Shut, shut the door, good John! fatigu'd, I said,
Tie up the knocker, say I'm sick, I'm dead.
The dog-star rages! nay 'tis past a doubt,
All Bedlam, or Parnassus, is let out:
Fire in each eye, and papers in each hand,
They rave, recite, and madden round the land.

What walls can guard me, or what shades can hide?
They pierce my thickets, through my grot they glide;
By land, by water, they renew the charge;
They stop the chariot, and they board the barge.
No place is sacred, not the church is free;
Ev'n Sunday shines no Sabbath-day to me:
Then from the Mint walks forth the man of rhyme,
Happy! to catch me just at dinner-time.

Is there a parson, much bemus'd in beer,
A maudlin poetess, a rhyming peer,
A clerk, foredoom'd his father's soul to cross,
Who pens a stanza, when he should engross?
Is there, who, lock'd from ink and paper, scrawls
With desp'rate charcoal round his darken'd walls?
All fly to Twit'nam, and in humble strain
Apply to me, to keep them mad or vain.
Arthur, whose giddy son neglects the laws,
Imputes to me and my damn'd works the cause:
Poor Cornus sees his frantic wife elope,
And curses wit, and poetry, and Pope.

Friend to my life! (which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song)
What drop or nostrum can this plague remove?
Or which must end me, a fool's wrath or love?
A dire dilemma! either way I'm sped,
If foes, they write, if friends, they read me dead.
Seiz'd and tied down to judge, how wretched I!
Who can't be silent, and who will not lie;
To laugh, were want of goodness and of grace,
And to be grave, exceeds all pow'r of face.
I sit with sad civility, I read
With honest anguish, and an aching head;
And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,
This saving counsel, "Keep your piece nine years."

"Nine years!" cries he, who high in Drury-lane

Lull'd by soft zephyrs through the broken pane,
Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before Term ends,
Oblig'd by hunger, and request of friends:
"The piece, you think, is incorrect: why, take it,
I'm all submission, what you'd have it, make it."

Three things another's modest wishes bound,
My friendship, and a prologue, and ten pound.
Pitholeon sends to me: "You know his Grace,
I want a patron; ask him for a place."

Pitholeon libell'd me--"but here's a letter
Informs you, sir, 'twas when he knew no better.
Dare you refuse him? Curll invites to dine,
He'll write a Journal, or he'll turn Divine."

Bless me! a packet--"'Tis a stranger sues,
A virgin tragedy, an orphan muse."
If I dislike it, "Furies, death and rage!"
If I approve, "Commend it to the stage."
There (thank my stars) my whole commission ends,
The play'rs and I are, luckily, no friends.
Fir'd that the house reject him, "'Sdeath I'll print it,
And shame the fools--your int'rest, sir, with Lintot!"
"Lintot, dull rogue! will think your price too much."
"Not, sir, if you revise it, and retouch."
All my demurs but double his attacks;
At last he whispers, "Do; and we go snacks."
Glad of a quarrel, straight I clap the door,
"Sir, let me see your works and you no more."

'Tis sung, when Midas' ears began to spring,
(Midas, a sacred person and a king)
His very minister who spied them first,
(Some say his queen) was forc'd to speak, or burst.
And is not mine, my friend, a sorer case,
When ev'ry coxcomb perks them in my face?

"Good friend, forbear! you deal in dang'rous things.
I'd never name queens, ministers, or kings;
Keep close to ears, and those let asses prick;
'Tis nothing"--Nothing? if they bite and kick?
Out with it, Dunciad! let the secret pass,
That secret to each fool, that he's an ass:
The truth once told (and wherefore should we lie?)
The queen of Midas slept, and so may I.

You think this cruel? take it for a rule,
No creature smarts so little as a fool.
Let peals of laughter, Codrus! round thee break,
Thou unconcern'd canst hear the mighty crack:
Pit, box, and gall'ry in convulsions hurl'd,

Thou stand'st unshook amidst a bursting world.
Who shames a scribbler? break one cobweb through,
He spins the slight, self-pleasing thread anew;
Destroy his fib or sophistry, in vain,
The creature's at his dirty work again;
Thron'd in the centre of his thin designs;
Proud of a vast extent of flimsy lines!
Whom have I hurt? has poet yet, or peer,
Lost the arch'd eye-brow, or Parnassian sneer?
And has not Colley still his lord, and whore?
His butchers Henley, his Free-masons Moore?
Does not one table Bavius still admit?
Still to one bishop Philips seem a wit?
Still Sappho-- "Hold! for God-sake--you'll offend:
No names!--be calm!--learn prudence of a friend!
I too could write, and I am twice as tall;
But foes like these!" One flatt'rer's worse than all.
Of all mad creatures, if the learn'd are right,
It is the slaver kills, and not the bite.
A fool quite angry is quite innocent;
Alas! 'tis ten times worse when they repent.

One dedicates in high heroic prose,
And ridicules beyond a hundred foes;
One from all Grub Street will my fame defend,
And, more abusive, calls himself my friend.
This prints my Letters, that expects a bribe,
And others roar aloud, "Subscribe, subscribe."

There are, who to my person pay their court:
I cough like Horace, and, though lean, am short,
Ammon's great son one shoulder had too high,
Such Ovid's nose, and "Sir! you have an eye"--
Go on, obliging creatures, make me see
All that disgrac'd my betters, met in me:
Say for my comfort, languishing in bed,
"Just so immortal Maro held his head:"
And when I die, be sure you let me know
Great Homer died three thousand years ago.

Why did I write? what sin to me unknown
Dipp'd me in ink, my parents', or my own?
As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.
I left no calling for this idle trade,
No duty broke, no father disobey'd.
The Muse but serv'd to ease some friend, not wife,
To help me through this long disease, my life,
To second, Arbuthnot! thy art and care,
And teach the being you preserv'd, to bear.

But why then publish? Granville the polite,

And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write;
Well-natur'd Garth inflamed with early praise,
And Congreve lov'd, and Swift endur'd my lays;
The courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield read,
Ev'n mitred Rochester would nod the head,
And St. John's self (great Dryden's friends before)
With open arms receiv'd one poet more.
Happy my studies, when by these approv'd!
Happier their author, when by these belov'd!
From these the world will judge of men and books,
Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cookes.

Soft were my numbers; who could take offence,
While pure description held the place of sense?
Like gentle Fanny's was my flow'ry theme,
A painted mistress, or a purling stream.
Yet then did Gildon draw his venal quill;
I wish'd the man a dinner, and sat still.
Yet then did Dennis rave in furious fret;
I never answer'd, I was not in debt.
If want provok'd, or madness made them print,
I wag'd no war with Bedlam or the Mint.

Did some more sober critic come abroad?
If wrong, I smil'd; if right, I kiss'd the rod.
Pains, reading, study, are their just pretence,
And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense.
Commas and points they set exactly right,
And 'twere a sin to rob them of their mite.
Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel grac'd these ribalds,
From slashing Bentley down to pidling Tibbalds.
Each wight who reads not, and but scans and spells,
Each word-catcher that lives on syllables,
Ev'n such small critics some regard may claim,
Preserv'd in Milton's or in Shakespeare's name.
Pretty! in amber to observe the forms
Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms;
The things, we know, are neither rich nor rare,
But wonder how the devil they got there?

Were others angry? I excus'd them too;
Well might they rage; I gave them but their due.
A man's true merit 'tis not hard to find,
But each man's secret standard in his mind,
That casting weight pride adds to emptiness,
This, who can gratify? for who can guess?
The bard whom pilfer'd pastorals renown,
Who turns a Persian tale for half a crown,
Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
And strains, from hard-bound brains, eight lines a year:
He, who still wanting, though he lives on theft,
Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing left:

And he, who now to sense, now nonsense leaning,
Means not, but blunders round about a meaning:
And he, whose fustian's so sublimely bad,
It is not poetry, but prose run mad:
All these, my modest satire bade translate,
And own'd, that nine such poets made a Tate.
How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe?
And swear, not Addison himself was safe.

Peace to all such! but were there one whose fires
True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires,
Blest with each talent and each art to please,
And born to write, converse, and live with ease:
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;
Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,
A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend;
Dreading ev'n fools, by flatterers besieg'd,
And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd;
Like Cato, give his little senate laws,
And sit attentive to his own applause;
While wits and templars ev'ry sentence raise,
And wonder with a foolish face of praise.
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he?

What though my name stood rubric on the walls,
Or plaister'd posts, with claps, in capitals?
Or smoking forth, a hundred hawkers' load,
On wings of winds came flying all abroad?
I sought no homage from the race that write;
I kept, like Asian monarchs, from their sight:
Poems I heeded (now berhym'd so long)
No more than thou, great George! a birthday song.
I ne'er with wits or witlings pass'd my days,
To spread about the itch of verse and praise;
Nor like a puppy, daggled through the town,
To fetch and carry sing-song up and down;
Nor at rehearsals sweat, and mouth'd, and cried,
With handkerchief and orange at my side;
But sick of fops, and poetry, and prate,
To Bufo left the whole Castalian state.

Proud as Apollo on his forked hill,
Sat full-blown Bufo, puff'd by every quill;
Fed with soft dedication all day long,

Horace and he went hand in hand in song.
His library (where busts of poets dead
And a true Pindar stood without a head,)
Receiv'd of wits an undistinguish'd race,
Who first his judgment ask'd, and then a place:
Much they extoll'd his pictures, much his seat,
And flatter'd ev'ry day, and some days eat:
Till grown more frugal in his riper days,
He paid some bards with port, and some with praise,
To some a dry rehearsal was assign'd,
And others (harder still) he paid in kind.
Dryden alone (what wonder?) came not nigh,
Dryden alone escap'd this judging eye:
But still the great have kindness in reserve,
He help'd to bury whom he help'd to starve.

May some choice patron bless each grey goose quill!
May ev'ry Bavius have his Bufo still!
So, when a statesman wants a day's defence,
Or envy holds a whole week's war with sense,
Or simple pride for flatt'ry makes demands,
May dunce by dunce be whistled off my hands!
Blest be the great! for those they take away,
And those they left me--for they left me Gay;
Left me to see neglected genius bloom,
Neglected die! and tell it on his tomb;
Of all thy blameless life the sole return
My verse, and Queensb'ry weeping o'er thy urn!

Oh let me live my own! and die so too!
("To live and die is all I have to do:")
Maintain a poet's dignity and ease,
And see what friends, and read what books I please.
Above a patron, though I condescend
Sometimes to call a minister my friend:
I was not born for courts or great affairs;
I pay my debts, believe, and say my pray'rs;
Can sleep without a poem in my head,
Nor know, if Dennis be alive or dead.

Why am I ask'd what next shall see the light?
Heav'ns! was I born for nothing but to write?
Has life no joys for me? or (to be grave)
Have I no friend to serve, no soul to save?
"I found him close with Swift"--"Indeed? no doubt",
(Cries prating Balbus) "something will come out".
'Tis all in vain, deny it as I will.
"No, such a genius never can lie still,"
And then for mine obligingly mistakes
The first lampoon Sir Will. or Bubo makes.
Poor guiltless I! and can I choose but smile,
When ev'ry coxcomb knows me by my style?

Curs'd be the verse, how well soe'er it flow,
That tends to make one worthy man my foe,
Give virtue scandal, innocence a fear,
Or from the soft-ey'd virgin steal a tear!
But he, who hurts a harmless neighbour's peace,
Insults fall'n worth, or beauty in distress,
Who loves a lie, lame slander helps about,
Who writes a libel, or who copies out:
That fop, whose pride affects a patron's name,
Yet absent, wounds an author's honest fame;
Who can your merit selfishly approve,
And show the sense of it without the love;
Who has the vanity to call you friend,
Yet wants the honour, injur'd, to defend;
Who tells what'er you think, whate'er you say,
And, if he lie not, must at least betray:
Who to the Dean, and silver bell can swear,
And sees at Cannons what was never there;
Who reads, but with a lust to misapply,
Make satire a lampoon, and fiction, lie.
A lash like mine no honest man shall dread,
But all such babbling blockheads in his stead.

Let Sporus tremble--"What? that thing of silk,
Sporus, that mere white curd of ass's milk?
Satire or sense, alas! can Sporus feel?
Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?"
Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,
This painted child of dirt that stinks and stings;
Whose buzz the witty and the fair annoys,
Yet wit ne'er tastes, and beauty ne'r enjoys,
So well-bred spaniels civilly delight
In mumbling of the game they dare not bite.
Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,
As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.
Whether in florid impotence he speaks,
And, as the prompter breathes, the puppet squeaks;
Or at the ear of Eve, familiar toad,
Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad,
In puns, or politics, or tales, or lies,
Or spite, or smut, or rhymes, or blasphemies.
His wit all see-saw, between that and this ,
Now high, now low, now Master up, now Miss,
And he himself one vile antithesis.
Amphibious thing! that acting either part,
The trifling head, or the corrupted heart,
Fop at the toilet, flatt'rer at the board,
Now trips a lady, and now struts a lord.
Eve's tempter thus the rabbins have express'd,
A cherub's face, a reptile all the rest;
Beauty that shocks you, parts that none will trust,

Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust.

Not fortune's worshipper, nor fashion's fool,
Not lucre's madman, nor ambition's tool,
Not proud, nor servile, be one poet's praise,
That, if he pleas'd, he pleas'd by manly ways;
That flatt'ry, even to kings, he held a shame,
And thought a lie in verse or prose the same:
That not in fancy's maze he wander'd long,
But stoop'd to truth, and moraliz'd his song:
That not for fame, but virtue's better end,
He stood the furious foe, the timid friend,
The damning critic, half-approving wit,
The coxcomb hit, or fearing to be hit;
Laugh'd at the loss of friends he never had,
The dull, the proud, the wicked, and the mad;
The distant threats of vengeance on his head,
The blow unfelt, the tear he never shed;
The tale reviv'd, the lie so oft o'erthrown;
Th' imputed trash, and dulness not his own;
The morals blacken'd when the writings 'scape;
The libell'd person, and the pictur'd shape;
Abuse, on all he lov'd, or lov'd him, spread,
A friend in exile, or a father, dead;
The whisper, that to greatness still too near,
Perhaps, yet vibrates on his sovereign's ear:--
Welcome for thee, fair Virtue! all the past:
For thee, fair Virtue! welcome ev'n the last!

"But why insult the poor? affront the great?"
A knave's a knave, to me, in ev'ry state:
Alike my scorn, if he succeed or fail,
Sporus at court, or Japhet in a jail,
A hireling scribbler, or a hireling peer,
Knight of the post corrupt, or of the shire;
If on a pillory, or near a throne,
He gain his prince's ear, or lose his own.

Yet soft by nature, more a dupe than wit,
Sappho can tell you how this man was bit:
This dreaded sat'rist Dennis will confess
Foe to his pride, but friend to his distress:
So humble, he has knock'd at Tibbald's door,
Has drunk with Cibber, nay, has rhym'd for Moore.
Full ten years slander'd, did he once reply?
Three thousand suns went down on Welsted's lie.
To please a mistress one aspers'd his life;
He lash'd him not, but let her be his wife.
Let Budgell charge low Grub Street on his quill,
And write whate'er he pleas'd, except his will;
Let the two Curlls of town and court, abuse
His father, mother, body, soul, and muse.

Yet why? that father held it for a rule,
It was a sin to call our neighbour fool:
That harmless mother thought no wife a whore,--
Hear this! and spare his family, James Moore!
Unspotted names! and memorable long,
If there be force in virtue, or in song.

Of gentle blood (part shed in honour's cause,
While yet in Britain honour had applause)
Each parent sprung--"What fortune, pray?"--Their own,
And better got, than Bestia's from the throne.
Born to no pride, inheriting no strife,
Nor marrying discord in a noble wife,
Stranger to civil and religious rage,
The good man walk'd innoxious through his age.
No courts he saw, no suits would ever try,
Nor dar'd an oath, nor hazarded a lie:
Un-learn'd, he knew no schoolman's subtle art,
No language, but the language of the heart.
By nature honest, by experience wise,
Healthy by temp'rance and by exercise;
His life, though long, to sickness past unknown;
His death was instant, and without a groan.
O grant me, thus to live, and thus to die!
Who sprung from kings shall know less joy than I.

O friend! may each domestic bliss be thine!
Be no unpleasing melancholy mine:
Me, let the tender office long engage
To rock the cradle of reposing age,
With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,
Make langour smile, and smooth the bed of death,
Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,
And keep a while one parent from the sky!
On cares like these if length of days attend,
May Heav'n, to bless those days, preserve my friend,
Preserve him social, cheerful, and serene,
And just as rich as when he serv'd a queen.
Whether that blessing be denied or giv'n,
Thus far was right, the rest belongs to Heav'n.

Alexander Pope

Essay on Man

The First Epistle

Awake, my ST. JOHN!(1) 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)
Expatiate(2) free o'er all this scene of Man;
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;
The latent tracts(3), 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;
But vindicate(4) the ways of God to Man.
1. 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?
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,
What other planets circle other suns,
What vary'd being peoples ev'ry star,
May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.
But of this frame the bearings, and the ties,
The strong connections, nice dependencies,
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?

II. Presumptuous Man! the reason wouldst thou find,
Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind!
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,
Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less!
Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade?
Or ask of yonder argent fields(5) above,
Why JOVE'S Satellites are less than JOVE?(6)
Of Systems possible, if 'tis confest
That Wisdom infinite must form the best,
Where all must full or not coherent be,
And all that rises, rise in due degree;
Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain
There must be, somewhere, such rank as Man;
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)

Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong?
    Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
Nay, 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;
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.
    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:(7)
Then shall Man's pride and dullness comprehend
His actions', passions', being's, use and end;
Why doing, suff'ring, check'd, impell'd; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity.
    Then say not Man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;
Say rather, Man's as perfect as he ought;
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place,
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matter, soon or late, or here or there?
The blest today is as completely so,
As who began a thousand years ago.

III. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of Fate,
All but the page prescrib'd, their present state;
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:
Or who could suffer Being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy Reason, would he skip and play?
Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.
Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,
That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n;
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.
    Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore!
What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,
But gives that Hope to be thy blessing now.
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;

His soul proud Science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;
Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,
Some happier island in the watry 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(8) fire;
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

IV. Go, wiser thou! and in thy scale of sense
Weigh thy Opinion against Providence;
Call Imperfection what thou fancy'st such,
Say, here he gives too little, there too much;
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,(9)
Yet cry, If Man's unhappy, God's unjust;
If Man alone ingross not Heav'n's high care,
Alone made perfect here, immortal there:
Snatch from his hand the balance(10) and the rod,
Re-judge 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 blest abodes,
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.

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
The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;
For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;
For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies."
    But errs not Nature from this gracious end,
From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?
"No ('tis reply'd) the first Almighty Cause
Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws;
Th' exceptions few; some change since all began,
And what created perfect?" -- Why then Man?
If the great end be human Happiness,
Then Nature deviates; and can Man do less?

As much that end a constant course requires
Of show'rs and sun-shine, 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,(11) or a Catiline?(12)
Who knows but he, whose hand the light'ning forms,
Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms,
Pours fierce Ambition in a Caesar's(13) mind,
Or turns young Ammon(14) 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,
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.
The gen'ral ORDER, since the whole began,
Is kept in Nature, and is kept in Man.

VI. What would this Man? Now upward will he soar,
And little less than Angel,(15) would be more;
Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears
To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.
Made for his use all creatures if he call,
Say what their use, had he the pow'rs of all?
Nature to these, without profusion kind,
The proper organs, proper pow'rs assign'd;
Each seeming want compensated of course,
Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;
All in exact proportion to the state;
Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.
Each beast, each insect, happy in its own;
Is Heav'n unkind to Man, and Man alone?
Shall he alone, whom rational we call,
Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all?
    The bliss of Man (could Pride that blessing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind;
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,
T' inspect a mite,(16) not comprehend the heav'n?
Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?
Or quick effluvia(17) darting thro' the brain,
Die of a rose in aromatic pain?
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,(18) and the purling rill?(19)
Who finds not Providence all good and wise,
Alike in what it gives, and what denies?

VII. Far as Creation's ample range extends,
The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:
Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial race,
From the green myriads in the people grass:
What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,
The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam:
Of smell, the headlong lioness between,
And hound sagacious(20) on the tainted(21) green:
Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,(22)
To that which warbles thro' the vernal(23) 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:(24)
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;
What thin partitions Sense from Thought divide:
And Middle natures,(25) 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?
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!
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
Vast chain of being, which from God began,
Natures ethereal,(26) human, angel, man
Beast, bird, fish, insect! what no eye can see,
No glass can reach! from Infinite to thee,
From thee to Nothing! -- On superior pow'rs
Were we to press, inferior might on ours:
Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destoy'd:
From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.
    And if each system in gradation roll,
Alike essential to th' amazing whole;
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only, but the whole must fall.
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,
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?
What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd(27)
To serve mere engines to the ruling Mind?
Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains
The great directing MIND of ALL ordains.
All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body, Nature is, and God the soul;
That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent,
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal parts,
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.

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,
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:
Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.
All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;
All Discord, Harmony, not understood;
All partial Evil, universal Good:
And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
One truth is clear, "Whatever IS, is RIGHT."

Argument of the Second Epistle:

Of the Nature and State of Man, with respect to Himself, as an Individual. The business of Man not to pry into God, but
to study himself.

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of Mankind is Man.

Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,(28)
A being darkly wise, and rudely great:
With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest,
In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;
In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer,
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little, or too much:
Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus'd;
Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;
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!

ENDNOTES:

1[His friend, Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke]
2[to wander]
3[hidden areas]
4[explain or defend]
5[silvery fields, i.e., the heavens]
6[the planet Jupiter]
7[ancient Egyptians sometimes worshipped oxen]
8[the highest level of angels]
9[pleasure]
10[the balance used to weigh justice]
11[Caesar Borgia (1476-1507) who used any cruelty to achieve his ends]
12[Lucious Sergius Catilina (108-62 B.C.) who was a traitor to Rome]
13[Julius Caesar (100-44 B.C.) who was thought to be overly ambitious Roman]
14[Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.)]
15[Psalm 8:5--"Thou hast made him [man] a little lower than the angels...."]
16[small insect]
17[vapors which were believed to pass odors to the brain]
18[the West Wind]
19[stream]
20[able to pick up a scent]
21[having the odor of an animal]
22[ocean]
23[green]
24[honey was thought to have medicinal properties]
25[Animals slightly below humans on the chain of being]
26[heavenly]
27[complained]
28[i.e., on the chain of being between angels and animals]

Alexander Pope

Farewell to London

Dear, damn'd distracting town, farewell!
Thy fools no more I'll tease:
This year in peace, ye critics, dwell,
Ye harlots, sleep at ease!

Soft B-- and rough C--s adieu,
Earl Warwick made your moan,
The lively H--k and you
May knock up whores alone.

To drink and droll be Rowe allow'd
Till the third watchman's toll;
Let Jervas gratis paint, and Frowde
Save three-pence and his soul.

Farewell, Arbuthnot's raillery
On every learned sot;
And Garth, the best good Christian he,
Although he knows it not.

Lintot, farewell! thy bard must go;
Farewell, unhappy Tonson!
Heaven gives thee for thy loss of Rowe,
Lean Philips, and fat Johnson.

Why should I stay? Both parties rage;
My vixen mistress squalls;
The wits in envious feuds engage:
And Homer (damn him!) calls.

The love of arts lies cold and dead
In Halifax's urn:
And not one Muse of all he fed
Has yet the grace to mourn.

My friends, by turns, my friends confound,
Betray, and are betrayed:
Poor Y--r's sold for fifty pound,
And B--ll is a jade.

Why make I friendships with the great,
When I no favour seek?
Or follow girls, seven hours in eight?
I us'd but once a week.

Still idle, with a busy air,
Deep whimsies to contrive;
The gayest valetudinaire,
Most thinking rake, alive.

Solicitous for others' ends,
Though fond of dear repose;

Careless or drowsy with my friends,
And frolic with my foes.

Luxurious lobster-nights, farewell,
For sober, studious days!
And Burlington's delicious meal,
For salads, tarts, and pease!

Adieu to all, but Gay alone,
Whose soul, sincere and free,
Loves all mankind, but flatters none,
And so may starve with me.

Alexander Pope

From an Essay on Man

Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of fate,
All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:
Or who could suffer being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed today,
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,
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.

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;
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,
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;
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky.

Alexander Pope

Imitations of Horace: The First Epistle of the Second Book

Ne Rubeam, Pingui donatus Munere
(Horace, Epistles II.i.267)
While you, great patron of mankind, sustain
The balanc'd world, and open all the main;
Your country, chief, in arms abroad defend,
At home, with morals, arts, and laws amend;
How shall the Muse, from such a monarch steal
An hour, and not defraud the public weal?
Edward and Henry, now the boast of fame,
And virtuous Alfred, a more sacred name,
After a life of gen'rous toils endur'd,
The Gaul subdu'd, or property secur'd,
Ambition humbled, mighty cities storm'd,
Or laws establish'd, and the world reform'd;
Clos'd their long glories with a sigh, to find
Th' unwilling gratitude of base mankind!
All human virtue, to its latest breath
Finds envy never conquer'd, but by death.
The great Alcides, ev'ry labour past,
Had still this monster to subdue at last.
Sure fate of all, beneath whose rising ray
Each star of meaner merit fades away!
Oppress'd we feel the beam directly beat,
Those suns of glory please not till they set.

To thee the world its present homage pays,
The harvest early, but mature the praise:
Great friend of liberty! in kings a name
Above all Greek, above all Roman fame:
Whose word is truth, as sacred and rever'd,
As Heav'n's own oracles from altars heard.
Wonder of kings! like whom, to mortal eyes
None e'er has risen, and none e'er shall rise.

Just in one instance, be it yet confest
Your people, Sir, are partial in the rest:
Foes to all living worth except your own,
And advocates for folly dead and gone.
Authors, like coins, grow dear as they grow old;
It is the rust we value, not the gold.
Chaucer's worst ribaldry is learn'd by rote,
And beastly Skelton heads of houses quote:
One likes no language but the Faery Queen ;
A Scot will fight for Christ's Kirk o' the Green:
And each true Briton is to Ben so civil,
He swears the Muses met him at the Devil.

Though justly Greece her eldest sons admires,
Why should not we be wiser than our sires?
In ev'ry public virtue we excel:
We build, we paint, we sing, we dance as well,
And learned Athens to our art must stoop,

Could she behold us tumbling through a hoop.

If time improve our wit as well as wine,
Say at what age a poet grows divine?
Shall we, or shall we not, account him so,
Who died, perhaps, an hundred years ago?
End all dispute; and fix the year precise
When British bards begin t'immortalize?

"Who lasts a century can have no flaw,
I hold that wit a classic, good in law."

Suppose he wants a year, will you compound?
And shall we deem him ancient, right and sound,
Or damn to all eternity at once,
At ninety-nine, a modern and a dunce?

"We shall not quarrel for a year or two;
By courtesy of England, he may do."

Then by the rule that made the horsetail bare,
I pluck out year by year, as hair by hair,
And melt down ancients like a heap of snow:
While you, to measure merits, look in Stowe,
And estimating authors by the year,
Bestow a garland only on a bier.

Shakespeare (whom you and ev'ry playhouse bill
Style the divine, the matchless, what you will)
For gain, not glory, wing'd his roving flight,
And grew immortal in his own despite.
Ben, old and poor, as little seem'd to heed
The life to come, in ev'ry poet's creed.
Who now reads Cowley? if he pleases yet,
His moral pleases, not his pointed wit;
Forgot his epic, nay Pindaric art,
But still I love the language of his heart.

"Yet surely, surely, these were famous men!
What boy but hears the sayings of old Ben?
In all debates where critics bear a part,
Not one but nods, and talks of Jonson's art,
Of Shakespeare's nature, and of Cowley's wit;
How Beaumont's judgment check'd what Fletcher writ;
How Shadwell hasty, Wycherley was slow;
But, for the passions, Southerne sure and Rowe.
These, only these, support the crowded stage,
From eldest Heywood down to Cibber's age."

All this may be; the people's voice is odd,
It is, and it is not, the voice of God.
To Gammer Gurton if it give the bays,

And yet deny the Careless Husband praise,
Or say our fathers never broke a rule;
Why then, I say, the public is a fool.
But let them own, that greater faults than we
They had, and greater virtues, I'll agree.
Spenser himself affects the obsolete,
And Sidney's verse halts ill on Roman feet:
Milton's strong pinion now not Heav'n can bound,
Now serpent-like, in prose he sweeps the ground,
In quibbles, angel and archangel join,
And God the Father turns a school divine.
Not that I'd lop the beauties from his book,
Like slashing Bentley with his desp'rate hook,
Or damn all Shakespeare, like th' affected fool
At court, who hates whate'er he read at school.

But for the wits of either Charles's days,
The mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease;
Sprat, Carew, Sedley, and a hundred more,
(Like twinkling stars the Miscellanies o'er)
One simile, that solitary shines
In the dry desert of a thousand lines,
Or lengthen'd thought that gleams through many a page,
Has sanctified whole poems for an age.

I lose my patience, and I own it too,
When works are censur'd, not as bad, but new;
While if our elders break all reason's laws,
These fools demand not pardon, but applause.

On Avon's bank, where flow'rs eternal blow,
If I but ask if any weed can grow?
One tragic sentence if I dare deride,
Which Betterton's grave action dignified,
Or well-mouth'd Booth with emphasis proclaims
(Though but, perhaps, a muster-roll of names)
How will our fathers rise up in a rage,
And swear, all shame is lost in George's age!
You'd think no fools disgrac'd the former reign,
Did not some grave examples yet remain,
Who scorn a lad should teach his father skill,
And, having once been wrong, will be so still.
He, who to seem more deep than you or I,
Extols old bards, or Merlin's Prophecy,
Mistake him not; he envies, not admires,
And to debase the sons, exalts the sires.
Had ancient times conspir'd to disallow
What then was new, what had been ancient now?
Or what remain'd, so worthy to be read

By learned critics, of the mighty dead?

In days of ease, when now the weary sword
Was sheath'd, and luxury with Charles restor'd;
In ev'ry taste of foreign courts improv'd,
"All, by the King's example, liv'd and lov'd."
Then peers grew proud in horsemanship t'excel,
Newmarket's glory rose, as Britain's fell;
The soldier breath'd the gallantries of France,
And ev'ry flow'ry courtier writ romance.
Then marble, soften'd into life, grew warm,
And yielding metal flow'd to human form:
Lely on animated canvas stole
The sleepy eye, that spoke the melting soul.
No wonder then, when all was love and sport,
The willing Muses were debauch'd at court:
On each enervate string they taught the note
To pant or tremble through an eunuch's throat.
But Britain, changeful as a child at play,
Now calls in princes, and now turns away:
Now Whig, now Tory, what we lov'd we hate;
Now all for pleasure, now for Church and state;
Now for prerogative, and now for laws;
Effects unhappy! from a noble cause.

Time was, a sober Englishman would knock
His servants up, and rise by five o'clock,
Instruct his family in ev'ry rule,
And send his wife to church, his son to school.
To worship like his fathers was his care;
To teach their frugal virtues to his heir;
To prove that luxury could never hold,
And place, on good security, his gold.
Now times are chang'd, and one poetic itch
Has seiz'd the court and city, poor and rich:
Sons, sires, and grandsires, all will wear the bays,
Our wives read Milton, and our daughters plays,
To theatres, and to rehearsals throng,
And all our grace at table is a song.
I, who so oft renounce the Muses, lie,
Not {-}{-}{-}{-}{-}'s self e'er tells more fibs than I;
When sick of Muse, our follies we deplore,
And promise our best friends to rhyme no more;
We wake next morning in a raging fit,
And call for pen and ink to show our wit.

He serv'd a 'prenticeship who sets up shop;
Ward tried on puppies and the poor, his drop;
Ev'n Radcliffe's doctors travel first to France,

Nor dare to practise till they've learn'd to dance.
Who builds a bridge that never drove a pile?
(Should Ripley venture, all the world would smile)
But those who cannot write, and those who can,
All rhyme, and scrawl, and scribble, to a man.

Yet, Sir, reflect, the mischief is not great;
These madmen never hurt the Church or state:
Sometimes the folly benefits mankind;
And rarely av'rice taints the tuneful mind.
Allow him but his plaything of a pen,
He ne'er rebels, or plots, like other men:
Flight of cashiers, or mobs, he'll never mind;
And knows no losses while the Muse is kind.
To cheat a friend, or ward, he leaves to Peter;
The good man heaps up nothing but mere metre,
Enjoys his garden and his book in quiet;
And then--a perfect hermit in his diet.
Of little use the man you may suppose,
Who says in verse what others say in prose:
Yet let me show, a poet's of some weight,
And (though no soldier) useful to the state.
What will a child learn sooner than a song?
What better teach a foreigner the tongue?
What's long or short, each accent where to place,
And speak in public with some sort of grace.
I scarce can think him such a worthless thing,
Unless he praise some monster of a king;
Or virtue or religion turn to sport,
To please a lewd, or unbelieving court.
Unhappy Dryden!--In all Charles's days,
Roscommon only boasts unspotted bays;
And in our own (excuse some courtly stains)
No whiter page than Addison remains.
He, from the taste obscene reclaims our youth,
And sets the passions on the side of truth,
Forms the soft bosom with the gentlest art,
And pours each human virtue in the heart.
Let Ireland tell, how wit upheld her cause,
Her trade supported, and supplied her laws;
And leave on Swift this grateful verse engrav'd,
"The rights a court attack'd, a poet sav'd."
Behold the hand that wrought a nation's cure,
Stretch'd to relieve the idiot and the poor,
Proud vice to brand, or injur'd worth adorn,
And stretch the ray to ages yet unborn.
Not but there are, who merit other palms;
Hopkins and Sternhold glad the heart with psalms:
The boys and girls whom charity maintains,
Implore your help in these pathetic strains:
How could devotion touch the country pews,

Unless the gods bestow'd a proper Muse?
Verse cheers their leisure, verse assists their work,
Verse prays for peace, or sings down Pope and Turk.
The silenc'd preacher yields to potent strain,
And feels that grace his pray'r besought in vain;
The blessing thrills through all the lab'ring throng,
And Heav'n is won by violence of song.

Our rural ancestors, with little blest,
Patient of labour when the end was rest,
Indulg'd the day that hous'd their annual grain,
With feasts, and off'rings, and a thankful strain:
The joy their wives, their sons, and servants share,
Ease of their toil, and part'ners of their care:
The laugh, the jest, attendants on the bowl,
Smooth'd ev'ry brow, and open'd ev'ry soul:
With growing years the pleasing licence grew,
And taunts alternate innocently flew.
But times corrupt, and nature, ill-inclin'd,
Produc'd the point that left a sting behind;
Till friend with friend, and families at strife,
Triumphant malice rag'd through private life.
Who felt the wrong, or fear'd it, took th' alarm,
Appeal'd to law, and justice lent her arm.
At length, by wholesome dread of statutes bound,
The poets learn'd to please, and not to wound:
Most warp'd to flatt'ry's side; but some, more nice,
Preserv'd the freedom, and forbore the vice.
Hence satire rose, that just the medium hit,
And heals with morals what it hurts with wit.

We conquer'd France, but felt our captive's charms;
Her arts victorious triumph'd o'er our arms;
Britain to soft refinements less a foe,
Wit grew polite, and numbers learn'd to flow.
Waller was smooth; but Dryden taught to join
The varying verse, the full-resounding line,
The long majestic march, and energy divine.
Though still some traces of our rustic vein
And splayfoot verse remain'd, and will remain.
Late, very late, correctness grew our care,
When the tir'd nation breath'd from civil war.
Exact Racine, and Corneille's noble fire
Show'd us that France had something to admire.
Not but the tragic spirit was our own,
And full in Shakespeare, fair in Otway shone:
But Otway fail'd to polish or refine,
And fluent Shakespeare scarce effac'd a line.
Ev'n copious Dryden wanted, or forgot,
The last and greatest art, the art to blot.

Some doubt, if equal pains, or equal fire
The humbler Muse of comedy require.
But in known images of life, I guess
The labour greater, as th' indulgence less.
Observe how seldom ev'n the best succeed:
Tell me if Congreve's fools are fools indeed?
What pert, low dialogue has Farqu'ar writ!
How Van wants grace, who never wanted wit!
The stage how loosely does Astr{ae}ea tread,
Who fairly puts all characters to bed!
And idle Cibber, how he breaks the laws,
To make poor Pinky eat with vast applause!
But fill their purse, our poet's work is done,
Alike to them, by pathos or by pun.

O you! whom vanity's light bark conveys
On fame's mad voyage by the wind of praise,
With what a shifting gale your course you ply,
For ever sunk too low, or borne too high!
Who pants for glory finds but short repose,
A breath revives him, or a breath o'erthrows.
Farewell the stage! if just as thrives the play,
The silly bard grows fat, or falls away.

There still remains, to mortify a wit,
The many-headed monster of the pit:
A senseless, worthless, and unhonour'd crowd;
Who, to disturb their betters mighty proud,
Clatt'ring their sticks before ten lines are spoke,
Call for the farce, the bear, or the black-joke.
What dear delight to Britons farce affords!
Farce once the taste of mobs, but now of lords;
(For taste, eternal wanderer, now flies
From heads to ears, and now from ears to eyes.)
The play stands still; damn action and discourse,
Back fly the scenes, and enter foot and horse;
Pageants on pageants, in long order drawn,
Peers, heralds, bishops, ermine, gold, and lawn;
The champion too! and, to complete the jest,
Old Edward's armour beams on Cibber's breast.
With laughter sure Democritus had died,
Had he beheld an audience gape so wide.
Let bear or elephant be e'er so white,
The people, sure, the people are the sight!
Ah luckless poet! stretch thy lungs and roar,
That bear or elephant shall heed thee more;
While all its throats the gallery extends,
And all the thunder of the pit ascends!

Loud as the wolves on Orcas' stormy steep,
Howl to the roarings of the Northern deep.
Such is the shout, the long-applauding note,
At Quin's high plume, or Oldfield's petticoat,
Or when from Court a birthday suit bestow'd
Sinks the lost actor in the tawdry load.
Booth enters--hark! the universal peal!
"But has he spoken?" Not a syllable.
"What shook the stage, and made the people stare?"
Cato's long wig, flow'r'd gown, and lacquer'd chair.

Yet lest you think I rally more than teach,
Or praise malignly arts I cannot reach,
Let me for once presume t'instruct the times,
To know the poet from the man of rhymes:
'Tis he, who gives my breast a thousand pains,
Can make me feel each passion that he feigns;
Enrage, compose, with more than magic art,
With pity and with terror tear my heart;
And snatch me o'er the earth or thro' the air,
To Thebes, to Athens, when he will, and where.

But not this part of the poetic state
Alone, deserves the favour of the great:
Think of those authors, Sir, who would rely
More on a reader's sense, than gazer's eye.
Or who shall wander where the Muses sing?
Who climb their mountain, or who taste their spring?
How shall we fill a library with wit,
When Merlin's Cave is half unfurnish'd yet?

My Liege! why writers little claim your thought,
I guess: and, with their leave, will tell the fault:
We poets are (upon a poet's word)
Of all mankind, the creatures most absurd:
The season, when to come, and when to go,
To sing, or cease to sing, we never know;
And if we will recite nine hours in ten,
You lose your patience, just like other men.
Then too we hurt ourselves, when to defend
A single verse, we quarrel with a friend;
Repeat unask'd; lament, the wit's too fine
For vulgar eyes, and point out ev'ry line.
But most, when straining with too weak a wing,
We needs will write epistles to the king;
And from the moment we oblige the town,
Expect a place, or pension from the Crown;
Or dubb'd historians by express command,
T'enroll your triumphs o'er the seas and land,

Be call'd to court to plan some work divine,
As once for Louis, Boileau and Racine.

Yet think, great Sir! (so many virtues shown)
Ah think, what poet best may make them known?
Or choose at least some minister of grace,
Fit to bestow the laureate's weighty place.

Charles, to late times to be transmitted fair,
Assign'd his figure to Bernini's care;
And great Nassau to Kneller's hand decreed
To fix him graceful on the bounding steed;
So well in paint and stone they judg'd of merit:
But kings in wit may want discerning spirit.
The hero William, and the martyr Charles,
One knighted Blackmore, and one pension'd Quarles;
Which made old Ben, and surly Dennis swear,
"No Lord's anointed, but a Russian bear."

Not with such majesty, such bold relief,
The forms august, of king, or conqu'ring chief,
E'er swell'd on marble; as in verse have shin'd
(In polish'd verse) the manners and the mind.
Oh! could I mount on the M{ae}onian wing,
Your arms, your actions, your repose to sing!
What seas you travers'd! and what fields you fought!
Your country's peace, how oft, how dearly bought!
How barb'rous rage subsided at your word,
And nations wonder'd while they dropp'd the sword!
How, when you nodded, o'er the land and deep,
Peace stole her wing, and wrapp'd the world in sleep;
Till earth's extremes your mediation own,
And Asia's tyrants tremble at your throne--
But verse, alas! your Majesty disdains;
And I'm not us'd to panegyric strains:
The zeal of fools offends at any time,
But most of all, the zeal of fools in rhyme,
Besides, a fate attends on all I write,
That when I aim at praise, they say I bite.
A vile encomium doubly ridicules:
There's nothing blackens like the ink of fools;
If true, a woeful likeness; and if lies,
"Praise undeserv'd is scandal in disguise."
Well may he blush, who gives it, or receives;
And when I flatter, let my dirty leaves
(Like journals, odes, and such forgotten things
As Eusden, Philips, Settle, writ of kings)
Clothe spice, line trunks, or flutt'ring in a row,
Befringe the rails of Bedlam and Soho.

Alexander Pope

Impromptu, to Lady Winchelsea

In vain you boast Poetic Names of yore,
And cite those Sapho's we admire no more:
Fate doom'd the Fall of ev'ry Female Wit,
But doom'd it then when first Ardelia writ.
Of all Examples by the World confest,
I knew Ardelia could not quote the best;
Who, like her Mistress on Britannia's Throne;
Fights, and subdues in Quarrels not her own.
To write their Praise you but in vain essay;
Ev'n while you write, you take that Praise away:
Light to the Stars the Sun does thus restore,
But shines himself till they are seen no more.

Alexander Pope

In Imitation of Chaucer

Women ben full of Ragerie,
Yet swinken not sans secresie.
Thilke Moral shall ye understond,
From Schoole-boy's Tale of fayre Irelond:
Which to the Fennes hath him betake,
To filch the gray Ducke fro the Lake.
Right then, there passen by the Way
His Aunt, and eke her Daughters tway.
Ducke in his Trowses hath he hent,
Not to be spied of Ladies gent.
'But ho! our Nephew,' (crieth one)
'Ho!' quoth another, 'Cozen John;'
And stoppen, and lough, and callen out, -
This sely Clerk full low doth lout:
They asken that, and talken this,
'Lo here is Coz, and here is Miss.'
But, as he glozeth with Speeches soote,
The Ducke sore tickleth his Erse-roote:
Fore-piece and buttons all-to-brest,
Forth thrust a white neck, and red crest.
'Te-he,' cry'd Ladies; Clerke nought spake:
Miss star'd; and gray Ducke crieth Quake.
'O Moder, Moder,' (quoth the daughter)
'Be thilke same thing Maids longer a'ter?
'Bette is to pyne on coals and chalke,
'Then trust on Mon, whose yerde can talke.'

Alexander Pope

In Imitation of Cowley : The Garden

Fain would my Muse the flow'ry Treasures sing,
And humble glories of the youthful Spring;
Where opening Roses breathing sweets diffuse,
And soft Carnations show'r their balmy dews;
Where Lilies smile in virgin robes of white,
The thin Undress of superficial Light,
And vary'd Tulips show so dazzling gay,
Blushing in bright diversities of day.
Each painted flow'ret in the lake below
Surveys its beauties, whence its beauties grow;
And pale Narcissus on the bank, in vain
Transformed, gazes on himself again.
Here aged trees Cathedral Walks compose,
And mount the Hill in venerable rows:
There the green Infants in their beds are laid,
The Garden's Hope, and its expected shade.
Here Orange-trees with blooms and pendantis shine,
And vernal honours to their autumn join;
Exceed their promise in the ripen'd store,
Yet in the rising blossom promise more.
There in bright drops the crystal Fountains play,
By Laurels shielded from the piercing day;
Where Daphne, now a tree as once a maid,
Still from Apollo vindicates her shade,
Still turns her Beauties from th' invading beam,
Nor seeks in vain for succour to the Stream.
The stream at once preserves her virgin leaves,
At once a shelter from her boughs receives,
Where Summer's beauty midst of Winter stays,
And Winter's Coolness spite of Summer's rays.

Alexander Pope

In Imitation of Dr. Swift : The Happy Life of a Country Parson

Parson, these things in thy possessing
Are better than the Bishop's blessing.
A Wife that makes conserves; a Steed
That carries double when there's need:
October store, and best Virginia,
Tithe-Pig, and mortuary Guinea:
Gazettes sent gratis down, and frank'd,
For which thy Patron's weekly thank'd;
A large Concordance, bound long since:
Sermons to Charles the First, when Prince;
A Chronicle of ancient standing;
A Chrysostom to smooth thy band in.
The Polygot - three parts, - my text,
Howbeit, - likewise - now to my next.
Lo here the Septuagint, - and Paul,
To sum the whole, - the close of all.
He that has these, may pass his life,
Drink with the 'Squire, and kiss his wife;
On Sundays preach, and eat his fill;
And fast on Fridays - if he will;
Toast Church and Queen, explain the News,
Talk with Church-Wardens about Pews,
Pray heartily for some new Gift,
And shake his head at Doctor S-t.

Alexander Pope

In Imitation of E. of Dorset : Artemisia

Tho' Artemisia talks, by fits,
Of councils, classics, fathers, wits;
Reads Malbranche, Boyle, and Locke;
Yet in some things methinks she fails,
'Twere well if she would pare her nails,
And wear a cleaner smock.

Haughty and huge as High-Dutch bride,
Such nastiness, and so much pride
Are oddly join'd by fate:
On her large squab you find her spread,
Like a fat corpse upon a bed,
That lies and stinks in state.

She wears no colours (sign of grace)
On any part except her face;
All white and black beside:
Dauntless her look, her gesture proud,
Her voice theatrically loud,
And masculine her stride.

So have I seen, in black and white
A prating thing, a Magpye hight,
Majestically stalk;
A stately, worthless animal,
That plies the tongue, and wags the tail,
All flutter, pride, and talk.

Alexander Pope

In Imitation of E. of Rochester : On Silence

I.
Silence! coeval with Eternity;
Thou wert, ere Nature's-self began to be,
'Twas one vast Nothing, all, and all slept fast in thee.

II.
Thine was the sway, ere heav'n was form'd, or earth,
Ere fruitful Thought conceiv'd creation's birth,
Or midwife Word gave aid, and spoke the infant forth.

III.
Then various elements, against thee join'd,
In one more various animal combin'd,
And fam'd the clam'rous race of busy Human-kind.

IV.
The tongue mov'd gently first, and speech was low,
'Till wrangling Science taught it noise and show,
And wicked Wit arose, thy most abusive foe.

V.
But rebel Wit deserts thee oft' in vain;
Lost in the maze of words he turns again,
And seeks a surer state, and courts thy gentle reign.

VI.
Afflicted Sense thou kindly dost set free,
Oppress'd with argumental tyranny,
And routed Reason finds a safe retreat in thee.

VII.
With thee in private modest Dulness lies,
And in thy bosom lurks in Thought's disguise;
Thou varnisher of Fools, and cheat of all the Wise!

VIII.
Yet thy indulgence is by both confest;
Folly by thee lies sleeping in the breast,
And 'tis in thee at last that Wisdom seeks for rest.

IX.
Silence the knave's repute, the whore's good name,
The only honour of the wishing dame;
Thy very want of tongue makes thee a kind of Fame.

X.
But could'st thou seize some tongues that now are free,
How Church and State should be oblig'd to thee!
At Senate, and at Bar, how welcome would'st thou be!

XI.
Yet speech ev'n there, submissively withdraws,

From rights of subjects, and the poor man's cause:
Then pompous Silence reigns, and stills the noisy Laws.

XII.
Past services of friends, good deeds of foes,
What Fav'rites gain, and what the Nation owes,
Fly the forgetful world, and in thy arms repose.

XIII.
The country wit, religion of the town,
The courtier's learning, policy o' th' gown,
Are best by thee express'd; and shine in thee alone.

XIV.
The parson's cant, the lawyer's sophistry,
Lord's quibble, critic's jest; all end in thee,
All rest in peace at last, and sleep eternally.

Alexander Pope

Inscription on a Grotto, the Work of Nine Ladies.

Here, shunning idleness at once and praise,
This radiant pile nine rural sisters raise;
The glittering emblem of each spotless dame,
Clear as her soul and shining as her frame;
Beauty which nature only can impart,
And such a polish as disgraces art;
But Fate disposed them in this humble sort,
And hid in deserts what would charm a Court.

Alexander Pope

Lines on Curll

So when Curll's Stomach the strong Drench o'ercame,
(Infus'd in Vengenance of insulted Fame)
Th' Avenger sees, with a delighted Eye,
His long Jaws open, and his Colour fly;
And while his Guts the keen Emeticks urge,
Smiles on the Vomit, and enjoys the Purge.

Alexander Pope

Lines Written in Windsor Forest

All hail, once pleasing, once inspiring shade!
Scene of my youthful loves and happier hours!
Where the kind Muses met me as I stray'd,
And gently press'd my hand, and said 'Be ours!-
Take all thou e'er shalt have, a constant Muse:
At Court thou may'st be liked, but nothing gain:
Stock thou may'st buy and sell, but always lose,
And love the brightest eyes, but love in vain.'

Alexander Pope

Macer : A Character

When simple Macer, now of high renown,
First fought a Poet's Fortune in the Town,
'Twas all th' Ambition his high soul could feel,
To wear red stockings, and to dine with Steele.
Some Ends of verse his Betters might afford,
And gave the harmless fellow a good word.
Set up with these he ventur'd on the Town,
And with a borrow'd Play, out-did poor Crown.
There he stopp'd short, nor since has write a tittle,
But has the wit to make the most of little;
Like stunted hide-bound Trees, that just have got
Sufficient sap at once to bear and rot.
Now he begs Verse, and what he gets commends,
Not of the Wits his foes, but Fools his friends.

So some coarse Country Wench, almost decay'd,
Trudges to town, and first turns Chambermaid;
Awkward and supple, each devoir to pay;
She flatters her good Lady twice a day;
Thought wond'rous honest, tho' of mean degree,
And strangely lik'd for her Simplicity:
In a translated Suit, then tries the Town,
With borrow'd Pins, and Patches not her own:
But just endur'd the winter she began,
And in four months a batter'd Harridan.
Now nothing left, but wither'd, pale, and shrunk,
To bawd for others, and go shares with Punk.

Alexander Pope

Occasioned By Some Verses of His Grace the Duke of Buckingham

Muse, 'tis enough: at length thy labour ends,
And thou shalt live, for Buckingham commends.
Let Crowds and Critics now my verse assail,
Let Dennis write, and nameless numbers rail:
This more than pays whole years of thankless pain;
Time, health, and fortune are not lost in vain.
Sheffield approves, consenting Phoebus bends,
And I and Malice from this hour are friends.

Alexander Pope

Ode on Solitude

Happy the man, whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air,
In his own ground.

Whose heards with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire,
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter fire.

Blest! who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night; study and ease
Together mix'd; sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please,
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me dye;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lye.

Alexander Pope

Ode on St. Cecilia's Day

I.
Descend ye Nine! descend and sing;
The breathing instruments inspire,
Wake into voice each silent string,
And sweep the sounding lyre!
In a sadly-pleasing strain
Let the warbling lute complain:
Let the loud trumpet sound,
'Till the roofs all around
The shrill echo's rebound:
While in more lengthen'd notes and slow,
The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow.
Hark! the numbers, soft and clear,
Gently steal upon the ear;
Now louder, and yet louder rise,
And fill with spreading sounds the skies;
Exulting in triumph now swell the bold notes,
In broken air, trembling, the wild music floats;
'Till, by degrees, remote and small,
The strains decay,
And melt away,
In a dying, dying fall.

II.
By Music, minds an equal temper know,
Nor swell too high, nor sink too low.
If in the breast tumultuous joys arise,
Music her soft, assuasive voice applies;
Or when the soul is press'd with cares,
Exalts her in enlivening airs.
Warriors she fires with animated sounds;
Pours balm into the bleeding lover's wounds:
Melancholy lifts her head,
Morpheus rouzes from his bed,
Sloth unfolds her arms and wakes,
List'ning Envy drops her snakes;
Intestine war no more our Passions wage,
And giddy Factions hear away their rage.

III.
But when our Country's cause provokes to Arms,
How martial music ev'ry bosom warms!
So when the first bold vessel dar'd the seas,
High on the stern the Thracian rais'd his strain,
While Argo saw her kindred trees
Descend from Pelion to the main.
Transported demi-gods stood round,
And men grew heroes at the sound,
Enflam'd with glory's charms:
Each chief his sev'nfold shield display'd,
And half unsheath'd the shining blade:
And seas, and rocks, and skies rebound

To arms, to arms, to arms!

IV.
But when thro' all th'infernal bounds
Which flaming Phlegeton surrounds,
Love, strong as Death, the Poet led
To the pale nations of the dead,
What sounds were heard,
What scenes appear'd,
O'er all the dreary coasts!
Dreadful gleams,
Dismal screams,
Fires that glow,
Shrieks of woe,
Sullen moans,
Hollow groans,
And cries of tortur'd ghosts!
But hark! he strikes the golden lyre;
And see! the tortur'd ghosts respire,
See, shady forms advance!
Thy stone, O Sysiphus, stands still,
Ixion rests upon his wheel,
And the pale spectres dance!
The Furies sink upon their iron beds,
And snakes uncurl'd hang list'ning round their heads.

V.
By the streams that ever flow,
By the fragrant winds that blow
O'er th' Elysian flow'rs,
By those happy souls who dwell
In yellow meads of Asphodel,
Or Amaranthine bow'rs,
By the hero's armed shades,
Glitt'ring thro' the gloomy glades,
By the youths that dy'd for love,
Wand'ring in the myrtle grove,
Restore, restore Eurydice to life;
Oh take the husband, or return the wife!
He sung, and hell consented
To hear the Poet's pray'r;
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair.
Thus song could prevail
O'er death and o'er hell,
A conquest how hard and how glorious?
Tho' fate had fast bound her
With Styx nine times round her,
Yet music and love were victorious.

VI.
But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes:

Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!
How wilt thou now the fatal sisters move?
No crime was thine, if 'tis no crime to love.
Now under hanging mountains,
Beside the falls of fountains,
Or where Hebrus wanders,
Rolling in Maeanders,
All alone,
Unheard, unknown,
He makes his moan;
And calls her ghost,
For ever, ever, ever lost!
Now with Furies surrounded,
Despairing, confounded,
He trembles, he glows,
Amidst Rhodope's snows:
See, wild as the winds, o'er the desart he flies;
Hark! Haemus resounds with the Bacchanals cries -
- Ah see, he dies!
Yet ev'n in death Eurydice he sung,
Eurydice still trembled on his tongue,
Eurydice the woods,
Eurydice the floods,
Eurydice the rocks, and hollow mountains rung.

VII.
Music the fiercest grief can charm,
And fate's severest rage disarm:
Music can soften pain to ease,
And make despair and madness please:
Our joys below it can improve,
And antedate the bliss above.
This the divine Cecilia found,
And to her Maker's praise confin'd the sound.
When the full organ joins the tuneful quire,
Th'immortal pow'rs incline their ear;
Borne on the swelling notes our souls aspire,
While solemn airs improve the sacred fire;
And Angels lean from heav'n to hear.
Of Orpheus now no more let Poets tell,
To bright Cecilia greater pow'r is giv'n;
His numbers rais'd a shade from hell,
Hers lift the soul to heav'n.

Alexander Pope

On a certain Lady at Court

I know the thing that's most uncommon;
  (Envy be silent and attend!)
I know a Reasonable Woman,
  Handsome and witty, yet a Friend.

Not warp'd by Passion, aw'd by Rumour,
  Not grave thro' Pride, or gay thro' Folly,
An equal Mixture of good Humour,
  And sensible soft Melancholy.

`Has she no Faults then (Envy says) Sir?'
  Yes she has one, I must aver:
When all the World comspires to praise her,
  The Woman's deaf, and does not hear.

Alexander Pope

On a Fan of the Author's Design

Come gentle Air! th' AEolian shepherd said,
While Procris panted in the secret shade:
Come, gentle Air, the fairer Delia cries,
While at her feet her swain expiring lies.
Lo the glad gales o'er all her beauties stray,
Breathe on her lips, and in her bosom play!
In Delia's hand this toy is fatal found,
Nor could that fabled dart more surely wound:
Both gifts destructive to the givers prove;
Alike both lovers fall by those they love.
Yet guiltless too this bright destroyer lives,
At random wounds, nor knows the wound she gives:
She views the story with attentive eyes,
And pities Procris, while her lover dies.

Alexander Pope

On Certain Ladies

When other fair ones to the shades go down,
Still Chloe, Flavin, Delia, stay in town:
Those ghosts of beauty wandering here reside,
And haunt the places where their honour died.

Alexander Pope

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When other fair ones to the shades go down,
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Alexander Pope

On His Grotto at Twickenham

Thou who shalt stop, where Thames' translucent wave
Shines a broad Mirror thro' the shadowy Cave;
Where ling'ring drops from min'ral Roofs distill,
And pointed Crystals break the sparkling Rill,
Unpolish'd Gems no ray on Pride bestow,
And latent Metals innocently glow.
Approach! Great Nature studiously behold;
And eye the Mine without a wish for Gold.
Approach; but awful! Lo! th' Egerian Grot,
Where, nobly-pensive, St. John sate and thought;
Where British sighs from dying Wyndham stole,
And the bright flame was shot thro' Marchmont's Soul.
Let such, such only tread this sacred Floor,
Who dare to love their Country, and be poor.

Alexander Pope

On Mr. Gay

Of Manners gentle, of Affections mild;
In Wit, a Man; Simplicity, a Child:
With native Humour temp'ring virtuous Rage,
Form'd to delight at once and lash the age:
Above Temptation, in a low Estate, 5
And uncorrupted, ev'n among the Great:
A safe Companion, and an easy Friend,
Unblam'd thro' Life, lamented in thy End.
These are Thy Honours! not that here thy Bust
Is mix'd with Heroes, or with Kings thy dust; 10
But that the Worthy and the Good shall say,
Striking their pensive bosoms-
Here
lies GAY.

Alexander Pope

On Seeing the Ladies Crux-Easton Walk in the Woods by the Grotto.

Authors the world and their dull brains have traced
To fix the ground where Paradise was placed;
Mind not their learned whims and idle talk;
Here, here's the place where these bright angels walk.

Alexander Pope

On the Countess of Burlington Cutting Paper

Pallas grew vapourish once, and odd,
She would not do the least right thing,
Either for goddess, or for god,
Nor work, nor play, nor paint, nor sing.

Jove frown'd, and, 'Use,' he cried, 'those eyes
So skilful, and those hands so taper;
Do something exquisite and wise -'
She bow'd, obey'd him, - and cut paper.

This vexing him who gave her birth,
Thought by all heaven a burning shame;
What does she next, but bids, on earth,
Her Burlington do just the same.

Pallas, you give yourself strange airs;
But sure you'll find it hard to spoil
The sense and taste of one that bears
The name of Saville and of Boyle.

Alas! one bad example shown;
How quickly all the sex pursue!
See, madam, see the arts o'erthrown,
Between John Overton and you!

Alexander Pope

Phyrne

Phryne had talents for mankind,
Open she was, and unconfin'd,
Like some free port of trade:
Merchants unloaded here their freight,
And Agents from each foreign state,
Here first their entry made.

Her learning and good breeding such,
Whether th' Italian or the Dutch,
Spaniards or French came to her:
To all obliging she'd appear:

'Twas
Si Signior
, 'twas
Yaw Mynheer
,
'Twas
S'il vous plaist, Monsieur.

Obscure by birth, renown'd by crimes,
Still changing names, religions, climes,
At length she turns a Bride:
In di'monds, pearls, and rich brocades,
She shines the first of batter'd jades,
And flutters in her pride.

So have I known those Insects fair
(Which curious Germans hold so rare)
Still vary shapes and dyes;
Still gain new Titles with new forms;
First grubs obscene, then wriggling worms,
Then painted butterflies.

Alexander Pope

Prayer of St. Francis Xavier

Thou art my God, sole object of my love;
Not for the hope of endless joys above;
Nor for the fear of endless pains below,
Which they who love thee not must undergo.

For me, and such as me, thou deign'st to bear
An ignominious cross, the nails, the spear:
A thorny crown transpierc'd thy sacred brow,
While bloody sweats from ev'ry member flow.

For me in tortures thou resignd'st thy breath,
Embrac'd me on the cross, and sav'd me by thy death.
And can these sufferings fail my heart to move?
What but thyself can now deserve my love?

Such as then was, and is, thy love to me,
Such is, and shall be still, my love to thee -
To thee, Redeemer! mercy's sacred spring!
My God, my Father, Maker, and my King!

Alexander Pope

Sandys Ghost ; A Proper Ballad on the New Ovid's Metamorphosis

Ye Lords and Commons, Men of Wit,
And Pleasure about Town;
Read this ere you translate one Bit
Of Books of high Renown.

Beware of Latin Authors all!
Nor think your Verses Sterling,
Though with a Golden Pen you scrawl,
And scribble in a Berlin:

For not the Desk with silver Nails,
Nor Bureau of Expense,
Nor standish well japann'd avails,
To writing of good Sense.

Hear how a Ghost in dead of Night,
With saucer Eyes of Fire,
In woeful wise did sore affright
A Wit and courtly 'Squire.

Rare Imp and Phoebus, hopeful Youth
Like Puppy tame that uses
To fetch and carry, in his Mouth,
The Works of all the Muses.

Ah! why did he write Poetry,
That hereto was so civil;
And sell his soul for vanity,
To Rhyming and the Devil?

A Desk he had of curious Work,
With glittering Studs about;
Within the same did Sandys lurk,
Though Ovid lay without.

Now as he scratch'd to fetch up Thought,
Forth popp'd the Sprite so thin;
And from the Key-hole bolted out,
All upright as a Pin.

With Whiskers, Band, and Pantaloon,
And Ruff composed most duly;
This 'Squire he dropp'd his Pen full soon,
While as the Light burnt bluely.

'Ho! Master Sam,' quoth Sandys' sprite,
'Write on, nor let me scare ye;
Forsooth, if Rhymes fall in not right,
To Budgell seek, or Carey.

'I hear the Beat of Jacob's Drums,
Poor Ovid finds no Quarter!

See first the merry Pembroke comes
In Haste, without his Garter.

'Then Lords and Lordlings, 'Squires and Knights,
Wits, Witlings, Prigs and Peers!
Garth at St. James's, and at White's,
Beats up for Volunteers.

'What Fenton will not do, nor Gay,
Nor Congreve, Rowe, nor Stanyan,
Tom Burnet or Tom D'Urfey may,
John Dunton, Steele, or any one.

'If Justice Philips' costive head
Some frigid Rhymes disburses;
They shall like Persian Tales be read,
And glad both Babes and Nurses.

'Let Warwick's Muse with Ashurst join,
And Ozell's with Lord Hervey's:
Tickell and Addison combine,
And P-pe translate with Jervas.

'Landsdowne himself, that lively Lord,
Who bows to every Lady,
Shall join with Frowde in one Accord,
And be like Tate and Brady.

'Ye Ladies too draw forth your pen,
I pray where can the hurt lie?
Since you have Brains as well as Men,
As witness Lady Wortley.

'Now, Tonson, list thy Forces all,
Review them, and tell Noses;
For to poor Ovid shall befal
A strange Metamorphosis.

'A Metamorphosis more strange
Than all his Books can vapour;'
'To what' (quoth 'squire) 'shall Ovid change?'
Quoth Sandys: 'To waste paper.'

Alexander Pope

Sappho to Phaon (Ovid Heroid XV)

Say, lovely youth, that dost my heart command,
Can Phaon's eyes forget his Sappho's hand?
Must then her name the wretched writer prove,
To thy remembrance lost, as to thy love?
Ask not the cause that I new numbers choose,
The Lute neglected, and the Lyric muse;
Love taught my tears in adder notes to flow,
And tun'd my heart to Elegies of woe,
I burn, I burn, as when thro' ripen'd corn
By driving winds the spreading flames are borne!
Phaon to Aetna's scorching fields retires,
While I consume with more than Aetna's fires!
No more my soul a charm in music finds,
Music has charms alone for peaceful minds.
Soft scenes of solitude no more can please,
Love enters there, and I'm my own disease.
No more the Lesbian dames my passion move,
Once the dear objects of my guilty love;
All other loves are lost in only thine,
Ah youth ungrateful to a flame like mine!
Whom would not all those blooming charms surprize,
Those heav'nly looks, and dear deluding eyes?
The harp and bow would you like Phoebus bear,
A brighter Phoebus Phaon might appear;
Would you with ivy wreath your flowing hair,
Not Bacchus' self with Phaon could compare:
Yet Phoebus lov'd, and Bacchus felt the flame,
One Daphne warm'd, and one the Cretan dame,
Nymphs that in verse no more could rival me,
That ev'n those Gods contend in charms with thee.
The Muses teach me all their softest lays,
And the wide world resounds with Sappho's praise.
Tho' great Alcaeus more sublimely sings,
And strikes with bolder rage the sounding strings,
No less renown attends the moving lyre,
Which Venus tunes, and all her loves inspire;
To me what nature has in charms deny'd,
Is well by wit's more lasting flames supply'd.
Tho' short my stature, yet my name extends
To heav'n itself, and earth's remotest ends.
Brown as I am, an Ethiopian dame
Inspir'd young Perseus with a gen'rous flame;
Turtles and doves of diff'ring hues unite,
And glossy jet is pair'd with shining white.
If to no charms thou wilt thy heart resign,
But such as merit, such as equal thine,
By none, alas! by none thou canst be mov'd,
Phaon alone by Phaon must be lov'd!
Yet once thy Sappho could thy cares employ,
Once in her arms you center'd all your joy:
No time the dear remembrance can remove,
For oh! how vast a memory has love!

My music, then, you could for ever hear,
And all my words were music to your ear;
You stopp'd with kisses my enchanting tongue,
And found my kisses sweeter than my song.
In all I pleas'd, but most in what was best;
And the last joy was dearer than the rest.
Then with each word, each glance, each motion fir'd,
You still enjoy'd, and yet you still desir'd,
'Till all dissolving in the trance we lay,
And in tumultuous raptures died away.
The fair Sicilians now thy soul inflame;
Why was I born, ye Gods, a Lesbian dame?
But ah beware, Sicilian nymphs! nor boast
That wand'ring heart which I so lately lost;
Nor be with all those tempting words abus'd,
Those tempting words were all to Sappho us'd.
And you that rule Sicilia's happy plains,
Have pity, Venus, on your Poet's pains!
Shall fortune still in one sad tenor run,
And still increase the woes so soon begun?
Inur'd to sorrow from my tender years,
My parent's ashes drank my early tears:
My brother next, neglecting wealth and fame,
Ignobly burn'd in a destructive flame:
An infant daughter late my griefs increas'd,
And all a mother's cares distract my breast.
Alas, what more could fate itself impose,
But thee, the last and greatest of my woes?
No more my robes in waving purple flow,
Nor on my hand the sparkling di'monds glow;
No more my locks in ringlets curl'd diffuse
The costly sweetness of Arabian dews,
Nor braids of gold the varied tresses bind,
That fly disorder'd with the wanton wind,
For whom should Sappho use such arts as these?
He's gone, whom only she desir'd to please!
Cupid's light darts my tender bosom move,
Still is there cause for Sappho still to love:
So from my birth the Sisters fix'd my doom,
And gave to Venus all my life to come;
Or while my Muse in melting notes complains,
My yielding heart keeps measure to my strains.
By charms like thine which all my soul have won,
Who might not - ah! who would not be undone?
For those Aurora Cephalus might scorn,
And with fresh blushes paint the conscious morn.
For those might Cynthia lengthen Phaon's sleep,
And bit Endymion nightly tend his sheep.
Venus for those had rapt thee to the skies,
But Mars on thee might look with Venus' eyes.
O scarce a youth, yet scarce a tender boy!
O useful time for lovers to employ!

Pride of thy age, and glory of thy race,
Come to these arms, and melt in this embrace!
The vows you never will return, receive;
And take at least the love you will not give.
See, while I write, my words are lost in tears;
The less my sense, the more my love appears.
Sure 'twas not much to bid one kind adieu,
(At least to feign was never hard to you)
Farewell, my Lesbian love, you might have said,
Or coldly thus, Farewell, oh Lesbian maid!
No tear did you, no parting kiss receive,
Nor knew I then how much I was to grieve.
No lover's gift your Sappho could confer,
And wrongs and woes were all you left with her.
No charge I gave you, and no charge could give,
But this, Be mindful of our loves, and live.
Now by the Nine, those pow'rs ador'd by me,
And Love, the God that ever waits on thee,
When first I heard (from whom I hardly knew)
That you were fled, and all my joys with you,
Like some sad statue, speechless, pale I stood,
Grief chill'd my breast, and stopp'd my freezing blood;
No sigh to rise, no tear had powr to flow,
Fix'd in a stupid lethargy of woe:
But when its way th' impetuous passion found,
I rend my tresses, and my breast I wound,
I rave, then weep, I curse, and then complain,
Now swell to rage, no melt in tears again.
Not fiercer pangs distract the mournful dame,
Whose first-born infant feeds the fun'ral flame.
My scornful brother with a smile appears,
Insults my woes, and triumphs in my tears;
His hated image ever haunts my eyes,
And why this grief? thy daughter lives, he cries.
Stung with my Love, and furious with despair,
All torn my garments, and my bosom bare,
My woes, thy crimes, I to the world proclaim;
Such inconsistent things are love and shame!
'Tis thou art all my care and my delight,
My daily longing, and my dream by night:
Oh night more pleasing than the brightest day,
When fancy gives what absence takes away,
And, dress'd in all its visionary charms,
Restores my fair deserter to my arms!
Then round your neck in wanton wreaths I twine,
Then you, methinks, as fondly circle mine:
A thousand tender words I hear and speak;
A thousand melting kisses give, and take:
Then fiercer joys, I blush to mention these,
Yet while I blush, confess how much they please.
But when, with day, the sweet delusions fly,
And all things wake to life and joy, but I,

As if once more forsaken, I complain,
And close my eyes to dream of you again;
Then frantic rise, and like some Fury rove
Thro' lonely plains, and thro' the silent grove,
As if the silent grove, and lonely plains,
That knew my pleasures, could relieve my pains.
I view the Grotto, once the scene of love,
The rocks around, the hanging roofs above,
That charm'd me more, with native moss o'ergrown,
Than Phyrgian marble, or the Parian stone.
I find the shades that veil'd our joys before;
But, Phaon gone, those shades delight no more.
Here the press'd herbs with bending tops betray
Where oft entwin'd in am'rous folds we lay;
I kiss that earth which once was press'd by you,
And all with tears the with'ring herbs bedew.
For thee the fading trees appear to mourn,
And birds defer their songs till thy return;
Night shades the grove,s and all in silence lie,
All but the mournful Philomel and I:
With mournful Philomel I join my strain,
Of Tereus she, of Phaeon I complain.

A spring there is, whose silver waters show,
Clear as a glass, the shining sands below:
A flow'ry Lotos spreads its arms above,
Shades all the banks, and seems itself a grove;
Eternal greens the mossy margin grace,
Watch'd by the sylvan Genius of the place.
Here as I lay, and swell'd with tears the flood,
Before my sight a wat'ry Virgin stood:
She stood and cry'd, 'O you that love in vain!
'Fly hence, and seek the fair Leucadian main;
'There stands a rock, from whose impending steep
'Apollo's fane surveys the rolling deep;
'There injur'd lovers, leaping from above,
'Their flames extinguish, and forget to love.
'Deucalion once, with hopeless fury burn'd,
'In vain he lov'd, relentless Pyrrha scorn'd;
'But when from hence he plung'd into the main,
'Deucalion scorn'd, and Pyrrha lov'd in vain.
Haste, Sappho, haste, from high Leucadia throw
'Thy wretched weight, nor dread the deeps below!'
She spoke, and vanish'd with the voice - I rise,
And silent tears fall trickling from my eyes.
I go, ye Nymphs! those rocks and seas to prove;
How much I fear, but ah, how much I love!
I go, ye Nymphs! where furious love inspires;
Let female fears submit to female fires.
To rocks and seas I fly from Phaon's hate,
And hope from seas and rocks a milder fate.
Ye gentle gales, beneath my body blow,

And softly lay me on the waves below!
And thou, kind Love, my sinking limbs sustain,
Spread thy soft wings, and waft me o'er the main,
Nor let a Lover's death the guiltless flood profane!
On Phoebus' shrine my harp I'll then bestow,
And this Inscription shall be plac'd below.
'Here she who sung, to him that did inspire,
'Sappho to Phoebus consecrates her Lyre;
'What suits with Sappho, Phoebus, suits with thee;
The Gift, the giver, and the God agree.'
But why, alas, relentless youth, ah why
To distant seas must tender Sappho fly?
Thy charms than those may far more pow'rful be,
And Phoebus' self is less a God to me.
Ah! canst thou doom me to the rocks and sea,
O far more faithless and more hard than they?
Ah! canst thou rather see this tender breast
Dash'd on these rocks than to thy bosom prest?
This breast which once, in vain! you lik'd so well;
Where Loves play'd, and where the Muses dwell.
Alas! the Muses now no more inspire,
Untun'd my lute, and silent is my lyre,
My languid numbers have forgot to flow,
And fancy sinks beneath a weight of woe.
Ye Lesbian virgins, and ye Lesbian dames,
Themes of my verse, and objects of my flames,
No more your groves with my glad songs shall ring,
No more these hands shall touch the trembling string:
My Phaon's fled, and I those arts resign
(Wretch that I am, to call that Phaon mine!)
Return, fair youth, return, and bring along
Joy to my soul, and vigour to my song:
Absent from thee, the Poet's flame expires;
But ah! how fiercely burn the Lover's fires!
Gods! can no pray'rs, no sighs, no numbers move
One savage heart, or teach it how to love?
The winds my pray'rs, my sighs, my numbers bear,
The flying winds have lost them all in air!
Oh when, alas! shall more auspicious gales
To these fond eyes restore thy welcome sails?
If you return - ah why these long delays?
Poor Sappho dies while careless Phaon stays.
O launch thy bark, secure of prosp'rous gales;
Cupid for thee shall spread the swelling gales;
I you will fly - (yet ah! what cause can be,
Too cruel youth, that you should fly from me?)
If not from Phaon I must hope for ease,
Ah let me seek it from the raging seas:
To raging seas unpity'd I'll remove,
And either cease to live or cease to love!

Alexander Pope

Solitude

Happy the man, whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
    In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire;
Whose trees in summer yield shade,
    In winter, fire.

Blest, who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years, slide soft away
In health of body, peace of mind,
    Quiet by day.

Sound sleep by night; study and ease
Together mixed; sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please
    With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
    Tell where I lie.

Alexander Pope

Solitude: An Ode

I.
How happy he, who free from care
The rage of courts, and noise of towns;
Contented breaths his native air,
In his own grounds.

II.
Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire,
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter fire.

III.
Blest! who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years slide swift away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day,

IV.
Sound sleep by night; study and ease
Together mix'd; sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please,
With meditation.

V.
Thus let me live, unheard, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me dye;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lye.

Alexander Pope

Song, by a Person of Quality

I.
Flutt'ring spread thy purple Pinions,
Gentle Cupid, o'er my Heart;
I a Slave in thy Dominions;
Nature must give Way to Art.

II.
Mild Arcadians, ever blooming,
Nightly nodding o'er your Flocks,
See my weary Days consuming,
All beneath yon flow'ry Rocks.

III.
Thus the Cyprian Goddess weeping,
Mourn'd Adonis, darling Youth:
Him the Boar in Silence creeping,
Gor'd with unrelenting Tooth.

IV.
Cynthia, tune harmonious Numbers;
Fair Discretion, string the Lyre;
Sooth my ever-waking Slumbers:
Bright Apollo, lend thy Choir.

V.
Gloomy Pluto, King of Terrors,
Arm'd in adamantine Chains,
Lead me to the Crystal Mirrors,
Wat'ring soft Elysian Plains.

VI.
Mournful Cypress, verdant Willow,
Gilding my Aurelia's Brows,
Morpheus hov'ring o'er my Pillow,
Hear me pay my dying Vows.

VII.
Melancholy smooth Maeander,
Swiftly purling in a Round,
On thy Margin Lovers wander,
With thy flow'ry Chaplets crown'd.

VIII.
Thus when Philomela drooping,
Softly seeks her silent Mate,
See the Bird of Juno stooping;
Melody resigns to Fate.

Alexander Pope

Sound and Sense

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offense,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense:
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 labors, and the words move slow;
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.
Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise!

Alexander Pope

Spring - The First Pastoral ; or Damon

First in these fields I try the sylvan strains,
Nor blush to sport on Windsor's blissful plains:
Fair Thames, flow gently from thy sacred spring,
While on thy banks Sicilian Muses sing;
Let vernal airs tho' trembling osiers play,
And Albion's cliffs resound the rural lay.
You, that too wise for pride, too good for pow'r,
Enjoy the glory to be great no more,
And carrying with you all the world can boast,
To all the world illustriously are lost!
O let my Muse her slender reed inspire,
Till in your native shades you tune the lyre:
So when the Nightingale to rest removes,
The Thrush may chant to the forsaken groves,
But, charm'd to silence, listens while she sings,
And all th' aerial audience clap their wings.
Soon as the flocks shook off the nightly dews,
Two Swains, whom Love kept wakeful, and the Muse
Pour'd o'er the whitening vale their fleecy care,
Fresh as the morn, and as the season fair:
The dawn now blushing on the mountain's side,
Thus Daphnis spoke, and Strephon thus reply'd.

Daphnis.
Hear how the birds, on ev'ry bloomy spray,
With joyous musick wake the dawning day!
Why sit we mute when early linnets sing,
When warbling Philomel salutes the spring?
Why sit we sad when Phosphor shines so clear,
And lavish nature paints the purple Year?

Strephon.
Sing, then, and Damon shall attend the strain,
While yon' slow oxen turn the furrow'd Plain.
Here the bright crocus and blue vi'let glow;
Here western winds on breathing roses blow.
I'll stake yon' lamb, that near the fountain plays,
And from the brink his dancing shade surveys.

Daphnis.
And I this bowl, where wanton Ivy twines,
And swelling clusters bend the curling vines:
Four figures rising from the work appear,
The various seasons of the rolling year;
And what is that, which binds the radiant sky,
Where twelve fair Signs in beauteous order lie?

Damon.
Then sing by turns, by turns the Muses sing,
Now hawthorns blossom, now the daisies spring,
Now leaves the trees, and flow'rs adorn the ground,
Begin, the vales shall ev'ry note rebound.

Inspire me, Phoebus, in my Delia's praise
With Waller's strains, or Granville's moving lays!
A milk-white bull shall at your altars stand,
That threats a fight, and spurns the rising sand.

Daphnis.
O Love! for Sylvia let me gain the prize,
And make my tongue victorious as her eyes;
No lambs or sheep for victims I'll impart,
Thy victim, Love, shall be the shepherd's heart.

Strephon.
Me gentle Delia beckons from the plain,
Then hid in shades, eludes her eager swain;
But feigns a laugh, to see me search around,
And by that laugh the willing fair is found.

Daphnis.
The sprightly Sylvia trips along the green,
She runs, but hopes she does not run unseen;
While a kind glance at her pursuer flies,
How much at variance are her feet and eyes!

Strephon.
O'er golden sands let rich Pactolus flow,
And trees weep amber on the banks of Po;
Blest Thames's shores the brightest beauties yield,
Feed here my lambs, I'll seek no distant field.

Daphnis.
Celestial Venus haunts Idalia's groves;
Diana Cynthus, Ceres Hybla loves;
If Windsor-shades delight the matchless maid,
Cynthus and Hybla yield to Windsor-shade.

Strephon.
All nature mourns, the Skies relent in show'rs,
Hush'd are the birds, and clos'd the drooping flow'rs;
If Delia smile, the flow'rs begin to spring,
The skies to brighten, and the birds to sing.

Daphnis.
All nature laughs, the groves are fresh and fair,
The Sun's mild lustre warms the vital air;
If Sylvia smiles, new glories gild the shore,
And vanquish'd nature seems to charm no more.

Strephon.
In spring the fields, in autumn hills I love,
At morn the plains, at noon the shady grove,
But Delia always; absent from her sight,
Nor plains at morn, nor groves at noon delight.

Daphnis.
Sylvia's like autumn ripe, yet mild as May,
More bright than noon, yet fresh as early day;
Ev'n spring displeases, when she shines not here;
But blest with her, 'tis spring throughout the year.

Strephon.
Say, Daphnis, say, in what glad soil appears,
A wond'rous Tree that sacred Monarchs bears:
Tell me but this, and I'll disclaim the prize,
And give the conquest to thy Sylvia's eyes.

Daphnis.
Nay tell me first, in what more happy fields
The Thistle springs, to which the Lily yields:
And then a nobler prize I will resign;
For Sylvia, charming Sylvia, shall be thine.

Damon.
Cease to contend, for, Daphnis, I decree,
The bowl to Strephon, and the lamb to thee:
Blest Swains, whose Nymphs in ev'ry grace excel;
Blest Nymphs, whose Swains those graces sing so well!
Now rise, and haste to yonder woodbine bow'rs,
A soft retreat from sudden vernal show'rs,
The turf with rural dainties shall be crown'd,
While op'ning blooms diffuse their sweets around.
For see! the gath'ring flocks to shelter tend,
And from the Pleiads fruitful show'rs descend.

Alexander Pope

Summer

See what delights in sylvan scenes appear!
Descending Gods have found Elysium here.
In woods bright Venus with Adonis stray'd,
And chaste Diana haunts the forest shade.
Come lovely nymph, and bless the silent hours,
When swains from shearing seek their nightly bow'rs;
When weary reapers quit the sultry field,
And crown'd with corn, their thanks to Ceres yield.
This harmless grove no lurking viper hides,
But in my breast the serpent Love abides.
Here bees from blossoms sip the rosy dew,
But your Alexis knows no sweets but you.
Oh deign to visit our forsaken seats,
The mossy fountains, and the green retreats!
Where-e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade,
Trees, where you sit, shall crowd into a shade,
Where-e'er you tread, the blushing flow'rs shall rise,
And all things flourish where you turn your eyes.
Oh! How I long with you to pass my days,
Invoke the muses, and resound your praise;
Your praise the birds shall chant in ev'ry grove,
And winds shall waft it to the pow'rs above.
But wou'd you sing, and rival Orpheus' strain,
The wond'ring forests soon shou'd dance again,
The moving mountains hear the pow'rful call,
And headlong streams hang list'ning in their fall!
But see, the shepherds shun the noon-day heat,
The lowing herds to murm'ring brooks retreat,
To closer shades the panting flocks remove,
Ye Gods! And is there no relief for Love?
But soon the sun with milder rays descends
To the cool ocean, where his journey ends;
On me Love's fiercer flames for ever prey,
By night he scorches, as he burns by day.

Alexander Pope

The Basset-Table : An Eclogue

Cardelia. Smilinda.

Cardelia.
The Basset-Table spread, the Tallier come;
Why stays Smilinda in the Dressing-Room?
Rise, pensive Nymph, the Tallier waits for you:

Smilinda.
Ah, Madam, since my Sharper is untrue,
I joyless make my once ador'd
Alpeu
.
I saw him stand behind Ombrelia's Chair,
And whisper with that soft, deluding air,
And those feign'd sighs which cheat the list'ning Fair.

Cardelia.
Is this the cause of your Romantic strains?
A mightier grief my heavy heart sustains.
As You by Love, so I by Fortune cross'd;
One, one bad
Deal
, Three
Septleva's
have lost.

Smilinda.
Is that the grief, which you compare with mine?
With ease, the smiles of Fortune I resign:
Would all my gold in one bad Deal were gone,
Were lovely Sharper mine, and mine alone.

Cardelia.
A Lover is lost, is but a common care;
And prudent Nymphs against that change prepare:
The Knave of Clubs thrice lost: Oh! who could guess
This fatal stroke, this unforeseen Distress?

Smilinda.
See Betty Lovet! very
a propos
,
She all the cares of
Love
and
Play
does know:
Dear Betty shall th' important point decide;
Betty, who oft the pain of each has try'd;
Impartial, she shall say who suffers most,
By
Cards' Ill Usage

, or by
Lover's lost
.

Lovet.
Tell, tell your griefs; attentive will I stay,
Tho' Time is precious, and I want some Tea.

Cardelia.
Behold this Equipage, by Mathers wrought,
With Fifty Guineas (a great Pen'worth) bought.
See, on the Tooth-pick, Mars and Cupid strive;
And both the struggling figures seem alive.
Upon the bottom shines the Queen's bright Face;
A Myrtle Foliage round the Thimble-Case.
Jove, Jove himself, does on the Scissors shine;
The Metal, and the Workmanship, divine!

Smilinda.
This Snuff-Box, - once the pledge of Sharper's love,
When rival beauties for the Present strove;
At Corticelli's he the Raffle won;
Then first his Passion was in public shown:
Hazardia blush'd, and turn'd her Head aside,
A Rival's envy (all in vain) to hide.
This Snuff-Box,- on the Hinge see Brilliants shine:
This Snuff-Box will I stake; the Prize is mine.

Cardelia.
Alas! far lesser losses than I bear,
Have made a Soldier sigh, a Lover swear.
And Oh! what makes the disappointment hard,
'Twas my own Lord that drew the fatal Card.
In complaisance, I took the Queen he gave;
Tho' my own secret wish was for the Knave.
The Knave won Sonica, which I had chose;
And, the next Pull, my Septleva I lose.

Smilinda.
But ah! what aggravates the killing smart,
The cruel thought, that stabs me to the heart;
This curs'd Ombrelia, this undoing Fair,
By whose vile arts this heavy grief I bear;
She, at whose name I shed these spiteful tears,
She owes to me the very charms she wears.
An awkward Thing, when first she came to Town;
Her Shape unfashion'd, and her Face unknown:
She was my friend; I taught her first to spread
Upon her sallow cheeks enliv'ning red:
I introduc'd her to the Park and Plays;
And, by my int'rest, Cozens made her Stays.
Ungrateful wretch, with mimic airs grown pert,

She dares to steal my Fav'rite Lover's heart.

Cardelia.
Wretch that I was, how often have I swore,
When Winnall tally'd, I would punt no more?
I know the Bite, yet to my Ruin run;
And see the Folly, which I cannot shun.

Smilinda.
How many Maids have Sharper's vows deceiv'd?
How many curs'd the moment they believ'd?
Yet his known Falsehoods could no Warning prove:
Ah! what is warning to a Maid in Love?

Cardelia.
But of what marble must that breast be form'd,
To gaze on Basset, and remain unwarm'd?
When Kings, Queens, Knaves, are set in decent rank;
Expos'd in glorious heaps the tempting Bank,
Guineas, Half-Guineas, all the shining train;
The Winner's pleasure, and the Loser's pain:
In bright Confusion open Rouleaux lie,
They strike the Soul, and glitter in the Eye.
Fir'd by the sight, all Reason I disdain;
My Passions rise, and will not bear the rein.
Look upon Basset, you who Reason boast;
And see if Reason must not there be lost.

Smilinda.
What more than marble must that heart compose,
Can hearken coldly to my Sharper's Vows?
Then, when he trembles! when his Blushes rise!
When awful Love seems melting in his Eyes!
With eager beats his Mechlin Cravat moves:

'He Loves,'
- I whisper to myself,
'He Loves!'

Such unfeign'd Passion in his Looks appears,
I lose all Mem'ry of my former Fears;
My panting heart confesses all his charms,
I yield at once, and sink into his arms:
Think of that moment, you who Prudence boast;
For such a moment, Prudence well were lost.

Cardelia.
At the Groom-Porter's, batter'd Bullies play,
Some Dukes at Mary-Bone bowl Time away.
But who the Bowl, or ratt'ling Dice compares
To Basset's heav'nly Joys, and pleasing Cares?

Smilinda.
Soft Simplicetta doats upon a Beau;
Prudina likes a Man, and laughs at Show.
Their several graces in my Sharper meet;
Strong as the Footman, as the Master sweet.

Lovet.
Cease your contention, which has been too long;
I grow impatient, and the Tea's too strong.
Attend, and yield to what I now decide;
The Equipage shall grace Smilinda's Side:
The Snuff-Box to Cardelia I decree,
Now leave complaining, and begin your Tea.

Alexander Pope

The Challenge: A Court Ballad

I.
To one fair lady out of Court,
And two fair ladies in,
Who think the Turk and Pope a sport,
And wit and love no sin!
Come, these soft lines, with nothing stiff in,
To Bellenden, Lepell, and Griffin.
With a fa, la, la.

II.

What passes in the dark third row,
And what behind the scene,
Couches and crippled chairs I know,
And garrets hung with green;
I know the swing of sinful hack,
Where many damsels cry alack.
With a fa, la, la.

III.
Then why to Courts should I repair,
Where's such ado with Townsend?
To hear each mortal stamp and swear,
And every speech with 'Zounds' end;
To hear them rail at honest Sunderland,
And rashly blame the realm of Blunderland.
With a fa, la, la.

IV.
Alas! like Schutz I cannot pun,
Like Grafton court the Germans;
Tell Pickenbourg how slim she's grown,
Like Meadows run to sermons;
To court ambitious men may roam,
But I and Marlbro' stay at home.
With a fa, la, la.

V.
In truth, by what I can discern,
Of courtiers, 'twixt you three,
Some wit you have, and more may learn
From Court, than Gay or Me:
Perhaps, in time, you'll leave high diet,
To sup with us on milk and quiet.
With a fa, la, la.

VI.
At Leicester Fields, a house full nigh,
With door all painted green,
(A Milliner, I mean);
There may you meet us three to three,
For Gay can well make two of Me.

With a fa, la, la.

VII.
But should you catch the prudish itch,
And each become a coward,
Bring sometimes with you lady Rich,
And sometimes mistress Howard;
For virgins, to keep chaste, must go
Abroad with such as are not so.
With a fa, la, la.

VIII.
And thus, fair maids, my ballad ends;
God send the king safe landing;
And make all honest ladies friends
To armies that are standing;
Preserve the limits of those nations,
And take off ladies' limitations.
With a fa, la, la.

Alexander Pope

The Dunciad: Book I.

The Mighty Mother, and her son who brings
The Smithfield muses to the ear of kings,
I sing. Say you, her instruments the great!
Called to this work by Dulness, Jove, and Fate;
You by whose care, in vain decried and cursed,
Still Dunce the second reigns like Dunce the first;
Say how the Goddess bade Britannia sleep,
And poured her spirit o'er the land and deep.
In eldest time, e'er mortals writ or read,
E'er Pallas issued from the Thunderer's head,
Dulness o'er all possessed her ancient right,
Daughter of Chaos and eternal Night:
Fate in their dotage this fair idiot gave,
Gross as her sire, and as her mother grave,
Laborious, heavy, busy, bold, and blind,
She ruled, in native anarchy, the mind.
Still her old empire to restore she tries,
For, born a goddess, Dulness never dies.
O thou! whatever title please thine ear,
Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver!
Whether thou choose Cervantes' serious air,
Or laugh and shake in Rabelais' easy chair,
Or praise the court, or magnify mankind,
Or thy grieved country's copper chains unbind;
From thy Boeotia though her power retires,
Mourn not, my SWIFT, at ought our realm acquires,
Here pleased behold her mighty wings out-spread
To hatch a new Saturnian age of lead.
Close to those walls where Folly holds her throne,
And laughs to think Monroe would take her down,
Where o'er the gates, by his famed by father's hand
Great Cibber's brazen, brainless brothers stand;
One cell there is, concealed from vulgar eye,
The cave of poverty and poetry.
Keen, hollow winds howl through the bleak recess,
Emblem of music caused by emptiness.
Hence bards, like Proteus long in vain tied down,
Escape in monsters, and amaze the town.
Hence miscellanies spring, the weekly boast
Of Curll's chaste press, and Lintot's rubric post :
Hence hymning Tyburn's elegiac lines,
Hence Journals, Medleys, Merc'ries, Magazines:
Sepulchral lies, our holy walls to grace,
And new Year odes, and all the Grub Street race.
In clouded majesty here Dulness shone;
Four guardian virtues, round, support her throne:
Fierce champion Fortitude, that knows no fears
Of hisses, blows, or want, or loss of ears:
Calm Temperance, whose blessings those partake
Who hunger, and who thirst for scribbling sake:
Prudence, whose glass presents th' approaching goal.
Poetic justice, with her lifted scale,

Where, in nice balance, truth with gold she weighs,
And solid pudding against empty praise.
Here she beholds the chaos dark and deep,
Where nameless somethings in their causes sleep,
Till genial Jacob, or a warm third day,
Call forth each mass, a poem, or a play:
How hints, like spawn, scarce quick in embryo lie,
How new-born nonsense first is taught to cry.
Maggots half-formed in rhyme exactly meet,
And learn to crawl upon poetic feet.
Here one poor word an hundred clenches makes,
And ductile dullness new meanders takes;
There motley images her fancy strike,
Figures ill paired, and similes unlike.
She sees a mob of metaphors advance,
Pleased with the madness of the mazy dance:
How tragedy and comedy embrace;
How farce and epic get a jumbled race;
How time himself stands still at her command,
Realms shift their place, and ocean turns to land.
Here gay description Egypt glads with showers,
Or gives to Zembla fruits, to Barca flowers;
Glittering with ice here hoary hills are seen,
There painted valleys of eternal green,
In cold December fragrant chaplets blow,
And heavy harvests nod beneath the snow.
All these, and more, the cloud-compelling Queen
Beholds through fogs, that magnify the scene.
She, tinselled o'er in robes of varying hues,
With self-applause her wild creation views;
Sees momentary monsters rise and fall,
And with her own fools-colours gilds them all.
'Twas on the day, when

rich and grave,
Like Cimon, triumphed both on land and wave:
(Pomps without guilt, of bloodless swords and maces,
Glad chains, warm furs, broad banners, and broad faces)
Now night descending, the proud scene was o'er,
But lived, in Settle's numbers, one day more.
Now mayors and shrieves all hushed and satiate lay,
Yet eat, in dreams, the custard of the day;
While pensive poets painful vigils keep,
Sleepless themselves, to give their readers sleep.
Much to the mindful Queen the feast recalls
What city swans once sung within the walls;
Much she revolves their arts, their ancient praise,
And sure succession down from Heywood's days.
She saw, with joy, the line immortal run,
Each sire impressed and glaring in his son:
So watchful Bruin forms, with plastic care,
Each growing lump, and brings it to a bear.

She saw old Prynne in restless Daniel shine,
And Eusden eke out Blackmore's endless line;
She saw slow Philips creep like Tate's poor page,
And all the mighty mad in Dennis rage.
In each she marks her image full expressed,
But chief in BAY'S monster-breeding breast;
Bays, formed by nature stage and town to bless,
And act, and be, a coxcomb with success.
Dulness with transport eyes the lively dunce,
Remembering she herself was pertness once.
Now (shame to fortune!) an ill run at play
Blanked his bold visage, and a thin third day:
Swearing and supperless the hero sate,
Blasphemed his gods, the dice, and damned his fate.
Then gnawed his pen, then dashed it on the ground,
Sinking from thought to thought, a vast profound!
Plunged for his sense, but found no bottom there,
Yet wrote and floundered on, in mere despair.
Round him much embryo, much abortion lay,
Much future ode, and abdicated play;
Nonsense precipitate, like running lead,
That slipped through cracks and zigzags of the head;
All that on folly frenzy could beget,
Fruits of dull heat, and sooterkins of wit.
Next, o'er his books his eyes began to roll,
In pleasing memory of all he stole,
How here he sipped, how there he plundered snug
And sucked all o'er, like an industrious bug.
Here lay poor Fletcher's half-eat scenes, and here
The frippery of crucified Molière;
There hapless Shakespeare, yet of Tibbald sore,
Wished he had blotted for himself before.
The rest on outside merit but presume,
Or serve (like other fools) to fill a room;
Such with their shelves as due proportion hold,
Or their fond parents dressed in red and gold;
Or where the pictures for the page atone,
And Quarles is saved by beauties not his own.
Here swells the shelf with Ogibly the great;
There, stamped with arms, Newcastle shines complete:
Here all his suffering brotherhood retire,
And 'scape the martyrdom of jakes and fire:
A Gothic library! Of Greece and Rome
Well purged, and worthy Settle, Banks, and Broome.
But, high above, more solid learning shone,
The classics of an age that heard of none;
There Caxton slept, with Wynkyn at his side,
One clasped in wood, and one in strong cow-hide;
There, saved by spice, like mummies, many a year,
Dry bodies of divinity appear:
De Lyra there a dreadful front extends,
And here the groaning shelves Philemon bends.

Of these twelve volumes, twelve of amplest size,
Redeemed from tapers and defrauded pies,
Inspired he seizes: these an altar raise:
An hetatomb of pure, unsullied lays
That altar crowns: a folio commonplace
Founds the whole pile, of all his works the base:
Quartos, octavos, shape the lessening pyre;
A twisted birthday ode completes the spire.
Then he: 'Great tamer of all human art!
First in my care, and ever at my heart;
Dulness! Whose good old cause I yet defend,
With whom my muse began, with whom shall end;
E'er since Sir Fopling's periwig was praise
To the last honours of the butt and bays:
O thou! of business the directing soul!
To this our head like bias to the bowl,
Which, as more ponderous, made its aim more true,
Obliquely waddling to the mark in view:
O! ever gracias to perplexed mankind,
Still spread a healing mist before the mind;
And lest we err by wit's wild dancing light,
Secure us kindly in our native night.
Or, if to wit a coxcomb make pretence,
Guard the sure barrier between that and sense;
Or quite unravel all the reasoning thread,
And hang some curious cobweb in its stead!
As, forced from wind-guns, lead itself can fly,
And ponderous slugs cut swiftly through the sky;
As clocks to weight their nimble motion owe,
The wheels above urged by the load below:
Me emptiness, and Dulness could inspire,
And were my elasticity, and fire.
Some daemon stole my pen(forgive th'offence)
And once betrayed me into common sense:
Else all my prose and verse were much the same;
This, prose on stilts, that, poetry fallen lame.
Did on the stage my fops appear confined?
My life gave ampler lessons to mankind.
Did the dead letter unsuccessful prove?
The brisk example never failed to move.
Yet sure had heaven decreed to save the state,
Heaven had decreed these works a longer date.
Could Troy be saved by any single hand,
This grey-goose weapon must have made her stand.
What can I now? my Fletcher cast aside,
Take up the Bible, once my better guide?
Or tread the path by venturous heroes trod,
This box my thunder, this right hand my god?
Or chaired at White's amidst the doctors sit,
Teach oaths to gamesters, and to nobles wit?
Or bidst thou rather party to embrace?
(A friend to party thou, and all her race;

'Tis the same rope at different ends they twist;
To Dulness Ridpath is as dear as Mist.)
Shall I, like Curtius, desperate in my zeal,
O'er head and ears plunge for the commonweal?
Or rob Rome's ancient geese of all their glories,
And cackling save the monarchy of Tories?
Hold—to the minister I more incline;
To serve his cause, O Queen! is serving thine.
And see! Thy very gazetteers give o'er,
Ev'n Ralph repents, and Henley writes no more.
What then remains? Ourself. Still, still remain
Cibberian forehead, and Cibberian brain.
This brazen brightness, to the 'squire so dear;
This polished hardness, that reflects the peer;
This arch absurd, that sit and fool delights;
This mess, tossed up of Hockley Hole and White's;
Where dukes and butchers join to wreathe my crown,
At once the bear and fiddle of the town.
O born in sin, and forth in folly brought!
Works damned, or to be damned! (your father's fault)
Go, purified by flames ascend the sky,
My better and more Christian progeny!
Unstained, untouched, and yet in maiden sheets;
While all your smutty sisters walk the streets.
Ye shall not beg, like gratis-given Bland,
Sent with a pass, and vagrant through the land;
Not sail, with Ward, to ape-and-monkey climes,
Where vile mundungus trucks for viler rhymes;
Not sulphur-tipped, emblaze an alehouse fire;
Not wrap up oranges, to pelt your sire!
O! pass more innocent, in infant state,
To the mild limbo of our father Tate:
Or peaceably forgot, at once be blessed
In Shadwell's bosom with eternal rest!
Soon to that mass of nonsense to return,
Where things destroyed are swept to things unborn.'
With that, a tear (portentous sign of grace!)
Stole from the master of the sevenfold face:
And thrice he lifted high the birthday brand,
And thrice he dropped it from his quivering hand;
Then lights the structure, with averted eyes:
The rolling smokes involve the sacrifice.
The opening clouds disclose each work by turns,
Now flames the Cid, and now Perolla burns;
Great Ceasar roars, and hisses in the fires;
King John in silence modestly expires:
No merit now the dear Nonjuror claims,
Molière's old stubble in a moment flames.
Tears gushed again, as from pale Priam's eyes
When the last blaze sent Ilion to the skies.
Roused by the light, old Dulness heaved the head;
Then snatched a sheet of Thulè from her bed,

Sudden she flies, and whelms it o’er the pyre;
Down sink the flames, and with a hiss expire.
Her ample presence fills up all the place;
A veil of fogs dilates her awful face;
Great in her charms! as when on shrieves and mayors
She looks, and breathes herself into their airs.
She bids him wait her to her sacred dome:
Well pleased he entered, and confessed his home.
So spirits ending their terrestrial race,
Ascend, and recognize their native place.
This the Great Mother dearer held than all
The clubs of quidnuncs, or her own Guildhall:
Here stood her opium, here she nursed her owls,
And here she planned th’ imperial seat of Fools.
Here to her chosen all her works she shows;
Prose swelled to verse, verse loitering into prose:
How random thoughts now meaning chance to find,
Now leave all memory of sense behind:
How prologues into prefaces decay,
And these to notes are frittered quite away:
How index-learning turns no student pale,
Yet holds the eel of science by the tail:
How, with less reading than makes felons ’scape,
Less human genius than God gives an ape,
Small thanks to France, and none to Rome or Greece,
A past, vamped, future, old, revived, new piece,
’Twixt Plautus, Fletcher, Shakespeare, and Corneille,
Can make a Cibber, Tibbald, or Ozell.
The Goddess then, o’er his anointed head,
With mystic words, the sacred opium shed.
And lo! her bird, (a monster of a fowl,
Something betwixt a Heidegger and owl,)
Perched on his crown: ‘ All hail! and hail again,
My son! The promised land expects thy reign.
Know, Eusden thirsts no more for sack or praise;
He sleeps among the dull of ancient days;
Safe, where no critics damn, no duns molest,
Where wretched Withers, Ward, and Gildon rest,
And high-born Howard, more majestic sire,
With fool of quality completes the quire.
Thou Cibber! thou, his laurel shalt support,
Folly, my son, has still a friend at court.
Lift up your gates, ye princes, see him come!
Sound, sound ye viols, be the catcall dumb!
Bring, bring the madding bay, the drunken vine;
The creeping, dirty, courtly ivy join.
And thou! his aide de camp, lead on my sons,
Light-armed with points, antitheses, and puns.
Let bawdry, Billingsgate, my daughters dear,
Support his front, and oaths bring up the rear:
And under his, and under Archer’s wing,
Gaming and Grub Street skulk behind the king.

O! when shall rise a monarch all our own,
And I, a nursing-mother, rock the throne,
'Twixt prince and people close the curtain draw,
Shade him from light, and cover him from law;
Fatten the courtier, starve the learned band,
And suckle armies, and dry-nurse the land:
Till senates nod to lullabies divine,
And all be asleep, as at an ode of thine.'

She ceased. Then swells the Chapel Royal throat:
'God save King Cibber!' mounts in every note.
Familiar White's, 'God save king Colley!' cries;
'God save King Colley!' Drury Lane replies:
To Needham's quick the voice triumphal rode,
But pious Needham dropped the name of God;
Back to the Devil the last echoes roll,
And 'Coll!' each butcher roars at Hockley Hole.
So when Jove's block descended from on high
(As sings thy great forefather Ogilby)
Loud thunder to its bottom shook the bog,
And the hoarse nation croaked, 'God save King Log!

Alexander Pope

The Dunciad: Book II.

High on a gorgeous seat, that far out-shone
Henley's gilt tub, or Flecknoe's Irish throne,
Or that where on her Curlls the public pours,
All-bounteous, fragrant grains and golden showers,
Great Cibber sate: the proud Parnassian sneer,
The conscious simper, and the jealous leer,
Mix on his look: all eyes direct their rays
On him, and crowds turn coxcombs as they gaze.
His peers shine round him with reflected grace,
New edge their dulness, and new bronze their face.
So from the sun's broad beam, in shallow urns
Heaven's twinkling sparks draw light, and point their horns.

Not with more glee, by hands Pontific crown'd,
With scarlet hats wide-waving circled round,
Rome in her Capitol saw Querno sit,
Throned on seven hills, the Antichrist of wit.

And now the queen, to glad her sons, proclaims
By herald hawkers, high heroic games.
They summon all her race: an endless band
Pours forth, and leaves unpeopled half the land.
A motley mixture! in long wigs, in bags,
In silks, in crapes, in garters, and in rags,
From drawing-rooms, from colleges, from garrets,
On horse, on foot, in hacks, and gilded chariots:
All who true dunces in her cause appear'd,
And all who knew those dunces to reward.

Amid that area wide they took their stand,
Where the tall maypole once o'er-looked the Strand,
But now (so Anne and piety ordain)
A church collects the saints of Drury Lane.

With authors, stationers obey'd the call,
(The field of glory is a field for all).
Glory and gain the industrious tribe provoke;
And gentle Dulness ever loves a joke.
A poet's form she placed before their eyes,
And bade the nimblest racer seize the prize;
No meagre, muse-rid mope, adust and thin,
In a dun night-gown of his own loose skin;
But such a bulk as no twelve bards could raise,
Twelve starveling bards of these degenerate days.
All as a partridge plump, full-fed, and fair,
She form'd this image of well-bodied air;
With pert flat eyes she window'd well its head;
A brain of feathers, and a heart of lead;
And empty words she gave, and sounding strain,
But senseless, lifeless! idol void and vain!
Never was dash'd out, at one lucky hit,
A fool, so just a copy of a wit;

So like, that critics said, and courtiers swore,
A wit it was, and call'd the phantom More.

All gaze with ardour: some a poet's name,
Others a sword-knot and laced suit inflame.
But lofty Lintot in the circle rose:
'This prize is mine; who tempt it are my foes;
With me began this genius, and shall end.'
He spoke: and who with Lintot shall contend?
Fear held them mute. Alone, untaught to fear,
Stood dauntless Curll: 'Behold that rival here!
The race by vigour, not by vaunts is won;
So take the hindmost Hell.' He said, and run.
Swift as a bard the bailiff leaves behind,
He left huge Lintot, and out-stripp'd the wind.
As when a dab-chick waddles through the copse
On feet and wings, and flies, and wades, and hops:
So labouring on, with shoulders, hands, and head,
Wide as a wind-mill all his figure spread,
With arms expanded Bernard rows his state,
And left-legg'd Jacob seems to emulate.
Full in the middle way there stood a lake,
Which Curll's Corinna chanced that morn to make:
(Such was her wont, at early dawn to drop
Her evening cates before his neighbour's shop,)
Here fortuned Curll to slide; loud shout the band,
And Bernard! Bernard! rings through all the Strand.
Obscene with filth the miscreant lies bewray'd,
Fallen in the plash his wickedness had laid:
Then first (if poets aught of truth declare)
The caitiff vaticide conceived a prayer:
'Hear, Jove! whose name my bards and I adore,
As much at least as any god's, or more;
And him and his if more devotion warms,
Down with the Bible, up with the Pope's arms.'

A place there is, betwixt earth, air, and seas,
Where, from Ambrosia, Jove retires for ease.
There in his seat two spacious vents appear,
On this he sits, to that he leans his ear,
And hears the various vows of fond mankind;
Some beg an eastern, some a western wind:
All vain petitions, mounting to the sky,
With reams abundant this abode supply;
Amused he reads, and then returns the bills
Sign'd with that ichor which from gods distils.

In office here fair Cloacina stands,
And ministers to Jove with purest hands.
Forth from the heap she pick'd her votary's prayer,
And placed it next him, a distinction rare!
Oft had the goddess heard her servant's call,

From her black grottos near the Temple-wall,
Listening delighted to the jest unclean
Of link-boys vile, and watermen obscene;
Where as he fish'd her nether realms for wit,
She oft had favour'd him, and favours yet.
Renew'd by ordure's sympathetic force,
As oil'd with magic juices for the course,
Vigorous he rises; from the effluvia strong
Imbibes new life, and scours and stinks along;
Repasses Lintot, vindicates the race,
Nor heeds the brown dishonours of his face.

And now the victor stretch'd his eager hand
Where the tall Nothing stood, or seem'd to stand;
A shapeless shade, it melted from his sight,
Like forms in clouds, or visions of the night.
To seize his papers, Curll, was next thy care;
His papers light, fly diverse, toss'd in air;
Songs, sonnets, epigrams the winds uplift,
And whisk them back to Evans, Young, and Swift.
The embroider'd suit at least he deem'd his prey,
That suit an unpaid tailor snatch'd away.
No rag, no scrap, of all the beau, or wit,
That once so flutter'd, and that once so writ.

Heaven rings with laughter: of the laughter vain,
Dulness, good queen, repeats the jest again.
Three wicked imps, of her own Grub Street choir,
She deck'd like Congreve, Addison, and Prior;
Mears, Warner, Wilkins run: delusive thought!
Breval, Bond, Bezaleel, the varlets caught.
Curll stretches after Gay, but Gay is gone,
He grasps an empty Joseph for a John:
So Proteus, hunted in a nobler shape,
Became, when seized, a puppy, or an ape.

To him the goddess: 'Son! thy grief lay down,
And turn this whole illusion on the town:
As the sage dame, experienced in her trade,
By names of toasts retails each batter'd jade;
(Whence hapless Monsieur much complains at Paris
Of wrongs from duchesses and Lady Maries
Be thine, my stationer! this magic gift;
Cook shall be Prior, and Concanen, Swift:
So shall each hostile name become our own,
And we too boast our Garth and Addison.'

With that she gave him (piteous of his case,
Yet smiling at his rueful length of face)
A shaggy tapestry, worthy to be spread
On Codrus' old, or Dunton's modern bed;
Instructive work! whose wry-mouth'd portraiture

Display'd the fates her confessors endure.
Earless on high, stood unabash'd Defoe,
And Tutchin flagrant from the scourge below.
There Ridpath, Roper, cudgell'd might ye view,
The very worsted still look'd black and blue.
Himself among the storied chiefs he spies,
As, from the blanket, high in air he flies,
And oh! (he cried) what street, what lane but knows
Our purgings, pumpings, blanketings, and blows?
In every loom our labours shall be seen,
And the fresh vomit run for ever green!

See in the circle next, Eliza placed,
Two babes of love close clinging to her waist;
Fair as before her works she stands confess'd,
In flowers and pearls by bounteous Kirkall dress'd.
The goddess then: 'Who best can send on high
The salient spout, far-streaming to the sky;
His be yon Juno of majestic size,
With cow-like udders, and with ox-like eyes.
This China Jordan let the chief o'ercome
Replenish, not ingloriously, at home.'

Osborne and Curll accept the glorious strife,
(Though this his son dissuades, and that his wife
One on his manly confidence relies,
One on his vigour and superior size.
First Osborne lean'd against his letter'd post;
It rose, and labour'd to a curve at most.
So Jove's bright bow displays its watery round
(Sure sign, that no spectator shall be drown'd),
A second effort brought but new disgrace,
The wild meander wash'd the artist's face:
Thus the small jet, which hasty hands unlock,
Spurts in the gardener's eyes who turns the cock.
Not so from shameless Curll; impetuous spread
The stream, and smoking flourish'd o'er his head.
So (famed like thee for turbulence and horns)
Eridanus his humble fountain scorns;
Through half the heavens he pours the exalted urn;
His rapid waters in their passage burn.

Swift as it mounts, all follow with their eyes:
Still happy impudence obtains the prize.
Thou triumph'st, victor of the high-wrought day,
And the pleased dame, soft-smiling, lead'st away.
Osborne, through perfect modesty o'ercome,
Crown'd with the Jordan, walks contented home.

But now for authors nobler palms remain;
Room for my lord! three jockeys in his train;
Six huntsmen with a shout precede his chair:

He grins, and looks broad nonsense with a stare.
His honour's meaning Dulness thus express'd,
'He wins this patron, who can tickle best.'

He chinks his purse, and takes his seat of state:
With ready quills the dedicators wait;
Now at his head the dext'rous task commence,
And, instant, fancy feels the imputed sense;
Now gentle touches wanton o'er his face,
He struts Adonis, and affects grimace:
Rolli the feather to his ear conveys,
Then his nice taste directs our operas:
Bentley his mouth with classic flattery opes,
And the puff'd orator bursts out in tropes.
But Welsted most the poet's healing balm
Strives to extract from his soft, giving palm;
Unlucky Welsted! thy unfeeling master,
The more thou ticklest, gripes his fist the faster.

While thus each hand promotes the pleasing pain,
And quick sensations skip from vein to vein;
A youth unknown to Phoebus, in despair,
Puts his last refuge all in Heaven and prayer.
What force have pious vows! The Queen of Love
Her sister sends, her votaress, from above.
As taught by Venus, Paris learn'd the art
To touch Achilles' only tender part;
Secure, through her, the noble prize to carry,
He marches off, his Grace's secretary.

'Now turn to different sports (the goddess cries),
And learn, my sons, the wondrous power of noise.
To move, to raise, to ravish every heart,
With Shakspeare's nature, or with Jonson's art,
Let others aim: 'tis yours to shake the soul
With thunder rumbling from the mustard bowl,
With horns and trumpets now to madness swell,
Now sink in sorrows with a tolling bell;
Such happy arts attention can command,
When fancy flags, and sense is at a stand.
Improve we these. Three cat-calls be the bribe
Of him whose chattering shames the monkey tribe:
And his this drum whose hoarse heroic bass
Drowns the loud clarion of the braying ass.'

Now thousand tongues are heard in one loud din:
The monkey-mimics rush discordant in;
'Twas chattering, grinning, mouthing, jabbering all,
And noise and Norton, brangling and Breval,
Dennis and dissonance, and captious art,
And snip-snap short, and interruption smart,
And demonstration thin, and theses thick,

And major, minor, and conclusion quick.
'Hold' (cried the queen) 'a cat-call each shall win;
Equal your merits! equal is your din!
But that this well-disputed game may end,
Sound forth, nay brayers, and the welkin rend.'

As when the long-ear'd milky mothers wait
At some sick miser's triple-bolted gate,
For their defrauded, absent foals they make
A moan so loud, that all the guild awake;
Sore sighs Sir Gilbert, starting at the bray,
From dreams of millions, and three groats to pay.
So swells each windpipe; ass intones to ass,
Harmonic twang! of leather, horn, and brass;
Such as from labouring lungs the enthusiast blows,
High sound, attemper'd to the vocal nose,
Or such as bellow from the deep divine;
There, Webster! peal'd thy voice, and, Whitfield! thine.
But far o'er all, sonorous Blackmore's strain;
Walls, steeples, skies, bray back to him again.
In Tottenham fields, the brethren, with amaze,
Prick all their ears up, and forget to graze;
'Long Chancery Lane retentive rolls the sound,
And courts to courts return it round and round;
Thames wafts it thence to Rufus' roaring hall,
And Hungerford re-echoes bawl for bawl.
All hail him victor in both gifts of song,
Who sings so loudly, and who sings so long.

This labour past, by Bridewell all descend,
(As morning prayer, and flagellation end)
To where Fleet-ditch with disemboguing streams
Rolls the large tribute of dead dogs to Thames,
The king of dikes! than whom no sluice of mud
With deeper sable blots the silver flood.
'Here strip, my children! here at once leap in,
Here prove who best can dash through thick and thin,
And who the most in love of dirt excel,
Or dark dexterity of groping well.
Who flings most filth, and wide pollutes around
The stream, be his the weekly journals bound;
A pig of lead to him who dives the best;
A peck of coals a-piece shall glad the rest.'

In naked majesty Oldmixon stands,
And, Milo-like, surveys his arms and hands;
Then sighing, thus, 'And am I now threescore?
Ah why, ye gods! should two and two make four?'
He said, and climb'd a stranded lighter's height,
Shot to the black abyss, and plunged downright.
The senior's judgment all the crowd admire,
Who but to sink the deeper, rose the higher.

Next Smedley dived; slow circles dimpled o'er
The quaking mud, that closed, and oped no more.
All look, all sigh, and call on Smedley lost;
'Smedley!' in vain, resounds through all the coast.

Then Hill essay'd; scarce vanish'd out of sight,
He buoys up instant, and returns to light:
He bears no token of the sable streams,
And mounts far off among the swans of Thames.

True to the bottom, see Concanen creep,
A cold, long-winded, native of the deep:
If perseverance gain the diver's prize,
Not everlasting Blackmore this denies:
No noise, no stir, no motion can'st thou make,
The unconscious stream sleeps o'er thee like a lake.

Next plunged a feeble, but a desperate pack,
With each a sickly brother at his back:
Sons of a day! just buoyant on the flood,
Then number'd with the puppies in the mud.
Ask ye their names? I could as soon disclose
The names of these blind puppies as of those.
Fast by, like Niobe (her children gone)
Sits Mother Osborne, stupified to stone!
And monumental brass this record bears,
'These are,-ah no! these were, the gazetteers!'

Not so bold Arnall; with a weight of skull,
Furious he dives, precipitately dull.
Whirlpools and storms his circling arm invest,
With all the might of gravitation bless'd.
No crab more active in the dirty dance,
Downward to climb, and backward to advance.
He brings up half the bottom on his head,
And loudly claims the journals and the lead.

The plunging Prelate, and his ponderous Grace,
With holy envy gave one layman place.
When, lo! a burst of thunder shook the flood,
Slow rose a form, in majesty of mud:
Shaking the horrors of his sable brows,
And each ferocious feature grim with ooze.
Greater he looks, and more than mortal stares:
Then thus the wonders of the deep declares.

First he relates, how sinking to the chin,
Smit with his mien, the mud-nymphs suck'd him in:
How young Lutetia, softer than the down,
Nigrina black, and Merdamante brown,
Vied for his love in jetty bowers below,

As Hylas fair was ravish'd long ago.
Then sung, how, shown him by the nut-brown maids;
A branch of Styx here rises from the shades,
That, tinctured as it runs with Lethe's streams,
And wafting vapours from the land of dreams,
(As under seas Alpheus' secret sluice
Bears Pisa's offerings to his Arethuse,)
Pours into Thames: and hence the mingled wave
Intoxicates the pert, and lulls the grave:
Here brisker vapours o'er the Temple creep,
There, all from Paul's to Aldgate drink and sleep.

Thence to the banks where reverend bards repose,
They led him soft; each reverend bard arose;
And Milbourn chief, deputed by the rest,
Gave him the cassock, surcingle, and vest.
'Receive (he said) these robes which once were mine,
Dulness is sacred in a sound divine.'

He ceased, and spread the robe; the crowd confess
The reverend Flamen in his lengthen'd dress.
Around him wide a sable army stand,
A low-born, cell-bred, selfish, servile band,
Prompt or to guard or stab, to saint or damn,
Heaven's Swiss, who fight for any god, or man.
Through Lud's famed gates, along the well-known Fleet
Rolls the black troop, and overshades the street,
Till showers of sermons, characters, essays,
In circling fleeces whiten all the ways:
So clouds replenish'd from some bog below,
Mount in dark volumes, and descend in snow.
Here stopp'd the goddess; and in pomp proclaims
A gentler exercise to close the games.

'Ye critics! in whose heads, as equal scales,
I weigh what author's heaviness prevails,
Which most conduce to soothe the soul in slumbers,
My Henley's periods, or my Blackmore's numbers,
Attend the trial we propose to make:
If there be man, who o'er such works can wake,
Sleep's all-subduing charms who dares defy,
And boasts Ulysses' ear with Argus' eye;
To him we grant our amplest powers to sit
Judge of all present, past, and future wit;
To cavil, censure, dictate, right or wrong,
Full and eternal privilege of tongue.'

Three college Sophs, and three pert Templars came,
The same their talents, and their tastes the same;
Each prompt to query, answer, and debate,
And smit with love of poesy and prate.
The ponderous books two gentle readers bring;

The heroes sit, the vulgar form a ring.
The clamorous crowd is hush'd with mugs of mum,
Till all, tuned equal, send a general hum.
Then mount the clerks, and in one lazy tone
Through the long, heavy, painful page drawl on;
Soft creeping, words on words, the sense compose,
At every line they stretch, they yawn, they doze.
As to soft gales top-heavy pines bow low
Their heads, and lift them as they cease to blow,
Thus oft they rear, and oft the head decline,
As breathe, or pause, by fits, the airs divine;
And now to this side, now to that they nod,
As verse or prose infuse the drowsy god.
Thrice Budgell aim'd to speak, but thrice suppress'd
By potent Arthur, knock'd his chin and breast.
Toland and Tindal, prompt at priests to jeer,
Yet silent bow'd to Christ's no kingdom here.
Who sate the nearest, by the words o'ercome,
Slept first; the distant nodded to the hum.
Then down are roll'd the books; stretch'd o'er 'em lies
Each gentle clerk, and, muttering, seals his eyes,
As what a Dutchman plumps into the lakes,
One circle first, and then a second makes;
What Dulness dropp'd among her sons impress'd
Like motion from one circle to the rest;
So from the midmost the nutation spreads
Round and more round, o'er all the sea of heads.
At last Centlivre felt her voice to fail,
Motteux himself unfinished left his tale,
Boyer the state, and Law the stage gave o'er,
Morgan and Mandeville could prate no more;
Norton, from Daniel and Ostroea sprung,
Bless'd with his father's front and mother's tongue,
Hung silent down his never-blushing head;
And all was hush'd, as Polly's self lay dead.

Thus the soft gifts of sleep conclude the day,
And stretch'd on bulks, as usual, poets lay.
Why should I sing what bards the nightly Muse
Did slumbering visit, and convey to stews;
Who prouder march'd, with magistrates in state,
To some famed round-house, ever open gate!
How Henley lay inspired beside a sink,
And to mere mortals seem'd a priest in drink;
While others, timely, to the neighbouring Fleet
(Haunt of the Muses!) made their safe retreat?

Alexander Pope

The Dunciad: Book IV

Yet, yet a moment, one dim ray of light
Indulge, dread Chaos, and eternal Night!
Of darkness visible so much be lent,
As half to show, half veil, the deep intent.
Ye pow'rs! whose mysteries restor'd I sing,
To whom time bears me on his rapid wing,
Suspend a while your force inertly strong,
Then take at once the poet and the song.

Now flam'd the Dog Star's unpropitious ray,
Smote ev'ry brain, and wither'd every bay;
Sick was the sun, the owl forsook his bow'r.
The moon-struck prophet felt the madding hour:
Then rose the seed of Chaos, and of Night,
To blot out order, and extinguish light,
Of dull and venal a new world to mould,
And bring Saturnian days of lead and gold.

She mounts the throne: her head a cloud conceal'd,
In broad effulgence all below reveal'd;
('Tis thus aspiring Dulness ever shines)
Soft on her lap her laureate son reclines.

Beneath her footstool, Science groans in chains,
And Wit dreads exile, penalties, and pains.
There foam'd rebellious Logic , gagg'd and bound,
There, stripp'd, fair Rhet'ric languish'd on the ground;
His blunted arms by Sophistry are borne,
And shameless Billingsgate her robes adorn.
Morality , by her false guardians drawn,
Chicane in furs, and Casuistry in lawn,
Gasps, as they straighten at each end the cord,
And dies, when Dulness gives her page the word.
Mad Mathesis alone was unconfin'd,
Too mad for mere material chains to bind,
Now to pure space lifts her ecstatic stare,
Now running round the circle finds it square.
But held in tenfold bonds the Muses lie,
Watch'd both by Envy's and by Flatt'ry's eye:
There to her heart sad Tragedy addres'd
The dagger wont to pierce the tyrant's breast;
But sober History restrain'd her rage,
And promised vengeance on a barb'rous age.
There sunk Thalia, nerveless, cold, and dead,
Had not her sister Satire held her head:
Nor couldst thou, Chesterfield! a tear refuse,
Thou weptst, and with thee wept each gentle Muse.

When lo! a harlot form soft sliding by,
With mincing step, small voice, and languid eye;
Foreign her air, her robe's discordant pride
In patchwork flutt'ring, and her head aside:

By singing peers upheld on either hand,
She tripp'd and laugh'd, too pretty much to stand;
Cast on the prostrate Nine a scornful look,
Then thus in quaint recitativo spoke.

'O
Cara! Cara!
silence all that train:
Joy to great Chaos! let Division reign:
Chromatic tortures soon shall drive them hence,
Break all their nerves, and fritter all their sense:
One trill shall harmonize joy, grief, and rage,
Wake the dull Church, and lull the ranting Stage;
To the same notes thy sons shall hum, or snore,
And all thy yawning daughters cry,
encore
.
Another Phoebus, thy own Phoebus, reigns,
Joys in my jigs, and dances in my chains.
But soon, ah soon, Rebellion will commence,
If Music meanly borrows aid from Sense.
Strong in new arms, lo! Giant Handel stands,
Like bold Briarerus, with a hundred hands;
To stir, to rouse, to shake the soul he comes,
And Jove's own thunders follow Mars's drums.
Arrest him, Empress, or you sleep no more-'
She heard, and drove him to th' Hibernian shore.

And now had Fame's posterior trumpet blown,
And all the nations summoned to the throne.
The young, the old, who feel her inward sway,
One instinct seizes, and transports away.
None need a guide, by sure attraction led,
And strong impulsive gravity of head:
None want a place, for all their centre found
Hung to the Goddess, and coher'd around.
Not closer, orb in orb, conglob'd are seen
The buzzing bees about their dusky Queen.

The gath'ring number, as it moves along,
Involves a vast involuntary throng,
Who gently drawn, and struggling less and less,
Roll in her Vortex, and her pow'r confess.
Not those alone who passive own her laws,
But who, weak rebels, more advance her cause.
Whate'er of dunce in college or in town
Sneers at another, in toupee or gown;
Whate'er of mongrel no one class admits,
A wit with dunces, and a dunce with wits.

Nor absent they, no members of her state,
Who pay her homage in her sons, the Great;

Who false to Phoebus bow the knee to Baal;
Or, impious, preach his Word without a call.
Patrons, who sneak from living worth to dead,
Withhold the pension, and set up the head;
Or vest dull Flattery in the sacred gown;
Or give from fool to fool the laurel crown.
And (last and worst) with all the cant of wit,
Without the soul, the Muse's hypocrite.

There march'd the bard and blockhead, side by side,
Who rhym'd for hire, and patroniz'd for pride.
Narcissus, prais'd with all a Parson's pow'r,
Look'd a white lily sunk beneath a show'r.
There mov'd Montalto with superior air;
His stretch'd-out arm display'd a volume fair;
Courtiers and Patriots in two ranks divide,
Through both he pass'd, and bow'd from side to side:
But as in graceful act, with awful eye
Compos'd he stood, bold Benson thrust him by:
On two unequal crutches propp'd he came,
Milton's on this, on that one Johnston's name.
The decent knight retir'd with sober rage,
Withdrew his hand, and closed the pompous page.
But (happy for him as the times went then)
Appear'd Apollo's mayor and aldermen,
On whom three hundred gold-capp'd youths await,
To lug the pond'rous volume off in state.

When Dulness, smiling-'Thus revive the Wits!
But murder first, and mince them all to bits;
As erst Medea (cruel, so to save!)
A new edition of old Aeson gave;
Let standard authors, thus, like trophies born,
Appear more glorious as more hack'd and torn,
And you, my Critics! in the chequer'd shade,
Admire new light through holes yourselves have made.

Leave not a foot of verse, a foot of stone,
A page, a grave, that they can call their own;
But spread, my sons, your glory thin or thick,
On passive paper, or on solid brick.
So by each bard an Alderman shall sit,
A heavy lord shall hang at ev'ry wit,
And while on Fame's triumphal Car they ride,
Some Slave of mine be pinion'd to their side.'

Now crowds on crowds around the Goddess press,
Each eager to present their first address.
Dunce scorning dunce beholds the next advance,
But fop shows fop superior complaisance,
When lo! a spector rose, whose index hand
Held forth the virtue of the dreadful wand;

His beaver'd brow a birchen garland wears,
Dropping with infant's blood, and mother's tears.
O'er every vein a shud'ring horror runs;
Eton and Winton shake through all their sons.
All flesh is humbl'd, Westminster's bold race
Shrink, and confess the Genius of the place:
The pale boy senator yet tingling stands,
And holds his breeches close with both his hands.

Then thus. 'Since man from beast by words is known,
Words are man's province, words we teach alone.
When reason doubtful, like the Samian letter,
Points him two ways, the narrower is the better.
Plac'd at the door of learning, youth to guide,
We never suffer it to stand too wide.
To ask, to guess, to know, as they commence,
As fancy opens the quick springs of sense,
We ply the memory, we load the brain,
Bind rebel Wit, and double chain on chain,
Confine the thought, to exercise the breath;
And keep them in the pale of words till death.
Whate'er the talents, or howe'er design'd,
We hang one jingling padlock on the mind:
A Poet the first day, he dips his quill;
And what the last? A very Poet still.
Pity! the charm works only in our wall,
Lost, lost too soon in yonder house or hall.
There truant Wyndham every Muse gave o'er,
There Talbot sunk, and was a wit no more!
How sweet an Ovid, Murray was our boast!
How many Martials were in Pult'ney lost!
Else sure some bard, to our eternal praise,
In twice ten thousand rhyming nights and days,
Had reach'd the work, and All that mortal can;
And South beheld that Masterpiece of Man.'

'Oh' (cried the Goddess) 'for some pedant Reign!
Some gentle James, to bless the land again;
To stick the Doctor's chair into the throne,
Give law to words, or war with words alone,
Senates and courts with Greek and Latin rule,
And turn the council to a grammar school!
For sure, if Dulness sees a grateful day,
'Tis in the shade of arbitrary sway.
O! if my sons may learn one earthly thing,
Teach but that one, sufficient for a king;
That which my priests, and mine alone, maintain,
Which as it dies, or lives, we fall, or reign:
May you, may Cam and Isis, preach it long!
'The Right Divine of Kings to govern wrong'.'

Prompt at the call, around the Goddess roll

Broad hats, and hoods, and caps, a sable shoal:
Thick and more thick the black blockade extends,
A hundred head of Aristotle's friends.
Nor wert thou, Isis! wanting to the day,
Though Christ Church long kept prudishly away.
Each staunch polemic, stubborn as a rock,
Each fierce logician, still expelling Locke,
Came whip and spur, and dash'd through thin and thick
On German Crousaz, and Dutch Burgersdyck.
As many quit the streams that murm'ring fall
To lull the sons of Marg'ret and Clare Hall,
Where Bentley late tempestuous wont to sport
In troubled waters, but now sleeps in Port.
Before them march'd that awful Aristarch;
Plow'd was his front with many a deep remark:
His hat, which never vail'd to human pride,
Walker with rev'rence took, and laid aside.
Low bowed the rest: He, kingly, did but nod;
So upright Quakers please both man and God.
'Mistress! dismiss that rabble from your throne:
Avaunt-is Aristarchus yet unknown?
Thy mighty scholiast, whose unwearied pains
Made Horace dull, and humbl'd Milton's strains.
Turn what they will to verse, their toil is vain,
Critics like me shall make it prose again.
Roman and Greek grammarians! know your better:
Author of something yet more great than letter;
While tow'ring o'er your alphabet, like Saul,
Stands our Digamma, and o'ertops them all.
'Tis true, on words is still our whole debate,
Disputes of
Me
or
Te
, of
aut
or
at
,

To sound or sink in
cano
, O or A,
Or give up Cicero to C or K.
Let Freind affect to speak as Terence spoke,
And Alsop never but like Horace joke:
For me, what Virgil, Pliny may deny,
Manilius or Solinus shall supply:
For Attic Phrase in Plato let them seek,
I poach in Suidas for unlicens'd Greek.
In ancient sense if any needs will deal,
Be sure I give them fragments, not a meal;

What Gellius or Stobaeus hash'd before,
Or chew'd by blind old Scholiasts o'er and o'er.
The critic eye, that microscope of wit,
Sees hairs and pores, examines bit by bit:
How parts relate to parts, or they to whole,
The body's harmony, the beaming soul,
Are things which Kuster, Burman, Wasse shall see,
When man's whole frame is obvious to a
Flea
.

'Ah, think not, Mistress! more true dulness lies
In Folly's cap, than Wisdom's grave disguise.
Like buoys, that never sink into the flood,
On learning's surface we but lie and nod.
Thine is the genuine head of many a house,
And much Divinity without a Nous.
Nor could a Barrow work on every block,
Nor has one Atterbury spoil'd the flock.
See! still thy own, the heavy canon roll,
And metaphysic smokes involve the pole.
For thee we dim the eyes, and stuff the head
With all such reading as was never read:
For thee explain a thing till all men doubt it,
And write about it, Goddess, and about it:
So spins the silkworm small its slender store,
And labours till it clouds itself all o'er.

'What tho' we let some better sort of fool
Thrid ev'ry science, run through ev'ry school?
Never by tumbler through the hoops was shown
Such skill in passing all, and touching none.
He may indeed (if sober all this time)
Plague with dispute, or persecute with rhyme.
We only furnish what he cannot use,
Or wed to what he must divorce, a Muse:
Full in the midst of Euclid dip at once,
And petrify a Genius to a Dunce:
Or set on metaphysic ground to prance,
Show all his paces, not a step advance.
With the same cement ever sure to bind,
We bring to one dead level ev'ry mind.
Then take him to develop, if you can,
And hew the block off, and get out the man.
But wherefore waste I words? I see advance
Whore, pupil, and lac'd governor from France.
Walker! our hat' -nor more he deign'd to say,
But, stern as Ajax' spectre, strode away.
In flow'd at once a gay embroider'd race,
And titt'ring push'd the Pedants off the place;
Some would have spoken, but the voice was drown'd
By the French horn, or by the op'ning hound.

The first came forwards, with as easy mien,
As if he saw St. James's and the Queen.
When thus th' attendant Orator begun,
Receive, great Empress! thy accomplish'd Son:
Thine from the birth, and sacred from the rod,
A dauntless infant! never scar'd with God.
The Sire saw, one by one, his Virtues wake:
The Mother begg'd the blessing of a Rake.
Thou gav'st that Ripeness, which so soon began,
And ceas'd so soon, he ne'er was Boy, nor Man,
Thro' School and College, thy kind cloud o'ercast,
Safe and unseen the young AEneas past:
Thence bursting glorious, all at once let down,
Stunn'd with his giddy Larum half the town.

Intrepid then, o'er seas and lands he flew:
Europe he saw, and Europe saw him too.
There all thy gifts and graces we display,
Thou, only thou, directing all our way!
To where the Seine, obsequious as she runs,
Pours at great Bourbon's feet her silken sons;
Or Tyber, now no longer Roman, rolls,
Vain of Italian Arts, Italian Souls:
To happy Convents, bosom'd deep in vines,
Where slumber Abbots, purple as their wines:
To Isles of fragrance, lilly-silver'd vales,
Diffusing languor in the panting gales:
To lands of singing, or of dancing slaves,
Love-whisp'ring woods, and lute-resounding waves.
But chief her shrine where naked Venus keeps,
And Cupids ride the Lyon of the Deeps;
Where, eas'd of Fleets, the Adriatic main
Wafts the smooth Eunuch and enamour'd swain.
Led by my hand, he saunter'd Europe round,
And gather'd ev'ry Vice on Christian ground;
Saw ev'ry Court, hear'd ev'ry King declare
His royal Sense, of Op'ra's or the Fair;
The Stews and Palace equally explor'd,
Intrigu'd with glory, and with spirit whor'd;
Try'd all hors-d' uvres, all Liqueurs defin'd,
Judicious drank, and greatly-daring din'd;
Dropt the dull lumber of the Latin store,
Spoil'd his own Language, and acquir'd no more;
All Classic learning lost on Classic ground;
And last turn'd Air, the Eccho of a Sound!
See now, half-cur'd, and perfectly well-bred,
With nothing but a Solo in his head;
As much Estate, and Principle, and Wit,
As Jansen, Fleetwood, Cibber shall think fit;
Stol'n from a Duel, follow'd by a Nun,
And, if a Borough chuse him, not undone;
See, to my country happy I restore

This glorious Youth, and add one Venus more.
Her too receive (for her my soul adores)
So may the sons of sons of sons of whores,
Prop thine, O Empress! like each neighbour Throne,
And make a long Posterity thy own.
Pleas'd, she accepts the Hero, and the Dame,
Wraps in her Veil, and frees from sense of Shame.
Then look'd, and saw a lazy, lolling sort,
Unseen at Church, at Senate, or at Court,
Of ever-listless Loit'rers, that attend
No Cause, no Trust, no Duty, and no Friend.
Thee too, my Paridel! she mark'd thee there,
Stretch'd on the rack of a too easy chair,
And heard thy everlasting yawn confess
The Pains and Penalties of Idleness.
She pity'd! but her Pity only shed
Benigner influence on thy nodding head.
But Annius, crafty Seer, with ebon wand,
And well-dissembl'd Em'rald on his hand,
False as his Gems and canker'd as his Coins,
Came, cramm'd with Capon, from where Pollio dines.
Soft, as the wily Fox is seen to creep,
Where bask on sunny banks the simple sheep,
Walk round and round, now prying here, now there;
So he; but pious, whisper'd first his pray'r.
Grant, gracious Goddess! grant me still to cheat,
O may thy cloud still cover the deceit!
Thy choicer mists on this assembly shed,
But pour them thickest on the noble head.
So shall each youth, assisted by our eyes,
See other C'sars, other Homers rise;
Thro' twilight ages hunt th'Athenian fowl,
Which Chalcis Gods, and mortals call an Owl,
Now see an Attys, now a Cecrops clear,
Nay, Mahomet! the Pigeon at thine ear;
Be rich in ancient brass, tho' not in gold,
And keep his Lares, tho' his house be sold;
To headless Ph be his fair bride postpone,
Honour a Syrian Prince above his own;
Lord of an Otho, if I vouch it true;
Blest in one Niger, till he knows of two.
Mummius o'erheard him; Mummius, Fool-renown'd,
Who like his Cheops stinks above the ground,
Fierce as a startled Adder, swell'd, and said,
Rattling an ancient Sistrum at his head.
Speak'st thou of Syrian Princes? Traitor base!
Mine, Goddess! mine is all the horned race.
True, he had wit, to make their value rise;
From foolish Greeks to steal them, was as wise;
More glorious yet, from barb'rous hands to keep,
When Sallee Rovers chac'd him on the deep.
Then taught by Hermes, and divinely bold,

Down his own throat he risqu'd the Grecian gold;
Receiv'd each Demi-God, with pious care,
Deep in his Entrails — I rever'd them there,
I bought them, shrouded in that living shrine,
And, at their second birth, they issue mine.
Witness great Ammon! by whose horns I swore,
(Reply'd soft Annius) this our paunch before
Still bears them, faithful; and that thus I eat,
Is to refund the Medals with the meat.
To prove me, Goddess! clear of all design,
Bid me with Pollio sup, as well as dine:
There all the Learn'd shall at the labour stand,
And Douglas lend his soft, obstetric hand.
The Goddess smiling seem'd to give consent;
So back to Pollio, hand in hand, they went.
Then thick as Locusts black'ning all the ground,
A tribe, with weeds and shells fantastic crown'd,
Each with some wond'rous gift approach'd the Pow'r,
A Nest, a Toad, a Fungus, or a Flow'r.
But far the foremost, two, with earnest zeal,
And aspect ardent to the Throne appeal.
The first thus open'd: Hear thy suppliant's call,
Great Queen, and common Mother of us all!
Fair from its humble bed I rear'd this Flow'r,
Suckled, and chear'd, with air, and sun, and show'r,
Soft on the paper ruff its leaves I spread,
Bright with the gilded button tipt its head,
Then thron'd in glass, and nam'd it Caroline:
Each Maid cry'd, charming! and each Youth, divine!
Did Nature's pencil ever blend such rays,
Such vary'd light in one promiscuous blaze?
Now prostrate! dead! behold that Caroline:
No Maid cries, charming! and no Youth, divine!
And lo the wretch! whose vile, whose insect lust
Lay'd this gay daughter of the Spring in dust.
Oh punish him, or to th' Elysian shades
Dismiss my soul, where no Carnation fades.
He ceas'd, and wept. With innocence of mien,
Th'Accus'd stood forth, and thus address'd the Queen.
Of all th'enamel'd race, whose silv'ry wing
Waves to the tepid Zephyrs of the spring,
Or swims along the fluid atmosphere,
Once brightest shin'd this child of Heat and Air.
I saw, and started from its vernal bow'r
The rising game, and chac'd from flow'r to flow'r.
It fled, I follow'd; now in hope, now pain;
It stopt, I stopt; it mov'd, I mov'd again.
At last it fix'd, 'twas on what plant it pleas'd,
And where it fix'd, the beauteous bird I seiz'd:
Rose or Carnation was below my care;
I meddle, Goddess! only in my sphere.
I tell the naked fact without disguise,

And, to excuse it, need but shew the prize;
Whose spoils this paper offers to your eye,
Fair ev'n in death! this peerless Butterfly.
My sons! (she answer'd) both have done your parts:
Live happy both, and long promote our arts.
But hear a Mother, when she recommends
To your fraternal care, our sleeping friends.
The common Soul, of Heav'n's more frugal make,
Serves but to keep fools pert, and knaves awake:
A drowzy Watchman, that just gives a knock,
And breaks our rest, to tell us what's a clock.
Yet by some object ev'ry brain is stirr'd;
The dull may waken to a Humming-bird;
The most recluse, discreetly open'd, find
Congenial matter in the Cockle-kind;
The mind, in Metaphysics at a loss,
May wander in a wilderness of Moss;
The head that turns at super-lunar things,
Poiz'd with a tail, may steer on Wilkins' wings.
'O! would the sons of men once think their eyes
And reason given them but to study flies !
See Nature in some partial narrow shape,
And let the Author of the Whole escape:
Learn but to trifle; or, who most observe,
To wonder at their Maker, not to serve.'
'Be that my task' (replies a gloomy clerk,
Sworn foe to Myst'ry, yet divinely dark;
Whose pious hope aspires to see the day
When Moral Evidence shall quite decay,
And damns implicit faith, and holy lies,
Prompt to impose, and fond to dogmatize):
'Let others creep by timid steps, and slow,
On plain experience lay foundations low,
By common sense to common knowledge bred,
And last, to Nature's Cause through Nature led.
All-seeing in thy mists, we want no guide,
Mother of Arrogance, and Source of Pride!
We nobly take the high Priori Road,
And reason downward, till we doubt of God:
Make Nature still encroach upon his plan;
And shove him off as far as e'er we can:
Thrust some Mechanic Cause into his place;
Or bind in matter, or diffuse in space.
Or, at one bound o'erleaping all his laws,
Make God man's image, man the final Cause,
Find virtue local, all relation scorn
See all in self , and but for self be born:
Of naught so certain as our reason still,
Of naught so doubtful as of soul and will .
Oh hide the God still more! and make us see
Such as Lucretius drew, a god like thee:
Wrapp'd up in self, a god without a thought,

Regardless of our merit or default.
Or that bright image to our fancy draw,
Which Theocles in raptur'd vision saw,
While through poetic scenes the Genius roves,
Or wanders wild in academic groves;
That Nature our society adores,
Where Tindal dictates, and Silenus snores.'

Rous'd at his name up rose the bousy Sire,
And shook from out his pipe the seeds of fire;
Then snapp'd his box, and strok'd his belly down:
Rosy and rev'rend, though without a gown.
Bland and familiar to the throne he came,
Led up the youth, and call'd the Goddess Dame .
Then thus, 'From priestcraft happily set free,
Lo! ev'ry finished Son returns to thee:
First slave to words, then vassal to a name,
Then dupe to party; child and man the same;
Bounded by Nature, narrow'd still by art,
A trifling head, and a contracted heart.
Thus bred, thus taught, how many have I seen,
Smiling on all, and smil'd on by a queen.
Marked out for honours, honour'd for their birth,
To thee the most rebellious things on earth:
Now to thy gentle shadow all are shrunk,
All melted down, in pension, or in punk!
So K-- so B-- sneak'd into the grave,
A monarch's half, and half a harlot's slave.
Poor W-- nipp'd in Folly's broadest bloom,
Who praises now? his chaplain on his tomb.
Then take them all, oh take them to thy breast!
Thy Magus , Goddess! shall perform the rest.'

With that, a Wizard old his Cup extends;
Which whoso tastes, forgets his former friends,
Sire, ancestors, himself. One casts his eyes
Up to a Star , and like Endymion dies:
A Feather , shooting from another's head,
Extracts his brain, and principle is fled,
Lost is his God, his country, ev'rything;
And nothing left but homage to a king!
The vulgar herd turn off to roll with hogs,
To run with horses, or to hunt with dogs;
But, sad example! never to escape
Their infamy, still keep the human shape.
But she, good Goddess, sent to ev'ry child
Firm impudence, or stupefaction mild;
And straight succeeded, leaving shame no room,
Cibberian forehead, or Cimmerian gloom.
Kind self-conceit to somewhere glass applies,
Which no one looks in with another's eyes:
But as the flatt'rer or dependant paint,

Beholds himself a patriot, chief, or saint.
On others Int'rest her gay liv'ry flings,
Int'rest that waves on party-colour'd wings:
Turn'd to the sun, she casts a thousand dyes,
And, as she turns, the colours fall or rise.
Others the siren sisters warble round,
And empty heads console with empty sound.
No more, Alas! the voice of Fame they hear,
The balm of Dulness trickling in their ear.
Great C--, H--, P--, R--, K--,
Why all your toils? your Sons have learn'd to sing.
How quick ambition hastes to ridicule!
The sire is made a peer, the son a fool.
On some, a Priest succinct in amice white
Attends; all flesh is nothing in his sight!
Beeves, at his touch, at once to jelly turn,
And the huge boar is shrunk into an urn:
The board with specious miracles he loads,
Turns hares to larks, and pigeons into toads.
Another (for in all what one can shine?)
Explains the
Seve
and
Verdeur
of the vine.
What cannot copious sacrifice atone?
Thy truffles, Perigord! thy hams, Bayonne!
With French libation, and Italian strain,
Wash Bladen white, and expiate Hays's stain.
Knight lifts the head, for what are crowds undone.
To three essential partridges in one?
Gone ev'ry blush, and silent all reproach,
Contending princes mount them in their coach.
Next, bidding all draw near on bended knees,
The Queen confers her Titles and Degrees .
Her children first of more distinguish'd sort,
Who study Shakespeare at the Inns of Court,
Impale a glowworm, or vertú profess,
Shine in the dignity of F.R.S.
Some, deep Freemasons, join the silent race
Worthy to fill Pythagoras's place:
Some botanists, or florists at the least,
Or issue members of an annual feast.
Nor pass'd the meanest unregarded, one
Rose a Gregorian, one a Gormogon.
The last, not least in honour or applause,
Isis and Cam made Doctors of her Laws.

Then, blessing all, 'Go, Children of my care!
To practice now from theory repair.
All my commands are easy, short, and full:
My sons! be proud, be selfish, and be dull.

Guard my prerogative, assert my throne:
This nod confirms each privilege your own.
The cap and switch be sacred to his Grace;
With staff and pumps the Marquis lead the race;
From stage to stage the licens'd Earl may run,
Pair'd with his fellow charioteer the sun;
The learned Baron butterflies design,
Or draw to silk Arachne's subtle line;
The Judge to dance his brother Sergeant call;
The Senator at cricket urge the ball;
The Bishop stow (pontific luxury!)
An hundred souls of turkeys in a pie;
The sturdy Squire to Gallic masters stoop,
And drown his lands and manors in a soupe .
Others import yet nobler arts from France,
Teach kings to fiddle, and make senates dance.
Perhaps more high some daring son may soar,
Proud to my list to add one monarch more;
And nobly conscious, princes are but things
Born for first ministers, as slaves for kings,
Tyrant supreme! shall three Estates command,
And make one mighty Dunciad of the Land!

More she had spoke, but yawn'd-All Nature nods:
What mortal can resist the yawn of gods?
Churches and Chapels instantly it reach'd;
(St. James's first, for leaden Gilbert preach'd)
Then catch'd the schools; the Hall scarce kept awake;
The Convocation gap'd, but could not speak:
Lost was the nation's sense, nor could be found,
While the long solemn unison went round:
Wide, and more wide, it spread o'er all the realm;
Even Palinurus nodded at the helm:
The vapour mild o'er each committee crept;
Unfinish'd treaties in each office slept;
And chiefless armies doz'd out the campaign;
And navies yawn'd for orders on the main.
O Muse! relate (for you can tell alone,
Wits have short memories, and Dunces none),
Relate, who first, who last resign'd to rest;
Whose heads she partly, whose completely blest;
What charms could faction, what ambition lull,
The venal quiet, and entrance the dull;
Till drown'd was sense, and shame, and right, and wrong-
O sing, and hush the nations with thy song!
In vain, in vain-the all-composing hour
Resistless falls: The Muse obeys the Pow'r.
She comes! she comes! the sable throne behold
Of Night primeval, and of Chaos old!
Before her, Fancy's gilded clouds decay,
And all its varying rainbows die away.
Wit shoots in vain its momentary fires,

The meteor drops, and in a flash expires.
As one by one, at dread Medea's strain,
The sick'ning stars fade off th' ethereal plain;
As Argus' eyes by Hermes' wand oppress'd,
Clos'd one by one to everlasting rest;
Thus at her felt approach, and secret might,
Art after Art goes out, and all is Night.
See skulking Truth to her old cavern fled,
Mountains of Casuistry heap'd o'er her head!
Philosophy, that lean'd on Heav'n before,
Shrinks to her second cause, and is no more.
Physic of Metaphysic begs defence,
And Metaphysic calls for aid on Sense !
See Mystery to Mathematics fly!
In vain! they gaze, turn giddy, rave, and die.
Religion blushing veils her sacred fires,
And unawares Morality expires.
Nor public Flame, nor private , dares to shine;
Nor human Spark is left, nor Glimpse divine !
Lo! thy dread Empire, Chaos! is restor'd;
Light dies before thy uncreating word:
Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;
And universal Darkness buries All.

Alexander Pope

The Dying Christian to His Soul

Vital spark of heav’nly flame!
Quit, O quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling’ring, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heav’n opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy sting?

Alexander Pope

The Fable of Dryope - Ovid's Metamorphoses Book 9, [v. 324-393]

She said, and for her lost Calanthis sighs,
When the fair Consort of her son replies.
'Since you a servant's ravish'd form bemoan,
And kindly sigh for sorrows not your own;
Let me (if tears and grief permit) relate
A nearer woe, a sister's stranger fate.
No Nymph of all OEchalia could compare
For beauteous form with Dryope the fair,
Her tender mother's only hope and pride,
(Myself the offspring of a second bride)
This Nymph compress'd by him who rules the day,
Whom Delphi and the Delian isle obey,
Andraemon lov'd; and, bless'd in all those charms
That pleas'd a God, succeeded to her arms.
'A lake there was, with shelving banks around,
Whose verdant summit fragrant myrtles crown'd.
These shades, unknowing of the fates, she sought,
And to the Naiads flow'ry garlands brought;
Her smiling babe (a pleasing charge) she prest
Within her arms, and nourish'd at her breast.
Not distant far, a wat'ry Lotos grows,
The spring was new, and all the verdant boughs
Adorn'd with blossoms promis'd fruits that vie
In glowing colours with the Tyrian dye:
Of these she cropp'd to please her infant son,
And I myself the same rash act had done:
But lo! I saw, (as near her side I stood)
The violated blossoms drop with blood;
Upon the tree I cast a frightful look;
The trembling tree with sudden horror shook.
Lotis the nymph (if rural tales be true)
As from Priapus' lawless lust she flew,
Forsook her form; and fixing here became
A flow'ry plant, which still preserves her name.
'This change unknown, astonish'd at the sight
My trembling sister strove to urge her flight,
And first the pardon of the nymphs implor'd,
And those offended sylvan powers ador'd:
But when she backward would have fled, she found
Her stiff'ning feet were rooted in the ground:
In vain to free her fasten'd feet she strove,
And as she struggles, only moves above;
She feels th' encroaching bark around her grow
By quick degrees, and cover all below:
Surpris'd at this, her trembling hand she heaves
To rend her hair, the shooting leaves are seen
To rise, and shade her with a sudden green.
The child Amphissus, to her bosom prest,
Perceiv'd a colder and a harder breast,
And found the springs, that ne'er till then deny'd
Their milky moisture, on a sudden dry'd.
I saw, unhappy! what I now relate,

And stood the helpless witness of thy fate,
Embrac'd thy boughs, thy rising bark delay'd,
There wish'd to grow, and mingle shade with shade.
'Behold Andraemon and th' unhappy sire
Appear, and for their Dryope enquire;
A springing tree for Dryope they find,
And print warm kisses on the panting rind.
Prostrate, with tears their kindred plant bedew,
And close embrace as to the roots they grew,
The face was all that now remain'd of thee,
No more a woman, nor yet quite a tree;
Thy branches hung with humid pearls appear,
From ev'ry leaf distils a trickling tear,
And straight a voice, while yet a voice remains,
Thus thro' the trembling boughs in sighs complains.
''If to the wretched any faith be giv'n,
I swear by all th' unpitying pow'rs of heav'n,
No wilful crime this heavy vengeance bred;
In mutual innocence our lives we led:
If this be false, let these new greens decay,
Let sounding axes lop my limbs away,
And crackling flames on all my honours prey.
But from my branching arms this infant bear,
Let some kind nurse supply a mother's care:
And to his mother let him oft be led,
Sport in her shades, and in her shades be fed;
Teach him, when first his infant voice shall frame
Imperfect words, and lisp his mother's name,
To hail this tree; and say with weeping eyes,
Within this plant my hapless parent lies:
And when in youth he seeks the shady woods,
Oh, let him fly the crystal lakes and floods,
Nor touch the fatal flow'rs; but, warn'd by me,
Believe a Goddess shrin'd in ev'ry tree.
My sire, my sister, and my spouse farewell!
If in your breasts or love, or pity dwell,
Protect your plant, nor let my branches feel
The browsing cattle or the piercing steel.
Farewell! and since I cannot bend to join
My lips to yours, advance at least to mine.
My son, thy mother's parting kiss receive,
While yet thy mother has a kiss to give.
I can no more; the creeping rind invades
My closing lips, and hides my head in shades:
Remove your hands, the bark shall soon suffice
Without their aid to seal these dying eyes.'
'She ceas'd at once to speak, and ceas'd to be;
And all the nymph was lost within the tree;
Yet latent life thro' her new branches reign'd,
And long the plant a human heat retain'd.'

Alexander Pope

The Iliad: Book VI (excerpt)

He said, and pass'd with sad presaging heart
To seek his spouse, his soul's far dearer part;
At home he sought her, but he sought in vain:
She, with one maid of all her menial train,
Had thence retir'd; and, with her second joy,
The young Astyanax, the hope of Troy,
Pensive she stood on Ilion's tow'ry height,
Beheld the war, and sicken'd at the sight;
There her sad eyes in vain her lord explore,
Or weep the wounds her bleeding country bore.

But he, who found not whom his soul desir'd,
Whose virtue charm'd him as her beauty fir'd,
Stood in the gates, and ask'd what way she bent
Her parting steps; if to the fane she went,
Where late the mourning matrons made resort,
Or sought her sisters in the Trojan court.
"Not to the court" replied th' attendant train,
"Nor, mixed with matrons, to Minerva's fane;
To Ilion's steepy tow'r she bent her way,
To mark the fortunes of the doubtful day.
Troy fled, she heard, before the Grecian sword;
She heard, and trembled for her absent lord.
Distracted with surprise, she seem'd to fly,
Fear on her cheek and sorrow in her eye.
The nurse attended with her infant boy,
The young Astyanax, the hope of Troy."

Hector, this heard, return'd without delay;
Swift through the town he trod his former way
Through streets of palaces and walks of state,
And met the mourner at the Scæan gate.
With haste to meet him sprung the joyful fair,
His blameless wife, E{"e}tion's wealthy heir
(Cilician Thebè great E{"e}tion sway'd,
And Hippoplacus' wide-extended shade);
The nurse stood near, in whose embraces prest
His only hope hung smiling at her breast,
Whom each soft charm and early grace adorn,
Fair as the new-born star that gilds the morn.
To this lov'd infant Hector gave the name
Scamandrius, from Scamander's honour'd stream;
Astyanax the Trojans call'd the boy,
From his great father, the defence of Troy.
Silent the warrior smil'd, and pleas'd, resign'd
To tender passions all his mighty mind:
His beauteous princess cast a mournful look,
Hung on his hand, and then dejected spoke;
Her bosom labour'd with a boding sigh,
And the big tear stood trembling in her eye.

"Too daring prince! ah whither dost thou run?

Ah, too forgetful of thy wife and son!
And think'st thou not how wretched we shall be,
A widow I, a helpless orphan he!
For sure such courage length of life denies,
And thou must fall, thy virtue's sacrifice.
Greece in her single heroes strove in vain;
Now hosts oppose thee, and thou must be slain!
Oh, grant me, gods! e'er Hector meets his doom,
All I can ask of heav'n, an early tomb!
So shall my days in one sad tenor run,
And end with sorrows as they first begun.
No parent now remains, my griefs to share,
No father's aid, no mother's tender care.
The fierce Achilles wrapp'd our walls in fire,
Laid Thebè waste, and slew my warlike sire!
His fate compassion in the victor bred;
Stern as he was, he yet rever'd the dead,
His radiant arms preserv'd from hostile spoil,
And laid him decent on the fun'ral pile;
Then rais'd a mountain where his bones were burn'd:
The mountain nymphs the rural tomb adorn'd;
Jove's sylvan daughters bade their elms bestow
A barren shade, and in his honour grow.

"By the same arm my sev'n brave brothers fell;
In one sad day beheld the gates of hell:
While the fat herds and snowy flocks they fed,
Amid their fields the hapless heroes bled!
My mother liv'd to bear the victor's bands,
The queen of Hippoplacia's sylvan lands;
Redeem'd too late, she scarce beheld again
Her pleasing empire and her native plain,
When, ah! oppress'd by life-consuming woe,
She fell a victim to Diana's bow.

"Yet while my Hector still survives, I see
My father, mother, brethren, all, in thee:
Alas! my parents, brothers, kindred, all,
Once more will perish if my Hector fall.
Thy wife, thy infant, in thy danger share:
Oh, prove a husband's and a father's care!
That quarter most the skilful Greeks annoy,
Where yon wild fig-trees join the wall of Troy:
Thou from this tow'r defend th' important post
There Agamemnon points his dreadful host,
That pass Tydides, Ajax, strive to gain,
And there the vengeful Spartan fires his train.
Thrice our bold foes the fierce attack have giv'n,
Or led by hopes, or dictated from heav'n.
Let others in the field their arms employ,
But stay my Hector here, and guard his Troy."

The chief replied: "That post shall be my care,
Not that alone, but all the works of war.
How would the sons of Troy, in arms renown'd,
And Troy's proud dames, whose garments sweep the ground,
Attaint the lustre of my former name,
Should Hector basely quit the field of fame?
My early youth was bred to martial pains,
My soul impels me to th' embattled plains:
Let me be foremost to defend the throne,
And guard my father's glories, and my own.
Yet come it will, the day decreed by fates,
(How my heart trembles while my tongue relates!)
The day when thou, imperial Troy! must bend,
And see thy warriors fall, thy glories end.
And yet no dire presage so wounds my mind,
My mother's death, the ruin of my kind,
Not Priam's hoary hairs defil'd with gore,
Not all my brothers gasping on the shore,
As thine, Andromache! thy griefs I dread;
I see thee trembling, weeping, captive led.
In Argive looms our battles to design,
And woes, of which so large a part was thine!
To bear the victor's hard commands, or bring
The weight of waters from Hyperia's spring!
There, while you groan beneath the load of life,
They cry, 'Behold the mighty Hector's wife!'
Some haughty Greek, who lives thy tears to see,
Embitters all thy woes by naming me.
The thoughts of glory past and present shame,
A thousand griefs, shall waken at the name!
May I lie cold before that dreadful day,
Press'd with a load of monumental clay!
Thy Hector, wrapp'd in everlasting sleep,
Shall neither hear thee sigh, nor see thee weep."

Thus having spoke, th' illustrious chief of Troy
Stretch'd his fond arms to clasp the lovely boy.
The babe clung crying to his nurse's breast,
Scar'd at the dazzling helm and nodding crest.
With secret pleasure each fond parent smil'd,
And Hector hasted to relieve his child;
The glitt'ring terrors from his brows unbound,
And plac'd the beaming helmet on the ground.
Then kiss'd the child, and, lifting high in air,
Thus to the gods preferr'd a father's pray'r:

"O thou! whose glory fills th' ethereal throne,
And all ye deathless pow'rs! protect my son!
Grant him, like me, to purchase just renown,
To guard the Trojans, to defend the crown,
Against his country's foes the war to wage,
And rise the Hector of the future age!

So when, triumphant from successful toils,
Of heroes slain he bears the reeking spoils,
Whole hosts may hail him with deserv'd acclaim,
And say, 'This chief transcends his father's fame':
While pleas'd, amidst the gen'ral shouts of Troy,
His mother's conscious heart o'erflows with joy."

He spoke, and fondly gazing on her charms,
Restor'd the pleasing burthen to her arms;
Soft on her fragrant breast the babe she laid,
Hush'd to repose, and with a smile survey'd.
The troubled pleasure soon chastis'd by fear,
She mingled with the smile a tender tear.
The soften'd chief with kind compassion view'd,
And dried the falling drops, and thus pursu'd:

"Andromache! my soul's far better part,
Why with untimely sorrows heaves thy heart?
No hostile hand can antedate my doom,
Till fate condemns me to the silent tomb.
Fix'd is the term to all the race of earth,
And such the hard condition of our birth.
No force can then resist, no flight can save;
All sink alike, the fearful and the brave.
No more--but hasten to thy tasks at home,
There guide the spindle, and direct the loom;
Me glory summons to the martial scene,
The field of combat is the sphere for men.
Where heroes war, the foremost place I claim,
The first in danger as the first in fame."

Alexander Pope

The Looking-Glass. : on Mrs. Pulteney

With scornful mien, and various toss of air,
Fantastic vain, and insolently fair,
Grandeur intoxicates her giddy brain,
She looks ambition, and she moves disdain.
Far other carriage grac'd her virgin life,
But charming G--y's lost in P--y's wife.
Not greater arrogance in him we find,
And this conjunction swells at least her mind:
O could the sire renown'd in glass, produce
One faithful mirror for his daughter's use!
Wherein she might her haughty errors trace,
And by reflection learn to mend her face:
The wonted sweetness to her form restore,
Be what she was, and charm mankind once more!

Alexander Pope

The Messiah : A Sacred Eclogue

Ye nymphs of Solyma! begin the song,
To heavenly themes sublimer strains belong.
The mossy fountains, and the sylvan shades,
The dreams of Pindus, and the Aonian maids,
Delight no more - O thou, my voice inspire,
Who touched Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire!

Rapt into future times the bard begun,
A virgin shall conceive, a Virgin bear a son!
From Jesse's root behold a branch arise,
Whose sacred flower with fragrance fills the skies;
The ethereal Spirit o'er its leaves shall move,
And on its top descend the mystic Dove.
Ye heavens! from high the dewy nectar pour,
And in soft silence shed the kindly shower!
The sick and weak, the healing Plant shall aid,
From storms a shelter, and from heat a shade.
All crimes shall cease, and ancient fraud shall fail;
Returning justice lift aloft her scale.
Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,
And white robed innocence from heaven descend.

Swift fly the years, and rise the expected morn!
O spring to light, auspicious Babe, be born!
See! nature hastes her earliest wreaths to bring,
WIth all the incense of the breathing spring!
See! lofty Lebanon his head advance,
See! nodding forests on the mountains dance:
See! spicy clouds from lowly Sharon rise;
And Carmel's flowery top perfumes the skies.
Hark! a glad voice the lonely desart cheers;
Prepare the way! a God, a God appears:
A God, a God! the vocal hills reply,
The rocks proclaim the approaching Deity.
Lo! earth receives him from the bending skies!
Sink down ye mountains, and ye vallies rise!
With heads declined ye cedars homage pay!
Be smooth ye rocks, ye rapid floods give way!
The Saviour comes! by ancient bards foretold:
Hear him ye deaf, and all ye blind, behold!
He from thick films shall purge the visual ray,
And on the sightless eye-ball pour the day.
'Tis he the obstructed paths of sound shall clear,
The dumb shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,
And leap exulting like the bounding roe:
No sigh, no murmer the wide world shall hear;
From every face he wipes off every tear.
In adamantine chains shall death be bound,
And hell's grim tyrant feel the eternal wound.
As the good shepherd tends his fleecy care,
Seeks freshest pastures and the purest air:
Explores the lost, the wandering sheep directs,

By day o'ersees them, and by night protects;
The tender lambs he raises in his arms,
Feeds from his hand, and in his bosom warms!
Thus shall mankind his guardian care engage,
The promis'd father of the future age.
No more shall nation against nation rise,
Nor ardent warriors meet with hateful eyes;
Nor fields with gleaming steel be cover'd o'er,
The brazen trumpets kindle rage no more;
But useless lances into scythes shall bend,
And the broad faulchion in a plough-share end.
Then palaces shall rise: the joyful son
Shall finish what his short-liv'd fire begun;
Their vines a shadow to their race shall yield,
And the same hand that sow'd, shall reap the field.
The swain in barren desarts with surprise
Sees lillies spring, and sudden verdure rise,
And starts amidst the thirsty wilds to hear
New falls of water murmuring in his ear;
On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes,
The green reed trembles, and the bulrush nods.
Waste sandy vallies once perplex'd with thorn,
The spiry fir and shapely box adorn;
The leafless shrubs the flow'ring palms succeed,
And odorous myrtle to the noisome weed.
The lambs with wolves shall grace the verdant mead,
And boys in flow'ry bands the tyger lead;
The steer and lion at one crib shall meet,
And harmless serpents lick the pilgrim's feet.
The smiling infant in his hand shall take
The crested basilisk and speckled snake;
Pleas'd, the green lustres of the scales survey,
And with their forky tongues shall innocently play.

Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem rise!
Exalt thy tow'ry head, and lift thy eyes!
See! a long race thy spacious courts adorn;
See! future sons and daughters yet unborn,
In crowding ranks on ev'ry side arise,
Demanding life, impatient for the skies!
See! barb'rous nations at thy gates attend,
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend;
See! thy bright altars throng'd with prostrate kings,
And heap'd with products of Sabaean springs!
For thee Idume's spicy forests blow,
And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountains glow.
See! heav'n its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in a flood of day!
No more the rising sun shall gild the morn,
Nor ev'ning Cynthia fill her silver horn;
But lost, dissolv'd in thy superior rays,
One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze,

O'erflow thy courts: the Light Himself shall shine
Reveal'd, and God's eternal day be thine!
The seas shall waste, the skies in smoke decay,
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;
But fix'd his word, his saving pow'r remains,
Thy realm for ever lasts, thy own Messiah reigns.

Alexander Pope

The Rape of the Lock

Part 1

WHAT dire Offence from am'rous Causes springs,
What mighty Contests rise from trivial Things,
I sing -- This Verse to C---, Muse! is due;
This, ev'n Belinda may vouchfafe to view:
Slight is the Subject, but not so the Praise,
If She inspire, and He approve my Lays.
Say what strange Motive, Goddess! cou'd compel
A well-bred Lord t'assault a gentle Belle?
Oh say what stranger Cause, yet unexplor'd,
Cou'd make a gentle Belle reject a Lord?
And dwells such Rage in softest Bosoms then?
And lodge such daring Souls in Little Men?

Sol thro' white Curtains shot a tim'rous Ray,
And op'd those Eyes that must eclipse the Day;
Now Lapdogs give themselves the rowzing Shake,
And sleepless Lovers, just at Twelve, awake:
Thrice rung the Bell, the Slipper knock'd the Ground,
And the press'd Watch return'd a silver Sound.
Belinda still her downy Pillow prest,
Her Guardian Sylph prolong'd the balmy Rest.
'Twas he had summon'd to her silent Bed
The Morning-Dream that hover'd o'er her Head.
A Youth more glitt'ring than a Birth-night Beau,
(That ev'n in Slumber caus'd her Cheek to glow)
Seem'd to her Ear his winning Lips to lay,
And thus in Whispers said, or seem'd to say.

Fairest of Mortals, thou distinguish'd Care
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!
If e'er one Vision touch'd thy infant Thought,
Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught,
Of airy Elves by Moonlight Shadows seen,
The silver Token, and the circled Green,
Or Virgins visited by Angel-Pow'rs,
With Golden Crowns and Wreaths of heav'nly Flowers,
Hear and believe! thy own Importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow Views to Things below.
Some secret Truths from Learned Pride conceal'd,
To Maids alone and Children are reveal'd:
What tho' no Credit doubting Wits may give?
The Fair and Innocent shall still believe.
Know then, unnumbered Spirits round thee fly,
The light Militia of the lower Sky;
These, tho' unseen, are ever on the Wing,
Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.
Think what an Equipage thou hast in Air,
And view with scorn Two Pages and a Chair.
As now your own, our Beings were of old,
And once inclos'd in Woman's beauteous Mold;

Thence, by a soft Transition, we repair
From earthly Vehicles to these of Air.
Think not, when Woman's transient Breath is fled,
That all her Vanities at once are dead:
Succeeding Vanities she still regards,
And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the Cards.
Her Joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,
And Love of Ombre, after Death survive.
For when the Fair in all their Pride expire,
To their first Elements the Souls retire:
The Sprights of fiery Termagants in Flame
Mount up, and take a Salamander's Name.
Soft yielding Minds to Water glide away,
And sip with Nymphs, their Elemental Tea.
The graver Prude sinks downward to a Gnome,
In search of Mischief still on Earth to roam.
The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
And sport and flutter in the Fields of Air.

Know farther yet; Whoever fair and chaste
Rejects Mankind, is by some Sylph embrac'd:
For Spirits, freed from mortal Laws, with ease
Assume what Sexes and what Shapes they please.
What guards the Purity of melting Maids,
In Courtly Balls, and Midnight Masquerades,
Safe from the treach'rous Friend, and daring Spark,
The Glance by Day, the Whisper in the Dark;
When kind Occasion prompts their warm Desires,
When Musick softens, and when Dancing fires?
'Tis but their Sylph, the wise Celestials know,
Tho' Honour is the Word with Men below.

Some Nymphs there are, too conscious of their Face,
For Life predestin'd to the Gnomes Embrace.
These swell their Prospects and exalt their Pride,
When Offers are disdain'd, and Love deny'd.
Then gay Ideas crowd the vacant Brain;
While Peers and Dukes, and all their sweeping Train,
And Garters, Stars, and Coronets appear,
And in soft Sounds, Your Grace salutes their Ear.
'Tis these that early taint the Female Soul,
Instruct the Eyes of young Coquettes to roll,
Teach Infants Cheeks a bidden Blush to know,
And little Hearts to flutter at a Beau.

Oft when the World imagine Women stray,
The Sylphs thro' mystick Mazes guide their Way,
Thro' all the giddy Circle they pursue,
And old Impertinence expel by new.
What tender Maid but must a Victim fall
To one Man's Treat, but for another's Ball?
When Florio speaks, what Virgin could withstand,

If gentle Damon did not squeeze her Hand?
With varying Vanities, from ev'ry Part,
They shift the moving Toyshop of their Heart;
Where Wigs with Wigs, with Sword-knots Sword-knots strive,
Beaus banish Beaus, and Coaches Coaches drive.
This erring Mortals Levity may call,
Oh blind to Truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.

Of these am I, who thy Protection claim,
A watchful Sprite, and Ariel is my Name.
Late, as I rang'd the Crystal Wilds of Air,
In the clear Mirror of thy ruling Star
I saw, alas! some dread Event impend,
E're to the Main this Morning Sun descend.
But Heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where:
Warn'd by thy Sylph, oh Pious Maid beware!
This to disclose is all thy Guardian can.
Beware of all, but most beware of Man!

He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too long,
Leapt up, and wak'd his Mistress with his Tongue.
'Twas then Belinda, if Report say true,
Thy Eyes first open'd on a Billet-doux.
Wounds, Charms, and Ardors, were no sooner read,
But all the Vision vanish'd from thy Head.

And now, unveil'd, the Toilet stands display'd,
Each Silver Vase in mystic Order laid.
First, rob'd in White, the Nymph intent adores
With Head uncover'd, the cosmetic Pow'rs.
A heav'nly Image in the Glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her Eyes she rears;
Th' inferior Priestess, at her Altar's side,
Trembling, begins the sacred Rites of Pride.
Unnumber'd Treasures ope at once, and here
The various Off'rings of the World appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious Toil,
And decks the Goddess with the glitt'ring Spoil.
This Casket India's glowing Gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder Box.

The Tortoise here and Elephant unite,
Transform'd to Combs, the speckled and the white.
Here Files of Pins extend their shining Rows,
Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux.
Now awful Beauty puts on all its Arms;
The Fair each moment rises in her Charms,
Repairs her Smiles, awakens ev'ry Grace,
And calls forth all the Wonders of her Face;
Sees by Degrees a purer Blush arise,
And keener Lightnings quicken in her Eyes.
The busy Sylphs surround their darling Care;

These set the Head, and those divide the Hair,
Some fold the Sleeve, while others plait the Gown;
And Betty's prais'd for Labours not her own.

Part 2

NOT with more Glories, in th' Etherial Plain,
The Sun first rises o'er the purpled Main,
Than issuing forth, the Rival of his Beams
Lanch'd on the Bosom of the Silver Thames.
Fair Nymphs, and well-drest Youths around her shone,
But ev'ry Eye was fix'd on her alone.
On her white Breast a sparkling Cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore.
Her lively Looks a sprightly Mind disclose,
Quick as her Eyes, and as unfix'd as those:
Favours to none, to all she Smiles extends,
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the Sun, her Eyes the Gazers strike,
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful Ease, and Sweetness void of Pride,
Might hide her Faults, if Belles had faults to hide:
If to her share some Female Errors fall,
Look on her Face, and you'll forget 'em all.

This Nymph, to the Destruction of Mankind,
Nourish'd two Locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal Curls, and well conspir'd to deck
With shining Ringlets her smooth Iv'ry Neck.
Love in these Labyrinths his Slaves detains,
And mighty Hearts are held in slender Chains.
With hairy Sprindges we the Birds betray,
Slight Lines of Hair surprize the Finny Prey,
Fair Tresses Man's Imperial Race insnare,
And Beauty draws us with a single Hair.

Th' Adventrous Baron the bright Locks admir'd,
He saw, he wish'd, and to the Prize aspir'd:
Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,
By Force to ravish, or by Fraud betray;
For when Success a Lover's Toil attends,
Few ask, if Fraud or Force attain'd his Ends.

For this, e're Phoebus rose, he had implor'd
Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry Pow'r ador'd,
But chiefly Love--to Love an Altar built,
Of twelve vast French Romances, neatly gilt.
There lay three Garters, half a Pair of Gloves;
And all the Trophies of his former Loves.
With tender Billet-doux he lights the Pyre,
And breathes three am'rous Sighs to raise the Fire.

Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent Eyes
Soon to obtain, and long possess the Prize:
The Pow'rs gave Ear, and granted half his Pray'r,
The rest, the Winds dispers'd in empty Air.

But now secure the painted Vessel glides,
The Sun-beams trembling on the floating Tydes,
While melting Musick steals upon the Sky,
And soften'd Sounds along the Waters die.
Smooth flow the Waves, the Zephyrs gently play
Belinda smil'd, and all the World was gay.
All but the Sylph---With careful Thoughts opprest,
Th' impending Woe sate heavy on his Breast.
He summons strait his Denizens of Air;
The lucid Squadrons round the Sails repair:
Soft o'er the Shrouds Aerial Whispers breathe,
That seem'd but Zephyrs to the Train beneath.
Some to the Sun their Insect-Wings unfold,
Waft on the Breeze, or sink in Clouds of Gold.
Transparent Forms, too fine for mortal Sight,
Their fluid Bodies half dissolv'd in Light.
Loose to the Wind their airy Garments flew,
Thin glitt'ring Textures of the filmy Dew;
Dipt in the richest Tincture of the Skies,
Where Light disports in ever-mingling Dies,
While ev'ry Beam new transient Colours flings,
Colours that change whene'er they wave their Wings.
Amid the Circle, on the gilded Mast,
Superior by the Head, was Ariel plac'd;
His Purple Pinions opening to the Sun,
He rais'd his Azure Wand, and thus begun.

Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your Chief give Ear,
Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Daemons hear!
Ye know the Spheres and various Tasks assign'd,
By Laws Eternal, to th' Aerial Kind.
Some in the Fields of purest AEther play,
And bask and whiten in the Blaze of Day.
Some guide the Course of wandring Orbs on high,
Or roll the Planets thro' the boundless Sky.
Some less refin'd, beneath the Moon's pale Light
Hover, and catch the shooting stars by Night;
Or suck the Mists in grosser Air below,
Or dip their Pinions in the painted Bow,
Or brew fierce Tempests on the wintry Main,
Or o'er the Glebe distill the kindly Rain.
Others on Earth o'er human Race preside,
Watch all their Ways, and all their Actions guide:
Of these the Chief the Care of Nations own,
And guard with Arms Divine the British Throne.

Our humbler Province is to tend the Fair,

Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious Care.
To save the Powder from too rude a Gale,
Nor let th' imprison'd Essences exhale,
To draw fresh Colours from the vernal Flow'rs,
To steal from Rainbows ere they drop in Show'rs
A brighter Wash; to curl their waving Hairs,
Assist their Blushes, and inspire their Airs;
Nay oft, in Dreams, Invention we bestow,
To change a Flounce, or add a Furbelo.

This Day, black Omens threat the brightest Fair
That e'er deserv'd a watchful Spirit's Care;
Some dire Disaster, or by Force, or Slight,
But what, or where, the Fates have wrapt in Night.
Whether the Nymph shall break Diana's Law,
Or some frail China Jar receive a Flaw,
Or stain her Honour, or her new Brocade,
Forget her Pray'rs, or miss a Masquerade,
Or lose her Heart, or Necklace, at a Ball;
Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must fall.
Haste then ye Spirits! to your Charge repair;
The flutt'ring Fan be Zephyretta's Care;
The Drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;
And Momentilla, let the Watch be thine;
Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite Lock;
Ariel himself shall be the Guard of Shock.

To Fifty chosen Sylphs, of special Note,
We trust th' important Charge, the Petticoat.
Oft have we known that sev'nfold Fence to fail;
Tho' stiff with Hoops, and arm'd with Ribs of Whale.
Form a strong Line about the Silver Bound,
And guard the wide Circumference around.

Whatever spirit, careless of his Charge,
His Post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,
Shall feel sharp Vengeance soon o'ertake his Sins,
Be stopt in Vials, or transfixt with Pins.
Or plung'd in Lakes of bitter Washes lie,
Or wedg'd whole Ages in a Bodkin's Eye:
Gums and Pomatums shall his Flight restrain,
While clog'd he beats his silken Wings in vain;
Or Alom-Stypticks with contracting Power
Shrink his thin Essence like a rivell'd Flower.
Or as Ixion fix'd, the Wretch shall feel
The giddy Motion of the whirling Mill,
In Fumes of burning Chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the Sea that froaths below!

He spoke; the Spirits from the Sails descend;
Some, Orb in Orb, around the Nymph extend,
Some thrid the mazy Ringlets of her Hair,

Some hang upon the Pendants of her Ear;
With beating Hearts the dire Event they wait,
Anxious, and trembling for the Birth of Fate.

Part 3

CLOSE by those Meads for ever crown'd with Flow'rs,
Where Thames with Pride surveys his rising Tow'rs,
There stands a Structure of Majestick Frame,
Which from the neighb'ring Hampton takes its Name.
Here Britain's Statesmen oft the Fall foredoom
Of Foreign Tyrants, and of Nymphs at home;
Here Thou, great Anna! whom three Realms obey,
Dost sometimes Counsel take--and sometimes Tea.
Hither the Heroes and the Nymphs resort,
To taste awhile the Pleasures of a Court;
In various Talk th' instructive hours they past,
Who gave the Ball, or paid the Visit last:
One speaks the Glory of the British Queen,
And one describes a charming Indian Screen.
A third interprets Motions, Looks, and Eyes;
At ev'ry Word a Reputation dies.
Snuff, or the Fan, supply each Pause of Chat,
With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.

Mean while declining from the Noon of Day,
The Sun obliquely shoots his burning Ray;
The hungry Judges soon the Sentence sign,
And Wretches hang that Jury-men may Dine;
The Merchant from th'exchange returns in Peace,
And the long Labours of the Toilette cease ----
Belinda now, whom Thirst of Fame invites,
Burns to encounter two adventrous Knights,
At Ombre singly to decide their Doom;
And swells her Breast with Conquests yet to come.
Strait the three Bands prepare in Arms to join,
Each Band the number of the Sacred Nine.
Soon as she spreads her Hand, th' Aerial Guard
Descend, and sit on each important Card,
First Ariel perch'd upon a Matadore,
Then each, according to the Rank they bore;
For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient Race,
Are, as when Women, wondrous fond of place.

Behold, four Kings in Majesty rever'd,
With hoary Whiskers and a forky Beard;
And four fair Queens whose hands sustain a Flow'r,
Th' expressive Emblem of their softer Pow'r;
Four Knaves in Garbs succinct, a trusty Band,
Caps on their heads, and Halberds in their hand;
And Particolour'd Troops, a shining Train,

Draw forth to Combat on the Velvet Plain.

The skilful Nymph reviews her Force with Care;
Let Spades be Trumps, she said, and Trumps they were.

Now move to War her Sable Matadores,
In Show like Leaders of the swarthy Moors.
Spadillio first, unconquerable Lord!
Led off two captive Trumps, and swept the Board.
As many more Manillio forc'd to yield,
And march'd a Victor from the verdant Field.
Him Basto follow'd, but his Fate more hard
Gain'd but one Trump and one Plebeian Card.
With his broad Sabre next, a Chief in Years,
The hoary Majesty of Spades appears;
Puts forth one manly Leg, to sight reveal'd;
The rest his many-colour'd Robe conceal'd.
The Rebel-Knave, who dares his Prince engage,
Proves the just Victim of his Royal Rage.
Ev'n mighty Pam that Kings and Queens o'erthrow,
And mow'd down Armies in the Fights of Lu,
Sad Chance of War! now, destitute of Aid,
Falls undistinguish'd by the Victor Spade.

Thus far both Armies to Belinda yield;
Now to the Baron Fate inclines the Field.
His warlike Amazon her Host invades,
Th' Imperial Consort of the Crown of Spades.
The Club's black Tyrant first her Victim dy'd,
Spite of his haughty Mien, and barb'rous Pride:
What boots the Regal Circle on his Head,
His Giant Limbs in State unwieldy spread?
That long behind he trails his pompous Robe,
And of all Monarchs only grasps the Globe?

The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace;
Th' embroider'd King who shows but half his Face,
And his refulgent Queen, with Pow'rs combin'd,
Of broken Troops an easie Conquest find.
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild Disorder seen,
With Throngs promiscuous strow the level Green.
Thus when dispers'd a routed Army runs,
Of Asia's Troops, and Africk's Sable Sons,
With like Confusion different Nations fly,
In various habits and of various Dye,
The pierc'd Battalions dis-united fall,
In Heaps on Heaps; one Fate o'erwhelms them all.

The Knave of Diamonds now tries his wily Arts,
And wins (oh shameful Chance!) the Queen of Hearts.
At this, the Blood the Virgin's Cheek forsook,
A livid Paleness spreads o'er all her Look;

She sees, and trembles at th' approaching Ill,
Just in the Jaws of Ruin, and Codille.
And now, (as oft in some distemper'd State)
On one nice Trick depends the gen'ral Fate.
An Ace of Hearts steps forth: The King unseen
Lurk'd in her Hand, and mourn'd his captive Queen.
He springs to Vengeance with an eager pace,
And falls like Thunder on the prostrate Ace.
The Nymph exulting fills with Shouts the Sky,
The Walls, the Woods, and long Canals reply.

Oh thoughtless Mortals! ever blind to Fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate!
Sudden these Honours shall be snatch'd away,
And curs'd for ever this Victorious Day.

For lo! the Board with Cups and Spoons is crown'd,
The Berries crackle, and the Mill turns round.
On shining Altars of Japan they raise
The silver Lamp; the fiery Spirits blaze.
From silver Spouts the grateful Liquors glide,
And China's Earth receives the smoking Tyde.
At once they gratify their Scent and Taste,
While frequent Cups prolong the rich Repast.
Strait hover round the Fair her Airy Band;
Some, as she sip'd, the fuming Liquor fann'd,
Some o'er her Lap their careful Plumes display'd,
Trembling, and conscious of the rich Brocade.
Coffee, (which makes the Politician wise,
And see thro' all things with his half shut Eyes)
Sent up in Vapours to the Baron's Brain
New Stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain.
Ah cease rash Youth! desist e'er 'tis too late,
Fear the just Gods, and think of Scylla's Fate!
Chang'd to a Bird, and sent to flit in Air,
She dearly pays for Nisus' injur'd Hair!

But when to Mischief Mortals bend their Will,
How soon they find fit Instruments of Ill!
Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting Grace
A two-edg'd Weapon from her shining Case;
So Ladies in Romance assist their Knight,
Present the Spear, and arm him for the Fight.
He takes the Gift with rev'rence, and extends
The little Engine on his Finger's Ends:
This just behind Belinda's Neck he spread,
As o'er the fragrant Steams she bends her Head:
Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprights repair,
A thousand Wings, by turns, blow back the Hair,
And thrice they twitch'd the Diamond in her Ear,
Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the Foe drew near.
Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought

The close Recesses of the Virgin's Thought;
As on the Nosegay in her Breast reclin'd,
He watch'd th' Ideas rising in her Mind,
Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her Art,
An Earthly Lover lurking at her Heart.
Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his Pow'r expir'd,
Resign'd to Fate, and with a Sigh retir'd.

The Peer now spreads the glitt'ring Forfex wide,
T'inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.
Ev'n then, before the fatal Engine clos'd,
A wretched Sylph too fondly interpos'd;
Fate urg'd the Sheers, and cut the Sylph in twain,
(But Airy Substance soon unites again)
The meeting Points that sacred Hair dissever
From the fair Head, for ever and for ever!

Then flash'd the living Lightnings from her Eyes,
And Screams of Horror rend th' affrighted Skies.
Not louder Shrieks to pitying Heav'n are cast,
When Husbands or when Lap-dogs breath their last,
Or when rich China Vessels, fal'n from high,
In glittring Dust and painted Fragments lie!

Let Wreaths of Triumph now my Temples twine,
(The Victor cry'd) the glorious Prize is mine!
While Fish in Streams, or Birds delight in Air,
Or in a Coach and Six the British Fair,
As long as Atalantis shall be read,
Or the small Pillow grace a Lady's Bed,
While Visits shall be paid on solemn Days,
When numerous Wax-lights in bright Order blaze,
While Nymphs take Treats, or Assignations give,
So long my Honour, Name, and Praise shall live!

What Time wou'd spare, from Steel receives its date,
And Monuments, like Men, submit to Fate!
Steel cou'd the Labour of the Gods destroy,
And strike to Dust th' Imperial Tow'rs of Troy.
Steel cou'd the Works of mortal Pride confound,
And hew Triumphal Arches to the Ground.
What Wonder then, fair Nymph! thy Hairs shou'd feel
The conqu'ring Force of unresisted Steel?

Part 4

BUT anxious Cares the pensive Nymph opprest,
And secret Passions labour'd in her Breast.
Not youthful Kings in Battel seiz'd alive,
Not scornful Virgins who their Charms survive,
Not ardent Lovers robb'd of all their Bliss,

Not ancient Ladies when refus'd a Kiss,
Not Tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,
Not Cynthia when her Manteau's pinn'd awry,
E'er felt such Rage, Resentment and Despair,
As Thou, sad Virgin! for thy ravish'd Hair.

For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky melancholy Spright,
As ever sully'd the fair face of Light,
Down to the Central Earth, his proper Scene,
Repairs to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen.

Swift on his sooty Pinions flitts the Gnome,
And in a Vapour reach'd the dismal Dome.
No cheerful Breeze this sullen Region knows,
The dreaded East is all the Wind that blows.
Here, in a Grotto, sheltred close from Air,
And screen'd in Shades from Day's detested Glare,
She sighs for ever on her pensive Bed,
Pain at her side, and Megrim at her Head.

Two Handmaids wait the Throne: Alike in Place,
But diff'ring far in Figure and in Face.
Here stood Ill-nature like an ancient Maid,
Her wrinkled Form in Black and White array'd;
With store of Pray'rs, for Mornings, Nights, and Noons,
Her Hand is fill'd; her Bosom with Lampoons.

There Affectation with a sickly Mien
Shows in her Cheek the Roses of Eighteen,
Practis'd to Lisp, and hang the Head aside,
Faints into Airs, and languishes with Pride;
On the rich Quilt sinks with becoming Woe,
Wrapt in a Gown, for Sickness, and for Show.
The Fair ones feel such Maladies as these,
When each new Night-Dress gives a new Disease.

A constant Vapour o'er the Palace flies;
Strange Phantoms rising as the Mists arise;
Dreadful, as Hermit's Dreams in haunted Shades,
Or bright as Visions of expiring Maids.
Now glaring Fiends, and Snakes on rolling Spires,
Pale Spectres, gaping Tombs, and Purple Fires:
Now Lakes of liquid Gold, Elysian Scenes,
And Crystal Domes, and Angels in Machines.

Unnumber'd Throngs on ev'ry side are seen
Of Bodies chang'd to various Forms by Spleen.
Here living Teapots stand, one Arm held out,
One bent; the Handle this, and that the Spout:
A Pipkin there like Homer's Tripod walks;

Here sighs a Jar, and there a Goose Pie talks;
Men prove with Child, as pow'rful Fancy works,
And Maids turn'd Bottels, call aloud for Corks.

Safe past the Gnome thro' this fantastick Band,
A Branch of healing Spleenwort in his hand.
Then thus addrest the Pow'r--Hail wayward Queen!
Who rule the Sex to Fifty from Fifteen,
Parent of Vapors and of Female Wit,
Who give th' Hysteric or Poetic Fit,
On various Tempers act by various ways,
Make some take Physick, others scribble Plays;
Who cause the Proud their Visits to delay,
And send the Godly in a Pett, to pray.
A Nymph there is, that all thy Pow'r disdains,
And thousands more in equal Mirth maintains.
But oh! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a Grace,
Or raise a Pimple on a beauteous Face,
Like Citron-Waters Matron's Cheeks inflame,
Or change Complexions at a losing Game;
If e'er with airy Horns I planted Heads,
Or rumpled Petticoats, or tumbled Beds,
Or caus'd Suspicion when no Soul was rude,
Or discompos'd the Head-dress of a Prude,
Or e'er to costive Lap-Dog gave Disease,
Which not the Tears of brightest Eyes could ease:
Hear me, and touch Belinda with Chagrin;
That single Act gives half the World the Spleen.

The Goddess with a discontented Air
Seems to reject him, tho' she grants his Pray'r.
A wondrous Bag with both her Hands she binds,
Like that where once Ulysses held the Winds;
There she collects the Force of Female Lungs,
Sighs, Sobs, and Passions, and the War of Tongues.
A Vial next she fills with fainting Fears,
Soft Sorrows, melting Griefs, and flowing Tears.
The Gnome rejoicing bears her Gift away,
Spreads his black Wings, and slowly mounts to Day.

Sunk in Thalestris' Arms the Nymph he found,
Her Eyes dejected and her Hair unbound.
Full o'er their Heads the swelling Bag he rent,
And all the Furies issued at the Vent.
Belinda burns with more than mortal Ire,
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising Fire.
O wretched Maid! she spread her hands, and cry'd,
(While Hampton's Ecchos, wretched Maid reply'd)
Was it for this you took such constant Care
The Bodkin, Comb, and Essence to prepare;
For this your Locks in Paper-Durance bound,
For this with tort'ring Irons wreath'd around?

For this with Fillets strain'd your tender Head,
And bravely bore the double Loads of Lead?
Gods! shall the Ravisher display your Hair,
While the Fops envy, and the Ladies stare!
Honour forbid! at whose unrival'd Shrine
Ease, Pleasure, Virtue, All, our Sex resign.
Methinks already I your Tears survey,
Already hear the horrid things they say,
Already see you a degraded Toast,
And all your Honour in a Whisper lost!
How shall I, then, your helpless Fame defend?
'Twill then be Infamy to seem your Friend!
And shall this Prize, th' inestimable Prize,
Expos'd thro' Crystal to the gazing Eyes,
And heighten'd by the Diamond's circling Rays,
On that Rapacious Hand for ever blaze?
Sooner shall Grass in Hide Park Circus grow,
And Wits take Lodgings in the Sound of Bow;
Sooner let Earth, Air, Sea, to Chaos fall,
Men, Monkies, Lap-dogs, Parrots, perish all!

She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,
And bids her Beau demand the precious Hairs:
(Sir Plume, of Amber Snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice Conduct of a clouded Cane)
With earnest Eyes, and round unthinking Face,
He first the Snuff-box open'd, then the Case,
And thus broke out--- "My Lord, why, what the Devil?
"Z---ds! damn the Lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!
"Plague on't! 'tis past a Jest---nay prithee, Pox!
"Give her the Hair---he spoke, and rapp'd his Box.

It grieves me much (reply'd the Peer again)
Who speaks so well shou'd ever speak in vain.
But by this Lock, this sacred Lock I swear,
(Which never more shall join its parted Hair,
Which never more its Honours shall renew,
Clipt from the lovely Head where late it grew)
That while my Nostrils draw the vital Air,
This Hand, which won it, shall for ever wear.
He spoke, and speaking, in proud Triumph spread
The long-contended Honours of her Head.

But Umbriel, hateful Gnome! forbears not so;
He breaks the Vial whence the Sorrows flow.
Then see! the Nymph in beauteous Grief appears,
Her Eyes half languishing, half drown'd in Tears;
On her heav'd Bosom hung her drooping Head,
Which, with a Sigh, she rais'd; and thus she said.

For ever curs'd be this detested Day,
Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite Curl away!

Happy! ah ten times happy, had I been,
If Hampton-Court these Eyes had never seen!
Yet am not I the first mistaken Maid,
By Love of Courts to num'rous Ills betray'd.
Oh had I rather un-admir'd remain'd
In some lone Isle, or distant Northern Land;
Where the gilt Chariot never marks the way,
Where none learn Ombre, none e'er taste Bohea!
There kept my Charms conceal'd from mortal Eye,
Like Roses that in Desarts bloom and die.
What mov'd my Mind with youthful Lords to rome?
O had I stay'd, and said my Pray'rs at home!
'Twas this, the Morning Omens seem'd to tell;
Thrice from my trembling hand the Patch-box fell;
The tott'ring China shook without a Wind,
Nay, Poll sate mute, and Shock was most Unkind!
A Sylph too warn'd me of the Threats of Fate,
In mystic Visions, now believ'd too late!
See the poor Remnants of these slighted Hairs!
My hands shall rend what ev'n thy Rapine spares:
These, in two sable Ringlets taught to break,
Once gave new Beauties to the snowie Neck.
The Sister-Lock now sits uncouth, alone,
And in its Fellow's Fate foresees its own;
Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal Sheers demands;
And tempts once more thy sacrilegious Hands.
Oh hadst thou, Cruel! been content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any Hairs but these!

Part 5

SHE said: the pitying Audience melt in Tears,
But Fate and Jove had stopp'd the Baron's Ears.
In vain Thalestris with Reproach assails,
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
Not half to fixt the Trojan cou'd remain,
While Anna begg'd and Dido rag'd in vain.
Then grave Clarissa graceful wav'd her Fan;
Silence ensu'd, and thus the Nymph began.

Say, why are Beauties prais'd and honour'd most,
The wise Man's Passion, and the vain Man's Toast?
Why deck'd with all that Land and Sea afford,
Why Angels call'd, and Angel-like ador'd?
Why round our Coaches crowd the white-glov'd Beaus,
Why bows the Side-box from its inmost Rows?
How vain are all these Glories, all our Pains,
Unless good Sense preserve what Beauty gains:
That Men may say, when we the Front-box grace,
Behold the first in Virtue, as in Face!
Oh! if to dance all Night, and dress all Day,

Charm'd the Small-pox, or chas'd old Age away;
Who would not scorn what Huswife's Cares produce,
Or who would learn one earthly Thing of Use?
To patch, nay ogle, might become a Saint,
Nor could it sure be such a Sin to paint.
But since, alas! frail Beauty must decay,
Curl'd or uncurl'd, since Locks will turn to grey,
Since paint'd, or not paint'd, all shall fade,
And she who scorns a Man, must die a Maid;
What then remains, but well our Pow'r to use,
And keep good Humour still whate'er we lose?
And trust me, Dear! good Humour can prevail,
When Airs, and Flights, and Screams, and Scolding fail.
Beauties in vain their pretty Eyes may roll;
Charms strike the Sight, but Merit wins the Soul.

So spake the Dame, but no Applause ensu'd;
Belinda frown'd, Thalestris call'd her Prude.
To Arms, to Arms! the fierce Virago cries,
And swift as Lightning to the Combate flies.
All side in Parties, and begin th' Attack;
Fans clap, Silks russle, and tough Whalebones crack;
Heroes and Heroins Shouts confus'dly rise,
And base, and treble Voices strike the Skies.
No common Weapons in their Hands are found,
Like Gods they fight, nor dread a mortal Wound.

So when bold Homer makes the Gods engage,
And heav'nly Breasts with human Passions rage;
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;
And all Olympus rings with loud Alarms.
Jove's Thunder roars, Heav'n trembles all around;
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing Deeps resound;
Earth shakes her nodding Tow'rs, the Ground gives way;
And the pale Ghosts start at the Flash of Day!

Triumphant Umbriel on a Sconce's Height
Clapt his glad Wings, and sate to view the Fight,
Propt on their Bodkin Spears, the Sprights survey
The growing Combat, or assist the Fray.

While thro' the Press enrag'd Thalestris flies,
And scatters Deaths around from both her Eyes,
A Beau and Witling perish'd in the Throng,
One dy'd in Metaphor, and one in Song.
O cruel Nymph! a living Death I bear,
Cry'd Dapperwit, and sunk beside his Chair.
A mournful Glance Sir Fopling upwards cast,
Those Eyes are made so killing---was his last:
Thus on Meander's flow'ry Margin lies
Th' expiring Swan, and as he sings he dies.

When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,
Chloe stept in, and kill'd him with a Frown;
She smil'd to see the doughty Hero slain,
But at her Smile, the Beau reviv'd again.

Now Jove suspends his golden Scales in Air,
Weighs the Mens Wits against the Lady's Hair;
The doubtful Beam long nods from side to side;
At length the Wits mount up, the Hairs subside.

See fierce Belinda on the Baron flies,
With more than usual Lightning in her Eyes;
Nor fear'd the Chief th' unequal Fight to try,
Who sought no more than on his Foe to die.
But this bold Lord, with manly Strength indu'd,
She with one Finger and a Thumb subdu'd,
Just where the Breath of Life his Nostrils drew,
A Charge of Snuff the wily Virgin threw;
The Gnomes direct, to ev'ry Atome just,
The pungent Grains of titillating Dust.
Sudden, with starting Tears each Eye o'erflows,
And the high Dome re-ecchoes to his Nose.

Now meet thy Fate, incens'd Belinda cry'd,
And drew a deadly Bodkin from her Side.
(The same, his ancient Personage to deck,
Her great great Grandsire wore about his Neck
In three Seal-Rings which after, melted down,
Form'd a vast Buckle for his Widow's Gown:
Her infant Grandame's Whistle next it grew,
The Bells she gingled, and the Whistle blew;
Then in a Bodkin grac'd her Mother's Hairs,
Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)

Boast not my Fall (he cry'd) insulting Foe!
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.
Nor think, to die dejects my lofty Mind;
All that I dread, is leaving you behind!
Rather than so, ah let me still survive,
And burn in Cupid's Flames,---but burn alive.

Restore the Lock! she cries; and all around
Restore the Lock! the vaulted Roofs rebound.
Not fierce Othello in so loud a Strain
Roar'd for the Handkerchief that caus'd his Pain.
But see how oft Ambitious Aims are cross'd,
And Chiefs contend 'till all the Prize is lost!
The Lock, obtain'd with Guilt, and kept with Pain,
In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain:
With such a Prize no Mortal must be blest,
So Heav'n decrees! with Heav'n who can contest?

Some thought it mounted to the Lunar Sphere,
Since all things lost on Earth, are treasur'd there.
There Heroe's Wits are kept in pondrous Vases,
And Beau's in Snuff-boxes and Tweezer-Cases.
There broken Vows, and Death-bed Alms are found,
And Lovers Hearts with Ends of Riband bound;
The Courtiers Promises, and Sick Man's Pray'rs,
The Smiles of Harlots, and the Tears of Heirs,
Cages for Gnats, and Chains to Yoak a Flea;
Dry'd Butterflies, and Tomes of Casuistry.

But trust the Muse---she saw it upward rise,
Tho' mark'd by none but quick Poetic Eyes:
(So Rome's great Founder to the Heav'ns withdrew,
To Proculus alone confess'd in view.)
A sudden Star, it shot thro' liquid Air,
And drew behind a radiant Trail of Hair.
Not Berenice's Locks first rose so bright,
The heav'ns bespangling with dishevel'd light.
The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
And pleas'd pursue its Progress thro' the Skies.

This the Beau-monde shall from the Mall survey,
And hail with Musick its propitious Ray.
This, the blest Lover shall for Venus take,
And send up Vows from Rosamonda's Lake.
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless Skies,
When next he looks thro' Galilaeo's Eyes;
And hence th' Egregious Wizard shall foredoom
The Fate of Louis, and the Fall of Rome.

Then cease, bright Nymph! to mourn the ravish'd Hair
Which adds new Glory to the shining Sphere!
Not all the Tresses that fair Head can boast
Shall draw such Envy as the Lock you lost.
For, after all the Murders of your Eye,
When, after Millions slain, your self shall die;
When those fair Suns shall sett, as sett they must,
And all those Tresses shall be laid in Dust;
This Lock, the Muse shall consecrate to Fame,
And mid'st the Stars inscribe Belinda's Name!
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Alexander Pope

The Rape of the Lock: Canto 1

Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos;
Sedjuvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.
(Martial, Epigrams 12.84)

What dire offence from am'rous causes springs,
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,
I sing--This verse to Caryl, Muse! is due:
This, ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view:
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.
Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel
A well-bred lord t' assault a gentle belle?
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplor'd,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?
In tasks so bold, can little men engage,
And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage?

Sol thro' white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,
And op'd those eyes that must eclipse the day;
Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,
And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake:
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,
And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.
Belinda still her downy pillow press'd,
Her guardian sylph prolong'd the balmy rest:
'Twas he had summon'd to her silent bed
The morning dream that hover'd o'er her head;
A youth more glitt'ring than a birthnight beau,
(That ev'n in slumber caus'd her cheek to glow)
Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay,
And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say.

"Fairest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care
Of thousand bright inhabitants of air!
If e'er one vision touch'd thy infant thought,
Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught,
Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,
The silver token, and the circled green,
Or virgins visited by angel pow'rs,
With golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly flow'rs,
Hear and believe! thy own importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
Some secret truths from learned pride conceal'd,
To maids alone and children are reveal'd:
What tho' no credit doubting wits may give?
The fair and innocent shall still believe.
Know then, unnumber'd spirits round thee fly,
The light militia of the lower sky;
These, though unseen, are ever on theg,
Hang o'er the box, and hover round the Ring.
Think what an equipage thou hast in air,
And view with scorn two pages and a chair.
As now your own, our beings were of old,

And once inclos'd in woman's beauteous mould;
Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
From earthly vehicles to these of air.
Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,
That all her vanities at once are dead;
Succeeding vanities she still regards,
And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.
Her joy in gilded chariots, when alive,
And love of ombre, after death survive.
For when the fair in all their pride expire,
To their first elements their souls retire:
The sprites of fiery termagants in flame
Mount up, and take a Salamander's name.
Soft yielding minds to water glide away,
And sip with Nymphs, their elemental tea.
The graver prude sinks downward to a Gnome,
In search of mischief still on earth to roam.
The light coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
And sport and flutter in the fields of air.

Know further yet; whoever fair and chaste
Rejects mankind, is by some sylph embrac'd:
For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease
Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.
What guards the purity of melting maids,
In courtly balls, and midnight masquerades,
Safe from the treach'rous friend, the daring spark,
The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,
When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,
When music softens, and when dancing fires?
'Tis but their sylph, the wise celestials know,
Though honour is the word with men below.

Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,
For life predestin'd to the gnomes' embrace.
These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,
When offers are disdain'd, and love denied:
Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,
While peers, and dukes, and all their sweeping train,
And garters, stars, and coronets appear,
And in soft sounds 'Your Grace' salutes their ear.
'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,
Teach infant cheeks a bidden blush to know,
And little hearts to flutter at a beau.

Oft, when the world imagine women stray,
The Sylphs through mystic mazes guide their way,
Thro' all the giddy circle they pursue,
And old impertinence expel by new.
What tender maid but must a victim fall
To one man's treat, but for another's ball?

When Florio speaks, what virgin could withstand,
If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?
With varying vanities, from ev'ry part,
They shift the moving toyshop of their heart;
Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive,
Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.
This erring mortals levity may call,
Oh blind to truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.

Of these am I, who thy protection claim,
A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.
Late, as I rang'd the crystal wilds of air,
In the clear mirror of thy ruling star
I saw, alas! some dread event impend,
Ere to the main this morning sun descend,
But Heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where:
Warn'd by the Sylph, oh pious maid, beware!
This to disclose is all thy guardian can.
Beware of all, but most beware of man!"

He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too long,
Leap'd up, and wak'd his mistress with his tongue.
'Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,
Thy eyes first open'd on a billet-doux;
Wounds, charms, and ardors were no sooner read,
But all the vision vanish'd from thy head.

And now, unveil'd, the toilet stands display'd,
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
First, rob'd in white, the nymph intent adores
With head uncover'd, the cosmetic pow'rs.
A heav'nly image in the glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;
Th' inferior priestess, at her altar's side,
Trembling, begins the sacred rites of pride.
Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here
The various off'rings of the world appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
And decks the goddess with the glitt'ring spoil.
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transform'd to combs, the speckled and the white.
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billet-doux.
Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
The fair each moment rises in her charms,
Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face;

Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.
The busy Sylphs surround their darling care;
These set the head, and those divide the hair,
Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
And Betty's prais'd for labours not her own.

Alexander Pope

The Rape of the Lock: Canto 2

Not with more glories, in th' etherial plain,
The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
Launch'd on the bosom of the silver Thames.
Fair nymphs, and well-dress'd youths around her shone,
But ev'ry eye was fix'd on her alone.
On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those:
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide:
If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all.
This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourish'd two locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, and well conspir'd to deck
With shining ringlets the smooth iv'ry neck.
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
With hairy springes we the birds betray,
Slight lines of hair surprise the finney prey,
Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.
Th' advent'rous baron the bright locks admir'd;
He saw, he wish'd, and to the prize aspir'd.
Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;
For when success a lover's toil attends,
Few ask, if fraud or force attain'd his ends.
For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implor'd
Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry pow'r ador'd,
But chiefly love--to love an altar built,
Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves;
And all the trophies of his former loves;
With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,
And breathes three am'rous sighs to raise the fire.
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:
The pow'rs gave ear, and granted half his pray'r,
The rest, the winds dispers'd in empty air.

But now secure the painted vessel glides,
The sun-beams trembling on the floating tides,
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And soften'd sounds along the waters die.
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,

Belinda smil'd, and all the world was gay.
All but the Sylph--with careful thoughts opprest,
Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
He summons strait his denizens of air;
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:
Soft o'er the shrouds aerial whispers breathe,
That seem'd but zephyrs to the train beneath.
Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold.
Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
Their fluid bodies half dissolv'd in light,
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
Thin glitt'ring textures of the filmy dew;
Dipp'd in the richest tincture of the skies,
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,
While ev'ry beam new transient colours flings,
Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.
Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
Superior by the head, was Ariel plac'd;
His purple pinions op'ning to the sun,
He rais'd his azure wand, and thus begun.

"Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear!
Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Dæmons, hear!
Ye know the spheres and various tasks assign'd
By laws eternal to th' aerial kind.
Some in the fields of purest æther play,
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.
Some guide the course of wand'ring orbs on high,
Or roll the planets through the boundless sky.
Some less refin'd, beneath the moon's pale light
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
Or suck the mists in grosser air below,
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,
Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain.
Others on earth o'er human race preside,
Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:
Of these the chief the care of nations own,
And guard with arms divine the British throne.

"Our humbler province is to tend the fair,
Not a less pleasing, though less glorious care.
To save the powder from too rude a gale,
Nor let th' imprison'd essences exhale,
To draw fresh colours from the vernal flow'rs,
To steal from rainbows e'er they drop in show'rs
A brighter wash; to curl their waving hairs,
Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs;
Nay oft, in dreams, invention we bestow,
To change a flounce, or add a furbelow.

"This day, black omens threat the brightest fair
That e'er deserv'd a watchful spirit's care;
Some dire disaster, or by force, or slight,
But what, or where, the fates have wrapt in night.
Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail china jar receive a flaw;
Or stain her honour, or her new brocade,
Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade;
Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;
Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must fall.
Haste, then, ye spirits! to your charge repair:
The flutt'ring fan be Zephyretta's care;
The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;
And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;
Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite lock;
Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.
"To fifty chosen Sylphs, of special note,
We trust th' important charge, the petticoat:
Oft have we known that sev'n-fold fence to fail,
Though stiff with hoops, and arm'd with ribs of whale.
Form a strong line about the silver bound,
And guard the wide circumference around.
"Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,
Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins,
Be stopp'd in vials, or transfix'd with pins;
Or plung'd in lakes of bitter washes lie,
Or wedg'd whole ages in a bodkin's eye:
Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
While clogg'd he beats his silken wings in vain;
Or alum styptics with contracting pow'r
Shrink his thin essence like a rivell'd flow'r.
Or, as Ixion fix'd, the wretch shall feel
The giddy motion of the whirling mill,
In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the sea that froths below!"
He spoke; the spirits from the sails descend;
Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend,
Some thrid the mazy ringlets of her hair,
Some hang upon the pendants of her ear;
With beating hearts the dire event they wait,
Anxious, and trembling for the birth of fate.

Alexander Pope

The Rape of the Lock: Canto 3

Close by those meads, for ever crown'd with flow'rs,
Where Thames with pride surveys his rising tow'rs,
There stands a structure of majestic frame,
Which from the neighb'ring Hampton takes its name.
Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom
Of foreign tyrants and of nymphs at home;
Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take--and sometimes tea.
Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,
To taste awhile the pleasures of a court;
In various talk th' instructive hours they pass'd,
Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;
One speaks the glory of the British queen,
And one describes a charming Indian screen;
A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;
At ev'ry word a reputation dies.
Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,
With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.

Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jury-men may dine;
The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace,
And the long labours of the toilet cease.
Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,
Burns to encounter two adventrous knights,
At ombre singly to decide their doom;
And swells her breast with conquests yet to come.
Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join,
Each band the number of the sacred nine.
Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aerial guard
Descend, and sit on each important card:
First Ariel perch'd upon a Matadore,
Then each, according to the rank they bore;
For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,
Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.

Behold, four Kings in majesty rever'd,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
And four fair Queens whose hands sustain a flow'r,
Th' expressive emblem of their softer pow'r;
Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,
Caps on their heads, and halberds in their hand;
And parti-colour'd troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.

The skilful nymph reviews her force with care:
"Let Spades be trumps!" she said, and trumps they were.

Now move to war her sable Matadores,
In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.

Spadillio first, unconquerable lord!
Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.
As many more Manillio forc'd to yield,
And march'd a victor from the verdant field.
Him Basto follow'd, but his fate more hard
Gain'd but one trump and one plebeian card.
With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
The hoary Majesty of Spades appears;
Puts forth one manly leg, to sight reveal'd;
The rest, his many-colour'd robe conceal'd.
The rebel Knave, who dares his prince engage,
Proves the just victim of his royal rage.
Ev'n mighty Pam, that kings and queens o'erthrew
And mow'd down armies in the fights of loo,
Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
Falls undistinguish'd by the victor Spade!

Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;
Now to the baron fate inclines the field.
His warlike Amazon her host invades,
Th' imperial consort of the crown of Spades.
The Club's black tyrant first her victim died,
Spite of his haughty mien, and barb'rous pride:
What boots the regal circle on his head,
His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread;
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
And of all monarchs, only grasps the globe?

The baron now his diamonds pours apace;
Th' embroider'd King who shows but half his face,
And his refulgent Queen, with pow'rs combin'd
Of broken troops an easy conquest find.
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,
With throngs promiscuous strow the level green.
Thus when dispers'd a routed army runs,
Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,
With like confusion diff'rent nations fly,
Of various habit, and of various dye,
The pierc'd battalions disunited fall.
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.

The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the Queen of Hearts.
At this, the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,
Just in the jaws of ruin, and codille.
And now (as oft in some distemper'd state)
On one nice trick depends the gen'ral fate.
An Ace of Hearts steps forth: The King unseen
Lurk'd in her hand, and mourn'd his captive Queen:
He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,

And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.
The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky;
The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.

Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate!
Sudden, these honours shall be snatch'd away,
And curs'd for ever this victorious day.

For lo! the board with cups and spoons is crown'd,
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round.
On shining altars of Japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze.
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoking tide.
At once they gratify their scent and taste,
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.
Straight hover round the fair her airy band;
Some, as she sipp'd, the fuming liquor fann'd,
Some o'er her lap their careful plumes display'd,
Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.
Coffee, (which makes the politician wise,
And see through all things with his half-shut eyes)
Sent up in vapours to the baron's brain
New stratagems, the radiant lock to gain.
Ah cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late,
Fear the just gods, and think of Scylla's fate!
Chang'd to a bird, and sent to flit in air,
She dearly pays for Nisus' injur'd hair!

But when to mischief mortals bend their will,
How soon they find fit instruments of ill!
Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace
A two-edg'd weapon from her shining case;
So ladies in romance assist their knight
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.
He takes the gift with rev'rence, and extends
The little engine on his fingers' ends;
This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.
Swift to the lock a thousand sprites repair,
A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair,
And thrice they twitch'd the diamond in her ear,
Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the foe drew near.
Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought
The close recesses of the virgin's thought;
As on the nosegay in her breast reclin'd,
He watch'd th' ideas rising in her mind,
Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her art,

An earthly lover lurking at her heart.
Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his pow'r expir'd,
Resign'd to fate, and with a sigh retir'd.

The peer now spreads the glitt'ring forfex wide,
T' inclose the lock; now joins it, to divide.
Ev'n then, before the fatal engine clos'd,
A wretched Sylph too fondly interpos'd;
Fate urg'd the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain,
(But airy substance soon unites again).
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.
Not louder shrieks to pitying Heav'n are cast,
When husbands or when lap-dogs breathe their last,
Or when rich China vessels, fall'n from high,
In glitt'ring dust and painted fragments lie!

"Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine,"
The victor cried, "the glorious prize is mine!
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,
Or in a coach and six the British fair,
As long at Atalantis shall be read,
Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed,
While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
When num'rous wax-lights in bright order blaze,
While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,
So long my honour, name, and praise shall live!
What time would spare, from steel receives its date,
And monuments, like men, submit to fate!
Steel could the labour of the gods destroy,
And strike to dust th' imperial tow'rs of Troy;
Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hairs should feel
The conqu'ring force of unresisted steel?"

Alexander Pope

The Rape of the Lock: Canto 4

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

For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,
As ever sullied the fair face of light,
Down to the central earth, his proper scene,
Repair'd to search the gloomy cave of Spleen.

Swift on his sooty pinions flits the Gnome,
And in a vapour reach'd the dismal dome.
No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,
The dreaded East is all the wind that blows.
Here, in a grotto, shelter'd close from air,
And screen'd in shades from day's detested glare,
She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,
Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.

Two handmaids wait the throne: alike in place,
But diff'ring far in figure and in face.
Here stood Ill Nature like an ancient maid,
Her wrinkled form in black and white array'd;
With store of pray'rs, for mornings, nights, and noons,
Her hand is fill'd; her bosom with lampoons.

There Affectation, with a sickly mien,
Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,
Practis'd to lisp, and hang the head aside,
Faints into airs, and languishes with pride,
On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,
Wrapp'd in a gown, for sickness, and for show.
The fair ones feel such maladies as these,
When each new night-dress gives a new disease.

A constant vapour o'er the palace flies;
Strange phantoms, rising as the mists arise;
Dreadful, as hermit's dreams in haunted shades,
Or bright, as visions of expiring maids.
Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,
Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires:
Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,
And crystal domes, and angels in machines.

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

Safe pass'd the Gnome through this fantastic band,
A branch of healing spleenwort in his hand.
Then thus address'd the pow'r: "Hail, wayward Queen!
Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen:
Parent of vapours and of female wit,
Who give th' hysteric, or poetic fit,
On various tempers act by various ways,
Make some take physic, others scribble plays;
Who cause the proud their visits to delay,
And send the godly in a pet to pray.
A nymph there is, that all thy pow'r disdains,
And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.
But oh! if e'er thy gnome could spoil a grace,
Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,
Like citron waters matrons' cheeks inflame,
Or change complexions at a losing game;
If e'er with airy horns I planted heads,
Or rumpled petticoats, or tumbled beds,
Or caus'd suspicion when no soul was rude,
Or discompos'd the head-dress of a prude,
Or e'er to costive lap-dog gave disease,
Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease:
Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin;
That single act gives half the world the spleen."

The goddess with a discontented air
Seems to reject him, though she grants his pray'r.
A wondrous bag with both her hands she binds,
Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;
There she collects the force of female lungs,
Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues.
A vial next she fills with fainting fears,
Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.
The Gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,
Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.

Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,
Her eyes dejected and her hair unbound.
Full o'er their heads the swelling bag he rent,
And all the Furies issu'd at the vent.
Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.
"Oh wretched maid!" she spread her hands, and cried,

(While Hampton's echoes, "Wretched maid!" replied,
"Was it for this you took such constant care
The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?
For this your locks in paper durance bound,
For this with tort'ring irons wreath'd around?
For this with fillets strain'd your tender head,
And bravely bore the double loads of lead?
Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,
While the fops envy, and the ladies stare!
Honour forbid! at whose unrivall'd shrine
Ease, pleasure, virtue, all, our sex resign.
Methinks already I your tears survey,
Already hear the horrid things they say,
Already see you a degraded toast,
And all your honour in a whisper lost!
How shall I, then, your helpless fame defend?
'Twill then be infamy to seem your friend!
And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,
Expos'd through crystal to the gazing eyes,
And heighten'd by the diamond's circling rays,
On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?
Sooner shall grass in Hyde Park Circus grow,
And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;
Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,
Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all!"

She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,
And bids her beau demand the precious hairs:
(Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane)
With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,
He first the snuffbox open'd, then the case,
And thus broke out--"My Lord, why, what the devil?
Z{-}{-}{-}ds! damn the lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!
Plague on't! 'tis past a jest--nay prithee, pox!
Give her the hair"--he spoke, and rapp'd his box.

"It grieves me much," replied the peer again,
"Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain.
But by this lock, this sacred lock I swear,
(Which never more shall join its parted hair;
Which never more its honours shall renew,
Clipp'd from the lovely head where late it grew)
That while my nostrils draw the vital air,
This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear."
He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread
The long-contended honours of her head.

But Umbriel, hateful gnome! forbears not so;
He breaks the vial whence the sorrows flow.
Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,
Her eyes half-languishing, half-drown'd in tears;

On her heav'd bosom hung her drooping head,
Which, with a sigh, she rais'd; and thus she said:

"For ever curs'd be this detested day,
Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite curl away!
Happy! ah ten times happy, had I been,
If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen!
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,
By love of courts to num'rous ills betray'd.
Oh had I rather unadmir'd remain'd
In some lone isle, or distant northern land;
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,
Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste bohea!
There kept my charms conceal'd from mortal eye,
Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.
What mov'd my mind with youthful lords to roam?
Oh had I stay'd, and said my pray'rs at home!
'Twas this, the morning omens seem'd to tell,
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;
The tott'ring china shook without a wind,
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!
A Sylph too warn'd me of the threats of fate,
In mystic visions, now believ'd too late!
See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!
My hands shall rend what ev'n thy rapine spares:
These, in two sable ringlets taught to break,
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck.
The sister-lock now sits uncouth, alone,
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;
Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal shears demands
And tempts once more thy sacrilegious hands.
Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!"

Alexander Pope

The Rape of the Lock: Canto 5

She said: the pitying audience melt in tears,
But Fate and Jove had stopp'd the Baron's ears.
In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
Not half so fix'd the Trojan could remain,
While Anna begg'd and Dido rag'd in vain.
Then grave Clarissa graceful wav'd her fan;
Silence ensu'd, and thus the nymph began.
"Say, why are beauties prais'd and honour'd most,
The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?
Why deck'd with all that land and sea afford,
Why angels call'd, and angel-like ador'd?
Why round our coaches crowd the white-glov'd beaux,
Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?
How vain are all these glories, all our pains,
Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains:
That men may say, when we the front-box grace:
'Behold the first in virtue, as in face!'
Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,
Charm'd the smallpox, or chas'd old age away;
Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,
Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?
To patch, nay ogle, might become a saint,
Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.
But since, alas! frail beauty must decay,
Curl'd or uncurl'd, since locks will turn to grey,
Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
And she who scorns a man, must die a maid;
What then remains but well our pow'r to use,
And keep good humour still whate'er we lose?
And trust me, dear! good humour can prevail,
When airs, and flights, and screams, and scolding fail.
Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll;
Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul."

So spoke the dame, but no applause ensu'd;
Belinda frown'd, Thalestris call'd her prude.
"To arms, to arms!" the fierce virago cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack;
Heroes' and heroines' shouts confus'dly rise,
And bass, and treble voices strike the skies.
No common weapons in their hands are found,
Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.

So when bold Homer makes the gods engage,
And heav'nly breasts with human passions rage;
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms.
Jove's thunder roars, heav'n trembles all around;
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound;

Earth shakes her nodding tow'rs, the ground gives way;
And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!

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

While through the press enrag'd Thalestris flies,
And scatters death around from both her eyes,
A beau and witling perish'd in the throng,
One died in metaphor, and one in song.
"O cruel nymph! a living death I bear,"
Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upwards cast,
"Those eyes are made so killing"--was his last.
Thus on Mæeander's flow'ry margin lies
Th' expiring swan, and as he sings he dies.

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

Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,
Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair;
The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;
At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.

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

"Now meet thy fate", incens'd Belinda cried,
And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.
(The same, his ancient personage to deck,
Her great great grandsire wore about his neck
In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,
Form'd a vast buckle for his widow's gown:
Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,
The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;
Then in a bodkin grac'd her mother's hairs,
Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)

"Boast not my fall," he cried, "insulting foe!
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.
Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind;
All that I dread is leaving you benind!
Rather than so, ah let me still survive,
And burn in Cupid's flames--but burn alive."

"Restore the lock!" she cries; and all around
"Restore the lock!" the vaulted roofs rebound.
Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain
Roar'd for the handkerchief that caus'd his pain.
But see how oft ambitious aims are cross'd,
The chiefs contend 'till all the prize is lost!
The lock, obtain'd with guilt, and kept with pain,
In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain:
With such a prize no mortal must be blest,
So Heav'n decrees! with Heav'n who can contest?

Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
Since all things lost on earth are treasur'd there.
There hero's wits are kept in pond'rous vases,
And beaux' in snuff boxes and tweezercases.
There broken vows and deathbed alms are found,
And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound;
The courtier's promises, and sick man's prayers,
The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,
Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.

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

This the beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
And hail with music its propitious ray.
This the blest lover shall for Venus take,
And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake.
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
When next he looks through Galileo's eyes;
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom

The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.

Then cease, bright nymph! to mourn thy ravish'd hair,
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast
Shall draw such envy as the lock you lost.
For, after all the murders of your eye,
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die:
When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
This lock, the Muse shall consecrate to fame
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

Alexander Pope

The Riddle of the World

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan
The proper study of Mankind is Man.
Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
A Being darkly wise, and rudely great:
With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;
In doubt his mind and body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;
Whether he thinks to 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.

Alexander Pope

The Temple of Fame

In that soft season, when descending show'rs
Call forth the greens, and wake the rising flow'rs;
When op'ning buds salute the welcome day,
And earth relenting feels the genial day,
As balmy sleep had charm'd my cares to rest,
And love itself was banish'd from my breast,
(What time the morn mysterious visions brings,
While purer slumbers spread their golden wings)
A train of phantoms in wild order rose,
And, join'd, this intellectual sense compose.
I stood, methought, betwixt earth, seas, and skies;
The whole creation open to my eyes:
In air self-balanc'd hung the globe below,
Where mountains rise and circling oceans flow;
Here naked rocks, and empty wastes were seen,
There tow'ry cities, and the forests green:
Here sailing ships delight the wand'ring eyes:
There trees, and intermingled temples rise;
Now a clear sun the shining scene displays,
The transient landscape now in clouds decays.
O'er the wide Prospect as I gaz'd around,
Sudden I heard a wild promiscuous sound,
Like broken thunders that at distance roar,
Then gazing up, a glorious pile beheld,
Whose tow'ring summit ambient clouds conceal'd.
High on a rock of Ice the structure lay,
Steep its ascent, and slipp'ry was the way;
The wond'rous rock like Parian marble shone,
And seem'd, to distant sight, of solid stone.
Inscriptions here of various Names I view'd,
The greater part by hostile time subdu'd;
Yet wide was spread their fame in ages past,
And Poets once had promis'd they should last.
Some fresh engrav'd appear'd of Wits renown'd;
I look'd again, nor could their trace be found.
Critics I saw, that other names deface,
And fix their own, with labour, in their place:
Their own, like others, soon their place resign'd,
Or disappear'd, and left the first behind.
Nor was the work impair'd by storms alone,
But felt th' approaches of too warm a sun;
For Fame, impatient of extremes, decays
Not more by Envy than excess of Praise.
Yet part no injuries of heav'n could feel,
Like crystal faithful to th' graving steel:
The rock's high summit, in the temple's shade,
Nor heat could melt, nor beating storm invade.
Their names inscrib'd, unnumber'd ages past
From time's first birth, with time itself shall last;
These ever new, nor subject to decays,
Spread, and grow brighter with the length of days.
So Zembla's rocks (the beauteous work of frost)

Rise white in air, and glitter o'er the coast;
Pale suns, unfelt, at distance roll away,
And on th' impassive ice the light'nings play;
Eternal snows the growing mass supply,
Till the bright mountains prop th' incumbent sky:
As Atlas fix'd, each hoary pile appears,
The gather'd winter of a thousand years.
On this foundation Fame's high temple stands;
Stupendous pile! not rear'd by mortal hands.
Whate'er proud Rome or artful Greece beheld,
Or elder Babylon, its frame excell'd.
Four faces had the dome, and ev'ry face
Of various structure, but of equal grace:
Four brazen gates, on columns lifted high,
Salute the diff'rent quarters of the sky.
Here fabled Chiefs in darker ages born,
Or Worthies old, whom arms or arts adorn,
Who cities rais'd, or tam'd a monstrous race;
The walls in venerable order grace:
Heroes in animated marble frown,
And Legislators seem to think in stone.
Westward, a sumptuous frontispiece appear'd,
On Doric pillars of white marble rear'd,
Crown'd with an architrave of antique mold,
And sculpture rising on the roughen'd mold,
In shaggy spoils here Theseus was beheld,
And Perseus dreadful with Minerva's shield:
There great Alcides stooping with his toil,
Rests on his club, and holds th' Hesperian spoil.
Here Orpheus sings; trees moving to the sound
Start from their roots, and form a shade around:
Amphion there the loud creating lyre
Strikes, and beholds a sudden Thebes aspire!
Cithaeron's echoes answer to his call,
And half the mountain rolls into a wall:
There might you see the length'ning spires ascend,
The domes swell up, the wid'ning arches bend,
The growing tow'rs, like exhalations rise,
And the huge columns heave into the skies.
The Eastern front was glorious to behold,
With di'mond flaming, and Barbaric gold.
There Ninus shone, who spread th' Assyrian fame,
And the great founder of the Persian name:
There in long robes the royal Magi stand,
Grave Zoroaster waves the circling wand,
The sage Chaldaeans rob'd in white appear'd,
And Brahmans, deep in desert woods rever'd.
These stop'd the moon, and call'd th' unbody'd shades
To midnight banquets in the glimm'ring glades;
Made visionary fabrics round them rise,
And airy spectres skim before their eyes;
Of Talismans and Sigils knew the pow'r,

And careful watch'd the Planetary hour.
Superior, and alone, Confucius stood,
Who taught that useful science, to be good.
But on the South, a long majestic race
Of AEgypt's Priests the gilded niches grace,
Who measur'd earth, describ'd the starry spheres,
And trac'd the long records of lunar years.
High on his car Sesostris struck my view,
Whom scepter'd slaves in golden harness drew:
His hands a bow and pointed javelin hold;
His giant limbs are arm'd in scales of gold.
Between the statues Obelisks were plac'd,
And the learn'd walls with Hieroglyphics grac'd.
Of Gothic structure was the Northern side,
O'erwrought with ornaments of barb'rous pride.
There huge Colosses rose, with trophies crown'd,
And Runic characters were grav'd around.
There sate Zamolxis with erected eyes,
And Odin here in mimic trances dies.
There on rude iron columns, smear'd with blood,
The horrid forms of Scythian heroes stood,
Druids and Bards (their once loud harps unstrung)
And youths that died to be by Poets sung.
These and a thousand more of doubtful fame,
To whom old fables gave a lasting name,
In ranks adorn'd the Temple's outward face;
The wall in lustre and effect like Glass,
Which o'er each object casting various dyes,
Enlarges some, and others multiplies:
Nor void of emblem was the mystic wall,
For thus romantic Fame increases all.
The Temple shakes, the sounding gates unfold,
Wide vaults appear, and roofs of fretted gold:
Rais'd on a thousand pillars, wreath'd around
With laurel-foliage, and with eagles crown'd:
Of bright, transparent beryl were the walls,
The friezes gold, an gold the capitals:
As heav'n with stars, the roof with jewels glows,
And ever-living lamps depend in rows.
Full in the passage of each spacious gate,
The sage Historians in white garments wait;
Grav'd o'er their seats the form of Time was found,
His scythe revers'd, and both his pinions bound.
Within stood Heroes, who thro' loud alarms
In bloody fields pursu'd renown in arms.
High on a throne with trophies charg'd, I view'd
The Youth that all things but himself subdu'd;
His feet on sceptres and tiara's trod,
And his horn'd head bely'd the Libyan God.
There Caesar, grac'd with both Minerva's, shone;
Unmov'd, superior still in ev'ry state,
And scarce detested in his Country's fate.

But chief were those, who not for empire fought,
But with their toils their people's safety bought:
High o'er the rest Epaminondas stood;
Timoleon, glorious in his brother's blood;
Bold Scipio, saviour of the Roman state;
Great in his triumphs, in retirement great;
And wise Aurelius, in whose well-taught mind
With boundless pow'r unbounded virtue join'd,
His own strict judge, and patron of mankind.
Much-suff'ring heroes next their honours claim,
Those of less noisy, and less guilty fame,
Fair Virtue's silent train: supreme of these
Here ever shines the godlike Socrates:
He whom ungrateful Athens could expell,
At all times just, but when he sign'd the Shell:
Here his abode the martyr'd Phocion claims,
With Agis, not the last of Spartan names:
Unconquered Cato shews the wound he tore,
And Brutus his ill Genius meets no more.
But in the centre of the hallow'd choir,
Six pompous columns o'er the rest aspire;
Around the shrine itself of Fame they stand,
Hold the chief honours, and the fane command.
High on the first, the mighty Homer shone;
Eternal Adamant compos'd his throne;
Father of verse! in holy fillets drest,
His silver beard wav'd gently o'er his breast;
Tho' blind, a boldness in his looks appears;
In years he seem'd, but not impair'd by years.
The wars of Troy were round the Pillar seen:
Here fierce Tydides wounds the Cyprian Queen;
Here Hector glorious from Patroclus' fall,
Here dragg'd in triumph round the Trojan wall,
Motion and life did ev'ry part inspire,
Bold was the work, and prov'd the master's fire;
A strong expression most he seem'd t' affect,
And here and there disclos'd a brave neglect.

A golden column next in rank appear'd,
On which a shrine of purest gold was rear'd;
Finish'd the whole, and labour'd ev'ry part,
With patient touches of unweary'd art:
The Mantuan there in sober triumph sate,
Compos'd his posture, and his look sedate;
On Homer still he fix'd a rev'rend eye,
Great without pride, in modest majesty.
In living sculpture on the sides were spread
The Latian Wars, and haughty Turnus dead;
Eliza stretch'd upon the fun'ral pyre,
AEneas ending with his aged sire:
Troy flam'd in burning gold, and o'er the throne
Arms of the Man in golden cyphers shone.

Four swans sustain a car of silver bright,
With heads advanc'd, and pinions stretch'd for flight:
Here, like some furious prophet, Pindar rode,
And seem'd to labour with th' inspiring God.
Across the harp a careless hand he flings,
And boldly sinks into the sounding strings.
The figur'd games of Greece the column grace,
Neptune and Jove survey the rapid race.
The youths hand o'er their chariots as they run;
The fiery steeds seem starting from the stone;
The champions in distorted postures threat;
And all appear'd irregularly great.
Here happy Horace tun'd th' Ausonian lyre
To sweeter sounds, and temper'd Pindar's fire:
Pleas'd with Alcaeus' manly rage t' infuse
The softer spirit of the Sapphic Muse.
The polish'd pillar diff'rent sculptures grace;
A work outlasting monumental brass.
Here smiling Loves and Bacchanals appear,
The Julian star, and great Augustus here,
The Doves that round the infant poet spread
Myrtles and bays, hung hov'ring o'er his head.
Here in a shrine that cast a dazzling light,
Sate fix'd in thought the mighty Stagirite;
His sacred head a radiant Zodiac crown'd,
And various Animals his sides surround;
His piercing eyes, erect, appear to view
Superior worlds, and look all Nature through.
With equal rays immortal Tully shone,
The Roman Rostra deck'd the Consul's throne:
Gath'ring his flowing robe, he seem'd to stand
In act to speak, and graceful stretch'd his hand.
Behind, Rome's Genius waits with Civic crowns,
And the great Father of his country owns.
These massy columns in a circle rise,
O'er which a pompous dome invades the skies:
Scarce to the top I stretch'd my aching sight,
So large it spread, and swell'd to such a height.
Full in the midst proud Fame's imperial seat,
With jewels blaz'd, magnificently great;
The vivid em'ralds there revive the eye,
The flaming rubies shew their sanguine dye,
Bright azure rays from lively sapphrys stream,
And lucid amber casts a golden gleam.
With various-colour'd light the pavement shone,
And all on fire appear'd the glowing throne;
The dome's high arch reflects the mingled blaze,
And forms a rainbow of alternate rays.
When on the Goddess first I cast my sight,
Scarce seem'd her stature of a cubit's height;
But swell'd to larger size, the more I gaz'd,
Till to the roof her tow'ring front she rais'd.

With her, the Temple ev'ry moment grew,
And ampler Vista's open'd to my view:
Upward the columns shoot, the roofs ascend,
And arches widen, and long aisles extend.
Such was her form as ancient bards have told,
Wings raise her arms, and wings her feet infold;
A thousand busy tongues the Goddess bears,
And thousand open eyes, and thousand list'ning ears.
Beneath, in order rang'd, the tuneful Nine
(Her virgin handmaids) still attend the shrine:
With eyes on Fame for ever fix'd, they sing;
For Fame they raise the voice, and tune the string;
With time's first birth began the heav'nly lays,
And last, eternal, thro' the length of days.

Around these wonders as I cast a look,
The trumpet sounded, and the temple shoo,
And all the nations, summon'd at the call,
From diff'rent quarters fill the crowded hall:
Of various tongues the mingled sounds were heard;
In various garbs promiscuous throngs appear'd;
Thick as the bees, that with the spring renew
Their flow'ry toils, and sip the fragrant dew,
When the wing'd colonies first tempt the sky,
O'er dusky fields and shaded waters fly,
Or settling, seize the sweets the blossoms yield,
And a low murmur runs along the field.
Millions of suppliant crowds the shrine attend,
And all degrees before the Goddess bend;
The poor, the rich, the valiant and the sage,
And boasting youth, and narrative old-age.
Their pleas were diff'rent, their request the same:
For good and bad alike are fond of Fame.
Some she disgrac'd, and some with honours crown'd;
Unlike successes equal merits found.
Thus her blind sister, fickle Fortune, reigns,
And, undiscerning, scatters crowns and chains.
First at the shrine the Learned world appear,
And to the Goddess thus prefer their play'r.
'Long have we sought t' instruct and please mankind,
With studies pale, with midnight vigils blind;
But thank'd by few, rewarded yet by none,
We here appeal to thy superior throne:
On wit and learning the just prize bestow,
For fame is all we must expect below.'
The Goddess heard, and bade the Muses raise
The golden Trumpet of eternal Praise:
From pole to pole the winds diffuse the sound,
That fills the circuit of the world around;
Not all at once, as thunder breaks the cloud;
The notes at first were rather sweet than loud:
By just degrees they ev'ry moment rise,

Fill the wide earth, and gain upon the skies.
At ev'ry breath were balmy odours shed,
Which still grew sweeter as they wider spread;
Less fragrant scents th' unfolding rose exhales,
Or spices breathing in Arabian gales.
Next these the good and just, an awful train,
Thus on their knees address the sacred fane.
'Since living virtue is with envy curs'd,
And the best men are treated like the worst,
Do thou, just Goddess, call our merits forth,
And give each deed th' exact intrinsic worth.'
'Not with bare justice shall your act be crown'd'
(Said Fame) 'but high above desert renown'd:
Let fuller notes th' applauding world amaze,
And the full loud clarion labour in your praise.'
This band dismiss'd, behold another croud
The constant tenour of whose well-spent days
No less deserv'd a just return of praise.
But strait the direful Trump of Slander sounds;
Thro' the big dome the doubling thunder bounds;
Loud as the burst of cannon rends the skies,
The dire report thro' ev'ry region flies,
In ev'ry ear incessant rumours rung,
And gath'ring scandals grew on ev'ry tongue.
From the black trumpet's rusty concave broke
Sulphureous flames, and clouds of rolling smoke:
The pois'nous vapour blots the purple skies,
And withers all before it as it flies.
A troop came next, who crowns and armour wore,
And proud defiance in their looks they bore:
'For thee' (they cry'd) 'amidst alarms and strife,
We sail'd in tempests down the stream of life;
For thee whole nations fill'd with flames and blood,
And swam to empire thro' the purple flood.
Those ills we dar'd, thy inspiration own,
What virtue seem'd, was done for thee alone.'
'Ambitious fools!' (the Queen reply'd, and frown'd)
'Be all your acts in dark oblivion drown'd;
There sleep forgot, with mighty tyrants gone,
Your statues moulder'd, and your names unknown!'
A sudden cloud straight snatch'd them from my sight,
And each majestic phantom sunk in night.
Then came the smallest tribe I yet had seen;
Plain was their dress, and modest was their mien.
'Great idol of mankind! we neither claim
The praise of merit, nor aspire to fame!
But safe in deserts from th' applause of men,
Would die unheard of, as we liv'd unseen,
'Tis all we beg thee, to conceal from sight
Those acts of goodness, which themselves requite.
To follow virtue ev'n for virtue's sake.'
'And live there men, who slight immortal fame?

Who then with incense shall adore our name?
But mortals! know, 'tis still our greatest pride
To blaze those virtues, which the good would hide.
Rise! Muses, rise; add all your tuneful breath,
These must not sleep in darkness and in death.'
She said: in air the trembling music floats,
And on the winds triumphant swell the notes;
So soft, tho' high, so loud, and yet so clear,
Ev'n list'ning Angels lean'd from heav'n to hear:
To farthest shores th' Ambrosial spirit flies,
Sweet to the world, and grateful to the skies.
Next these a youthful train their vows express'd,
With feathers crown'd, with gay embroid'ry dress'd:
'Hither,' they cry'd, 'direct your eyes, and see
The men of pleasure, dress, and gallantry;
Ours is the place at banquets, balls, and plays,
Sprightly our nights, polite are all our days;
Courts we frequent, where 'tis our pleasing care
To pay due visits, and address the fair:
In fact, 'tis true, no nymph we could persuade,
But still in fancy vanquish'd ev'ry maid;
Of unknown Duchesses lewd tales we tell,
Yet, would the world believe us, all were well.
The joy let others have, and we the name,
And what we want in pleasure, grant in fame.'
The Queen assents, the trumpet rends the skies,
And at each blast a Lady's honour dies.
Pleas'd with the strange success, vast numbers prest
Around the shrine, and made the same request:
'What? you,' (she cry'd) 'unlearn'd in arts to please,
Slaves to yourselves, and ev'n fatigu'd with ease,
Who lose a length of undeserving days,
Would you usurp the lover's dear-bought praise?
To just contempt, ye vain pretenders, fall,
The people's fable, and the scorn of all.'
Straight the black clarion sends a horrid sound,
Loud laughs burst out, and bitter scoffs fly round,
Whispers are heard, with taunts reviling loud,
And scornful hisses run thro' the crowd.
Last, those who boast of mighty mischiefs done,
Enslave their country, or usurp a throne;
Or who their glory's dire foundation lay'd
On Sov'reigns ruin'd, or on friends betray'd;
Calm, thinking villains, whom no faith could fix,
Of crooked counsels and dark politics;
Of these a gloomy tribe surround the throne,
And beg to make th' immortal treasons known.
The trumpet roars, long flaky flames expire,
With sparks, that seem'd to set the world on fire.
At the dread sound, pale mortals stood aghast,
And startled nature trembled with the blast.
This having heard and seen, and snatch'd me from the throne.

Before my view appear'd a structure fair,
Its site uncertain, if in earth or air;
With rapid motion turn'd the mansion round;
With ceaseless noise the ringing walls resound;
Not less in number were the spacious doors,
Than leaves on trees, or sand upon the shores;
Which still unfolded stand, by night, by day,
Pervious to winds, and open ev'ry way.
As flames by nature to the skies ascend,
As weighty bodies to the centre tend,
As to the sea returning rivers toll,
And the touch'd needle trembles to the pole;
Hither, as to their proper place, arise
All various sounds from earth, and seas, and skies,
Or spoke aloud, or whisper'd in the ear;
Nor ever silence, rest, or peace is here.
As on the smooth expanse of crystal lakes
The sinking stone at first a circle makes;
The trembling surface by the motion stir'd,
Spreads in a second circle, then a third;
Wide, and more wide, the floating rings advance,
Fill all the wat'ry plain, and to the margin dance:
Thus ev'ry voice and sound, when first they break,
On neighb'ring air a soft impression make;
Another ambient circle then they move;
That, in its turn, impels the next above;
Thro' undulating air the sounds are sent,
And spread o'er all the fluid element.
There various news I heard of love and strife,
Of peace and war, health, sickness, death, and life,
Of loss and gain, of famine and of store,
Of storms at sea, and travels on the shore,
Of prodigies, and portents seen in air,
Of fires and plagues, and stars with blazing hair,
Of turns of fortune, changes in the state,
The falls of fav'rites, projects of the great,
Of old mismanagements, taxations new:
All neither wholly false, nor wholly true.
Above, below, without, within, around.
Confus'd, unnumber'd multitudes are found,
Who pass, repass, advance, and glide away;
Hosts rais'd by fear, and phantoms of a day:
Astrologers, that future fates foreshew,
Projectors, quacks, and lawyers not a few;
And priests, and party-zealots, num'rous bands
With home-born lies, or tales from foreign lands;
Each talk'd aloud, or in some secret place,
And wild impatience star'd in ev'ry face.
The flying rumours gather'd as they roll'd,
Scarce any tale was sooner heard than told;
And all who told it added something new,
And all who heard it, made enlargements too,

In ev'ry ear it spread, on ev'ry tongue it grew.
Thus flying east and west, and north and south,
News travel'd with increase from mouth to mouth.
So from a spark, that kindled first by chance,
With gath'ring force the quick'ning flames advance;
Till to the clouds their curling heads aspire,
And tow'rs and temples sink in floods of fire.
When thus ripe lies are to perfection sprung,
Full grown, and fit to grace a mortal tongue,
Thro' thousand vents, impatient, forth they flow,
And rush in millions on the world below.
Fame sits aloft, and points them out their course,
Their date determines, and prescribes their force:
Some to remain, and some to perish soon;
Or wane and wax alternate like the moon.
Around, a thousand winged wonders fly,
Borne by the trumpet's blast, and scatter'd thro' the sky.
There, at one passage, oft you might survey
A lie and truth contending for the way;
And long 'twas doubtful, both so closely pent,
Which first should issue thro' the narrow vent:
At last agreed, together out they fly,
Inseparable now, the truth and lie;
The strict companions are for ever join'd,
And this or that unmix'd, no mortal e'er shall find.
While thus I stood, intent to see and hear,
One came, methought, and whisper'd in my ear:
What could thus high thy rash ambition raise?
Art thou, fond youth, a candidate for praise?
'Tis true, said I, not void of hopes I came,
For who so fond as youthful bards of Fame?
But few, alas! the casual blessing boast,
So hard to gain, so easy to be lost.
How vain that second life in others breath,
Th' estate which wits inherit after death!
Ease, health, and life, for this they must resign,
(Unsure the tenure, but how vast the fine!)
The great man's curse, without the gains endure,
Be envy'd, wretched, and be flatter'd, poor;
All luckless wits their enemies profest,
And all successful, jealous friends at best.
Nor Fame I slight, nor for her favours call;
She comes unlook'd for, if she comes at all.
But if the purchase costs so dear a price,
As soothing Folly, or exalting Vice:
Oh! if the Muse must flatter lawless sway,
And follow still where fortune leads the way;
Or if no basis bear my rising name,
But the fall'n ruin of another's fame;
Then teach me, heav'n! to scorn the guilty bays,
Drive from my breast that wretched lust of praise,
Unblemish'd let me live, or die unknown;

Oh grant an honest fame, or grant me none!

Alexander Pope

The Three Gentle Shepherds

Of gentle Philips will I ever sing,
With gentle Philips shall the valleys ring.
My numbers too for ever will I vary,
With gentle Budgell and with gentle Carey.
Or if in ranging of the names I judge ill,
With gentle Carey and with gentle Budgell:
Oh! may all gentle bards together place ye,
Men of good hearts, and men of delicacy.
May satire ne'er befool ye, or beknave ye,
And from all wits that have a knack, God save ye.

Alexander Pope

To Lady Mary Wortley Montagu

I.
In beauty, or wit,
No mortal as yet
To question your empire has dared:
But men of discerning
Have thought that in learning
To yield to a lady was hard.

II.
Impertinent schools,
With musty dull rules,
Have reading to females denied;
So Papists refuse
The Bible to use,
Lest flocks should be wise as their guide.

III.
'Twas a woman at first
(Indeed she was curst)
In knowledge that tasted delight,
And sages agree
The laws should decree
To the first possessor the right.

IV.
Then bravely, fair dame,
Resume the old claim,
Which to your whole sex does belong;
And let men receive,
From a second bright Eve,
The knowledge of right and of wrong.

V.
But if the first Eve
Hard doom did receive,
When only one apple had she,
What a punishment new
Shall be found out for you,
Who tasting, have robb'd the whole tree?

Alexander Pope

To Mr. Thomas Southern, on his Birth-Day

Resign'd to live, prepar'd to die,
With not one sin, but poetry,
This day Tom's fair account has run
(Without a blot) to eighty-one.
Kind Boyle, before his poet, lays
A table, with a cloth of bays;
And Ireland, mother of sweet singers,
Presents her harp still to his fingers.
The feast, his tow'ring genius marks
In yonder wild goose and the larks!
The mushrooms shew his wit was sudden!
And for his judgement, lo a pudden!
Roast beef, tho' old, proclaims him stout,
And grace, altho' a bard, devout.
May Tom, whom heav'n send down to raise
The price of prologues and of plays,
He ev'ry birth-day more a winner,
Digest his thirty thousandth dinner;
Walk to his grave without reproach,
And scorn a rascal and a coach.

Alexander Pope

To Mrs. M. B. On Her Birthday

Oh be thou blest with all that Heav'n can send,
Long Health, long Youth, long Pleasure, and a Friend:
Not with those Toys the female world admire,
Riches that vex, and Vanities that tire.
With added years if Life bring nothing new,
But, like a Sieve, let ev'ry blessing thro',
Some joy still lost, as each vain year runs o'er,
And all we gain, some sad Reflection more;
Is that a Birth-Day? 'tis alas! too clear,
'Tis but the funeral of the former year.
Let Joy or Ease, let Affluence or Content,
And the gay Conscience of a life well spent,
Calm ev'ry thought, inspirit ev'ry grace.
Glow in thy heart, and smile upon thy face.
Let day improve on day, and year on year,
Without a Pain, a Trouble, or a Fear;
Till Death unfelt that tender frame destroy,
In some soft Dream, or Extasy of joy,
Peaceful sleep out the Sabbath of the Tomb,
And wake to Raptures in a Life to come.

Alexander Pope

To the Author of a Poem Entitled Succession

Begone, ye Critics, and restrain your spite,
Codrus writes on, and will for ever write,
The heaviest Muse the swiftest course has gone,
As clocks run fastest when most lead is on;
What tho' no bees around your cradle flew,
Nor on your lips distill'd their golden dew;
Yet have we oft discover'd in their stead
When you, like Orpheus, strike the warbling lyre.
Attentive blocks stand round you and admire.
Wit pass'd through thee no longer is the same,
As meat digested takes a diff'rent name;
But sense must sure thy safest plunder be,
Since no reprisals can be made on thee.
Thus thou may'st rise, and in thy daring flight
(Though ne'er so weighty) reach a wondrous height.
So, forced from engines, lead itself can fly,
Sure Bavius copied Maevius to the full,
And Chaerilus taught Codrus to be dull;
Therefore, dear friend, at my advice give o'er
This needless labour; and contend no more
To prove a dull succession to be true,
Since 'tis enough we find it so in you.

Alexander Pope

Translation of a Prayer of Brutus

Goddess of woods, tremendous in the chase,
To mountain wolves and all the savage race,
Wide o'er the aerial vault extend thy sway,
And o'er the infernal regions void of day.
On thy third reign look down; disclose our fate,
In what new station shall we fix our seat?
When shall we next thy hallow'd altars raise,
And choirs of virgins celebrate thy praise?

Alexander Pope

Two Or Three: A Recipe To Make A Cuckold

Two or three visits, and two or three bows,
Two or three civil things, two or three vows,
Two or three kisses, with two or three sighs,
Two or three Jesus's - and let me dies-
Two or three squeezes, and two or three towses,
With two or three thousand pound lost at their houses,
Can never fail cuckolding two or three spouses.

Alexander Pope

Universal Prayer

Father of all! In every age,
  In ev'ry clime ador'd,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
  Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou Great First Cause, least understood,
  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;
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,
  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.

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,
And teach damnation round the land
  On each I judge thy foe.

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

Save me alike from foolish Pride
  Or impious Discontent,
At aught thy wisdom has denied,
  Or aught that goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
  To right the fault I see:
That mercy I to others show,
  That mercy show to me.

Mean tho' I am, not wholly so,
  Since quicken'd by thy breath;

O lead me whereso'er I go,
  Thro' this day's life or death!

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

To Thee, whose temple is of Space,
  Whose altar earth, sea, skies,
One chorus let all Beings raise!
  All Nature's incense rise!

Alexander Pope

Untitled

'Sir, I admit your general rule,
That every poet is a fool.
But you yourself may serve to show it,
Every fool is not a poet.'

Alexander Pope

Verses Left by Mr. Pope

With no poetic ardour fir'd
I press the bed where Wilmot lay;
That here he lov'd, or here expir'd,
Begets no numbers grave or gay.

Beneath thy roof, Argyle, are bred
Such thoughts as prompt the brave to lie
Stretch'd out in honour's nobler bed,
Beneath a nobler roof - the sky.

Such flames as high in patriots burn,
Yet stoop to bless a child or wife;
And such as wicked kings may mourn,
When freedom is more dear than life.

Alexander Pope

Vertumnus and Pomona : Ovid's Metamorphoses, book 14 [v. 623-771]

The fair Pomona flourish'd in his reign;
Of all the Virgins of the sylvan train,
None taught the trees a nobler race to bear,
Or more improv'd the vegetable care.
To her the shady grove, the flow'ry field,
The streams and fountains, no delights could yield;
'Twas all her joy the ripening fruits to tend,
And see the boughs with happy burthens bend.
The hook she bore instead of Cynthia's spear,
To lop the growth of the luxuriant year,
To decent form the lawless shoots to bring,
And teach th' obedient branches where to spring.
Now the cleft rind inserted graffs receives,
And yields an offspring more than nature gives;
Now sliding streams the thirsty plants renew,
And feed their fibres with reviving dew.
These cares alone her virgin breast employ,
Averse from Venus and the nuptial joy.
Her private orchards, wall'd on ev'ry side,
To lawless sylvans all access deny'd.
How oft the Satyrs and the wanton Fawns,
Who haunt the forests, or frequent the lawns,
The God whose ensign scares the birds of prey,
And old Silenus, youthful in decay,
Employ'd their wiles, and unavailing care,
To pass the fences, and surprise the fair.
Like these, Vertumnus own'd his faithful flame,
Like these, rejected by the scornful dame.
To gain her sight a thousand forms he wears,
And first a reaper from the field appears,
Sweating he walks, while loads of golden grain
O'ercharge the shoulders of the seeming swain.
Oft o'er his back a crooked scythe is laid,
And wreathes of hay his sun-burnt temples shade:
Oft in his harden'd hand a goad he bears,
Like one who late unyok'd the sweating steers.
Sometimes his pruning-hook corrects the vines,
And the loose stragglers to their ranks confines.
Now gath'ring what the bounteous year allows,
He pulls ripe apples from the bending boughs.
A soldier now, he with his sword appears;
A fisher next, his trembling angle bears;
Each shape he varies, and each art he tries,
On her bright charms to feast his longing eyes.
A female form at last Vertumnus wears,
With all the marks of rev'rend age appears,
His temples thinly spread with silver hairs;
Propp'd on his staff, and stooping as he goes,
A painted mitre shades his furrow'd brows.
The God in this decrepit form array'd,
The gardens enter'd, and the fruit survey'd,
And 'Happy you!' (he thus address'd the maid)

'Whose charms as far all other nymphs out-shine,
'As other gardens are excell'd by thine!'
Then kiss'd the fair; (his kisses warmer grow
Than such as women on their sex bestow.)
Then plac'd beside her on the flow'ry ground,
Beheld the trees with autumn's bounty crown'd.
An Elm was near, to whose embraces led,
The curling vine her swelling clusters spread:
He view'd her twining branches with delight,
And prais'd the beauty of the pleasing sight.
'Yet this tall elm, but for his vine' (he said)
'Had stood neglected, and a barren shade;
And this fair vine, but that her arms surround
Her marry'd elm, had crept along the ground.
Ah beauteous maid, let this example move
Your mind, averse from all the joys of love.
Deign to be lov'd, and ev'ry heart subdue!
What nymph could e'er attract such crowds as you?
Not she whose beauty urg'd the Centaurs' arms,
Ulysses' Queen, nor Helen's fatal charms.
Ev'n now, when silent scorn is all they gain,
A thousand court you, tho' they court in vain,
A thousand sylvans, demigods, and gods,
That haunt our mountains and our Alban woods.
But if you'll prosper, mark what I advise,
Whom age, and long experience render wise,
And one whose tender care is far above
All that these lovers ever felt of love,
(Far more than e'er can by yourself be guess'd)
Fix on Vertumnus, and reject the rest.
For his firm faith I dare engage my own;
Scarce to himself, himself is better known.
To distant lands Vertumnus never roves;
Like you contented with his native groves;
Nor at first sight, like most, admires the fair;
For you he lives; and you alone shall share
His last affection, as his early care.
Besides, he's lovely far above the rest,
With youth immortal, and with beauty blest.
Add, that he varies ev'ry shape with ease,
And tries all forms that may Pomona please.
But what should most excite a mutual flame,
Your rural cares, and pleasures are the same:
To him your orchard's early fruits are due,
(A pleasing off'ring when 'tis made by you)
He values these; but yet (alas) complains,
That still the best and dearest gift remains.
Not the fair fruit that on yon' branches glows
With that ripe red th' autumnal sun bestows;
Nor tasteful herbs that in these gardens rise,
Which the kind soil with milky sap supplies;
You, only you, can move the God's desire:

Oh crown so constant and so pure a fire!
Let soft compassion touch your gentle mind;
Think, 'tis Vertumnus begs you to be kind!
So may no frost, when early buds appear,
Destroy the promise of the youthful year;
Nor winds, when first your florid orchard blows,
Shake the light blossoms from their blasted boughs!'
This when the various God had urg'd in vain,
He straight assum'd his native form again;
Such, and so bright an aspect now he bears,
As when thro' clouds th' emerging sun appears,
And thence exerting his refulgent ray,
Dispels the darkness, and reveals the day.
Force he prepar'd, but check'd the rash design;
For when, appearing in a form divine,
The Nymph surveys him, and beholds the grace
Of charming features, and a youthful face,
In her soft breast consenting passions move,
And the warm maid confess'd a mutual love.

Alexander Pope

Weeping

While Celia's Tears make sorrow bright,
Proud Grief sits swelling in her eyes;
The Sun, next those the fairest light,
Thus from the Ocean first did rise:
And thus thro' Mists we see the Sun,
Which else we durst not gaze upon.

These silver drops, like morning dew,
Foretell the fervour of the day:
So from one Cloud soft show'rs we view,
And blasting lightnings burst away.
The Stars that fall from Celia's eye
Declare our Doom in drawing nigh.

The Baby in that sunny Sphere
So like a Phaeton appears,
That Heav'n, the threaten'd World to spare,
Thought fit to drown him in her tears;
Else might th' ambitious Nymph aspire,
To set, like him, Heav'n too on fire.

Alexander Pope

Windsor Forest

Thy forests, Windsor! and thy green retreats,
At once the Monarch's and the Muse's seats,
Invite my lays. Be present, sylvan maids!
Unlock your springs, and open all your shades.
Granville commands; your aid O Muses bring!
What Muse for Granville can refuse to sing?
The groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in description, and look green in song:
These, were my breast inspir'd with equal flame,
Like them in beauty, should be like in fame.
Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,
Here earth and water, seem to strive again;
Not Chaos like together crush'd and bruis'd,
But as the world, harmoniously confus'd:
Where order in variety we see,
And where, tho' all things differ, all agree.
Here waving groves a checquer'd scene display,
And part admit, and part exclude the day;
As some coy nymph her lover's warm address
Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress.
There, interspers'd in lawns and opening glades,
Thin trees arise that shun each other's shades.
Here in full light the russet plains extend;
There wrapt in clouds the blueish hills ascend.
Ev'n the wild heath displays her purple dyes,
And 'midst the desart fruitful fields arise,
That crown'd with tufted trees and springing corn,
Like verdant isles the sable waste adorn.
Let India boast her plants, nor envy we
The weeping amber or the balmy tree,
While by our oaks the precious loads are born,
And realms commanded which those trees adorn.
Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight,
Tho' Gods assembled grace his tow'ring height,
Than what more humble mountains offer here,
Where, in their blessings, all those Gods appear.
See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crown'd,
Here blushing Flora paints th' enamel'd ground,
Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,
And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand;
Rich Industry sits smiling on the plains,
And peace and plenty tell, a Stuart reigns.
Not thus the land appear'd in ages past,
A dreary desart and a gloomy waste,
To savage beasts and savage laws a prey,
And kings more furious and severe than they;
Who claim'd the skies, dispeopled air and floods,
The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods:
Cities laid waste, they storm'd the dens and caves,
(For wiser brutes were backward to be slaves):
What could be free, when lawless beasts obey'd,
And ev'n the elements a Tyrant sway'd?

In vain kind seasons swell'd the teeming grain,
Soft show'rs distill'd, and suns grew warm in vain;
The swain with tears his frustrate labour yields,
And famish'd dies amidst his ripen'd fields.
What wonder then, a beast or subject slain
Were equal crimes in a despotick reign?
Both doom'd alike, for sportive Tyrants bled,
But that the subject starv'd, the beast was fed.
Proud Nimrod first the bloody chace began,
A mighty hunter, and his prey was man:
Our haughty Norman boasts that barb'rous name,
And makes his trembling slaves the royal game.
The fields are ravish'd from th' industrious swains,
From men their cities, and from Gods their fanes:
The levell'd towns with weeds lie cover'd o'er;
The hollow winds thro' naked temples roar;
Round broken columns clasping ivy twin'd;
O'er heaps of ruin stalk'd the stately hind;
The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,
And savage howlings fill the sacred quires.
Aw'd by his Nobles, by his Commons curst,
Th' Oppressor rul'd tyrannic where he durst,
Stretch'd o'er the Poor and Church his iron rod,
And serv'd alike his Vassals and his God.
Whom ev'n the Saxon spar'd, and bloody Dane,
The wanton victims of his sport remain.
But see, the man who spacious regions gave
A waste for beasts, himself deny'd a grave!
Stretch'd on the lawn, his second hope survey,
At once the chaser, and at once the prey:
Lo Rufus, tugging at the deadly dart,
Bleeds in the forest, like a wounded hart.
Succeeding Monarchs heard the subjects cries,
Nor saw displeas'd the peaceful cottage rise.
Then gath'ring flocks on unknown mountains fed,
O'er sandy wilds were yellow harvests spread,
The forests wonder'd at th' unusual grain,
And secret transport touch'd the conscious swain.
Fair Liberty, Britannia's Goddess, rears
Her chearful head, and leads the golden years.
Ye vig'rous swains! while youth ferments your blood,
And purer spirits swell the sprightly flood,
Now range the hills, the thickest woods beset,
Wind the shrill horn, or spread the waving net.
When milder autumn summer's heat succeeds,
And in the new-shorn field the partridge feeds,
Before his lord the ready spaniel bounds,
Panting with hope, he tries the furrow'd grounds;
But when the tainted gales the game betray,
Couch'd close he lies, and meditates the prey:
Secure they trust th' unfaithful field, beset,
Till hov'ring o'er 'em sweeps the swelling net.

Thus (if small things we may with great compare)
When Albion sends her eager sons to war,
Some thoughtless Town, with ease and plenty blest,
Near, and more near, the closing lines invest;
Sudden they seize th' amaz'd, defenceless prize,
And high in air Britannia's standard flies.
See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,
And mounts exulting on triumphant wings:
Short is his joy; he feels the fiery wound,
Flutters in blood, and panting beats the ground.
Ah! what avail his glossy, varying dyes,
His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes,
The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold?
Nor yet, when moist Arcturus clouds the sky,
The woods and fields their pleasing toils deny.
To plains with well-breath'd beagles we repair,
And trace the mazes of the circling hare:
(Beasts, urg'd by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,
And learn of man each other to undo.)
With slaught'ring guns th' unweary'd fowler roves,
When frosts have whiten'd all the naked groves;
Where doves in flocks the leafless trees o'ershade,
And lonely woodcocks haunt the wat'ry glade.
He lifts the tube, and levels with his eye;
Strait a short thunder breaks the frozen sky:
Oft', as in airy rings they skim the heath,
The clam'rous plovers feel the leaden death:
Oft', as the mounting larks their notes prepare,
They fall, and leave their little lives in air.
In genial spring, beneath the quiv'ring shade,
Where cooling vapours breathe along the mead,
The patient fisher takes his silent stand,
Intent, his angle trembling in his hand;
With looks unmov'd, he hopes the scaly breed,
And eyes the dancing cork, and bending reed.
Our plenteous streams a various race supply,
The bright-ey'd perch with fins of Tyrian dye,
The silver eel, in shining volumes roll'd,
The yellow carp, in scales bedrop'd with gold,
Swift trouts, diversify'd with crimson stains,
And pykes, the tyrants of the watry plains.
Now Cancer glows with Phoebus' fiery car;
The youth rush eager to the sylvan war,
Swarm o'er the lawns, the forest walks surround,
Rouze the fleet hart, and chear the opening hound.
Th' impatient courser pants in ev'ry vein,
And pawing, seems to beat the distant plain;
Hills, vales, and floods appear already cross'd,
And e'er he starts, a thousand steps are lost.
See! the bold youth strain up the threat'ning steep,
Rush thro' the thickets, down the valleys sweep,

Hang o'er their coursers heads with eager speed,
And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed.
Let old Arcadia boast her ample plain,
Th' immortal huntress, and her virgin-train;
Nor envy, Windsor! since thy shades have seen
As bright a Goddess, and as chaste a Queen;
Whose care, like hers, protects the sylvan reign,
The Earth's fair light, and Empress of the main.
Here, as old bards have sung, Diana stray'd,
Bath'd in the springs, or sought the cooling shade;
Here arm'd with silver bows, in early dawn,
Her buskin'd Virgins trac'd the dewy lawn.
Above the rest a rural nymph was fam'd,
Thy offspring, Thames! the fair Lodona nam'd;
(Lodona's fate, in long oblivion cast,
The Muse shall sing, and what she sings shall last.)
Scarce could the Goddess from her nymph be known,
But by the crescent and the golden zone.
She scorn'd the praise of beauty, and the care,
A belt her waist, a fillet binds her hair,
A painted quiver on her shoulder sounds,
And with her dart the flying deer she wounds.
It chanc'd, as eager of the chace, the maid
Beyond the forest's verdant limits stray'd,
Pan saw and lov'd, and burning with desire
Pursu'd her flight, her flight increas'd his fire.
Not half so swift the trembling doves can fly,
When the fierce eagle cleaves the liquid sky;
Not half so swiftly the fierce eagle moves,
When thro' the clouds he drives the trembling doves;
As from the God she flew with furious pace,
Or as the God, more furious, urg'd the chace.
Now fainting, sinking, pale, the nymph appears;
Now close behind, his sounding steps she hears;
And now his shadow reach'd her as she run,
His shadow lengthen'd by the setting sun;
And now his shorter breath, with sultry air,
Pants on her neck, and fans her parting hair.
In vain on father Thames she call'd for aid,
Nor could Diana help her injur'd maid.
Faint, breathless, thus she pray'd, nor pray'd in vain;
'Ah Cynthia! ah tho' banish'd from thy train,
'Let me, O let me, to the shades repair,
'My native shades there weep, and murmur there.
She said, and melting as in tears she lay,
In a soft, silver stream dissolv'd away.
The silver stream her virgin coldness keeps,
For ever murmurs, and for ever weeps;
Still bears the name the hapless virgin bore,
And bathes the forest where she rang'd before.
In her chaste current oft' the Goddess laves,
And with celestial tears augments the waves.

Oft' in her glass the musing shepherd spies
The headlong mountains and the downward skies,
The watry landskip of the pendant woods,
And absent trees that tremble in the floods;
In the clear azure gleam the flocks are seen,
And floating forests paint the waves with green.
Thro' the fair scene rowl slow the ling'ring streams,
Then foaming pour along, and rush into the Thames.
Thou too, great father of the British floods!
With joyful pride survey'st our lofty woods;
Where tow'ring oaks their spreading honours rear,
And future navies on thy shores appear.
Not Neptune's self from all his streams receives
A wealthier tribute, than to thine he gives.
No seas so rich, so gay no banks appear,
No lake so gentle, and no spring so clear.
Not fabled Po more swells the poet's lays,
While thro' the skies his shining current strays,
Than thine, which visits Windsor's fam'd abodes,
To grace the mansion of our earthly Gods:
Nor all his stars a brighter lustre show,
Than the fair nymphs that grace thy side below:
Here Jove himself, subdu'd by beauty still,
Might change Olympus for a nobler hill.
Happy the man whom this bright Court approves,
His Sov'reign favours, and his Country loves:
Happy next him, who to these shades retires,
Whom Nature charms, and whom the Muse inspires;
Whom humbler joys of home-felt quiet please,
Successive study, exercise, and ease.
He gathers health from herbs the forest yields,
And of their fragrant physic spoils the fields:
With chymic art exalts the min'ral pow'rs,
And draws the aromatic souls of flow'rs:
Now marks the course of rolling orbs on high;
O'er figur'd worlds now travels with his eye:
Of ancient writ unlocks the learned store,
Consults the dead, and lives past ages o'er:
Or wand'ring thoughtful in the silent wood,
Attends the duties of the wise and good,
T'observe a mean, be to himself a friend,
To follow nature, and regard his end;
Or looks on heav'n with more than mortal eyes,
Bids his free soul expatiate in the skies,
Amid her kindred stars familiar roam,
Survey the region, and confess her home!
Such was the life great Scipio once admir'd,
Thus Atticus, and Trumbal thus retir'd.
Ye sacred Nine! that all my soul possess,
Whose raptures fire me, and whose visions bless,
Bear me, oh bear me to sequester'd scenes,
The bow'ry mazes, and surrounding greens;

To Thames's banks which fragrant breezes fill,
Or where ye Muses sport on Cooper's hill.
(On Cooper's hill eternal wreaths shall grow,
While lasts the mountain, or while Thames shall flow)
I seem thro' consecrated walks to rove,
I hear soft music die along the grove;
Led by the sound, I roam from shade to shade,
By god-like Poets venerable made:
Here his first lays majestic Denham sung;
There the last numbers flow'd from Cowley's tongue.
O early lost! what tears the river shed,
When the sad pomp along his banks was led?
His drooping swans on ev'ry note expire,
And on his willows hung each Muse's lyre.
Since fate relentless stop'd their heav'nly voice,
No more the forests ring, or groves rejoice;
Who now shall charm the shades, where Cowley strung
His living harp, and lofty Denham sung?
But hark! the groves rejoice, the forest rings!
Are these reviv'd? or is it Granville sings?
'Tis yours, my Lord, to bless our soft retreats,
And call the Muses to their ancient seats;
To paint anew the flow'ry sylvan scenes,
To crown the forests with immortal greens,
Make Windsor-hills in lofty numbers rise,
And lift her turrets nearer to the skies;
To sing those honours you deserve to wear,
And add new lustre to her silver star.
Here noble Surrey felt the sacred rage,
Surrey, the Granville of a former age:
Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance,
Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance:
In the same shades the Cupids tun'd his lyre,
To the same notes, of love, and soft desire:
Fair Geraldine, bright object of his vow,
Then fill'd the groves, as heav'nly Myra now.
Oh would'st thou sing what Heroes Windsor bore,
What Kings first breath'd upon her winding shore,
Or raise old warriours, whose ador'd remains
In weeping vaults her hallow'd earth contains!
With Edward's acts adorn the shining page,
Stretch his long triumphs down thro' ev'ry age,
Draw Monarchs chain'd, and Cressi's glorious field,
The lillies blazing on the regal shield:
Then, from her roofs when Verrio's colours fall,
And leave inanimate the naked wall,
Still in thy song should vanquish'd France appear,
And bleed for ever under Britain's spear.
Let softer strains ill-fated Henry mourn,
And palms eternal flourish round his urn,
Here o'er the martyr-King the marble weeps,
And fast beside him, once-fear'd Edward sleeps:

Whom not th' extended Albion could contain,
From old Belerium to the northern main,
The grave unites; where ev'n the Great find rest,
And blended lie th' oppressor and th' opprest!
Make sacred Charles's tomb for ever known,
(Obscure the place, and un-inscrib'd the stone)
Oh fact accurst! what tears has Albion shed,
Heav'ns, what new wounds! and how her old have bled?
She saw her sons with purple deaths expire,
Her sacred domes involv'd in rolling fire,
A dreadful series of intestine wars,
Inglorious triumphs, and dishonest scars.
At length great Anna said 'Let Discord cease!'
She said, the World obey'd, and all was Peace!
In that blest moment, from his oozy bed
Old father Thames advanc'd his rev'rend head.
His tresses drop'd with dews, and o'er the stream
His shining horns diffus'd a golden gleam:
Grav'd on his urn, appear'd the Moon that guides
His swelling waters, and alternate tydes;
The figur'd streams in waves of silver roll'd,
And on their banks Augusta rose in gold.
Around his throne the sea-born brothers stood,
Who swell with tributary urns his flood:
First the fam'd authors of his ancient name,
The winding Isis and the fruitful Tame:
The Kennet swift, for silver eels renown'd;
The Loddon slow, with verdant alders crown'd;
Cole, whose clear streams his flow'ry islands lave;
And chalky Wey, that rolls a milky wave:
The blue, transparent Vandalis appears;
The gulphy Lee his sedgy tresses rears;
And sullen Mole, that hides his diving flood;
And silent Darent, stain'd with Danish blood.
High in the midst, upon his urn reclin'd,
(His sea-green mantle waving with the wind)
The God appear'd: he turn'd his azure eyes
Where Windsor-domes and pompous turrets rise;
Then bow'd and spoke; the winds forget to roar,
And the hush'd waves glide softly to the shore.
Hail, sacred Peace! hail long-expected days,
That Thames's glory to the stars shall raise!
Tho' Tyber's streams immortal Rome behold,
Tho' foaming Hermus swells with tydes of gold,
From heav'n itself tho' sev'n-fold Nilus flows,
And harvests on a hundred realms bestows;
These now no more shall be the Muse's themes,
Lost in my fame, as in the sea their streams.
Let Volga's banks with iron squadrons shine,
And groves of lances glitter on the Rhine,
Let barb'rous Ganges arm a servile train;
Be mine the blessings of a peaceful reign.

No more my sons shall dye with British blood
Red Iber's sands, or Ister's foaming flood;
Safe on my shore each unmolested swain
Shall tend the flocks, or reap the bearded grain;
The shady empire shall retain no trace
Of war or blood, but in the sylvan chace;
The trumpet sleep, while chearful horns are blown,
And arms employ'd on birds and beasts alone.
Behold! th' ascending Villa's on my side,
Project long shadows o'er the crystal tyde.
Behold! Augusta's glitt'ring spires increase,
And temples rise, the beauteous works of Peace.
I see, I see where two fair cities bend
Their ample bow, a new White-ball ascend!
There mighty nations shall enquire their doom,
The world's great Oracle in times to come;
There Kings shall sue, and suppliant States be seen
Once more to bend before a British Queen.
Thy trees, fair Windsor! now shall leave their woods,
And half thy forests rush into my floods,
Bear Britain's thunder, and her Cross display,
To the bright regions of the rising day;
Tempt icy seas, where scarce the waters roll,
Where clearer flames glow round the frozen Pole;
Or under southern skies exalt their sails,
Led by new stars, and borne by spicy gales!
For me the balm shall bleed, and amber flow,
The coral redden, and the ruby glow,
The pearly shell its lucid globe infold,
And Phoebus warm the ripening ore to gold.
The time shall come, when free as seas or wind
Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind,
Whole nations enter with each swelling tyde,
And seas but join the regions they divide;
Earth's distant ends our glory shall behold,
And the new world launch forth to seek the old.
Then ships of uncouth form shall stem the tyde,
And feather'd people croud my wealthy side,
And naked youths and painted chiefs admire
Our speech, our colour, and our strange attire!
Oh stretch thy reign, fair Peace! from shore to shore,
'Till Conquest cease, and slav'ry be no more;
'Till the freed Indians in their native groves
Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable loves,
Peru once more a race of Kings behold,
And other Mexico's be roof'd with gold.
Exil'd by thee from earth to deepest hell,
In brazen bonds shall barb'rous Discord dwell:
Gigantic Pride, pale Terror, gloomy Care,
And mad Ambition, shall attend her there:
There purple Vengeance bath'd in gore retires,
Her weapons blunted, and extinct her fires:

There hateful Envy her own snakes shall feel,
And Persecution mourn her broken wheel:
There Faction roar, Rebellion bite her chain,
And gasping Furies thirst for blood in vain.
Here cease thy flight, nor with unhallow'd lays
Touch the fair fame of Albion's golden days:
The thoughts of Gods let Granville's verse recite,
And bring the scenes of opening fate to light.
My humble Muse, in unambitious strains,
Paints the green forests and the flow'ry plains,
Where Peace descending bids her olives spring,
And scatters blessings from her dove-like wing.
Ev'n I more sweetly pass my careless days,
Pleas'd in the silent shade with empty praise;
Enough for me, that to the list'ning swains
First in these fields I sung the sylvan strains.

Alexander Pope

Winter - The Fourth Pastoral, or Daphne

Lycidas.
Thyrsis, the music of that murm'ring spring,
Is not so mournful as the strains you sing.
Nor rivers winding thro' the vales below,
So sweetly warble, or so smoothly flow.
Now sleeping flocks on their soft fleeces lie,
The moon, serene in glory, mounts the sky,
Wile silent birds forget their tuneful lays,
Oh sing of Daphne's fate, and Daphne's praise!

Thyrsis.
Behold the groves that shine with silver frost,
Their beauty wither'd, and their verdure lost.
Here shall I try the sweet Alexis' strain,
That call'd the list'ning Dryads to the plain?
Thames heard the numbers as he flow'd along,
And bade his willows learn the moving song.

Lycidas.
So may kind rains their vital moisture yield,
And swell the future harvest of the field.
Begin; this charge the dying Daphne gave,
And said; 'Ye shepherds, sing around my grave!
Sing, while beside the shaded tomb I mourn,
And with fresh bays her rural shrine adorn.'

Thyrsis.
Ye gentle Muses, leave your crystal spring,
Let Nymphs and Sylvans cypress garlands bring;
Ye weeping Loves, the stream with myrtles hide,
And break your vows, as when Adonis died;
And with your golden darts, now useless grown,
Inscribe a verse on this relenting stone:
'Let nature change, let heav'n and earth deplore,
Fair Daphne's dead, and love is now no more!'
'Tis done, and nature's various charms decay,
See gloomy clouds obscure the cheerful day!
Now hung with pearls the dropping trees appear,
Their faded honours scatter'd on her bier.
See, where on earth the flow'ry glories lie,
With her they flourish'd, and with her they die.
Ah what avail the beauties nature wore?
Fair Daphne's dead, and beauty is no more!
For her the flocks refuse their verdant food,
Nor thirsty heifers seek the gliding flood.
The silver swans her hapless fate bemoan,
In notes more sad than when they sing their own;
In hollow caves sweet Echo silent lies,
Silent, or only to her name replies;
Her name with pleasure once she taught the shore,
Now Daphne's dead, and pleasure is no more!
No grateful dews descend from ev'ning skies,

Nor morning odours from the flow'rs arise;
No rich perfumes refresh the fruitful field,
Nor fragrant herbs their native incense yield.
The balmy Zephyrs, silent since her death,
Lament the ceasing of a sweeter breath;
Th' industrious bees neglect their golden store;
Fair Daphne's dead, and sweetness is no more!
No more the mounting larks, while Daphne sings,
Shall list'ning in mid air suspend their wings;
No more the birds shall imitate her lays,
Or hush'd with wonder, hearken from the sprays;
No more the streams their murmur shall forbear,
A sweeter music than their own to hear,
But tell the reeds, and tell the vocal shore,
Fair Daphne's dead, and music is no more!
Her fate is whisper'd by the gentle breeze,
And told in sighs to all the trembling trees;
The trembling trees, in ev'ry plain and wood,
Her fate remurmur to the silver flood;
The silver flood, so lately calm, appears
Swell'd with new passion, and o'erflows with tears;
The winds and trees and floods her death deplore,
Daphne, our grief! our glory now no more!
But see! where Daphne wond'ring mounts on high
Above the clouds, above the starry sky!
Eternal beauties grace the shining scene,
Fields ever fresh, and groves for ever green!
There while you rest in Amaranthine bow'rs,
Or from those meads select unfading flow'rs,
Behold us kindly, who your name implore,
Daphne, our Goddess, and our grief no more!

Lycidas.
How all things listen, while thy Muse complains!
Such silence waits on Philomela's strains,
In some still ev'ning, when the whisp'ring breeze
Pants on the leaves, and dies upon the trees.
To thee, bright goddess, oft a lamb shall bleed,
If teeming ewes increase my fleecy breed.
While plants their shade, or flow'rs their odours give,
Thy name, thy honour, and thy praise shall live!

Thyrsis.
But see, Orion sheds unwholesome dews,
Arise, the pines a noxious shade diffuse;
Sharp Boreas blows, and Nature feels decay,
Time conquers all, and we must Time obey.
Adieu, ye vales, ye mountains, streams and groves,
Adieu, ye shepherd's rural lays and loves;
Adieu, my flocks, farewell ye sylvan crew,
Daphne, farewell, and all the world adieu!

Alexander Pope

You Know Where You Did Despise

You know where you did despise
(Tother day) my little Eyes,
Little Legs, and little Thighs,
And some things, of little Size,
You know where.

You, tis true, have fine black eyes,
Taper legs, and tempting Thighs,
Yet what more than all we prize
Is a Thing of little Size,
You know where.

Alexander Pope