

Classic Poetry Series

Oliver Goldsmith

- 46 poems -

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Oliver Goldsmith (10 November 1730 – 4 April 1774)

Oliver Goldsmith was an Anglo-Irish writer and poet, who is best known for his novel *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), his pastoral poem *The Deserted Village* (1770), and his plays *The Good-Natur'd Man* (1768) and *She Stoops to Conquer* (1771, first performed in 1773). He also wrote *An History of the Earth and Animated Nature*. He is thought to have written the classic children's tale *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes*, the source of the phrase "goody two-shoes".

Goldsmith's birth date and year are not known with certainty. According to the Library of Congress authority file, he told a biographer that he was born on 29 November 1731, or perhaps in 1730. Other sources have indicated 10 November, on any year from 1727 to 1731. 10 November 1730 is now the most commonly accepted birth date.

The location of his birthplace is also uncertain. He was born either in the townland of Pallas, near Ballymahon, County Longford, Ireland, where his father was the Anglican curate of the parish of Forgney, or at the residence of his maternal grandparents, at the Smith Hill House in the diocese of Elphin, County Roscommon where his grandfather Oliver Jones was a clergyman and master of the Elphin diocesan school. When he was two years old, Goldsmith's father was appointed the rector of the parish of "Kilkenny West" in County Westmeath. The family moved to the parsonage at Lissoy, between Athlone and Ballymahon, and continued to live there until his father's death in 1747.

In 1744 Goldsmith went up to Trinity College, Dublin. His tutor was Theaker Wilder. Neglecting his studies in theology and law, he fell to the bottom of his class. He was graduated in 1749 as a Bachelor of Arts, but without the discipline or distinction that might have gained him entry to a profession in the church or the law; his education seemed to have given him mainly a taste for fine clothes, playing cards, singing Irish airs and playing the flute. He lived for a short time with his mother, tried various professions without success, studied medicine desultorily at the University of Edinburgh and the University of Leiden, and set out on a walking tour of Flanders, France, Switzerland and Northern Italy, living by his wits (busking with his flute).

He settled in London in 1756, where he briefly held various jobs, including an apothecary's assistant and an usher of a school. Perennially in debt and addicted to gambling, Goldsmith produced a massive output as a hack writer for the publishers of London, but his few painstaking works earned him the company of Samuel Johnson, with whom he was a founding member of "The Club". The combination of his literary work and his dissolute lifestyle led Horace Walpole to give him the epithet inspired idiot. During this period he

used the pseudonym "James Willington" (the name of a fellow student at Trinity) to publish his 1758 translation of the autobiography of the Huguenot Jean Marteilhe.

Goldsmith was described by contemporaries as prone to envy, a congenial but impetuous and disorganised personality who once planned to emigrate to America but failed because he missed his ship. His premature death in 1774 may have been partly due to his own misdiagnosis of his kidney infection. Goldsmith was buried in Temple Church. The inscription reads; "HERE LIES/OLIVER GOLDSMITH". There is a monument to him in the center of Ballymahon, also in Westminster Abbey with an epitaph written by Samuel Johnson

Works:

The Citizen of the World

In 1760 Goldsmith began to publish a series of letters in the Public Ledger under the title The Citizen of the World. Purportedly written by a Chinese traveler in England named Lien Chi, they used this fictional outsider's perspective to comment ironically and at times moralistically on British society and manners. It was inspired by the earlier essay series Persian Letters by Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu.

The Hermit

Goldsmith wrote this romantic ballad of precisely 160 lines in 1765. The hero and heroine are Edwin, a youth without wealth or power, and Angelina, the daughter of a lord "beside the Tyne." Angelina spurns many wooers, but refuses to make plain her love for young Edwin. "Quite dejected with my scorn," Edwin disappears and becomes a hermit. One day, Angelina turns up at his cell in boy's clothes and, not recognizing him, tells him her story. Edwin then reveals his true identity, and the lovers never part again. The poem is notable for its interesting portrayal of a hermit, who is fond of the natural world and his wilderness solitude but maintains a gentle, sympathetic demeanor toward other people. In keeping with eremitical tradition, however, Edwin the Hermit claims to "spurn the [opposite] sex." This poem appears under the title of "A Ballad" sung by the character of Mr. Burchell in Chapter 8 of Goldsmith's novel, The Vicar of Wakefield

The Deserted Village

In the 1760s Goldsmith witnessed the demolition of an ancient village and destruction of its farms to clear land to become a wealthy man's garden. His poem The Deserted Village, published in 1770, expresses a fear that the destruction of villages and the conversion of land from productive agriculture to ornamental landscape gardens would ruin the peasantry.

The Deserted Village gave the demolished village the pseudonym "Sweet Auburn" and Goldsmith did not disclose the real village on which he based it. However, he did indicate it was about 50 miles (80 km) from London and it is widely believed to have been Nuneham Courtenay in Oxfordshire, which Simon Harcourt, 1st Earl Harcourt had demolished and moved 1 mile (1.6 km) away to make the park for his newly built Nuneham House.

In Ireland the village described in the poem is thought to be Glasson village, nr Athlone. Signage around the village points out the association with Oliver Goldsmith. The village is also described as the "village of the roses" since in the poem Glasson appears as Sweet Auburn which locally means 'Roses'. Glasson was famous in the 1800s for its rose bloom and the local landlord, Robert Temple is said to have walked the village giving prizes for the best presented houses.

In popular culture, the poem's first line "Sweet Auburn, Loveliest village of the plain" is the basis for the term "Auburn Plainsman/Plainsmen" which is used to refer to an Auburn University student and is also the source for the name of the University student Newspaper, The Auburn Plainsman.

Other Works

The ironic poem, *An Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog* was published in 1766. Goldsmith is also thought to have written the classic children's tale *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes*.

A New Simile

IN THE MANNER OF SWIFT

LONG had I sought in vain to find
A likeness for the scribbling kind;
The modern scribbling kind, who write
In wit, and sense, and nature's spite:
Till reading, I forget what day on,
A chapter out of Tooke's Pantheon,
I think I met with something there,
To suit my purpose to a hair;
But let us not proceed too furious,
First please to turn to god Mercurius;
You'll find him pictur'd at full length
In book the second, page the tenth:
The stress of all my proofs on him I lay,
And now proceed we to our simile.

Imprimis, pray observe his hat,
Wings upon either side--mark that.
Well! what is it from thence we gather?
Why these denote a brain of feather.
A brain of feather! very right,
With wit that's flighty, learning light;
Such as to modern bard's decreed:
A just comparison,--proceed.

In the next place, his feet peruse,
Wings grow again from both his shoes;
Design'd, no doubt, their part to bear,
And waft his godship through the air;
And here my simile unites,
For in a modern poet's flights,
I'm sure it may be justly said,
His feet are useful as his head.

Lastly, vouchsafe t'observe his hand,
Filled with a snake-encircl'd wand;
By classic authors term'd caduceus,
And highly fam'd for several uses.
To wit--most wond'rously endu'd,
No poppy water half so good;
For let folks only get a touch,
Its soporific virtue's such,
Though ne'er so much awake before,
That quickly they begin to snore.
Add too, what certain writers tell,
With this he drives men's souls to hell.

Now to apply, begin we then;
His wand's a modern author's pen;
The serpents round about it twin'd
Denote him of the reptile kind;

Denote the rage with which he writes,
His frothy slaver, venom'd bites;
An equal semblance still to keep,
Alike too both conduce to sleep.
This diff'rence only, as the god
Drove souls to Tart'rus with his rod,
With his goosequill the scribbling elf,
Instead of others, damns himself.

And here my simile almost tript,
Yet grant a word by way of postscript.
Moreover, Merc'ry had a failing:
Well! what of that? out with it--stealing;
In which all modern bards agree,
Being each as great a thief as he:
But ev'n this deity's existence
Shall lend my simile assistance.
Our modern bards! why what a pox
Are they but senseless stones and blocks?

Oliver Goldsmith

A Sonnet

WEEPING, murmuring, complaining,
Lost to every gay delight;
MYRA, too sincere for feigning,
Fears th' approaching bridal night.

Yet, why impair thy bright perfection?
Or dim thy beauty with a tear?
Had MYRA followed my direction,
She long had wanted cause of fear.

Oliver Goldsmith

An Author's Bedchamber

DESCRIPTION OF AN AUTHOR'S BEDCHAMBER

WHERE the Red Lion flaring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's butt, and Parsons' black champagne,
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury-lane;
There in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The Muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug;
A window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly show'd the state in which he lay;
The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread;
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread:
The royal game of goose was there in view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The seasons, fram'd with listing, found a place,
And brave prince William show'd his lamp-black face:
The morn was cold, he views with keen desire
The rusty grate unconscious of a fire;
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scor'd,
And five crack'd teacups dress'd the chimney board;
A nightcap deck'd his brows instead of bay,
A cap by night--a stocking all the day!

Oliver Goldsmith

An Elegy On The Death Of A Mad Dog

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wondrous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran-
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad-
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wond'ring neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost its wits
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light
That showed the rogues they lied,-
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died!

Oliver Goldsmith

An Elegy On The Glory Of Her Sex, Mrs Mary Blaize

Good people all, with one accord
Lament for Madam Blaize,
Who never wanted a good word,—
From those who spoke her praise.

The needy seldom passed her door,
And always found her kind;
She freely lent to all the poor,—
Who left a pledge behind.

She strove the neighbourhood to please
With manners wondrous winning;
And never followed wicked ways,—
Unless when she was sinning.

At church, in silks and satins new,
With hoop of monstrous size,
She never slumbered in her pew,—
But when she shut her eyes.

Her love was sought, I do aver,
By twenty beaux and more;
The king himself has followed her,—
When she has walked before.

But now her wealth and finery fled,
Her hangers-on cut short all;
The doctors found, when she was dead,—
Her last disorder mortal.

Let us lament in sorrow sore,
For Kent Street well may say
That had she lived a twelvemonth more,—
She had not died today.

Oliver Goldsmith

An Epigram

ADDRESSED TO THE GENTLEMEN REFLECTED ON IN THE ROSCIAD,
A POEM, BY THE AUTHOR

Worried with debts and past all hopes of bail,
His pen he prostitutes t' avoid a gaol.
ROSCOM.

LET not the 'hungry' Bavius' angry stroke
Awake resentment, or your rage provoke;
But pitying his distress, let virtue shine,
And giving each your bounty, 'let him dine';
For thus retain'd, as learned counsel can,
Each case, however bad, he'll new japan;
And by a quick transition, plainly show
'Twas no defect of yours, but 'pocket low',
That caused his 'putrid kennel' to o'erflow.

Oliver Goldsmith

Description of an Author's Bedchamber

WHERE the Red Lion flaring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's butt, and Parsons' black champagne,
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury-lane;
There in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The Muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug;
A window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly show'd the state in which he lay;
The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread;
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread:
The royal game of goose was there in view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The seasons, fram'd with listing, found a place,
And brave prince William show'd his lamp-black face:
The morn was cold, he views with keen desire
The rusty grate unconscious of a fire;
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scor'd,
And five crack'd teacups dress'd the chimney board;
A nightcap deck'd his brows instead of bay,
A cap by night-a stocking all the day!

Oliver Goldsmith

Edwin and Angela, A Ballad

'Turn, gentle hermit of the dale,
And guide my lonely way,
To where yon taper cheers the vale
With hospitable ray.

'For here, forlorn and lost I tread,
With fainting steps and slow;
Where wilds immeasurably spread,
Seem length'ning as I go.'

'Forbear, my son,' the hermit cries,
'To tempt the dangerous gloom;
For yonder faithless phantom flies
To lure thee to thy doom.

'Here to the houseless child of want
My door is open still;
And though my portion is but scant,
I give it with good will.

'Then turn to-night, and freely share
Whate'er my cell bestows;
My rushy couch, and frugal fare,
My blessing and repose.

'No flocks that range the valley free
To slaughter I condemn:
Taught by that power that pities me,
I learn to pity them.

'But from the mountain's grassy side
A guiltless feast I bring;
A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,
And water from the spring.

'Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forgo;
All earth-born cares are wrong:
Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long.'

Soft as the dew from heav'n descends,
His gentle accents fell:
The modest stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.

Far in a wilderness obscure
The lonely mansion lay;
A refuge to the neighbouring poor
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Requir'd a master's care;

The wicket, opening with a latch,
Receiv'd the harmless pair.

And now, when busy crowds retire
To take their evening rest,
The hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheer'd his pensive guest:

And spread his vegetable store,
And gaily press'd, and smil'd;
And, skill'd in legendary lore,
The lingering hours beguil'd.

Around in sympathetic mirth
Its tricks the kitten tries;
The cricket chirrups in the hearth;
The crackling fag got flies.

But nothing could a charm impart
To soothe the stranger's woe;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

His rising cares the hermit spied,
With answ'ring care oppress'd;
'And whence, unhappy youth,' he cried,
'The sorrows of thy breast?

'From better habitations spurn'd,
Reluctant dost thou rove;
Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
Or unregarded love?

'Alas! the joys that fortune brings
Are trifling, and decay;
And those who prize the paltry things,
More trifling still than they.

'And what is friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep;
A shade that follows wealth or fame,
But leaves the wretch to weep?

'And love is still an emptier sound,
The modern fair one's jest:
On earth unseen, or only found
To warm the turtle's nest.

'For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
And spurn the sex,' he said:
But, while he spoke, a rising blush
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

Surpris'd, he sees new beauties rise,
Swift mantling to the view;
Like colours o'er the morning skies,
As bright, as transient too.

The bashful look, the rising breast,
Alternate spread alarms:
The lovely stranger stands confess'd
A maid in all her charms.

'And, ah! forgive a stranger rude,
A wretch forlorn,' she cried;
'Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude
Where heaven and you reside.

'But let a maid thy pity share,
Whom love has taught to stray;
Who seeks for rest, but finds despair
Companion of her way.

'My father liv'd beside the Tyne,
A wealthy lord was he;
And all his wealth was mark'd as mine,
He had but only me.

'To win me from his tender arms
Unnumber'd suitors came;
Who prais'd me for imputed charms,
And felt or feign'd a flame.

Each hour a mercenary crowd
With richest proffers strove:
Amongst the rest young Edwin bow'd,
But never talk'd of love.

'In humble, simplest habit clad,
No wealth nor power had he;
Wisdom and worth were all he had,
But these were all to me.

'And when beside me in the dale
He caroll'd lays of love;
His breath lent fragrance to the gale,
And music to the grove.

'The blossom opening to the day,
The dews of heaven refin'd,
Could nought of purity display,
To emulate his mind.

'The dew, the blossom on the tree,

With charms inconstant shine;
Their charms were his, but woe to me!
Their constancy was mine.

'For still I tried each fickle art,
Importunate and vain:
And while his passion touch'd my heart,
I triumph'd in his pain.

'Till quite dejected with my scorn,
He left me to my pride;
And sought a solitude forlorn,
In secret, where he died.

'But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
And well my life shall pay;
I'll seek the solitude he sought,
And stretch me where he lay.

'And there forlorn, despairing, hid,
I'll lay me down and die;
'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
And so for him will I.'

'Forbid it, heaven!' the hermit cried,
And clasp'd her to his breast:
The wondering fair one turn'd to chide,
'Twas Edwin's self that prest.

'Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
My charmer, turn to see
Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
Restor'd to love and thee.

'Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
And ev'ry care resign;
And shall we never, never part,
My life - my all that's mine?

'No, never from this hour to part,
We'll live and love so true;
The sigh that rends thy constant heart
Shall break thy Edwin's too.'

Oliver Goldsmith

Eiologue

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SPOKEN FOR 'SHE STOOPS
TO CONQUER'

THERE is a place, so Ariosto sings,
A treasury for lost and missing things;
Lost human wits have places assign'd them,
And they, who lose their senses, there may find them.
But where's this place, this storehouse of the age?
The Moon, says he:-- but 'I' affirm the Stage:
At least in many things, I think, I see
His lunar, and our mimic world agree.
Both shine at night, for, but at Foote's alone,
We scarce exhibit till the sun goes down.
Both prone to change, no settled limits fix,
And sure the folks of both are lunatics.
But in this parallel my best pretence is,
That mortals visit both to find their senses.
To this strange spot, Rakes, Macaronies, Cits
Come thronging to collect their scatter'd wits.
The gay coquette, who ogles all the day,
Comes here at night, and goes a prude away.
Hither the affected city dame advancing,
Who sighs for operas, and dotes on dancing,
Taught by our art her ridicule to pause on,
Quits the 'Ballet', and calls for 'Nancy Dawson'.
The Gamester too, whose wit's all high or low,
Oft risks his fortune on one desperate throw,
Comes here to saunter, having made his bets,
Finds his lost senses out, and pay his debts.
The Mohawk too -- with angry phrases stored,
As 'D-- --, Sir,' and 'Sir, I wear a sword';
Here lesson'd for a while, and hence retreating,
Goes out, affronts his man, and takes a beating.
Here come the sons of scandal and of news,
But find no sense -- for they had none to lose.
Of all the tribe here wanting an adviser
Our Author's the least likely to grow wiser;
Has he not seen how you your favour place,
On sentimental Queens and Lords in lace?
Without a star, a coronet or garter,
How can the piece expect or hope for quarter?
No high-life scenes, no sentiment:-- the creature
Still stoops among the low to copy nature.
Yes, he's far gone:-- and yet some pity fix,
The English laws forbid to punish lunatics.

Oliver Goldsmith

Epilogue For Mr. Lee Lewes

HOLD! Prompter, hold! a word before your nonsense;
I'd speak a word or two, to ease my conscience.
My pride forbids it ever should be said,
My heels eclips'd the honours of my head;
That I found humour in a piebald vest,
Or ever thought that jumping was a jest.

('Takes off his mask.')

Whence, and what art thou, visionary birth?
Nature disowns, and reason scorns thy mirth,
In thy black aspect every passion sleeps,
The joy that dimples, and the woe that weeps.
How has thou fill'd the scene with all thy brood,
Of fools pursuing, and of fools pursu'd!
Whose ins and outs no ray of sense discloses,
Whose only plot it is to break our noses;
Whilst from below the trap-door Demons rise,
And from above the dangling deities;

And shall I mix in this unhallow'd crew?
May rosined lightning blast me, if I do!
No -- I will act, I'll vindicate the stage:
Shakespeare himself shall feel my tragic rage.

Off! off! vile trappings! a new passion reigns!
The madd'ning monarch revels in my veins.

Oh! for a Richard's voice to catch the theme:
'Give me another horse! bind up my wounds!
-- soft -- 'twas but a dream.'

Aye, 'twas but a dream, for now there's no retreating:
If I cease Harlequin, I cease from eating.

'Twas thus that Aesop's stag, a creature blameless,
Yet something vain, like one that shall be nameless,
Once on the margin of a fountain stood,
And cavill'd at his image in the flood.

'The deuce confound,' he cries, 'these drumstick shanks,
They never have my gratitude nor thanks;

They're perfectly disgraceful! strike me dead!
But for a head, yes, yes, I have a head.

How piercing is that eye! how sleek that brow!
My horns! I'm told horns are the fashion now.'

Whilst thus he spoke, astonish'd, to his view,
Near, and more near, the hounds and huntsmen drew.

'Hoicks! hark forward!' came thund'ring from behind,
He bounds aloft, outstrips the fleeting wind:

He quits the woods, and tries the beaten ways;
He starts, he pants, he takes the circling maze.

At length his silly head, so priz'd before,
Is taught his former folly to deplore;

Whilst his strong limbs conspire to set him free,
And at one bound he saves himself, -- like me.

('Taking a hump through the stage door'.)

Oliver Goldsmith

Epilogue Intended To Have Been Spoken For 'She Stoops To Conquer'

'Enter' MRS. BULKLEY,
'who curtsies very low as beginning to speak.
Then enter' MISS CATLEY,
'who stands full before her, and curtsies to the audience'.

MRS. BULKELEY.
HOLD, Ma'am, your pardon. What's your business here?

MISS CATLEY.
The Epilogue.

MRS. BULKLEY.
The Epilogue?

MISS CATLEY.
Yes, the Epilogue, my dear.

MRS. BULKLEY.
Sure you mistake, Ma'am. The Epilogue, 'I' bring it.

MISS CATLEY.
Excuse me, Ma'am. The Author bid 'me' sing it.

'Recitative'.
Ye beaux and belles, that form this splendid ring,
Suspend your conversation while I sing.

MRS. BULKLEY.
Why, sure the girl's beside herself: an Epilogue of singing,
A hopeful end indeed to such a blest beginning.
Besides, a singer in a comic set! --
Excuse me, Ma'am, I know the etiquette.

MISS CATLEY.
What if we leave it to the House?

MRS. BULKLEY.
The House! -- Agreed.

MISS CATLEY>
Agreed.

MRS. BULKLEY.
And she, whose party's largest, shall proceed.
And first I hope, you'll readily agree
I've all the critics and the wits for me.
They, I am sure, will answer my commands:
Ye candid-judging few, hold up your hands.
What! no return? I find too late, I fear,
That modern judges seldom enter here.

MISS CATLEY.

I'm for a different set. -- Old men, whose trade is
Still to gallant and dangle with the ladies; --

'Recitative'.
Who mump their passion, and who, grimly smiling,
Still thus address the fair with voice beguiling:--

'Air -- Cotillon'.
Turn, my fairest, turn, if ever
Strephon caught thy ravish'd eye;
Pity take on your swain so clever,
Who without your aid must die.
Yes, I shall die, hu, hu, hu, hu!
Yes, I must die, ho, ho, ho, ho! ('Da capo'.)

MRS. BULKLEY.
Let all the old pay homage to your merit;
Give me the young, the gay, the men of spirit.
Ye travell'd tribe, ye macaroni train,
Of French friseurs, and nose-gays, justly vain,
Who take a trip to Paris once a year
To dress, and look like awkward Frenchmen here,
Lend me your hands. -- Oh! fatal news to tell:
Their hands are only lent to the Heinel.

MISS CATLEY.
Ay, take your travellers, travellers indeed!
Give me my bonny Scot, that travels from the Tweed.
Where are the chieft? Ah! Ah, I well discern
The smiling looks of each bewitching bairn.

'Air -- A bonny young lad is my Jockey'.
I'll sing to amuse you by night and by day,
And be unco merry when you are but gay;
When you with your bagpipes are ready to play,
My voice shall be ready to carol away
With Sandy, and Sawney, and Jockey
With Sawney, and Jarvie, and Jockey.

MRS. BULKLEY.
Ye gamesters, who, so eager in pursuit,
Make but of all your fortune one 'va toute';
Ye jockey tribe, whose stock of words are few,
'I hold the odds. -- Done, done, with you, with you;'
Ye barristers, so fluent with grimace,
'My Lord, -- your Lordship misconceives the case;'
Doctors, who cough and answer every misfortuner,
'I wish I'd been called in a little sooner:'
Assist my cause with hands and voices hearty;
Come, end the contest here, and aid my party.

MISS CATLEY.

'Air -- Ballinamony'.

Ye brave Irish lads, hark away to the crack,
Assist me, I pray, in this woful attack;
For sure I don't wrong you, you seldom are slack,
When the ladies are calling, to blush and hang back;
For you're always polite and attentive,
Still to amuse us inventive,
And death is your only preventive:
Your hands and your voices for me.

MRS. BULKLEY.

Well, Madam, what if, after all this sparring,
We both agree, like friends, to end our jarring?

MISS CATLEY.

And that our friendship may remain unbroken,
What if we leave the Epilogue unspoken?

MRS. BULKLEY.

Agreed.

MISS CATLEY.

Agreed.

MRS. BULKLEY.

And now with late repentance,
Un-epilogued the Poet waits his sentence.
Condemn the stubborn fool who can't submit
To thrive by flattery, though he starves by wit.
('Exeunt'.)

Oliver Goldsmith

Epilogue To 'She Stoops To Conquer'

WELL, having stoop'd to conquer with success,
And gain'd a husband without aid from dress,
Still, as a Bar-maid, I could wish it too,
As I have conquer'd him, to conquer you:
And let me say, for all your resolution,
That pretty Bar-maids have done execution.
Our life is all a play, compos'd to please,
'We have our exits and our entrances.'
The First Act shows the simple country maid,
Harmless and young, of ev'ry thing afraid;
Blushes when hir'd, and, with unmeaning action,
'I hopes as how to give you satisfaction.'
Her Second Act displays a livelier scene --
Th' unblushing Bar-maid of a country inn,
Who whisks about the house, at market caters,
Talks loud, coquets the guests, and scolds the waiters.
Next the scene shifts to town, and there she soars,
The chop-house toast of ogling connoisseurs.
On 'Squires and Cits she there displays her arts,
And on the gridiron broils her lovers' hearts:
And as she smiles, her triumphs to complete,
Even Common-Councilmen forget to eat.
The Fourth Act shows her wedded to the 'Squire,
And Madam now begins to hold it higher;
Pretends to taste, at Operas cries 'caro',
And quits her 'Nancy Dawson', for 'Che faro',
Doats upon dancing, and in all her pride,
Swims round the room, the Heinel of Cheapside;
Ogles and leers with artificial skill,
'Till having lost in age the power to kill,
She sits all night at cards, and ogles at spadille.
Such, through our lives, the eventful history --
The Fifth and Last Act still remains for me.
The Bar-maid now for your protection prays.
Turns Female Barrister, and pleads for Bayes.

Oliver Goldsmith

Epilogue to the 'Good Natur'd Man'

As puffing quacks some caitiff wretch procure
To swear the pill, or drop, has wrought a cure;
Thus on the stage, our play-wrights still depend
For Epilogues and Prologues on some friend,
Who knows each art of coaxing up the town,
And make full many a bitter pill go down.
Conscious of this, our bard has gone about,
And teas'd each rhyming friend to help him out.
'An Epilogue - things can't go on without it;
It could not fail, would you but set about it.'
'Young man,' cries one - a bard laid up in clover -
'Alas, young man, my writing days are over;
Let boys play tricks, and kick the straw; not I:
Your brother Doctor there, perhaps, may try.'
'What I? dear Sir,' the Doctor interposes
'What plant my thistle, Sir, among his roses!
No, no; I've other contests to maintain;
To-night I head our troops at Warwick Lane:
Go, ask your manager.' 'Who, me? Your pardon;
Those things are not our forte at Covent Garden.'
Our Author's friends, thus plac'd at happy distance,
Give him good words indeed, but no assistance.
As some unhappy wight, at some new play,
At the Pit door stands elbowing a way,
While oft, with many a smile, and many a shrug,
He eyes the centre, where his friends sit snug;
His simp'ring friends, with pleasure in their eyes,
Sink as he sinks, and as he rises rise;
He nods, they nod; he cringes, they grimace;
But not a soul will budge to give him place.
Since then, unhelp'd, our bard must now conform
'To 'bide the pelting of this pitiless storm' -
Blame where you must, be candid where you can;
And be each critic the 'Good Natur'd Man'.

Oliver Goldsmith

Epilogue to 'The Sister'

WHAT! five long acts -- and all to make us wiser!
Our authoress sure has wanted an adviser.
Had she consulted 'me', she should have made
Her moral play a speaking masquerade;
Warm'd up each bustling scene, and in her rage
Have emptied all the green-room on the stage.
My life on't, this had kept her play from sinking;
Have pleas'd our eyes, and sav'd the pain of thinking.
Well! since she thus has shown her want of skill,
What if I give a masquerade? -- I will.
But how? ay, there's the rub! ('pausing') -- I've got my cue:
The world's a masquerade! the maskers, you, you, you.
('To Boxes, Pit, and Gallery' .)

_____, what a group the motley scene discloses!
False wits, false wives, false virgins, and false spouses!
Statesmen with bridles on; and, close beside 'em,
Patriots, in party-coloured suits, that ride 'em.
There Hebes, turn'd of fifty, try once more
To raise a flame in Cupids of threescore.
These in their turn, with appetites as keen,
Deserting fifty, fasten on fifteen,
Miss, not yet full fifteen, with fire uncommon,
Flings down her sampler, and takes up the woman:
The little urchin smiles, and spreads her lure,
And tries to kill, ere she's got power to cure.
Thus 'tis with all -- their chief and constant care
Is to seem everything but what they are.
Yon broad, bold, angry spark, I fix my eye on,
Who seems to have robb'd his vizor from the lion;
Who frowns, and talks, and swears, with round parade,
Looking as who should say, D___ ___! who's afraid?
('Mimicking')

Strip but his vizor off, and sure I am
You'll find his lionship a very lamb.
Yon politician, famous in debate,
Perhaps, to vulgar eyes, bestrides the state;
Yet, when he deigns his real shape t' assume,
He turns old woman, and bestrides a broom.
Yon patriot, too, who presses on your sight,
And seems to every gazer all in white,
If with a bribe his candour you attack,
He bows, turns round, and whip -- the man's a black!
Yon critic, too -- but whither do I run?
If I proceed, our bard will be undone!
Well then a truce, since she requests it too:
Do you spare her, and I'll for once spare you.

Oliver Goldsmith

Epitaph On Edward Purdon

HERE lies poor Ned Purdon, from misery freed,
Who long was a bookseller's hack;
He led such a damnable life in this world, --
I don't think he'll wish to come back.

Oliver Goldsmith

Epitaph On Thomas Parnell

THIS tomb, inscrib'd to gentle Parnell's name,
May speak our gratitude, but not his fame.
What heart but feels his sweetly-moral lay,
That leads to truth through pleasure's flowery way!
Celestial themes confess'd his tuneful aid;
And Heaven, that lent him genius, was repaid.
Needless to him the tribute we bestow --
The transitory breath of fame below:
More lasting rapture from his works shall rise,
While Converts thank their poet in the skies.

Oliver Goldsmith

From 'She Stoops to Conquer' A Song

Let school-masters puzzle their brain,
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning;
Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives 'genus' a better discerning.
Let them brag of their heathenish gods,
Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians:
Their Quis, and their Quaes, and their Quods,
They're all but a parcel of Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

When Methodist preachers come down
A-preaching that drinking is sinful,
I'll wager the rascals a crown
They always preach best with a skinful.
But when you come down with your pence,
For a slice of their scurvy religion,
I'll leave it to all men of sense,
But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

Then come, put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever;
Our hearts and our liquors are stout;
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever.
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons;
But of all the birds in the air,
Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

Oliver Goldsmith

Letter In Prose And Verse To Mrs. Bunbury

MADAM,

I read your letter with all that allowance which critical candour could require, but after all find so much to object to, and so much to raise my indignation, that I cannot help giving it a serious answer.

I am not so ignorant, Madam, as not to see there are many sarcasms contained in it, and solecisms also. (Solecism is a word that comes from the town of Soleis in Attica, among the Greeks, built by Solon, and applied as we use the word Kidderminster for curtains, from a town also of that name; -- but this is learning you have no taste for!) -- I say, Madam, there are sarcasms in it, and solecisms also. But not to seem an ill-natured critic, I'll take leave to quote your own words, and give you my remarks upon them as they occur. You begin as follows:--

'I hope, my good Doctor, you soon will be here,
And your spring-velvet coat very smart will appear,
To open our ball the first day of the year.'

Pray, Madam, where did you ever find the epithet 'good,' applied to the title of Doctor? Had you called me 'learned Doctor,' or 'grave Doctor,' or 'noble Doctor,' it might be allowable, because they belong to the profession. But, not to cavil at trifles, you talk of my 'spring-velvet coat,' and advise me to wear it the first day in the year, -- that is, in the middle of winter! -- a spring-velvet in the middle of winter!!! That would be a solecism indeed! and yet, to increase the inconsistency, in another part of your letter you call me a beau. Now, on one side or other, you must be wrong. If I am a beau, I can never think of wearing a spring-velvet in winter: and if I am not a beau, why then, that explains itself. But let me go on to your two next strange lines:--

'And bring with you a wig, that is modish and gay,
To dance with the girls that are makers of hay.'

The absurdity of making hay at Christmas, you yourself seem sensible of: you say your sister will laugh; and so indeed she well may! The Latins have an expression for a contemptuous sort of laughter, 'Naso contemnere adunco'; that is, to laugh with a crooked nose. She may laugh at you in the manner of the ancients if she thinks fit. But now I come to the most extraordinary of all extraordinary propositions, which is, to take your and your sister's advice in playing at loo. The presumption of the offer raises my indignation beyond the bounds of prose; it inspires me at once with verse and resentment. I take advice! and from whom? You shall hear.

First let me suppose, what may shortly be true,
The company set, and the word to be, Loo;
All smirking, and pleasant, and big with adventure,
And ogling the stake which is fix'd in the centre.
Round and round go the cards, while I inwardly damn
At never once finding a visit from Pam.
I lay down my stake, apparently cool,
While the harpies about me all pocket the pool.

I fret in my gizzard, yet, cautious and sly,
 I wish all my friends may be bolder than I:
 Yet still they sit snug, not a creature will aim
 By losing their money to venture at fame.
 'Tis in vain that at niggardly caution I scold,
 'Tis in vain that I flatter the brave and the bold:
 All play their own way, and they think me an ass, --
 'What does Mrs. Bunbury?' 'I, Sir? I pass.'
 'Pray what does Miss Horneck? Take courage, come do,' --
 'Who, I? let me see, Sir, why I must pass too.'
 Mr. Bunbury frets, and I fret like the devil,
 To see them so cowardly, lucky, and civil.
 Yet still I sit snug, and continue to sigh on,
 Till made by my losses as bold as a lion,
 I venture at all, -- while my avarice regards
 The whole pool as my own -- 'Come, give me five cards.'
 'Well done!' cry the ladies; 'Ah, Doctor, that's good!
 The pool's very rich -- ah! the Doctor is loo'd!'
 Thus foil'd in my courage, on all sides perplex'd,
 I ask for advice from the lady that's next:
 'Pray, Ma'am, be so good as to give your advice;
 Don't you think the best way is to venture for 't twice?'
 'I advise,' cries the lady, 'to try it, I own. --
 Ah! the Doctor is loo'd! Come, Doctor, put down.'
 Thus, playing, and playing, I still grow more eager,
 And so bold, and so bold, I'm at last a bold beggar.
 Now, ladies, I ask, if law-matters you're skill'd in,
 Whether crimes such as yours should not come before Fielding?
 For giving advice that is not worth a straw,
 May well be call'd picking of pockets in law;
 And picking of pockets, with which I now charge ye,
 Is, by quinto Elizabeth, Death without Clergy.
 What justice, when both to the Old Bailey brought!
 By the gods, I'll enjoy it; though 'tis but in thought!
 Both are plac'd at the bar, with all proper decorum,
 With bunches of fennel, and nosegays before 'em;
 Both cover their faces with mobs and all that;
 But the judge bids them, angrily, take off their hat.
 When uncover'd, a buzz of enquiry runs round, --
 'Pray what are their crimes?' -- 'They've been pilfering found.'
 'But, pray, whom have they pilfer'd?' -- 'A Doctor, I hear.'
 'What, yon solemn-faced, odd-looking man that stands near!'
 'The same.' -- 'What a pity! how does it surprise one!
 Two handsomer culprits I never set eyes on!'
 Then their friends all come round me with cringing and leering,
 To melt me to pity, and soften my swearing.
 First Sir Charles advances with phrases well strung,
 'Consider, dear Doctor, the girls are but young.'
 'The younger the worse,' I return him again,
 'It shows that their habits are all dyed in grain.'
 'But then they're so handsome, one's bosom it grieves.'
 'What signifies 'handsome', when people are thieves?'

'But where is your justice? their cases are hard.'
'What signifies 'justice'? I want the 'reward'.

There's the parish of Edmonton offers forty pounds; there's the parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, offers forty pounds; there's the parish of Tyburn, from the Hog-in-the-Pound to St. Giles's watchhouse, offers forty pounds, -- I shall have all that if I convict them!' --

'But consider their case, -- it may yet be your own!
And see how they kneel! Is your heart made of stone?'
This moves:-- so at last I agree to relent,
For ten pounds in hand, and ten pounds to be spent.

I challenge you all to answer this: I tell you, you cannot. It cuts deep; -- but now for the rest of the letter: and next -- but I want room -- so I believe I shall battle the rest out at Barton some day next week.

I don't value you all!

Oliver Goldsmith

Memory

O MEMORY, thou fond deceiver,
Still importunate and vain,
To former joys recurring ever,
And turning all the past to pain:

Thou, like the world, th' oppress'd oppressing,
Thy smiles increase the wretch's woe:
And he who wants each other blessing
In thee must ever find a foe.

Oliver Goldsmith

On A Beautiful Youth Struck Blind With Lightning

('Imitated from the Spanish'.)

SURE 'twas by Providence design'd,
Rather in pity, than in hate,
That he should be, like Cupid, blind,
To save him from Narcissus' fate.

Oliver Goldsmith

On Seeing Mrs. ** Perform In The Character Of ***

FOR you, bright fair, the nine address their lays,
And tune my feeble voice to sing thy praise.
The heartfelt power of every charm divine,
Who can withstand their all-commanding shine?
See how she moves along with every grace,
While soul-brought tears steal down each shining face.
She speaks! 'tis rapture all, and nameless bliss,
Ye gods! what transport e'er compared to this.
As when in Paphian groves the Queen of Love
With fond complaint addressed the listening Jove,
'Twas joy, and endless blisses all around,
And rocks forgot their hardness at the sound.
Then first, at last even Jove was taken in,
And felt her charms, without disguise, within.

Oliver Goldsmith

On the Death of the Right Hounourable ---

YE Muses, pour the pitying tear
For Pollio snatch'd away;
O! had he liv'd another year!-
'He had not died to-day'.

O! were he born to bless mankind,
In virtuous times of yore,
Heroes themselves had fallen behind!-
'Whene'er he went before'.

How sad the groves and plains appear,
And sympathetic sheep;
Even pitying hills would drop a tear!-
'If hills could learn to weep'.

His bounty in exalted strain
Each bard might well display;
Since none implor'd relief in vain!-
'That went reliev'd away'.

And hark! I hear the tuneful throng
His obsequies forbid,
He still shall live, shall live as long!-
'As ever dead man did'.

Oliver Goldsmith

**Part Of A Prologue Written And Spoken By The POet Laberius A Roman Knight,
Whom Caesar Forced Upon The Stage**

PRESERVED BY MACROBIUS.

WHAT! no way left to shun th' inglorious stage,
And save from infamy my sinking age!
Scarce half alive, oppress'd with many a year,
What in the name of dotage drives me here?
A time there was, when glory was my guide,
Nor force nor fraud could turn my steps aside;
Unaw'd by pow'r, and unappall'd by fear,
With honest thrift I held my honour dear;
But this vile hour disperses all my store,
And all my hoard of honour is no more.
For ah! too partial to my life's decline,
Caesar persuades, submission must be mine;
Him I obey, whom heaven itself obeys,
Hopeless of pleasing, yet inclin'd to please.
Here then at once, I welcome every shame,
And cancel at threescore a life of fame;
No more my titles shall my children tell,
The old buffoon will fit my name as well;
This day beyond its term my fate extends,
For life is ended when our honour ends.

Oliver Goldsmith

Prologue To 'Zobeide'

IN these bold times, when Learning's sons explore
The distant climate and the savage shore;
When wise Astronomers to India steer,
And quit for Venus, many a brighter here;
While Botanists, all cold to smiles and dimpling,
Forsake the fair, and patiently -- go simpling;
When every bosom swells with wond'rous scenes,
Priests, cannibals, and hoity-toity queens:
Our bard into the general spirit enters,
And fits his little frigate for adventures:
With Scythian stores, and trinkets deeply laden,
He this way steers his course, in hopes of trading --
Yet ere he lands he 'as ordered me before,
To make an observation on the shore.
Where are we driven? our reck'ning sure is lost!
This seems a barren and a dangerous coast.
_____ what a sultry climate am I under!
Yon ill foreboding cloud seems big with thunder.
('Upper Gallery'.)
There Mangroves spread, and larger than I've seen 'em --
('Pit'.)
Here trees of stately size -- and turtles in 'em --
('Balconies'.)
Here ill-condition'd oranges abound --
('Stage'.)
And apples ('takes up one and tastes it'),
bitter apples strew the ground.
The place is uninhabited, I fear!
I heard a hissing -- there are serpents here!
O there the natives are -- a dreadful race!
The men have tails, the women paint the face!
No doubt they're all barbarians. -- Yes, 'tis so,
I'll try to make palaver with them though;
('Making signs'.)
'Tis best, however, keeping at a distance.
Good Savages, our Captain craves assistance;
Our ship's well stor'd; -- in yonder creek we've laid her;
His honour is no mercenary trader;
This is his first adventure; lend him aid,
Or you may chance to spoil a thriving trade.
His goods, he hopes are prime, and brought from far,
Equally fit for gallantry and war.
What! no reply to promises so ample?
I'd best step back -- and order up a sample.

Oliver Goldsmith

Retaliation: A Poem

Oliver Goldsmith

Song From 'The Vicar Of Wakefield'

WHEN lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, is -- to die.

Oliver Goldsmith

Song Intended To Have Been Sung In 'She Stoops To Conquer'

AH me! when shall I marry me?
Lovers are plenty; but fail to relieve me:
He, fond youth, that could carry me,
Offers to love, but means to deceive me.

But I will rally, and combat the ruiner:
Not a look, not a smile shall my passion discover:
She that gives all to the false one pursuing her,
Makes but a penitent, loses a lover.

Oliver Goldsmith

Stanzas on the Taking of Quebec and the Death of General Wolfe

AMIDST the clamour of exulting joys,
Which triumph forces from the patriot heart,
Grief dares to mingle her soul-piercing voice,
And quells the raptures which from pleasures start.

O WOLFE! to thee a streaming flood of woe,
Sighing we pay, and think e'en conquest dear;
QUEBEC in vain shall teach our breast to glow,
Whilst thy sad fate extorts the heart-wrung tear.

Alive the foe thy dreadful vigour fled,
And saw thee fall with joy-pronouncing eyes:
Yet they shall know thou conquerest, though dead-
Since from thy tomb a thousand heroes rise!

Oliver Goldsmith

The Clown's Reply

JOHN TROTT was desired by two witty peers
To tell them the reason why asses had ears?
'An't please you,' quoth John, 'I'm not given to letters,
Nor dare I pretend to know more than my betters;
Howe'er, from this time I shall ne'er see your graces,
As I hope to be saved! without thinking on asses.'

Oliver Goldsmith

The Deserted Village

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the labouring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visits paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, where every sport could please,
How often have I loitered o'er your green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene;
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topped the neighbouring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made;
How often have I blessed the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree:
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round;
And still as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down!
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong look of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove:
These were thy charms, sweet village; sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught even toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms-But all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain:
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But choked with sedges works its weedy way.
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.
Sunk are thy bowers, in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away, thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man;
For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more:
His best companions, innocence and health;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land and dispossess the swain;
Along the lawn, where scattered hamlet's rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose,
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that asked but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brightened all the green;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs-and God has given my share-
I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose.
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt and all I saw;
And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations passed,
Here to return-and die at home at last.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,

Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How happy he who crowns in shades like these
A youth of labour with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands in guilty state
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels round befriending Virtue's friend;
Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
While Resignation gently slopes the way;
All, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His Heaven commences ere the world be past!

Sweet was the sound when oft at evening's close
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below;
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school;
The watchdog's voice that bayed the whisp'ring wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
For all the bloomy flush of life is fled.
All but yon widowed, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced in age for bread
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place;
Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,

More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;
The long remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to Virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt, for all.
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service passed, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in Heaven.
As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,

The village master taught his little school;
A man severe he was, and stern to view;
I knew him well, and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed, with counterfeited glee,
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned;
Yet he was kind; or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declared how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge.
In arguing too, the parson owned his skill,
For e'en though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around,
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumphed is forgot.
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the signpost caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour splendours of that festive place:
The white-washed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,-
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay;
While broken teacups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.

Vain transitory splendours! Could not all
Relieve the tottering mansion from its fall!
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,

Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be pressed,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.
Spontaneous joys, where Nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined:
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen, who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards even beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robbed the neighbouring fields of half their growth;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies:
While thus the land adorned for pleasure, all
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female unadorned and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are passed, for charms are frail,
When time advances and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress.

Thus fares the land, by luxury betrayed,
In nature's simplest charms at first arrayed;
But verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourged by famine, from the smiling land
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms-a garden, and a grave.

Where then, ah! where, shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits strayed,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And even the bare-worn common is denied.
If to the city sped-what waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
To see those joys the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow creature's woe.
Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign
Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts?-Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in a village plenty blessed,
Has wept at tales of innocence distressed;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
Now lost to all; her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deploras that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, sweet Auburn, thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
E'en now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!

Ah, no!-To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,

Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crowned,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed that parting day
That called them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure passed,
Hung round their bowers, and fondly looked their last,
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main;
And, shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire, the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blessed the cot where every pleasure rose;
And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.

O luxury! thou cursed by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse thy pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own;
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
Till, sapped their strength, and every part unsound,

Down, down they sink, and spread the ruin round.

Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land:
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there;
And piety with wishes placed above,
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell, and oh! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of th' inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth; with thy persuasive strain
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him that states of native strength possessed,
Though very poor, may still be very blessed;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the laboured mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

Oliver Goldsmith

The Double Transformation, A Tale

Secluded from domestic strife,
Jack Book-worm led a college life;
A fellowship at twenty-five
Made him the happiest man alive;
He drank his glass and crack'd his joke,
And freshmen wonder'd as he spoke.

Such pleasures, unalloy'd with care,
Could any accident impair?
Could Cupid's shaft at length transfix
Our swain, arriv'd at thirty-six?
O had the archer ne'er come down
To ravage in a country town!
Or Flavia been content to stop
At triumphs in a Fleet-street shop.
O had her eyes forgot to blaze!
Or Jack had wanted eyes to gaze.
O! - But let exclamation cease,
Her presence banish'd all his peace.
So with decorum all things carried;
Miss frown'd, and blush'd, and then was - married.

Need we expose to vulgar sight
The raptures of the bridal night?
Need we intrude on hallow'd ground,
Or draw the curtains clos'd around?
Let it suffice, that each had charms;
He clasp'd a goddess in his arms;
And though she felt his usage rough,
Yet in a man 'twas well enough.

The honey-moon like lightning flew,
The second brought its transports too.
A third, a fourth, were not amiss,
The fifth was friendship mix'd with bliss:
But when a twelvemonth pass'd away,
Jack found his goddess made of clay;
Found half the charms that deck'd her face
Arose from powder, shreds, or lace;
But still the worst remain'd behind,
That very face had robb'd her mind.

Skill'd in no other arts was she
But dressing, patching, repartee;
And, just as humour rose or fell,
By turns a slattern or a belle;
'Tis true she dress'd with modern grace,
Half naked at a ball or race;
But when at home, at board or bed,
Five greasy nightcaps wrapp'd her head.
Could so much beauty condescend
To be a dull domestic friend?

Could any curtain-lectures bring
To decency so fine a thing?
In short, by night, 'twas fits or fretting;
By day, 'twas gadding or coquetting.
Fond to be seen, she kept a bevy
Of powder'd coxcombs at her levy;
The 'squire and captain took their stations,
And twenty other near relations;
Jack suck'd his pipe, and often broke
A sigh in suffocating smoke;
While all their hours were pass'd between
Insulting repartee or spleen.

Thus as her faults each day were known,
He thinks her features coarser grown;
He fancies every vice she shows,
Or thins her lip, or points her nose:
Whenever rage or envy rise,
How wide her mouth, how wild her eyes!
He knows not how, but so it is,
Her face is grown a knowing phiz;
And, though her fops are wond'rous civil,
He thinks her ugly as the devil.

Now, to perplex the ravell'd noose,
As each a different way pursues,
While sullen or loquacious strife,
Promis'd to hold them on for life,
That dire disease, whose ruthless power
Withers the beauty's transient flower:
Lo! the small-pox, whose horrid glare
Levell'd its terrors at the fair;
And, rifling ev'ry youthful grace,
Left but the remnant of a face.

The glass, grown hateful to her sight,
Reflected now a perfect fright:
Each former art she vainly tries
To bring back lustre to her eyes.
In vain she tries her paste and creams,
To smooth her skin, or hide its seams;
Her country beaux and city cousins,
Lovers no more, flew off by dozens:
The 'squire himself was seen to yield,
And e'en the captain quit the field.

Poor Madam, now condemn'd to hack
The rest of life with anxious Jack,
Perceiving others fairly flown,
Attempted pleasing him alone.
Jack soon was dazzl'd to behold
Her present face surpass the old;

With modesty her cheeks are dy'd,
Humility displaces pride;
For tawdry finery is seen
A person ever neatly clean:
No more presuming on her sway,
She learns good-nature every day;
Serenely gay, and strict in duty,
Jack finds his wife a perfect beauty.

Oliver Goldsmith

The Gift (To Iris, In Bow Street, Covent Garden)

SAY, cruel IRIS, pretty rake,
Dear mercenary beauty,
What annual offering shall I make,
Expressive of my duty?

My heart, a victim to thine eyes,
Should I at once deliver,
Say, would the angry fair one prize
The gift, who slights the giver?

A bill, a jewel, watch, or toy,
My rivals give-and let 'em;
If gems, or gold, impart a joy,
I'll give them-when I get 'em.

I'll give-but not the full-blown rose,
Or rose-bud more in fashion;
Such short-liv'd offerings but disclose
A transitory passion.

I'll give thee something yet unpaid,
Not less sincere, than civil:
I'll give thee-Ah! too charming maid,
I'll give thee-To the devil.

Oliver Goldsmith

The Haunch Of Venison

A POETICAL EPISTLE TO LORD CLARE

THANKS, my Lord, for your venison, for finer or fatter
Never rang'd in a forest, or smok'd in a platter;
The haunch was a picture for painters to study,
The fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy.
Though my stomach was sharp, I could scarce help regretting
To spoil such a delicate picture by eating;
I had thoughts, in my chambers, to place it in view,
To be shown to my friends as a piece of 'virtu';
As in some Irish houses, where things are so so,
One gammon of bacon hangs up for a show:
But for eating a rasher of what they take pride in,
They'd as soon think of eating the pan it is fried in.
But hold -- let me pause -- Don't I hear you pronounce
This tale of the bacon a damnable bounce?
Well, suppose it a bounce -- sure a poet may try,
By a bounce now and then, to get courage to fly.

But, my Lord, it's no bounce: I protest in my turn,
It's a truth -- and your Lordship may ask Mr. Byrne.
To go on with my tale -- as I gaz'd on the haunch,
I thought of a friend that was trusty and staunch;
So I cut it, and sent it to Reynolds undress'd,
To paint it, or eat it, just as he lik'd best.
Of the neck and the breast I had next to dispose;
'Twas a neck and a breast -- that might rival M--r--'s:
But in parting with these I was puzzled again,
With the how, and the who, and the where, and the when.
There's H--d, and C--y, and H--rth, and H--ff,
I think they love venison -- I know they love beef;
There's my countryman H--gg--ns-- Oh! let him alone,
For making a blunder, or picking a bone.
But hang it -- to poets who seldom can eat,
Your very good mutton's a very good treat;
Such dainties to them, their health it might hurt,
It's like sending them ruffles, when wanting a shirt.
While thus I debated, in reverie centred,
An acquaintance, a friend as he call'd himself, enter'd;
An under-bred, fine-spoken fellow was he,
And he smil'd as he look'd at the venison and me.
'What have we got here? -- Why, this is good eating!
Your own, I suppose -- or is it in waiting?'
'Why, whose should it be?' cried I with a flounce,
'I get these things often;' -- but that was a bounce:
'Some lords, my acquaintance, that settle the nation,
Are pleas'd to be kind -- but I hate ostentation.'

'If that be the case, then,' cried he, very gay,
'I'm glad I have taken this house in my way.
To-morrow you take a poor dinner with me;
No words -- I insist on't -- precisely at three:

We'll have Johnson, and Burke; all the wits will be there;
My acquaintance is slight, or I'd ask my Lord Clare.
And now that I think on't, as I am a sinner!
We wanted this venison to make out the dinner.
What say you -- a pasty? it shall, and it must,
And my wife, little Kitty, is famous for crust.
Here, porter! -- this venison with me to Mile-end;
No stirring -- I beg -- my dear friend -- my dear friend!
Thus snatching his hat, he brush'd off like the wind,
And the porter and eatables follow'd behind.

Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,
'And nobody with me at sea but myself';
Though I could not help thinking my gentleman hasty,
Yet Johnson, and Burke, and a good venison pasty,
Were things that I never dislik'd in my life,
Though clogg'd with a coxcomb, and Kitty his wife.
So next day, in due splendour to make my approach,
I drove to his door in my own hackney coach.

When come to the place where we all were to dine,
(A chair-lumber'd closet just twelve feet by nine
My friend bade me welcome, but struck me quite dumb,
With tidings that Johnson and Burke would not come;
'For I knew it,' he cried, 'both eternally fail,
The one with his speeches, and t'other with Thrale;
But no matter, I'll warrant we'll make up the party
With two full as clever, and ten times as hearty.
The one is a Scotchman, the other a Jew,
They're both of them merry and authors like you;
The one writes the 'Snarler', the other the 'Scourge';
Some think he writes 'Cinna' -- he own to 'Panurge'.
While thus he describ'd them by trade, and by name,
They enter'd and dinner was serv'd as they came.

At the top a fried liver and bacon were seen,
At the bottom was tripe in a swinging tureen;
At the sides there was spinach and pudding made hot;
In the middle a place where the pasty -- was not.
Now, my Lord as for tripe, it's my utter aversion,
And your bacon I hate like a Turk or a Persian;
So there I sat stuck, like a horse in a pound,
While the bacon and liver went merrily round.
But what vex'd me most was that d--'d Scottish rogue,
With his long-winded speeches, his smiles and his brogue;
And, 'Madam,' quoth he, 'may this bit be my poison,
A prettier dinner I never set eyes on;
Pray a slice of your liver, though may I be curs'd,
But I've eat of your tripe till I'm ready to burst.;
'The tripe,' quoth the Jew, with his chocolate cheek,
'I could dine on this tripe seven days in the week:
I like these here dinners so pretty and small;

But your friend there, the Doctor, eats nothing at all.'
'O--Oh!' quoth my friend, 'he'll come on in a trice,
He's keeping a corner for something that's nice:
There's a pasty' -- 'A pasty!' repeated the Jew,
'I don't care if I keep a corner for't too.'
'What the de'il, mon, a pasty!' re-echoed the Scot,
'Though splitting, I'll still keep a corner for thot.'
'We'll all keep a corner,' the lady cried out;
'We'll all keep a corner,' was echoed about.
While thus we resolv'd, and the pasty delay'd,
With look that quite petrified, enter'd the maid;
A visage so sad, and so pale with affright,
Wak'd Priam in drawing his curtains by night.
But we quickly found out, for who could mistake her?
That she came with some terrible news from the baker:
And so it fell out, for that negligent sloven
Had shut out the pasty on shutting his oven
Sad Philomel thus -- but let similes drop --
And now that I think on't, the story may stop.
To be plain, my good Lord, it's but labour misplac'd
To send such good verses to one of your taste;
You've got an odd something -- a kind of discerning --
A relish -- a taste -- sicken'd over by learning;
At least, it's your temper, as very well known,
That you think very slightly of all that's your own:
So, perhaps, in your habits of thinking amiss,
You may make a mistake, and think slightly of this.

Oliver Goldsmith

The Logicians Refuted

IN IMITATION OF DEAN SWIFT

LOGICIANS have but ill defin'd
As rational, the human kind;
Reason, they say, belongs to man,
But let them prove it if they can.
Wise Aristotle and Smiglecius,
By ratiocinations specious,
Have strove to prove with great precision,
With definition and division,
'Homo est ratione praeditum',--
But for my soul I cannot credit 'em;
And must in spite of them maintain,
That man and all his ways are vain;
And that this boasted lord of nature
Is both a weak and erring creature;
That instinct is a surer guide
Than reason-boasting mortals' pride;
And that brute beasts are far before 'em,
'Deus est anima brutorum'.
Who ever knew an honest brute
At law his neighbour prosecute,
Bring action for assault and battery,
Or friend beguile with lies and flattery?
O'er plains they ramble unconfin'd,
No politics disturb their mind;
They eat their meals, and take their sport,
Nor know who's in or out at court;
They never to the levee go
To treat as dearest friend, a foe;
They never importune his grace,
Nor ever cringe to men in place;
Nor undertake a dirty job,
Nor draw the quill to write for B--b.
Fraught with invective they ne'er go
To folks at Pater-Noster-Row;
No judges, fiddlers, dancing-masters,
No pick-pockets, or poetasters,
Are known to honest quadrupeds;
No single brute his fellow leads.
Brutes never meet in bloody fray,
Nor cut each others' throats, for pay.
Of beasts, it is confess'd, the ape
Comes nearest us in human shape;
Like man he imitates each fashion,
And malice is his ruling passion;
But both in malice and grimaces
A courtier any ape surpasses.
Behold him humbly cringing wait
Upon a minister of state;
View him soon after to inferiors,
Aping the conduct of superiors;

He promises with equal air,
And to perform takes equal care.
He in his turn finds imitators;
At court, the porters, lacqueys, waiters,
Their master's manners still contract,
And footmen, lords and dukes can act.
Thus at the court both great an small
Behave alike--for all ape all.

Oliver Goldsmith

The Poet Laberius

PRESERVED BY MACROBIUS.

WHAT! no way left to shun th' inglorious stage,
And save from infamy my sinking age!
Scarce half alive, oppress'd with many a year,
What in the name of dotage drives me here?
A time there was, when glory was my guide,
Nor force nor fraud could turn my steps aside;
Unaw'd by pow'r, and unappall'd by fear,
With honest thrift I held my honour dear;
But this vile hour disperses all my store,
And all my hoard of honour is no more.
For ah! too partial to my life's decline,
Caesar persuades, submission must be mine;
Him I obey, whom heaven itself obeys,
Hopeless of pleasing, yet inclin'd to please.
Here then at once, I welcome every shame,
And cancel at threescore a life of fame;
No more my titles shall my children tell,
The old buffoon will fit my name as well;
This day beyond its term my fate extends,
For life is ended when our honour ends.

Oliver Goldsmith

The Taking Of Quebec

STANZAS ON THE TAKING OF QUEBEC, AND DEATH OF
GENERAL WOLFE

AMIDST the clamour of exulting joys,
Which triumph forces from the patriot heart,
Grief dares to mingle her soul-piercing voice,
And quells the raptures which from pleasures start.
O WOLFE! to thee a streaming flood of woe,
Sighing we pay, and think e'en conquest dear;
QUEBEC in vain shall teach our breast to glow,
Whilst thy sad fate extorts the heart-wrung tear.
Alive the foe thy dreadful vigour fled,
And saw thee fall with joy-pronouncing eyes:
Yet they shall know thou conquerest, though dead--
Since from thy tomb a thousand heroes rise!

Oliver Goldsmith

The Traveller; or, A Prospect of Society (excerpt)

...

But where to find that happiest spot below
Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
The shudd'ring tenant of the frigid zone
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own;
Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long nights of revelry and ease:
The naked negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine,
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast where'er we roam,
His first, best country ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Tho' patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind;
As different good, by Art or Nature given,
To different nations makes their blessings even.

Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at Labour's earnest call:
With food as well the peasant is supplied
On Idra's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side;
And though the rocky-crested summits frown,
These rocks by custom turn to beds of down.
From Art more various are the blessings sent,--
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content.
Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
That either seems destructive of the rest.
Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment fails,
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.
Hence every state, to one lov'd blessing prone,
Conforms and models life to that alone.
Each to the favourite happiness attends,
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends:
Till carried to excess in each domain,
This favourite good begets peculiar pain.

But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies:
Here for a while my proper cares resign'd;
Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind;
Like yon neglected shrub at random cast,
That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast.

Far to the right, where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer, Italy extends:
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride;
While oft some temple's mould'ring tops between

With venerable grandeur mark the scene.

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise or humbly court the ground;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession descks the varied year;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die;
These, here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil;
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.
In florid beauty groves and fields appear;
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign:
Though poor, luxurious; though submissive, vain;
Though grave, yet trifling; zealous, yet untrue;
And e'en in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind
That opulence departed leaves behind;
For wealth was theirs; not far removed the date,
When commerce proudly flourish'd through the state;
At her command the palace learnt to rise,
Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies,
The canvas glow'd, beyond e'en nature warm,
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form;
Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail;
While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unmann'd, and lords without a slave:
And late the nation found with fruitless skill
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

Yet still the loss of wealth is here supplied
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride;
For these the feeble heart and long-fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The pasteboard triumph and the cavalcade,
Processions form'd for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguil'd;
The sports of children satisfy the child.
Each nobler aim, repress'd by long control,
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul;
While low delights, succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind:

As in those domes where Caesars once bore sway,
Defac'd by time and tott'ring in decay,
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed;
And, wond'ring man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile....

Oliver Goldsmith

The Village Schoolmaster

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school;
A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The days disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee,
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he:
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd:
Yet he was kind; or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declar'd how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too:
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And e'en the story ran that he could gauge.
In arguing too, the parson own'd his skill,
For e'en though vanquish'd he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thund'ring sound
Amazed the gazing rustics rang'd around;
And still they gaz'd and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.
But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumph'd is forgot.

Oliver Goldsmith

Threnodia Augustalis: Overture - A Solemn Dirge

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF HER LATE ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCESS DOWAGER OF WALES.

AIR -- TRIO.

ARISE, ye sons of worth, arise,
And waken every note of woe;
When truth and virtue reach the skies,
'Tis ours to weep the want below!

CHORUS.
When truth and virtue, etc.

MAN SPEAKER.
The praise attending pomp and power,
The incense given to kings,
Are but the trappings of an hour --
Mere transitory things!
The base bestow them: but the good agree
To spurn the venal gifts as flattery.
But when to pomp and power are join'd
An equal dignity of mind --
When titles are the smallest claim --
When wealth and rank and noble blood,
But aid the power of doing good --
Then all their trophies last; and flattery turns to fame.

Bless'd spirit thou, whose fame, just born to bloom
Shall spread and flourish from the tomb,
How hast thou left mankind for heaven!
Even now reproach and faction mourn.
And, wondering how their rage was borne,
Request to be forgiven.
Alas! they never had thy hate:
Unmov'd in conscious rectitude,
Thy towering mind self-centred stood,
Nor wanted man's opinion to be great.
In vain, to charm thy ravish'd sight,
A thousand gifts would fortune send;
In vain, to drive thee from the right,
A thousand sorrows urg'd thy end:
Like some well-fashion'd arch thy patience stood,
And purchas'd strength from its increasing load.
Pain met thee like a friend that set thee free;
Affliction still is virtue's opportunity!
Virtue, on herself relying,
Ev'ry passion hush'd to rest,
Loses ev'ry pain of dying
In the hopes of being blest.
Ev'ry added pang she suffers
Some increasing good bestows,
Ev'ry shock that malice offers

Only rocks her to repose.

SONG. BY A MAN -- AFFETTUOSO.

Virtue, on herself relying,
Ev'ry passion hush'd to rest,
Loses ev'ry pain of dying
In the hopes of being blest.

Ev'ry added pang she suffers
Some increasing good bestows,
Ev'ry shock that malice offers,
Only rocks her to repose.

WOMAN SPEAKER.

Yet, ah! what terrors frowned upon her fate --
Death, with its formidable band,
Fever and pain and pale consumptive care,
Determin'd took their stand:
Nor did the cruel ravagers design
To finish all their efforts at a blow;
But, mischievously slow,
They robb'd the relic and defac'd the shrine.
With unavailing grief,
Despairing of relief,
Her weeping children round
Beheld each hour
Death's growing power,
And trembled as he frown'd.

As helpless friends who view from shore
The labouring ship, and hear the tempest roar,
While winds and waves their wishes cross --
They stood, while hope and comfort fail,
Not to assist, but to bewail
The inevitable loss.
Relentless tyrant, at thy call
How do the good, the virtuous fall!
Truth, beauty, worth, and all that most engage,
But wake thy vengeance and provoke thy rage.

SONG. BY A MAN. -- BASSO. -- STACCATO. -- SPIRITOSO.

When vice my dart and scythe supply,
How great a king of terrors I!
If folly, fraud, your hearts engage,
Tremble, ye mortals, at my rage!
Fall, round me fall, ye little things,
Ye statesmen, warriors, poets, kings;
If virtue fail her counsel sage,
Tremble, ye mortals, at my rage!

MAN SPEAKER.

Yet let that wisdom, urged by her example,

Teach us to estimate what all must suffer;
Let us prize death as the best gift of nature --
As a safe inn, where weary travellers,
When they have journeyed through a world of cares,
May put off life and be at rest for ever.
Groans, weeping friends, indeed, and gloomy sables,
May oft distract us with their sad solemnity:
The preparation is the executioner.
Death, when unmasked, shows me a friendly face,
And is a terror only at a distance;
For as the line of life conducts me on
To Death's great court, the prospect seems more fair.
'Tis Nature's kind retreat, that's always open
To take us in when we have drained the cup
Of life, or worn our days to wretchedness.
In that secure, serene retreat,
Where all the humble, all the great,
Promiscuously recline;
Where wildly huddled to the eye,
The beggar's pouch and prince's purple lie,
May every bliss be thine.
And ah! bless'd spirit, wheresoe'er thy flight,
Through rolling worlds, or fields of liquid light,
May cherubs welcome their expected guest;
May saints with songs receive thee to their rest;
May peace that claimed while here thy warmest love,
May blissful endless peace be thine above!

SONG. BY A WOMAN. -- AMOROSO.

Lovely, lasting Peace below,
Comforter of every woe,
Heav'nly born, and bred on high,
To crown the favourites of the sky --
Lovely, lasting Peace, appear;
This world itself, if thou art here,
Is once again with Eden blest,
And man contains it in his breast.

WOMAN SPEAKER.

Our vows are heard! Long, long to mortal eyes,
Her soul was fitting to its kindred skies:
Celestial-like her bounty fell,
Where modest want and patient sorrow dwell;
Want pass'd for merit at her door,
Unseen the modest were supplied,
Her constant pity fed the poor --
Then only poor, indeed, the day she died.
And oh! for this! while sculpture decks thy shrine,
And art exhausts profusion round,
The tribute of a tear be mine,
A simple song, a sigh profound.
There Faith shall come, a pilgrim gray,

To bless the tomb that wraps thy clay;
And calm Religion shall repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there.
Truth, Fortitude, and Friendship shall agree
To blend their virtues while they think of thee.

AIR. CHORUS. -- POMPOSO.
Let us, let all the world agree,
To profit by resembling thee.

Oliver Goldsmith

Threnodia Augustalis: Overture - Pastorale

MAN SPEAKER.

FAST by that shore where Thames' translucent stream
Reflects new glories on his breast,
Where, splendid as the youthful poet's dream,
He forms a scene beyond Elysium blest --
Where sculptur'd elegance and native grace
Unite to stamp the beauties of the place,
While sweetly blending still are seen
The wavy lawn, the sloping green --
While novelty, with cautious cunning,
Through ev'ry maze of fancy running,
From China borrows aid to deck the scene --
There, sorrowing by the river's glassy bed,
Forlorn, a rural bard complain'd,
All whom Augusta's bounty fed,
All whom her clemency sustain'd;
The good old sire, unconscious of decay,
The modest matron, clad in homespun gray,
The military boy, the orphan'd maid,
The shatter'd veteran, now first dismay'd;
These sadly join beside the murmuring deep,
And, as they view
The towers of Kew,
Call on their mistress -- now no more -- and weep.

CHORUS. -- AFFETTUOSO. -- LARGO.

Ye shady walks, ye waving greens,
Ye nodding towers, ye fairy scenes --
Let all your echoes now deplore
That she who form'd your beauties is no more.

MAN SPEAKER.

First of the train the patient rustic came,
Whose callous hand had form'd the scene,
Bending at once with sorrow and with age,
With many a tear and many a sigh between;
'And where,' he cried, 'shall now my babes have bread,
Or how shall age support its feeble fire?
No lord will take me now, my vigour fled,
Nor can my strength perform what they require;
Each grudging master keeps the labourer bare --
A sleek and idle race is all their care.
My noble mistress thought not so:
Her bounty, like the morning dew,
Unseen, though constant, used to flow;
And as my strength decay'd, her bounty grew.'

WOMAN SPEAKER.

In decent dress, and coarsely clean,
The pious matron next was seen --
Clasp'd in her hand a godly book was borne,
By use and daily meditation worn;

That decent dress, this holy guide,
Augusta's care had well supplied.
'And ah!' she cries, all woe-begone,
'What now remains for me?
Oh! where shall weeping want repair,
To ask for charity?
Too late in life for me to ask,
And shame prevents the deed,
And tardy, tardy are the times
To succour, should I need.
But all my wants, before I spoke,
Were to my Mistress known;
She still reliev'd, nor sought my praise,
Contented with her own.
But ev'ry day her name I'll bless,
My morning prayer, my evening song,
I'll praise her while my life shall last,
A life that cannot last me long.'

SONG. BY A WOMAN.

Each day, each hour, her name I'll bless --
My morning and my evening song;
And when in death my vows shall cease,
My children shall the note prolong.

MAN SPEAKER.

The hardy veteran after struck the sight,
Scarr'd, mangled, maim'd in every part,
Lopp'd of his limbs in many a gallant fight,
In nought entire -- except his heart.
Mute for a while, and sullenly distress'd,
At last the impetuous sorrow fir'd his breast.
'Wild is the whirlwind rolling
O'er Afric's sandy plain,
And wild the tempest howling
Along the billow'd main:
But every danger felt before --
The raging deep, the whirlwind's roar --
Less dreadful struck me with dismay,
Than what I feel this fatal day.
Oh, let me fly a land that spurns the brave,
Oswego's dreary shores shall be my grave;
I'll seek that less inhospitable coast,
And lay my body where my limbs were lost.'

SONG. BY A MAN. -- BASSO. SPIRITOSO.

Old Edward's sons, unknown to yield,
Shall crowd from Crecy's laurell'd field,
To do thy memory right;
For thine and Britain's wrongs they feel,
Again they snatch the gleamy steel,
And wish the avenging fight.

WOMAN SPEAKER.

In innocence and youth complaining,
Next appear'd a lovely maid,
Affliction o'er each feature reigning,
Kindly came in beauty's aid;
Every grace that grief dispenses,
Every glance that warms the soul,
In sweet succession charmed the senses,
While pity harmonized the whole.
'The garland of beauty' -- 'tis thus she would say --
'No more shall my crook or my temples adorn,
I'll not wear a garland -- Augusta's away,
I'll not wear a garland until she return;
But alas! that return I never shall see,
The echoes of Thames shall my sorrows proclaim,
There promised a lover to come -- but, O me!
'Twas death, -- 'twas the death of my mistress that came.
But ever, for ever, her image shall last,
I'll strip all the spring of its earliest bloom;
On her grave shall the cowslip and primrose be cast,
And the new-blossomed thorn shall whiten her tomb.'

SONG. BY A WOMAN. -- PASTORALE.

With garlands of beauty the queen of the May
No more will her crook or her temples adorn;
For who'd wear a garland when she is away,
When she is remov'd, and shall never return.

On the grave of Augusta these garlands be plac'd,
We'll rifle the spring of its earliest bloom,
And there shall the cowslip and primrose be cast,
And the new-blossom'd thorn shall whiten her tomb.

CHORUS. -- ALTRO MODO.

On the grave of Augusta this garland be plac'd,
We'll rifle the spring of its earliest bloom,
And there shall the cowslip and primrose be cast,
And the tears of her country shall water her tomb.

Oliver Goldsmith

To G. C. And R. L.

'Twas you, or I, or he, or all together,
'Twas one, both, three of them, they know not whether;
This, I believe, between us great or small,
You, I, he, wrote it not--'twas Churchill's all.

Oliver Goldsmith

Translation

CHASTE are their instincts, faithful is their fire,
No foreign beauty tempts to false desire;
The snow-white vesture, and the glittering crown,
The simple plumage, or the glossy down
Prompt not their loves:-- the patriot bird pursues
His well acquainted tints, and kindred hues.
Hence through their tribes no mix'd polluted flame,
No monster-breed to mark the groves with shame;
But the chaste blackbird, to its partner true,
Thinks black alone is beauty's favourite hue.
The nightingale, with mutual passion blest,
Sings to its mate, and nightly charms the nest;
While the dark owl to court its partner flies,
And owns its offspring in their yellow eyes.

Oliver Goldsmith

Translation Of A South American Ode

IN all my Enna's beauties blest,
Amidst profusion still I pine;
For though she gives me up her breast,
Its panting tenant is not mine.

Oliver Goldsmith

Verses In Reply To An Invitation To Dinner At Dr. Baker's

'This 'is' a poem! This 'is' a copy of verses!'

YOUR mandate I got,
You may all go to pot;
Had your senses been right,
You'd have sent before night;
As I hope to be saved,
I put off being shaved;
For I could not make bold,
While the matter was cold,
To meddle in suds,
Or to put on my duds;
So tell Horneck and Nesbitt,
And Baker and his bit,
And Kauffmann beside,
And the Jessamy Bride,
With the rest of the crew,
The Reynoldses two,
Little Comedy's face,
And the Captain in lace,
(By-the-bye you may tell him,
I have something to sell him;
Of use I insist,
When he comes to enlist.
Your worships must know
That a few days ago,
An order went out,
For the foot guards so stout
To wear tails in high taste,
Twelve inches at least:
Now I've got him a scale
To measure each tail,
To lengthen a short tail,
And a long one to curtail.) --
Yet how can I when vext,
Thus stray from my text?
Tell each other to rue
Your Devonshire crew,
For sending so late
To one of my state.
But 'tis Reynolds's way
From wisdom to stray,
And Angelica's whim
To be frolick like him,
But, alas! Your good worships, how could they be wiser,
When both have been spoil'd in to-day's 'Advertiser'?

Oliver Goldsmith

Vida's Game Of Chess

TRANSLATED

ARMIES of box that sportively engage
And mimic real battles in their rage,
Pleased I recount; how, smit with glory's charms,
Two mighty Monarchs met in adverse arms,
Sable and white; assist me to explore,
Ye Serian Nymphs, what ne'er was sung before.
No path appears: yet resolute I stray
Where youth undaunted bids me force my way.
O'er rocks and cliffs while I the task pursue,
Guide me, ye Nymphs, with your unerring clue.
For you the rise of this diversion know,
You first were pleased in Italy to show
This studious sport; from Scacchis was its name,
The pleasing record of your Sister's fame.

When Jove through Ethiopia's parch'd extent
To grace the nuptials of old Ocean went,
Each god was there; and mirth and joy around
To shores remote diffused their happy sound.
Then when their hunger and their thirst no more
Claim'd their attention, and the feast was o'er;
Ocean with pastime to divert the thought,
Commands a painted table to be brought.
Sixty-four spaces fill the chequer'd square;
Eight in each rank eight equal limits share.
Alike their form, but different are their dyes,
They fade alternate, and alternate rise,
White after black; such various stains as those
The shelving backs of tortoises disclose.
Then to the gods that mute and wondering sate,
You see (says he) the field prepared for fate.
Here will the little armies please your sight,
With adverse colours hurrying to the fight:
On which so oft, with silent sweet surprise,
The Nymphs and Nereids used to feast their eyes,
And all the neighbours of the hoary deep,
When calm the sea, and winds were lull'd asleep
But see, the mimic heroes tread the board;
He said, and straightway from an urn he pour'd
The sculptured box, that neatly seem'd to ape
The graceful figure of a human shape:--
Equal the strength and number of each foe,
Sixteen appear'd like jet, sixteen like snow.
As their shape varies various is the name,
Different their posts, nor is their strength the same.
There might you see two Kings with equal pride
Gird on their arms, their Consorts by their side;
Here the Foot-warriors glowing after fame,
There prancing Knights and dexterous Archers came
And Elephants, that on their backs sustain

Vast towers of war, and fill and shake the plain.

And now both hosts, preparing for the storm
Of adverse battle, their encampments form.
In the fourth space, and on the farthest line,
Directly opposite the Monarchs shine;
The swarthy on white ground, on sable stands
The silver King; and then they send commands.
Nearest to these the Queens exert their might;
One the left side, and t'other guards the right:
Where each, by her respective armour known,
Chooses the colour that is like her own.
Then the young Archers, two that snowy-white
Bend the tough yew, and two as black as night;
(Greece call'd them Mars's favourites heretofore,
From their delight in war, and thirst of gore).
These on each side the Monarch and his Queen
Surround obedient; next to these are seen
The crested Knights in golden armour gay;
Their steeds by turns curvet, or snort or neigh.
In either army on each distant wing
Two mighty Elephants their castles bring,
Bulwarks immense! and then at last combine
Eight of the Foot to form the second line,
The vanguard to the King and Queen; from far
Prepared to open all the fate of war.
So moved the boxen hosts, each double-lined,
Their different colours floating in the wind:
As if an army of the Gauls should go,
With their white standards, o'er the Alpine snow
To meet in rigid fight on scorching sands
The sun-burnt Moors and Memnon's swarthy bands.

Then Father Ocean thus; you see them here,
Celestial powers, what troops, what camps appear.
Learn now the sev'ral orders of the fray,
For e'en these arms their stated laws obey.
To lead the fight, the Kings from all their bands
Choose whom they please to bear their great commands.
Should a black hero first to battle go,
Instant a white one guards against the blow;
But only one at once can charge or shun the foe.
Their gen'ral purpose on one scheme is bent,
So to besiege the King within the tent,
That there remains no place by subtle flight
From danger free; and that decides the fight.
Meanwhile, howe'er, the sooner to destroy
Th' imperial Prince, remorseless they employ
Their swords in blood; and whosoever dare
Oppose their vengeance, in the ruin share.
Fate thins their camp; the parti-coloured field
Widens apace, as they o'ercome or yield,

But the proud victor takes the captive's post;
There fronts the fury of th' avenging host
One single shock: and (should he ward the blow),
May then retire at pleasure from the foe.
The Foot alone (so their harsh laws ordain)
When they proceed can ne'er return again.

But neither all rush on alike to prove
The terror of their arms: The Foot must move
Directly on, and but a single square;
Yet may these heroes, when they first prepare
To mix in combat on the bloody mead,
Double their sally, and two steps proceed;
But when they wound, their swords they subtly guide
With aim oblique, and slanting pierce his side.
But the great Indian beasts, whose backs sustain
Vast turrets arm'd, when on the redd'ning plain
They join in all the terror of the fight,
Forward or backward, to the left or right,
Run furious, and impatient of confine
Scour through the field, and threat the farthest line.
Yet must they ne'er obliquely aim their blows;
That only manner is allow'd to those
Whom Mars has favour'd most, who bend the stubborn bows.
These glancing sideways in a straight career,
Yet each confin'd to their respective sphere,
Or white or black, can send th' unerring dart
Wing'd with swift death to pierce through ev'ry part.
The fiery steed, regardless of the reins,
Comes prancing on; but sullenly disdains
The path direct, and boldly wheeling round,
Leaps o'er a double space at ev'ry bound:
And shifts from white or black to diff'rent colour'd ground.
But the fierce Queen, whom dangers ne'er dismay,
The strength and terror of the bloody day,
In a straight line spreads her destruction wide,
To left or right, before, behind, aside.
Yet may she never with a circling course
Sweep to the battle like the fretful Horse;
But unconfin'd may at her pleasure stray,
If neither friend nor foe block up the way;
For to o'erleap a warrior, 'tis decreed
Those only dare who curb the snorting steed.
With greater caution and majestic state
The warlike Monarchs in the scene of fate
Direct their motions, since for these appear
Zealous each hope, and anxious ev'ry fear.
While the King's safe, with resolution stern
They clasp their arms; but should a sudden turn
Make him a captive, instantly they yield,
Resolved to share his fortune in the field.
He moves on slow; with reverence profound

His faithful troops encompass him around,
And oft, to break some instant fatal scheme,
Rush to their fates, their sov'reign to redeem;
While he, unanxious where to wound the foe,
Need only shift and guard against a blow.
But none, however, can presume t' appear
Within his reach, but must his vengeance fear;
For he on ev'ry side his terror throws;
But when he changes from his first repose,
Moves but one step, most awfully sedate,
Or idly roving, or intent on fate.
These are the sev'ral and establish'd laws:
Now see how each maintains his bloody cause.

Here paused the god, but (since whene'er they wage
War here on earth the gods themselves engage
In mutual battle as they hate or love,
And the most stubborn war is oft above),
Almighty Jove commands the circling train
Of gods from fav'ring either to abstain,
And let the fight be silently survey'd;
And added solemn threats if disobey'd.
Then call'd he Phoebus from among the Powers
And subtle Hermes, whom in softer hours
Fair Maia bore: youth wanton'd in their face;
Both in life's bloom, both shone with equal grace.
Hermes as yet had never wing'd his feet;
As yet Apollo in his radiant seat
Had never driv'n his chariot through the air,
Known by his bow alone and golden hair.
These Jove commission'd to attempt the fray,
And rule the sportive military day;
Bid them agree which party each maintains,
And promised a reward that's worth their pains.
The greater took their seats; on either hand
Respectful the less gods in order stand,
But careful not to interrupt their play,
By hinting when t' advance or run away.

Then they examine, who shall first proceed
To try their courage, and their army lead.
Chance gave it for the White, that he should go
First with a brave defiance to the foe.
Awhile he ponder'd which of all his train
Should bear his first commission o'er the plain;
And then determin'd to begin the scene
With him that stood before to guard the Queen.
He took a double step: with instant care
Does the black Monarch in his turn prepare
The adverse champion, and with stern command
Bid him repel the charge with equal hand.
There front to front, the midst of all the field,

With furious threats their shining arms they wield;
Yet vain the conflict, neither can prevail
While in one path each other they assail.
On ev'ry side to their assistance fly
Their fellow soldiers, and with strong supply
Crowd to the battle, but no bloody stain
Tinctures their armour; sportive in the plain
Mars plays awhile, and in excursion slight
Harmless they sally forth, or wait the fight.

But now the swarthy Foot, that first appear'd
To front the foe, his pond'rous jav'lin rear'd
Leftward aslant, and a pale warrior slays,
Spurns him aside, and boldly takes his place.
Unhappy youth, his danger not to spy!
Instant he fell, and triumph'd but to die.
At this the sable King with prudent care
Removed his station from the middle square,
And slow retiring to the farthest ground,
There safely lurk'd, with troops entrench'd around.
Then from each quarter to the war advance
The furious Knights, and poise the trembling lance:
By turns they rush, by turns the victors yield,
Heaps of dead Foot choke up the crimson'd field:
They fall unable to retreat; around
The clang of arms and iron hoofs resound.

But while young Phoebus pleased himself to view
His furious Knight destroy the vulgar crew,
Sly Hermes long'd t' attempt with secret aim
Some noble act of more exalted fame.
For this, he inoffensive pass'd along
Through ranks of Foot, and midst the trembling throng
Sent his left Horse, that free without confine
Rov'd o'er the plain, upon some great design
Against the King himself. At length he stood,
And having fix'd his station as he would,
Threaten'd at once with instant fate the King
And th' Indian beast that guarded the right wing.
Apollo sigh'd, and hast'ning to relieve
The straiten'd Monarch, griev'd that he must leave
His martial Elephant expos'd to fate,
And view'd with pitying eyes his dang'rous state.
First in his thoughts however was his care
To save his King, whom to the neighbouring square
On the right hand, he snatch'd with trembling flight;
At this with fury springs the sable Knight,
Drew his keen sword, and rising to the blow,
Sent the great Indian brute to shades below.
O fatal loss! for none except the Queen
Spreads such a terror through the bloody scene.
Yet shall you ne'er unpunish'd boast your prize,

The Delian god with stern resentment cries;
 And wedg'd him round with Foot, and pour'd in fresh supplies.
 Thus close besieg'd trembling he cast his eye
 Around the plain, but saw no shelter nigh,
 No way for flight; for here the Queen oppos'd,
 The Foot in phalanx there the passage clos'd:
 At length he fell; yet not unpleas'd with fate,
 Since victim to a Queen's vindictive hate.
 With grief and fury burns the whiten'd host,
 One of their Tow'rs thus immaturely lost.
 As when a bull has in contention stern
 Lost his right horn, with double vengeance burn
 His thoughts for war, with blood he's cover'd o'er,
 And the woods echo to his dismal roar,
 So look'd the flaxen host, when angry fate
 O'erturn'd the Indian bulwark of their state.
 Fired at this great success, with double rage
 Apollo hurries on his troops t' engage,
 For blood and havoc wild; and, while he leads
 His troops thus careless, loses both his steeds:
 For if some adverse warriors were o'erthrown,
 He little thought what dangers threat his own.
 But slyer Hermes with observant eyes
 March'd slowly cautious, and at distance spies
 What moves must next succeed, what dangers next arise.
 Often would he, the stately Queen to snare,
 The slender Foot to front her arms prepare,
 And to conceal his scheme he sighs and feigns
 Such a wrong step would frustrate all his pains.
 Just then an Archer, from the right-hand view,
 At the pale Queen his arrow boldly drew,
 Unseen by Phoebus, who, with studious thought,
 From the left side a vulgar hero brought.
 But tender Venus, with a pitying eye,
 Viewing the sad destruction that was nigh,
 Wink'd upon Phoebus (for the Goddess sat
 By chance directly opposite); at that
 Roused in an instant, young Apollo threw
 His eyes around the field his troops to view:
 Perceiv'd the danger, and with sudden fright
 Withdrew the Foot that he had sent to fight,
 And sav'd his trembling Queen by seasonable flight.
 But Maia's son with shouts fill'd all the coast:
 The Queen, he cried, the important Queen is lost.
 Phoebus, howe'er, resolving to maintain
 What he had done, bespoke the heavenly train.
 What mighty harm, in sportive mimic flight,
 Is it to set a little blunder right,
 When no preliminary rule debarr'd?
 If you henceforward, Mercury, would guard
 Against such practice, let us make the law:
 And whosoe'er shall first to battle draw,

Or white, or black, remorseless let him go
At all events, and dare the angry foe.
He said, and this opinion pleased around:
Jove turn'd aside, and on his daughter frown'd,
Unmark'd by Hermes, who, with strange surprise,
Fretted and foam'd, and roll'd his ferret eyes,
And but with great reluctance could refrain
From dashing at a blow all off the plain.
Then he resolved to interweave deceits, --
To carry on the war by tricks and cheats.
Instant he call'd an Archer from the throng,
And bid him like the courser wheel along:
Bounding he springs, and threats the pallid Queen.
The fraud, however, was by Phoebus seen;
He smiled, and, turning to the Gods, he said:
Though, Hermes, you are perfect in your trade,
And you can trick and cheat to great surprise,
These little sleights no more shall blind my eyes;
Correct them if you please, the more you thus disguise.
The circle laugh'd aloud; and Maia's son
(As if it had but by mistake been done)
Recall'd his Archer, and with motion due,
Bid him advance, the combat to renew.
But Phoebus watch'd him with a jealous eye,
Fearing some trick was ever lurking nigh,
For he would oft, with sudden sly design,
Send forth at once two combatants to join
His warring troops, against the law of arms,
Unless the wary foe was ever in alarms.

Now the white Archer with his utmost force
Bent the tough bow against the sable Horse,
And drove him from the Queen, where he had stood
Hoping to glut his vengeance with her blood.
Then the right Elephant with martial pride
Roved here and there, and spread his terrors wide:
Glittering in arms from far a courser came,
Threaten'd at once the King and Royal Dame;
Thought himself safe when he the post had seized,
And with the future spoils his fancy pleased.
Fired at the danger a young Archer came,
Rush'd on the foe, and levell'd sure his aim;
(And though a Pawn his sword in vengeance draws,
Gladly he'd lose his life in glory's cause).
The whistling arrow to his bowels flew,
And the sharp steel his blood profusely drew;
He drops the reins, he totters to the ground,
And his life issued murm'ring through the wound.
Pierced by the Foot, this Archer bit the plain;
The Foot himself was by another slain;
And with inflamed revenge, the battle burns again.
Towers, Archers, Knights, meet on the crimson ground,

And the field echoes to the martial sound.
Their thoughts are heated, and their courage fired,
Thick they rush on with double zeal inspired;
Generals and Foot, with different colour'd mien,
Confusedly warring in the camps are seen, --
Valour and fortune meet in one promiscuous scene.
Now these victorious, lord it o'er the field;
Now the foe rallies, the triumphant yield:
Just as the tide of battle ebbs or flows.
As when the conflict more tempestuous grows
Between the winds, with strong and boisterous sweep
They plough th' Ionian or Atlantic deep!
By turns prevail the mutual blustering roar,
And the big waves alternate lash the shore.
But in the midst of all the battle raged
The snowy Queen, with troops at once engaged;
She fell'd an Archer as she sought the plain, --
As she retired an Elephant was slain:
To right and left her fatal spears she sent,
Burst through the ranks, and triumph'd as she went;
Through arms and blood she seeks a glorious fate,
Pierces the farthest lines, and nobly great
Leads on her army with a gallant show,
Breaks the battalions, and cuts through the foe.
At length the sable King his fears betray'd,
And begg'd his military consort's aid:
With cheerful speed she flew to his relief,
And met in equal arms the female chief.

Who first, great Queen, and who at last did bleed?
How many Whites lay gasping on the mead?
Half dead, and floating in a bloody tide,
Foot, Knights, and Archer lie on every side.
Who can recount the slaughter of the day?
How many leaders threw their lives away?
The chequer'd plain is fill'd with dying box,
Havoc ensues, and with tumultuous shocks
The different colour'd ranks in blood engage,
And Foot and Horse promiscuously rage.
With nobler courage and superior might
The dreadful Amazons sustain the fight,
Resolved alike to mix in glorious strife,
Till to imperious fate they yield their life.

Meanwhile each Monarch, in a neighbouring cell,
Confined the warriors that in battle fell,
There watch'd the captives with a jealous eye,
Lest, slipping out again, to arms they fly.
But Thracian Mars, in stedfast friendship join'd
To Hermes, as near Phoebus he reclined,
Observed each chance, how all their motions bend,
Resolved if possible to serve his friend.

He a Foot-soldier and a Knight purloin'd
Out from the prison that the dead confined;
And slyly push'd 'em forward on the plain;
Th' enliven'd combatants their arms regain,
Mix in the bloody scene, and boldly war again.

So the foul hag, in screaming wild alarms
O'er a dead carcass muttering her charms,
(And with her frequent and tremendous yell
Forcing great Hecate from out of hell)
Shoots in the corpse a new fictitious soul;
With instant glare the supple eyeballs roll,
Again it moves and speaks, and life informs the whole.

Vulcan alone discern'd the subtle cheat;
And wisely scorning such a base deceit,
Call'd out to Phoebus. Grief and rage assail
Phoebus by turns; detected Mars turns pale.
Then awful Jove with sullen eye reproved
Mars, and the captives order'd to be moved
To their dark caves; bid each fictitious spear
Be straight recall'd, and all be as they were.

And now both Monarchs with redoubled rage
Led on their Queens, the mutual war to wage.
O'er all the field their thirsty spears they send,
Then front to front their Monarchs they defend.
But lo! the female White rush'd in unseen,
And slew with fatal haste the swarthy Queen;
Yet soon, alas! resign'd her royal spoils,
Snatch'd by a shaft from her successful toils.
Struck at the sight, both hosts in wild surprise
Pour'd forth their tears, and fill'd the air with cries;
They wept and sigh'd, as pass'd the fun'ral train,
As if both armies had at once been slain.

And now each troop surrounds its mourning chief,
To guard his person, or assuage his grief.
One is their common fear; one stormy blast
Has equally made havoc as it pass'd.
Not all, however, of their youth are slain;
Some champions yet the vig'rous war maintain.
Three Foot, an Archer, and a stately Tower,
For Phoebus still exert their utmost power.
Just the same number Mercury can boast,
Except the Tower, who lately in his post
Unarm'd inglorious fell, in peace profound,
Pierced by an Archer with a distant wound;
But his right Horse retain'd its mettled pride, --
The rest were swept away by war's strong tide.

But fretful Hermes, with despairing moan,

Griev'd that so many champions were o'erthrown,
Yet reassumes the fight; and summons round
The little stragglings army that he found, --
All that had 'scaped from fierce Apollo's rage, --
Resolved with greater caution to engage
In future strife, by subtle wiles (if fate
Should give him leave) to save his sinking state.
The sable troops advance with prudence slow,
Bent on all hazards to distress the foe.
More cheerful Phoebus, with unequal pace,
Rallies his arms to lessen his disgrace.
But what strange havoc everywhere has been!
A stragglings champion here and there is seen;
And many are the tents, yet few are left within.

Th' afflicted Kings bewail their consorts dead,
And loathe the thoughts of a deserted bed;
And though each monarch studies to improve
The tender mem'ry of his former love,
Their state requires a second nuptial tie.
Hence the pale ruler with a love-sick eye
Surveys th' attendants of his former wife,
And offers one of them a royal life.
These, when their martial mistress had been slain,
Weak and despairing tried their arms in vain;
Willing, howe'er, amidst the Black to go,
They thirst for speedy vengeance on the foe.
Then he resolves to see who merits best,
By strength and courage, the imperial vest;
Points out the foe, bids each with bold design
Pierce through the ranks, and reach the deepest line:
For none must hope with monarchs to repose
But who can first, through thick surrounding foes,
Through arms and wiles, with hazardous essay,
Safe to the farthest quarters force their way.
Fired at the thought, with sudden, joyful pace
They hurry on; but first of all the race
Runs the third right-hand warrior for the prize, --
The glitt'ring crown already charms her eyes.
Her dear associates cheerfully give o'er
The nuptial chase; and swift she flies before,
And Glory lent her wings, and the reward in store.
Nor would the sable King her hopes prevent,
For he himself was on a Queen intent,
Alternate, therefore, through the field they go.
Hermes led on, but by a step too slow,
His fourth left Pawn: and now th' advent'rous White
Had march'd through all, and gain'd the wish'd for site.
Then the pleased King gives orders to prepare
The crown, the sceptre, and the royal chair,
And owns her for his Queen: around exult
The snowy troops, and o'er the Black insult.

Hermes burst into tears, -- with fretful roar
Fill'd the wide air, and his gay vesture tore.
The swarthy Foot had only to advance
One single step; but oh! malignant chance!
A towered Elephant, with fatal aim,
Stood ready to destroy her when she came:
He keeps a watchful eye upon the whole,
Threatens her entrance, and protects the goal.
Meanwhile the royal new-created bride,
Pleased with her pomp, spread death and terror wide;
Like lightning through the sable troops she flies,
Clashes her arms, and seems to threat the skies.
The sable troops are sunk in wild affright,
And wish th' earth op'ning snatch'd 'em from her sight.
In burst the Queen, with vast impetuous swing:
The trembling foes come swarming round the King,
Where in the midst he stood, and form a valiant ring.
So the poor cows, straggl'g o'er pasture land,
When they perceive the prowling wolf at hand,
Crowd close together in a circle full,
And beg the succour of the lordly bull;
They clash their horns, they low with dreadful sound,
And the remotest groves re-echo round.

But the bold Queen, victorious, from behind
Pierces the foe; yet chiefly she design'd
Against the King himself some fatal aim,
And full of war to his pavilion came.
Now here she rush'd, now there; and had she been
But duly prudent, she had slipp'd between,
With course oblique, into the fourth white square,
And the long toil of war had ended there,
The King had fallen, and all his sable state;
And vanquish'd Hermes cursed his partial fate.
For thence with ease the championess might go,
Murder the King, and none could ward the blow.

With silence, Hermes, and with panting heart,
Perceived the danger, but with subtle art,
(Lest he should see the place) spurs on the foe,
Confounds his thoughts, and blames his being slow.
For shame! move on; would you for ever stay?
What sloth is this, what strange perverse delay? --
How could you e'er my little pausing blame? --
What! you would wait till night shall end the game?
Phoebus, thus nettled, with imprudence slew
A vulgar Pawn, but lost his nobler view.
Young Hermes leap'd, with sudden joy elate;
And then, to save the monarch from his fate,
Led on his martial Knight, who stepp'd between,
Pleased that his charge was to oppose the Queen --

Then, pondering how the Indian beast to slay,
 That stopp'd the Foot from making farther way, --
 From being made a Queen; with slanting aim
 An archer struck him; down the monster came,
 And dying shook the earth: while Phoebus tries
 Without success the monarch to surprise.
 The Foot, then uncontroll'd with instant pride,
 Seized the last spot, and moved a royal bride.
 And now with equal strength both war again,
 And bring their second wives upon the plain;
 Then, though with equal views each hop'd and fear'd,
 Yet, as if every doubt had disappear'd,
 As if he had the palm, young Hermes flies
 Into excess of joy; with deep disguise,
 Extols his own Black troops, with frequent spite
 And with invective taunts disdains the White.
 Whom Phoebus thus reproved with quick return --
 As yet we cannot the decision learn
 Of this dispute, and do you triumph now?
 Then your big words and vauntings I'll allow,
 When you the battle shall completely gain;
 At present I shall make your boasting vain.
 He said, and forward led the daring Queen;
 Instant the fury of the bloody scene
 Rises tumultuous, swift the warriors fly
 From either side to conquer or to die.
 They front the storm of war: around 'em Fear,
 Terror, and Death, perpetually appear.
 All meet in arms, and man to man oppose,
 Each from their camp attempts to drive their foes;
 Each tries by turns to force the hostile lines;
 Chance and impatience blast their best designs.
 The sable Queen spread terror as she went
 Through the mid ranks: with more reserved intent
 The adverse dame declined the open fray,
 And to the King in private stole away:
 Then took the royal guard, and bursting in,
 With fatal menace close besieged the King.
 Alarm'd at this, the swarthy Queen, in haste,
 From all her havoc and destructive waste
 Broke off, and her contempt of death to show,
 Leap'd in between the Monarch and the foe,
 To save the King and state from this impending blow.
 But Phoebus met a worse misfortune here:
 For Hermes now led forward, void of fear,
 His furious Horse into the open plain,
 That onward chafed, and pranced, and pawed amain.
 Nor ceased from his attempts until he stood
 On the long-wished-for spot, from whence he could
 Slay King or Queen. O'erwhelm'd with sudden fears,
 Apollo saw, and could not keep from tears.
 Now all seem'd ready to be overthrown;

His strength was wither'd, ev'ry hope was flown.
Hermes, exulting at this great surprise,
Shouted for joy, and fill'd the air with cries;
Instant he sent the Queen to shades below,
And of her spoils made a triumphant show.
But in return, and in his mid career,
Fell his brave Knight, beneath the Monarch's spear.

Phoebus, however, did not yet despair,
But still fought on with courage and with care.
He had but two poor common men to show,
And Mars's favourite with his iv'ry bow.
The thoughts of ruin made 'em dare their best
To save their King, so fatally distress'd.
But the sad hour required not such an aid;
And Hermes breathed revenge where'er he stray'd.
Fierce comes the sable Queen with fatal threat,
Surrounds the Monarch in his royal seat;
Rushed here and there, nor rested till she slew
The last remainder of the whiten'd crew.
Sole stood the King, the midst of all the plain,
Weak and defenceless, his companions slain.
As when the ruddy morn ascending high
Has chased the twinkling stars from all the sky,
Your star, fair Venus, still retains its light,
And, loveliest, goes the latest out of sight.
No safety's left, no gleams of hope remain;
Yet did he not as vanquish'd quit the plain,
But tried to shut himself between the foe, --
Unhurt through swords and spears he hoped to go,
Until no room was left to shun the fatal blow.
For if none threaten'd his immediate fate,
And his next move must ruin all his state,
All their past toil and labour is in vain,
Vain all the bloody carnage of the plain, --
Neither would triumph then, the laurel neither gain.
Therefore through each void space and desert tent,
By different moves his various course he bent:
The Black King watch'd him with observant eye,
Follow'd him close, but left him room to fly.
Then when he saw him take the farthest line,
He sent the Queen his motions to confine,
And guard the second rank, that he could go
No farther now than to that distant row.
The sable monarch then with cheerful mien
Approach'd, but always with one space between.
But as the King stood o'er against him there,
Helpless, forlorn, and sunk in his despair,
The martial Queen her lucky moment knew,
Seized on the farthest seat with fatal view,
Nor left th' unhappy King a place to flee unto.
At length in vengeance her keen sword she draws,

Slew him, and ended thus the bloody cause:
And all the gods around approved it with applause.

The victor could not from his insults keep,
But laugh'd and sneer'd to see Apollo weep.
Jove call'd him near, and gave him in his hand
The powerful, happy, and mysterious wand
By which the Shades are call'd to purer day,
When penal fire has purged their sins away;
By which the guilty are condemn'd to dwell
In the dark mansions of the deepest hell;
By which he gives us sleep, or sleep denies,
And closes at the last the dying eyes.
Soon after this, the heavenly victor brought
The game on earth, and first th' Italians taught.

For (as they say) fair Scacchis he espied
Feeding her cygnets in the silver tide,
(Sacchis, the loveliest Seriad of the place)
And as she stray'd, took her to his embrace.
Then, to reward her for her virtue lost,
Gave her the men and chequer'd board, emboss'd
With gold and silver curiously inlay'd;
And taught her how the game was to be play'd.
Ev'n now 'tis honour'd with her happy name;
And Rome and all the world admire the game.
All which the Seriards told me heretofore,
When my boy-notes amused the Serian shore.

Oliver Goldsmith

When Lovely Woman Stoops To Folly

When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, is-to die.

Oliver Goldsmith