

## Classic Poetry Series

**John Gay**

**- 36 poems -**

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## **John Gay (30 June 1685 – 4 December 1732)**

John Gay was an English poet and dramatist and member of the Scriblerus Club. He is best remembered for *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), a ballad opera. The characters, including Captain Macheath and Polly Peachum, became household names.

### Early Life

Gay was born in Barnstaple, England and was educated at the town's grammar school. On leaving school he was apprenticed to a silk mercer in London, but being weary, according to [Samuel Johnson](http://www.poemhunter.com/samuel-johnson/), "of either the restraint or the servility of his occupation", he soon returned to Barnstaple, where he was educated by his uncle, the Rev. John Hanmer, the Nonconformist minister of the town. He then returned to London.

### Early Career

The dedication of his *Rural Sports* (1713) to [Alexander Pope](http://www.poemhunter.com/alexander-pope/) was the beginning of a lasting friendship. In 1714, Gay wrote *The Shepherd's Week*, a series of six pastorals drawn from English rustic life. Pope had urged him to undertake this task in order to ridicule the Arcadian pastorals of Ambrose Philips, who had been praised by a short-lived contemporary publication *The Guardian*, to the neglect of Pope's claims as the first pastoral writer of the age and the true English Theocritus. Gay's pastorals achieved this goal and his ludicrous pictures of the English country lads and their loves were found to be entertaining on their own account.

Gay had just been appointed secretary to the British ambassador to the court of Hanover through the influence of Jonathan Swift when the death of Anne, Queen of Great Britain, three months later put an end to all his hopes of official employment.

In 1715, probably with some help from Pope, he produced *What d'ye call it?*, a dramatic skit on contemporary tragedy, with special reference to Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserv'd*. It left the public so ignorant of its real meaning that Lewis Theobald and Benjamin Griffin published a *Complete Key* to what d'ye call it to explain it. In 1716 appeared his *Trivia*, or the *Art of Walking the Streets of London*, a poem in three books, for which he acknowledged having received several hints from Swift. It contains graphic and humorous descriptions of the London of that period. What is most interesting about the poem, however, is not the fact that it depicts the city with photographic

accuracy, but that it acts as a guide to the upper, and upper-middle class walkers of society. In taking a mock-heroic form, Gay's poem was able to poke fun at the notion of complete reformation of street civility, whilst also proposing an idea of reform in terms of the attitude towards walking. In January 1717 he produced the comedy, *Three Hours after Marriage*, which was grossly indecent without being amusing and a failure. He had assistance from Pope and John Arbuthnot, but they allowed it to be assumed that Gay was the sole author.

#### Patrons

Gay had numerous patrons, and in 1720 he published *Poems on Several Occasions* by subscription, taking in £1000 or more. In that year James Craggs, the secretary of state, presented him with some South Sea stock. Gay, disregarding the advice of Pope and others of his friends, invested all his money in South Sea stock, and, holding on to the end of the South Sea Bubble, he lost everything. The shock is said to have made him dangerously ill. His friends did not fail him at this juncture. He had patrons in William Pulteney, afterwards Earl of Bath, in the third Earl of Burlington, who constantly entertained him at Chiswick or at Burlington House, and in the third Duke of Queensberry. He was a frequent visitor with Pope, and received unvarying kindness from William Congreve and John Arbuthnot. In 1727 he wrote for six year old Prince William, later the Duke of Cumberland, *Fifty-one Fables in Verse*, for which he naturally hoped to gain some preferment, although he has much to say in them of the servility of courtiers and the vanity of court honours. He was offered the situation of gentleman-usher to the Princess Louisa, who was also still a child. He refused this offer, which all his friends seem to have regarded as an indignity. He had never rendered any special services to the court.

#### The Beggar's Opera

He certainly did nothing to conciliate the favour of the government by his next work, *The Beggar's Opera*, a Ballad opera produced on the January 29, 1728 by John Rich, in which Sir Robert Walpole was caricatured. This famous piece, which was said to have made "Rich gay and Gay rich", was an innovation in many respects. The satire of the play has a double allegory. The characters of Peachum and Macheath represent the famous highwayman and gangster Jonathan Wild and the cockney housebreaker Jack Sheppard. At the same time, Jonathan Wild was understood to represent Robert Walpole, whose government had been tolerant of Wild's thievery and the South Sea directors' escape from punishment. Under cover of the thieves and highwaymen who figured in it was disguised a satire on society, for Gay made it plain that in describing the moral code of his characters he had in mind the corruptions of the governing class. Part of the success of *The Beggar's Opera* may have been due to the acting of Lavinia Fenton, afterwards Duchess of Bolton, in the part of Polly Peachum. The play ran for sixty-two nights. Swift is said to have suggested the subject, and Pope and Arbuthnot were constantly consulted while the work was in progress, but Gay must be regarded as the sole author. After seeing an early version of the work, Swift was optimistic of its commercial prospects but famously warned Gay to be cautious with his earnings: "I beg you will be thrifty and learn to value a shilling."

#### Later career

He wrote a sequel, *Polly*, relating the adventures of Polly Peachum in the West Indies; its production was forbidden by the Lord Chamberlain, no doubt through the influence of Walpole. This act of "oppression" caused no loss to Gay. It proved an excellent advertisement for *Polly*, which was published by subscription in 1729, and brought its author several thousand pounds. The Duchess of Queensberry was dismissed from court for enlisting subscribers in the palace. The Duke of Queensberry gave Gay a home, and the duchess continued her affectionate patronage until Gay's death, which took place on December 4, 1732. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. The epitaph on his tomb is by Pope, and is followed by Gay's own mocking couplet:

Life is a jest, and all things show it,  
I thought so once, and now I know it.

Works:

Wine - 1708  
The Present State of Wit - 1711  
The Rural Sports - 1713  
The Shepherd's Week - 1714  
The What D'ye Call It - 1715  
Trivia, or The Art of Walking the Streets of London - 1716  
Acis and Galatea - 1718  
Poems on Several Occasions - 1720  
Fables (also known as Fifty-one Fables in Verse or Fables of John Gay) -  
1727 (Part the Second - 1738)  
The Beggar's Opera - 1728  
Polly - 1729  
Achilles - 1733  
The Distress'd Wife - 1734  
Three Hours After Marriage

## A Ballad

I.  
'Twas when the seas were roaring  
With hollow blasts of wind;  
A damsel lay deploring,  
All on a rock reclin'd.  
Wide o'er the roaring billows  
She cast a wistful look;  
Her head was crown'd with willows,  
That tremble o'er the brook.

II.  
Twelve months are gone and over,  
And nine long tedious days,  
Why didst thou, vent'rous lover,  
Why didst thou trust the seas?  
Cease, cease, thou cruel ocean,  
And let my lover rest:  
Ah! what's thy troubled motion  
To that within my breast?

III.  
The merchant robb'd of pleasure  
Sees tempests in despair;  
But what's the loss of treasure  
To losing of my dear?  
Should you some coast be laid on  
Where gold and diamonds grow  
You'd find a richer maiden,  
But none that loves you so.

IV.  
How can they say that nature  
Has nothing made in vain  
Why then beneath the water  
Should hideous rocks remain?  
No eyes the rocks discover,  
That lurk beneath the deep,  
To wreck the wandering lover,  
And leave the maid to weep.

V.  
All melancholy lying,  
Thus wail'd she for her dear;  
Repay'd each blast with sighing,  
Each billow with a tear;  
When, o'er the white wave stooping,  
His floating corpse she spied;  
Then like a lily drooping,  
She bow'd her head and died.

John Gay

## **Acis and Galatea**

Air.

Love in her eyes sits playing,  
And sheds delicious death;  
Love on her lips is straying,  
And warbling in her breath;  
Love on her breast sits panting,  
And swells with soft desire;  
Nor grace nor charm is wanting  
To set the heart on fire.

Air.

O ruddier than the cherry!  
O sweeter than the berry!  
O Nymph more bright  
Than moonshine night,  
Like kidlings blithe and merry!

Ripe as the melting cluster!  
No lily has such lustre;  
Yet hard to tame  
As raging flame,  
And fierce as storms that bluster.

John Gay

## An Elegy on a Lap-dog

1 Shock's fate I mourn; poor Shock is now no more,  
2 Ye Muses mourn, ye chamber-maids deplore.  
3 Unhappy Shock! yet more unhappy fair,  
4 Doom'd to survive thy joy and only care!  
5 Thy wretched fingers now no more shall deck,  
6 And tie the fav'rite ribbon round his neck;  
7 No more thy hand shall smooth his glossy hair,  
8 And comb the wavings of his pendent ear.  
9 Yet cease thy flowing grief, forsaken maid;  
10 All mortal pleasures in a moment fade:  
11 Our surest hope is in an hour destroy'd,  
12 And love, best gift of heav'n, not long enjoy'd.

13 Methinks I see her frantic with despair,  
14 Her streaming eyes, wrung hands, and flowing hair  
15 Her Mechlen pinnars rent the floor bestrow,  
16 And her torn fan gives real signs of woe.  
17 Hence Superstition, that tormenting guest,  
18 That haunts with fancied fears the coward breast;  
19 No dread events upon his fate attend,  
20 Stream eyes no more, no more thy tresses rend.  
21 Tho' certain omens oft forewarn a state,  
22 And dying lions show the monarch's fate;  
23 Why should such fears bid Celia's sorrow rise?  
24 For when a lap-dog falls no lover dies.

25 Cease, Celia, cease; restrain thy flowing tears,  
26 Some warmer passion will dispel thy cares.  
27 In man you'll find a more substantial bliss,  
28 More grateful toying, and a sweeter kiss.

29 He's dead. Oh lay him gently in the ground!  
30 And may his tomb be by this verse renown'd.  
31 Here Shock, the pride of all his kind, is laid;  
32 Who fawn'd like man, but ne'er like man betray'd.

John Gay

## Fable L: The Hare and Many Friends

1 Friendship, like love, is but a name,  
2 Unless to one you stint the flame.  
3 The child, whom many fathers share,  
4 Hath seldom known a father's care;  
5 'Tis thus in friendships; who depend  
6 On many, rarely find a friend.

7 A hare, who, in a civil way,  
8 Complied with ev'ry thing, like Gay,  
9 Was known by all the bestial train,  
10 Who haunt the wood, or graze the plain:  
11 Her care was, never to offend,  
12 And ev'ry creature was her friend.

13 As forth she went at early dawn  
14 To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,  
15 Behind she hears the hunter's cries,  
16 And from the deep-mouth'd thunder flies;  
17 She starts, she stops, she pants for breath,  
18 She hears the near advance of death,  
19 She doubles, to mis-lead the hound,  
20 And measures back her mazy round;  
21 'Till, fainting in the public way,  
22 Half dead with fear she gasping lay.

23 What transport in her bosom grew,  
24 When first the horse appear'd in view!

25 'Let me,' says she, 'your back ascend,  
26 And owe my safety to a friend,  
27 You know my feet betray my flight,  
28 To friendship ev'ry burthen's light.'

29 The horse replied, 'Poor honest puss,  
30 It grieves my heart to see thee thus;  
31 Be comforted, relief is near;  
32 For all your friends are in the rear.'

33 She next the stately bull implor'd;  
34 And thus reply'd the mighty lord.  
35 'Since ev'ry beast alive can tell  
36 That I sincerely wish you well,  
37 I may, without offence, pretend  
38 To take the freedom of a friend;  
39 Love calls me hence; a fav'rite cow  
40 Expects me near yon barley mow:  
41 And when a lady's in the case,  
42 You know, all other things give place.  
43 To leave you thus might seem unkind;  
44 But see, the goat is just behind.'

45 The goat remark'd her pulse was high,

46 Her languid head, her heavy eye;  
47 'My back,' says he, 'may do you harm;  
48 The sheep's at hand, and wool is warm.'

49       The sheep was feeble, and complain'd,  
50 His sides a load of wool sustain'd,  
51 Said he was slow, confess'd his fears;  
52 For hounds eat sheep as well as hares.

53 She now the trotting calf address,  
54 To save from death a friend distress.

55       'Shall I, says he, of tender age,  
56 In this important care engage?  
57 Older and abler pass'd you by;  
58 How strong are those! how weak am I!  
59 Should I presume to bear you hence,  
60 Those friends of mine may take offence.  
61 Excuse me then. You know my heart,  
62 But dearest friends, alas, must part!  
63 How shall we all lament! Adieu.  
64 For see the hounds are just in view.'

John Gay

## Fable XLII. The Juggler

A juggler long through all the town  
Had raised his fortune and renown;  
You'd think (so far his art transcends)  
The devil at his fingers' ends.  
Vice heard his fame, she read his bill;  
Convinced of his inferior skill,  
She sought his booth, and from the crowd  
Defied the man of art aloud:  
'Is this, then, he so famed for sleight?  
Can this slow bungler cheat your sight!

Dares he with me dispute the prize?  
I leave it to impartial eyes.'  
Provoked, the juggler cried, 'tis done.  
In science I submit to none.'  
Thus said, the cups and balls he played;  
By turns, this here, that there, conveyed.  
The cards, obedient to his words,  
Are by a fillip turned to birds.  
His little boxes change the grain:  
Trick after trick deludes the train.

He shakes his bag, he shows all fair;  
His fingers spreads, and nothing there;  
Then bids it rain with showers of gold,  
And now his ivory eggs are told.  
But when from thence the hen he draws,  
Amazed spectators hum applause.  
Vice now stept forth, and took the place  
With all the forms of his grimace.  
'This magic looking-glass,' she cries,  
(There, hand it round) 'will charm your eyes.'

Each eager eye the sight desired,  
And every man himself admired.  
Next to a senator addressing:  
'See this bank-note; observe the blessing,  
Breathe on the bill.' Heigh, pass! 'Tis gone.  
Upon his lips a padlock shone.  
A second puff the magic broke,  
The padlock vanished, and he spoke.  
Twelve bottles ranged upon the board,  
All full, with heady liquor stored,

By clean conveyance disappear,  
And now two bloody swords are there.  
A purse she to a thief exposed,  
At once his ready fingers closed;  
He opes his fist, the treasure's fled;  
He sees a halter in its stead.  
She bids ambition hold a wand;  
He grasps a hatchet in his hand.

A box of charity she shows,  
'Blow here;' and a churchwarden blows,

'Tis vanished with conveyance neat,  
And on the table smokes a treat.  
She shakes the dice, the boards she knocks,  
And from all pockets fills her box.  
She next a meagre rake address'd:  
'This picture see; her shape, her breast!  
What youth, and what inviting eyes!  
Hold her, and have her.' With surprise,  
His hand exposed a box of pills,  
And a loud laugh proclaimed his ills.

A counter, in a miser's hand,  
Grew twenty guineas at command.  
She bids his heir the sum retain,  
And 'tis a counter now again.  
A guinea with her touch you see  
Take every shape, but charity;  
And not one thing you saw, or drew,  
But changed from what was first in view.  
The juggler now in grief of heart,  
With this submission owned her art:

'Can I such matchless sleight withstand?  
How practice hath improved your hand!  
But now and then I cheat the throng;  
You every day, and all day long.'

John Gay

## **HE THAT TASTES WOMAN**

Man may escape from rope and gun;  
Nay, some have out-liv'd the doctor's pill;  
Who takes a woman must be undone,  
That basilisk is sure to kill.  
The fly that sips treacle is lost in the sweets,  
So he that tastes woman, woman, woman,  
He that tastes woman, ruin meets.

John Gay

## **IF LAWYER'S HAND IS FEE'D**

A fox may steal your hens, sir,  
A whore your health and pence, sir,  
Your daughter rob your chest, sir,  
Your wife may steal your rest, sir,  
A thief your goods and plate.

But this is all but picking,  
With rest, pence, chest and chicken;  
It ever was decreed, sir,  
If lawyer's hand is fee'd, sir,  
He steals your whole estate.

John Gay

## **If the Heart of a Man**

If the heart of a man is deprest with cares,  
The mist is dispell'd when a woman appears;  
Like the notes of a fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly  
Raises the spirits, and charms our ears.  
Roses and lillies her cheeks disclose,  
But her ripe lips are more sweet than those.  
Press her,  
Caress her,  
With blisses,  
Her kisses  
Dissolve us in pleasure, and soft repose

John Gay

## Ode to Adversity

Daughter of Heav'n, relentless pow'r,  
Thou tamer of the human breast,  
Whose iron scourge, and tort'ring hour,  
The bad affright, afflict the best!  
Bound in thy adamant chain,  
The proud are taught to taste of pain,  
And purple tyrants vainly groan  
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth  
Virtue, his darling child, design'd,  
To thee he gave the heav'nly birth,  
And bade to form her infant mind.  
Stern rugged nurse! thy rigid lore  
With patience many a year she bore.  
What sorrow was, thou bad'st her know;  
And from her she learn'd to melt at others' wo.

Scar'd at thy frown terrific, fly  
Self-pleasing folly's idle brood,  
Wild laughter, noise, and thoughtless joy,  
And leave us leisure to be good.  
Light they disperse; and with them go  
The summer-friend, the flatt'ring foe.  
By vain prosperity receiv'd,  
To her they vow their truth, and are again believ'd.

Wisdom, in sable garb array'd,  
Immers'd in rapt'rous thought profound,  
And melancholy, silent maid,  
With leaden eye that loves the ground,  
Still on thy solemn steps attend;  
Warm charity, the gen'ral friend,  
With justice to herself severe,  
And pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh, gently, on the suppliant's head,  
Dread pow'r lay thy chast'ning hand!  
Not in thy gorgon terrors clad,  
Nor circled with the vengeful band,  
(As by the impious thou art seen,)  
With thund'ring voice, and threat'ning mien,  
With screaming horror's fun'ral cry,  
Despair, and fell disease, and ghastly poverty.

Thy form benign, propitious, wear,  
Thy milder influence impart;  
Thy philosophic train be there,  
To soften, not to wound my heart.  
The gen'rous spark extinct revive:  
Teach me to love, and to forgive;  
Exact my own defects to scan;

What others are to feel; and know myself a man.

John Gay

## Rural Sports: A Georgic - Canto I.

You, who the sweets of rural life have known,  
Despise the ungrateful hurry of the town;  
In Windsor groves your easy hours employ,  
And, undisturb'd, yourself and muse enjoy.  
Thames, listens to thy strains, and silent flows,  
And no rude winds through rustling osiers blows,  
While all his wondering nymphs around thee throng,  
To hear the Syrens warble in thy song.

But I, who ne'er was bless'd by fortune's hand,  
Nor brighten'd plough shares in paternal land,  
Long in the noisy town have been immur'd,  
Respir'd its smoke, and all its cares endur'd,  
Where news and politics divide mankind,  
And schemes of state involve the uneasy mind:  
Faction embroils the world; and every tongue  
Is mov'd by flattery, or with scandal hung:  
Friendship, for sylvan shades, the palace flies,  
Where all must yield to interest's dearer ties,  
Each rival Machiavel with envy burns,  
And honesty forsakes them all by turns;  
While calumny upon each party's thrown,  
Which both promote, and both alike disown.  
Fatigu'd at last; a calm retreat I chose,  
And sooth'd my harass'd mind with sweet repose,  
Where fields, and shades, and the refreshing clime,  
Inspire my silvan song, and prompt my rhyme.  
My muse shall rove through flowery meads and plains,  
And deck with rural sports her native strains,  
And the same road ambitiously pursue,  
Frequented by the Mantuan swain, and you.

'Tis not that rural sports alone invite,  
But all the grateful country breathes delight;  
Here blooming health exerts her gentle reign,  
And strings the sinews of the industrious swain.  
Soon as the morning lark salutes the day,  
Through dewy fields I take my frequent way,  
Where I behold the farmer's early care,  
In the revolving labours of the year.

When the fresh spring in all her state is crown'd,  
And high luxuriant grass o'erspreads the ground,  
The labourer with the bending scythe is seen,  
Shaving the surface of the waving green,  
Of all her native pride disrobes the land,  
And meads lays waste before the sweeping hand:  
While the mounting sun the meadow glows,  
The fading herbage round he loosely throws;  
But if some sign portend a lasting shower,  
The experienc'd swain foresees the coming hour,  
His sun burnt hands the scattering fork forsake,

And ruddy damsels ply the saving rake;  
In rising hills the fragrant harvest grows,  
And spreads along the field in equal rows.

Now when the height of heaven bright Phoebus gains,  
And level rays cleave wide the thirsty plains,  
When heifers seek the shade and cooling lake,  
And in the middle path-way basks the snake?  
O lead me, guard me from the sultry hours,  
Hide me, ye forests, in your closet bowers:  
Where the tall oak his spreading arms entwine,,  
And with the beech a mutual shade combines;  
Where flows the murmuring brook, inviting dreams,  
Where bordering hazle overhangs the streams,  
Whose rolling current winding round and round,  
With frequent falls makes all the woods resound,  
Upon the mossy couch my limbs I cast,  
And even at noon the sweets of evening taste.

Here I peruse the Mantuan's Georgic strains,  
And learn the labours of Italian swains;  
In every page I see new landscapes rise,  
And all Hesperia opens to my eyes.  
I wander o'er the various rural toil,  
And know the nature of each different soil:  
This waving field is gilded o'er with corn,  
That spreading trees with blushing fruit adorn;  
Here I survey the purple vintage grow,  
Climb round the poles, and rise in graceful row;  
Now I behold the steed curvet and bound,  
And paw with restless hoof the smoking ground:  
The dewlap'd bull now chaffs along the plain,  
While burning love ferments in every vein;  
His well-arm'd front against his rival aims,  
And by the dint of war his mistress claims:  
The careful insect 'midst his works I view,  
Now from the flowers exhaust the fragrant dew;  
With golden treasures load his little thighs,  
And steer his distant journey through the skies;  
Some against hostile drones the hive defend;  
Others with sweets the waxen cells distend;  
Each in the toil his destin'd office bears,  
And in the little bulk a mighty soul appears.

Or when the ploughman leaves the task of day,  
And trudging homeward whistles on the way;  
When the big udder'd cows with patience stand,  
Waiting the stroakings of the damsel's hand;  
No warbling cheers the woods; the feather'd choir  
To court kind slumbers to their sprays retire;  
When no rude gale disturbs the sleeping trees,  
Nor aspen leaves confess the gentlest breeze;

Engag'd in thought, to Neptune's bounds I stray,  
To take my farewell of the parting day;  
Far in the deep the sun his glory hides,  
A streak of gold the sea and sky divides;  
The purple clouds their amber lining show,  
And edg'd with flame rolls every wave below:  
Here pensive I behold the fading light,  
And o'er the distant billow lose my sight.

Now night in the silent state begins to rise  
And twinkling orbs bestow the uncloudy skies;  
Her borrow'd lustre growing Cynthia lends,  
And on the main a glittering path extends;  
Millions of worlds hang in the spacious air,  
Which round their suns the annual circles steer.  
Sweet contemplation elevates my sense,  
While I survey the works of Providence.  
O would the muse in loftier strains rehearse,  
The glorious Author of the universe,  
Who reins the winds, gives the vast ocean bounds,  
And circumscribes the floating worlds their rounds.  
My soul should overflow in songs of praise,  
And my Creator's name inspire my lays!

As in successive course the seasons roll,  
So circling pleasures recreate the soul.  
When genial spring a living warmth bestows,  
And o'er the year her verdant mantle throws,  
No swelling inundation hides the grounds,  
But crystal currents glide within their bounds;  
The finny brood their wonted haunts forsake,  
Float in the sun, and skim along the lake,  
With frequent leap they range the shallow streams,  
Their silver coats reflect the dazzling beams.  
Now let the fisherman his tolls prepare,  
And arm himself with every watery snare;  
His hooks, his lines persue with careful eye,  
Increase his tackle, and his rod re-tie.

When floating clouds their spongy fleeces drain,  
Troubling the streams with swift-descending rain,  
And waters, tumbling down the mountain's side,  
Bear the loose soil into the swelling tide;  
Then, soon as vernal gales begin to rise,  
And drive the liquid burthen through the skies,  
The fisher to the neighbouring current speeds,  
Whose rapid surface purls, unknown to weeds;  
Upon a rising border of the brook  
He sits him down, and ties the treacherous hook;  
Now expectation cheers his eager thought,  
His bosom glows with treasures yet uncaught,  
Before his eyes a banquet seems to stand,

Where every guest applauds his skilful hand.

Far up the stream the twisted hair he throws,  
Which down the murmuring current gently flows;  
When if or chance or hunger's powerful sway  
Directs the roving trout this fatal way,  
He greedily sucks in the twining bait,  
And tugs and nibbles the fallacious meat:  
Now, happy fisherman, now twitch the line!  
How thy rod bends! behold, the prize is thine!  
Cast on the bank, he dies with gasping pains,  
And trickling blood his silver mail distains.

You must not every worm promiscuous use,  
Judgement will tell thee proper bait to choose;  
The worm that draws a long immoderate size  
The trout abhors, and the rank morsel flies;  
And if too small, the naked fraud's in sight,  
And fear forbids, while hunger does invite.  
Those baits will best reward the fisher's pains,  
Whose polish'd tails a shining yellow stains.  
Cleanse them from filth, to give a tempting gloss,  
Cherish the sullied reptile race with moss;  
Amid the verdant bed they twine, they toil,  
And from their bodies wipe their native soil.

But when the sun displays his glorious beams,  
And shallow rivers flow with silver streams,  
Then the deceit the scaly breed survey,  
Bask in the sun, and look into the day.  
You now a more delusive art must try,  
And tempt their hunger with the curious fly.

To frame the little animal, provide  
All the gay hues that wait on female pride,  
Let nature guide thee; sometimes golden wire  
The shining bellies of the fly require;  
The peacock plumes thy tackle must not fail,  
Nor the drear purchase of the sable's tail.  
Each gaudy bird some slender tribute brings,  
And lends the growing insect proper wings:  
Silks of all colours must their aid impart,  
And every fur promote the fisher's art.  
So the gay lady, with expensive care,  
Borrows the pride of land, of sea, and air;  
Furs, pearls, and plumes, the glittering thing displays,  
Dazzles our eyes, and easy hearts betrays.

Mark well the various seasons of the year,  
How the succeeding insect race appear;  
In this revolving moon one colour reigns,  
Which in the next the fickle trout disdains.

Oft have I seen a skilful angler try  
The various colours of the treacherous fly;  
When he with fruitless pain hath skimm'd the brook,  
And the coy fish rejects the skipping hooks,  
He shakes the boughs that on the margin grow,  
Which o'er the stream a waving forest throw;  
When if an insect fall, (his certain guide)  
He gently takes him from the whirling tide;  
Examines well his form with curious eyes,  
His gaudy vest, his wings, his horns and size.  
Then round his hook the chosen fur he winds,  
And on the back a speckled feather binds,  
So just the colours shine through every part,  
That nature seems to live again in art.  
Let not thy wary step advance too near,  
While all thy hopes hang on a single hair;  
The new-form'd insect on the water moves,  
The speckled trout the curious snare approves  
Upon the curling surface let it glide,  
With natural motion from thy hand supplied,  
Against the stream now let it gently play,  
Now in the rapid eddy roll away.  
The scaly shoals float by, and seiz'd with fear  
Behold their fellows toss'd in thinner air;  
But soon they leap, and catch the swimming bait,  
Plunge on the hook, and share an equal fate.

When a brisk gale against the current blows,  
And all the watery plain in wrinkles flows,  
Then let the fisherman his art repeat,  
Where bubbling eddies favour the deceit.  
If an enormous salmon chance to spy  
The wanton errors of the floating fly,  
He lifts his silver gills above the flood,  
And greedily sucks in the unfaithful food;  
Then downward plunges with the fraudulent prey,  
And bears with joy the little spoil away.  
Soon, in smart pain, he feels the dire mistake,  
Lashes the wave, and beats the foamy lake,  
With sudden rage he now aloft appears,  
And in his eye convulsive anguish bears;  
And now again, impatient of the wound,  
He rolls and wreaths his shining body round;  
Then headlong shoots beneath the dashing tide,  
The trembling fins the boiling wave divide;  
Now hope exalts the fisher's beating heart,  
Now he turns pale, and fears his dubious art;  
He views the tumbling fish with longing eyes,  
While the line stretches with the unwieldy prize;  
Each motion humours with his steady hands,  
And one slight hair the mighty bulk commands;  
Till tir'd at last, despoil'd of all his strength,

The game athwart the stream unfolds his length.  
He now with pleasure views the gasping prize  
Gnash his sharp teeth, and roll his blood-shot eyes  
Then draws him to the shore, with artful care,  
And lifts his nostrils in the sickening air:  
Upon the burthen'd stream he floating lies,  
Stretches his quivering fins, and gasping dies.

Would you preserve a numerous finny race?  
Let your fierce dogs the ravenous otter chase;  
The amphibious monster ranges all the shores,  
Darts through the waves, and every haunt explores  
Or let the gin his roving steps betray,  
And save from hostile jaws the scaly prey.

I never wander where the bordering reeds  
O'erlook the muddy stream, whose tangling weeds  
Perplex the fisher; I, nor choose to bear  
The thievish nightly net, nor barbed spear;  
Nor drain I ponds the golden carp to take,  
Nor troll for pikes, dispeoplers of the lake.  
Around the steel no tortur'd worm shall twine,  
No blood of living insect stain my line;  
Let me less cruel cast the feather'd hook,  
With pliant rod athwart the pebbled brook,  
Silent along the mazy margin stray,  
And with the fur-wrought fly delude the prey.

John Gay

## Rural Sports: A Georgic - Canto II.

Now, sporting muse, draw in the flowing reins,  
Leave the clear streams a while for sunny plains.  
Should you the various arms and toils rehearse,  
And all the fisherman adorn thy verse;  
Should you the wide-encircling net display,  
And in its spacious arch enclose the sea,  
Then haul the plunging load upon the land,  
And with the soale and turbot hide the sand;  
It would extend the growing theme too long,  
And tire the reader with the watery song.

Let the keen hunter from the chase refrain,  
Nor render all the ploughman's labour vain,  
When Ceres pours out plenty from her horn,  
And clothes the fields with golden ears of corn.  
New, now, ye reapers to your task repair,  
Haste, save the product of the bounteous year.  
To the wide-gathering hook long furrows yield,  
And rising sheaves extend through all the field.

Yet if for silvan sport thy bosom glow,  
Let thy feet greyhound urge his dying foe.  
With what delight the rapid course I view!  
How does my eye the circling race pursue!  
He snaps deceitful air with empty jaws,  
The subtle hare darts swift beneath his paws;  
She flies, he stretches, now with nimble bound.  
Eager he presses on, but overshoots his ground;  
She turns, he winds, and soon regains the way,  
Then tears with goary mouth the screaming prey.  
What various sport does rural life afford!  
What unbought dainties heap the wholesome board!

Nor less the spaniel, skilful to betray,  
Rewards the fowler with the feather'd prey.  
Soon as the lab'ring horse with swelling veins,  
Hath safely hous'd the farmer's doubtful gains,  
To sweet repast the unwary partridge flies,  
With joy amid the scatter'd harvest lies;  
Wandering in plenty, danger he forgets,  
Nor dreads the slavery of entangling nets.  
The subtle dog scowrs with sagacious nose  
Along the field, and snuffs each breeze that blows,  
Against the wind he takes his prudent way,  
While the strong gale directs him to the prey;  
Now the warm scent assures the covey near,  
He treads with caution, and he points with fear  
Then (lest some centry fowl the fraud descry,  
And bid his fellows from the danger fly)  
Close to the ground in expectation lies,  
Till in the snare the fluttering covey rise.  
Soon as the blushing light begins to spread

And glancing Phoebus gilds the mountain's head,  
His early flight the ill-fated partridge takes,  
And quits the friendly shelter of the brakes:  
Or when the sun casts a declining ray,  
And drives his chariot down the western way,  
Let your obsequious ranger search around,  
Where yellow stubble withers on the ground:  
Nor will the roving spy direct in vain,  
But numerous coveys gratify thy pain.  
When the meridian sun contracts the shade,  
And frisking heifers seek the cooling shade;  
Or when the country floats with sudden rains,  
Or driving mists deface the moist'ned plains;  
In vain his toils the unskilful fowler tries,  
While in thick woods the feeding partridge lies.  
Nor must the sporting verse the gun forbear,  
But what's the fowler's be the muse's care.  
See how the well-taught pointer leads the way:  
The scent grows warm; he stops; he springs the prey;  
The fluttering coveys from the stubble rise,  
And on swift wing divide the sounding skies;  
The scattering lead pursues the certain sight,  
And death in thunder overtakes their flight.  
Cool breathes the morning air, and winter's hand  
Spreads wide her hoary mantle o'er the land;  
Now to the copse thy lesser spaniel take,  
Teach him to range the ditch and force the brake;  
Now closest coverts can protect the game:  
Hark! the dog opens; take thy certain aim;  
The woodcock flutters; how he wavering flies!  
The wood resounds: he wheels, he drops, he dies.

The towering hawk let future poets sing,  
Who terror bears upon his soaring wing:  
Let them on high the frightened hern survey,  
And lofty numbers paint their airy fray,  
Nor shall the mounting lark the muse detain,  
That greets the morning with his early strain;  
When, 'midst his song, the twinkling glass betrays;  
While from each angle flash the glancing rays,  
And in the sun the transient colours blaze,  
Bride lures the little warbler from the skies:  
The light-enamour'd bird deluded dies.

But still the chase, a pleasing task, remains;  
The hound must open in these rural strains.  
Soon as Aurora drives away the night,  
And edges eastern clouds with rosy light,  
The healthy huntsman, with the cheerful horn,  
Summons the dogs, and greets the dappled morn;  
The jocund thunder wakes the enliven'd hounds,  
They rouse from sleep, and answer sounds for sounds.

Wide through the furzy field their rout they take,  
Their bleeding bosoms force the thorny brake:  
The dying game their smoking nostrils trace,  
No bounding hedge obstructs their eager pace;  
The distant mountains echo from afar,  
And hanging woods resound the flying war:  
The tuneful noise the sprightly courser hears,  
Paws the green turf, and pricks his trembling ears  
The slacken'd rein now gives him all his speed,  
Back flies the rapid ground beneath the steed:  
Hills, dales, and forests far behind remain,  
While the warm scent draws on the deep mouth'd train.  
Where shall the trembling hare a shelter find?  
Hark! death advances in each gust of wind!  
New stratagems and doubling wiles she tries,  
Now circling turns, and now at large she flies;  
Till spent at last, she pants, and heaves for breath  
Then lays her down, and waits devouring death.

But stay, advent'rous muse, hast thou the force  
To wind the twisted horn, to guide the horse?  
To keep thy seat unmov'd hast thou the skill  
O'er the high gate, and down the headlong hill  
Canst thou the stag's laborious chase direct,  
Or the strong fox through all his arts detect,  
The theme demands a more experienc'd lay;  
Ye mighty hunters, spare this weak essay.

Oh happy plains, remote from war's alarms,  
And all the ravages of hostile arms!  
And happy shepherds, who, secure from fear,  
On open downs preserve your fleecy care!  
Whose spacious barns groan with increasing store,  
And whirling flails disjoint the cracking floor:  
No barbarous soldier, bent on cruel spoil,  
Spreads desolation o'er your fertile soil;  
No trampling steed lays waste the ripen'd grain,  
Nor crackling fires devour the promis'd gain:  
No flaming beacons cast their blaze afar,  
The dreadful signal of invasive war;  
No trumpet's clangor wounds the mother's ear,  
And calls the lover from his swooning fair.

What happiness the rural maid attends,  
In cheerful labour while each day she spends!  
She gratefully receives what heaven has sent,  
And, rich in poverty, enjoys content:  
(Such happiness, and such unblemish'd fame  
Ne'er glad the bosom of the courtly dame)  
She never feels the spleen's imagin'd pains,  
Nor melancholy stagnates in her veins;  
She never loses life in thoughtless ease,

Nor on the velvet couch invites disease;  
Her home-spun dress in simple neatness lies  
And for no glaring equipage she sighs:  
Her reputation, which is all her boast,  
In a malicious visit ne'er was lost:  
No midnight masquerade her beauty wears,  
And health, not paint, the fading bloom repairs.  
If love's soft passion warms her happy swain;  
An equal passion in her bosom reign,  
No home-bred jars her quiet state control,  
Nor watchful jealousy torments her soul;  
With secret joy she sees her little race  
Hang on her breast, and her small cottage grace  
The fleecy ball their little fingers cull,  
Or from the spindle draw the length'ning wool:  
Thus flow her hours with constant peace of mind,  
Till age the latest thread of life unwind.

Ye happy fields, unknown to noise and strife,  
The kind rewarders of industrious life,  
Ye shady woods, where once I used to rove;  
Alike indulgent to the muse and love;  
Ye murmuring streams that in meanders roll,  
The sweet composers of the pensive soul,  
Farewell - The city calls me from your bowers;  
Farewell amusing thoughts and peaceful hours.

John Gay

## Songs from The Beggar's Opera: Air IV-Cotillion

Act II, Scene iv, Air IV—Cotillion

Youth's the season made for joys,  
Love is then our duty:  
She alone who that employs,  
Well deserves her beauty.  
Let's be gay  
While we may,  
Beauty's a flower despised in decay.

Chorus. Youth's the season, etc.

Let us drink and sport to-day,  
Ours is not to-morrow:  
Love with youth flies swift away,  
Age is naught but sorrow.  
Dance and sing,  
Time's on the wing,  
Life never knows the return the spring.

Chorus. Let us drink, etc.

John Gay

## **Songs from The Beggar's Opera: Air X-"Thomas, I Cannot'**

Polly.            I like a ship in storms was tossed,  
                      Yet afraid to put into land,  
                      For seized in the port the vessel's lost  
                      Whose treasure is contraband.  
                      The waves are laid,  
                      My duty's paid;  
                      O joy beyond expression!  
                      Thus safe ashore  
                      I ask no more;  
                      My all is in my possession.

John Gay

## **Songs from The Beggar's Opera: Air XVI-"Over the Hills, and Far Away"**

Mac. Were I laid on Greenland's coast,  
And in my arms embraced my lass,  
Warm amidst eternal frost,  
Too soon the half-year's night would pass.

Polly. Were I sold on Indian soil,  
Soon as the burning day was closed,  
I could mock the sultry toil  
When on my charmer's breast reposed.

Mac. And I would love you all the day,

Polly. Every night would kiss and play,

Mac. If with me you'd fondly stray

Polly. Over the hills, and far away.

John Gay

### **Songs from The Beggar's Opera: Air XXVII-"Green Sleeves"**

Since laws were made, for every degree,  
To curb vice in others, as well as me,  
I wonder we han't better company  
    Upon Tyburn tree.

But gold from law can take out the sting;  
And if rich men, like us, were to swing,  
'Twould thin the land, such numbers to string  
    Upon Tyburn tree.

John Gay

## Sweet William's Farewell to Black-ey'd Susan: A Ballad

1 All in the Downs the fleet was moor'd,  
2 The streamers waving in the wind,  
3 When black-ey'd Susan came aboard.  
4 Oh! where shall I my true love find!  
5 Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true,  
6 If my sweet William sails among the crew.

7 William, who high upon the yard,  
8 Rock'd with the billow to and fro,  
9 Soon as her well-known voice he heard,  
10 He sigh'd, and cast his eyes below:  
11 The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,  
12 And, (quick as lightning) on the deck he stands.

13 So the sweet lark, high pois'd in air,  
14 Shuts close his pinions to his breast,  
15 (If, chance, his mate's shrill call he hear)  
16 And drops at once into her nest.  
17 The noblest captain in the British fleet,  
18 Might envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

19 'O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,  
20 My vows shall ever true remain;  
21 Let me kiss off that falling tear,  
22 We only part to meet again.  
23 Change, as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be  
24 The faithful compass that still points to thee.

25 'Believe not what the landmen say,  
26 Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind:  
27 They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,  
28 In ev'ry port a mistress find.  
29 Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,  
30 For thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

31 'If to far India's coast we sail,  
32 Thy eyes are seen in di'monds bright,  
33 Thy breath is Afric's spicy gale,  
34 Thy skin is ivory, so white.  
35 Thus ev'ry beauteous object that I view,  
36 Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

37 'Though battle call me from thy arms  
38 Let not my pretty Susan mourn;  
39 Though cannons roar, yet safe from harms,  
40 William shall to his dear return.  
41 Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,  
42 Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye'.

43 The boatswain gave the dreadful word,  
44 The sails their swelling bosom spread,  
45 No longer must she stay aboard:

46      They kiss'd, she sigh'd, he hung his head.  
47 Her less'ning boat, unwilling rows to land:  
48 'Adieu', she cries! and wav'd her lily hand.

John Gay

## The Beggar's Opera (excerpts)

Air I. An old woman clothed in gray, &c. 1-

Through all the employments of life

- Each neighbour abuses his brother;  
- Whore and rogue they call husband and wife:  
- All professions be-rogue one another.

- The priest calls the lawyer a cheat,

- The lawyer be-knaves the divine;

- And the statesman, because he's so great,

- Thinks his trade as honest as mine. Air XI. A Soldier and a Sailor 2-  
A fox may steal your hens, sir,

- A whore your health and pence, sir,

- Your daughter rob your chest, sir,

- Your wife may steal your rest, sir,

- A thief your goods and plate.

- But this is all but picking,

- With rest, pence, chest and chicken;

- It ever was decreed, sir,

- If lawyer's hand is fee'd, sir,

- He steals your whole estate. Air XXII. Cotillon 3-  
Youth's the season made for joys,

- Love is then our duty,

- She alone who that employs,

- Well deserves her beauty.

- Let's be gay,

- While we may,

- Beauty's a flower, despised in decay. CHORUS. 3-  
Youth's the season, &c. Cotillon 3-  
Let us drink and sport to-day,

-

Ours is not to-morrow.

-

Love with youth flies swift away,

-

Age is nought but sorrow.

-

Dance and sing,

-

Time's on the wing,

-

Life never knows the return of spring.CHORUS.3-

Let us drink, &c.Air XXVI.4-

Courtiers, Courtiers think it no harm, &c.4-

Man may escape from rope and gun;

-

Nay, some have out-liv'd the doctor's pill;

-

Who takes a woman must be undone,

-

That basilisk is sure to kill.

-

The fly that sips treacle is lost in the sweets,

-

So he that tastes woman, woman, woman,

-

He that tastes woman, ruin meets.

John Gay

## The Fan : A Poem. Book I.

I sing that graceful toy, whose waving play,  
With gentle gales relieves the sultry day.  
Not the wide fan by Persian dames display'd,  
Which o'er their beauty casts a grateful shade;  
Nor that long known in China's artful land,  
Which, while it cools the face, fatigues the hand;  
Nor shall the muse in Asian climates rove,  
To seek in Indostan some spicy grove,  
Where stretch'd at ease the panting lady lies,  
To shun the fervour of meridian skies,  
While sweating slaves catch every breeze of air,  
And with wide-spreading fans refresh the fair;  
No busy gnats her pleasing dreams molest,  
Inflame her cheek, or ravage o'er her breast,  
But artificial zephyrs round her fly,  
And mitigate the fever of the sky.

Nor shall Bermudas long the muse detain,  
Whose fragrant forests bloom in Waller's strain,  
Where breathing sweets from every field ascend,  
And the wild woods with golden apples bend;  
Yet let me in some odorous shade repose,  
Whilst in my verse the fair Palmetto grows:  
Like the tall pine it shoots its stately head,  
From the broad top depending branches spread;  
No knotty limbs the taper body bears,  
Hung on each bough a single leaf appears,  
Which shrivell'd in its infancy remains,  
Like a clos'd fan, nor stretches wide its veins,  
But as the seasons in their circle run,  
Opes its ribb'd surface to the nearer sun;  
Beneath this shade the weary peasant lies,  
Plucks the broad leaf, and bids the breezes rise.  
Stay, wandering muse, nor rove in foreign climes,  
To thy own native shore confine thy rhymes.  
Assist, ye Nine, your loftiest notes employ,  
Say what celestial skill contriv'd the toy;  
Say how this instrument of love began,  
And in immortal strains display the fan.

Strephon had long confest his amorous pain,  
Which gay Corinna rally'd with disdain;  
Sometimes in broken words he sigh'd his care,  
Look'd pale, and trembled when he view'd the fair;  
With bolder freedoms now the youth advanc'd,  
He dress'd, he laugh'd, he sung, he rhym'd, he danc'd:  
Now call'd more powerful presents to his aid,  
And, to seduce the mistress, brib'd the maid;  
Smooth flattery in her softer hours apply'd,  
The surest charm to bind the force of pride.  
But still unmov'd remains the scornful dame,  
Insults her captive, and derides his flame.

When Strephon saw his vows dispers'd in air,  
He sought in solitude to lose his care:  
Relief in solitude he sought in vain,  
It serv'd, like music, but to feed his pain.  
To Venus now the slighted boy complains,  
And calls the goddess in these tender strains.

O potent queen, from Neptune's empire sprung,  
Whose glorious birth admiring Nereids sung,  
Who 'midst the fragrant plains of Cyprus rove,  
Whose radiant presence gilds the Paphian grove,  
And curling clouds of incense hide the skies;  
O beauteous goddess, teach me how to move,  
Inspire my tongue with eloquence of love,  
If lost Adonis e'er thy bosom warm'd,  
If e'er his eyes or godlike figure charm'd,  
Think on those hours when first you felt the dart,  
Think how you pin'd in absense of the swain:  
By those uneasy minutes know my pain.  
Even while Cydippe to Diana bows,  
And at her shrine renews her virgin vows,  
The lover, taught by thee, her pride o'ercame;  
She reads his oaths, and feels an equal flame!  
Oh, may my flame, like thine, Acontius prove,  
May Venus dictate, and reward my love.  
When crowds of suitors Atlanta try'd,  
She wealth and beauty, wit and fame defy'd;  
Each daring lover with advent'rous pace  
Pursu'd his wishes in the dangerous race;  
Like the swift hind, the bounding damsel flies,  
Strains to the goal, the distanc'd lover dies.  
Hippomenes, O Venus, was thy care,  
You taught the swain to stay the flying fair,  
Thy golden present caught the virgin's eyes,  
She stoops; he rushes on, and gains the prize.  
Say, Cyprian deity, what gift, what art,  
Shall humble into love Corinna's heart,  
If only some bright toy can charm her sight,  
Teach me what present may suspend her flight.

Thus the desponding youth his flame declares.  
The goddess with a nod his passion hears.

Far in Cytherea stands a spacious grove,  
Sacred to Venus and the god of love;  
Here the luxuriant myrtle rears her head,  
Like the tall oak the fragrant branches spread;  
Here nature all her sweets profusely pours,  
And paints the enamell'd ground with various flowers;  
Deep in the gloomy shade a grotto bends,  
Wide thro' the craggy rock an arch extends,  
The rugged stone is cloth'd with mantling vines,

And round the cave the creeping woodbine twines.

Here busy Cupids, with pernicious art,  
Form the stiff bow, and forge the fatal dart;  
All share the toil; while some the bellows ply,  
Others with feathers teach the shafts to fly:  
Some with joint force whirl round the stony wheel,  
Where streams the sparkling fire from temper'd steel;  
Some point their arrows with the nicest skill,  
And with the warlike store their quivers fill.

A different toil another forge employs;  
Here the loud hammer fashions female toys.  
Hence is the fair with ornament supply'd,  
Hence sprung the glittering implements of pride;  
Each trinket that adorns the modern dame,  
First to these little artists ow'd its frame.  
Here an unfinish'd diamond-crosslet lay,  
To which soft lovers adoration pay;  
There was the pollish'd crystal bottle seen,  
That with quick scents revives the modish spleen  
Here the yet rude unjointed snuff-box lies,  
Which serves the rally'd fop for smart replies;  
There piles of paper rose in glided reams,  
The future records of the lover's flames;  
Here clouded canes 'midst heaps of toys are found,  
And inlaid tweezer-cases strow the ground.  
There stands the toilette, nursery of charms,  
Completely furnish'd with bright beauty's arms;  
The patch, the powder-box, pulville, perfumes,  
Pins, paints, a flattering glass, and black-lead combs.

The toilsome hours in different labour slide,  
Some work the file, and some the graver guide;  
From the loud anvil the quick blow rebounds,  
And their rais'd arms descend in tuneful sounds.  
Thus when Semiramis, in ancient days,  
Bade Babylon her mighty bulwarks raise;  
A swarm of labourers different tasks attend:  
Here pullies make the pond'rous oak ascend,  
With echoing strokes the cragged quarry groans,  
While there the chissel forms the shapeless stones;  
The weighty mallet deals resounding blows,  
Till the proud battlements her towers enclose.

Now Venus mounts her car, she shakes the reins,  
And steers her turtles to Cythera's plains;  
Straight to the grot with graceful step she goes,  
Her loose ambrosial hair behind her flows:  
The swelling bellows heave for breath no more,  
All drop their silent hammers on the floor;  
In deep suspense the mighty labour stands,

While thus the goddess spoke her mild commands.

Industrious Loves, your present toils forbear,  
A more important task demands your care;  
Long has the scheme employ'd my thoughtful mind,  
By judgement ripen'd, and by time refin'd.  
That glorious bird have ye not often seen  
Who draws the car of the celestial queen?  
Have ye not oft survey'd his varying dyes,  
His tall all gilded o'er with Argus' eyes?  
have ye not seen him in the sunny day  
Unfurl his plumes, and all his pride display,  
Then suddenly contract his dazzling train,  
And with long-trailing feathers sweep the plain?  
Learn from this hint, let this instruct your art;  
Thin taper sticks must from one centre part:  
Let these into the quadrant's form divide,  
The spreading ribs with snowy paper bide;  
Here shall the pencil bid its colours flow,  
And make a miniature creation grow.  
Let the machine in equal foldings close,  
And now its plaited surface wide dispose.  
So shall the fair her idle hand employ,  
And grace each motion with the restless toy,  
With various play bid grateful zephyrs rise,  
While love in ev'ry grateful zephyr flies.

The master Cupid traces out the lines,  
And with judicious hand the draught designs,  
The expecting Loves with joy the model view,  
And the joint labour eagerly pursue.  
Some slit their arrows with the nicest art,  
And into sticks convert the shiver'd dart;  
The breathing bellows wake the sleeping sire,  
Blow off the cinders and the sparks aspire;  
Their arrow's point they soften in the flame,  
And sounding hammers break its barbed frame:  
Of this, the little pin they neatly mold,  
From whence their arms the spreading sticks unfold;  
In equal plaits they now the paper bend,  
And at just distance the wide ribs extend,  
Then on the frame they mount the limber skreen,  
And finish instantly the new machine.

The goddess pleas'd, the curious work receive,  
Remounts her chariot, and the grotto leaves;  
With the light fan she moves the yielding air,  
And gales, till then unknown, play round the fair.

Unhappy lovers, how will you withstand,  
When these new arms shall grace your charmer's hand?  
In ancient times, when maids in thought were pure,

When eyes were artless, and the look demure,  
When the wide ruff the well-turn'd neck enclos'd,  
And heaving breasts within the stays repos'd,  
When the close hood conceal'd the modest ear,  
Ere black lead-combs disown'd the virgin's hair;  
Then in the muff unactive fingers lay,  
Nor taught the fan in fickle forms to play.

How are the sex improv'd in amorous arts,  
What new-found snares they bait for human hearts!

When kindling war the ravish'd globe ran o'er,  
And flatten'd thirsty plains with human gore,  
At first, the brandish'd arm the javelin threw,  
Or sent wing'd arrows from the twanging yew;  
In the bright air the dreadful fauchion shone,  
Or whistling slings dismiss'd the uncertain stone.  
Now men those less destructive arms despise,  
Wide-wasted death from thundering cannon flies,  
One hour with more battalions strows the plain,  
Than were of yore in weekly battles slain.  
So love with fatal airs the nymph supplies,  
Her dress disposes, and directs her eyes.  
The bosom now its panting beauty shows,  
The experienc'd eye resistless glances throws;  
Now vary'd patches wander o'er the face,  
And strike each gazer with a borrow'd grace;  
The fickle head-dress sinks and now aspires  
A towery front of lace on branching wires.  
The curling hair in tortur'd ringlets flows,  
Or round the face in labour'd order grows.

How shall I soar, and on unweary'd wing  
Trace varying habits upward to their spring!  
What force of thought, what numbers can express,  
The inconstant equipage of female dress?  
How the strait stays the slender waist constrain,  
How to adjust the manteau's sweeping train?  
What fancy can the petticoat surround,  
With the capacious hoop of whalebone bound?  
But stay, presumptuous muse, nor boldy dare  
The Toilette's sacred mysteries declare;  
Let a just distance be to beauty paid;  
None here must enter but the trusty maid.  
Should you the wardrobe's magazine rehearse,  
And glossy manteaus rustle in thy verse;  
Should you the rich brocaded suit unfold,  
Where rising flowers grow stiff with frosted gold,  
The dazzled muse would from her subject stray,  
And in a maze of passions lose her way.

John Gay

### **The Fan : A Poem. Book III.**

Thus Mommus spoke. When sage Minerva rose,  
From her sweet lips smooth elocution flows,  
Her skilful hand an ivory pallet grac'd,  
Where shining colours were in order plac'd.  
As gods are bless'd with a superior skill,  
And, swift as mortal thought, perform their will,  
Straight she proposes, by her art divine,  
To bid the paint express her great design.  
The assembled powers consent. She now began,  
And her creating pencil stain'd the fan.

O'er the fair field, trees spread, and rivers flow,  
Towers rear their heads, and distant mountains grow;  
Life seems to move within the glowing veins,  
And in each face some lively passion reigns.  
Thus have I seen woods, hills, and dales appear,  
Flocks graze the plains, birds wing the silent air  
In darken'd rooms, where light can only pass  
Through the small circle of a convex glass;  
On the white sheet the moving figures rise,  
The forest waves, clouds float along the skies.

She various fables on the piece design'd,  
That spoke the follies of the female kind.

The fate of pride in Niobe she drew;  
Be wise, ye nymphs, that scornful vice subdue,  
In a wide plain the imperious mother stood,  
Whose distant bounds rose in a winding wood;  
Upon her shoulders flows her mantling hair,  
Pride marks her brow, and elevates her air:  
A purple robe behind her sweeps the ground,  
Whose spacious border golden flowers surround;  
She made Latona's altars cease to flam,  
And of due honours robb'd her sacred name,  
To her own charms she bade fresh incense rise,  
And adoration own her brighter eyes.  
Seven daughters from her fruitful loins were born,  
Seven graceful sons her nuptial bed adorn,  
Who, from a mother's arrogant disdain,  
Were by Latona's double offspring slain.  
Here Phoebus his unerring arrow drew,  
And from his rising steed her first-born threw,  
His opening fingers drop the slacken'd rein,  
And the pale corse falls headlong to the plain.  
Beneath her pencil here two wrestlers bend,  
See, to the grasp their swelling nerves distend,  
Diana's arrow joins them face to face,  
And death unites them in a strict embrace.  
Another her flies trembling o'er the plain;  
When heaven pursues we shun the stroke in vain.  
This lifts his supplicating hands and eyes,

And midst his humble adoration dies.  
As from his thigh this tears the barbed dart,  
A surer weapon strikes this throbbing heart  
While that to raise his wounded brother tries,  
Death blasts his bloom, and locks his frozen eyes  
The tender sisters bath'd in grief appear,  
With sable garments and dishevell'd hair,  
And o'er their grasping brothers weeping stood;  
Some with their tresses stopp'd the gushing blood,  
They strive to stay the fleeting life too late,  
And in the pious action share their fate.  
Now the proud dame o'ercome by trembling fear,  
With her wide robe protects her only care;  
To save her only care in vain she tries,  
Close at her feet the latest victim dies.  
Down her fair cheek the trickling sorrow flows,  
Like dewy spangles on the blushing rose,  
Fix'd in astonishment she weeping stood,  
The plain all purple with her children's blood;  
She stiffens with her woes: no more her hair  
In easy ringlets wantons the air;  
Motion forsakes her eyes, her veins are dried,  
And beat not longer with the sanguine tide;  
All life is fled, firm marble now she grows,  
Which still in tears the mother's anguish shows.

Ye haughty fair, your painted fans display,  
And the just fate of lofty pride survey;  
Though lovers oft extol your beauty's pow'r,  
And in celestial similies adore,  
Though from your features Cupid borrows arms,  
And goddesses confess inferior charms,  
Do not, vain maid, the flattering tale believe,  
Alike thy lovers and thy glass deceive.

Here lively colours Procris' passion tell,  
Who to her jealous fears a victim fell.  
Here kneels the trembling hunter o'er his wife,  
Who rolls her sick'ning eyes, and gasps for life;  
Her drooping head upon her shoulder lies,  
And purple gore her snowy bosom dies.  
What guilt, what horror on his face appears!  
See, his red eye-lids seem to swell with tears,  
With agony his wringing hands he stains,  
And strong convulsions stretch his branching veins.

Learn hence, ye wives; bid vain suspicion cease,  
Lose not in sulien discontent your peace.  
For when fierce love to jealousy ferments,  
A thousand doubts and fears the soul invents,  
No more the days in pleasing converse flow,  
And nights no more their soft endearments know.

There on the piece the Volscian Queen expir'd,  
The love of spoils her female bosom fir'd;  
Gay Chloereus' arms attract her longing eyes,  
And for the painted plume and helm she sighs;  
Fearless she follows, bent on gaudy prey,  
Till an ill-fated dart obstructs her way;  
Down drops the martial maid; the bloody ground,  
Floats with a torrent from the purple wound.  
The mournful nymphs her drooping head sustain,  
And try to stop the gushing life in vain.

Thus the raw maid some tawdry coat surveys,  
Where the fop's fancy in embroidery plays;  
His snowy feather edg'd with crimson dies,  
And his bright sword-knot lure her wandering eyes;  
Fring'd gloves and gold brocade conspire to move,  
Till the nymph falls a sacrifice to love.

Here young Narcissus o'er the fountains stood,  
And view'd his image in the crystal flood;  
The crystal flood reflects his lovely charms,  
And the pleas'd image strives to meet his arms.  
No nymph his unexperienc'd breast subdu'd,  
Echo in vain the flying boy pursu'd,  
Himself alone the foolish youth admires,  
And with fond look the smiling shade desires:  
O'er the smooth lake with fruitless tears he grieves,  
His spreading fingers shoot in verdant leaves,  
Through his pale veins green sap now gently flows,  
And in a short-liv'd flower his beauty blows.

Let vain Narcissus warn each female breast,  
That beauty's but a transient good at best.  
Like flowers it withers with the advancing year,  
And age, like winter, robs the blooming fair.  
Oh Araminta, cease thy wonted pride,  
Nor longer in thy faithless charms confide;  
Even while the glass reflects thy sparkling eyes,  
Their lustre and thy rosy colour flies!

Thus on the fan the breathing figures shine,  
And all the powers applaud the wise design.

The Cyprian Queen the painted gift receives,  
And with a grateful bow the synod leaves.  
To the low world she bends her steepy way,  
Where Strephon pass'd the solitary day;  
She found him in a melancholy grove,  
His down-cast eyes betray'd desponding love,  
The wounded bark confess'd his slighted flame,  
And every tree bore false Corinna's name;

In a cool shade he lay with folded arms,  
Curses his fortune, and upbraids her charms,  
When Venus to his wondering eyes appears,  
And with these words relieves his amorous cares.

Rise, happy youth, this bright machine survey  
Whose rattling sticks my busy fingers sway,  
This present shall thy cruel charmer move,  
And in her fickle bosom kindle love.

The fan shall flutter in all female hands,  
And various fashions learn from various lands.  
For this, shall elephants their ivory shed;  
And polish'd sticks the waving engine spread:  
His clouded mail the tortoise shall resign,  
And round the rivet pearly circles shine.  
On this shall Indians all their art employ,  
And with bright colours stain the gaudy toy;  
Their paint shall here in wildest fancies flow,  
Their dress, their customs, their religion show  
So shall the British fair their minds improve,  
And on the fan to distant climates rove.  
Here China's ladies shall their pride display,  
And silver figures gild their loose array;  
This boasts her little feet in winking eyes;  
That tunes the fife, or tinkling cymbal plies:  
Here cross-legg'd nobles in rich state shall dine,  
There in bright mail distorted heroes shine.  
The peeping fan in modern times shall rise,  
Through which, unseen, the female ogle flies;  
This shall in temples the sly maid conceal,  
And shelter love beneath devotion's veil.  
Gay France shall make the fan her artist's care,  
And with the costly trinket arm the fair.  
As learned orators that touch the heart,  
With various action raise their soothing art,  
Both head and hand affect the listening throng,  
And humour each expression of the tongue.  
So shall each passion by the fan be seen,  
From noisy anger to the sullen spleen.

White Venus spoke, joy shone in Strephon's eyes,  
Proud of the gift, he to Corinna flies.  
But Cupid (who delights in amorous ill,  
Wounds hearts, and leaves them to a woman's will)  
With certain aim a golden arrow drew,  
Which to Leander's panting bosom flew:  
Leander lov'd; and to the sprightly dame  
In gentle sighs reveal'd his growing flame  
Sweet smiles Corinna to his sighs returns,  
And for the fop in equal passion burns.

Lo, Strephon comes! and, with a suppliant bow,  
Offers the present, and renews his vow.

When she the fate of Niobe beheld,  
Why has my pride against my heart rebell'd?  
She sighing cried: disdain forsook her breast,  
And Strephon now was thought a worthy guest.

In Procris' bosom when she saw the dart;  
She justly blames her own suspicious heart,  
Imputes her discontent to jealous fear,  
And knows her Strephon's constancy sincere.

When on Camilla's fate her eye she turns,  
No more for show and equipage she burns;  
She learns Leander's passion to despise,  
And looks on merit with discerning eyes.

Narcissus' change to the vain virgin shows  
Who trusts her beauty, trusts the fading rose.  
Youth flies apace, with youth your beauty flies,  
Love then, ye virgins, e'er the blossom dies.

Thus Pallas taught her, Strephon weds the dame,  
And Hymen's torch diffus'd the brightest flame.

John Gay

## The Fan : A Poem. Book II.

Olympus' gates unfold: in heaven's high towers  
Appear in council all the immortal powers;  
Great Jove above the rest exalted sate,  
And in his mind revolv'd succeeding fate,  
His awful eye with ray superior shone,  
The thunder-grasping eagle guards his throne  
On silver clouds the great assembly laid,  
The whole creation at one view survey'd.

But see, fair Venus comes in all her state;  
The wanton Loves and Graces round her wait;  
With her loose robe officious Zephyrs play,  
And strow with odoriferous flowers the way.  
In her right hand she waves the fluttering fan,  
And thus in melting sounds her speech began.

Assembled powers, who fickle mortals guide,  
Who o'er the sea, the skies and earth preside,  
Ye fountains whence all human blessings flow,  
Who pour your bounties on the world below;  
Bacchus first rais'd and prun'd the climbing vine,  
And taught the grape to stream with generous wine;  
Industrious Ceres tam'd the savage ground,  
And pregnant fields with golden harvest crown'd;  
Flora with bloomy sweets enrich'd the year,  
And fruitful autumn in Pomona's care.  
I first taught woman to subdue mankind,  
And all her native charms with dress refin'd,  
Celestial synod, this machine survey,  
That shades the face, or bids cool zephyrs play;  
If conscious blushes on her cheek arise,  
With this she veils them from her lover's eyes;  
No levell'd glance betrays her amorous heart,  
From the fan's ambush she directs the dart.  
The royal sceptre shines in Juno's hand,  
And twisted thunder speaks great Jove's command;  
On Pallas' arm the Gorgon shield appears,  
And Neptune's mighty grasp the trident bears;  
Ceres is with the bending suckle seen,  
And the strong bow points out the Cynthian queen;  
Henceforth the waving fan my hand shall grace,  
The waving fan supply the sceptre's place.  
Who shall, ye powers, the forming pencil hold?  
What story shall the wide machine unfold?  
Let Loves and Graces lead the dance around,  
With myrtle wreaths and flowery chaplet's crown'd,  
Let Cupid's arrows strow the smiling plains  
With unresisting nymphs, and amorous swains:  
May glowing picture o'er the surface shine,  
To melt slow virgins with the warm design.

Diana rose; with silver crescent crown'd,

And fixt her modest eyes upon the ground;  
Then with becoming mien she rais'd her head,  
And thus with graceful voice the virgin said.

Has woman then forgot all former wiles,  
The watchful ogle, and delusive smiles?  
Does man against her charms too powerful prove,  
Or are the sex grown novices in love?  
Why then these arms? or why should artful eyes,  
From this slight ambush, conquer by surprise?  
No guilty thought the spotless virgin knows,  
And o'er her cheek no conscious crimson glows;  
Since blushes then from shame alone arise,  
Why should we veil them from her lover's eyes?  
Let Cupid rather give up his command,  
And trust his arrows in a female hand.  
Have not the gods already cherish'd pride,  
And woman with destructive arms supply'd?  
Neptune on her bestows his choicest stores,  
For her the chambers of the deep explores:  
The gaping shell its pearly charge resigns,  
And round her neck the lucid bracelet twines:  
Plutus for her bids earth its wealth unfold,  
Where the warm oar is ripen'd into gold:  
Or where the ruby reddens in the soil,  
Where the green emerald pays the searcher's toil.  
Does not the diamond sparkle in her ear,  
Glow on her hand, and tremble in her hair?  
From the gay nymph the glancing lustre flies,  
And imitates the lightning of her eyes.  
But yet it Venus' wishes must succeed,  
And this fantastic engine be decreed,  
May some chaste story from the pencil flow,  
To speak the virgin's joy, and Hymen's wo.

Here let the wretched Ariadne stand,  
Seduc'd by Theseus to some desert land.  
Her locks dishevell'd waving in the wind,  
The crystal tears confess her tortur'd mind;  
The perjurd youth unfurls his treacherous sails,  
And their white bosoms catch the swelling gales.  
Be still, ye winds, she cries, stay, Theseus, stay:  
But faithless Theseus hears no more than they.  
All desperate, to some craggy cliff she flies,  
And spreads a well-known signal in the skies;  
His less'ning vessel ploughs the foamy main,  
She sighs, she calls, she waves the sign in vain.

Paint Dido there amidst her last distress,  
Pale cheeks and blood-shot eyes her grief express;  
Deep in her breast the reeking sword is drown'd,  
And gushing blood streams purple from the wound;

Her sister Anna hovering o'er her stands,  
Accuses heaven with lifted eyes and hands,  
Upbraids the Trojan with repeated cries,  
And mixes curses with her broken sighs.  
View this, ye maids; and then each swain believe;  
They're Trojans all, and vow but to deceive.

Here draw Oenone in the lonely grove,  
Where Paris first betrayed her into love;  
Let wither'd garlands hand on every bough,  
Which the false youth wove for Oenone's brow,  
The garlands lose their sweets, their pride is shed,  
And like their odours all his vows are fled;  
On her fair arm her pensive head she lays,  
And Xanthus' waves with mournful look surveys;  
That flood which witness'd his inconstant flame,  
When thus he swore, and won the yielding dame:  
'These streams shall sooner to their fountain move,  
Than I forget my dear Oenone's love.'  
Roll back, ye streams, back to your fountain run,  
Paris is false, Oenone is undone.  
Ah wretched maid! think how the moments flew,  
Ere you the pangs of this curs'd passion knew,  
When groves could please, and when you lov'd the plain,  
Without the presence of your perjur'd swain.

Thus may the nymph, whene'er she spreads the fan,  
In his true colours view perfidious man,  
Pleas'd with her virgin state in forests rove,  
And never trust the dangerous hopes of love.

The goddess ended. Merry Momus rose,  
With smiles and grins he waggish glances throws,  
Then with a noisy laugh forestalls his joke,  
Mirth flashes from his eyes while thus he spoke.

Rather let heavenly deeds be painted there,  
And by your own examples teach the fair.  
Let chaste Diana on the piece be seen,  
And the bright crescent own the Cythian queen:  
On Latmos' top see young Endymion lies,  
Feign'd sleep hath clos'd the bloomy lover's eyes,  
See, to his soft embraces how she steals,  
And on his lips her warm caresses seals:  
No more her hand the glittering javelin holds,  
But round his neck her eager arms she folds.  
Why are our secrets by our blushes shown?  
Virgins are virgins still - while 'tis unknown.  
Here let her on some flowery bank be laid,  
Where meeting beeches weave a grateful shade,  
Her naked bosom wanton tresses grace,  
And glowing expectation paints her face.

O'er her fair limbs a thin loose veil is spread,  
Stand off, ye shepherds; fear Actaeon's head:  
Let vigorous Pan the unguarded minute seize,  
And in a shaggy goat the virgin please.  
Why are our secrets by our blushes shown?  
Virgins are virgins still - while 'tis unknown.

There with just warmth Aurora's passion trace,  
Let spreading crimson stain her virgin face:  
See Cephalus her wanton airs despise,  
While she provokes him with desiring eyes:  
To raise his passion she displays her charms,  
His modest hand upon her bosom warms:  
Nor looks, nor prayers, nor force his heart persuade,  
But with disdain he quits the rosy maid.

Here let dissolving Leda grace the toy,  
Warm her cheeks and heaving breasts reveal her joy;  
Beneath the pressing swan she pants for air,  
While with his fluttering wings he fans the fair.  
There let all-conquering gold exert its power,  
And soften Danae in a glittering shower.

Would you warn beauty not to cherish pride,  
Nor vainly in the treacherous bloom confide,  
On the machine the sage Minerva place,  
With lineaments of wisdom mark her face;  
See, where she lies near some transparent flood,  
And with her pipe cheers the resounding wood:  
Her image in the floating glass she spies,  
Her bloated cheeks, worn lips, and shrivell'd eyes;  
She breaks the guiltless pipe, and with disdain  
Its shatter'd ruins flings upon the plain.  
With the loud reed no more her cheek shall swell,  
What, spoil her face! no: warbling strains, farewell.  
Shall arts, shall sciences employ the fair?  
Those trifles are beneath Minerva's care.

From Venus let her learn the married life,  
And all the virtuous duties of a wife.  
Here on a couch extend the Cyprian dame,  
Let her eye sparkle with the growing flame  
The god of war within her clinging arms,  
Sinks on her lips, and kindles all her charms.  
Paint limping Vulcan with a husband's care,  
And let his brow the cuckold's honours wear;  
Beneath the net the captive lovers place,  
Their limbs entangled in a close embrace.  
Let these amours adorn the new machine,  
And female nature on the piece be seen;  
So shall the fair, as long as fans shall last,  
Learn from your bright examples to be chaste.

John Gay

## The Man and the Flea

Whether on earth, in air, or main,  
Sure ev'ry thing alive is vain!  
Does not the hawk all fowls survey,  
As destin'd only for his prey?  
And do not tyrants, prouder things,  
Think men were born for slaves to kings?  
When the crab views the pearly strands,  
Or Tagus bright with golden sands,  
Or crawls beside the coral grove,  
And hears the ocean roll above,  
'Nature is too profuse,' says he,  
'Who gave all these to pleasure me!'  
When bord'ring pinks and roses bloom,  
And ev'ry garden breathes perfume,  
When peaches glow with sunny dyes  
Like Laura's cheek when blushes rise,  
When with huge figs the branches bend,  
When clusters from the vine depend,  
The snail looks round on flow'r and tree,  
And cries, 'All these were made for me!'  
'What dignity's in human nature,'  
Says Man, the most conceited creature,  
As from a cliff he cast his eye,  
And view'd the sea and arched sky!  
The sun was sunk beneath the main,  
The moon and all the starry train  
Hung the vast vault of heav'n. The Man  
His contemplation thus began:  
'When I behold this glorious show,  
And the side watry world below,  
The scaly people of the main,  
The beasts that range the wood or plain,  
The wing'd inhabitants of air,  
The day, the night, the various year,  
And know all these by heav'n design'd  
As gifts to pleasure human kind,  
I cannot raise my worth too high;  
Of what vast consequence am I!'  
'Not of th'importance you suppose,'  
Replies a Flea upon his nose;  
'Be humble; learn thyself to scan;  
Know, pride was never made for Man.  
'Tis vanity that swells thy mind.  
What, heav'n and earth for thee design'd!  
For thee! made only for our need,  
That more important Fleas might feed.'

John Gay

## The Quidnunckis

How vain are mortal man's endeavours?  
(Said, at dame Elleot's, master Travers)  
Good Orleans dead! in truth 'tis hard:  
Oh! may all statesmen die prepar'd!  
I do foresee (and for foreseeing  
He equals any man in being)  
The army ne'er can be disbanded.  
--I with the king was safely landed.  
Ah friends! great changes threat the land!  
All France and England at a stand!  
There's Meroweis--mark! strange work!  
And there's the Czar, and there's the Turk--  
The Pope--An India-merchant by  
Cut short the speech with this reply:  
All at a stand? you see great changes?  
Ah, sir! you never saw the Ganges:  
There dwells the nation of Quidnunckis  
(So Monomotapa calls monkeys  
On either bank from bough to bough,  
They meet and chat (as we may now):  
Whispers go round, they grin, they shrug,  
They bow, they snarl, they scratch, they hug;  
And, just as chance or whim provoke them,  
They either bite their friends, or stroke them.  
There have I seen some active prig,  
To show his parts, bestride a twig:  
Lord! how the chatt'ring tribe admire!  
Not that he's wiser, but he's higher:  
All long to try the vent'rous thing,  
(For power is but to have one's swing).  
From side to side he springs, he spurns,  
And bangs his foes and friends by turns.  
Thus as in giddy freaks he bounces,  
Crack goes the twig, and in he flounces!  
Down the swift stream the wretch is borne;  
Never, ah never, to return!  
Zounds! what a fall had our dear brother!  
Morbleu! cries one; and damme, t'other.  
The nation gives a general screech;  
None cocks his tail, none claws his breech;  
Each trembles for the public weal,  
And for a while forgets to steal.  
Awhile all eyes intent and steady  
Pursue him whirling down the eddy:  
But, out of mind when out of view,  
Some other mounts the twig anew;  
And business on each monkey shore  
Runs the same track it ran before.

John Gay

## The Shepherd and the Philosopher

Remote from cities liv'd a swain,  
Unvex'd with all the cares of gain;  
His head was silver'd o'er with age,  
And long experience made him sage;  
In summer's heat and winter's cold,  
He led his flock and penn'd the fold;  
His hours in cheerful labour flew,  
Nor envy nor ambition knew:  
His wisdom and his honest fame  
Through all the country rais'd his name

A deep philosopher (whose rules  
Of moral life were drawn from schools)  
The shepherd's homely cottage sought,  
And thus explor'd his reach of thought.

'Whence is thy learning? Hath thy toil  
O'er books consum'd the midnight oil?  
Hast thou old Greece and Rome survey'd,  
And the vast sense of Plato weigh'd?  
Hath Socrates thy soul refin'd,  
And hast thou fathom'd Tully's mind?  
Or, like the wise Ulysses, thrown,  
By various fates, on realms unknown,  
Hast thou through many cities stray'd,  
Their customs, laws, and manners weigh'd?'

The shepherd modestly replied,  
'I ne'er the paths of learning tried;  
Nor have I roam'd in foreign parts,  
To read mankind, their laws and arts;  
For man is practis'd in disguise,  
HE cheats the most discerning eyes.  
Who by that search shall wiser grow?  
By that ourselves we never know.  
The little knowledge I have gain'd,  
Was all from simple nature drain'd;  
Hence my life's maxims took their rise,  
Hence grew my settled hate to vice.  
The daily labours of the bee  
Awake my soul to industry.  
Who can observe the careful ant,  
And not provide for future want?  
My dog (the trustiest of his kind)  
With gratitude inflames my mind:  
I mark his true, his faithful way,  
And in my service copy Tray.  
In constancy and nuptial love,  
I learn my duty from the dove.  
The hen, who from the chilly air,  
With pious wing protects her care,  
And ev'ry fowl that flies at large,

Instructs me in a parent's charge.'

'From nature too I take my rule,  
To shun contempt and ridicule.  
I never, with important air,  
In conversation overbear.  
Can grave and formal pass for wise,  
When men the solemn owl despise?  
My tongue within my lips I rein;  
For who talks much must talk in vain,  
We from the wordy torrent fly:  
Who listens to the chatt'ring pye?  
Nor would I, with felonious flight,  
By stealth invade my neighbour's right:  
Rapacious animals we hate;  
Kites, hawks, and wolves, deserve their fate.  
Do not we just abhorrence find  
Against the toad and serpent kind?  
But envy, calumny, and spite,  
Bear stronger venom in their bite.  
Thus ev'ry object of creation  
Can furnish hints to contemplation;  
And from the most minute and mean,  
A virtuous mind can morals glean.'

'Thy fame is just,' the sage replies;  
'Thy virtue proves thee truly wise.  
Pride often guides the author's pen,  
Books as affected are as men:  
But he who studies nature's laws,  
From certain truth his maxims draws;  
And those, without our schools, suffice,  
To make men moral, good, and wise.'

John Gay

## The Shepherd's Week (excerpt)

MONDAY, OR, THE SQUABBLE  
Lobbin Clout, Cuddy, CloddipoleCUDDY

Hold, witless Lobbin Clout, I thee advise,  
Lest blisters sore on thy own tongue arise.  
Lo yonder Cloddipole, the blithesome swain,  
The wisest lout of all the neighbouring plain!  
From Cloddipole we learnt to read the skies,  
To know when hail will fall, or winds arise.  
He taught us erst the heifer's tail to view,  
When stuck aloft, that show'rs would straight ensue;  
He first that useful secret did explain,  
That pricking corns foretold the gath'ring rain.  
When swallows fleet soar high and sport in air,  
He told us that the welkin would be clear.  
Let Cloddipole then hear us twain rehearse,  
And praise his sweetheart in alternate verse.  
I'll wager this same oaken staff with thee,  
That Cloddipole shall give the prize to me.LOBBIN CLOUT

See this tobacco-pouch that's lin'd with hair,  
Made of the skin of sleekest fallow deer.  
This pouch, that's tied with tape of reddest hue,  
I'll wager, that the prize shall be my due.CUDDY

Begin thy carols then, thou vaunting slouch,  
Be thine the oaken staff, or mine the pouch.LOBBIN CLOUT

My Blouzelinda is the blithest lass,  
Than primrose sweeter, or the clover-grass.  
Fair is the king-cup that in meadow blows,  
Fair is the daisy that beside her grows,  
Fair is the gillyflow'r, of gardens sweet,  
Fair is the marigold, for pottage meet.  
But Blouzelind's than gillyflow'r more fair,  
Than daisy, marigold, or king-cup rare.CUDDY

My brown Buxoma is the featest maid,  
That e'er at Wake delightsome gambol play'd.  
Clean as young lambkins or the goose's down,  
And like the goldfinch in her Sunday gown.  
The witless lamb may sport upon the plain,  
The frisking kid delight the gaping swain,  
The wanton calf may skip with many a bound,  
And my cur Tray play deftest feats around;  
But neither lamb nor kid, nor calf nor Tray,  
Dance like Buxoma on the first of May.LOBBIN CLOUT

Sweet is my toil when Blouzelind is near,  
Of her bereft 'tis winter all the year.  
With her no sultry summer's heat I know;  
In winter, when she's nigh, with love I glow.

Come, Blouzelinda, ease thy swain's desire,  
My summer's shadow and my winter's fire!CUDDY

As with Buxoma once I work'd at hay,  
Ev'n noon-tide labour seem'd a holiday;  
And holidays, if haply she were gone,  
Like worky-days I wish'd would soon be done.  
Eftsoons, O sweet-heart kind, my love repay,  
And all the year shall then be holiday.LOBBIN CLOUT

As Blouzelinda in a gamesome mood,  
Behind a haycock loudly laughing stood,  
I slily ran, and snatch'd a hasty kiss,  
She wip'd her lips, nor took it much amiss.  
Believe me, Cuddy, while I'm bold to say,  
Her breath was sweeter than the ripen'd hay.CUDDY

As my Buxoma in a morning fair,  
With gentle finger strok'd her milky care,  
I quaintly stole a kiss; at first, 'tis true,  
She frown'd, yet after granted one or two.  
Lobbin, I swear, believe who will my vows,  
Her breath by far excell'd the breathing cows.LOBBIN CLOUT

Leek to the Welsh, to Dutchmen butter's dear,  
Of Irish swains potato is the cheer;  
Oats for their feasts, the Scottish shepherds grind,  
Sweet turnips are the food of Blouzelind.  
While she loves turnips, butter I'll despise,  
Nor leeks nor oatmeal nor potato prize.CUDDY

In good roast-beef my landlord sticks his knife,  
The capon fat delights his dainty wife,  
Pudding our parson eats, the squire loves hare,  
But white-pot thick is my Buxoma's fare.  
While she loves white-pot, capon ne'er shall be,  
Nor hare, nor beef, nor pudding, food for me.  
....CLODDIPOLE

Forbear, contending louts, give o'er your strains,  
An oaken staff each merits for his pains.  
But see the sun-beams bright to labour warn,  
And gild the thatch of goodman Hodges' barn.  
Your herds for want of water stand adry,  
They're weary of your songs--and so am I.

John Gay

## The Shepherd's Week : Friday; or, The Dirge

Bumkinet, Grubbinol

Bumkinet.

Why, Grubbinol, dost thou so wistful seem?  
There's sorrow in thy look, if right I deem.  
'Tis true, yon oaks with yellow tops appear,  
And chilly blasts begin to nip the year;  
From the tall elm a shower of leaves is borne  
And their lost beauty riven beeches mourn.  
Yet ev'n this season pleasance blithe affords,  
Now the squeez'd press foams with our apple hoards.  
Come, let us hie, and quaff a cheery bowl,  
Let cyder new wash sorrow from my soul.

Grubbinol.

Ah Bumkinet! since thou from hence wert gone,  
From these sad plains all merriment is flown;  
Should I reveal my grief 'twould spoil thy cheer,  
And make thine eye o'erflow with many a tear.

Bumkinet.

Hang sorrow! let's to yonder hut repair,  
And with trim sonnets cast away our care,  
Gilliam of Croydon well thy pipe can play,  
Thou sing'st most sweet, O'er hills and far away,  
Of Patient Grissel I devise to sing,  
And catches quaint shall make the valleys ring.  
Come, Grubbinol, beneath this shelter come,  
From hence we view our flocks securely roam.

Grubbinol.

Yes, blithesome lad, a tale I mean to sing,  
But with my wo shall distant valleys ring.  
The tale shall make our kidlings droop their head,  
For wo is me! - our Blouzelind is dead.

Bumkinet.

It Blouzelinda dead? Farewell my glee!  
No happiness is now reserv'd for me.  
As the wood-pigeon cooes without his mate,  
So shall my doleful dirge bewail her fate.  
Of Blouzelinda fair I mean to tell,  
The peerless maid that did all maids excel.  
Hence forth the morn shall dewy sorrow shed,  
And evening tears upon the grass be spread;  
The rolling streams with watery grief shall flow,  
And winds shall moan aloud - when loud they blow,  
Henceforth, as oft as autumn shall return,  
The dropping trees, whene'er it rains shall mourn;  
This season quite shall strip the country's pride,  
For 'twas in autumn Blouzelinda died.

Where'er I gad, I Blouzelind shall view,  
 Woods, dairy, barn and mows our passion knew.  
 When I direct my eyes to yonder wood,  
 Fresh rising sorrow curdles in my blood.  
 Thither I've often been the damsel's guide,  
 When rotten sticks our fuel have supply'd;  
 There I remember how her faggots large,  
 Were frequently these happy shoulders' charge.  
 Sometimes this crook drew hazel boughs adown,  
 And stuff'd her apron wide with nuts so brown;  
 Or when her feeding hogs had miss'd their way,  
 Or wallowing 'mid a feast of acorns lay;  
 The untoward creatures to the sty I drove,  
 And whistled all the way - or told my love.  
 If by the dairy's hatch I chance to hie,  
 I shall her goodly countenance espy,  
 For there her goodly countenance I've seen,  
 Set off with kerchief starch'd and pinnars clean.  
 Sometimes, like wax, she rolls the butter round,  
 Or with the wooden lily prints the pound.  
 Whilome I've seen her skim the clouted cream,  
 And press from spongy curds the milky stream,  
 But now, alas! these ears shall hear no more  
 The whining swine surround the dairy door,  
 No more her care shall fill the hollow tray,  
 To fat the guzzling hogs with floods of whey.  
 Lament, ye swine, in gruntings spend your grief,  
 For you, like me, have lost your sole relief.  
 When in the barn the sounding flail I ply,  
 Where from her sieve the chaff was wont to fly,  
 The poultry there will seem around to stand,  
 Waiting upon her charitable hand.  
 No succour meet the poultry now can find,  
 For they, like me, have lost their Blouzelind.  
 Whenever by yon barley mow I pass,  
 Before my eyes will trip the tidy lass.  
 I pitch'd the sheaves (oh could I do so now)  
 Which she in rows pil'd on the growing mow.  
 There every deale my heart by love was gain'd,  
 There the sweet kiss my courtship has explain'd.  
 Ah Blouzelind! that now I ne'er shall see,  
 But thy memorial will revive in me.  
 Lament, ye fields, and rueful symptoms show,  
 Henceforth let not the smelling primrose grow;  
 Let weeds instead of butter-flowers appear,  
 And meads, instead of daisies, hemlock bear;  
 For cowslips sweet let dandelions spread,  
 For Blouzelinda, blithesome maid, is dead!  
 Lament, ye swains, and o'er her grave bemoan,  
 And spell ye right this verse upon her stone,  
 'Here Blouzelinda lies - Alas, alas!  
 Weep shepherds - and remember flesh is grass.'

Grubbinol.

Albeit thy songs are sweeter to mine ear,  
Than to the thirsty cattle rivers clear;  
Or winter porridge to the labouring youth,  
Or buns and sugar to the damsel's tooth;  
Yet Blouzelind's name shall tune my lay,  
Of her I'll sing for ever and for aye.  
When Blouzelind expir'd, the weather's bell  
Before the drooping flock told forth her knell;  
The solemn death-watch click'd the hour she died,  
And shrilling crickets in the chimney cried;  
The boding raven on her cottage sate,  
And with hoarse croaking warn'd us of her fate;  
The lambkins, which her wonted tendance bred,  
Dropp'd on the plains that fatal instant dead;  
Swarm'd on a rotten stick the bees I spy'd,  
Which erst I saw when goody Dobson died.  
How shall I, void of tears, her death relate,  
While on her dearling's bed her mother sate!  
These words the dying Blouzelinda spoke,  
And 'of the dead let none the will revoke.'  
Mother, quoth she, let not the poultry need,  
And give the goose wherewith to raise her breed,  
Be these my sister's care - and every morn  
Amid the ducklings let her scatter corn;  
The sickly calf that's hous'd be sure to tend,  
Feed him with milk, and from bleak colds defend.  
Yet ere I die - see, mother, yonder shelf,  
There secretly I've hid my worldly pelf.  
Twenty good shillings in a rag I laid,  
Be ten the parson's, for my sermon paid.  
The rest is yours - my spinning-wheel and rake,  
Let Susan keep for her dear sister's sake;  
My new straw-hat that's trimly lin'd with green,  
Let Peggy wear, for she's a damsel clean.  
My leathern bottle, long in harvests try'd,  
Be Grubbinol's - this silver ring beside:  
Three silver pennies, and a ninepence bent,  
A token kind, to Bumkinet is sent.  
Thus spoke the maiden, while her mother cried,  
And peaceful, like the harmless lamb she died.  
To show their love, the neighbours far and near,  
Followed with wistful look the damsel's bier.  
Sprigg'd rosemary the lads and lasses bore,  
While dismally the parson walk'd before.  
Upon her grave the rosemary they threw,  
The daisy, butter-flower, and endive blue.  
After the good man warn'd us from his text,  
That none could tell whose turn would be the next;  
He said, that heaven would take her soul, no doubt,  
And spoke the hour-glass in her praise - quite out.

To her sweet memory flowery garlands strung,  
O'er her now empty seat aloft were hung.  
With wicker rods we fenc'd her tomb around,  
To ward from man and beast the hallow'd ground,  
Lest her new grave the parson's cattle raze,  
For both his horse and cow the church-yard graze.  
Now we trudg'd homeward to her mother's farm,  
To drink new cyder mull'd, with ginger warm.  
For gaffer Tread-well told us by the by,  
'Excessive sorrow is exceeding dry.'  
While bulls bear horns upon their curled brow,  
Or lasses with soft stroakings milk the cow,  
While pudling ducks the standing lake desire,  
Or battening hogs roll in the sinking mire;  
Whole moles the crumbling earth in hillocks raise,  
So long shall swains tell Blouzelinda's praise.  
Thus wail'd the louts in melancholy strain,  
'Till bonny Susan sped across the plain;  
They seiz'd the lass in apron clean array'd,  
And to the ale-house forc'd the willing maid,  
In ale and kisses they forget their cares,  
And Susan Blouzelinda's loss repairs.

John Gay

## The Shepherd's Week : Monday; or the Squabble

Lobbin Clout, Cuddy, Cloddipole

Lobbin Clout.

Thy younglings, Cuddy, are but just awake,  
No thrustles shrill the bramble-bush forsake  
No chirping lark the welkin sheen invokes,  
No damsel yet the swelling udder strokes;  
O'er yonder hill does scant the dawn appear,  
Then why does Cuddy leave his cott so rear?

Cuddy.

Ah Lobbin Clout! I ween, my plight is guest,  
'For he that loves, a stranger is to rest;'  
If swains belye not, thou hast prov'd the smart  
And Blouzelinda's mistress of thy heart.  
This rising rear betokeneth well thy mind,  
Those arms are folded for thy Blouzelind.  
And well, I trow, our piteous plights agree,  
Thee Blouzelinda smiles, Buxoma me.

Lobbin Clout.

Ah Blouzelind! I love thee more by half,  
Than does their fawns, or cows the new-fallen calf;  
Wo worth the tongue! may blisters sore it gall,  
That names Buxoma, Blouzelind withal.

Cuddy.

Hold, witless Lobbin Clout, I thee advise,  
Lest blisters sore on thy own tongue arise.  
Lo yonder Cloddipole, the blithesome swain,  
The wisest lout of all the neighbouring plain!  
From Cloddipole we learnt to read the skies,  
To know when hail will fall, or winds arise.  
He taught us erst the heifer's tail to view,  
When stuck aloft, that show'rs would straight ensue;  
He first that useful secret did explain,  
That pricking corns foretold the gath'ring rain.  
When swallows fleet soar high and sport in air,  
He told us that the welkin would be clear.  
Let Cloddipole then hear us twain rehearse,  
And praise his sweetheart in alternate verse.  
I'll wager this same oaken staff with thee,  
That Cloddipole shall give the prize to me.

Lobbin Clout.

See this tobacco-pouch that's lin'd with hair,  
Made of the skin of sleekest fallow deer.  
This pouch, that's tied with tape of reddest hue,  
I'll wager, that the prize shall be my due.

Cuddy.

Begin thy carols then, thou vaunting slouch,  
Be thine the oaken staff, or mine the pouch.

Lobbin Clout.

My Blouzelinda is the blithest lass,  
Than primrose sweeter, or the clover-grass.  
Fair is the king-cup that in meadow blows,  
Fair is the daisy that beside her grows,  
Fair is the gillyflow'r, of gardens sweet,  
Fair is the marigold, for pottage meet.  
But Blouzelind's than gillyflow'r more fair,  
Than daisy, marigold, or king-cup rare.

Cuddy.

My brown Buxoma is the featest maid,  
That e'er at Wake delightsome gambol play'd.  
Clean as young lambkins or the goose's down,  
And like the goldfinch in her Sunday gown.  
The witless lamb may sport upon the plain,  
The frisking kid delight the gaping swain,  
The wanton calf may skip with many a bound,  
And my cur Tray play deffest feats around;  
But neither lamb nor kid, nor calf nor Tray,  
Dance like Buxoma on the first of May.

Lobbin Clout.

Sweet is my toil when Blouzelind is near,  
Of her bereft 'tis winter all the year.  
With her no sultry summer's heat I know;  
In winter, when she's nigh, with love I glow.  
Come, Blouzelinda, ease thy swain's desire,  
My summer's shadow and my winter's fire!

Cuddy.

As with Buxoma once I work'd at hay,  
Ev'n noon-tide labour seem'd a holiday;  
And holidays, if haply she were gone,  
Like worky-days I wish'd would soon be done.  
Eftsoons, O sweet-heart kind, my love repay,  
And all the year shall then be holiday.

Lobbin Clout.

As Blouzelinda in a gamesome mood,  
Behind a haycock loudly laughing stood,  
I slily ran, and snatch'd a hasty kiss,  
She wip'd her lips, nor took it much amiss.  
Believe me, Cuddy, while I'm bold to say,  
Her breath was sweeter than the ripen'd hay.

Cuddy.

As my Buxoma in a morning fair,  
With gentle finger strok'd her milky care,

I quaintly stole a kiss; at first, 'tis true,  
She frown'd, yet after granted one or two.  
Lobbin, I swear, believe who will my vows,  
Her breath by far excell'd the breathing cows.

Lobbin Clout.

Leek to the Welsh, to Dutchmen butter's dear,  
Of Irish swains potato is the cheer;  
Oats for their feasts, the Scottish shepherds grind,  
Sweet turnips are the food of Blouzelind.  
While she loves turnips, butter I'll despise,  
Nor leeks nor oatmeal nor potato prize.

Cuddy.

In good roast-beef my landlord sticks his knife,  
The capon fat delights his dainty wife,  
Pudding our parson eats, the squire loves here,  
But white-pot thick is my Buxoma's fare.  
While she loves white-pot, capon ne'er shall be,  
Nor hare, nor beef, nor pudding, food for me.

Lobbin Clout.

As once I play'd at Blindman's-Buff, it hapt  
About my eyes the towel thick was wrapt.  
I miss'd the swains, and seiz'd on Blouzelind;  
True speaks that ancient proverb, Love is blind.

Cuddy.

As at Hot-Cockles once I laid me down,  
And felt the weighty hand of many a clown;  
Buxoma gave a gentle tap, and I  
Quick rose, and read soft mischief in her eye.

Lobbin Clout.

On two near elms, the slacken'd cord I hung,  
Now high, now low my Blouzelinda swung.  
With the rude wind her rump'd garment rose,  
And show'd her taper leg, and scarlet hose.

Cuddy.

Across the fallen oak the plank I laid,  
And myself pois'd against the tottering maid,  
High leapt the plank; adown Buxoma fell;  
I spy'd - but faithful sweethearts never tell.

Lobbin Clout.

This riddle, Cuddy, if thou canst, explain,  
This wily riddle puzzles every swain.  
'What flower is that which bears the Virgin's name,  
The richest metal joined with the same?'

Cuddy.

Answer, thou carle, and judge this riddle right,  
I'll frankly own thee for a cunning wight.  
'What flower is that which royal honour craves,  
Adjoin the Virgin, and 'tis strown on graves?'

Cloddipole.  
Forbear, contending louts, give o'er your strains,  
An oaken staff each merits for his pains.  
But see the sun-beams bright to labour warn,  
And gild the thatch of goodman Hodges' barn.  
Your herds for want of water stand adry,  
They're weary of your songs-and so am I.

John Gay

## The Shepherd's Week : Saturday; or, The Flights

Bowzybeus.

Sublimar strains, O rustic muse, prepare;  
Forget awhile the barn and dary's care;  
Thy homely voice to loftier numbers raise,  
The drunkard's flights require sonorous lays,  
With Bowzybeus; songs exalt thy verse,  
While rocks and woods the various notes rehearse.  
'Twas in the season when the reaper's toil  
Of the ripe harvest 'gan to rid the soil;  
Wide through the field was seen a goodly rout,  
Clean damsels bound the gather'd sheaves about,  
The lads with sharpen'd hook and sweating brow  
Cut down the labours of the winter plough.  
To the near hedge young Susan steps aside,  
She feign'd her coat or garter was untied,  
Whate'er she did, she stoop'd adown unseen,  
And merry reapers, what they list, will ween.  
Soon she rose up, and cried with voice so shrill  
That echo answer'd from the distant hill;  
The youths and damsels ran to Susan's aid,  
Who thought some adder had the lass dismay'd.  
When fast asleep they Bowzybeus spied,  
His hat and oaken staff lay close beside.  
That Bowzybeus who could sweetly sing,  
Or with the rozin'd bow torment the string:  
That Bowzybeus who with finger's speed  
Could call soft warblings from the breathing reed;  
That Bowzybeus who with jocund tongue,  
Ballads and roundelays and catches sung.  
They loudly laugh to see the damsel's fright,  
And in disport surround the drunken wight.  
Ah Bowzybee, why didst thou stay so long?  
The mugs were large, the drink was wondrous strong!  
Thou shouldst have left the fair before 'twas night,  
But thou sat'st toping 'till the morning light.  
Cic'ly, brisk maid, steps forth before the rout,  
And kiss'd, with smacking lip, the snoring lout.  
For custom says, 'Whoe'er this venture proves,  
'For such a kiss demands a pair of gloves.'  
By her example Dorcas bolder grows,  
And plays a tickling straw within his nose.  
He rubs his nostril, and in wonted joke  
The sneering swains with stammering speech bespoke.  
To you, my lads, I'll sing my carols o'er,  
As for the maids, - I've something else in store.  
No sooner 'gan he raise his tuneful song,  
But lads and lasses round about him throng.  
Sings with a note so shrilling sweet and loud,  
Nor parish-clerk who calls the psalm so clear,  
Like Bowzybeus soothes the attentive ear.  
Of nature's laws his carols first begun,  
Why the grave owl can never face the sun.

For owls, as swains observe, detest the light,  
 And only sing and seek their prey by night.  
 How turnips hide their swelling heads below,  
 And how the closing colworts upwards grow;  
 How Will-a-Wisp misleads night-faring clowns,  
 O'er hills, and sinking bogs, and pathless downs.  
 Of stars he told that shoot with shining trail,  
 And of the glow-worm's light that gilds his tail,  
 He sung where wood-cocks in the summer feed,  
 And in what climates they renew their breed;  
 Some think to northern coasts their flight they tend,  
 Or to the moon in midnight hours ascend.  
 Where swallows in the winter season jeep,  
 And how the drowsy bat and dormouse sleep.  
 How nature does the puppy's eye-lid close,  
 Till the bright sun has nine times set and rose,  
 For huntsmen by their long experience find,  
 That puppies still nine rolling suns are blind.  
 Now he goes on, and sings of fairs and shows,  
 For still new fairs before his eyes arose.  
 How pedlars' stalls with glittering toys are laid,  
 The various fairings of the country maid.  
 Long silken laces hang upon the twine,  
 And rows of pins and amber bracelets shine;  
 How the tight lass, knives, combs, and scissars spies,  
 And looks on thimbles with desiring eyes.  
 Of lotteries next with tuneful note he told,  
 Where silver spoons are won, and rings of gold.  
 The lads and lasses trudge the street along,  
 And all the fair is crowded in his song.  
 The mountebank now treads the stage, and sells  
 His pills, his balsams, and his ague-spells;  
 Now o'er and o'er the nimble tumbler springs  
 And on the rope the vent'rous maiden swings;  
 Jack-pudding in his parti-colour'd jacket  
 Tosses the glove, and jokes at every packet.  
 Of raree-shows he sung, and Punch's feats,  
 Of pockets pick'd in crowds, and various cheats.  
 Then sad he sung 'the children in the wood.'  
 Ah barbarous uncle, stain'd with infant blood!  
 How blackberries they pluck'd in deserts wild,  
 And fearless at the glittering fauchion smil'd;  
 Their little corpse with robin-red-breasts found,  
 And strow'd with pious bill the leaves around.  
 Ah gentle birds! if this verse lasts so long,  
 Your name shall live for ever in my song.  
 For buxom Joan he sung the doubtful strife,  
 How the sly sailor made the maid a wife.  
 To louder strains he rais'd his voice, to tell  
 What woful wars in Chevy-Chase befell,  
 When 'Percy drove the deer with hound and horn,  
 Wars to be wept by children yet unborn!'

Ah Withrington, more years thy life had crown'd,  
If thou hadst never heard the horn or hound!  
Yet shall the squire, who fought on bloody stumps,  
By future bards be wail'd in doleful dumps.  
'All in the land of Essex' next he chants,  
How to sleek mares starch quakers turn gallants:  
How the grave brother stood on bank so green.  
Happy for him if mares had never been!  
Then he was seiz'd with a religious qualm,  
And on a sudden, sung the hundredth psalm.  
He sang of Taffy Welch, and Sawney Scot,  
Lilly-bullero and the Irish Trot.  
Why should I tell of Bateman or of Shore,  
Or Wantley's dragon slain by valiant Moore.  
The bower of Rosamond, or Robin Hood,  
And how the grass now grows where Troy town stood?  
His carols ceas'd: the listening maids and swains  
Seem still to hear some soft imperfect strains.  
Sudden he rose; and as he reels along  
Swears kisses sweet should well reward his song.  
The damsels laughing fly: the giddy clown  
Again upon a wheat-sheaf drops adown;  
The power that guards the drunk, his sleep attends,  
'Till ruddy, like his face, the sun descends.

John Gay

## The Shepherd's Week : Thursday; or, The Spell

Hobnelia.

Hobnelia, seated in a dreary vale,  
In pensive mood rehears'd her piteous tale,  
Her piteous tale the wind in sighs bemoan,  
And pining echo answers groan for groan.  
I rue the day, a rueful day I trow,  
The woful day, a day indeed of wo!  
When Lubberkin to town his cattle drove,  
A maiden fine bedight he hap'd to love;  
The maiden fine bedight his love retains,  
And for the village he forsakes the plains.  
Return, my Lubberkin, these ditties hear;  
Spells will I try, and spells shall ease my care.  
'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
When first the year, I heard the cuckoo sing,  
And call with welcome note the budding spring,  
I straightway set a running with such haste,  
Deborah that won the smock scarce ran so fast.  
'Till spent for lack of breath quite weary grown,  
Upon a rising bank I sat adown,  
Then doff'd my shoe, and by my troth I swear,  
Therein I spy'd this yellow frizzled hair,  
As like to Lubberkin's in curl and hue,  
As if upon his comely pate it grew.  
'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
At eve last midsummer no sleep I sought,  
But to the field a bag of hemp-seed brought,  
I scatter'd round the seed on every side,  
And three times in a trembling accent cried,  
'This hemp-seed with my virgin hand I sow,  
Who shall my true-love be, the crop shall mow.'  
I straight look'd back, and if my eyes speak truth,  
With his keen scythe behind me came the youth.  
'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
Last Valentine, the day when birds of kind  
Their paramours with mutual chirpings find;  
I rearily rose, just at the break of day,  
Before the sun had chas'd the stars away,  
A-field I went, amid the morning dew,  
To milk my kine (for so should huswives do)  
Thee first I spy'd, and the first swain we see,  
In spite of fortune shall our true-love be;  
See, Lubberkin, each bird his partner take,  
And canst thou then thy sweet-hear dear forsake?  
'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
Last May-day fair I search'd to find a snail  
That might my secret lover's name reveal;  
Upon a gooseberry bush a snail I found,

For always snails near sweetest fruit abound.  
 I seiz'd the vermin, home I quickly sped,  
 And on the hearth the milk-white embers spread  
 Slow crawl'd the snail, and if I right can spell,  
 In the soft ashes mark'd a curious L :  
 Oh, may this wondrous omen lucky prove!  
 For L is found in Lubberkin and Love.  
 'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
 And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
 Two hazel-nuts I threw into the flame,  
 And to each nut I gave a sweet-heart's name.  
 This with the loudest bounce me sore amaz'd,  
 That in a flame of brightest colour blaz'd.  
 As blaz'd the nut, so may thy passion grow,  
 For 'twas thy nut that did so brightly glow.  
 'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
 And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
 As peascods once I pluck'd, I chanc'd to see  
 One that was closely fill'd with three times three,  
 Which when I crop'd I safely home convey'd,  
 And o'er the door the spell in secret laid,  
 My wheel I turn'd, and sung a ballad new,  
 While from the spindle I the fleeces drew;  
 The latch mov'd up, when who should first come in,  
 But in his proper person - Lubberkin.  
 I broke my yarn, surpris'd the sight to see,  
 Sure sign that he would break his word with me.  
 Eftsoons I join'd it with my wonted slight,  
 So may again his love with mine unite!  
 'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
 And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
 This lady-fly I take from off the grass,  
 Whose spotted back might scarlet red surpass.  
 'Fly, lady-bird, North, South, or East, or West,  
 Fly where the man is found that I love best.'  
 He leaves my hand, see to the West he's flown,  
 To call my true-love from the faithless town.  
 'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
 And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
 I pare this pippin round and round again,  
 My shepherd's name to flourish on the plain,  
 I fling the unbroken paring o'er my head,  
 Upon the grass a perfect L is read;  
 Yet on my heart a fairer L is seen  
 Than what the paring makes upon the green.  
 'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
 And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
 This pippin shall another trial make,  
 See from the core two kernels brown I take;  
 This on my cheek for Lubberkin's is worn,  
 And Boobyclod soon drops upon the ground,  
 A certain token that his love's unsound,

While Lubberkin sticks firmly to the last;  
Oh were his lips to mine but join'd so fast!  
'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
As Lubberkin once slept beneath a tree,  
I twitch'd his dangling garter from his knee;  
He wist not when the hempen string I drew,  
Now mine I quickly doff of inkle blue;  
Together fast I tie the garters twain,  
And while I knit the knot repeat this strain.  
'Three times a true-lover's knot I tie secure,  
Firm be the knot, firm may his love endure.'  
'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
As I was wont, I trudg'd last market day  
To town, with new laid eggs, preserv'd in hay.  
I made my market long before 'twas night,  
My purse grew heavy, and my basket light.  
Straight to the 'pothecary's shop I went,  
And in love-powder all my money spent;  
Behap what will, next Sunday after prayers,  
When to the ale-house Lubberkin repairs,  
These golden flies into his mug I'll throw,  
And soon the swain with fervent love shall glow.  
'With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,  
And turn me thrice around, around, around.'  
But hold - our Lightfoot barks, and cocks his ears,  
O'er yonder stile see Lubberkin appears.  
He comes, he comes, Hobnelia's not bewray'd,  
Nor shall she, crown'd with willow, die a maid.  
He vows, he swears, he'll give me a green gown,  
Oh dear! I fall adown, adown, adown!

John Gay

## The Shepherd's Week : Tuesday; or, the Ditty

Marian.

Young Colin Clout, a lad of peerless meed,  
Full well could dance, and deftly tune the reed;  
In every wood his carrols sweet were known,  
At every wake his nimble feats were shown.  
When in the ring the rustic routs he threw,  
The damsel's pleasures with his conquests grew;  
Or when aslant the cudgel threats his head,  
His danger smites the breast of every maid;  
But chief of Marian. Marian lov'd the swain,  
The parson's maid, and neatest of the plain.  
Marian that soft could stroke the udder'd cow,  
Or lessen, with her sieve, the barley mow;  
Marbled with sage the hardening cheese she press'd,  
And yellow butter Marian's skill confess'd;  
But Marian now devoid of country cares,  
Nor yellow butter nor sage cheese prepares.  
For yearning love the witless maid employs,  
And love, say swains, 'all busy heed destroys.'  
Colin makes mock at all her piteous smart,  
A lass that Cicily hight, had won his heart,  
The rival of the parson's maid was she.  
In dreary shade now Marian lies along,  
And mix'd with sighs thus wails in plaining song.  
Ah woful day! ah woful noon and morn!  
When first by thee my younglings white were shorn,  
Then first, I ween, I cast a lover's eye,  
My sheep were silly, but more silly I.  
Beneath the sheers they felt no lasting smart,  
They lost but fleeces while I lost a heart.  
Ah Colin! canst thou leave thy sweetheart true!  
What have I done for thee will Cicily do?  
Will she thy linen wash or hosen darn,  
And knit thee gloves made of her own-spun yarn?  
Will she with huswife's hand provide thy meat,  
And every Sunday morn thy neckcloth plait?  
Which o'er thy kersey doublet spreading wide,  
In service-time drew Cicily's eyes aside.  
Where'er I gad I cannot hide my care,  
My new disasters in my look appear.  
White as the curd my ruddy cheek has grown,  
So thin my features that I'm hardly known;  
Our neighbours tell me oft in joking talk,  
Of ashes, leather, oatmeal, bran, and chalk;  
Unwittingly of Marian they divine,  
And wist not that with thoughtful love I pine.  
Yet Colin Clout, untoward shepherd swain,  
Walks whistling blithe, while pitiful I 'plain.  
Whilom with thee 'twas Marian's dear delight  
To moll all day, and merry-make at night.  
If in the soil you guide the crooked share,  
Your early breakfast is my constant care.

And when with even hand you strow the grain,  
 I fright the thievish rooks from off the plain.  
 In misling days when I my thresher heard,  
 With nappy beer I to the barn repair'd;  
 Lost in the music of whirling flail,  
 To gaze on thee I left the smoking pail;  
 In harvest when the sun was mounted high,  
 My leathern bottle did thy drought supply;  
 Whene'er you mow'd I follow'd with the rake,  
 And have full oft been sun-burnt for thy sake;  
 When in the welkin gathering showers were seen,  
 I lagg'd, the last with Colin on the green;  
 And when at eve returning with thy car,  
 Awaiting heard the jingling bells from afar;  
 Straight on the fire the sooty pot I plac'd,  
 To warm thy broth I burn'd my hands for haste.  
 When hungry thou stood'st staring like an Oaf,  
 I slic'd the luncheon from the barley loaf,  
 With crumbled bread I thicken'd well thy mess.  
 Ah! love me more, or love thy pottage less!  
 Last Friday's eve, when as the sun was set,  
 I, near yon stile, three sallow gypsies met  
 Upon my hand they cast a poring look,  
 Bid me beware, and thrice their heads they shook,  
 They said that many crosses I must prove,  
 Some in my worldly gain, but most in love.  
 Next morn I miss'd three hens and our old cock,  
 And off the hedge two pinner and a smock.  
 I bore these losses with a Christian mind,  
 And no mishaps could feel, while thou wert kind.  
 But since, alas! I grew my Colin's scorn,  
 I've known no pleasure, night, or noon, or morn.  
 Help me, ye gypsies, bring him home again,  
 And to a constant lass give back her swain.  
 Have I not sat with thee full many a night,  
 When dying embers were our only light,  
 When every creature did in slumbers lie,  
 Besides our cat, my Colin Clout, and I?  
 No troublous thoughts the cat or Colin move,  
 While I alone am kept awake by love.  
 Remember, Colin, when at last year's wake,  
 I bought the costly present for thy sake,  
 Couldst thou spell o'er the posy on thy knife,  
 And with another change they state of life?  
 If thou forget'st, I wot, I can repeat,  
 My memory can tell the verse so sweet.  
 'As this is grav'd upon this knife of thine,  
 So is thy image on this heart of mine.'  
 But wo is me! such presents luckless prove,  
 For knives, they tell me, always sever love.  
 Thus Marian wail'd, her eyes with tears brimfull,  
 When goody Dobbins brought her cow to bull.

With apron blue to dry her tears she sought,  
Then saw the cow well serv'd, and took a goat.

John Gay

## The Shepherd's Week : Wednesday; or, The Dumps

Sparabella.

The wailings of a maiden I recite,  
A maiden fair, that Sparabella hight.  
Such strains ne'er warble in the linnet's throat,  
Nor the gay goldfinch chants so sweet a note,  
No magpie chatter'd, nor the painted jay,  
No ox was heard to low, nor ass to bray.  
No rustling breezes play'd the leaves among,  
While thus her madrigal the damsel sung.  
A while, O D'Urfey, lend an ear or twain,  
Nor, though in homely guise, my verse disdain:  
Whether thou seek'st new kingdoms in the sun,  
Whether thy muse does at Newmarket run,  
Or does with gossips at a feast regale,  
And heighten her conceits with sack and ale,  
Or else at wakes with Joan and Hodge rejoice,  
Where D'Urfey's lyrics swell in every voice;  
Yet suffer me, thou bard of wondrous meed,  
Amid thy bays to weave this rural weed.  
Now the sun drove adown the western road,  
And oxen laid at rest forget the goad,  
The clown fatigu'd trudg'd homeward with his spade,  
Across the meadows stretch'd the lengthen'd shade:  
When Sparabella, pensive and forlorn,  
Alike with yearning love and labour worn,  
Lean'd on her rake, and straight with doleful guise  
Did this said plaint in moanful notes devise.  
Come night as dark as pitch, surround my head,  
From Sparabella Bumkinet is fled;  
The ribbon that his valorous cudgel won,  
Last Sunday happier Clumsillis put on,  
Sure if he'd eyes, (but love, they say, has none)  
I whilom by that ribbon had been known.  
Ah, well-a-day! I'm shent with baneful aid,  
'Tis hard so true a damsel dies a maid.'  
Shall heavy Clumsillis with me compare?  
View this, ye lovers, and like me despair.  
Her blubber'd lip by smutty pipes is worn,  
And in her breath tobacco whiffs are born;  
The cleanly cheese-press she could never turn,  
Her awkward fist did ne'er employ the churn;  
If e'er she brew'd, the drink would straight go sour,  
Before it ever felt the thunder's power:  
No huswifry the dowdy creature knew,  
To sum up all, her tongue confess'd the shrew.  
'My plaint, ye lasses, with this burthen aid,  
'Tis hard so true a damsel dies a maid.'  
I've often seen my visage in yon lake,  
Nor are my features of the homeliest make.  
Though Clumsillis may boast a whiter dye,  
Yet the black sloe turns in my rolling eye;  
And fairest blossoms drop with every blast,

But the brown beauty will like the hollies last.  
 Her wan complexion's like the wither'd leek,  
 While Catherine pears adorn my ruddy cheek.  
 Yet she, alas! the witless lout hath won,  
 And by her gain poor Sparabella's undone!  
 Let hares and hounds in coupling straps unite,  
 The clocking hen make friendship with the kite,  
 Let the fox simply wear the nuptial noose,  
 And join in wedlock with the wadling goose;  
 For love hath brought a stranger thing to pass,  
 The fairest shepherd weds the foulest lass.  
 'My plaint, ye lasses, with this burthen aid,  
 'Tis hard so true a damsel dies a maid.'  
 Ah! didst thou know what proffers I withstood,  
 When late I met the squire in yonder wood!  
 To me he sped, regardless of his game,  
 While all my cheek was glowing red with shame;  
 My lip he kiss'd, and prais'd my healthful look,  
 Then from his purse of silk a guinea took,  
 Into my hand he forc'd the tempting gold,  
 While I with modest struggling broke his hold.  
 He swore that Dick in livery stripp'd with lace,  
 Should wed me soon, to keep me from disgrace;  
 But I nor footman priz'd, nor golden fee,  
 For what is lace or gold compar'd to thee?  
 'My plaint, ye lasses, with this burthen aid,  
 'Tis hard so true a damsel dies a maid.'  
 Now plain I ken whence love his rise begun,  
 Sure he was born some bloody butcher's son,  
 Bred up in shambles where our younglings slain,  
 Erst taught him mischief and to sport with pain.  
 The father only silly sheep annoys,  
 The son the sillier shepherdess destroys.  
 Does son or father greater mischief do?  
 The sire is cruel, so the son is too.  
 'My plaint, ye lasses, with this burthen aid,  
 'Tis hard so true a damsel dies a maid.'  
 Farewell, ye woods, ye meads, ye streams that flow:  
 A sudden death shall rid me of my woe.  
 This penknife keen my windpipe shall divide,  
 What, shall I fall as squeaking pigs have died!  
 No - to some tree this carcass I'll suspend.  
 But worrying curs find such untimely end!  
 I'll speed me to the pond, where the high stool  
 On the long plank hangs o'er the muddy pool,  
 That stool, the dread of every scolding quean,  
 Yet, sure a lover should not die so mean!  
 There plac'd aloft, I'll rave and rail by fits,  
 Though all the parish say I've lost my wits;  
 And thence, if courage holds, myself I'll throw,  
 And quench my passion in the lake below.  
 'Ye lasses, cease your burthen, cease to moan,

And, by my case forewarn'd, go mind your own.'  
The sun was set; the night came on apace,  
And falling dews bewet around the place,  
The bat takes airy rounds on leathern wings,  
And the hoarse owl his woful dirges sings;  
The prudent maiden deems it now too late,  
And till to-morrow comes defers her fate.

John Gay

## To a Lady

When I some antique Jar behold,  
Or white, or blue, or speck'd with gold,  
Vessels so pure, and so refin'd  
Appear the types of woman-kind:  
Are they not valu'd for their beauty,  
Too fair, too fine for household duty?  
With flowers and gold and azure dy'd,  
Of ev'ry house the grace and pride?  
How white, how polish'd is their skin,  
And valu'd most when only seen!  
She who before was highest priz'd  
Is for a crack or flaw despis'd;  
I grant they're frail, yet they're so rare,  
The treasure cannot cost too dear!  
But Man is made of coarser stuff,  
And serves convenience well enough;  
He's a strong earthen vessel made,  
For drudging, labour, toil and trade;  
And when wives lose their other self,  
With ease they bear the loss of Delf.

John Gay

## To a Young Lady, With Some Lampreys

With lovers, 'twas of old the fashion  
By presents to convey their passion;  
No matter what the gift they sent,  
The Lady saw that love was meant.  
Fair Atalanta, as a favour,  
Took the boar's head her Hero gave her;  
Nor could the bristly thing affront her,  
'Twas a fit present from a hunter.  
When Squires send woodcocks to the dame,  
It serves to show their absent flame:  
Some by a snip of woven hair,  
In posied lockets bribe the fair;  
How many mercenary matches  
Have sprung from Di'mond-rings and watches!  
But hold – a ring, a watch, a locket,  
Would drain at once a Poet's pocket;  
He should send songs that cost him nought,  
Nor ev'n he prodigal of thought.

Why then send Lampreys? fye, for shame!  
'Twill set a virgin's blood on flame.  
This to fifteen a proper gift!  
It might lend sixty five a lift.

I know your maiden Aunt will scold,  
And think my present somewhat bold.  
I see her lift her hands and eyes.

'What eat it, Niece? eat Spanish flies!  
'Lamprey's a most immodest diet:  
'You'll neither wake nor sleep in quiet.  
'Should I to night eat Sago cream,  
'Twould make me blush to tell my dream;  
'If I eat Lobster, 'tis so warming,  
'That ev'ry man I see looks charming;  
'Wherefore had not the filthy fellow  
'Laid Rochester upon your pillow?  
'I vow and swear, I think the present  
'Had been as modest and as decent.

'Who has her virtue in her power?  
'Each day has its unguarded hour;  
'Always in danger of undoing,  
'A prawn, a shrimp may prove our ruin!  
'The shepherdess, who lives on salad,  
'To cool her youth, controuls her palate;  
'Should Dian's maids turn liqu'rish livers,  
'And of huge lampreys rob the rivers,  
'Then all beside each glade and Visto,  
'You'd see Nymphs lying like Calisto.

'The man who meant to heat your blood,  
'Needs not himself such vicious food –'

In this, I own, your Aunt is clear,  
I sent you what I well might spare:  
For when I see you, (without joking)  
Your eyes, lips, breasts, are so provoking,

They set my heart more cock-a-hoop,  
Than could whole seas of craw-fish soupe.

John Gay

## Trivia ; or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London : Book II.

Of Walking the Streets by Day.

Thus far the Muse has trac'd in useful lays  
The proper implements for wintry ways;  
Has taught the walker, with judicious eyes,  
To read the various warnings of the skies.  
Now venture, Muse, from home to range the town,  
And for the public safety risk thy own.  
For ease and for dispatch, the morning's best;  
No tides of passengers the street molest.  
You'll see a draggled damsel, here and there,  
From Billingsgate her fishy traffic bear;  
On doors the sallow milk-maid chinks her gains;  
Ah! how unlike the milk-maid of the plains!  
Before proud gates attending asses bray,  
Or arrogate with solemn pace the way;  
These grave physicians with their milky cheer,  
The love-sick maid and dwindling beau repair;  
Here rows of drummers stand in martial file,  
And with their vellum thunder shake the pile,  
To greet the new-made bride. Are sounds like these  
The proper prelude to a state of peace?  
Now industry awakes her busy sons,  
Full charg'd with news the breathless hawker runs:  
Shops open, coaches roll, carts shake the ground,  
And all the streets with passing cries resound.  
If cloth'd in black, you tread the busy town  
Or if distinguish'd by the rev'rend gown,  
Three trades avoid; oft in the mingling press,  
The barber's apron soils the sable dress;  
Shun the perfumer's touch with cautious eye,  
Nor let the baker's step advance too nigh;  
Ye walkers too that youthful colours wear,  
Three sullyng trades avoid with equal care;  
The little chimney-sweeper skulks along,  
And marks with sooty stains the heedless throng;  
When small-coal murmurs in the hoarser throat,  
From smutty dangers guard thy threaten'd coat:  
The dust-man's cart offends thy clothes and eyes,  
When through the street a cloud of ashes flies;  
But whether black or lighter dyes are worn,  
The chandler's basket, on his shoulder borne,  
With tallow spots thy coat; resign the way,  
To shun the surly butcher's greasy tray,  
Butcher's, whose hands are dy'd with blood's foul stain,  
And always foremost in the hangman's train.  
Let due civilities be strictly paid.  
The wall surrender to the hooded maid;  
Nor let thy sturdy elbow's hasty rage  
Jostle the feeble steps of trembling age;  
And when the porter bends beneath his load,  
And pants for breath, clear thou the crowded road.

But, above all, the groping blind direct,  
 And from the pressing thron'g the lame protect.  
 You'll sometimes meet a fop, of nicest tread,  
 Whose mantling peruke veils his empty head;  
 At ev'ry step he dreads the wall to lose,  
 And risks, to save a coach, his red-heel'd shoes;  
 Him, like the miller, pass with caution by,  
 Lest from his shoulder clouds of powder fly.  
 But when the bully, with assuming pace,  
 Cocks his broad hat, edg'd round with tarnish'd lace,  
 Yield not the way; defy his strutting pride,  
 And thrust him to the muddy kennel's side;  
 He never turns again, nor dares oppose,  
 But mutters coward curses as he goes.  
 If drawn by bus'ness to a street unknown,  
 Let the sworn porter point thee through the town;  
 Be sure observe the signs, for signs remain,  
 Like faithful land-marks to the walking train.  
 Seek not from "prentices to learn the way,  
 Those fabling boys will turn thy steps astray;  
 Ask the grave tradesman to direct thee right,  
 He ne'er deceives, but when he profits by 't.  
 Where fam'd St. Giles's ancient limits spread,  
 An inrail'd column rears its lofty head,  
 Here to sev'n streets sev'n dials count the day,  
 And from each other catch the circling ray.  
 Here oft the peasant, with enquiring face,  
 Bewilder'd, trudges on from place to place;  
 He dwells on ev'ry sign with stupid gaze,  
 Enters the narrow alley's doubtful maze,  
 Tries ev'ry winding court and street in vain,  
 And doubles o'er his weary steps again.  
 Thus hardy Theseus with intrepid feet,  
 Travers'd the dang'rous labyrinth of Crete;  
 But still the wand'ring passes forc'd his stay,  
 Till Ariadne's clue unwinds the way.  
 But do not thou, like that bold chief, confide  
 Thy vent'rous footsteps to a female guide;  
 She'll lead thee with delusive smiles along,  
 Dive in thy fob, and drop thee in the throng.  
 When waggish boys the stunted besom ply  
 To rid the slabby pavement, pass not by  
 E'er thou hast held their hands; some heedless flirt  
 Will over-spread thy calves with spatt'ring dirt.  
 Where porters hogsheads roll from carts aslope,  
 Or brewers down steep cellars stretch the rope,  
 Where counted billets are by carmen tost,  
 Stay thy rash steps, and walk without the post.  
 What though the gathering mire thy feet besmear,  
 The voice of industry is always near.  
 Hark! the boy calls thee to his destin'd stand,  
 And the shoe shines beneath his oily hand.

Here let the muse, fatigu'd amid the throng,  
 Adorn her precepts with digressive song:  
 Of shirtless youths the secret rise to trace,  
 And show the parent of the sable race.  
 Like mortal man, great Jove (grown fond of change)  
 Of old was wont this nether world to range  
 To seek amours; the vice the monarch lov'd  
 Soon through the wide ethereal court improv'd,  
 And e'en the proudest goddess now and then  
 Would lodge a night among the sons of men;  
 To vulgar deities descends the fashion,  
 Each, like her betters, had her earthly passion.  
 Then Cloacina (goddess of the tide  
 Whose sable streams beneath the city glide)  
 Indulg'd the modish flame; the town she rov'd,  
 A mortal scavenger she saw, she lov'd;  
 The muddy spots that dry'd upon his face,  
 Like female patches, heighten'd every grace:  
 She gaz'd; she sigh'd. For love can beauties spy  
 In what seems faults to every common eye.  
 Now had the watchman walk'd his second round;  
 When Cloacina hears the rumbling sound  
 Of her brown lover's cart, for well she knows  
 That pleasing thunder: swift the goddess rose,  
 And through the streets pursu'd the distant noise,  
 Her bosom panting with expected joys.  
 With the night wandering harlot's air she past,  
 Brush'd near his side, and wanton glances cast;  
 In the black form of cinder wench she came,  
 When love, the hour, the place had banish'd shame;  
 To the dark alley arm in arm they move:  
 O may no link-boy interrupt their love.  
 When the pale moon had nine times fill'd her space,  
 The pregnant goddess (cautious of disgrace)  
 Descends to earth; but sought no midwife's aid,  
 Nor 'midst her anguish to Lucina pray'd;  
 No cheerful gossip wish'd the mother joy,  
 Alone, beneath a bulk she dropt the boy.  
 The child through various risks in years improv'd,  
 At first a beggar's brat, compassion mov'd;  
 His infant tongue soon learnt the canting art,  
 Knew all the prayers and whines to touch the heart.  
 Oh happy unown'd youths, your limbs can bear  
 The scorching dog-star and the winter's air,  
 While the rich infant, nurs'd with care and pain,  
 Thirsts with each heat, and coughs with every rain?  
 The goddess long had mark'd the child's distress,  
 And long had sought his sufferings to redress;  
 She prays the gods to take the fondling's part,  
 To teach his hands some beneficial art  
 Practis'd in streets: the gods her suit allow'd,  
 And made him useful to the walking crowd,

To cleanse the miry feet, and o'er the shoe  
 With nimble skill the glossy black renew:  
 Each power contributes to relieve the poor:  
 With the strong bristles of the mighty boar  
 Diana forms his brush; the god of day  
 A tripod gives, amid the crowded way  
 To raise the dirty foot, and ease his toil;  
 Kind Neptune fills his vase with fetid oil  
 Prest from the enormous whale: the god of fire  
 From whose dominions smoky clouds aspire,  
 Among these generous presents joints his part,  
 And aids with soot the new japanning art;  
 Pleas'd she receives the gifts; she downward glides,  
 Lights in Fleet-ditch, and shoots beneath the tides.  
 Now dawns the morn, the sturdy lad awakes,  
 Leaps from his stall, his tangled hair he shakes.  
 Then leaning o'er the rails he musing stood,  
 And view'd below the black canal of mud,  
 Where common-shores a lulling murmur keep,  
 Pensive through idleness, tears flow'd apace,  
 Which eas'd his loaded heart, and wash'd his face;  
 At length he sighing cry'd; That boy was blest,  
 Whose infant lips have drain'd a mother's breast;  
 But happier far are those, (if such be known)  
 Whom both a father and a mother own:  
 But I, alas! had fortune's utmost scorn,  
 Who ne'er knew parents, was an orphan born!  
 Some boys are rich by birth beyond all wants,  
 Belov'd by uncles, and kind good old aunts;  
 When time comes round a Christmas box they bear,  
 And one day makes them rich for all the year.  
 Had I the precepts of a father learn'd,  
 Perhaps I then the coachman's fare had earn'd,  
 For lesser boys can drive; I thirsty stand  
 And see the double flaggon charge their hand,  
 See them puff off the froth, and gulp amain,  
 While with dry tongue I lick my lips in vain.  
 While thus he fervent prays, the heaving tide  
 In widen'd circles beats on either side;  
 The goddess rose amid the inmost round,  
 With wither'd turnip-tops her temples crown'd;  
 Low reach'd her dripping tresses, lank and black  
 As the smooth jet, or glossy raven's back;  
 Around her waste a circling eel was twin'd,  
 Which bound her robe that hung in rags behind.  
 Now beck'ning to the boy; she thus begun,  
 Thy prayers are granted; weep no more, my son:  
 Go thrive. At some frequented corner stand,  
 This brush I give thee, grasp it in thy hand.  
 Temper the soot within this vase of oil,  
 And let the little tripod aid they toil;  
 On this methinks I see the walking crew

At thy request support the miry shoe.  
 The foot grows black that was with dirt embrown'd,  
 And in thy pockets jingling halfpence sound.  
 The goddess plunges swift beneath the flood,  
 And dashes all around her showers of mud;  
 The youth straight chose his post; the labour plied  
 Where branching streets from Charing-cross divide;  
 His treble voice resounds along the Meuse,  
 And Whitehall echoes, 'Clean your honour's shoes.'  
 Like the sweet ballad, this amusing lay  
 Too long detains the walker on his way;  
 The busy city asks instructive song.  
 Clasp'd in the board the perjurd head is bow'd,  
 Betimes retreat; here, thick as hailstones pour,  
 Turnips, and half-hatched eggs, (a mingled shower)  
 Among the rabble rain: some random throw  
 May with the trickling yolk thy cheek o'erflow;  
 Though expedition bids, yet never stray  
 Where no rang'd posts defend the rugged way.  
 Here laden carts with thundering waggons meet,  
 Wheels clash with wheels, and bar the narrow street;  
 The lashing whip resounds, the horses strain,  
 And blood in anguish bursts the swelling vein.  
 O barbarous men, your cruel breasts assuage,  
 Why vent ye on the generous steed your rage?  
 Does not his service earn your daily bread?  
 Your wives, your children, by his labours fed!  
 If, as the Samian taught, the soul revives,  
 And, shifting seats, in other bodies lives:  
 Severe shall be the brutal coachman's change,  
 Doom'd in a hackney-horse the town to range:  
 Car-men, tranform'd, the groaning load shall draw  
 Whom other tyrants with the lash shall awe.  
 Who would of Watling-street the dangers share,  
 When the broad pavement of Cheapside is near?  
 Or who that rugged street would traverse o'er,  
 That stretches, O Fleet-ditch, from thy black shore  
 To the tower's moated walls! here steams ascend,  
 That, in mix'd fumes, the wrinkled nose offend.  
 Where chandler's cauldrons boil; where fishy prey  
 Hide the wet stall, long absent from the sea;  
 And where the cleaver chops the heifer's spoil,  
 And where huge hogsheads sweat with trainy oil,  
 Thy breathing nostril hold, but how shall I  
 Pass, where in piles Carnavian cheeses lie;  
 Cheese, that the table's closing rites denies,  
 And bids me with the unwilling chaplain rise.  
 O bear me to the paths of fair Pell-mell,  
 Safe are thy pavements, grateful is thy smell;  
 At distance rolls along the gilded coach,  
 Nor sturdy car-men on thy walks encroach:  
 No lets would bar thy ways, were chairs denied,

The soft supports of laziness and pride;  
Shops breathe perfumes, through sashes ribbons glow,  
The mutual arms of ladies and the beau.  
Yet still even here, when rains the passage hide,  
Oft the loose stone spirits up a muddy tide,  
Beneath thy careless foot; and from on high,  
Where masons mount the ladder, fragments fly;  
Mortar, and crumbled lime in showers descend,  
And o'er thy head destructive tiles impend.  
But sometimes let me leave the noisy roads,  
And silent wander in the close abodes,  
Where wheels ne'er shake the ground; there pensive stray  
In studious thought the long uncrowded way.  
Here I remark each walker's different face,  
And in their look their various business trace.  
The broker here his spacious beaver wears,  
Upon his brow sit jealousies and cares;  
Bent on some mortgage (to avoid reproach)  
He seeks bye streets, and saves the expensive coach.  
Soft, at low doors, old lechers tap their cane,  
For fair recluse, who travels Drury-lane;  
Here roams, uncomb'd, the lavish rake, to shun  
His Fleet-street draper's everlasting dun.

Careful observers, studious of the town,  
Shun the misfortunes that disgrace the clown;  
Untempted, they contemn the juggler's feats,  
Pass by the Meuse; nor try the thimbles cheats.  
When drays bound high, they never cross behind,  
Where bubbling yest is blown by gusts of wind:  
And when up Ludgate-hill huge carts move slow,  
Far from the straining steeds securely go,  
Whose dashing hoofs behind them fling the mire,  
And mark with muddy blots the gazing 'squire.  
The Parthian thus his javelin backward throws,  
And as he flies infests pursuing foes.  
The thoughtless wits shall frequent forfeits pay,  
Who 'gainst the sentry's box discharge their tea.  
Do thou some court, or secret corner seek,  
Nor flush with shame the passing virgin's cheek.  
Yet let me not descend to trivial song,  
Nor vulgar circumstance my verse prolong;  
Why should I teach the maid, when torrents pour,  
Her head to shelter from the sudden shower?  
Nature will best her reedy hand inform,  
With her spread petticoat to fence the storm.  
Does not each walker know the warning sign,  
When wisps of straw depend upon the twine  
Cross the close street; that then the paver's art  
Renews the ways, denied to coach and cart?  
Who knows not that the coachman lashing by,  
Oft with his flourish cuts the heedless eye;

And when he takes his stand, to wait a fare,  
 His horses' foreheads shun the winter's air?  
 Nor will I roam when summer's sultry rays  
 Parch the dry ground, and spread with dust the ways,  
 With whirling gusts the rapid atoms rise,  
 Smoke o'er the pavement, and involve the skies.  
 Winter my theme confines; whose nitry wind  
 Shall crust the slabby mire, and kennels bind;  
 She bids the snow descend in flaky sheets,  
 And in her hoary mantle clothe the streets.  
 Let not the virgin tread these slippery roads,  
 The gathering fleece the hollow patten loads;  
 But if thy footsteps slide with clotted frost,  
 Strike off the breaking balls against the post,  
 On silent wheel the passing coaches roll;  
 Oft look behind and ward the threatening pole.  
 In harden'd orbs the school-boy moulds the snow,  
 To mark the coachman with a dexterous throw.  
 Why do you, boys, the kennel's surface spread,  
 To tempt with faithless pass the matron's tread?  
 How can you laugh to see the damsel spurn,  
 Sink in your frauds, and her green stocking mourn?  
 At White's the harness'd chairman idly stands,  
 And swings round his waist his tingling hands;  
 The sempstress speeds to 'Change with red-tipp'd nose;  
 The Belgian stove beneath her footstool glows;  
 In half-whipt muslin needles useless lie,  
 And shuttle-cocks across the counter fly.  
 These sports warm harmless; why then will ye prove,  
 Deluded maids, the dangerous flame of love?  
 Where Covent-Garden's famous temple stands,  
 That boasts the work of Jones' immortal hands;  
 Columns with plain magnificence appear,  
 And graceful porches lead along the square;  
 Here oft my course I bend, when lo! from afar,  
 I spy the furies of the foot-ball war,  
 The 'prentice quits his shop, to join the crew,  
 Increasing crowds the flying game pursue.  
 Thus, as you roll the ball o'er snowy ground,  
 The gathering globe augments with every round.  
 But whither shall I run? the throng draws nigh,  
 The ball now skims the street, now soars on high;  
 The dexterous glazier strong returns the bound,  
 And jingling sashes on the pent-house sound.

O roving muse, recall that wondrous year,  
 When winter reign'd in bleak Britannia's air;  
 When hoary Thames, with frosted osiers crown'd,  
 Was three long moons in icy fetters bound,  
 The waterman, forlorn along the shore,  
 Pensive reclines upon his useless oar.  
 See harness'd steeds desert the stony town;

And wander roads unstable, not their own:  
Wheels o'er the harden'd waters smoothly glide,  
And raze, with whiten'd tracks, the slippery tide.  
Here the fat cook plies high the blazing fire,  
And scarce the spit can turn the steer entire.  
Booths sudden hide the Thames, long streets appear,  
And numerous games proclaim the crowded fair.  
So when a general bids the martial train  
Spread their encampments o'er the spacious plain;  
Thick-rising camps a canvas city build,  
And the loud dice resound through all the field.  
'Twas here the matron found a doleful fate:  
Let elegiac lay the wo relate,  
Soft as the breath of distant flutes, at hours  
When silent evening closes up the flowers;  
Lulling as falling water's hollow noise;  
Indulging grief, like Philomela's voice.

Doll every day had walk'd these treacherous roads;  
Her neck grew warpt beneath the autumnal loads  
Of various fruit; she now a basket bore  
That head, alas! shall basket bear no more.  
Each booth she frequent past, in quest of gain,  
And boys with pleasure heard her shrilling strain.  
Ah Doll! all mortals must resign their breath,  
And industry itself submit to death!  
The crackling crystal yields, she sinks, she dies,  
Her head, chopt off, from her lost shoulders flies;  
Pippins she cried, but dead her voice confounds,  
And pip-pip-pip- along the ice resounds.  
So when the Thracian furies Orpheus tore,  
And left his bleeding trunk deform'd with gore,  
His sever'd head floats down the silver tide,  
His yet warm tongue for his lost consort cried;  
Eurydice with quivering voice he mourn'd,  
And Heber's banks Eurydice return'd.  
But now the western gal the flood unbinds,  
And blackening clouds move on with warmer winds,  
The wooden town its frail foundation leaves,  
And Thames' full urn rolls down his plenteous waves;  
From every pent-house streams the fleeting snow,  
And with dissolving frost the pavements flow.  
Experienc'd men, inur'd to city ways,  
Need not the calendar to count their days.  
When through the town with slow and solemn air,  
Led by the nostril, walks the muzzled bear;  
Behind him moves majestically dull,  
The pride of Hockley-hole, the surly bull;  
Learn hence the periods of the week to name,  
Mondays and Thursdays are the days of game.  
When fishy stalls with double store are laid;  
The golden-bellied carp, the broad-finn'd maid,

Red-speckl'd trouts, the salmon's silver joul,  
The jointed lobster, and unscaly soale,  
And luscious scallops to allure the tastes  
Of rigid zealots to delicious fasts;  
Wednesdays and Fridays you'll observe from hence,  
Days, when our sires were doom'd to abstinence.  
When dirty waters from balconies drop,  
And dexterous damsels twirl the sprinkling mop,  
And cleanse the spatter'd sash, and scrub the stairs;  
Know Saturday's conclusive morn appears.

Successive cries the seasons change declare,  
And mark the monthly progress of the year.  
Hark, how the streets with treble voices ring,  
To sell the bounteous product of the spring!  
Sweet-smelling flowers, and elder's early bud,  
With nettle's tender shoots, to cleanse the blood:  
And when June's thunder cools the sultry skies,  
Even Sundays are profan'd by mackerel cries.  
Walnuts the fruit'rer's hand, in autumn stain,  
Blue plumbs and juicy pears augment his gain;  
Next oranges the longing boys entice,  
To trust their copper fortunes to the dice.  
When rosemary, and bays, the poet's crown,  
Are bawl'd in frequent cries through all the town;  
Then judge the festival of Christmas near,  
Christmas, the joyous period of the year.  
Now with bright holly all your temples strow,  
With laurel green and sacred mistletoe.  
Now, heav'n-born Charity, thy blessings shed;  
Bid meagre Want uprear her sickly head:  
Bid shiv'ring limbs be warm; let plenty's bowl  
In humble roofs make glad the needy soul.  
See, see, the heav'n-born maid her blessings shed;  
Lo! meagre Want uprears her sickly head;  
Cloth'd are the naked, and the needy glad,  
While selfish Avarice alone is sad.  
Proud coaches pass, regardless of the moan  
Of infant orphans, and the widow's groan;  
While Charity still moves the walker's mind,  
His lib'ral purse relieves the lame and blind.  
Judiciously thy half-pence are bestow'd,  
Where the laborious beggar sweeps the road.  
Whate'er you give, give ever at demand,  
Nor let old age long stretch his palsy'd hand.  
Those who give late are importun'd each day,  
And still are teas'd because they still delay.  
If e'er the miser durst his farthings spare,  
He thinly spreads them through the public square,  
Where, all beside the rail, rang'd beggars lie,  
And from each other catch the doleful cry;  
With heav'n, for two-pence, cheaply wipes his score,

Lifts up his eyes, and hastes to beggar more.  
Where the brass knocker, wrapt in flannel band,  
Forbids the thunder of the footman's hand;  
Th' upholder, rueful harbinger of death,  
Waits with impatience for the dying breath;  
As vulture, o'er a camp, with hov'ring flight,  
Snuff up the future carnage of the fight.  
Here canst thou pass, unmindful of a pray'r,  
That heav'n in mercy may thy brother spare?  
Come, F  
sincere, experienc'd friend,  
Thy briefs, thy deeds, and e'en thy fees suspend;  
Come let us leave the Temple's silent walls,  
Me business to my distant lodging calls:  
Through the long Strand together let us stray:  
With thee conversing I forget the way.  
Behold that narrow street which steep descends,  
Whose building to the slimy shore extends;  
Here Arundel's fam'd structure rear'd its frame,  
The street alone retains the empty name:  
Where Titian's glowing paint the canvas warm'd,  
And Raphael's fair design, with judgement, charm'd,  
Now hangs the bell-man's song, and pasted here  
The colour'd prints of Overton appear.  
Where statues breath'd, the work of Phidias' hands,  
A wooden pump, or lonely watch-house stands.  
There Essex stately pile adorn'd the shore,  
There Cecil's, Bedford's, Villers', now no more.  
Yet Burlington's fair palace still remains;  
Beauty within, without proportion reigns.  
Beneath his eye declining art revives,  
The wall with animated picture lives:  
There Handel strikes the strings, the melting strain  
Transports the soul, and thrills through every vein;  
There oft I enter, (but with cleaner shoes)  
For Burlington's belov'd by every muse.

O ye associate walkers, O my friends,  
Upon your state what happiness attends!  
What, though no coach to frequent visit rolls,  
Nor for your shilling chairmen sling their poles;  
Yet still your nerves rheumatic pains defy,  
Nor lazy jaundice dulls your saffron eye:  
No wasting cough discharges sounds of death,  
Nor wheezing asthma heaves in vain for breath;  
Nor from your restless couch is heard the groan  
Of burning gout, or sedentary stone.  
Let others in the jolting coach confide,  
Or in the leaky boat the Thames divide;  
Or, box'd within the chair, contemn the street,  
And trust their safety to another's feet,  
Still let me walk; for oft the sudden gale

Ruffles the tide, and shifts the dangerous sail.  
Then shall the passenger too late deplore  
Then whelming billow, and the faithless oar;  
The drunken chairman in the kennel spurns,  
The glasses shatters, and his charge o'erturns.  
Who can recount the coach's various harms,  
The legs disjointed, and the broken arms?

I've seen a beau, in some ill-fated hour,  
When o'er the stones choak'd kennels swell the shower,  
In gilded chariots loll, he with disdain  
Views spatter'd passengers all drench'd in rain;  
With mud fill'd high, the rumbling cart draws near,  
Now rule thy prancing steeds, lac'd charioteer!  
The dust-man lashes on with spiteful rage,  
His ponderous spokes thy painted wheel engage,  
Crush'd is thy pride, down falls the shrieking beau,  
The slabby pavement crystal fragments strow,  
Black floods of mire the embroider'd coat disgrace,  
And mud enwraps the honours of his face.  
So when dread Jove the son of Phoebus hurl'd,  
Scar'd with dark thunder, to the nether world;  
The headstrong coursers tore the silver reins,  
And the sun's beamy ruin gilds the plains.

If the pale walker pant with weakening ill,  
His sickly hand is stor'd with friendly bills;  
From hence he learns the seventh-born doctor's fame,  
From hence he learns the cheapest tailor's name.  
Shall the large mutton smoke upon your boards  
Such, Newgate's copious market best affords.  
Wouldst thou with mighty beef augment thy meal?  
Seek Leaden-hal; St. James's sends thee veal;  
Thames-street gives cheeses; Covent-garden fruits;  
Moor-field old books; and Monmouth-street old suits.  
Hence mayst thou well supply the wants of life  
Support thy family, and clothe thy wife.  
Volumes on shelter'd stalls expanded lie,  
And various science lures the learned eye;  
The bending shelves with ponderous scholiasts groan,  
And deep divines to modern shops unknown:  
Here, like the bee, that on industrious wing  
Collects the various odours of the spring,  
Walkers, at leisure, learning's flowers may spoil,  
Nor watch the wasting of the midnight oil,  
May morals snatch from Plutarch's tatter'd page,  
A mildew'd Bacon, or Stagyra's sage.  
Here sauntering 'prentices o'er Otway weep,  
O'er Congreve smile, or over D  
sleep;  
Pleas'd sempstresses the Lock's fam'd Rape unfold,  
And Squirts read Garth, 'till apozems grow cold.

O Lintot, let my labours obvious lie,  
Rang'd on thy stall, for every curious eye;  
So shall the poor these precepts gratis know,  
And to my verse their future safeties owe.  
What walker shall his mean ambition fix  
On the false lustre of a coach and six?  
Let the vain virgin, lur'd by glaring show,  
Sigh for the liveries of the embroider'd beau.  
See yon bright chariot on its braces swing,  
With Flanders' mares, and on an arched spring!  
That wretch to gain an equipage and place,  
Betray'd his sister to a lewd embrace.  
This coach that with the blazon'd 'scutcheon glows,  
Vain of his unknown race, the coxcomb shows.  
Here the brib'd lawyer, sunk in velvet, sleeps;  
The starving orphan, as he passes, weeps;  
There flames a fool, begirt with tinsell'd slaves,  
Who wastes the wealth of a whole race of knaves.  
That other, with a clustering train behind,  
Owes his new honours to a sordid mind.  
This next in court fidelity excels,  
The public rifles, and his country sells.  
May the proud chariot never be my fate,  
If purchas'd at so mean, so dear a rate;  
O rather give me sweet content on foot,  
Wrapt in my virtue, and a good Surtout!

John Gay

## Trivia ; or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London : Book III

Of Walking the Streets by Night.

O Trivia, goddess, leave these low abodes,  
And traverse o'er the wide ethereal roads,  
Celestial queen, put on thy robes of light,  
Now Cynthia nam'd, fair regent of the night.  
At sight of thee the villain sheaths his sword,  
Nor scales the wall, to steal the wealthy hoard.  
O may thy silver lamp from heaven's high bower  
Direct my footsteps in the midnight hour!  
When night first bids the twinkling stars appear,  
Or with her cloudy vest enwraps the air,  
Then swarms the busy street; with caution tread  
Where the shop-windows falling threat thy head;  
Now labourers home return, and join their strength  
To bear the tottering plank, or ladder's length;  
Still fix thy eyes intent upon the throng,  
And as the passes open, wind along.  
Where the fair columns of St. Clement stand,  
Whose straighten'd bounds encroach upon the Strand  
Where the low pent-house bows the walker's head,  
And the rough pavement wounds the yielding tread;  
Where not a post protects the narrow space,  
And strung in twines, combs dangle in thy face;  
Summon at once thy courage, rouse thy care,  
Stand firm, look back, be resolute, beware,  
Forth issuing from steep lanes, the collier's steeds  
Drag the black load; another cart succeeds,  
Team follows team, crowds heap'd on crowds appear,  
And wait impatient, 'till the road grow clear.  
Now all the pavement sounds with trampling feet,  
And the mixt hurry barricades the street;  
Entangled here, the waggon's lengthen'd team  
Cracks the tough harness; here a ponderous beam  
Lies overturn'd athwart; for slaughter fed  
Here lowing bullocks raise their horned head.  
Now oaths grow loud, with coaches coaches jar,  
And the smart blow provokes the sturdy war;  
From the high box they whirl the thong around,  
And with the twining lash their shins resound;  
Their rage ferments, more dangerous wounds they try,  
And the blood gushes down their painful eye,  
And now on foot the frowning warriors light,  
And with their ponderous fists renew the fight;  
Blow after blow, the cheeks are smear'd with blood,  
Till down they fall, and grappling roll in mud.  
So when two boars, in wild Ytene bred,  
Or on Westphalia's fattening chestnuts fed,  
Gnash their sharp tusks, and rous'd with equal fire,  
Dispute the reign of some luxurious mire;  
In the black flood they wallow o'er and o'er,  
'Till their arm'd jaws distil with foam and gore.

Where the mob gathers, swiftly shoot along,  
Nor idly mingle in the noisy throng.  
Lur'd by the silver hilt, amid the swarm,  
The subtle artist will thy side disarm.  
Nor is the flaxen wig with safety worn:  
High on the shoulder, in a basket borne,  
Lurks the sly boy; whose hand, to rapine bred,  
Plucks off the curling honours of thy head.  
Here dives the skulking thief, with practis'd slight,  
And unfelt fingers make thy pocket light.  
Where's now thy watch, with all its trinkets, flown;  
And thy late snuff-box is no more thy own.  
But lo! his bolder thefts some tradesman spies,  
Swift from his prey the scudding lurcher flies;  
Dextrous he 'scapes the coach with nimble bounds,  
Whilst every honest tongue 'stop thief' resounds.  
So speeds the wily fox, alarm'd by fear,  
Who lately filch'd the turkey's callow care;  
Hounds following hounds, grow louder as he flies,  
And injur'd tenants join the hunter's cries.  
Breathless he stumbling falls: ill-fated boy!  
Why did not honest work thy youth employ?  
Seiz'd by rough hands, he's dragg'd amid the rout,  
And stretch'd beneath the pump's incessant spout:  
Or plung'd in miry ponds, he gasping lies,  
Mud choaks his mouth, and plasters o'er his eyes.  
Let not the ballad-singer's shrilling strain  
Amid the swarm thy listening ear detain:  
Guard well thy pocket; for these Sirens stand,  
To aid the labours of the diving hand;  
Confederate in the cheat, they draw the throng,  
And cambric handkerchiefs reward the song.  
But soon as coach or cart drives rattling on,  
The rabble part, in shoals they backward run.  
So Jove's loud bolts the mingled war divide,  
And Greece and Troy retreat on either side.  
If the rude throng pour on with furious pace,  
And hap to break thee from a friend's embrace,  
Stop short; nor struggle through the crowd in vain,  
But watch with careful eye the passing train.  
Yet I (perhaps too fond) if chance the tide  
Tumultuous, bear my partner from my side,  
Impatient venture back; despising harm,  
I force my passage where the thickest swarm.  
Thus his lost bride the Trojan sought in vain  
Thro' night, and arms, and flames, and hills of slain  
Thus Nisus wandere'd o'er the pathless grove,  
To find the brave companion of his love,  
The pathless grove in vain he wanders o'er:  
Euryalus, alas! is now no more.  
That walker who, regardless of his pace,  
Turns oft to pore upon the damsel's face,

From side to side by rustling elbows tost,  
Shall strike his aching breast against the post;  
Or water dash'd from fishy stalls shall stain  
His hapless coat with spirits of scaly rain.  
But if unwarily he chance to stray,  
Where twirling turnstiles intercept the way,  
The thwarting passenger shall force them round,  
And beat the wretch half breathless to the ground.  
Let constant vigilance thy footsteps guide,  
And wary circumspection guard thy side;  
Then shalt thou walk unharm'd the dangerous night,  
Nor need the officious link-boy's smoky light.  
Thou never wilt attempt to cross the road,  
Where ale-house benches rest the porter's load,  
Grievous to heedless shins; no barrow's wheel,  
That bruises oft the truant school-boy's heel,  
Behind thee rolling, with insidious pace,  
Shall mark thy stocking with a miry trace.  
Let not thy vent'rous steps approach too nigh,  
Where gaping wide, low steepy cellars lie;  
Should thy shoe wrench aside, down, down you fall,  
And overturn the scolding huckster's stall,  
The scolding huckster shall not o'er thee moan,  
But pence exact for nuts and pears o'erthrown.  
Though you through cleaner alleys wind by day,  
To shun the hurries of the public way,  
Yet ne'er to those dark paths by night retire;  
Mind only safety and contemn the mire.  
Then no impervious courts thy haste detain,  
Nor sneering ale-wives bid thee turn again,  
Where Lincoln's-Inn, wide space, is rail'd around,  
Cross not with vent'rous steps, there oft is found  
The lurking thief, who while the day-light shone,  
Made the walls echo with his begging tone:  
That crutch which late compassion mov'd shall wound  
Thy bleeding head, and fell thee to the ground.  
Though thou art tempted by the link-man's call,  
Yet trust him not along the lonely wall;  
In the midway he'll quench the flaming brand,  
And share the booty with the pilfering band.  
Still keep the public streets, where oily rays  
Shot from the crystal lamp, o'erspread the ways.  
Happy Augusta! law-defended town!  
Here no dark lanthorns shade the villain's frown;  
No Spanish jealousies thy lanes infest,  
Nor Roman vengeance stabs the unwary breast;  
Here tyranny ne'er lifts her purple hand,  
But liberty and justice guard the land;  
No bravos here profess the bloody trade,  
Nor is the church the murderer's refuge made.  
Let not the chairman with assuming stride  
Press near the wall, and rudely thrust thy side;

The laws have set him bounds; his service feet  
 Should ne'er encroach where posts defend the street.  
 Yet who the footman's arrogance can quell  
 Whose flambeau gilds the sashes of Pell-mell,  
 When in long rank a train of torches flame,  
 To light the midnight visits of the dame?  
 Others, perhaps, by happier guidance led,  
 May where the chairmen rests with safety tread;  
 Whene'er I pass, their poles unseen below,  
 Make my knee tremble with the jarring blow.  
 If wheels bar up the road where streets are crost,  
 With gentle words the coachman's ear accost;  
 He ne'er the threat, or harsh command obeys,  
 But with contempt the spatter'd shoe surveys.  
 Now man with utmost fortitude thy soul,  
 To cross the way where carts and coaches roll;  
 Yet do not in thy hardy skill confide,  
 Nor rashly risk the kennel's spacious stride;  
 Stay till afar the distant wheel you hear,  
 Like dying thunder in the breaking air;  
 Thy foot will slide upon the miry stone,  
 And passing coaches crush thy tortur'd bone,  
 Or wheels enclose the road; on either hand  
 Pent round with perils, in the midst you stand,  
 And call for aid in vain; the coachman swears,  
 And car-men drive, unmindful of thy prayers.  
 Where wilt thou turn? ah! whither wilt thou fly?  
 On every side the pressing spokes are nigh.  
 So sailors, while Charybdis' gulph they shun,  
 Amaz'd, on Scylla's craggy dangers run.  
 Be sure observe where brown Ostrea stands,  
 Who boasts her shelly ware from Walfleet sands;  
 There mayst thou pass, with safe unmiry feet,  
 Where the rail'd pavement leads athwart the street  
 If where Fleet-ditch with muddy current flows,  
 You chance to roam; where oyster tubs in rows  
 Are rang'd beside the posts; here stay thy haste  
 And with the savoury fish indulge thy taste:  
 The damsel's knife the gaping shell commands,  
 While the salt liquor streams between her hands.  
 The man had sure a palate cover'd o'er  
 With brass or steel, that on the rocky shore  
 First broke the oozy oyster's pearly coat,  
 And risk'd the living morsel down his throat.  
 What will not luxury taste? earth, sea, and air  
 Blood stuff'd in skins in British Christians food,  
 And France robs marshes of the croaking brood;  
 Spongy morells in strong ragousts are found,  
 And in the soup the slimy snail is drown'd.  
 When from high spouts the dashing torrents fall,  
 Ever be watchful to maintain the wall;  
 For should'st thou quit thy ground, the rushing throng

Will with impetuous fury drive along;  
 All press to gain those honours thou hast lost,  
 And rudely shove thee far without the post.  
 Then to retrieve the shed you strive in vain,  
 Draggled all o'er, and soak'd in floods of rain.  
 Yet rather bear the shower, and toils of mud,  
 Than in the doubtful quarrel risk thy blood.  
 O think on OEdipus' detested state,  
 And by his woes be warn'd to shun his fate.  
 Where three roads join'd he met his sire unknown;  
 (Unhappy sire, but more unhappy son!)  
 Each claim'd the way, their swords the strife decide,  
 The hoary monarch fell, he groan'd, and died!  
 Hence sprung the fatal plague that thinn'd thy reign,  
 Thy cursed incest! and thy children slain!  
 Hence wert thou doom'd in endless night to stray,  
 Thro' Theban streets, and cheerless grope thy way.  
 Contemplate, mortal, on thy fleeting years;  
 See, with black train the funeral pomp appears!  
 Whether some heir attends in sable state,  
 And mourns with outward grief a parent's fate;  
 Or the fair virgin, nipt in beauty's bloom,  
 A crowd of lovers follow to her tomb.  
 Why is the hearse with scutcheon blazon'd round,  
 And with the nodding plume of ostrich crown'd?  
 No! the dead know it not, nor profit gain;  
 It only serves to prove the living vain.  
 How short is life! how frail is human trust!  
 Is all this pomp for laying dust to dust!  
 Where the nail'd hoop defends the painted stall,  
 Brush not thy sweeping skirt too near the wall;  
 Thy heedless sleeve will drink the colour'd oil,  
 And spot indelible thy pocket soil.  
 Has not wise nature strung the legs and feet  
 With firmest nerves, design'd to walk the street?  
 Has she not given us hands to grope aright,  
 Amidst the frequent dangers of the night?  
 And think'st thou not the double nostril meant,  
 To warn from oily woes by previous scent?  
 Who can the various city-frauds recite,  
 With all the petty rapines of the night?  
 Who now the guinea-dropper's bait regards,  
 Trick'd by the sharper's dice, or juggler's cards!  
 Why should I warn thee ne'er to join the fray,  
 Where the sham quarrel interrupts the way?  
 Lives there in these our days so soft a clown,  
 Brav'd by the bully's oaths or threatening frown;  
 I need not strict enjoin the pocket's care,  
 When from the crowded pay thou lead'st the fair?  
 Who has not here, or watch, or snuff-box lost,  
 Or handkerchiefs that India's shuttle boast?  
 O! may thy virtue guard thee through the roads

Of Drury's mazy courts, and dark abodes.  
 The harlots' guileful paths, who nightly stand,  
 Where Katharine-street descends into the Strand.  
 Say, vagrant muse, their wiles and subtile arts,  
 To lure the strangers' unsuspecting hearts:  
 So shall our youth on healthful sinews tread,  
 And city cheeks grow warm with rural red.  
 'Tis she who nightly strolls with sauntering pace,  
 No stubborn stays her yielding shape embrace;  
 Beneath the lamp her tawdry ribbons glare,  
 The new-scour'd manteau, and the slattern air;  
 High-draggled petticoats her travels show,  
 And hollow cheeks with artful blushes glow;  
 With flattering sounds she soothes the credulous ear  
 My noble captain! charmer! love! my dear!  
 In riding-hood near tavern-doors she plies,  
 Or muffled pinner's hide her livid eyes.  
 With empty bandbox she delights to range,  
 And feigns a distant errand from the 'Chance;  
 Nay, she will oft the Quaker's hood profane,  
 And trudge demure the rounds of Drury-land.  
 She darts from sarsnet ambush wily leers,  
 Twitches thy sleeve, or with familiar airs  
 Her fan will pat thy cheek; these snares disdain,  
 Nor gaze behind thee when she turns again.  
 I knew a yeoman, who for thirst or gain,  
 To the great city drove from Devon's plain  
 His numerous lowing herd; his hers he sold,  
 And his deep leathern pocket bagg'd with gold;  
 Drawn by a fraudulent nymph, he gazed, and sigh'd;  
 Unmindful of his home, and distant bride,  
 She leads the willing victim to his doom,  
 Through winding alleys to her cobweb room,  
 Thence thro' the street he reels, from post to post,  
 Valiant with wine, nor knows his treasures lost.  
 The vagrant wretch the assembled watchmen spies,  
 He waves his hanger, and their poles defies;  
 Deep in the round-house pent all night he snores,  
 And the next morning vain his fate deplores.  
 Ah hapless swain, unus'd to pains and ills!  
 Canst thou forego roast-beef for nauseous pills?  
 How wilt thou lift to heaven thy eyes and hands,  
 When the long scroll the surgeon's fees demands!  
 Or else (ye gods avert that worst disgrace)  
 Thy ruin'd nose falls level with thy face,  
 Then shall thy wife thy loathsome kiss disdain,  
 And wholesome neighbours from thy mug refrain.  
 Yet there are watchmen who with friendly light  
 Will teach thy reeling steps to tread aright;  
 For sixpence will support thy helpless arm,  
 And home conduct thee, safe from nightly harm;  
 But if they shake their lanthorns from afar

To call their brethren confederate war,  
 When rakes resist their power; if hapless you  
 Should chance to wander with the scow'ring crew;  
 Though fortune lead thee captive, ne'er despair,  
 But seek the constable's considerate ear;  
 He will reverse the watchman's harsh decree,  
 Mov'd by the rhetoric of a silver fee.  
 Thus would you gain some favourite courtier's word:  
 Fee not the petty clerks, but bribe my lord.  
 Now is the time that rakes their revels keep:  
 Kindlers of riot, enemies of sleep.  
 His scatter'd pence the flying Nicker flings,  
 And with the copper shower the casement rings.  
 Who has not heard the Scowrer's midnight fame?  
 Who has not trembled at the Mohock's name?  
 Was there a watchman took his hourly rounds,  
 Safe from their blows, or new-invented wounds?  
 I pass their desperate deeds, and mischiefs done  
 Where from Snow-hill black and steepy torrents run;  
 How matrons hoop'd within the hogshead's womb,  
 Were tumbled furious thence, the rolling tomb  
 O'er the stones thunders, bounds from side to side,  
 So Regulus to save his country died.  
 Where a dim gleam the paly lanthorn throws  
 O'er the mid pavement, heapy rubbish grows;  
 Or arching vaults their gaping jaws extend,  
 Or the dark caves to common-shores descend.  
 Oft by the winds extinct the signal lies,  
 Or smother'd in the glimmering socket dies,  
 Ere night has half-roll'd round her ebon throne;  
 In the wide gulph the shatter'd coach o'erthrown  
 Sinks with the snorting steeds: the reins are broke,  
 And from the crackling axle flies the spoke.  
 So when fan'd Eddystone's far-shooting ray,  
 That led the sailor thro' the stormy way,  
 Was from its rocky roots by billows torn,  
 And the high turret in the whirlwind borne,  
 Fleets bulg'd their sides against the craggy land,  
 And pitchy ruins blacken'd all the strand.  
 Who then thro' night would hire the harness'd steed,  
 And who would choose the rattling wheel for speed?  
 But hark! distress with screaming voice draws nigher,  
 And wakes the slumbering street with cries of fire.  
 At first a glowing red enwraps the skies,  
 And borne by winds the scattering sparks arise;  
 From beam to beam the fierce contagion spreads;  
 The spiry flames now lift aloft their heads,  
 Through the burst sash a blazing deluge pours,  
 And splitting tiles descend in rattling showers.  
 Now with thick crowds the enlighten'd pavement swarms,  
 The fire-man sweats beneath his crooked arms,  
 A leathern cask his vent'rous head defends,

Boldly he climbs where thickest smoke ascends;  
 Mov'd by the mother's streaming eyes and prayers,  
 The helpless infant through the flame he bears,  
 With no less virtue, than thro' hostile fire  
 The Dardan hero bore his aged sire.  
 See forceful engines spout their levell'd streams,  
 To quench the blaze that runs along the beams;  
 The grappling hook plucks rafters from the walls,  
 And heaps on heaps the smocky ruin falls.  
 Blown by strong winds the fiery tempest roars,  
 Bears down new walls, and pours along the floors;  
 The heavens are all a-blaze, the face of night  
 Is cover'd with a sanguine dreadful light:  
 'Twas such a light involv'd thy tower, O Rome,  
 The dire presage of mighty Caesar's doom,  
 When the sun veil'd in rust his mourning head,  
 And frightful prodigies the skies o'erspread.  
 Hark! the drum thunders! far, ye crowds, retire  
 Behold! the ready match is tipt with fire,  
 The nitrous store is laid, the smutty train  
 With running blaze awakes the barrel'd grain;  
 Flames sudden wrap the walls; with sullen sound  
 The shatter'd pile sinks on the smoky ground.  
 So when the year shall have revolv'd the date,  
 The inevitable hour of Naples' fate,  
 Her sapp'd foundations shall with thunder shake,  
 And heave and toss upon the sulphurous lake  
 Earth's womb at once the fiery flood shall rend,  
 And in the abyss her plunging towers descend.  
 Consider reader, what fatigues I've known,  
 The toils, the perils of the wintry town;  
 What riots seen, what bustling crowds I bor'd,  
 How oft I cross'd where carts and coaches roar'd;  
 Yet shall I bless my labours, if mankind  
 Their future safety from my dangers find.  
 Thus the bold traveller, (inur'd to toil,  
 Whose steps have printed Asia's desert soil,  
 The barbarous Arabs haunt; or shivering crost  
 Dark Greenland's mountains of eternal frost;  
 Whom Providence in length of years restores  
 To the wish'd harbour of his native shores);  
 Sets forth his journals to the public view,  
 To caution, by his woes, the wandering crew.  
 And now complete my generous labours lie,  
 Finish'd, and ripe for Immortality.  
 Death shall entomb in dust this mouldering frame,  
 But never reach the eternal part, my fame.  
 When W  
 and G  
 , mighty names, are dead;  
 Or but at Chelsea under custards read:  
 When critics crazy bandboxes repair,

And tragedies, turn'd rockets, bounce in air:  
High rais'd on Fleet-street posts, consign'd to fame,  
This work shall shine, and walkers bless my name.

John Gay

## Trivia; or the Art of Walking the Streets of London: Book I.

Of the Implements for Walking the Streets,  
and Signs of the Weather.

Through winter streets to steer your courses aright,  
How to walk clean by day, and safe by night,  
How jostling crowds, with prudence to decline,  
When to assert the wall, and when resign,  
I sing: thou, Trivia, goddess, aid my song,  
Through spacious streets conduct thy bard along;  
By thee transported, I securely stray  
Where winding alleys lead the doubtful way,  
The silent court, and opening square explore,  
And long perplexing lanes untrod before.  
To pave thy realm, and smooth the broken ways,  
Earth from her womb a flinty tribute pays;  
For thee, the sturdy paver thumps the ground,  
Whilst every stroke his labouring lungs resound;  
For thee the scavenger bids kennels glide  
Within their bounds, and heaps of dirt subside,  
My youthful bosom burns with thirst of fame.  
From the great theme to build a glorious name,  
And bind my temples with a civic crown:  
But more, my country's love demands the lays,  
My country's be the profit, mine the praise.  
When the black youth at chosen stands rejoice,  
And 'clean your shoes' resounds from every voice;  
When late their miry sides stage-coaches show,  
And their stiff horses through the town move slow;  
When all the Mall in leafy ruin lies,  
And damsels first renew their oyster-cries:  
Then let the prudent walker shoes provide,  
Not of the Spanish or Morocco hide;  
The wooden heel may raise the dancer's bound,  
And with the scallop'd top his step be crown'd:  
Let firm, well-hammer'd soles protect thy feet  
Through freezing snows, and rains, and soaking sleet.  
Should the big last extend the shoe too wide,  
Each stone will wrench the unwary step aside:  
The sudden turn may stretch the swelling vein,  
Thy cracking joint unhinge, or ankle sprain;  
And then too short the modish shoes are worn,  
You'll judge the seasons by your shooting corn.  
Nor should it prove thy less important care,  
To choose a proper coat for winter's wear.  
Now in thy trunk thy D'oily habit fold,  
The silken drugget ill can fence the cold;  
The frieze's spongy nap is soak'd with rain,  
And showers soon drench the camlet's cockled grain,  
True Witney broad-cloth with its shag unshorn,  
Unpierc'd is in the lasting tempest worn;  
Be this the horseman's fence; for who would wear  
Amid the town the spoils of Russia's bear!

Within the Roquelaure's clasp thy hands are pent,  
Hands, that stretch'd forth invading harms prevent.  
Let the loop'd Bavaroy the fop embrace,  
Or his deep cloak be spatter'd o'er with lace,  
That garment best the winter's rage defends,  
Whose ample form without one plait depends;  
By various names in various counties known,  
Yet held in all the true surtout alone:  
Be thine of Kersey firm, though small the cost,  
Then brave unwet the rain, unchill'd the frost.  
If the strong cane support thy walking hand,  
Chairmen no longer shall the wall command;  
Even sturdy car-men shall thy nod obey,  
And rattling coaches stop to make the way;  
This shall direct thy cautious tread aright,  
Though not one glaring lamp enliven night.

Let beaux their canes with amber tipt produce,  
Be theirs for empty show but thine for use.  
In gilded chariots while they loll at east,  
And lazily ensure a life's disease;  
While softer chairs the tawdry load convey  
To court, to White's, assemblies, or the play;  
Rosy-complexion'd health thy steps attends,  
And exercise thy lasting youth defends.  
Imprudent men heaven's choicest gifts profane,  
Thus some beneath their arm support the cane;  
The dirty point oft checks the careless pace,  
And miry spots the clean cravat disgrace:  
O! may I never such misfortune meet,  
May no such vicious walkers crowd the street,  
May Providence o'ershade me with her wings,  
While the bold muse experienc'd dangers sings.

Not that I wander from my native home,  
And (tempting perils) foreign cities roam.  
Let Paris be the theme of Gallia's muse,  
Where slavery treads the street in wooden shoes  
Nor do I rove in Belgia's frozen clime,  
And teach the clumsy boor to skate in rhyme,  
Where, if the warmer clouds in rain descend,  
No wiry ways industrious steps offend,  
The rushing flood from sloping pavements pours,  
And blackens the canals with dirty showers.  
Let others Naples' smoother streets rehearse,  
And with proud Roman structures grace their verse,  
Where frequent murders wake the night with groans,  
And blood in purple torrents dies the stones;  
Nor shall the muse through narrow Venice stray,  
Where gondolas their painted oars display.  
O happy streets, to rumbling wheels unknown,  
No carts, no coaches shake the floating town!

Thus was of old Britannia's city bless'd,  
Ere pride and luxury her sons possess'd:  
Coaches and chariots yet unfashion'd lay,  
Nor late-invented chairs perplex'd the way:  
Then the proud lady tipp'd along the town,  
And tuck'd up petticoats secur'd her gown,  
Her rosy cheek with distant visits glow'd,  
And exercise unartful charms bestow'd;  
But since in braded gold her foot is bound,  
And a long-trailing manteau sweeps the ground,  
Her shoe disdains the street; the lazy fair  
With narrow step affects a limping air.  
Now gaudy pride corrupts the lavish age,  
And the streets flame with glaring equipage;  
The tricking gamester insolently rides,  
With Loves and Graces on his chariot sides;  
In saucy state the griping broker sits,  
And laughs at honesty, and trudging wits:  
For you, O honest men, these useful lays  
The muse prepares; I seek no other praise.

When sleep is first disturb'd by morning cries;  
From sure prognostics learn to know the skies,  
Lest you of rheums and coughs at night complain;  
Surpris'd in dreary fogs, or driving rain.  
When suffocating mists obscure the morn,  
Let thy worst wig long us'd to storms, be worn;  
This knows the powder'd footman, and with care,  
Beneath his flapping hat secures his hair,  
Be thou, for every season, justly drest,  
Nor brave the piercing frost with open breast;  
And when the bursting clouds a deluge pour,  
Let thy surtout defend the drenching shower.  
The changing weather certain signs reveal,  
Ere winter sheds her snow, or frosts congeal,  
You'll see the coals in bright flame aspire,  
And sulphur tinge with blue the rising fire:  
Your tender shins the scorching heat decline,  
And at the dearth of coals the poor repine;  
Before her kitchen hearth, the nodding dame  
In flannel mantle wrapt, enjoys the flame  
Hovering; upon her feeble knees she bends,  
And all around the grateful warmth ascends.

Nor do less certain signs the town advise,  
Of milder weather, and serener skies.  
The ladies gaily dress'd, the Mall adorn  
With various dyes, and paint the sunny morn;  
The wanton fawns with frisking pleasure range,  
And chirping sparrows greet the welcome change:  
Not that their minds with greater skill are fraught,  
Endu'd by instinct, or by reason taught,

The seasons operate on every breast,  
'Tis hence that fawns are brisk, and ladies drest.  
When on his box the nodding coachman snores,  
And dreams of fancy'd fares; when tavern doors  
The chairman idly crowd; then ne'er refuse  
To trust thy busy steps in thinner shoes.  
But when the swinging signs your ears offend  
With creaking noise, then rainy floods impend;  
Soon shall the kennels swell with rapid streams,  
And rush in muddy torrents to the Thames.  
The bookseller, whose shop's an open square,  
Foresees the tempest, and with early care  
Of learning strips the rail; the rowing crew  
To tempt a fare, clothe all their tilts in blue:  
On hosier's poles depending stockings ty'd,  
Flag with the slacken'd gale, from side to side:  
Church-monuments foretell the changing air,  
Then Niobe dissolves into a tear,  
And sweats with secret grief; you'll hear the sounds,  
Of whistling winds, ere kennels break their bounds;  
Ungrateful odours common-shores diffuse,  
And dropping vaults distil unwholesome dews,  
Ere the tiles rattle with the smoking shower,  
And spouts on heedless men their torrents pour.

All superstition from thy breast repel.  
Let credulous boys, and prattling nurses tell,  
How if the festival of Paul be clear,  
Plenty from liberal horn shall strow the year;  
When the dark skies dissolve in snow or rain,  
The labouring hind shall yoke the steer in vain;  
But if threat'ning winds in tempests roar,  
Then war shall bathe her wasteful sword in gore.  
How, if on Swithin's feast the welkin lowers,  
And every penthouse streams with hasty showers,  
Twice twenty days shall clouds their fleeces drain,  
And wash the pavements with incessant rain;  
Let not such vulgar tales debase thy mind;  
Nor Paul nor Swithin rule the clouds and wind.  
If you the precepts of the muse despise,  
And slight the faithful warning of the skies,  
Others you'll see, when all the town's afloat,  
Wrapt in the embraces of a Kersey coat,  
Or double-button'd frieze: their guarded feet  
Defy the muddy dangers of the street,  
While you with hat unloop'd, the fury dread  
Of spouts high streaming, and with cautious tread  
Shun every dashing pool; or idly stop,  
To seek the kind protection of a shop.  
But business summons; now with hasty scud  
You jostle for the wall: the spatter'd mud  
Hides all thy hose behind; in vain you scour,

The wig, alas! uncurl'd, admits the shower.  
So fierce, Alecto's snaky tresses fell,  
When Orpheus charm'd the rigorous powers of hell,  
Or thus hung Glaucus' beard, with briny dew  
Clotted and straight, when first his amorous view  
Surpris'd the bathing fair; the frightened maid  
Now stands a rock, transform'd by Circe's aid.

Good housewives all the winter's rage despise,  
Defended by the riding-hood's disguise:  
Or underneath the umbrella's oily shade,  
Safe thro' the wet on clinking pattens tread.  
Let Persian dames the umbrella's ribs display,  
To guard their beauties from the sunny ray;  
Or sweating slaves support the shady load,  
When eastern monarchs show their state abroad  
Britain in winter only knows its aid,  
To guard from chilly showers the walking maid.  
But O! forget not, muse, the patten's praise,  
That female implement shall grace thy lays;  
Say from what art divine the invention came,  
And from its origin deduc'd its name,  
Where Lincoln wide extends her fenny soil,  
A goodly yeoman liv'd, grown white with toil:  
One only daughter bless'd his nuptial bed,  
Who from her infant hand the poultry fed:  
Martha (her careful mother's name) she bore,  
But now her careful mother was no more.  
Whilst on her father's knee the damsel play'd,  
Patty he fondly call'd the smiling maid;  
As years increas'd, her ruddy beauty grew,  
And Patty's fame o'er all the village flew.

Soon as the gray-ey'd morning streaks the skies,  
And in the doubtful day the woodcock flies,  
Her cleanly pail the pretty housewife bears,  
And singing to the distant field repairs:  
And when the plains with evening dews are spread  
The milky burden smokes upon her head,  
Deep, thro' a miry lane she picked her way,  
Above her ancle rose the chalky clay.  
Vulcan by chance the gloomy maiden spies,  
With innocence and beauty in her eyes,  
He saw, he lov'd; for yet he ne'er had known  
Sweet innocence and beauty meet in one.  
Ah Mulciber, recal thy nuptial vows,  
Think on the graces of thy Paphian spouse,  
Think how her eyes dart inexhausted charms,  
And canst thou leave her bed for Patty's arms?  
The Lemnian power forsakes the realms above,  
His bosom glowing with terrestrial love:  
Far in the lane a lonely hut he found,

No tenant ventur'd on the unwholesome ground.  
Here smokes his forge, he bares his sinewy arm,  
And early strokes the sounding anvil warm;  
Around his shop the steely sparkles flew,  
As for the steed he shap'd the bending shoe.

When blue ey'd Patty near his window came,  
His anvil rests, his forge forgets to flame.  
To hear his soothing tales she feigns delays;  
What woman can resist the force of praise?  
At first she coyly every kiss withstood,  
And all her cheek was flush'd with modest blood:  
With headless nails he now surrounds her shoes,  
To save her steps from rains and piercing dews;  
She lik'd his soothing tales, his presents wore,  
And granted kisses, but would grant no more.  
Yet winter chill'd her feet, with cold she pines,  
And on her cheek the fading rose declines;  
No more her humid eyes their lustre boast,  
And in hoarse sounds her melting voice is lost.  
This Vulcan saw, and in his heavenly thought,  
A new machine mechanic fancy wrought,  
Above the mire her shelter'd steps to raise,  
And bare her safely through the wintry ways;  
Straight the new engine on the anvil glows,  
And the pale virgin on the patten rose.  
No more her lungs are shook with drooping rheums,  
And on her cheek reviving beauty blooms.  
The god obtain'd his suit; though flattery fail,  
Presents with female virtue must prevail.  
The patten now supports each frugal dame,  
Which from the blue-eyed Patty takes the name.

John Gay

## Trivia; or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London (excer

Thus far the Muse has trac'd in useful lays  
The proper implements for wintry ways;  
Has taught the walker, with judicious eyes,  
To read the various warnings of the skies.  
Now venture, Muse, from home to range the town,  
And for the public safety risk thy own.

For ease and for dispatch, the morning's best;  
No tides of passengers the street molest.  
You'll see a draggled damsel, here and there,  
From Billingsgate her fishy traffic bear;  
On doors the sallow milk-maid chinks her gains;  
Ah! how unlike the milk-maid of the plains!  
Before proud gates attending asses bray,  
Or arrogate with solemn pace the way;  
These grave physicians with their milky cheer,  
The love-sick maid and dwindling beau repair;  
Here rows of drummers stand in martial file,  
And with their vellum thunder shake the pile,  
To greet the new-made bride. Are sounds like these  
The proper prelude to a state of peace?  
Now industry awakes her busy sons,  
Full charg'd with news the breathless hawker runs:  
Shops open, coaches roll, carts shake the ground,  
And all the streets with passing cries resound.

If cloth'd in black, you tread the busy town  
Or if distinguish'd by the rev'rend gown,  
Three trades avoid; oft in the mingling press,  
The barber's apron soils the sable dress;  
Shun the perfumer's touch with cautious eye,  
Nor let the baker's step advance too nigh;  
Ye walkers too that youthful colours wear,  
Three sullying trades avoid with equal care;  
The little chimney-sweeper skulks along,  
And marks with sooty stains the heedless throng;  
When small-coal murmurs in the hoarser throat,  
From smutty dangers guard thy threaten'd coat:  
The dust-man's cart offends thy clothes and eyes,  
When through the street a cloud of ashes flies;  
But whether black or lighter dyes are worn,  
The chandler's basket, on his shoulder borne,  
With tallow spots thy coat; resign the way,  
To shun the surly butcher's greasy tray,  
Butcher's, whose hands are dy'd with blood's foul stain,  
And always foremost in the hangman's train.

Let due civilities be strictly paid.  
The wall surrender to the hooded maid;  
Nor let thy sturdy elbow's hasty rage  
Jostle the feeble steps of trembling age;  
And when the porter bends beneath his load,

And pants for breath, clear thou the crowded road.  
But, above all, the groping blind direct,  
And from the pressing throng the lame protect.  
You'll sometimes meet a fop, of nicest tread,  
Whose mantling peruke veils his empty head;  
At ev'ry step he dreads the wall to lose,  
And risks, to save a coach, his red-heel'd shoes;  
Him, like the miller, pass with caution by,  
Lest from his shoulder clouds of powder fly.  
But when the bully, with assuming pace,  
Cocks his broad hat, edg'd round with tarnish'd lace,  
Yield not the way; defy his strutting pride,  
And thrust him to the muddy kennel's side;  
He never turns again, nor dares oppose,  
But mutters coward curses as he goes.

If drawn by bus'ness to a street unknown,  
Let the sworn porter point thee through the town;  
Be sure observe the signs, for signs remain,  
Like faithful land-marks to the walking train.  
Seek not from prentices to learn the way,  
Those fabling boys will turn thy steps astray;  
Ask the grave tradesman to direct thee right,  
He ne'er deceives, but when he profits by 't.

Where fam'd St. Giles's ancient limits spread,  
An inrail'd column rears its lofty head,  
Here to sev'n streets sev'n dials count the day,  
And from each other catch the circling ray.  
Here oft the peasant, with enquiring face,  
Bewilder'd, trudges on from place to place;  
He dwells on ev'ry sign with stupid gaze,  
Enters the narrow alley's doubtful maze,  
Tries ev'ry winding court and street in vain,  
And doubles o'er his weary steps again.  
Thus hardy Theseus with intrepid feet,  
Travers'd the dang'rous labyrinth of Crete;  
But still the wand'ring passes forc'd his stay,  
Till Ariadne's clue unwinds the way.  
But do not thou, like that bold chief, confide  
Thy vent'rous footsteps to a female guide;  
She'll lead thee with delusive smiles along,  
Dive in thy fob, and drop thee in the throng.

When waggish boys the stunted besom ply  
To rid the slabby pavement, pass not by  
E'er thou hast held their hands; some heedless flirt  
Will over-spread thy calves with spatt'ring dirt.  
Where porters hogsheads roll from carts aslope,  
Or brewers down steep cellars stretch the rope,  
Where counted billets are by carmen tost,  
Stay thy rash steps, and walk without the post....

When rosemary, and bays, the poet's crown,  
Are bawl'd in frequent cries through all the town,  
Then judge the festival of Christmas near,  
Christmas, the joyous period of the year.  
Now with bright holly all your temples strow,  
With laurel green and sacred mistletoe.  
Now, heav'n-born Charity, thy blessings shed;  
Bid meagre Want uprear her sickly head:  
Bid shiv'ring limbs be warm; let plenty's bowl  
In humble roofs make glad the needy soul.  
See, see, the heav'n-born maid her blessings shed;  
Lo! meagre Want uprears her sickly head;  
Cloth'd are the naked, and the needy glad,  
While selfish Avarice alone is sad.

Proud coaches pass, regardless of the moan  
Of infant orphans, and the widow's groan;  
While Charity still moves the walker's mind,  
His lib'ral purse relieves the lame and blind.  
Judiciously thy half-pence are bestow'd,  
Where the laborious beggar sweeps the road.  
Whate'er you give, give ever at demand,  
Nor let old age long stretch his palsy'd hand.  
Those who give late are importun'd each day,  
And still are teas'd because they still delay.  
If e'er the miser durst his farthings spare,  
He thinly spreads them through the public square,  
Where, all beside the rail, rang'd beggars lie,  
And from each other catch the doleful cry;  
With heav'n, for two-pence, cheaply wipes his score,  
Lifts up his eyes, and hastes to beggar more.

Where the brass knocker, wrapt in flannel band,  
Forbids the thunder of the footman's hand;  
Th' upholder, rueful harbinger of death,  
Waits with impatience for the dying breath;  
As vulture, o'er a camp, with hov'ring flight,  
Snuff up the future carnage of the fight.  
Here canst thou pass, unmindful of a pray'r,  
That heav'n in mercy may thy brother spare?

John Gay