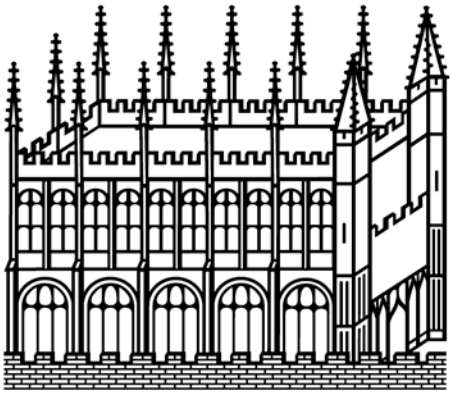

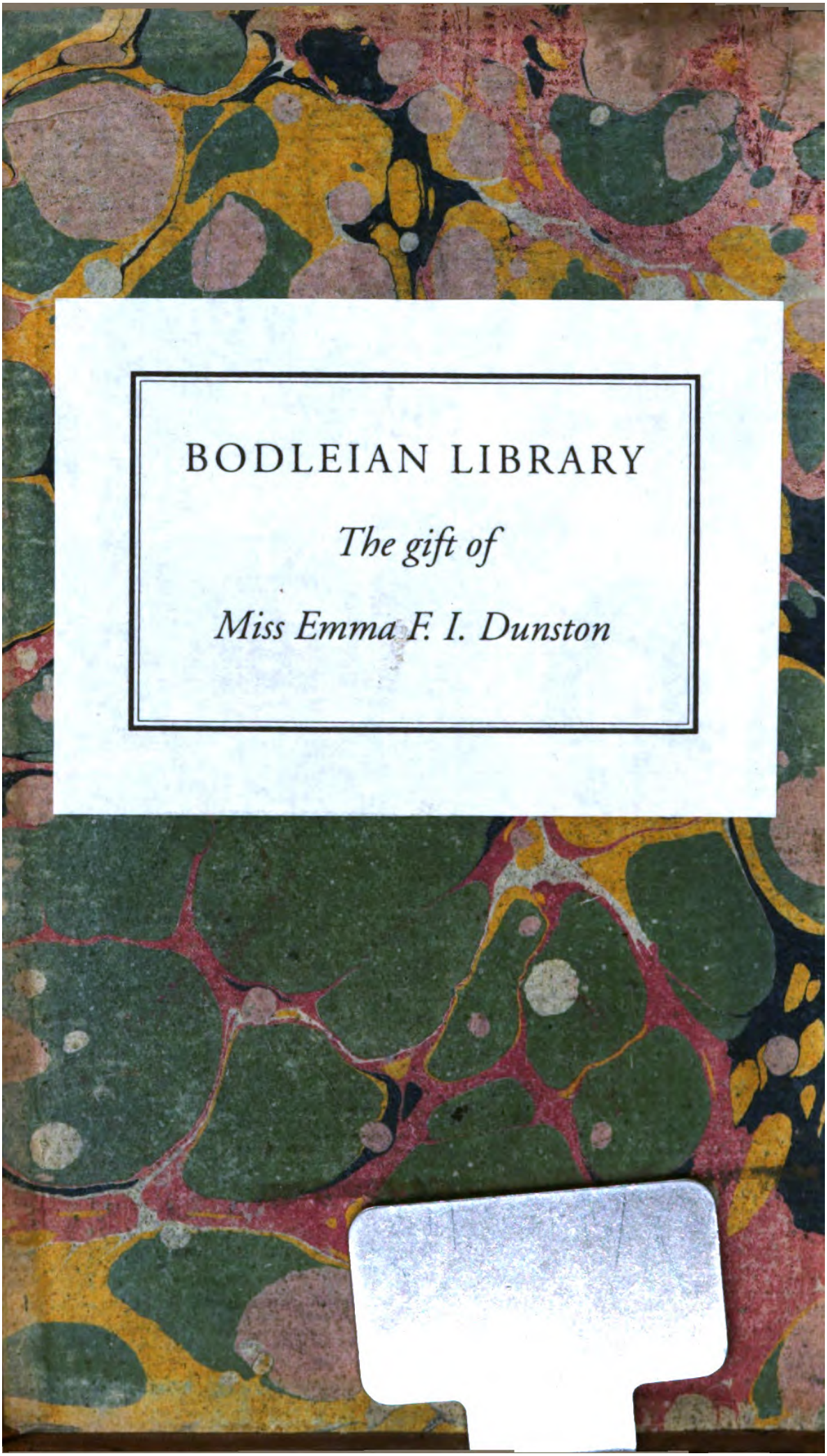

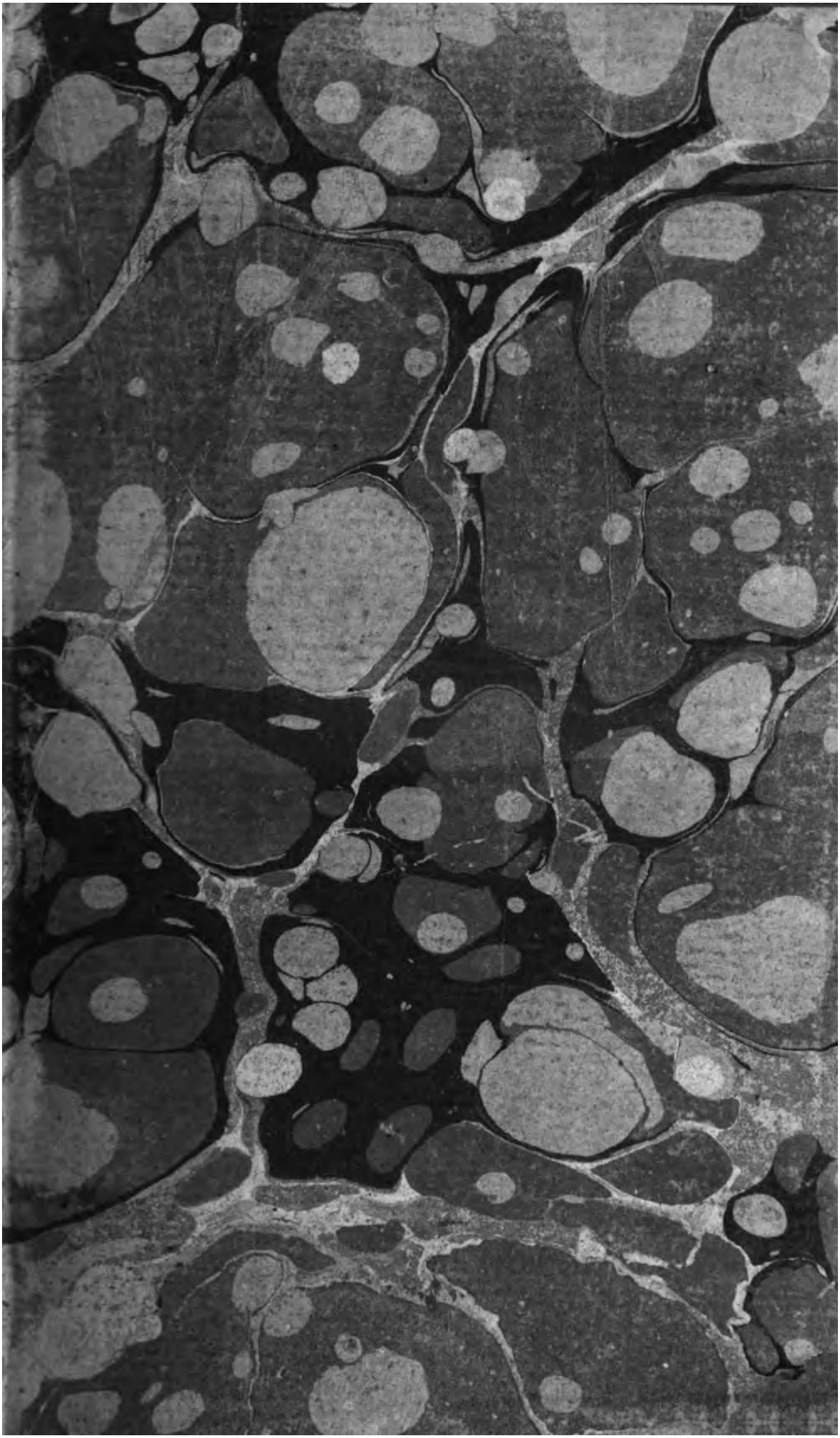

PREFACES,
BIOGRAPHICAL
AND
CRITICAL,
TO THE
WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS.
BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

VOLUME THE TENTH.

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M DCC LXXXI.

PREFACES

TO

YOUNG, DYER,

MALLET, SHENSTONE,

AKENSIDE, LYTTELTON,

WEST, AND GRAY.

YOUNG.

THE following Life was written, at my requeſt, by a gentleman who had better information than I could eaſily have obtained; and the publick will perhaps wiſh that I had ſolicited and obtained more ſuch favours from him.

" Dear Sir,

In conſequence of our different converſations about authentick materials for the Life of Young, and in conſequence of your fears leſt, for want of proper

 infor-

information, you might ſay any thing of the father which ſhould hurt the ſon, I ſend you the following detail. It is not, I confeſs, immediately in the line of my profeſſion; but hard indeed is our fate at the bar, if we may not call a few hours now-and-then our own.

Of great men ſomething muſt always be ſaid to gratify curioſity. Of the great author of the *Night Thoughts* much has been told of which there never could have been proofs; and little care appears to have been taken to tell that of which proofs, with little trouble, might have been procured.

ED.

EDWARD YOUNG was born at Upham, near Wincheſter, in June 1681. He was the ſon of Edward Young, at that time Fellow of Wincheſter College and Rector of Upham; who was the ſon of Jo. Young of Woodhay in Berkſhire, ſtiled by Wood *gentleman*. In September 1682 the Poet's father was collated to the prebend of Gillingham Minor, in the church of Sarum, by biſhop Ward. On the childiſhneſs of Ward, his duties were neceſſarily performed by others. We learn from Wood, that, at a viſitation of Sprat, July the 12th, 1686, the Prebendary preached a Latin ſermon, afterwards publiſhed, with which the Biſhop was ſo pleaſed, that he told the Chapter he was concerned to find the preacher had one of the

worſt prebends in their church. In conſequence of his merit and reputation, or of the intereſt of lord Bradford (to whom, in 1702, he dedicated two volumes of ſermons), he was, ſome time after, appointed chaplain to King William and Queen Mary, and preferred to the deanry of Sarum. Jacob, who wrote in 1720, ſays, he was chaplain and clerk of the cloſet to the late Queen, who honoured him by ſtanding godmother to the Poet. His fellowſhip of Wincheſter he reſigned in favour of one Mr. Harris, who married his only daughter. The Dean died at Sarum, after a ſhort illneſs, in 1705, in the ſixty-third year of his age. On the Sunday after his deceaſe Biſhop Burnet preached at the cathedral, and began his ſermon with ſaying, ‘ Death has

“ been

"been of late walking round us, and
"making breach upon breach upon us,
"and has now carried away the head of
"this body with a ſtroke; ſo that he,
"whom you ſaw a week ago diſtributing
"the holy myſteries, is now laid in the
"duſt. But he ſtill lives in the many
"excellent directions he has left us, both
"how to live and how to die."

The Dean placed his ſon upon the foundation at Wincheſter College, where he had himſelf been educated. At this ſchool Edward Young remained till the election after his eighteenth birth-day, the period at which thoſe upon the foundation are ſuperannuated. Whether he did not betray his abilities early in life, or his maſters had not ſkill enough to diſcover in their pupil any marks of ge-

nius for which he merited reward, or no vacancy at Oxford afforded them an opportunity to beſtow upon him the reward provided for merit by William of Wykeham; certain it is, that to an Oxford fellowſhip our Poet did not ſucceed. By chance, or by choice, New College does not number among its Fellows him who wrote the *Night Thoughts*.

On the 13th of October, 1703, he was entered an Independent Member of New College, that he might live at little expence in the Warden's lodgings, who was a particular friend of his father, till he ſhould be qualified to ſtand for a fellowſhip at All-ſouls. In a few months the warden of New College died. He

then removed to Corpus. The Preſident of this College, from regard alſo for his father, invited him thither, in order to leſſen his academical expences. In 1708 he was nominated to a law fellowſhip at All-ſouls by Archbiſhop Tenniſon, into whoſe hands it came by devolution. —Such repeated patronage, while it juſtifies Burnet's praiſe of the father, reflects credit on the conduct of the ſon. The manner in which it was exerted ſeems to prove that the father did not leave behind him much wealth.

On the 23d of April 1714, Young took his degree of Batchelor of Civil Laws, and his Doctor's degree on the 10th of June 1719.

Soon after he was elected at All-ſouls he diſcovered, it is ſaid, an inclination to take pupils. Whether he ever commenced tutor is not known. None has hitherto boaſted to have received his academical inſtruction from the author of the *Night Thoughts*. It is certain that his college was proud of him no leſs as a ſcholar than as a poet; for, in 1716, when the foundation of the Codrington Library was laid, two years after he had taken his Batchelor's degree, he was appointed to ſpeak the Latin oration, which is at leaſt particular for being dedicated in Engliſh *To the Ladies of the Codrington Family*. To theſe he ſays, that "he was unavoidably flung into a ſingularity, by being obliged to write an epiſtle-

epiſtle-dedicatory void of common-place, and ſuch an one as was never publiſhed before by any author whatever;—that this practice abſolved them from any obligation of reading what was preſented to them;—and that the bookſeller approved of it, becauſe it would make people ſtare, was abſurd enough, and perfectly right." Of this oration there is no appearance in his own edition of his works; and prefixed to an edition by Curll and Tonſon, in 1741, is a letter from Young to Curll (if Curll may be credited), dated December the 9th, 1739, wherein he ſays he has not leiſure to review what he formerly wrote, and adds, "I have not the *Epiſtle to Lord* "*Lanſdowne.* If you will take my ad-

"vice,

" vice, I would have you omit that, and " the oration on *Codrington*. I think the " collection will ſell better without " them."

There are who relate, that, when firſt Young found himſelf independent, and his own maſter at All-ſouls, he was not the ornament to religion and morality which he afterwards became. The authority of his father, indeed, had ceaſed by his death in 1705; and Young was certainly not aſhamed to be patronized by the infamous Wharton. But Wharton befriended in Young, perhaps, the poet, and particularly the tragedian. If virtuous authors muſt be patronized only by virtuous peers, who ſhall point them out?

Yet

Yet Pope is ſaid by Ruffhead to have told Warburton, that "Young had much of a ſublime genius, though without common ſenſe; ſo that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombaſt. This made him, paſs a *fooliſh youth*, the ſport of peers and poets: but his having a very good heart enabled him to ſupport the clerical character when he aſſumed it, firſt with decency, and afterwards with honour."

They who think ill of Young's morality in the early part of his life, may perhaps be wrong, but Tindal could not err in his opinion of Young's warmth and ability in the cauſe of religion. Tindal uſed

to ſpend much of his time at All-ſouls. "The other boys," ſaid the atheiſt, "I "can always anſwer, becauſe I always "know whence they have their argu- "ments, which I have read an hundred "times; but that fellow Young is con- "tinually peſtering me with ſomething "of his own." After all, Tindal and the cenſurers of Young may be recon- cileable. Young might, for two or three years, have tried that kind of life, in which his natural principles would not ſuffer him to wallow long. If this were ſo, he has left behind him not only his evidence in favour of virtue, but the potent teſtimony of experience againſt vice.

Young

Young perhaps aſcribed the good fortune of Addiſon to the *Poem to his Majeſty*, preſented, with a copy of verſes, to Somers; and hoped that he alſo might ſoar to wealth and honours on wings of the ſame kind. His firſt poetical flight was when Queen Anne called up to the Houſe of Lords the ſons of the Earls of Northampton and Ayleſbury, and added, in one day, ten others to the number of Peers. In order to reconcile the people to one at leaſt of the new Lords, he publiſhed in 1712 *An Epiſtle to the Right Honourable George Lord Lanſdowne*. In this compoſition the poet pours out his panegyrick with the extravagance of a young man, who thinks his preſent ſtock

ſtock of wealth will never be exhauſted.

The poem ſeems intended alſo to reconcile the publick to the late peace. This is endeavoured to be done by ſhewing that men are ſlain in war, and that in peace *harveſts wave and commerce ſwells her ſail.* If this be humanity, it is not politicks. Another purpoſe of this epiſtle appears to have been to prepare the publick for the reception of ſome tragedy of his own. His Lordſhip's patronage, he ſays, will not let him *repent his paſſion for the ſtage*;—and the particular praiſe beſtowed on *Othello* and *Oroonoko* ſeems to ſhew that ſome ſuch character as *Zanga* was even then

in

in contemplation. The affectionate mention of the death of his friend Harriſon of New College, at the cloſe of this poem, is an inſtance of Young's art, which diſplayed itſelf ſo fully thirty years afterwards in the *Night Thoughts*, of making the publick a party in his private ſorrow.

Should juſtice call upon you to cenſure this poem, it ought at leaſt to be remembered that he did not inſert it into his works; and that in the letter to Curll, as we have ſeen, he adviſes its omiſſion. The bookſellers, in the preſent Body of Engliſh Poetry, ſhould have diſtinguiſhed what was deliberately rejected by the reſpective authors. This I ſhall be careful to do with regard to

Young.

Young. "I think, ſays he, the following "pieces in *four* volumes to be the moſt "excuſeable of all that I have written; "and I wiſh *leſs apology* was needful for "theſe. As there is no recalling what "is got abroad, the pieces here re-"publiſhed I have reviſed and corrected, "and rendered them as *pardonable* as it "was in my power to do,"—Shall the gates of repentance be ſhut only againſt literary ſinners?

When Addiſon publiſhed *Cato* in 1713, Young had the honour of prefixing to it a recommendatory copy of verſes. This is one of the pieces which the author of the *Night Thoughts* did not republiſh.

On

On the appearance of his *Poem on the Laſt Day*, Addiſon did not return Young's compliment; but *The Engliſhman* of October 29, 1713, which was probably written by Addiſon, ſpeaks handſomely of this poem. The *Laſt Day* was publiſhed ſoon after the peace. The vice-chancellor's *imprimatur* (for it was firſt printed at Oxford) is dated May the 19th, 1713. From the Exordium Young appears to have ſpent ſome time on the compoſition of it. While other bards *with Britain's hero ſet their ſouls on fire*, he draws, he ſays, a deeper ſcene. Marlborough *had been* conſidered by Britain as her *hero*; but, when the *Laſt Day* was publiſhed, female cabal had blaſted for a time the laurels of Blenheim. This

poem was probably finiſhed by Young as early as 1710; for part of it is printed in the *Tatler*. It was inſcribed to the Queen, in a dedication, which, for ſome reaſon, he did not admit into his works. It tells her, that his only title to the great honour he now does himſelf is the obligation he formerly received from her royal indulgence. Of this obligation nothing is now known. Young is ſaid to have been engaged at a ſettled ſtipend as a writer for the Court. Yet who ſhall ſay this with certainty? In all modern periods of this country, the writers on one ſide have been regularly called Hirelings, and on the other Patriots.

Of

Of the dedication, however, the complexion is clearly political. It ſpeaks in the higheſt terms of the late peace;—it gives her Majeſty praiſe indeed for her victories, but ſays that the author is more pleaſed to ſee her riſe from this lower world, ſoaring above the clouds, paſſing the firſt and ſecond heavens, and leaving the fixed ſtars behind her;—nor will he loſe her there, but keep her ſtill in view through the boundleſs ſpaces on the other ſide of Creation, in her journey towards eternal bliſs, till he behold the heaven of heavens open, and angels receiving and conveying her ſtill onward from the ſtretch of his imagination, which tires in her purſuit, and falls back again to earth.

The Queen was ſoon called away from this lower world, to a place where human praiſe or human flattery are of little conſequence. If Young thought the dedication contained only the praiſe of truth, he ſhould not have omitted it in his works. Was he conſcious of the exaggeration of party? Then he ſhould not have written it. The poem itſelf is not without a glance to politicks, notwithſtanding the ſubject. The cry that the church was in danger, had not yet ſubſided. The *Laſt Day*, written by a layman, was much approved by the miniſtry and their friends.

Before the Queen's death, *The Force of Religion, or Vanquiſhed Love*, was ſent into the world. This poem is founded

on the execution of lady Jane Gray and her huſband lord Guilford in 1554—a ſtory choſen for the ſubject of a tragedy by Edmund Smith, and wrought into a tragedy by Rowe. The dedication of it to the counteſs of Saliſbury does not appear in his own edition. He hopes it may be ſome excuſe for his preſumption that the ſtory could not have been read without thoughts of the Counteſs of Saliſbury, though it had been dedicated to another. "To behold," he proceeds, "a perſon *only* virtuous, ſtirs in us a "prudent regret; to behold a perſon "*only* amiable to the ſight, warms us "with a religious indignation; but to "turn our eyes on a Counteſs of Saliſ-"bury, gives us pleaſure and improve-

" ment; it works a ſort of miracle, oc-
" caſions the biaſs of our nature to fall
" off from ſin, and makes our very
" ſenſes and affections converts to our
" religion, and promoters of our duty."
His flattery was as ready for the other ſex as for ours, and was at leaſt as well adapted.

Auguſt the 27th, 1714, Pope writes to his friend Jervas, that he is juſt arrived from Oxford—that every one was much concerned for the Queen's death, but that no panegyricks were ready yet for the King. Nothing like friendſhip had yet taken place between Pope and Young; for, ſoon after the event which Pope mentions, Young publiſhed a poem on the late Queen's death, and his Ma-

jeſty's acceſſion to the throne. It is inſcribed to Addiſon, then ſecretary to the Lords Juſtices. Whatever was the obligation which he had formerly received from Anne, the poet appears to aim at ſomething of the ſame ſort from George. Of the poem the intention ſeems to have been, to ſhew that he had the ſame extravagant ſtrain of praiſe for a King as for a Queen. To diſcover, at the very outſet of a foreigner's reign, that the Gods bleſs his new ſubjects in ſuch a King, is ſomething more than praiſe. Neither was this deemed one of his *excuſeable pieces*. We do not find it in his works.

Young's father had been well acquainted with Lady Anne Wharton, the firſt wife

of Thomas Wharton, Eſq; afterwards Marquis of Wharton—a Lady celebrated for her poetical talents by Burnet and by Waller. To the Dean of Sarum's viſitation ſermon, already mentioned, were added ſome copies of verſes "by that "excellent poeteſs Mrs. Anne Wharton," upon its being tranſlated into Engliſh, at the inſtance of Waller, by Atwood. Wharton, after he became ennobled, did not drop the ſon of his old friend. In him, during the ſhort time he lived, Young found a patron, and in his diſſolute deſcendant a friend and a companion. The Marquis died in April 1715. The beginning of the next year the young Marquis ſet out upon his travels, from which he returned in about a twelve-

twelvemonth. The beginning of 1717 carried him to Ireland; where, ſays the Biographia, "on the ſcore of his extra-"ordinary qualities, he had the honour "done him of being admitted, though "under age, to take his ſeat in the Houſe "of Lords."

With this unhappy character we might have preſumed, almoſt without evidence, that Young went to Ireland. From his Letter to Richardſon on *Original Compoſition*, it is clear he was, at ſome period of his life, in that country. "I "remember," ſays he, in that Letter, ſpeaking of Swift, "as I and others were "taking with him an evening walk, "about a mile out of *Dublin*, he ſtopt "ſhort; we paſſed on; but, perceiving

"he

" he did not follow us, I went back,
" and found him fixed as a ſtatue, and
" earneſtly gazing upward at a noble
" elm, which in its uppermoſt branches
" was much withered and decayed.
" Pointing at it, he ſaid, " I ſhall be
" like that tree, I ſhall die at top."—
A note from Wharton, among Swift's Letters, clearly ſhews that this viſit to Ireland was paid when he had an opportunity of going thither with his avowed friend and patron.

From *The Engliſhman* it appears that a tragedy by Young was in the theatre ſo early as 1713; yet *Buſiris* was not brought upon Drury-Lane Stage till 1719. It was inſcribed to the Duke of Newcaſtle, " becauſe the late inſtances he

" had

" had received of his Grace's undeſerved " and uncommon favour, in an affair of " ſome conſequence, foreign to the thea- " tre, had taken from him the privilege " of chuſing a patron.". The Dedication he afterwards ſuppreſſed.—This was followed in the year 1721 by *The Revenge*. Left at liberty now to chuſe his patron, he dedicated this famous tragedy to the Duke of Wharton. " Your " Grace," ſays the Dedication, " has " been pleaſed to make yourſelf acceſ- " ſary to the following ſcenes, not only " by ſuggeſting the moſt beautiful inci- " dent in them, but by making all poſ- " ſible proviſion for the ſucceſs of the " whole."

That

That his Grace ſhould have ſuggeſted the incident to which he alludes, whatever that incident be, is not unlikely. The laſt mental exertion of the unhappy ſuperannuated young man, in his quarters at Lerida in Spain, was ſome ſcenes of a tragedy on the ſtory of Mary Queen of Scots.

Dryden dedicated *Marriage à la Mode* to Wharton's infamous relation Rocheſter; whom he acknowledges not only as the defender of his poetry, but as the promoter of his fortune. Young concludes his addreſs to Wharton thus—"My preſent fortune is his bounty, and my future his care; which I will venture to ſay will be always remembered to his honour, ſince he, I know, intended his

" his generoſity as an encouragement to " merit, though, through his very par- " donable partiality to one who bears " him ſo ſincere a duty and reſpect, I " happen to receive the benefit of it." That he ever had ſuch a patron as Wharton, Young took all the pains in his power to conceal from the world, by excluding this Dedication from his works. He ſhould have remembered, that he at the ſame time concealed his obligation to Wharton for *the moſt beautiful incident* in what is ſurely not his leaſt beautiful compoſition. The paſſage juſt quoted is, in a poem afterwards addreſſed to Walpole, literally copied:

Be this thy partial ſmile from cenſure free;
'Twas meant for merit, though it fell on me.

While

While Young, who, in his *Love of Fame*, complains grievouſly how often *dedications waſh an Æthiopian white*, was painting an amiable Duke of Wharton in periſhable proſe, Pope was perhaps beginning to deſcribe the *ſcorn and wonder of his days* in laſting verſe.

To the patronage of ſuch a character, had Young ſtudied men as much as Pope, he would have known how little to have truſted. Young, however, was certainly indebted to it for ſomething material; and his Grace's regard for Young, added to his *Luſt of Praiſe*, procured to All-ſouls College a donation, which is not forgotten by the Dedication of *The Revenge*.

It will ſurprize you to ſee me cite ſecond Atkins, Caſe 136, Stiles *verſus* the Attor-

Attorney General, 14 March 1740, as authority for the Life of a Poet. But biographers do not always find ſuch certain guides as the oaths of thoſe they record. Chancellor Hardwicke was to determine whether two annuities granted by the Duke of Wharton to Young were for legal conſiderations. The firſt was dated the 24th of March, 1719, and accounted for his Grace's bounty in a ſtile princely and commendable, if not legal— "conſidering that the publick good is "advanced by the encouragement of "learning and the polite arts, and being "pleaſed therein with the attempts of "Dr. Young, in conſideration thereof, "and of the love he bare him, &c." The ſecond was dated the 10th of July, 1722. Young, on his examination, ſwore

that

that he quitted the Exeter family, and refuſed an annuity of 100 *l.* which had been offered him for his life, if he would continue tutor to Lord Burleigh, upon the preſſing ſolicitations of the Duke of Wharton, and his Grace's aſſurances of providing for him in a much more ample manner. It alſo appeared that the Duke had given him a bond for 600 *l.* dated the 15th of March, 1721, in conſideration of his taking ſeveral journies, and being at great expences, in order to be choſen member of the Houſe of Commons at the Duke's deſire, and in conſideration of his not taking two livings of 200 *l.* and 400 *l.* in the gift of All-ſoul's College, on his Grace's promiſes of ſerving and advancing him in the world.

This

This attempt to get into Parliament was at Cirenceſter, where Young ſtood a conteſted election. His Grace diſcovered in him talents for oratory as well as for poetry. Nor was this judgement wrong. Young, after he took orders, became a very popular preacher, and was much followed for the grace and animation of his delivery. By his oratorical talents he was once in his life, according to the Biographia, deſerted. As he was preaching in his turn at St. James's, he plainly perceived it was out of his power to command the attention of his audience. This ſo affected the feelings of the preacher, that he ſat back in the pulpit, and burſt into tears.—But to purſue his poetical life.

In 1719 he lamented the death of Addiſon, in a Letter addreſſed to their

common friend Tickell. For the ſecret hiſtory of the following lines, if they contain any, it is now vain to ſeek:

In joy once join'd, in ſorrow, now, for years—
Partner in grief, and brother of my tears,
Tickell, accept this verſe, thy mournful due.

In 1719 appeared a *Paraphraſe on Part of the Book of Job*. Parker, to whom it is dedicated, had not long, by means of the ſeals, been qualified for a patron. Of this work the author's opinion may be gathered from his Letter to Curll: "You ſeem, in the Col-"lection you propoſe, to have omitted "what I think may claim the firſt place "in it; I mean *a Tranſlation from Part*

"o

"*of Job*, printed by Mr. Tonſon." The Dedication, which was only ſuffered to appear in Tonſon's edition, while it ſpeaks of his preſent retirement, ſeems to make an unuſual ſtruggle to eſcape from retirement. It is addreſſed, in no common ſtrain of flattery, to a Lord Chancellor, of whom he clearly appears to have had no kind of knowledge.

Of his Satires it would not have been difficult to fix the dates without the aſſiſtance of firſt editions, which, as you had occaſion to obſerve in the Life of Dryden, are with difficulty found. We muſt then have referred to the Poems, to find when they were written. For theſe internal notes of time we ſhould not have referred in vain. The firſt Satire laments that

"Guilt's chief foe in Addiſon is fled;" and the ſecond, addreſſing himſelf, aſks,

Is thy ambition ſweating for a rhyme,
Thou unambitious fool, at this late time?
A fool at *forty* is a fool indeed.

The Satires were originally publiſhed ſeparately in folio, and theſe paſſages fix the appearance of the firſt to about 1725, the time at which it came out. As Young ſeldom ſuffered his pen to dry, after he had once dipped it in poetry, we may conclude that he began his Satires ſoon after he had written the *Paraphraſe on Job*. The laſt was certainly finiſhed in the beginning of the year 1726; for in December 1725 the King,

King, in his paſſage from Helvoetſluys, eſcaped with great difficulty from a ſtorm by landing at Rye; and the concluſion of the Satire turns the eſcape into a miracle, in ſuch an encomiaſtick ſtrain of compliment as poetry too often ſeeks to pay to royalty. From the ſixth of theſe poems we learn,

Midſt empire's charms, how Carolina's heart
Glow'd with the love of virtue and of art:

ſince the grateful poet tells us in the next couplet,

Her favour is diffus'd to that degree,
Exceſs of goodneſs! it has dawn'd on me.

Of the nature of this favour we muſt

now reſt contented in ignorance. The fifth Satire, *on Women*, was not publiſhed till 1727; and the ſixth not till 1728.

To theſe Poems, when he gathered them into one publication under the title of *The Univerſal Paſſion*, he prefixed a Preface, in which he obſerves, that "no man can converſe much in the "world but, at what he meets with, he "muſt either be inſenſible or grieve, or "be angry or ſmile. Now to ſmile at "it, and turn it into ridicule," adds he, "I think moſt eligible, as it hurts our-"ſelves leaſt, and gives vice and folly "the greateſt offence.—Laughing at the "miſconduct of the world, will, in a "great meaſure, eaſe us of any more "diſagreeable paſſion about it. One "paſſion is more effectually driven out

"by

"by another than by reaſon, whatever "ſome teach." So wrote, and ſo of courſe thought the lively and witty Satiriſt at the grave age of almoſt fifty, who, many years earlier in life, wrote the *Laſt Day*. After all, Swift pronounced of theſe Satires, that they ſhould either have been more angry, or more merry. Is it not ſomewhat ſingular that Young preſerved, without any palliation, this Preface, ſo bluntly deciſive in favour of laughing at the world, in the ſame collection of his works which contains the mournful, angry, gloomy *Night Thoughts?*

At the concluſion of the Preface he applies Plato's beautiful fable of the *Birth of Love* to modern poetry, with

the addition, "that Poetry, like Love, "is a little ſubject to blindneſs, which "makes her miſtake her way to prefer-"ments and honours; and that ſhe re-"tains a dutiful admiration of her fa-"ther's family; but divides her favours, "and generally lives with her mother's "relations." Poetry, it is true, did not lead Young to preferments or to honours; but was there not ſomething like blindneſs ſometimes in the flattery which he forced her, and her ſiſter Proſe, to utter? He always, indeed, made her entertain a moſt dutiful admiration of riches; but ſurely Young, though nearly related to Poetry, had no connexion with her whom Plato makes the mother of Love. The frequent bounties his

gratitude records, and the fortune he left behind him, clearly ſhow that he could not complain of being related to Poverty. By *The Univerſal Paſſion* he acquired no vulgar fortune, more than three thouſand pounds. A ſum not much leſs had already been ſwallowed up in the South Sea. For this loſs he took the vengeance of an author. His Muſe makes poetical uſe more than once of a *South-ſea* Dream.

It is related by Mr. Spence, in his Manuſcript Anecdotes, on the authority of Mr. *Rawlinſon*, that Young, upon the publication of his *Univerſal Paſſion*, received from the Duke of Grafton two thouſand pounds; and that,

when

when one of his friends exclaimed, *Two thouſand pounds for a poem!* he ſaid it was the beſt bargain he ever made in his life, for the poem was worth four thouſand.

This ſtory may be true; but it ſeems to have been raiſed from the two anſwers of Lord Burghley and Sir Philip Sidney in Spenſer's Life.

When Young was writing a tragedy, Grafton is ſaid to have ſent him a human ſkull, with a candle in it, as a proper lamp *.

After inſcribing his Satires, not in the hope of not finding preferments and honours, to the Duke of Dorſet, Mr. Dodington, Mr. Spencer Compton, Lady

* Spence.

Eliza-

Elizabeth Germain, and Sir Robert Walpole, he returns to plain panegyric. In 1726 he addreſſed a poem to Sir Robert Walpole, of which the title, *The Inſtalment*, ſufficiently explains the intention. If Young was a ready celebrator, he did not endeavour, or did not chooſe, to be a laſting one. *The Inſtalment* is among the pieces he did not admit into the number of his *excuſcable writings*. Yet it contains a couplet which pretends to pant after the power of beſtowing immortality:

Oh how I long, enkindled by the theme,
In deep Eternity to launch thy name!

The bounty of the former reign ſeems to have been continued, poſſibly increaſed,

creaſed, in this. Whatever it was, the poet thought he deſerved it;—for he was not aſhamed to acknowledge what, without his acknowledgement, would now perhaps never have been known:

My breaſt, O Walpole, glows with grateful fire.
The ſtreams of royal bounty, turn'd by thee,
Refreſh the dry domains of poeſy.

If the purity of modern patriotiſm term Young a penſioner, it muſt at leaſt be confeſſed he was a grateful one.

The reign of the new monarch was uſhered in by Young with *Ocean, an Ode*. The hint of it was taken from the royal ſpeech, which recommended the increaſe

and

and encouragement of the ſeamen; that they might be *invited, rather than compelled by force and violence, to enter into the ſervice of their country*;—a plan which humanity muſt lament that policy has not even yet been able, or willing, to carry into execution. Prefixed to the original publication were an *Ode to the King*, *Pater Patriæ*, and an *Eſſay on Lyrick Poetry*. It is but juſtice to confeſs, that though the bookſellers have now, for ſome reaſon, revived them both, he preſerved neither of them; and that the ode itſelf, which in the firſt edition and in the preſent conſiſts of ſeventy-three ſtanzas, in the author's own edition is reduced to forty-nine. Among the omitted paſſages is *a Wiſh*, that concluded

cluded the poem, which few would have ſuſpected Young of forming, and of which few, after having formed it, would confeſs their ſhame by ſuppreſſion.

It is whimſical that he, who was ſoon to bid adieu to rhyme, ſhould fix upon a meaſure in which rhyme abounds even to ſatiety. Of this he ſaid, in his *Eſſay on Lyrick Poetry*, prefixed to the Poem, "For the more *harmony* likewiſe I choſe "the frequent return of rhyme, which "laid me under great difficulties. But "difficulties, overcome, give grace and "pleaſure. Nor can I account for the "*pleaſure of rhyme in general* (of which "the moderns are too fond) but from "this truth." But the moderns ſurely deſerve

deſerve not much cenſure for their fondneſs of what, by his own confeſſion, affords pleaſure, and abounds in harmony.

About this time he entered into Orders; and in April 1728, ſoon after he put on the gown, he was appointed chaplain to George the Second.

The tragedy of *The Brothers*, which was already in rehearſal, he immediately withdrew from the ſtage. The managers reſigned it with ſome reluctance to the delicacy of the new clergyman. The Epilogue to *The Brothers*, the only appendage to any of his three plays which he added himſelf, is, I believe, the only one of the kind. He calls it an *hiſtorical* Epilogue. Finding that *Guilt's dread-*

dreadful cloſe his narrow ſcene denied, he, in a manner, continues the tragedy in the Epilogue, and relates how Rome revenged the ſhade of Demetrius, and puniſhed Perſeus *for this night's deed.*

Of this change of profeſſion ſomething is told by the biographer of Pope, which places the eaſineſs and ſimplicity of Young in a ſingular light. When he determined on Orders, he did not addreſs himſelf to Sherlock, to Atterbury, or to Hare, for the beſt inſtructions in Theology, but to Pope; who, in a youthful frolick, adviſed the diligent peruſal of *Thomas Aquinas.* With this treaſure Young retired from interruption to an obſcure place in the ſuburbs. His poetical guide to godli-

neſs

neſs hearing nothing of him during half a year, and apprehending he might have carried the jeſt too far, ſought after him, and found him juſt in time to prevent what Ruffhead calls *an irretrievable derangement.*

That attachment to his favourite ſtudy which made him think a poet the ſureſt guide in his new profeſſion, left him little doubt whether poetry was the ſureſt path to its honours and preferments. Not long indeed after he took Orders, he publiſhed in proſe, *A true Eſtimate of Human Life*, dedicated, notwithſtanding the Latin quotations with which it abounds, to the Queen; and a ſermon preached before the Houſe of Commons, 1729, on the martyrdom of

King Charles, entitled *An Apology for Princes, or the Reverence due to Government.* But his old friends the Muſes were not forgotten. In 1730 he ſent into the world *Imperium Pelagi; a Naval Lyric, written in Imitation of Pindar's Spirit, occaſioned by His Majeſty's Return from Hanover, September* 1729, *and the ſucceeding Peace.* It is inſcribed to the Duke of Chandos. In the Preface we are told, that the Ode is the moſt ſpirited kind of Poetry, and that the Pindaric is the moſt ſpirited kind of Ode. "This I ſpeak," he adds, "at my own "very great peril. But truth has an "eternal title to our confeſſion, though "we are ſure to ſuffer by it." Let it not be forgotten that this was one of his

pieces

pieces which the author of the *Night Thoughts* deliberately refuſed to own.

Not long after this Pindaric attempt, he publiſhed two Epiſtles to Pope, *concerning the Authors of the Age*, 1730. Of theſe poems one occaſion ſeems to have been an apprehenſion left, from the livelineſs of his ſatires, he ſhould not be deemed ſufficiently ſerious for promotion in the Church.

In July 1730 he was preſented by his College to the rectory of Welwyn in Hertfordſhire. In April 1732 he married Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the Earl of Litchfield, and widow of Colonel Lee. His connexion with this Lady aroſe from his father's acquaintance, already mentioned, with Lady Ann

Wharton, who was coheireſs of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley in Oxfordſhire.

We may naturally conclude that he now gave himſelf up in ſome meaſure to the comforts of his new connexion, and to the expectations of that preferment which he thought due to his poetical talents, or, at leaſt, to the manner in which they had ſo frequently been exerted.

The next production of his Muſe was *The Sea-piece*, in two odes.

Young enjoys the credit of what is called an *Extempore Epigram* on Voltaire; who, when he was in England, ridiculed, in the company of the jealous Engliſh poet, Milton's allegory of *Sin and Death*—

You are ſo witty, profligate and thin,
At once we think thee Milton, Death,
and Sin.

From a paſſage in the poetical Dedication of his *Sea-piece* to Voltaire, it ſeems that his extemporaneous reproof (if it muſt be extemporaneous), for what few will now affirm Voltaire to have deſerved any reproof, was ſomething longer than a diſtich, and ſomething more gentle than this diſtich.

No ſtranger, Sir, though born in foreign
climes.
On *Dorſet* downs, when Milton's page,
With Sin and Death provok'd thy rage,
Thy rage provok'd, who ſooth'd with
gentle rhymes?

By *Dorſet downs* he probably meant Mr. Dodington's ſeat. In Pitt's Poems is *An Epiſtle to Dr. Edward Young, at Eaſtbury in Dorſetſhire, on the Review at Sarum*, 1722.

While with your Dodington retir'd you
fit,
Charm'd with his flowing Burgundy
and wit, &c.

In 1734 he publiſhed *The foreign Addreſs, occaſioned by the Britiſh Fleet and the Poſture of Affairs. Written in the Character of a Sailor.* This Ode conſiſted of forty-five ſtanzas. It is not to be found in the author's four volumes; and the editors of the preſent collection of Engliſh poetry have, for once, followed the deciſion of the author. Of all the pieces which

which Young condemned as inexcuſeable, this alone has eſcaped that poſthumous inſertion, which, in truth, it little merited. He now appears to have given up all hopes of overtaking Pindar, and perhaps to have thought of turning his ambition to ſome original ſpecies of poetry. This poem concludes with a formal farewell to Ode:

My ſhell which Clio gave, which *Kings applaud*,
Which Europe's bleeding genius call'd abroad,
Adieu!

In a ſpecies of poetry altogether his own he next tried his ſkill, and ſucceeded.

Of his wife he was deprived in 1740. She was ſoon followed by an amiable

daughter, the child of her former huſband, who was juſt married to Mr. Temple, ſon of Lord Palmerſton. Mr. Temple did not long remain after his wife*. How ſuddenly their deaths happened, and how nearly together, none who has read the *Night Thoughts* (and who has not read them?) needs to be informed.

Inſatiate Archer! could not one ſuffice?
Thy ſhaft flew thrice; and thrice my peace was ſlain;
And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.

To the ſorrow Young felt at his loſſes we are indebted for theſe poems. There is a pleaſure ſure in ſadneſs which

* The Iriſh Peerage, if authentic, in the account of Lord Palmerſton's family, ſomewhat confuſes this buſineſs; but I take what I have related to be the fact.

mourners

mourners only know. Of theſe poems the three or four firſt have been peruſed perhaps more eagerly, and more frequently, than the latter. When he got as far as the fourth or fifth, his grief was naturally either diminiſhed or exhauſted. We find the ſame religion, the ſame piety; but we hear leſs of Philander and of Narciſſa.

Mrs. Temple died *in her bridal hour* at Nice. He, with the reſt of her family, accompanied her to the continent.

He flew, he ſnatch'd her from the rigid North,
And bore her nearer to the ſun.

The poet ſeems to dwell with more melancholy on the deaths of Philander and Narciſſa, than of his wife. He who runs and reads may remember, that in the

the *Night Thoughts* Philander and Narciſſa are often mentioned, and often lamented. To recollect lamentations over the author's wife, the memory muſt have been charged with diſtinct paſſages. This Lady brought him one child, Frederick, now living.

That domeſtick grief is, in the firſt inſtance, to be thanked for theſe ornaments to our language it is impoſſible to deny. Nor would it be common hardineſs to contend that worldly diſcontent had no hand in theſe joint productions of poetry and piety. Yet am I by no means ſure that, at any rate, we ſhould not have had ſomething of the ſame colour from Young's pencil, notwithſtanding the livelineſs of his ſatires. In ſo long a life, cauſes for diſcontent

content and occaſions for grief muſt have occurred. It is not clear to me that his Muſe was not ſitting upon the watch for the firſt which happened. *Night Thoughts* were not uncommon to her, even when firſt ſhe viſited the poet, and at a time when he himſelf was remarkable neither for gravity nor gloominess. In his *Laſt Day*, almoſt his earlieſt poem, he calls her the *melancholy Maid*,

—whom diſmal ſcenes delight,
Frequent at tombs and in the realms of Night.

And in the prayer which concludes the ſecond book of the ſame poem—

—Oh! permit the gloom of ſolemn night
To ſacred thought may forcibly invite.

Oh!

Oh! how divine to tread the milky way,
To the bright palace of Eternal Day!

Still, is it altogether fair to dreſs up the poet for the man, and to bring the gloomineſs of the *Night Thoughts* to prove the gloomineſs of Young, and to ſhew that his genius, like the genius of Swift, was in ſome meaſure the ſullen inſpiration of diſcontent?

Whether you think with me, I know not; but the famous *De mortuis nil niſi bonum* has always ſtricken me as favouring more of female weakneſs than of manly reaſon. Cenſure is not heard beneath the tomb any more than praiſe. *De mortuis nil niſi verum—De vivis nil niſi bonum*—would approach much nearer to good ſenſe. After all, the few hand-

ſulls of remaining duſt which once compoſed the body of the author of the *Night Thoughts*, feel not much concern whether Young paſſes now for a man of ſorrow, or for a *fellow of infinite jeſt*. To this favour muſt come the whole family of Yorick.—His immortal part, wherever that now dwells, is ſtill leſs ſolicitous on this head. But to a ſon of worth and ſenſibility it is of ſome little conſequence whether contemporaries believe, and poſterity be taught to believe, that his debauched and reprobate life caſt a Stygian gloom over the evening of his father's days, ſaved him the trouble of feigning a character completely deteſtable, and ſucceeded at laſt in bringing his *grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave*.

The

The humanity of the world, little ſatisfied with inventing perhaps a melancholy diſpoſition for the father, proceeds next to invent an argument in ſupport of their invention, and chooſes that Lorenzo ſhould be Young's own ſon. The Biographia pretty roundly aſſerts this to be the fact; of the abſolute impoſſibility of which the Biographia itſelf, in particular dates, contains undeniable evidence. Readers I know there are of a ſtrange turn of mind, who will hereafter peruſe the *Night Thoughts* with leſs ſatisfaction; who will wiſh they had ſtill been deceived; who will quarrel with me for diſcovering that no ſuch character as Lorenzo ever yet diſgraced human nature, or broke a father's heart. Yet would theſe admirers of the ſublime

and

and terrible be offended, ſhould you ſet them down for cruel and for ſavage.

Of this report, inhuman to the ſurviving ſon, if it be untrue, in proportion as the character of Lorenzo is diabolical, where are we to find the proofs? Perhaps it is clear from the performance itſelf. From the firſt line to the laſt of the *Night Thoughts* no one expreſſion can be diſcovered which betrays any thing like the father. In the ſecond *Night* I find an expreſſion which betrays ſomething elſe; that Lorenzo was his friend; one, it is poſſible, of his former companions; one of the Duke of Wharton's ſett. The Poet ſtiles him *gay Friend*—an appellation not very natural from a pious incenſed father to ſuch

ſuch a being as he paints Lorenzo, and that being his ſon.

But let us ſee how he has ſketched this dreadful portrait, from the ſight of ſome of whoſe features the artiſt himſelf muſt have turned away with horror!—A ſubject more ſhocking, if his only child really ſat to him, than the crucifixion of Michael Angelo; upon the horrid ſtory told of which, Young compoſed a ſhort Poem of fourteen lines in the early part of life, which he did not think deſerved to be republiſhed.

In the firſt *Night*, the addreſs to the Poet's ſuppoſed ſon is,

Lorenzo, Fortune makes her court to thee.

In

In the fifth *Night*—

And burns Lorenzo ſtill for the ſublime
Of life? To hang his airy neſt on high?

Is this a picture of the ſon of the rector of Wellwyn?

Eighth *Night*—

In foreign realms (for thou haſt travell'd far)—

which even now does not apply to his ſon.

In *Night* five—

So wept Lorenzo fair Clariſſa's fate,
Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes,
And died to give him, orphan'd in his birth!

At the beginning of the fifth *Night* we find—

Lorenzo! to recriminate is juſt.
I grant the man is vain who writes for praiſe.

But, to cut ſhort all enquiry, if any one of theſe paſſages, if any paſſage in the poems, be applicable, my friend ſhall paſs for Lorenzo. The ſon of the author of the *Night Thoughts* was not old enough, when the *Night Thoughts* were written, to recriminate, or to be a father. The *Night Thoughts* were begun immediately after the mournful events of 1740. The firſt *Nights* appear in the Stationers' books as the property of Robert Dodſley, in 1742. The Preface to *Night* Seven is dated July the 7th,

7th, 1744. The marriage, in conſequence of which the ſuppoſed Lorenzo was born, happened in April 1732. Young's child was not born till June 1733. In 1740 this Lorenzo, this finiſhed infidel, this *father*, to whoſe education Vice had for ſome years put the laſt hand, was only *ſeven* years old. An anecdote of this cruel ſort, ſo open to contradiction, ſo impoſſible to be true, who could propagate? Thus eaſily are blaſted the reputations of the living and of the dead.

Who then was Lorenzo? exclaim the readers I have mentioned. If he was not his ſon, was he not his nephew, his couſin?

Theſe are queſtions which I do not pretend to anſwer. For the ſake of human nature, I could wiſh Lorenzo to have been only the creation of the Poet's fancy. That this was the caſe, many expreſſions in the *Night Thoughts* would ſeem to prove, did not a paſſage in *Night* Eight appear to ſhew that he had ſomebody in his eye for the ground-work at leaſt of the painting. Lovelace or Lorenzo may be feigned characters; but a writer does not feign a name of which he only gives the initial letter:

Tell not Caliſta. She will laugh thee
dead,
Or ſend thee to her hermitage with L—.

The Biographia, not ſatisfied with pointing out the ſon of Young, in that ſon's

ſon's life-time, as his father's Lorenzo, travels out of its way into the hiſtory of the ſon, and tells of his having been forbidden his college at Oxford for miſbehaviour, and of his long labouring under the diſpleaſure of his father. How ſuch anecdotes, were they true, tend to illuſtrate the Life of Young, it is not eaſy to diſcover. If the ſon of the author of the *Night Thoughts* was indeed forbidden his college for a time at one of our univerſities, the author of *Paradiſe Loſt* was diſgracefully ejected from the other, with the additional indignity of publick corporal correction. From juvenile follies who is free? Were Nature to indulge the ſon of Young with a ſecond youth, and to leave him

at the ſame time the experience of that which is paſt, he would probably paſs it differently (who would not?); he would certainly be the occaſion of leſs uneaſineſs to his father;—but, from the ſame experience, he would as certainly be treated in a different manner by his father. Young was a poet; poets (with reverence be it ſpoken) do not make the beſt parents. Fancy and imagination ſeldom deign to ſtoop from their heights; always ſtoop unwillingly to the low level of common duties. Aloof from vulgar life, they purſue their rapid flight beyond the ken of mortals, and deſcend not to earth but when obliged by neceſſity. The proſe of ordinary occurrences is beneath the dignity of poetry.

Yet

Yet the ſon of Young would almoſt ſooner, I know, paſs for a Lorenzo, than ſee himſelf vindicated, at the expence of his father's memory, from follies which, if it was blameable in a boy to have committed them, it is ſurely praiſe-worthy in a man to lament, and certainly not only unneceſſary but cruel in a biographer to record.

Of Edward Young an anecdote which wanders among readers is not true, that he was Fielding's *Parſon Adams*. The original of that famous painting was William Young. He too was a clergyman. He ſupported an uncomfortable exiſtence by tranſlating for the booksellers from Greek; and, if he was not his own friend, was at leaſt no man's

enemy. Yet the facility with which this report has gained belief in the world, argues (were it not ſufficiently known) that the author of the *Night Thoughts* bore ſome reſemblance to *Adams*.

Of the *Night Thoughts*, notwithſtanding their author's profeſſed retirement, all are inſcribed to great or to growing names. He had not yet weaned himſelf from Earls and Dukes, from Speakers of the Houſe of Commons, Lords Commiſſioners of the Treaſury, and Chancellors of the Exchequer. In *Night* Eight the politician plainly betrays himſelf—

Think no poſt needful that demands a knave.

When

When late our civil helm was ſhifting hands,
So P— thought: think better if you can.

Yet it muſt be confeſſed, that at the concluſion of *Night* Nine, weary perhaps of courting earthly patrons, he tells his ſoul,

Henceforth
Thy *patron* he, whoſe diadem has dropt
Yon gems of heaven; Eternity thy prize;
And leave the racers of the world their own.

The Fourth *Night* was addreſſed by "a much-indebted Muſe" to the Honourable Mr. Yorke, now Lord Hardwicke; who meant to have laid the Muſe

under ſtill greater obligations, by the living of Shenfield in Eſſex, if it had become vacant.

The Firſt *Night* concludes with this paſſage—

Dark, though not blind, like thee, Meonides;
Or Milton, thee. Ah! could I reach your ſtrain;
Or his who made Meonides our own!
Man too he ſung. Immortal man I ſing.
Oh had he preſt his theme, purſued the track
Which opens out of darkneſs into day!
Oh had he mounted on his wing of fire,
Soar'd, where I ſink, and ſung immortal man—
How had it bleſt mankind, and reſcued me!

To the author of theſe lines Dr. Warton choſe, in 1756, to dedicate his *Eſſay on the Writings and Genius of Pope*, which attempted (whether juſtly or not) to pluck from Pope his *Wing of Fire*, and to reduce him to a rank at leaſt one degree lower than the claſs of Engliſh poets. Though the firſt edition of this Eſſay was, for particular reaſons, ſuppreſſed; another was printed. The Dedication ſtill remained. To ſuppoſe therefore that Young approved of Warton's opinion of Pope is not unnatural. Yet the author of the paſſage juſt quoted would ſcarcely countenance, by patronage, ſuch an attack upon the fame of him whom he invokes as his Muſe. Part of Pope's Third Book of the *Odyſſey*, depoſited in the Muſeum,

is

is written upon the back of a Letter ſigned *E. Young*, which is clearly the hand-writing of our Young. The Letter, dated only May the 2d, ſeems obſcure; but there can be little doubt that the friendſhip he requeſts was a literary one *, and that he had the higheſt literary opinion of Pope.

" Dear Sir, May the 2d.

" Having been often from home, I " know not if you have done me the " favour of calling on me. But, be " that as it will, I much want that in- " ſtance of your friendſhip I mentioned " in my laſt; a friendſhip I am very ſen- " ſible I can receive from no one but " yourſelf. I ſhould not urge this thing

* I am told that it was a Prologue for one of his Tragedies.

" ſo

" ſo much but for very particular rea-
" ſons; nor can you be at a loſs to con-
" ceive how a *trifle of this nature* may
" be of ſerious moment to me; and
" while I am in hopes of the great ad-
" vantage of your advice about it, I
" ſhall not be ſo abſurd as to make any
" further ſtep without it. I know you
" are much engaged, and only hope to
" hear of you at your entire leiſure.

" I am, Sir,

" Your moſt faithful

" and obedient Servant,

" E. YOUNG."

Nay, even after Pope's death, he ſays, in *Night* Seven:

Pope, who could'ſt make immortals,
art thou dead?

Either

Either Warton, then, dedicated his book to a patron who diſapproved its doctrine; or Young, in his old age, bartered for a dedication an opinion entertained of his friend through all that part of life when he could beſt form opinions.

From this account of Young, two or three ſhort paſſages, which ſtand almoſt together in *Night* Four, ſhould not be excluded. They afford a picture, by his own hand; from the ſtudy of which my readers may chooſe to form their own opinion of the features of his mind, and the complexion of his life.

Ah me! the dire effect
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long;
Of old ſo gracious (and let that ſuffice),
My very maſter knows me not.

I've

✻

I've been ſo long remember'd, I'm forgot.

✻

When in his courtier's ears I pour my plaint,
They drink it as the Nectar of the Great;
And ſqueeze my hand, and beg me come to-
morrow.

✻

Twice-told the period ſpent on ſtubborn Troy,
Court-favour, yet untaken, I beſiege.

✻

If this ſong lives, Poſterity ſhall know,
One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too
late;
Nor on his ſubtle death-bed plann'd his ſcheme
For future vacancies in church or ſtate.

By theſe extraordinary Poems, writ-
ten after he was ſixty, of which I have
been

been led to ſay ſo much, I hope, by the wiſh of doing juſtice to the living and the dead, it was the deſire of Young to be principally known. He entitled the four volumes which he publiſhed himſelf, *The Works of the Author of the Night Thoughts.* While it is remembered that from theſe he excluded many of his writings, let it not be forgotten that the rejected pieces contained nothing prejudicial to the cauſe of virtue, or of religion. Were every thing that Young ever wrote to be publiſhed, he would only appear perhaps in a leſs reſpectable light as a poet, and more deſpicable as a dedicator: he would not paſs for a worſe chriſtian, or for a worſe man.—His dedications, after all, he had no right to

ſup-

ſuppreſs. They all, I believe, ſpeak, not a little to the credit of his gratitude, of favours received; and I know not whether the author, who has once ſolemnly printed an acknowledgement of a favour, ſhould not always print it.

Is it to the credit or to the diſcredit of Young, as a poet, that of his *Night Thoughts* the *French* are particularly fond?

Of the *Epitaph on Lord Aubrey Beauclerk*, dated 1740, all I know is, that I find it in this Body of Engliſh Poetry, and that I am ſorry to find it there.

Notwithſtanding the farewell which he ſeemed to have taken in the *Night Thoughts* of every thing which bore the leaſt reſemblance to ambition, he dipped

again in politics. In 1745 he wrote *Reflections on the publick Situation of the Kingdom, addreſſed to the Duke of Newcaſtle*—impatient, as it appears, to behold

A pope-bred Princeling crawl aſhore,
And whiſtle cut-throats, with thoſe ſwords that ſcrap'd
Their barren rocks for wretched ſuſtenance,
To cut his paſſage to the Britiſh throne.

This political poem might be called a *Night Thought*. Indeed it was originally printed as the concluſion of the *Night Thoughts*, though he did not gather it with his other works.

Prefixed to the ſecond edition of Howe's *Devout Meditations* is a Letter from Young, dated January 19, 1752,

1752, addreſſed to Archibald Macaulay, Eſq; thanking him for the book, which he ſays "he ſhall never lay far out of "his reach; for a greater demonſtration "of a ſound head and a ſincere heart he "never ſaw."

In 1753, when *The Brothers* had lain by him above thirty years, it appeared upon the ſtage. If any part of his fortune had been acquired by ſervility of adulation, he now determined to deduct from it no inconſiderable ſum, as a gift to the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel. To this ſum he hoped the profits of *The Brothers* would amount. In his calculation he was deceived; but the Society were not loſers by the bad ſucceſs of the play. The author made up the

ſum he intended, which was a thouſand pounds, from his own pocket.

The next performance which he printed was a proſe publication, entitled, *The Centaur not fabulous, in ſix Letters to a Friend on the Life in Vogue.* The Concluſion is dated November 29, 1754. In the third Letter is deſcribed the death-bed of the *gay, young, noble, ingenious, accompliſhed, and moſt wretched Altamont.* His laſt words were—"My principles have poi-"ſoned my friend, my extravagance has "beggared my boy, my unkindneſs has "murdered my wife!" Either Altamont and Lorenzo were the ſame, or Young was unlucky enough to know two characters who bore no little reſemblance to each other in perfection of wickedneſs.

The Old Man's Relapſe, occaſioned by an Epiſtle to Walpole, if it was written by Young, which I much doubt, muſt have been written very late in life. It has been ſeen, I am told, in a Miſcellany publiſhed thirty years before his death.—In 1758 he exhibited *The Old Man's Relapſe* in more than words, by again becoming a dedicator, and publiſhing a ſermon addreſſed to the King.

The Letter in proſe on *Original Compoſition*, addreſſed to Richardſon the author of *Clariſſa*, appeared in 1759. He, who employed his pious pen for almoſt the laſt time in doing juſtice to the exemplary death-bed of Addiſon, might probably, at the cloſe of his own life, afford no unuſeful leſſons for the deaths of others.

The few lines which ſtand in this edition as *ſent by Lord Melcombe to Dr. Young, not long before his Lordſhip's Death*, were indeed ſo ſent, but were only an introduction to what was there meant by *the Muſe's lateſt ſpark*. The poem is neceſſary, whatever may be its merit, ſince the Preface to it is already printed. Lord Melcombe called his *Tuſculum La Trappe*.

" Love thy country, wiſh it well,
Not with too intenſe a care,
'Tis enough, that, when it fell,
Thou its ruin didſt not ſhare.

Envy's cenſure, Flattery's praiſe,
With unmov'd indifference view;
Learn to tread Life's dangerous maze,
With unerring Virtue's clue.

Void

Void of ſtrong deſire and fear,
Life's wide ocean truſt no more;
Strive thy little bark to ſteer
With the tide, but near the ſhore.

Thus prepar'd, thy ſhorten'd ſail
Shall, whene'er the winds increaſe,
Seizing each propitious gale,
Waft thee to the Port of Peace.

Keep thy conſcience from offence,
And tempeſtuous paſſions free,
So, when thou art call'd from hence,
Eaſy ſhall thy paſſage be;

Eaſy ſhall thy paſſage be,
Chearful thy allotted ſtay,
Short the account 'twixt God and thee;
Hope ſhall meet thee on the way;

Truth ſhall lead thee to the gate,
Mercy's ſelf ſhall let thee in,
Where its never-changing ſtate
Full perfection ſhall begin."

The Poem was accompanied by a Letter.

" *La Trappe*, the 27th Oct. 1761.

" Dear Sir,

" You ſeemed to like the ode I ſent " you for your amuſement; I now ſend " it you as a preſent. If you pleaſe to " accept of it, and are willing that our " friendſhip ſhould be known, when we " are gone, you will be pleaſed to leave " this among thoſe of your own papers, " that may poſſibly ſee the light, by a " poſthumous publication. God ſend " us health while we ſtay, and an eaſy " journey. My dear Dr. Young,

" Yours, moſt cordially,

" MELCOMBE."

In 1762, a ſhort time before his death, Young publiſhed *Reſignation*. Notwithſtanding the manner in which it was forced from him by the world, criticiſm has treated it with no common ſeverity. If it ſhall be thought not to deſerve the higheſt praiſe, on the other ſide of fourſcore by whom, except by Newton and by Waller, has praiſe been merited? To *Reſignation* was prefixed an Apology for its appearance: to which more credit is due than to the generality of ſuch apologies, from Young's unuſual anxiety that no more productions of his old age ſhould diſgrace his former fame. In his will, dated February 1760, he deſires of his executors, *in a particular manner*, that all his manuſcript books and writings

writings whatever might be burned, except his book of accounts.

In September 1764 he added a kind of codicil, wherein he made it his dying intreaty to his houſekeeper, to whom he left 1000 *l.* "that all his "manuſcripts might be deſtroyed as "ſoon as he was dead, which would "greatly oblige her deceaſed *friend.*"

It may teach mankind the uncertainty of worldly friendſhips, to know that Young, either by ſurviving thoſe he loved, or by outliving their affections, could only recollect the names of two friends, this poor woman and a hatter, to mention in his will; and it may ſerve to repreſs that teſtamentary pride, which too often ſeeks for ſounding names and titles,

titles, to be informed that the author of the *Night Thoughts* did not bluſh to leave a legacy to his "friend Henry Stevens, "a hatter at the Temple-gate." Of theſe two remaining friends, one went before Young. But, at eighty-four, "where," as he ſays in *The Centaur*, "is that world "into which we were born?"

The ſame humility which marked a houſekeeper and a hatter for the friends of the author of the *Night Thoughts*, had before beſtowed the ſame title on his footman, in an epitaph in his *Church-yard* upon James Barker, dated 1749, which I am glad to find in this collection of his works.

Young and his houſekeeper were ridiculed, with more ill-nature than wit, in

a kind of novel publiſhed by Kidgell in 1755, called *The Card*, under the names of Dr. Elwes and Mrs. Fuſby. Kidgell had been Young's curate.

In April 1765, at an age to which few attain, a period was put to the life of Young. Much is told in the *Biographia*, which I know not to have been true, of the manner of his burial—of the maſter and children of a charity-ſchool, which he founded in his pariſh, who neglected to attend their benefactor's corpſe; and of a bell which was not cauſed to toll as often as bells uſually toll. Had that humanity, which is here laviſhed upon things of little conſequence either to the living or to the dead, been ſhewn in its proper place to

the

the living, I ſhould have had leſs to ſay about Lorenzo. They who lament that theſe misfortunes happened to Young, forget the praiſe he beſtows upon Socrates, in the Preface to *Night* Seven, for reſenting his friend's requeſt about his funeral.

After his death, Dodſley publiſhed a novel called *Eliza*, of which I have been told that Young was the author.

The curious reader of Young's Life will naturally inquire to what it was owing, that, though he lived almoſt forty years after he took Orders, which included one whole reign uncommonly long, and part of another, he was never thought worthy of the leaſt preferment. The author of the *Night Thoughts* ended his days upon a Living which came to him

him from his College without any favour, and to which he probably had an eye when he determined on the Church. To ſatisfy curioſity of this kind is, at this diſtance of time, far from eaſy. The parties themſelves know not often, at the inſtant, why they are neglected. The neglect of Young is by ſome aſcribed to his having attached himſelf to the Prince of Wales, and to his having preached an offenſive ſermon at St. James's. It has been told me, that he had two hundred a year in the late reign, by the patronage of Walpole; and that, whenever the King was reminded of Young, the only anſwer was, *he has a penſion*. All the light thrown on this inquiry, by the following Letter from Secker, only ſerves to ſhew us at what

a late

a late period of life the author of the *Night Thoughts* ſolicited preferment.

" Deanry of St. Paul's, July 8, 1758.

" Good Dr. Young,

" I have long wondered, that more " ſuitable notice of your great merit " hath not been taken by perſons in " power. But how to remedy the omiſ- " ſion, I ſee not. No encouragement " hath ever been given me to mention " things of this nature to his Majeſty. " And therefore, in all likelihood, the " only conſequence of doing it would be " weakening the little influence, which " elſe I may poſſibly have on ſome other " occaſions. Your fortune and your re- " putation ſet you above the need of " advancement; and your ſentiments,

" above

"above that concern for it, on your "own account, which, on that of the "Public, is ſincerely felt by

"Your loving Brother,

"THOS. CANT."

At laſt, at the age of fourſcore, he was appointed, in 1761, Clerk of the Cloſet to the Princeſs Dowager.

One obſtacle muſt have ſtood not a little in the way of that preferment after which his whole life panted. Though he took Orders, he never intirely ſhook off Politics. He was always the Lion of his maſter Milton, *pawing to get free his hinder parts*. By this conduct, if he gained ſome friends, he made many enemies.

Beſides,

Beſides, in the latter part of life, Young was fond of holding himſelf out for a man retired from the world. The ſame line which contains *oblitus meorum*, contains alſo *oblivi ſcendus & illis*. The brittle chain of worldly friendſhip and patronage is broken as effectually, when one goes beyond the length of it, as when the other does. To the veſſel which is ſailing from the ſhore it only appears that the ſhore alſo recedes; in life it is truly thus. He who retires from the world, will find himſelf, in reality, deſerted as faſt, if not faſter, by the world. The public is not to be treated as the vain coxcomb treats his miſtreſs—to be threatened with deſertion, in order to increaſe fondneſs.

Young ſeems to have been taken at his word. Notwithſtanding his frequent complaints of being neglected, no hand was reached out to pull him from that retirement of which he declared himſelf enamoured. Alexander aſſigned no palace for the reſidence of Diogenes, who boaſted his ſurly ſatisfaction with his tub.

Of the domeſtic manners and petty habits of the author of the *Night Thoughts*, I hoped to have given you an account from the beſt authority;—but who ſhall dare to ſay, To morrow I will be wiſe or virtuous, or to-morrow I will do a particular thing? Upon enquiring for his houſekeeper, I learned that ſhe was buried two days before I reached the town of her abode.

In

In a Letter from Tſcharner, a noble foreigner, to Count Haller, Tſcharner ſays, he has lately ſpent four days with Young at Wellwyn, where the author taſtes all the eaſe and pleaſure mankind can deſire. "Every thing about him "ſhews the man, each individual being "placed by rule. All is neat without "art. He is very pleaſant in converſa-"tion, and extremely polite."

This, and more, may poſſibly be true; but Tſcharner's was a firſt viſit, a viſit of curioſity and admiration, and a viſit which the author expected.

The attention Young beſtowed upon the peruſal of books is not unworthy imitation. When any paſſage pleaſed him, he appears to have folded down

the leaf. On theſe paſſages he beſtowed a ſecond reading. But the labours of man are too frequently vain. Before he returned, a ſecond time, to what he had once approved, he died. Many of his books, which I have ſeen, are by thoſe notes of approbation ſo ſwelled beyond their real bulk, that they will not ſhut.

What though we wade in wealth, or ſoar in fame!
Earth's higheſt ſtation ends in here *Here he lies!*
And *duſt to duſt* concludes her nobleſt ſong!

The author of theſe lines is not without his *hic jacet*.

By

By the good ſenſe of his ſon, it contains none of that praiſe which no marble can make the bad or the fooliſh merit; which, without the direction of a ſtone or a turf, will find its way, ſooner or later, to the deſerving.

M. S.
Optimi parentis
EDWARDI YOUNG, LL. D.
Hujus eccleſiæ rect.
Et Elizabethæ
fæm. prænob.
Conjugis ejus amantiſſimæ
Pio & gratiſſimo animo
Hoc marmor poſuit
F. Y.
Filius ſuperſtes.

Such, my good friend, is the account I have been able to collect of Young. That it may be long before any thing like what I have juſt tranſcribed be neceſſary for you, is the ſincere wiſh of,

Dear Sir,

Your greatly obliged Friend,

HERBERT CROFT, Jun."

Lincoln's Inn,
Sept. 1780.

OF

OF Young's Poems it is difficult to give any general character; for he has no uniformity of manner: one of his pieces has no great reſemblance to another. He began to write early, and continued long; and at different times had different modes of poetical excellence in view. His numbers are ſometimes ſmooth, and ſometimes rugged; his ſtile is ſometimes concatenated, and ſometimes abrupt; ſometimes diffuſive, and ſometimes conciſe. His plan ſeems to have ſtarted in his mind at the preſent moment, and his thoughts appear the effects of chance, ſometimes ad-

verſe, and ſometimes lucky, with very little operation of judgement.

He was not one of the writers whom experience improves, and who obſerving their own faults become gradually correct. His Poem on the *Laſt Day*, his firſt great performance, has an equability and propriety, which he afterwards either never endeavoured or never attained. Many paragraphs are noble, and few are mean, yet the whole is languid; the plan is too much extended, and a ſucceſſion of images divides and weakens the general conception; but the great reaſon why the reader is diſappointed is, that the thought of the LAST DAY makes every man more than poetical, by ſpreading over his mind a general

general obſcurity of ſacred horror, that oppreſſes diſtinction, and diſdains expreſſion.

His ſtory of *Jane Grey* was never popular. It is written with elegance enough, but *Jane* is too heroick to be pitied.

The *Univerſal Paſſion* is indeed a very great performance. It is ſaid to be a ſeries of Epigrams; but if it be, it is what the author intended: his endeavour was at the production of ſtriking diſtichs and pointed ſentences; and his diſtichs have the weight of ſolid ſentiment, and his points the ſharpneſs of reſiſtleſs truth. His characters are often ſelected with diſcernment, and drawn with nicety; his illuſtrations are often happy,

and

and his reflections often juſt. His ſpecies of ſatire is between thoſe of Horace and of Juvenal; he has the gaiety of Horace without his laxity of numbers, and the morality of Juvenal with greater variation of images. He plays, indeed, only on the ſurface of life; he never penetrates the receſſes of the mind, and therefore the whole power of his poetry is exhauſted by a ſingle peruſal; his conceits pleaſe only when they ſurpriſe.

To tranſlate he never condeſcended, unleſs his *Paraphraſe on Job* may be conſidered as a verſion; in which he has not, I think, been unſucceſsful: he indeed favoured himſelf, by chuſing thoſe parts which moſt eaſily admit the ornaments of Engliſh poetry.

He

He had leaſt ſucceſs in his lyrick attempts, in which he ſeems to have been under ſome malignant influence: he is always labouring to be great, and at laſt is only turgid.

In his *Night Thoughts* he has exhibited a very wide diſplay of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and ſtriking alluſions, a wilderneſs of thought, in which the fertility of fancy ſcatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verſe could not be changed for rhyme but with diſadvantage. The wild diffuſion of the ſentiments, and the digreſſive ſallies of imagination, would have been compreſſed

and

and reſtrained by regard to rhyme. The excellence of this work is not exactneſs, but copiouſneſs; particular lines are not to be regarded; the power is in the whole, and in the whole there is a magnificence like that aſcribed to Chineſe Plantation, the magnificence of vaſt extent and endleſs diverſity.

His laſt poem was the *Reſignation*; in which he made, as he was accuſtomed, an experiment of a new mode of writing, and ſucceeded better than in his *Ocean* or his *Merchant*. It was very falſely repreſented as a proof of decaying faculties. There is Young in every ſtanza, ſuch as he often was in his higheſt vigour.

His Tragedies not making part of this Collection, I had forgotten, till Mr. Steevens recalled them to my thoughts by remarking, that he ſeemed to have one favourite cataſtrophe, as his three Plays all concluded with laviſh ſuicide; a method by which, as Dryden remarked, a poet eaſily rids his ſcene of perſons whom he wants not to keep alive. In *Buſiris* there are the greateſt ebullitions of imagination; but the pride of Buſiris is ſuch as no other man can have, and the whole is too remote from known life to raiſe either grief, terror, or indignation. The *Revenge* approaches much nearer to human practices and manners, and therefore keeps poſſeſſion of the ſtage: the firſt deſign ſeems ſuggeſted

geſted by *Othello*; but the reflections, the incidents, and the diction, are original. The moral obſervations are ſo introduced, and ſo expreſſed, as to have all the novelty that can be required. Of *The Brothers* I may be allowed to ſay nothing, ſince nothing was ever ſaid of it by the Publick.

It muſt be allowed of Young's poetry, that it abounds in thought, but without much accuracy or ſelection. When he lays hold of an illuſtration, he purſues it beyond expectation, ſometimes happily, as in his parallel of *Quickſilver* with *Pleaſure*, which I have heard repeated with approbation by a Lady, of whoſe praiſe he would have been juſtly

proud, and which is very ingenious, very ſubtle, and almoſt exact; but ſometimes he is leſs lucky, as when, in his *Night Thoughts*, having it dropped into his mind, that the orbs, floating in ſpace, might be called the *cluſter* of Creation, he thinks on a cluſter of grapes, and ſays, that they all hang on the great Vine, drinking the *nectareous juice of immortal Life.*

His conceits are ſometimes yet leſs valuable; in the *Laſt Day*, he hopes to illuſtrate the re-aſſembly of the atoms that compoſe the human body at the *Trump of Doom*, by the collection of bees into a ſwarm at the tinkling of a pan.

The

The Prophet ſays of Tyre, that *her Merchants are Princes*; Young ſays of Tyre in his *Merchant*,

Her merchants Princes, and each *deck a Throne.*

Let burleſque try to go beyond him.

He has the trick of joining the turgid and familiar: to buy the alliance of Britain, *Climes were paid down.* Antitheſis is his favourite. *They for kindneſs hate*; and *becauſe ſhe's right, ſhe's ever in the wrong.*

His verſification is his own; neither his blank nor his rhyming lines have any reſemblance to thoſe of former writers: he picks up no hemiſtichs, he copies

copies no favourite expreſſions; he ſeems to have laid up no ſtores of thought or diction, but to owe all to the fortuitous ſuggeſtions of the preſent moment. Yet I have reaſon to believe that, when once he had formed a new deſign, he then laboured it with very patient induſtry, and that he compoſed with great labour, and frequent reviſions.

His verſes are formed by no certain model; for he is no more like himſelf in his different productions than he is like others. He ſeems never to have ſtudied proſody, nor to have had any direction but from his own ear. But, with all his defects, he was a man of genius and a poet.

DYER.

JOHN DYER, of whom I have no other account to give than his own Letters, publiſhed with Hughes's correſpondence, and the notes added by the editor, have afforded me, was born in 1700, the ſecond ſon of Robert Dyer of Aberglaſney in Caermarthenſhire, a ſolicitor of great capacity and note.

He paſſed through Weſtminſter-ſchool under the care of Dr. Freind, and was then called home to be inſtructed in his father's profeſſion. But his father died

ſoon, and he took no delight in the ſtudy of the law, but, having always amuſed himſelf with drawing, reſolved to turn painter, and became pupil to Mr. Richardſon, an artiſt then of high reputation, but now better known by his books than by his pictures.

Having ſtudied awhile under his maſter, he became, as he tells his friend, an itinerant painter, and wandered about South Wales and the parts adjacent; but he mingled poetry with painting; and about 1727 printed *Grongar Hill* in Lewis's Miſcellany.

Being, probably, unſatisfied with his own proficiency, he, like other painters, tra-

travelled to Italy; and coming back in 1740, publiſhed the *Ruins of Rome.*

If his poem was written ſoon after his return, he did not make much uſe of his acquiſitions, whatever they might be; for decline of health, and love of ſtudy, determined him to the church. He therefore entered into orders; and, it ſeems, married about the ſame time a lady of the name of *Enſor*; "whoſe "grand-mother," ſays he, "was a Shake-"ſpeare, deſcended from a brother of "every body's Shakeſpeare;" by her, in 1756, he had a ſon and three daughters living.

His eccleſiaſtical proviſion was a long time but ſlender. His firſt patron, Mr. Harper, gave him, in 1741, Calthorp in Leiceſterſhire of eighty pounds a year,

on which he lived ten years, and then exchanged it for Belchford in Lincolnſhire of ſeventy-five. His condition now began to mend. In 1752, Sir John Heathcote gave him Coningſby, of one hundred and twenty pounds a year; and afterwards the Chancellor added Kirkby, of one hundred and ten. He complains that the repair of the houſe at Coningſby, and other expences, took away the profit.

About the time of his removal to Coningſby he publiſhed the *Fleece*, his greateſt poetical work; of which I will not ſuppreſs a ludicrous ſtory. Dodſley the bookſeller was one day mentioning it to a critical viſiter, with more expectation of ſucceſs than the other could

eaſily admit. In the converſation the author's age was aſked; and being repreſented as advanced in life, *He will*, ſaid the critick, *be buried in woollen*.

He did not indeed long ſurvive that publication, nor long enjoy the increaſe of his preferments; for in 1758 he died.

Dyer is not a poet of bulk or dignity ſufficient to require an elaborate criticiſm. *Grongar Hill* is the happieſt of his productions: it is not indeed very accurately written; but the ſcenes which it diſplays are ſo pleaſing, the images which they raiſe ſo welcome to the mind, and the reflections of the writer ſo conſonant to the general ſenſe or experience

of

of mankind, that when it is once read, it will be read again.

The idea of the *Ruins of Rome* ſtrikes more but pleaſes leſs, and the title raiſes greater expectation than the performance gratifies. Some paſſages, however, are conceived with the mind of a poet; as when, in the neighbourhood of dilapidating Edifices, he ſays,

— —At dead of night
The hermit oft, 'midſt his oriſons, hears,
Aghaſt, the voice of Time diſparting towers.

Of *The Fleece*, which never became popular, and is now univerſally neglected, I can ſay little that is likely to recall it to attention. The woolcomber and the poet appear to me ſuch diſcor-

dant natures, that an attempt to bring them together is to *couple the ſerpent with the fowl.* When Dyer, whoſe mind was not unpoetical, has done his utmoſt, by intereſting his reader in our native commodity, by interſperſing rural imagery and incidental digreſſions, by cloathing ſmall images in great words, and by all the writer's arts of deluſion, the meanneſs naturally adhering, and the irreverence habitually annexed to trade and manufacture, ſink him under inſuperable oppreſſion; and the diſguſt which blank verſe, encumbering and encumbered, ſuperadds to an unpleaſing ſubject, ſoon repels the reader, however willing to be pleaſed.

Let

Let me however honeſtly report whatever may counterbalance this weight of cenſure. I have been told that Akenſide, who, upon a poetical queſtion, has a right to be heard, ſaid, "That he would "regulate his opinion of the reigning "taſte by the fate of Dyer's *Fleece*; for, "if that were ill-received, he ſhould "not think it any longer reaſonable to "expect fame from excellence."

MALLET.

OF DAVID MALLET, having no written memorial, I am able to give no other account than ſuch as is ſupplied by the unauthoriſed loquacity of common fame, and a very ſlight perſonal knowledge.

He was by his original one of the Macgregors, a clan that became, about ſixty years ago, under the conduct of Robin Roy, ſo formidable and ſo infamous for violence and robbery, that the name was annulled by a legal abolition; and when they were all to denominate themſelves anew, the father, I

ſuppoſe, of this author called himſelf Malloch.

David Malloch was, by the penury of his parents, compelled to be *Janitor* of the High School at Edinburgh; a mean office, of which he did not afterwards delight to hear. But he ſurmounted the diſadvantages of his birth and fortune; for when the duke of Montroſe applied to the College of Edinburgh for a tutor to educate his ſons, Malloch was recommended; and I never heard that he diſhonoured his credentials.

When his pupils were ſent to ſee the world, they were intruſted to his care; and having conducted them round the common circle of modiſh travels, he re-

returned with them to London, where, by the influence of the family in which he reſided, he naturally gained admiſſion to many perſons of the higheſt rank, and the higheſt character, to wits, nobles, and ſtateſmen.

Of his works, I know not whether I can trace the ſeries. His firſt production was *William and Margaret* *; of which, though it contains nothing very ſtriking or difficult, he has been envied the reputation; and plagiariſm has been boldly charged, but never proved.

Not long afterwards he publiſhed the *Excurſion* (1728); a deſultory and capri-

* Mallet's *William and Margaret* was printed in Aaron Hill's *Plain Dealer*, N° 36, July 24, 1724. In its original ſtate it was very different from what it is in this Collection.

cious view of ſuch ſcenes of Nature as his fancy led him, or his knowledge enabled him, to deſcribe. It is not devoid of poetical ſpirit. Many of the images are ſtriking, and many of the paragraphs are elegant. The caſt of diction ſeems to be copied from Thomſon, whoſe *Seaſons* were then in their full bloſſom of reputation. He has Thomſon's beauties and his faults.

His poem on *Verbal Criticiſm* (1733) was written to pay court to Pope, on a ſubject which he either did not underſtand or willingly miſrepreſented; and is little more than an improvement, or rather expanſion, of a fragment which Pope printed in a Miſcellany long before he engrafted it into a regular poem. There is in this piece more pertneſs than wit,

and

and more confidence than knowledge. The verſification is tolerable, nor can criticiſm allow it a higher praiſe.

His firſt tragedy was *Eurydice*, acted at Drury-Lane in 1731; of which I know not the reception nor the merit, but have heard it mentioned as a mean performance. He was not then too high to accept a Prologue and Epilogue from Aaron Hill, neither of which can be much commended.

Having cleared his tongue from his native pronunciation ſo as to be no longer diſtinguiſhed as a Scot, he ſeems inclined to diſencumber himſelf from all adherences of his original, and took upon him to change his name from Scotch *Malloch* to Engliſh *Mallet*, without any imaginable reaſon of preference

which the eye or ear can diſcover. What other proofs he gave of diſreſpect to his native country I know not; but it was remarked of him, that he was the only Scot whom Scotchmen did not commend.

About this time Pope, whom he viſited familiarly, publiſhed his *Eſſay on Man*, but concealed the author; and when Mallet entered one day, Pope aſked him ſlightly what there was new. Mallet told him, that the neweſt piece was ſomething called an *Eſſay on Man*, which he had inſpected idly; and ſeeing the utter inability of the author, who had neither ſkill in writing nor knowledge of his ſubject, had toſſed it away. Pope, to puniſh his ſelf-conceit, told him the ſecret.

A new

A new edition of the works of Bacon being prepared (1740) for the preſs, Mallet was employed to prefix a Life, which he has written with elegance, perhaps with ſome affectation; but with ſo much more knowledge of hiſtory than of ſcience, that when he afterwards undertook the Life of Marlborough, Warburton remarked, that he might perhaps forget that Marlborough was a general, as he had forgotten that Bacon was a philoſopher.

When the prince of Wales was driven from the palace, and, ſetting himſelf at the head of the oppoſition, kept a ſeparate Court, he endeavoured to increaſe his popularity by the patronage of literature, and made Mallet his under-ſecretary,

with a ſalary of two hundred pounds a year: Thomſon likewiſe had a penſion; and they were aſſociated in the compoſition of the Maſque of *Alfred*, which in its original ſtate was played at Cliefden in 1740; it was afterwards almoſt wholly changed by Mallet, and brought upon the ſtage at Drury-Lane in 1751, but with no great ſucceſs.

Mallet, in a familiar converſation with Garrick, diſcourſing of the diligence which he was then exerting upon the Life of *Marlborough*, let him know that in the ſeries of great men, quickly to be exhibited, he ſhould *find a nich* for the hero of the theatre. Garrick profeſſed to wonder by what artifice he could be introduced; but Mallet let

him

him know, that, by a dexterous anticipation, he ſhould fix him in a conſpicuous place. "Mr. Mallet," ſays Garrick, in his gratitude of exultation, "have you "left off to write for the ſtage?" Mallet then confeſſed that he had a drama in his hands. Garrick promiſed to act it; and *Alfred* was produced.

The long retardation of the Life of the duke of Marlborough ſhews, with ſtrong conviction, how little confidence can be placed in poſthumous renown. When he died, it was ſoon determined that his ſtory ſhould be delivered to poſterity; and the papers ſuppoſed to contain the neceſſary information were delivered to the lord Moleſworth, who had been his favourite in Flanders. When

Moleſ-

Moleſworth died, the ſame papers were transferred with the ſame deſign to Sir Richard Steele, who in ſome of his exigencies put them in pawn. They then remained with the old dutcheſs, who in her will aſſigned the taſk to Glover and Mallet, with a reward of a thouſand pounds, and a prohibition to inſert any verſes. Glover rejected, I ſuppoſe, with diſdain the legacy, and devolved the whole work upon Mallet; who had from the late duke of Marlborough a penſion to promote his induſtry, and who talked of the diſcoveries which he made; but left not, when he died, any hiſtorical labours behind him.

While he was in the Prince's ſervice he publiſhed *Muſtapha*, with a Prologue

by Thomſon, not mean, but far inferior to that which he had received from Mallet for *Agamemnon*. The Epilogue, ſaid to be written by a friend, was compoſed in haſte by Mallet, in the place of one promiſed, which was never given. This tragedy was dedicated to the Prince his maſter. It was acted at Drury-Lane in 1739, and was well received, but was never revived.

In 1740, he produced, as has been already mentioned, the maſque of *Alfred*, in conjunction with Thomſon.

For ſome time afterwards he lay at reſt. After a long interval, his next work was *Amyntor and Theodora* (1747), a long ſtory in blank verſe; in which it cannot be denied that there is copiouſneſs and elegance of language, vigour of ſentiment,

ment, and imagery well adapted to take poſſeſſion of the fancy. But it is blank verſe. The firſt ſale was not great, and it is now loſt in forgetfulneſs.

Mallet, by addreſs or accident, perhaps by his dependance on the Prince, found his way to Bolingbroke; a man whoſe pride and petulance made his kindneſs difficult to gain, or keep, and whom Mallet was content to court by an act, which, I hope, was unwillingly performed. When it was found that Pope had clandeſtinely printed an unauthoriſed number of the pamphlet called the *Patriot King*, Bolingbroke, in a fit of uſeleſs fury, reſolved to blaſt his memory, and employed Mallet (1747) as the executioner of his vengeance. Mallet had not virtue, or had not ſpirit, to refuſe

fuſe the office; and was rewarded, not long after, with the legacy of lord Bolingbroke's works.

Many of the political pieces had been written during the oppoſition to Walpole, and given to Franklin, as he ſuppoſed, in perpetuity. Theſe, among the reſt, were claimed by the will. The queſtion was referred to arbitrators; but when they decided againſt Mallet, he refuſed to yield to the award; and by the help of Millar the bookſeller publiſhed all that he could find, but with ſucceſs very much below his expectation.

In 1753, his maſque of *Britannia* was acted at Drury-Lane, and his tragedy of *Elvira* in 1763; in which year he was ap-

appointed keeper of the book of Entries for ſhips in the port of London.

In the beginning of the laſt war, when the nation was exaſperated by ill ſucceſs, he was employed to turn the publick vengeance upon Byng, and wrote a letter of accuſation under the character of a *Plain Man*. The paper was with great induſtry circulated and diſperſed; and he for his ſeaſonable intervention had a conſiderable penſion beſtowed upon him, which he retained to his death.

Towards the end of his life he went with his wife to France; but after a while, finding his health declining, he returned alone to England, and died in April 1765.

He was twice married, and by his firſt wife had ſeveral children. One daughter,

who

who married an Italian of rank named Cileſia, wrote a tragedy called *Almida*, which was acted at Drury-Lane. His ſecond wife was the daughter of a nobleman's ſteward, who had a conſiderable fortune, which ſhe took care to retain in her own hands.

His ſtature was diminutive, but he was regularly formed; his appearance, till he grew corpulent, was agreeable, and he ſuffered it to want no recommendation that dreſs could give it. His converſation was elegant and eaſy. The reſt of his character may, without injury to his memory, ſink into ſilence.

As a writer, he cannot be placed in any high claſs. There is no ſpecies of compoſition in which he was eminent.

His

His Dramas had their day, a ſhort day, and are forgotten: his blank verſe ſeems to my ear the echo of Thomſon. His Life of Bacon is known as it is appended to Bacon's volumes, but is no longer mentioned. His works are ſuch as a writer, buſtling in the world, ſhewing himſelf in publick, and emerging occaſionally from time to time into notice, might keep alive by his perſonal influence; but which, conveying little information, and giving no great pleaſure, muſt ſoon give way, as the ſucceſſion of things produces new topicks of converſation, and other modes of amuſement.

SHENSTONE.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, the ſon of Thomas Shenſtone and Anne Pen, was born in November 1714, at the Leaſowes in Hales-Owen, one of thoſe inſulated diſtricts which, in the diviſion of the kingdom, was appended, for ſome reaſon not now diſcoverable, to a diſtant county; and which, though ſurrounded by Warwickſhire and Worceſterſhire, belongs to Shropſhire, though perhaps thirty miles diſtant from any other part of it.

He learned to read of an old dame, whom his poem of the *School-miſtreſs* has delivered to poſterity; and ſoon received ſuch delight from books, that he was always calling for new entertainment, and expected that when any of the family went to market a new book ſhould be brought him, which, when it came, was in fondneſs carried to bed and laid by him. It is ſaid, that when his requeſt had been neglected, his mother wrapped up a piece of wood of the ſame form, and pacified him for the night.

As he grew older, he went for a while to the Grammar-ſchool in Hales-Owen, and was placed afterwards with Mr. Crumpton, an eminent ſchool-maſter at

Soli-

Solihul, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the quickneſs of his progreſs.

When he was young (June 1724) he was deprived of his father, and ſoon after (Auguſt 1726) of his grandfather; and was, with his brother, who died afterwards unmarried, left to the care of his grandmother, who managed the eſtate.

From ſchool he was ſent in 1732 to Pembroke-College in Oxford, a ſociety which for half a century has been eminent for Engliſh poetry and elegant literature. Here it appears that he found delight and advantage; for he continued his name there ten years, though he took no degree. After the firſt four years he put on the Civilian's gown, but with-

out ſhewing any intention to engage in the profeſſion.

About the time when he went to Oxford, the death of his grandmother devolved his affairs to the care of the reverend Mr. Dolman of Brome in Staffordſhire, whoſe attention he always mentioned with gratitude.

At Oxford he employed himſelf upon Engliſh poetry; and in 1737 publiſhed a ſmall Miſcellany, without his name.

He then for a time wandered about, to acquaint himſelf with life; and was ſometimes at London, ſometimes at Bath, or any other place of publick reſort; but he did not forget his poetry. He publiſhed in 1740 his *Judgement of Hercules*, addreſſed to Mr. Lyttelton, whoſe inte-

intereſt he ſupported with great warmth at an election: this was two years afterwards followed by the *School-miſtreſs*.

Mr. Dolman, to whoſe care he was indebted for his eaſe and leiſure, died in 1745, and the care of his own fortune now fell upon him. He tried to eſcape it a while, and lived at his houſe with his tenants, who were diſtantly related; but finding that imperfect poſſeſſion inconvenient, he took the whole eſtate into his own hands, more to the improvement of its beauty than the increaſe of its produce.

Now began his delight in rural pleaſures, and his ambition of rural elegance: he began from this time to point his proſpects, to diverſify his ſurface, to

entangle his walks, and to wind his waters; which he did with ſuch judgement and ſuch fancy, as made his little domain the envy of the great, and the admiration of the ſkilful; a place to be viſited by travellers, and copied by deſigners. Whether to plant a walk in undulating curves, and to place a bench at every turn where there is an object to catch the view; to make water run where it will be heard, or to ſtagnate where it will be ſeen; to leave intervals where the eye will be pleaſed, and to thicken the plantation where there is ſomething to be hidden, demands any great powers of mind, I will not enquire; perhaps a ſullen and ſurly ſpeculator may think ſuch performances rather the ſport than

the buſineſs of human reaſon. But it muſt be at leaſt confeſſed, that to embelliſh the form of Nature is an innocent amuſement; and ſome praiſe muſt be allowed by the moſt ſupercilious obſerver to him, who does beſt what ſuch multitudes are contending to do well.

This praiſe was the praiſe of Shenſtone; but, like all other modes of felicity, it was not enjoyed without its abatements. Lyttelton was his neighbour and his rival, whoſe empire, ſpacious and opulent, looked with diſdain on the *petty State* that *appeared behind it*. For a while the inhabitants of Hagley affected to tell their acquaintance of the little fellow that was trying to make himſelf admired; but when by degrees

the Leaſowes forced themſelves into notice, they took care to defeat the curioſity which they could not ſuppreſs, by conducting their viſitants perverſely to inconvenient points of view, and introducing them at the wrong end of a walk to detect a deception; injuries of which Shenſtone would heavily complain. Where there is emulation there will be vanity, and where there is vanity there will be folly.

The pleaſure of Shenſtone was all in his eye; he valued what he valued merely for its looks; nothing raiſed his indignation more than to aſk if there were any fiſhes in his water.

His houſe was mean, and he did not improve it; his care was of his grounds.

When he came home from his walks he might find his floors flooded by a ſhower through the broken roof; but could ſpare no money for its reparation.

In time his expences brought clamours about him, that overpowered the lamb's bleat and the linnet's ſong; and his groves were haunted by beings very different from fawns and fairies. He ſpent his eſtate in adorning it, and his death was probably haſtened by his anxieties. He was a lamp that ſpent its oil in blazing. It is ſaid, that if he had lived a little longer he would have been aſſiſted by a penſion: ſuch bounty could not have been ever more properly beſtowed; but that it was ever aſked

is not certain; it is too certain that it never was enjoyed.

He died at the Leaſowes, of a putrid fever, about five on Friday morning, February 11, 1763; and was buried by the ſide of his brother in the church-yard of Hales-Owen.

He was never married, though he might have obtained the lady, whoever ſhe was, to whom his *Paſtoral Ballad* was addreſſed. He is repreſented by his friend Dodſley as a man of great tenderneſs and generoſity, kind to all that were within his influence; but, if once offended, not eaſily appeaſed; inattentive to œconomy, and careleſs of his expences; in his perſon larger than the middle ſize, with ſomething clumſy in his

his form; very negligent of his cloaths, and remarkable for wearing his grey hair in a particular manner; for he held that the faſhion was no rule of dreſs, and that every man was to ſuit his appearance to his natural form.

His mind was not very comprehenſive, nor his curioſity active; he had no value for thoſe parts of knowledge which he had not himſelf cultivated.

His life was unſtained by any crime; the Elegy on *Jeſſy*, which has been ſuppoſed to relate an unfortunate and criminal amour of his own, was known by his friends to have been ſuggeſted by the ſtory of Miſs Godfrey in Richardſon's *Pamela*.

What

What Gray thought of his character, from the peruſal of his Letters, was this:

" I have read too an octavo volume of " Shenſtone's Letters. Poor man! he " was always wiſhing for money, for " fame, and other diſtinctions; and his " whole philoſophy conſiſted in living " againſt his will in retirement, and in a " place which his taſte had adorned; " but which he only enjoyed when " people of note came to ſee and com- " mend it: his correſpondence is about " nothing elſe but this place and his own " writings, with two or three neighbour- " ing clergymen, who wrote verſes too."

His poems conſiſt of elegies, odes, and ballads, humorous ſallies, and moral pieces.

His

His conception of an Elegy he has in his Preface very judiciouſly and diſcriminately explained. It is, according to his account, the effuſion of a contemplative mind, ſometimes plaintive, and always ſerious, and therefore ſuperior to the glitter of ſlight ornaments. His compoſitions ſuit not ill to this deſcription. His topicks of praiſe are the domeſtick virtues, and his thoughts are pure and ſimple; but, wanting combination, they want variety. The peace of ſolitude, the innocence of inactivity, and the unenvied ſecurity of an humble ſtation, can fill but a few pages. That of which the eſſence is uniformity will be ſoon deſcribed. His Elegies have therefore too much reſemblance of each other.

The

The lines are ſometimes, ſuch as Elegy requires, ſmooth and eaſy; but to this praiſe his claim is not conſtant: his diction is often harſh, improper, and affected; his words ill-coined, or ill-choſen, and his phraſe unſkilfully inverted.

The Lyrick Poems are almoſt all of the light and airy kind, ſuch as trip lightly and nimbly along, without the load of any weighty meaning. From theſe, however, *Rural Elegance* has ſome right to be excepted. I once heard it praiſed by a very learned lady; and though the lines are irregular, and the thoughts diffuſed with too much verboſity, yet it cannot be denied to contain both philoſophical argument and poetical ſpirit.

Of

Of the reſt I cannot think any excellent; the *Skylark* pleaſes me beſt, which has however more of the epigram than of the ode.

But the four parts of his *Paſtoral Ballad* demand particular notice. I cannot but regret that it is paſtoral; an intelligent reader, acquainted with the ſcenes of real life, ſickens at the mention of the *crook*, the *pipe*, the *ſheep*, and the *kids*, which it is not neceſſary to bring forward to notice, for the poet's art is ſelection, and he ought to ſhew the beauties without the groſſneſs of the country life. His ſtanza ſeems to have been choſen in imitation of Rowe's *Deſpairing Shepherd*.

In the firſt part are two paſſages, to which if any mind denies its ſympathy,

it

it has no acquaintance with love or nature:

I priz'd every hour that went by,
Beyond all that had pleas'd me before;
But now they are paſt, and I ſigh,
And I grieve that I priz'd them no more.

When forc'd the fair nymph to forgo,
What anguiſh I felt in my heart!
Yet I thought—but it might not be ſo,
'Twas with pain that ſhe ſaw me depart.

She gaz'd, as I ſlowly withdrew;
My path I could hardly diſcern;
So ſweetly ſhe bade me adieu,
I thought that ſhe bade me return.

In the ſecond this paſſage has its prettineſs, though it be not equal to the former:

I have

I have found out a gift for my fair;
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed:
But let me that plunder forbear,
She will ſay 'twas a barbarous deed:
For he ne'er could be true, ſhe averr'd,
Who could rob a poor bird of its young;
And I lov'd her the more, when I heard
Such tenderneſs fall from her tongue.

In the third he mentions the common places of amorous poetry with ſome addreſs:

'Tis his with mock paſſion to glow;
'Tis his in ſmooth tales to unfold,
How her face is as bright as the ſnow,
And her boſom, be ſure, is as cold:
How the nightingales labour the ſtrain,
With the notes of his charmer to vie;
How they vary their accents in vain,
Repine at her triumphs, and die.

In the fourth I find nothing better than this natural ſtrain of Hope:

Alas! from the day that we met,
What hope of an end to my woes?
When I cannot endure to forget
The glance that undid my repoſe.
Yet Time may diminiſh the pain:
The flower, and the ſhrub, and the tree,
Which I rear'd for her pleaſure in vain,
In time may have comfort for me.

His *Levities* are by their title exempted from the ſeverities of criticiſm; yet it may be remarked, in a few words, that his humour is ſometimes groſs, and ſeldom ſpritely.

Of the Moral Poems the firſt is the *Choice of Hercules*, from Xenophon. The numbers are ſmooth, the diction elegant,

gant, and the thoughts juſt; but ſomething of vigour perhaps is ſtill to be wiſhed, which it might have had by brevity and compreſſion. His *Fate of Delicacy* has an airy gaiety, but not a very pointed general moral. His blank verſes, thoſe that can read them may probably find to be like the blank verſes of his neighbours. *Love and Honour* is derived from the old ballad, *Did you not hear of a Spaniſh Lady*—I wiſh it well enough to wiſh it were in rhyme.

The *School-miſtreſs*, of which I know not what claim it has to ſtand among the Moral Works, is ſurely the moſt pleaſing of Shenſtone's performances. The adoption of a particular ſtile, in light and ſhort compoſitions, contributes

butes much to the increaſe of pleaſure: we are entertained at once with two imitations, of nature in the ſentiments, of the original author in the ſtile, and between them the mind is kept in perpetual employment.

The general recommendation of Shenſtone is eaſineſs and ſimplicity; his general defect is want of comprehenſion and variety. Had his mind been better ſtored with knowledge, whether he could have been great, I know not; he could certainly have been agreeable.

AKENSIDE.

MARK AKENSIDE was born on the ninth of November, 1721, at Newcaſtle upon Tyne. His father, Mark, was a butcher of the Preſbyterian ſect; his mother's name was Mary Lumſden. He received the firſt part of his education at the grammar-ſchool of Newcaſtle; and was afterwards inſtructed by Mr. Wilſon, who kept a private academy.

At the age of eighteen he was ſent to Edinburgh, that he might qualify him-

ſelf for the office of a diſſenting miniſter, and received ſome aſſiſtance from the fund which the Diſſenters employ in educating young men of ſcanty fortune. But a wider view of the world opened other ſcenes, and prompted other hopes: he determined to ſtudy phyſic, and repaid that contribution, which, being received for a different purpoſe, he juſtly thought it diſhonourable to retain.

Whether, when he reſolved not to be a diſſenting miniſter, he ceaſed to be a Diſſenter, I know not. He certainly retained an unneceſſary and outrageous zeal for what he called and thought liberty; a zeal which ſometimes diſguiſes from the world, and not rarely from the mind which it poſſeſſes,

an envious deſire of plundering wealth or degrading greatneſs; and of which the immediate tendency is innovation and anarchy, an impetuous eagerneſs to ſubvert and confound, with very little care what ſhall be eſtabliſhed.

Akenſide was one of thoſe poets who have felt very early the motions of genius, and one of thoſe ſtudents who have very early ſtored their memories with ſentiments and images. Many of his performances were produced in his youth; and his greateſt work, *The Pleaſures of Imagination*, appeared in 1744. I have heard Dodſley, by whom it was publiſhed, relate, that when the copy was offered him, the price demanded for it, which was an

hundred and twenty pounds, being ſuch as he was not inclined to give precipitately, he carried the work to Pope, who, having looked into it, adviſed him not to make a niggardly offer; for *this was no every-day writer.*

In 1741 he went to Leyden, in purſuit of medical knowledge; and three years afterwards (May 16, 1744) became doctor of phyſick, having, according to the cuſtom of the Dutch Univerſities, publiſhed a theſis, or diſſertation. The ſubject which he choſe was *the Original and Growth of the Human Fœtus*; in which he is ſaid to have departed, with great judgement, from the opinion then eſtabliſhed, and to have deli-

delivered that which has been ſince confirmed and received.

Akenſide was a young man, warm with every notion that by nature or accident had been connected with the ſound of liberty, and by an excentricity which ſuch diſpoſitions do not eaſily avoid, a lover of contradiction, and no friend to any thing eſtabliſhed. He adopted Shafteſbury's fooliſh aſſertion of the efficacy of ridicule for the diſcovery of truth. For this he was attacked by Warburton, and defended by Dyſon: Warburton afterwards reprinted his remarks at the end of his dedication to the Freethinkers.

The reſult of all the arguments which have been produced in a long and eager

diſcuſſion of this idle queſtion, may be eaſily collected. If ridicule be applied to any poſition as the teſt of truth, it will then become a queſtion whether ſuch ridicule be juſt; and this can only be decided by the application of truth, as the teſt of ridicule. Two men, fearing, one a real and the other a fancied danger, will be for a while equally expoſed to the inevitable conſequences of cowardice, contemptuous cenſure, and ludicrous repreſentation; and the true ſtate of both caſes muſt be known, before it can be decided whoſe terror is rational, and whoſe is ridiculous; who is to be pitied, and who to be deſpiſed.

In the reviſal of his poem, which he died before he had finiſhed, he omitted the lines which had given occaſion to Warburton's objections.

He publiſhed, ſoon after his return from Leyden (1745), his firſt collection of odes; and was impelled by his rage of patriotiſm to write a very acrimonious epiſtle to Pulteney, whom he ſtigmatizes, under the name of Curio, as the betrayer of his country.

Being now to live by his profeſſion, he firſt commenced phyſician at Northampton, where Dr. Stonehouſe then practiſed, with ſuch reputation and ſucceſs, that a ſtranger was not likely to gain ground upon him. Akenſide tried the conteſt awhile; and,

having deafened the place with clamours for liberty, removed to Hampſtead, where he reſided more than two years, and then fixed himſelf in London, the proper place for a man of accompliſhments like his.

At London he was known as a poet, but was ſtill to make his way as a phyſician; and would perhaps have been reduced to great exigencies, but that Mr. Dyſon, with an ardour of friendſhip that has not many examples, allowed him three hundred pounds a year. Thus ſupported, he advanced gradually in medical reputation, but never attained any great extent of practice, or eminence of popularity. A phyſician in a great city ſeems to be the mere play-

thing

thing of Fortune; his degree of reputation is, for the moſt part, totally caſual: they that employ him, know not his excellence; they that reject him, know not his deficience. By an acute obſerver, who had looked on the tranſactions of the medical world for half a century, a very curious book might be written on the *Fortune of Phyſicians*.

Akenſide appears not to have been wanting to his own ſucceſs: he placed himſelf in view by all the common methods; he became a Fellow of the Royal Society; he obtained a degree at Cambridge, and was admitted into the College of Phyſicians; he wrote little poetry, but publiſhed, from time to time, medical eſſays and obſervations; he

he became phyſician to St. Thomas's Hoſpital; having read the Gulſtonian Lectures in Anatomy, he began to give, for the Cronian Lecture, a hiſtory of the revival of Learning, from which he ſoon deſiſted; and, in converſation, he very eagerly forced himſelf into notice by an ambitious oſtentation of elegance and literature.

His Diſcourſe on the Dyſentery (1764) was conſidered as a very conſpicuous ſpecimen of Latinity, which entitled him to the ſame height of place among the ſcholars as he poſſeſſed before among the wits; and he might perhaps have riſen to a greater elevation of character, but that his ſtudies were

ended

ended with his life, by a putrid fever, June 23, 1770, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

AKENSIDE is to be conſidered as a didactick and lyrick poet. His great work is the *Pleaſures of Imagination*; a performance which, publiſhed, as it was, at the age of twenty-three, raiſed expectations which were not afterwards very amply ſatisfied. It has undoubtedly a juſt claim to very particular notice, as an example of great felicity of genius, and uncommon amplitude of acquiſitions, of a young mind ſtored with

with images, and much exerciſed in combining and comparing them.

With the philoſophical or religious tenets of the author I have nothing to do; my buſineſs is with his poetry. The ſubject is well-choſen, as it includes all images that can ſtrike or pleaſe, and thus compriſes every ſpecies of poetical delight. The only difficulty is in the choice of examples and illuſtrations, and it is not eaſy in ſuch exuberance of matter to find the middle point between penury and ſatiety. The parts ſeem artificially diſpoſed, with ſufficient coherence, ſo as that they cannot change their places without injury to the general deſign.

His images are diſplayed with ſuch luxuriance of expreſſion, that they are hidden, like Butler's Moon, by a *Veil of Light*; they are forms fantaſtically loſt under ſuperfluity of dreſs. *Pars minima eſt ipſa Puella ſui.* The words are multiplied till the ſenſe is hardly perceived; attention deſerts the mind, and ſettles in the ear. The reader wanders through the gay diffuſion ſometimes amazed, and ſometimes delighted; but, after many turnings in the flowery labyrinth, comes out as he went in. He remarked little, and laid hold on nothing.

To his verſification juſtice requires that praiſe ſhould not be denied. In the general fabrication of his lines he is perhaps ſuperior to any other writer

of

of blank verſe; his flow is ſmooth, and his pauſes are muſical; but the concatenation of his verſes is commonly too long continued, and the full cloſe does not recur with ſufficient frequency. The ſenſe is carried on through a long intertexture of complicated clauſes, and as nothing is diſtinguiſhed, nothing is remembered.

The exemption which blank verſe affords from the neceſſity of cloſing the ſenſe with the couplet, betrays luxuriant and active minds into ſuch indulgence, that they pile image upon image, ornament upon ornament, and are not eaſily perſuaded to cloſe the ſenſe at all. Blank verſe will therefore, I fear, be too often found in deſcription exube-

rant,

rant, in argument loquacious, and in narration tireſome.

His diction is certainly ſo far poetical as it is not proſaick, and ſo far valuable as it is not common. He is to be commended as having fewer artifices of diſguſt than moſt of his brethren of the blank ſong. He rarely either recalls old phraſes or twiſts his metre into harſh inverſions. The ſenſe however of his words is ſtrained; when *he views the* Ganges *from* Alpine *heights*; that is, from mountains like the Alps. And the pedant ſurely intrudes, but when was blank verſe without pedantry? when he tells how *Planets* abſolve *the ſtated round of Time.*

It

It is generally known to the readers of poetry that he intended to reviſe and augment this work, but died before he had completed his deſign. The reformed work as he left it, and the addition which he had made, are very properly retained in this collection. He ſeems to have ſomewhat contracted his diffuſion; but I know not whether he has gained in cloſeneſs what he has loſt in ſplendor. In the additional book, the *Tale of Solon* is too long.

His other poems are now to be conſidered; but a ſhort conſideration will diſpatch them. It is not eaſy to gueſs why he addicted himſelf ſo diligently to lyrick poetry, having neither the eaſe and airineſs of the lighter, nor

the vehemence and elevation of the grander ode. When he lays his ill-fated hand upon his harp, his former powers ſeem to deſert him; he has no longer his luxuriance of expreſſion, nor variety of images. His thoughts are cold, and his words inelegant. Yet ſuch was his love of lyricks, that, having written with great vigour and poignancy his *Epiſtle to Curio*, he transformed it afterwards into an ode diſgraceful only to its author.

Of his odes nothing favourable can be ſaid; the ſentiments commonly want force, nature, or novelty; the diction is ſometimes harſh and uncouth, the ſtanzas ill-conſtructed and unpleaſant, and the rhymes diſſonant, or unſkilfully diſ-

poſed, too diſtant from each other, or arranged with too little regard to eſtabliſhed uſe, and therefore perplexing to the ear, which in a ſhort compoſition has not time to grow familiar with an innovation.

To examine ſuch compoſitions ſingly, cannot be required; they have doubtleſs brighter and darker parts: but when they are once found to be generally dull, all further labour may be ſpared; for to what uſe can the work be criticiſed that will not be read?

LYTTELTON.

GEORGE LYTTELTON, the ſon of Sir Thomas Lyttelton of Hagley in Worceſterſhire, was born in 1709. He was educated at Eaton, where he was ſo much diſtinguiſhed, that his exerciſes were recommended as models to his ſchool-fellows.

From Eaton he went to Chriſt-church, where he retained the ſame reputation of ſuperiority, and diſplayed his abilities to the publick in a poem on *Blenheim*.

He was a very early writer, both in verſe and proſe. His *Progreſs of Love*, and his *Perſian Letters*, were both written when he was very young; and, indeed, the character of a young man is very viſible in both. The Verſes cant of ſhepherds and flocks, and crooks dreſſed with flowers; and the Letters have ſomething of that indiſtinct and headſtrong ardour for liberty which a man of genius always catches when he enters the world, and always ſuffers to cool as he paſſes forward.

He ſtaid not long at Oxford; for in 1728 he began his travels, and ſaw France and Italy. When he returned he obtained a ſeat in parliament, and ſoon diſtinguiſhed himſelf among the moſt

eager

eager opponents of Sir Robert Walpole, though his father, who was one of the Admiralty, always voted with the Court.

For many years the name of George Lyttelton was ſeen in every account of every debate in the Houſe of Commons. He oppoſed the ſtanding army; he oppoſed the exciſe; he ſupported the motion for petitioning the King to remove Walpole. His zeal was conſidered by the courtiers not only as violent, but as acrimonious and malignant; and when Walpole was at laſt driven from his places, every effort was made by his friends, and many friends he had, to exclude Lyttelton from the Secret Committee.

The Prince of Wales, being (1737) driven from St. James's, kept a ſeparate court, and opened his arms to the opponents of the miniſtry. Mr. Lyttelton was made his ſecretary, and was ſuppoſed to have great influence in the direction of his conduct. He perſuaded his maſter, whoſe buſineſs it was now to be popular, that he would advance his character by patronage. Mallet was made under-ſecretary, and Thomſon had a penſion. For Thomſon Lyttelton always retained his kindneſs, and was able at laſt to place him at eaſe.

Moore courted his favour by an apologetical poem, called *The Trial of Selim*, for which he was paid with kind words, which, as is common, raiſed great hopes,

hopes, that at laſt were diſappointed.

Lyttelton now ſtood in the firſt rank of oppoſition; and Pope, who was incited, it is not eaſy to ſay how, to increaſe the clamour againſt the miniſtry, commended him among the other patriots. This drew upon him the reproaches of Fox, who, in the houſe, imputed to him as a crime his intimacy with a lampooner ſo unjuſt and licentious. Lyttelton ſupported his friend, and replied, that he thought it an honour to be received into the familiarity of ſo great a poet.

While he was thus conſpicuous, he married (1741) Miſs Lucy Forteſcue of Devonſhire, by whom he had a ſon, the

late lord Lyttelton, and two daughters, and with whom he appears to have lived in the higheſt degree of connubial felicity: but human pleaſures are ſhort; ſhe died in childbed about five years afterwards, and he ſolaced his grief by writing a long poem to her memory.

He did not however condemn himſelf to perpetual ſolitude and ſorrow; for, after a while, he was content to ſeek happineſs again by a ſecond marriage with the daughter of Sir Robert Rich; but the experiment was unſucceſsful.

At length, after a long ſtruggle, Walpole gave way, and honour and profit were diſtributed among his conquerors. Lyttelton was made (1744) one of the Lords of the Treaſury; and from that

time was engaged in ſupporting the ſchemes of the miniſtry.

Politicks did not, however, ſo much engage him as to withhold his thoughts from things of more importance. He had, in the pride of juvenile confidence, with the help of corrupt converſation, entertained doubts of the truth of Chriſtianity; but he thought the time now come when it was no longer fit to doubt or believe by chance, and applied himſelf ſeriouſly to the great queſtion. His ſtudies, being honeſt, ended in conviction. He found that religion was true, and what he had learned he endeavoured to teach (1747), by *Obſervations on the Converſion of St. Paul*; a treatiſe to which infidelity has never been able to

fabricate a ſpecious anſwer. This book his father had the happineſs of ſeeing, and expreſſed his pleaſure in a letter which deſerves to be inſerted.

" I have read your religious treatiſe " with infinite pleaſure and ſatisfaction. " The ſtile is fine and clear, the argu- " ments cloſe, cogent, and irreſiſtible. " May the King of kings, whoſe glo- " rious cauſe you have ſo well defended, " reward your pious labours, and grant " that I may be found worthy through " the merits of Jeſus Chriſt, to be an " eye-witneſs of that happineſs which I " don't doubt he will bountifully beſtow " upon you. In the mean time, I ſhall " never ceaſe glorifying God for having

" en-

"endowed you with ſuch uſeful talents,
"and giving me ſo good a ſon.

"Your affectionate father,
"THOMAS LYTTELTON."

A few years afterwards (1751), by the death of his father, he inherited a baronet's title with a large eſtate, which, though perhaps he did not augment, he was careful to adorn, by a houſe of great elegance and expence, and by great attention to the decoration of his park.

As he continued his exertions in parliament, he was gradually advancing his claim to profit and preferment; and accordingly was made in time (1754) cofferer and privy counſellor: this place

he

he exchanged next year for the great office of chancellor of the Exchequer; an office, however, that required ſome qualifications which he ſoon perceived himſelf to want.

The year after, his curioſity led him into Wales; of which he has given an account, perhaps rather with too much affectation of delight, to Archibald Bower, a man of whom he had conceived an opinion more favourable than he ſeems to have deſerved, and whom, having once eſpouſed his intereſt and fame, he never was perſuaded to diſown. Bower, whatever was his moral character, did not want abilities; attacked as he was by an univerſal outcry, and that outcry, as it ſeems, the echo of truth, he kept his ground;

ground; at laſt, when his defences began to fail him, he ſallied out upon his adverſaries, and his adverſaries retreated.

About this time Lyttelton publiſhed his *Dialogues of the Dead*, which were very eagerly read, though the production rather, as it ſeems, of leiſure than of ſtudy, rather effuſions than compoſitions. The names of his perſons too often enable the reader to anticipate their converſation; and when they have met, they too often part without concluſion. He has copied *Fenelon* more than *Fontenelle*.

When they were firſt publiſhed they were kindly commended by the *Critical Reviewers*; and poor Lyttelton, with humble gratitude, returned his acknowledgements in a note which I have read;

acknow-

acknowledgements either for flattery or juſtice.

When, in the latter part of the laſt reign, the inauſpicious commencement of the war made the diſſolution of the miniſtry unavoidable, Sir George Lyttelton, loſing his employment, with the reſt, was recompenſed with a peerage; and reſted from political turbulence in the Houſe of Lords.

His laſt literary production was his *Hiſtory of Henry the Second*, elaborated by the ſearches and deliberations of twenty years, and publiſhed with ſuch anxiety as only vanity can dictate.

The ſtory of this publication is remarkable. The whole work was printed twice over, a great part of it three

times, and many ſheets four or five times. The bookſellers paid for the firſt impreſſion; but the charges and repeated operations of the Preſs were at the expence of the author, whoſe ambitious accuracy is known to have coſt him at leaſt a thouſand pounds. He began to print in 1755. Three volumes appeared in 1764, a ſecond edition of them in 1767, a third edition in 1768, and the concluſion in 1771.

Andrew Reid, a man not without conſiderable abilities, and not unacquainted with letters or with life, undertook to perſuade Lyttelton, as he had perſuaded himſelf, that he was maſter of the ſecret of punctuation; and, as fear begets credulity, he was employed,

I know

I know not at what price, to point the pages of *Henry the Second*. The book was at laſt pointed and printed, and ſent into the world. Lyttelton took money for his copy, of which, when he had paid the *Pointer*, he probably gave the reſt away; for he was very liberal to the indigent.

When time brought the Hiſtory to a third edition, Reid was either dead or diſcarded; and the ſuperintendence of typography and punctuation was committed to a man originally a comb-maker, but then known by the ſtile of Dr. Saunders. Something uncommon was probably expected, and ſomething uncommon was at laſt done; for to the edition of Dr. Saunders is appended,

what

what the world had hardly ſeen before, a liſt of errors of nineteen pages.

But to politicks and literature there muſt be an end. Lord Lyttelton had never the appearance of a ſtrong or of a healthy man; he had a ſlender uncompacted frame, and a meagre face: he laſted however ſixty years, and then was ſeized with his laſt illneſs. Of his death a very affecting and inſtructive account has been given by his phyſician, which will ſpare me the taſk of his moral character.

"On Sunday evening the ſymptoms "of his lordſhip's diſorder, which for "a week paſt had alarmed us, put on "a fatal appearance, and his lordſhip "believed himſelf to be a dying man.

"From

" From this time he ſuffered by reſtleſſ-
" neſs rather than pain; and though his
" nerves were apparently much flut-
" tered, his mental faculties never
" ſeemed ſtronger, when he was tho-
" roughly awake.

" His lordſhip's bilious and hepatic
" complaints ſeemed alone not equal to
" the expected mournful event; his
" long want of ſleep, whether the con-
" ſequence of the irritation in the
" bowels, or, which is more probable,
" of cauſes of different kind, accounts
" for his loſs of ſtrength, and for his
" death very ſufficiently.

" Though his lordſhip wiſhed his
" approaching diſſolution not to be lin-
" gering, he waited for it with reſigna-
" tion.

"tion. He ſaid, "It is a folly, a "keeping me in miſery, now to attempt "to prolong life;" yet he was eaſily "perſuaded, for the ſatisfaction of "others, to do or take any thing "thought proper for him. On Satur-"day he had been remarkably better, "and we were not without ſome hopes "of his recovery.

"On Sunday, about eleven in the "forenoon, his lordſhip ſent for me, "and ſaid he felt a great hurry, and "wiſhed to have a little converſation "with me in order to divert it. He "then proceeded to open the fountain "of that heart, from whence goodneſs "had ſo long flowed as from a copious "ſpring. "Doctor," ſaid he, "you

" ſhall be my confeſſor: when I firſt ſet
" out in the world, I had friends who
" endeavoured to ſhake my belief in the
" Chriſtian religion. I ſaw difficulties
" which ſtaggered me; but I kept my
" mind open to conviction. The evi-
" dences and doctrines of Chriſtianity,
" ſtudied with attention, made me a
" moſt firm and perſuaded believer of
" the Chriſtian religion. I have made
" it the rule of my life, and it is the
" ground of my future hopes. I have
" erred and ſinned; but have repented,
" and never indulged any vicious habit.
" In politicks, and publick life, I have
" made publick good the rule of my
" conduct. I never gave counſels which
" I did not at the time think the beſt.
" I have

"I have ſeen that I was ſometimes in "the wrong, but I did not err deſigned-"ly. I have endeavoured, in private "life, to do all the good in my power, "and never for a moment could in-"dulge malicious or unjuſt deſigns "upon any perſon whatſoever."

"At another time he ſaid, "I muſt "leave my ſoul in the ſame ſtate it was "in before this illneſs; I find this a very "inconvenient time for ſolicitude about "any thing."

"On the evening, when the ſymp-"toms of death came on, he ſaid, "I "ſhall die; but it will not be your "fault." When lord and lady Valentia "came to ſee his lordſhip, he gave "them his ſolemn benediction, and

" ſaid, " Be good, be virtuous, my lord;
" you muſt come to this." Thus he
" continued giving his dying benedic-
" tion to all around him. On Monday
" morning a lucid interval gave ſome
" ſmall hopes, but theſe vaniſhed in the
" evening; and he continued dying,
" but with very little uneaſineſs, till
" Tueſday morning, Auguſt 22, when
" between ſeven and eight o'clock he
" expired, almoſt without a groan."

His lordſhip was buried at Hagley; and the following inſcription is cut on the ſide of his lady's monument:

" This unadorned ſtone was placed here
" By the particular deſire and expreſs
" directions of the late Right Honourable
" GEORGE Lord LYTTELTON,
" Who died Auguſt 22, 1773, aged 64."

Lord

Lord Lyttelton's Poems are the works of a man of literature and judgement, devoting part of his time to verfification. They have nothing to be deſpiſed, and little to be admired. Of his *Progreſs of Love*, it is ſufficient blame to ſay that it is paſtoral. His blank verſe in *Blenheim* has neither much force nor much elegance. His little performances, whether Songs or Epigrams, are ſometimes ſpritely and ſometimes inſipid. His epiſtolary pieces have a ſmooth equability, which cannot much tire, becauſe they are ſhort, but which ſeldom *elevates* or *ſurprizes*. But from this cenſure ought to be excepted his *Advice to Belinda*, which, though for the moſt part written when he was very young,

con-

contains much truth and much prudence, very elegantly and vigorouſly expreſſed, and ſhews a mind attentive to life, and a power of poetry which cultivation might have raiſed to excellence.

WEST.

GILBERT WEST is one of the writers of whom I regret my inability to give a ſufficient account; the intelligence which my enquiries have obtained is general and ſcanty.

He was the ſon of the reverend Dr. Weſt; perhaps him who publiſhed *Pindar* at Oxford about the beginning of this century. His mother was ſiſter to Sir Richard Temple, afterwards lord Cobham. His father, purpoſing to educate him for the Church, ſent him firſt to Eaton, and afterwards to Oxford; but he was ſeduced to a more airy mode

of life, by a commiſſion in a troop of horſe procured him by his uncle.

He continued ſome time in the army; though it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that he never ſunk into a mere ſoldier, nor ever loſt the love or much neglected the purſuit of learning; and afterwards, finding himſelf more inclined to civil employment, he laid down his commiſſion, and engaged in buſineſs under the lord Townſhend, then ſecretary of ſtate, with whom he attended the king to Hanover.

His adherence to lord Townſhend ended in nothing but a nomination (May 1729) to be clerk-extraordinary of the Privy Council, which produced no immediate profit; for it only placed him in a ſtate of expectation and right of ſucceſſion,

and

and it was very long before a vacancy admitted him to profit.

Soon afterwards he married, and ſettled himſelf in a very pleaſant houſe at Wickham in Kent, where he devoted himſelf to learning, and to piety. Of his learning this Collection exhibits evidence, which would have been yet fuller if the diſſertations which accompany his verſion of Pindar had not been improperly omitted. Of his piety the influence has, I hope, been extended far by his *Obſervations on the Reſurrection*, publiſhed in 1747, for which the Univerſity of Oxford created him a Doctor of Laws by diploma (March 30, 1748); and perhaps it may not be without effect to tell, that he read prayers every evening to his family. Craſhaw is now not the

only maker of verſes to whom may be given the two venerable names of *Poet and Saint.*

He was very often viſited by Lyttelton and Pitt, who, when they were weary of faction and debates, uſed at Wickham to find books and quiet, a decent table, and literary converſation. There is at Wickham a walk made by Pitt; and, what is of far more importance, at Wickham Lyttelton received that conviction which produced his *Diſſertation on St. Paul.*

Mr. Weſt's income was not large; and his friends endeavoured, but without ſucceſs, to obtain an augmentation. It is reported, that the education of the young prince was offered to him, but that he required a more extenſive power

of

of ſuperintendence than it was thought proper to allow him.

In time, however, his revenue was improved; he lived to have one of the lucrative clerkſhips of the Privy Council (1752), and Mr. Pitt at laſt had it in his power to make him treaſurer of Chelſea Hoſpital.

He was now ſufficiently rich; but wealth came too late to be long enjoyed: nor could it ſecure him from the calamities of life; he loſt (1755) his only ſon; and the year after (March 26), a ſtroke of the palſy brought to the grave one of the few poets to whom the grave needed not to be terrible.

His poems are in this Collection neither ſelected nor arranged as I ſhould

have directed, had either the choice or the order fallen under my care or notice. His *Inſtitution of the Garter* is improperly omitted; inſtead of the mock tragedy of Lucian, the verſion from Euripides, if both could not be inſerted, ſhould have been taken. Of the *Imitations of Spenſer*, one was publiſhed before the verſion of *Pindar*, and ſhould therefore have had the firſt place.

Of his tranſlations I have only compared the firſt Olympick Ode with the original, and found my expectation ſurpaſſed, both by its elegance and its exactneſs. He does not confine himſelf to his author's train of ſtanzas; for he ſaw that the difference of the languages required a different mode of verſi-

verſification. The firſt ſtrophe is eminently happy; in the ſecond he has a little ſtrayed from Pindar's meaning, who ſays, *if thou, my ſoul, wiſheſt to ſpeak of games, look not in the deſert ſky for a planet hotter than the ſun, nor ſhall we tell of nobler games than thoſe of Olympia.* He is ſometimes too paraphraſtical. Pindar beſtows upon Hiero an epithet, which, in one word, ſignifies *delighting in horſes*; a word which, in the tranſlation, generates theſe lines:

Hiero's royal brows, whoſe care
Tends the courſer's noble breed,
Pleas'd to nurſe the pregnant mare,
Pleas'd to train the youthful ſteed.

Pindar ſays of Pelops, that *he came alone in the dark to the White Sea*; and Weſt,

Near the billow-beaten ſide
Of the foam-beſilver'd main,
Darkling, and alone, he ſtood:

which however is leſs exuberant than the former paſſage.

A work of this kind muſt, in a minute examination, diſcover many imperfections; but Weſt's verſion, ſo far as I have conſidered it, appears to be the product of great labour and great abilities.

His *Inſtitution of the Garter* (1742), which is omitted in this Collection, is written with ſufficient knowledge of the

manners that prevailed in the age to which it is referred, and with great elegance of diction; but, for want of a proceſs of events, neither knowledge nor elegance preſerve the reader from wearineſs.

His *Imitations of Spenſer* are very ſucceſsfully performed, both with reſpect to the metre, the language, and the fiction; and being engaged at once by the excellence of the ſentiments, and the artifice of the copy, the mind has two amuſements at once. But ſuch compoſitions are not to be reckoned among the great atchievements of intellects, becauſe their effect is local and temporary; they appeal not to reaſon or paſſion, but to memory, and preſuppoſe

ſuppoſe an accidental and artificial ſtate of mind. An Imitation of Spenſer is nothing to a reader, however acute, by whom Spenſer has never been peruſed. Works of this kind may deſerve praiſe, as proofs of great induſtry, and great nicety of obſervation; but the higheſt praiſe, the praiſe of genius, they cannot claim. The nobleſt beauties of art are thoſe of which the effect is co-extended with rational nature, or at leaſt with the whole circle of poliſhed life; what is leſs than this can be only pretty, the plaything of faſhion, and the amuſement of a day.

THERE

THERE is in the *Adventurer* a paper of verſes given to one of the authors as Mr. Weſt's, and ſuppoſed to have been written by him, which, having been left out by the compilers, it is proper to inſert here. It ſhould not be concealed, however, that this Elegy is printed with Mr. Jago's name in Dodſley's Collection, and is mentioned as his in a Letter of Shenſtone's. Perhaps Weſt gave it without naming the author; and Hawkeſworth, receiving it from him, thought it his; for his he thought it, as he told me, and as he tells the publick.

ELE-

ELEGY,

Occaſioned by ſhooting a BLACKBIRD on Valentine's-Day.

The ſun had chac'd the winter's ſnow,
And kindly loos'd the froſt-bound ſoil;
The melting ſtreams began to flow,
And plowmen urg'd their annual toil.

'Twas then amid the vernal throng,
Whom Nature wakes to mirth and love,
A Blackbird rais'd his am'rous ſong,
And thus it echo'd through the grove.

"O! faireſt of the feather'd train,
"For whom I ſing, for whom I burn;
"Attend with pity to my ſtrain,
"And grant my love a kind return.

"See, ſee, the winter's ſtorms are flown,
"And Zephyrs gently fan the air!
"Let us the genial influence own,
"Let us the vernal paſtime ſhare.

"The

" The Raven plumes his jetty wing,
" To pleaſe his croaking paramour;
" The Larks reſponſive love-tales ſing,
" And tell their paſſions as they ſoar.

" But truſt me, love, the Raven's wing
" Is not to be compar'd with mine;
" Nor can the Lark ſo ſweetly ſing
" As I, who ſtrength with ſweetneſs join.

" With thee I'll prove the ſweets of love,
" With thee divide the cares of life;
" No fonder huſband in the grove,
" Nor none than thee a happier wife.

" I'll lead thee to the cleareſt rill,
" Whoſe ſtreams among the pebbles ſtray;
" There will we ſit and ſip our fill,
" Or on the flow'ry border play.

" I'll guide thee to the thickeſt brake,
" Impervious to the ſchool-boy's eye:
" For thee the plaſter'd neſt I'll make,
" And on thy downy pinions lie.

" To get thee food I'll range the fields,
" And cull the beſt of ev'ry kind;
" Whatever nature's bounty yields,
" Or love's aſſiduous care can find.

" And

" And when my lovely mate would ſtray,
" To taſte the ſummer's ſweets at large,
" At home I'll wait the live-long day,
" And tend at home our infant charge.

" When prompted by a mother's care
" Thy warmth ſhall form th' impriſon'd
" young,
" With thee the taſk I'll fondly ſhare,
" Or cheer thy labours with my ſong."

He ceas'd his ſong. The melting dame
With tender pity heard his ſtrain;
She felt, ſhe own'd a mutual flame,
And haſten'd to relieve his pain.

He led her to the nuptial bow'r,
And neſtled cloſely to her ſide,
The happieſt bridegroom in that hour,
And ſhe the moſt enamour'd bride.

Next morn he wak'd her with a ſong—
" Ariſe! behold the new-born day!
" The Lark his mattin peal has rung;
" Ariſe, my love, and come away!"

Together

Together through the fields they ſtray'd,
And to the verdant riv'let's ſide,
Renew'd their vows, and hopp'd and play'd,
With honeſt joy and decent pride.

But, O! my Muſe with pain relates
The mournful ſequel of my tale:
Sent by an order of the Fates,
A gunner met them in the vale.

Alarm'd, the lover cry'd, "My dear,
"Haſte, haſte away; from danger fly!
"Here, gunner, take thy vengeance, here!
"O! ſpare my love, and let me die."

At him the gunner took his aim;
The aim he took was much too true;
O! had he choſe ſome other game,
Or ſhot as he had us'd to do! *

Divided pair! forgive the wrong,
While I with tears your fate rehearſe:
I'll join the widow's plaintive ſong,
And ſave the lover in my verſe.

* Never having killed any thing before or ſince.

GRAY.

THOMAS GRAY, the ſon of Mr. Philip Gray, a ſcrivener of London, was born in Cornhill, November 26, 1716. His grammatical education he received at Eaton under Mr. Antrobus, his mother's brother; and when he left ſchool, in 1734, entered a penſioner at Peterhouſe in Cambridge.

The tranſition from the ſchool to the college is, to moſt young ſcholars, the time from which they date their years of manhood, liberty, and happineſs; but

Gray ſeems to have been very little delighted with academical gratifications; he liked at Cambridge neither the mode of life nor the faſhion of ſtudy, and lived ſullenly on to the time when his attendance on lectures was no longer required. As he intended to profeſs the Common Law, he took no degree.

When he had been at Cambridge about five years, Mr. Horace Walpole, whoſe friendſhip he had gained at Eaton, invited him to travel with him as his companion. They wandered through France into Italy; and Gray's Letters contain a very pleaſing account of many parts of their journey. But unequal friendſhips are eaſily diſſolved: at Florence they quarrelled, and parted; and

Mr.

Mr. Walpole is now content to have it told that it was by his fault. If we look however without prejudice on the world, we ſhall find that men, whoſe conſciouſneſs of their own merit ſets them above the compliances of ſervility, are apt enough in their aſſociation with ſuperiors to watch their own dignity with troubleſome and punctilious jealouſy, and in the fervour of independance to exact that attention which they refuſe to pay. Part they did, whatever was the quarrel, and the reſt of their travels was doubtleſs more unpleaſant to them both. Gray continued his journey in a manner ſuitable to his own little fortune, with only an occaſional ſervant.

He returned to England in September 1741, and in about two months afterwards buried his father; who had, by an injudicious waſte of money upon a new houſe, ſo much leſſened his fortune, that Gray thought himſelf too poor to ſtudy the law. He therefore retired to Cambridge, where he ſoon after became Bachelor of Civil Law; and where, without liking the place or its inhabitants, or pretending to like them, he paſſed, except a ſhort reſidence at London, the reſt of his life.

About this time he was deprived of Mr. Weſt, the ſon of a chancellor of Ireland, a friend on whom he appears to have ſet a high value, and who deſerved his eſteem by the powers which he

he ſhews in his Letters, and in the Ode to *May*, which Mr. Maſon has preſerved, as well as by the ſincerity with which, when Gray ſent him part of *Agrippina*, a tragedy that he had juſt begun, he gave an opinion which probably intercepted the progreſs of the work, and which the judgement of every reader will confirm. It was certainly no loſs to the Engliſh ſtage that *Agrippina* was never finiſhed.

In this year (1742) Gray ſeems firſt to have applied himſelf ſeriouſly to poetry; for in this year were produced the *Ode to Spring*, his *Proſpect of Eaton*, and his *Ode to Adverſity*. He began likewiſe a Latin poem, *de Principiis cogitandi*.

It ſeems to be the opinion of Mr. Maſon, that his firſt ambition was to have excelled in Latin poetry: perhaps it were reaſonable to wiſh that he had proſecuted his deſign; for though there is at preſent ſome embarraſſment in his phraſe, and ſome harſhneſs in his Lyrick numbers, his copiouſneſs of language is ſuch as very few poſſeſs; and his lines, even when imperfect, diſcover a writer whom practice would quickly have made ſkilful.

He now lived on at Peterhouſe, very little ſolicitous what others did or thought, and cultivated his mind and enlarged his views without any other purpoſe than of improving and amuſing himſelf; when Mr. Maſon, being elected

fellow

fellow of Pembroke-hall, brought him a companion who was afterwards to be his editor, and whoſe fondneſs and fidelity has kindled in him a zeal of admiration, which cannot be reaſonably expected from the neutrality of a ſtranger and the coldneſs of a critick.

In this retirement he wrote (1747) an ode on the *Death of Mr. Walpole's Cat*; and the year afterwards attempted a poem of more importance, on *Government and Education*, of which the fragments which remain have many excellent lines.

His next production (1750) was his far-famed *Elegy in the Church-yard*, which, finding its way into a Magazine,

firſt, I believe, made him known to the publick.

An invitation from lady Cobham about this time gave occaſion to an odd compoſition called *a Long Story*, which, though perhaps it adds little to Gray's character, I am not pleaſed to find wanting in this Collection. It will therefore be added to this Preface.

Several of his pieces were publiſhed (1753), with deſigns, by Mr. Bentley; and, that they might in ſome form or other make a book, only one ſide of each leaf was printed. I believe the poems and the plates recommended each other ſo well, that the whole impreſſion was ſoon bought. This year he loſt his mother.

Some

Some time afterwards (1756) ſome young men of the college, whoſe chambers were near his, diverted themſelves with diſturbing him by frequent and troubleſome noiſes. This inſolence, having endured it a while, he repreſented to the governors of the ſociety, among whom perhaps he had no friends; and, finding his complaint little regarded, removed himſelf to Pembroke-hall.

In 1757 he publiſhed *The Progreſs of Poetry* and *The Bard*, two compoſitions at which the readers of poetry were at firſt content to gaze in mute amazement. Some that tried them confeſſed their inability to underſtand them, though Warburton ſaid that they were underſtood as well as the works of Mil-

ton and Shakeſpeare, which it is the faſhion to praiſe. Garrick wrote a few lines in their praiſe. Some hardy champions undertook to reſcue them from neglect, and in a ſhort time many were content to be ſhewn beauties which they could not ſee.

Gray's reputation was now ſo high, that, after the death of Cibber, he had the honour of refuſing the laurel, which was then beſtowed on Mr. Whitehead.

His curioſity, not long after, drew him away from Cambridge to a lodging near the Muſeum, where he reſided near three years, reading and tranſcribing; and, ſo far as can be diſcovered, very little affected by two odes on *Oblivion* and *Obſcurity*, in which his

Lyrick

Lyrick performances were ridiculed with much contempt and much ingenuity.

When the Profeſſor of Modern Languages at Cambridge died, he was, as he ſays, *cockered and ſpirited up*, till he aſked it of lord Bute, who ſent him a civil refuſal; and the place was given to Mr. Brocket, the tutor of Sir James Lowther.

His conſtitution was weak, and believing that his health was promoted by exerciſe and change of place, he undertook (1765) a journey into Scotland, of which his account, ſo far as it extends, is very curious and elegant; for as his comprehenſion was ample, his curioſity extended to all the works of art, all the appearances of nature, and all

all the monuments of paſt events. He naturally contracted a friendſhip with Dr. Beattie, whom he found a poet, a philoſopher, and a good man. The Mareſchal College at Aberdeen offered him the degree of Doctor of Laws, which, having omitted to take it at Cambridge, he thought it decent to refuſe.

What he had formerly ſolicited in vain, was at laſt given him without ſolicitation. The Profeſſorſhip of Languages became again vacant, and he received (1768) an offer of it from the duke of Grafton. He accepted, and retained it to his death; always deſigning lectures, but never reading them; uneaſy at his neglect of duty, and appeaſing

his

his uneaſineſs with deſigns of reformation, and with a reſolution which he believed himſelf to have made of reſigning the office, if he found himſelf unable to diſcharge it.

Ill health made another journey neceſſary, and he viſited (1769) Weſtmoreland and Cumberland. He that reads his epiſtolary narration wiſhes, that to travel, and to tell his travels, had been more of his employment; but it is by ſtudying at home that we muſt obtain the ability of travelling with intelligence and improvement.

His travels and his ſtudies were now near their end. The gout, of which he had ſuſtained many weak attacks, fell upon his ſtomach, and, yielding to no medi-

medicines, produced ſtrong convulſions, which (July 30, 1771) terminated in death.

His character I am willing to adopt, as Mr. Maſon has done, from a nameleſs writer; and am as willing as his warmeſt friend to believe it true.

"Perhaps he was the moſt learned "man in Europe. He was equally ac- "quainted with the elegant and pro- "found parts of ſcience, and that not "ſuperficially but thoroughly. He "knew every branch of hiſtory, both "natural and civil; had read all the "original hiſtorians of England, France, "and Italy; and was a great antiqua- "rian. Criticiſm, metaphyſics, morals, "politics, made a principal part of his

"ſtudy;

" ſtudy; voyages and travels of all ſorts
" were his favourite amuſements; and
" he had a fine taſte in painting, prints,
" architecture, and gardening. With
" ſuch a fund of knowledge, his con-
" verſation muſt have been equally in-
" ſtructing and entertaining; but he was
" alſo a good man, a man of virtue and
" humanity. There is no character
" without ſome ſpeck, ſome imperfec-
" tion; and I think the greateſt defect
" in his was an affectation in delicacy,
" or rather effeminacy, and a viſible
" faſtidiouſneſs, or contempt and diſ-
" dain of his inferiors in ſcience. He
" alſo had, in ſome degree, that weak-
" neſs which diſguſted Voltaire ſo much
" in Mr. Congreve: though he ſeemed

" to value others chiefly according to
" the progreſs they had made in know-
" ledge, yet he could not bear to be
" conſidered himſelf merely as a man
" of letters; and though without birth,
" or fortune, or ſtation, his deſire was
" to be looked upon as a private inde-
" pendent gentleman, who read for his
" amuſement. Perhaps it may be ſaid,
" What ſignifies ſo much knowledge,
" when it produced ſo little? Is it worth
" taking ſo much pains to leave no me-
" morial but a few poems? But let it
" be conſidered that Mr. Gray was, to
" others, at leaſt innocently employed;
" to himſelf, certainly beneficially. His
" time paſſed agreeably; he was every
" day making ſome new acquiſition in
" ſcience;

"ſcience; his mind was enlarged, his "heart ſoftened, his virtue ſtrengthened; the world and mankind were "ſhewn to him without a maſk; and he "was taught to conſider every thing as "trifling, and unworthy of the attention of a wiſe man, except the purſuit of knowledge and practice of "virtue, in that ſtate wherein God hath "placed us."

To this character Mr. Maſon has added a more particular account of Gray's ſkill in zoology. He has remarked, that Gray's effeminacy was affected moſt *before thoſe whom he did not wiſh to pleaſe*; and that he is unjuſtly charged with making knowledge his ſole reaſon of preference, as he paid his eſteem to none

whom he did not likewiſe believe to be good.

What has occurred to me, from the ſlight inſpection of his Letters in which my undertaking has engaged me, is, that his mind had a large graſp; that his curioſity was unlimited, and his judgement cultivated; that he was a man likely to love much where he loved at all, but that he was faſtidious and hard to pleaſe. His contempt however is often employed, where I hope it will be approved, upon ſcepticiſm and infidelity. His ſhort account of Shafteſbury I will inſert.

"You ſay you cannot conceive how "lord Shafteſbury came to be a philo-"ſopher in vogue; I will tell you: firſt,

"he

" he was a lord; ſecondly, he was as
" vain as any of his readers; thirdly,
" men are very prone to believe what
" they do not underſtand; fourthly, they
" will believe any thing at all, provided
" they are under no obligation to believe
" it; fifthly, they love to take a new
" road, even when that road leads no
" where; ſixthly, he was reckoned a
" fine writer, and ſeems always to mean
" more than he ſaid. Would you have
" any more reaſons? An interval of above
" forty years has pretty well deſtroyed
" the charm. A dead lord ranks with
" commoners: vanity is no longer in-
" tereſted in the matter; for a new road
" is become an old one."

Mr. Maſon has added, from his own knowledge, that though Gray was poor, he was not eager of money; and that, out of the little that he had, he was very willing to help the neceſſitous.

As a writer he had this peculiarity, that he did not write his pieces firſt rudely, and then correct them, but laboured every line as it aroſe in the train of compoſition; and he had a notion not very peculiar, that he could not write but at certain times, or at happy moments; a fantaſtick foppery, to which my kindneſs for a man of learning and of virtue wiſhes him to have been ſuperior.

GRAY'S Poetry is now to be conſidered; and I hope not to be looked on as an enemy to his name, if I confeſs that I contemplate it with leſs pleaſure than his life.

His ode on *Spring* has ſomething poetical, both in the language and the thought; but the language is too luxuriant, and the thoughts have nothing new. There has of late ariſen a practice of giving to adjectives, derived from ſubſtantives, the termination of participles; ſuch as the *cultured* plain, the *daſied* bank; but I was ſorry to ſee, in the lines of a ſcholar like Gray, the *bonied* Spring. The morality is natu-

ral, but too ſtale; the concluſion is pretty.

The poem on the *Cat* was doubtleſs by its author conſidered as a trifle, but it is not a happy trifle. In the firſt ſtanza *the azure flowers* that *blow*, ſhew reſolutely a rhyme is ſometimes made when it cannot eaſily be found. *Selima*, the *Cat*, is called a nymph, with ſome violence both to language and ſenſe; but there is good uſe made of it when it is done; for of the two lines,

What female heart can gold deſpiſe?
What cat's averſe to fiſh?

the firſt relates merely to the nymph, and the ſecond only to the cat. The ſixth ſtanza contains a melancholy truth, that *a favourite has no friend*; but the laſt

laſt ends in a pointed ſentence of no relation to the purpoſe; if *what gliſtered* had been *gold*, the cat would not have gone into the water; and, if ſhe had, would not leſs have been drowned.

The *Proſpect of Eaton College* ſuggeſts nothing to Gray, which every beholder does not equally think and feel. His ſupplication to father *Thames*, to tell him who drives the hoop or toſſes the ball, is uſeleſs and puerile. Father *Thames* has no better means of knowing than himſelf. His epithet *buxom health* is not elegant; he ſeems not to underſtand the word. Gray thought his language more poetical as it was more remote from common uſe: finding in Dryden *honey redolent of Spring*, an expreſ-

ſion that reaches the utmoſt limits of our language, Gray drove it a little more beyond common apprehenſion, by making *gales* to be *redolent of joy and youth.*

Of the *Ode on Adverſity*, the hint was at firſt taken from *O Diva, gratum quæ regis Antium*; but Gray has excelled his original by the variety of his ſentiments, and by their moral application. Of this piece, at once poetical and rational, I will not by ſlight objections violate the dignity.

My proceſs has now brought me to the *wonderful Wonder of Wonders*, the two Siſter Odes; by which, though either vulgar ignorance or common ſenſe at firſt univerſally rejected them, many have

have been ſince perſuaded to think themſelves delighted. I am one of thoſe that are willing to be pleaſed, and therefore would gladly find the meaning of the firſt ſtanza of the *Progreſs of Poetry*.

Gray ſeems in his rapture to confound the images of *ſpreading ſound* and *running water*. A *ſtream of muſick* may be allowed; but where does *Muſick*, however *ſmooth and ſtrong*, after having viſited the *verdant vales*, *rowl down the ſteep amain*, ſo as that *rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar?* If this be ſaid of *Muſick*, it is nonſenſe; if it be ſaid of *Water*, it is nothing to the purpoſe.

The ſecond ſtanza, exhibiting Mars's car and Jove's eagle, is unworthy of further

further notice. Criticiſm diſdains to chaſe a ſchool-boy to his common places.

To the third it may likewiſe be objected, that it is drawn from Mythology, though ſuch as may be more eaſily aſſimilated to real life. Idalia's *velvet-green* has ſomething of cant. An epithet or metaphor drawn from Nature ennobles Art; an epithet or metaphor drawn from Art degrades Nature. Gray is too fond of words arbitrarily compounded. *Many-twinkling* was formerly cenſured as not analogical; we may ſay *many-ſpotted*, but ſcarcely *many-ſpotting*. This ſtanza, however, has ſomething pleaſing.

Of the ſecond ternary of ſtanzas, the firſt endeavours to tell ſomething, and would have told it, had it not been croſſed

croſſed by Hyperion: the ſecond deſcribes well enough the univerſal prevalence of Poetry; but I am afraid that the concluſion will not riſe from the premiſes. The caverns of the North and the plains of Chili are not the reſidences of *Glory* and *generous Shame*. But that Poetry and Virtue go always together is an opinion ſo pleaſing, that I can forgive him who reſolves to think it true.

The third ſtanza ſounds big with *Delphi*, and *Egean*, and *Iliſſus*, and *Meander*, and *hallowed fountain* and *ſolemn ſound*; but in all Gray's odes there is a kind of cumbrous ſplendor which we wiſh away. His poſition is at laſt falſe: in the time of Dante and Petrarch, from whom

whom he derives our firſt ſchool of Poetry, Italy was over-run by *tyrant power* and *coward vice*; nor was our ſtate much better when we firſt borrowed the Italian arts.

Of the third ternary, the firſt gives a mythological birth of Shakeſpeare. What is ſaid of that mighty genius is true; but it is not ſaid happily: the real effects of his poetical power are put out of ſight by the pomp of machinery. Where truth is ſufficient to fill the mind, fiction is worſe than uſeleſs; the counterfeit debaſes the genuine.

His account of Milton's blindneſs, if we ſuppoſe it cauſed by ſtudy in the formation of his poem, a ſuppoſition ſurely allowable, is poetically true, and

hap-

happily imagined. But the *car* of Dryden, with his *two courſers*, has nothing in it peculiar; it is a car in which any other rider may be placed.

The Bard appears, at the firſt view, to be, as Algarotti and others have remarked, an imitation of the prophecy of Nereus. Algarotti thinks it ſuperior to its original; and, if preference depends only on the imagery and animation of the two poems, his judgement is right. There is in *The Bard* more force, more thought, and more variety. But to copy is leſs than to invent, and the copy has been unhappily produced at a wrong time. The fiction of Horace was to the Romans credible; but its revival diſ-

guſts

guſts us with apparent and unconquerable falſehood. *Incredulus odi.*

To ſelect a ſingular event, and ſwell it to a giant's bulk by fabulous appendages of ſpectres and predictions, has little difficulty, for he that forſakes the probable may always find the marvellous; and it has little uſe, we are affected only as we believe; we are improved only as we find ſomething to be imitated or declined. I do not ſee that *The Bard* promotes any truth, moral or political.

His ſtanzas are too long, eſpecially his epodes; the ode is finiſhed before the ear has learned its meaſures, and conſequently before it can receive plea-

ſure

ſure from their conſonance and recurrence.

Of the firſt ſtanza the abrupt beginning has been celebrated; but technical beauties can give praiſe only to the inventor. It is in the power of any man to ruſh abrutly upon his ſubject, that has read the ballad of *Johnny Armſtrong*.

Is there ever a man in all Scotland—

The initial reſemblances, or alliterations, *ruin, ruthleſs, helm nor hauberk*, are below the grandeur of a poem that endeavours at ſublimity.

In the ſecond ſtanza the *Bard* is well deſcribed; but in the third we have the puerilities of obſolete mythology. When we are told that *Cadwallo huſh'd the ſtormy main*, and that *Modred* made *huge Plin-*

limmon

Linmon bow his cloud-top'd head, attention recoils from the repetition of a tale that, even when it was firſt heard, was heard with ſcorn.

The *weaving* of the *winding ſheet* he borrowed, as he owns, from the northern Bards; but their texture, however, was very properly the work of female powers, as the art of ſpinning the thread of life in another mythology. Theft is always dangerous; Gray has made weavers of his ſlaughtered bards, by a fiction outrageous and incongruous. They are then called upon to *Weave the warp, and weave the woof*, perhaps with no great propriety; for it is by croſſing the *woof* with the *warp* that men *weave* the *web* or piece; and the firſt line was dearly bought

by the admiſſion of its wretched correſpondent, *Give ample room and verge enough.* He has, however, no other line as bad.

The third ſtanza of the ſecond ternary is commended, I think, beyond its merit. The perſonification is indiſtinct. *Thirſt* and *Hunger* are not alike; and their features, to make the imagery perfect, ſhould have been diſcriminated. We are told, in the ſame ſtanza, how *towers* are *fed.* But I will no longer look for particular faults; yet let it be obſerved that the ode might have been concluded with an action of better example; but ſuicide is always to be had, without expence of thought.

Theſe odes are marked by glittering accumulations of ungraceful ornaments;

they ſtrike rather than pleaſe; the images are magnified by affectation; the language is laboured into harſhneſs. The mind of the writer ſeems to work with unnatural violence. *Double, double, toil and trouble.* He has a kind of ſtrutting dignity, and is tall by walking on tiptoe. His art and his ſtruggle are too viſible, and there is too little appearance of eaſe or nature.

To ſay that he has no beauties would be unjuſt: a man like him, of great learning and great induſtry, could not but produce ſomething valuable. When he pleaſes leaſt, it can only be ſaid that a good deſign was ill directed.

His

His tranſlations of Northern and Welſh Poetry deſerve praiſe; the imagery is preſerved, perhaps often improved; but the language is unlike the language of other poets.

In the character of his Elegy I rejoice to concur with the common reader; for by the common ſenſe of readers uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinements of ſubtilty and the dogmatiſm of learning, muſt be finally decided all claim to poetical honours. The *Church-yard* abounds with images which find a mirrour in every mind, and with ſentiments to which every boſom returns an echo. The four ſtanzas beginning *Yet even theſe bones*, are to me

original: I have never ſeen the notions in any other place; yet he that reads them here, perſuades himſelf that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and uſeleſs to praiſe him.

A LONG

A LONG STORY *.

IN Britain's iſle, no matter where,
An antient pile of building ſtands:
The Huntingdons and Hattons there
Employ'd the power of Fairy hands

* When Mr. Gray had put his laſt hand to the celebrated Elegy in the Country Church-yard, he communicated it to his friend Mr. Walpole, whoſe good taſte was too much charmed with it to ſuffer him to with-hold the ſight of it from his acquaintance; accordingly it was ſhewn about for ſome time in manuſcript, and received with all the applauſe it ſo juſtly merited. Amongſt the reſt of the faſhionable world, for to thoſe only it was at preſent communicated, Lady Cobham, who now lived at the manſion-houſe at Stoke-Pogis, had read and admired it. She wiſhed to be acquainted with the author; accordingly her relation Miſs Speed and Lady Schaub, then at her houſe, undertook to bring this about by making him the firſt viſit. He happened to be from home when the Ladies arrived at his Aunt's ſolitary manſion; and, when he returned, was ſurprized to find, written on one of his

To raiſe the ceiling's fretted height,
Each pannel in atchievements cloathing,
Rich windows that exclude the light,
And paſſages, that lead to nothing †.

papers in the parlour where he uſually read, the following note: "Lady Schaub's compliments to Mr. Gray; ſhe is "ſorry not to have found him at home, to tell him that Lady "Brown is very well." This neceſſarily obliged him to return the viſit, and ſoon after induced him to compoſe a ludicrous account of this little adventure, for the amuſement of the Ladies in queſtion. He wrote it in ballad meaſure, and entitled it a Long Story: when it was handed about in manuſcript, nothing could be more various than the opinions concerning it; by ſome it was thought a maſter-piece of original humour, by others a wild and fantaſtic farrago; and when it was publiſhed, the ſentiments of good judges were equally divided about it. See Mr. Maſon's Memoirs, vol. III. p. 125.

† The manſion-houſe at Stoke-Pogis, then in the poſſeſſion of Viſcounteſs Cobham. The ſtyle of building, which we now call Queen Elizabeth's, is here admirably deſcribed, both with regard to its beauties and defects; and the third and fourth ſtanzas delineate the fantaſtic manners of her time with equal truth and humour. The houſe formerly belonged to the Earls of Huntingdon and the family of Hatton. M.

Full

Full oft within the ſpacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
* My grave Lord-Keeper led the brawls;
The ſeal and maces danc'd before him.

His buſhy beard, and ſhoe-ſtrings green,
His high-crown'd hat, and ſattin doublet,
Mov'd the ſtout heart of England's Queen,
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.

What, in the very firſt beginning!
Shame of the verſifying tribe!
Your hiſtory whither are you ſpinning!
Can you do nothing but deſcribe?

A houſe there is (and that's enough)
From whence one fatal morning iſſues

* Sir Chriſtopher Hatton, promoted by Queen Elizabeth for his graceful perſon and fine dancing. G.—Brawls were a ſort of figure-dance, then in vogue, and probably deemed as elegant as our modern Cotillions, or ſtill more modern Quadrilles. M.

* A brace of warriors, not in buff,
But ruſtling in their ſilks and tiſſues.

The firſt came cap-a-pee from France,
Her conquering deſtiny fulfilling,
Whom meaner beauties eye aſkance,
And vainly ape her art of killing.

The other Amazon kind heaven
Had arm'd with ſpirit, wit, and ſatire:
But Cobham had the poliſh given,
And tipp'd her arrows with good-nature.

To celebrate her eyes, her air—
Coarſe panegyrics would but teaze her.
Meliſſa is her *Nom de Guerre.*
Alas, who would not wiſh to pleaſe her!

* The reader is already appriſed who theſe Ladies were; the two deſcriptions are prettily contraſted; and nothing can be more happily turned than the compliment to Lady Cobham in the eighth ſtanza. M.

With

With bonnet blue and capuchine,
And aprons long they hid their armour,
And veil'd their weapons bright and keen,
In pity to the country farmer.

Fame, in the ſhape of * Mr. P—t,
(By this time all the pariſh know it)
Had told, that thereabouts there lurk'd
A wicked Imp they call a Poet:

Who prowl'd the country far and near,
Bewitch'd the children of the peaſants,
Dried up the cows, and lam'd the deer,
And ſuck'd the eggs, and kill'd the pheaſants.

My Lady heard their joint petition,
Swore by her coronet and ermine,
She'd iſſue out her high commiſſion
To rid the manor of ſuch vermin.

* I have been told that this Gentleman, a neighbour and acquaintance of Mr. Gray's in the country, was much diſpleaſed at the liberty here taken with his name; yet, ſurely, without any great reaſon. M.

The

The Heroines undertook the taſk,
Thro' lanes unknown, o'er ſtiles they ventur'd,
Rap'd at the door, nor ſtay'd to aſk,
But bounce into the parlour enter'd.

The trembling family they daunt,
They flirt, they ſing, they laugh, they tattle,
Rummage his Mother, pinch his Aunt,
And up ſtairs in a whirlwind rattle.

Each hole and cupboard they explore,
Each creek and cranny of his chamber;
Run hurry-ſkurry round the floor,
And o'er the bed and teſter clamber;

Into the drawers and china pry,
Papers and books, a huge imbroglio!
Under a tea-cup he might lie,
Or creas'd, like dogs-ears, in a folio.

On the firſt marching of the troops,
The Muſes, hopeleſs of his pardon,
Convey'd him underneath their hoops
To a ſmall cloſet in the garden.

So Rumour ſays: (who will, believe.)
But that they left the door a-jar,
Where, ſafe and laughing in his ſleeve,
He heard the diſtant din of war.

Short was his joy. He little knew
The power of Magic was no fable;
Out of the window, whiſk, they flew,
But left a ſpell upon the table.

The words too eager to unriddle,
The Poet felt a ſtrange diſorder:
Tranſparent bird-lime form'd the middle,
And chains inviſible the border.

So

So cunning was the Apparatus,
The powerful pot-hooks did ſo move him,
That, will he, nill he, to the Great-houſe
He went, as if the Devil drove him.

Yet on his way (no ſign of grace,
For folks in fear are apt to pray)
To Phœbus he preferr'd his caſe,
And begg'd his aid that dreadful day.

The Godhead would have back'd his quarrel;
But with a bluſh, on recollection,
Own'd, that his quiver and his laurel
'Gainſt four ſuch eyes were no protection.

The court was ſat, the culprit there,
Forth from their gloomy manſions creeping
The Lady Janes and Joans repair,
And from the gallery ſtand peeping:

Such

Such as in ſilence of the night
Come (ſweep) along ſome winding entry,
* (Styack has often ſeen the ſight)
Or at the chapel-door ſtand centry:

In peaked hoods and mantles tarniſh'd,
Sour viſages, enough to ſcare ye,
High dames of honour once, that garniſh'd
The drawing-room of fierce Queen Mary.

The Peereſs comes. The audience ſtare,
And doff their hats with due ſubmiſſion:
She curtſies, as ſhe takes her chair,
To all the people of condition.

The Bard, with many an artful fib,
Had in imagination fenc'd him,
Diſprov'd the arguments of † Squib,
And all that ‡ Groom could urge againſt him.

* The Houſe-keeper. G. † Groom of the Chamber. G.
‡ The Steward. G.

But ſoon his rhetorick forſook him,
When he the ſolemn hall had ſeen;
A ſudden fit of ague ſhook him,
He ſtood as mute as poor * Macleane.

Yet ſomething he was heard to mutter,
"How in the Park, beneath an old tree,
"(Without deſign to hurt the butter,
"Or any malice to the poultry,)

"He once or twice had penn'd a ſonnet;
"Yet hoped, that he might ſave his bacon:
"Numbers would give their oaths upon it,
"He ne'er was for a conj'rer taken."

The ghoſtly prudes with hagged † face
Already had condemn'd the ſinner.

* A famous highwayman, hanged the week before. G.

† Hagged, *i. e.* the face of a witch or hag; the epithet Hagard has been ſometimes miſtaken, as conveying the ſame idea; but it means a very different thing, viz. wild and ſarouche, and is taken from an unreclaimed hawk, called an Hagard. M.

My

My Lady roſe, and with a grace—
She ſmil'd, and bid him come to dinner *.

" Jeſu-Maria! Madam Bridget,
" Why, what can the Viſcounteſs mean?
(Cried the ſquare-hoods in woeful fidget)
" The times are alter'd quite and clean!

" Decorum's turn'd to mere civility;
" Her air and all her manners ſhew it.
Commend me to her affability!
" Speak to a Commoner and Poet!"

[*Here* 500 *Stanzas are loſt.*]

* Here the ſtory finiſhes; the exclamation of the Ghoſts which follows is characteriſtic of the Spaniſh manners of the age, when they are ſuppoſed to have lived; and the 500 ſtanzas, ſaid to be loſt, may be imagined to contain the remainder of their long-winded expoſtulation. M.

And ſo God ſave our noble King,
And guard us from long-winded Lubbers,
That to eternity would ſing,
And keep my Lady from her Rubbers.

ODE

ODE FOR MUSICK,

Performed in the Senate-Houſe at Cambridge, July 1, 1769, at the Inſtallation of his Grace Auguſtus-Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, Chancellor of the Univerſity.

I.

" HENCE, avaunt ('tis holy ground),
" Comus, and his midnight-crew,
" And Ignorance with looks profound,
" And dreaming Sloth of pallid hue,
" Mad Sedition's cry profane,
" Servitude that hugs her chain,
" Nor in theſe conſecrated bowers
" Let painted Flattery hide her ſerpent-train
" in flowers.
" Nor Envy baſe, nor creeping Gain,
" Dare the Muſe's walk to ſtain,

" While bright-eyed Science watches round:
" Hence, away, 'tis holy ground!"

II.

From yonder realms of empyrean day
Burſts on my ear th' indignant lay:
There ſit the ſainted Sage, the Bard divine,
The Few, whom Genius gave to ſhine
Through every unborn age, and undiſcover'd clime.
Rapt in celeſtial tranſport they,
Yet hither oft a glance from high
They ſend of tender ſympathy
To bleſs the place, where on their opening ſoul
Firſt the genuine ardor ſtole.
'Twas Milton ſtruck the deep-ton'd ſhell,
And, as the choral warblings round him ſwell,
Meek Newton's ſelf bends from his ſtate ſublime,
And nods his hoary head, and liſtens to the rhyme.

III.

"Ye brown o'er-arching Groves,
"That Contemplation loves,
"Where willowy Camus lingers with delight!
"Oft at the bluſh of dawn
"I trod your level lawn,
"Oft woo'd the gleam of Cynthia ſilver-bright
"In cloiſters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,
"With Freedom by my ſide, and ſoft-ey'd
"Melancholy."

IV.

But hark! the portals found, and pacing forth
With ſolemn ſteps and ſlow,
High Potentates, and Dames of royal birth,
And mitred Fathers in long order go:
Great *Edward, with the lilies on his brow

* Edward the Third; who added the Fleur de lys of France to the arms of England. He founded Trinity College.

From haughty Gallia torn,
And * ſad Chatillon, on her bridal morn
That wept her bleeding Love, and princely
† Clare,
And ‡ Anjou's Heroine, and § the paler Roſe,

* Mary de Valentia, Counteſs of Pembroke, daughter of Guy de Chatillon Comte de St. Paul in France: of whom tradition ſays, that her husband Audemar de Valentia, Earl of Pembroke, was ſlain at a tournament on the day of his nuptials. She was the foundreſs of Pembroke College or Hall, under the name of Aula Mariæ de Valentia.

† Elizabeth de Burg, Counteſs of Clare, was wife of John de Burg, ſon and heir of the Earl of Ulſter, and daughter of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Glouceſter, by Joan of Acres, daughter of Edward the Firſt. Hence the Poet gives her the epithet of Princely. She founded Clare Hall.

‡ Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry the Sixth, foundreſs of Queen's College. The Poet has celebrated her conjugal fidelity in a former Ode.

§ Elizabeth Widville, wife of Edward the Fourth (hence called the paler Roſe, as being of the Houſe of York). She added to the foundation of Margaret of Anjou.

The

The rival of her crown and of her woes,
And * either Henry there,
The murder'd Saint, and the majeſtic Lord,
That broke the bonds of Rome.
(Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,
Their human paſſions now no more,
Save Charity, that glows beyond the tomb)
All that on Granta's fruitful plain
Rich ſtreams of regal bounty pour'd,
And bade theſe awful fanes and turrets riſe,
To hail their Fitzroy's feſtal morning come;
And thus they ſpeak in ſoft accord
The liquid language of the ſkies.

V.

"What is Grandeur, what is Power?
"Heavier toil, ſuperior pain.
"What the bright reward we gain?

* Henry the Sixth and Eighth. The former the founder of King's, the latter the greateſt benefactor to Trinity College.

"The grateful memory of the Good.

"Sweet is the breath of vernal ſhower,

"The bee's collected treaſures ſweet,

"Sweet muſic's melting fall, but ſweeter yet

"The ſtill ſmall voice of Gratitude."

VI.

Foremoſt and leaning from her golden cloud
The * venerable Marg'ret ſee!

"Welcome, my noble Son (ſhe cries aloud),

"To this, thy kindred train, and me:

"Pleas'd in thy lineaments we trace

"A † Tudor's fire, a Beaufort's grace.

"Thy liberal heart, thy judging eye,

"The flower unheeded ſhall deſcry,

* Counteſs of Richmond and Derby; the mother of Henry the Seventh, foundreſs of St. John's and Chriſt's Colleges.

† The Counteſs was a Beaufort, and married to a Tudor: hence the application of this line to the Duke of Grafton, who claims deſcent from both theſe families.

"And

" And bid it round heaven's altars ſhed
" The fragrance of its bluſhing head:
" Shall raiſe from earth the latent gem
" To glitter on the diadem.

VII.

" Lo, Granta waits to lead her blooming band,
" Not obvious, not obtruſive, ſhe
" No vulgar praiſe, no venal incenſe flings;
" Nor dares with courtly tongue refin'd
" Profane thy inborn royalty of mind:
" She reveres herſelf and thee.
" With modeſt pride to grace thy youthful brow
" The laureate wreath, * that Cecil wore, ſhe
" brings,
" And to thy juſt, thy gentle hand
" Submits the Faſces of her ſway,
" While Spirits bleſt above and Men below
" Join with glad voice the loud ſymphonious
lay.

* Lord Treaſurer Burleigh was Chancellor of the Univerſity, in the reign of Q. Elizabeth.

"Throug

VIII.

" Through the wild waves as they roar
" With watchful eye and dauntleſs mien
" Thy ſteady courſe of honour keep,
" Nor fear the rocks, nor ſeek the ſhore:
" The Star of Brunſwick ſmiles ſerene,
" And gilds the horrors of the deep."