Bodleian Libraries
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

2804 f 157

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

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY J. NICHOLS;
FOR C. BATHURST, J. BUCKLAND, W. STRAHAN, J. RIVINGTON AND SONS, T. DAVIES, T. PAYNE, L. DAVIS, W. OWEN, B. WHITE, S. CROWDER, T. CASLON, T. LONGMAN, B. LAW, E. AND C. DILLY, J. DODSLEY, H. BALDWIN, J. WILKIE, J. ROBSON, J. JOHNSON, T. LOWNDES, T. BECKET, G. ROBINSON, T. CADELL, W. DAVIS, J. NICHOLS, F. NEWBERY, T. EVANS, J. RIDLEY, R. BALDWIN, G. NICOL, LEIGH AND SOTHEBY, J. BEW, N. CONANT, J. MURRAY, W. FOX, J. BOWEN.
MDCCLXXIX.

BODLEIAN LIBRARY
4
MAR
1924
OXFORD

Ann Duckworth 1782

PREFACES

TO

DENHAM, SPRAT, ROSCOMMON, ROCHESTER, YALDEN, OTWAY, DUKE, DORSET, HALIFAX, STEPNEY, WALSH, GARTH, KING, J. PHILIPS, SMITH, POMFRET, HUGHES.

DENHAM.

OF Sir JOHN DENHAM very little is known but what is related of him by Wood, or by himself.

He was born at Dublin in 1615; the only ſon of Sir John Denham, of Little Horſely in Eſſex, then chief baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, and of Eleanor, daughter of Sir Garret Moore baron of Mellefont.

Two years afterwards, his father, being made one of the barons of the Exchequer in England, brought him away from his native country, and educated him in London.

In 1631 he was ſent to Oxford, where he was conſidered "as a dreaming young man, given more to dice and cards than ſtudy;" and therefore gave no prognoſticks of his future eminence; nor was ſuſpected to conceal, under ſluggiſhneſs and laxity, a genius born to improve the literature of his country.

When he was, three years afterwards, removed to Lincoln's Inn, he proſecuted the common law with ſufficient appearance of application; yet did not

loſe

loſe his propenſity to cards and dice; but was very often plundered by gameſters.

Being ſeverely reproved for this folly, he profeſſed, and perhaps believed, himſelf reclaimed; and, to teſtify the ſincerity of his repentance, wrote and publiſhed "An Eſſay upon Gaming."

He ſeems to have divided his ſtudies between law and poetry; for, in 1636, he tranſlated the ſecond book of the Eneid.

Two years after, his father died; and then, notwithſtanding his reſolutions and profeſſions, he returned again to the vice of gaming, and loſt ſeveral thouſand pounds that had been left him.

In 1641, he publiſhed "The Sophy." This ſeems to have given him his firſt hold of the publick attention; for Waller remarked, "that he broke out "like the Iriſh rebellion threeſcore "thouſand ſtrong, when nobody was "aware, or in the leaſt ſuſpected it." An obſervation which could have had no propriety, had his poetical abilities been known before.

He was after that pricked for ſheriff of Surrey, and made governor of Farnham Caſtle for the king; but he ſoon reſigned that charge, and retreated to Oxford, where, in 1643, he publiſhed "Cooper's Hill."

This poem had ſuch reputation as to excite the common artifice by which

envy

envy degrades excellence. A report was ſpread that the performance was not his own, but that he had bought it of a vicar for forty pounds. The ſame attempt was made to rob Addiſon of his Cato, and Pope of his Eſſay on Criticiſm.

In 1647, the diſtreſſes of the royal family required him to engage in more dangerous employments. He was entruſted by the queen with a meſſage to the king; and, by whatever means, ſo far ſoftened the ferocity of Hugh Peters, that, by his interceſſion, admiſſion was procured. Of the king's condeſcenſion he has given an account in the dedication of his works.

He was afterwards employed in carrying on the king's correſpondence; and, as he ſays, diſcharged this office with great ſafety to the royaliſts: and being accidentally diſcovered by the adverſe party's knowledge of Mr. Cowley's hand, he happily eſcaped both for himſelf and his friends.

He was yet engaged in a greater undertaking. In April 1648, he conveyed James the duke of York from London into France, and delivered him there to the Queen and prince of Wales. This year he publiſhed his tranſlation of "Cato Major."

He

He now reſided in France, as one of the followers of the exiled King; and, to divert the melancholy of their condition, was ſometimes enjoined by his maſter to write occaſional verſes; one of which amuſements was probably his ode or ſong upon the Embaſſy to Poland, by which he and lord Crofts procured a contribution of ten thouſand pounds from the Scotch, that wandered over that kingdom. Poland was at that time very much frequented by itinerant traders, who, in a country of very little commerce and of great extent, where every man reſided on his own eſtate, contributed very much to the accommodation of life, by

bringing to every man's houſe thoſe little neceſſaries which it was very inconvenient to want, and very troubleſome to fetch. I have formerly read, without much reflection, of the multitude of Scotchmen that travelled with their wares in Poland; and that their numbers were not ſmall, the ſucceſs of this negotiation gives ſufficient evidence.

About this time, what eſtate the war and the gameſters had left him was ſold, by order of the parliament; and when, in 1652, he returned to England, he was entertained by the earl of Pembroke

Of

Of the next years of his life there is no account. At the Reſtoration he obtained, what many miſſed, the reward of his loyalty; being made ſurveyor of the king's buildings, and dignified with the order of the Bath. He ſeems now to have learned ſome attention to money; for Wood ſays, that he got by his place ſeven thouſand pounds.

After the Reſtoration he wrote the poem on Prudence and Juſtice, and perhaps ſome of his other pieces: and as he appears, whenever any ſerious queſtion comes before him, to have been a man of piety, he conſecrated his poetical powers to religion, and made

a metri-

a metrical verſion of the Pſalms of David. In this attempt he has failed; but, in ſacred poetry, who has ſucceeded?

It might be hoped that the favour of his maſter and eſteem of the publick would now make him happy. But human felicity is ſhort and uncertain: a ſecond marriage brought upon him ſo much diſquiet, as for a time diſordered his underſtanding; and Butler lampooned him for his lunacy. I know not whether the malignant lines were then made publick, nor what provocation incited Butler to do that which no provocation can excuſe.

His

His frenzy lasted not long; and he seems to have regained his full force of mind; for he wrote afterwards his excellent poem upon the death of Cowley, whom he was not long to survive; for on the 19th of March, 1668, he was buried by his side.

DENHAM is deservedly considered as one of the fathers of English poetry. "Denham and Waller," says Prior, "improved our versification, "and Dryden perfected it." He has given specimens of various composition, descriptive, ludicrous, didactick, and sublime.

He appears to have had, in common with almoſt all mankind, the ambition of being upon proper occaſions *a merry fellow*, and in common with moſt of them to have been by nature, or by early habits, debarred from it. Nothing is leſs exhilarating than the ludicrouſneſs of Denham. He does not fail for want of efforts: he is familiar, he is groſs; but he is never merry, unleſs the "Speech againſt peace in the cloſe "Committee," be excepted. For grave burleſque, however, his imitation of Davenant ſhews him to have been well qualified.

Of his more elevated occaſional poems there is perhaps none that does not deſerve commendation. In the verſes to

Fletcher,

Fletcher, we have an image that has ſince been often adopted:

" But whither am I ſtray'd? I need
" not raiſe
" Trophies to thee from other mens
" diſpraiſe;
" Nor is thy fame on leſſer ruins built,
" Nor need thy juſter title the foul
" guilt
" Of eaſtern kings, who, to ſecure
" their reign,
" Muſt have their brothers, ſons, and
" kindred ſlain."

After Denham, Orrery, in one of his prologues,

" Poets are ſultans, if they had their will;
" For every author would his brother
" kill."

And Pope,

" Should ſuch a man, too fond to rule
" alone,
" Bear like the Turk no brother near
" the throne."

But this is not the beſt of his little pieces: it is excelled by his poem to Fanſhaw, and his elegy on Cowley.

His praiſe of Fanſhaw's verſion of Guarini, contains a very ſpritely and judicious character of a good tranſlator:

" That ſervile path thou nobly doſt
" decline,
" Of tracing word by word, and line
" by line.

Thoſe

"Thoſe are the labour'd births of
"ſlaviſh brains,
"Not the effect of poetry, but pains;
"Cheap vulgar arts, whoſe narrow-
"neſs affords
"No flight for thoughts, but poorly
"ſtick at words.
"A new and nobler way thou doſt
"purſue
"To make tranſlations and tranſlators
"too.
"They but preſerve the aſhes, thou
"the flame,
"True to his ſenſe, but truer to his
"fame."

The excellence of theſe lines is greater, as the truth which they contain

tain was not at that time generally known.

His poem on the death of Cowley was his laſt, and, among his ſhorter works, his beſt performance: the numbers are muſical, and the thoughts are juſt.

COOPER'S HILL is the work that confers upon him the rank and dignity of an original author. He ſeems to have been, at leaſt among us, the author of a ſpecies of compoſition that may be denominated local poetry, of which the fundamental ſubject is ſome particular landſchape, to be poetically deſcribed, with the addition of ſuch embelliſhments as may be ſupplied by hiſto-

hiſtorical retroſpection, or incidental meditation.

To trace a new ſcheme of poetry has in itſelf a very high claim to praiſe, and its praiſe is yet more when it is apparently copied by Garth and Pope; after whoſe names little will be gained by an enumeration of ſmaller poets, that have left ſcarce a corner of the iſland undignified by rhime, or blank verſe.

COOPER'S HILL, if it be maliciouſly inſpected, will not be found without its faults. The digreſſions are too long, the morality too frequent, and the ſentiments ſometimes ſuch as will not bear a rigorous enquiry.

The four verſes, which, ſince Dryden has commended them, almoſt every writer for a century paſt has imitated, are generally known:

" O could I flow like thee, and make
" thy ſtream
" My great example, as it is my
" theme!
" Tho' deep yet clear; tho' gentle, yet
" not dull;
" Strong without rage, without o'er-
" flowing full."

The lines are in themſelves not perfect; for moſt of the words, thus artfully oppoſed, are to be underſtood ſimply on one ſide of the compariſon, and metaphorically on the other; and if

there

there be any language which does not expreſs intellectual operations by material images, into that language they cannot be tranſlated. But ſo much meaning is compriſed in ſo few words; the particulars of reſemblance are ſo perſpicaciouſly collected, and every mode of excellence ſeparated from its adjacent fault by ſo nice a line of limitation; the different parts of the ſentence are ſo accurately adjuſted; and the flow of the laſt couplet is ſo ſmooth and ſweet, that the paſſage, however celebrated, has not been praiſed above its merit. It has beauty peculiar to itſelf, and muſt be numbered among thoſe felicities which cannot be pro-

duced at will by wit and labour, but muſt ariſe unexpectedly in ſome hour propitious to poetry.

He appears to have been one of the firſt that underſtood the neceſſity of emancipating tranſlation from the drudgery of counting lines and interpreting ſingle words. How much this ſervile practice obſcured the cleareſt and deformed the moſt beautiful parts of the ancient authors, may be diſcovered by a peruſal of our earlier verſions; ſome of them the works of men well qualified not only by critical knowledge, but by poetical genius, who yet, by a miſtaken ambition of exactneſs, degraded at once their originals and themſelves.

Den-

Denham ſaw the better way, but has not perſued it with great ſucceſs. His verſions of Virgil are not pleaſing; but they taught Dryden to pleaſe better. His poetical imitation of Tully on "Old Age" has neither the clearneſs of proſe, nor the ſpritelineſs of poetry.

The "ſtrength of Denham," which Pope ſo emphatically mentions, is to be found in many lines and couplets, which convey much meaning in few words, and exhibit the ſentiment with more weight than bulk.

On the Thames.

" Though with thoſe ſtreams he no
" reſemblance hold,
" Whoſe foam is amber, and their
" gravel gold;
" His genuine and leſs guilty wealth
" t' explore,
" Search not his bottom, but ſurvey
" his ſhore."

On Strafford.

" His wiſdom ſuch, at once it did
" appear
" Three kingdoms wonder, and three
" kingdoms fear;

" Whilſt

" Whilſt ſingle he ſtood forth, and
" ſeem'd, although
" Each had an army, as an equal
" foe.
" Such was his force of eloquence,
" to make
" The hearers more concern'd than
" he that ſpake;
" Each ſeem'd to act that part he
" came to ſee,
" And none was more a looker-on
" than he;
" So did he move our paſſions, ſome
" were known
" To wiſh, for the defence, the crime
" their own.

" Now private pity ſtrove with pub-
" lick hate,
" Reaſon with rage, and eloquence
" with fate."

On Cowley.

" To him no author was unknown,
" Yet what he wrote was all his
" own;
" Horace's wit, and Virgil's ſtate,
" He did not ſteal, but emulate!
" And when he would like them
" appear,
" Their garb, but not their cloaths,
" did wear."

As

As one of Denham's principal claims to the regard of poſterity ariſes from his improvement of our numbers, his verſification ought to be conſidered. It will afford that pleaſure which ariſes from the obſervation of a man of right natural judgement forſaking bad copies by degrees, and advancing towards a better practice, as he gains more confidence in himſelf.

In his tranſlation of Virgil, written when he was about twenty-one years old, may be ſtill found the old manner of continuing the ſenſe ungracefully from verſe to verſe.

" Then all thoſe
" Who in the dark our fury did
" eſcape,
" Returning, know our borrow'd
" arms, and ſhape,
" And differing dialect: then their
" numbers ſwell
" And grow upon us; firſt Chorœbus
" fell
" Before Minerva's altar; next did
" bleed
" Juſt Repheus, whom no Trojan
" did exceed
" In virtue, yet the gods his fate
" decreed.

" Then

" Then Hypanis and Dymas, wound-
" ed by
" Their friends; nor thee, Pantheus,
" thy piety,
" Nor consecrated mitre, from the
" same
" Ill fate could save; my country's
" funeral flame
" And Troy's cold ashes I attest, and
" call
" To witness for myself, that in their
" fall
" No foes, no death, nor danger I
" declin'd,
" Did, and deserv'd no less, my fate
" to find."

From

From this kind of concatenated metre he afterwards refrained, and taught his followers the art of concluding their ſenſe in couplets; which has perhaps been with rather too much conſtancy purſued.

This paſſage exhibits one of thoſe triplets which are not infrequent in this firſt eſſay, but which it is to be ſuppoſed his maturer judgement diſapproved, ſince in his latter works he has totally forborn them.

His rhymes are ſuch as ſeem found without difficulty, by following the ſenſe; and are for the moſt part as exact at leaſt as thoſe of other poets, though now and then the reader is ſhifted off with what he can get.

" O how *transform'd!*
" How much unlike that Hector,
" who *return'd*
" Clad in Achilles' ſpoils!"

And again,

" From thence a thouſand leſſer poets
" *ſprung*,
" Like petty princes from the fall of
" *Rome*."

Sometimes the weight of rhyme is laid upon a word too feeble to ſuſtain it:

" Troy confounded falls
" From all her glories: if it might
" have ſtood

" By

" By any power, by this right hand
" it *ſhou'd*.
" —And though my outward ſtate
" misfortune *hath*
" Depreſt thus low, it cannot reach
" my faith."

" —Thus by his fraud and our own
" faith o'ercome,
" A feigned tear deſtroys us, againſt
" *whom*
" Tydides nor Achilles could prevail,
" Nor ten years conflict, nor a thou-
" ſand ſail."

He is not very careful to vary the ends of his verſes: in one paſſage the word *die* rhimes three couplets in ſix.

Moſt of theſe petty faults are in his firſt productions, when he was leſs ſkilful, or at leaſt leſs dexterous in the uſe of words; and though they had been more frequent, they could only have leſſened the grace, not the ſtrength, of his compoſition. He is one of the writers that improved our taſte, and advanced our language, and whom we ought therefore to read with gratitude, though, having done much, he left much to do.

SPRAT.

THOMAS SPRAT was born in 1636, at Tallaton in Devonſhire, the ſon of a clergyman; and having been educated, as he tells of himſelf, not at Weſtminſter or Eaton, but at a little ſchool by the churchyard ſide, became a commoner of Wadham College in Oxford in 1651; and, being choſen ſcholar next year, proceeded through the uſual academical courſe, and in 1657 became maſter of arts. He

obtained a fellowſhip, and commenced poet.

In 1659, his poem on the death of Oliver was publiſhed, with thoſe of Dryden and Waller. In his dedication to Dr. Wilkins he appears a very willing and liberal encomiaſt, both of the living and the dead. He implores his patron's excuſe of his verſes, both as falling *ſo infinitely below the full and ſublime genius of that excellent poet who made this way of writing free of our nation*, and being *ſo little equal and proportioned to the renown of the prince on whom they were written; ſuch great actions and lives deſerving to be the ſubject of the nobleſt pens and moſt divine phanſies.* He proceeds: *Having ſo long experienced your*

care

care and indulgence, and been formed, as it were, by your own hands, not to entitle you to any thing which my meanneſs produces, would be not only injuſtice but ſacrilege.

He publiſhed the ſame year a poem on the *Plague of Athens*; a ſubject of which it is not eaſy to ſay what could recommend it. To theſe he added afterwards a poem on Mr. Cowley's death.

After the Reſtoration he took orders, and by Cowley's recommendation was made chaplain to the duke of Buckingham, whom he is ſaid to have helped in writing the *Rehearſal*. He was likewiſe chaplain to the king.

As he was the favourite of Wilkins, at whoſe houſe began thoſe philoſo-

phical conferences and enquiries, which in time produced the Royal Society, he was consequently engaged in the same studies, and became one of the fellows; and when, after their incorporation, something seemed necessary to reconcile the publick to the new institution, he undertook to write its history, which he published in 1667. This is one of the few books which selection of sentiment and elegance of diction have been able to preserve, though written upon a subject flux and transitory. The History of the Royal Society is now read not with the wish to know what they were then doing, but how their transactions are exhibited by Sprat.

In

In the next year he publiſhed *Obſervations on Sorbiere's Voyage into England, in a Letter to Mr. Wren.* This is a work not ill performed; but perhaps rewarded with at leaſt its full proportion of praiſe.

In 1668 he publiſhed Cowley's Latin poems, and prefixed in Latin the Life of the Author; which he afterwards amplified, and placed before Cowley's Engliſh works, which were by will committed to his care.

Eccleſiaſtical benefices now fell faſt upon him. In 1668 he became a prebendary of Weſtminſter, and had afterwards the church of St. Margaret, adjoining to the Abbey. He was in 1680 made canon of Windſor, in 1683 dean

of Weſtminſter, and in 1684 biſhop of Rocheſter.

The Court having thus a claim to his diligence and gratitude, he was required to write the Hiſtory of the Ryehouſe Plot; and in 1685 publiſhed *A true Account and Declaration of the horrid Conſpiracy againſt the late King, his preſent Majeſty, and the preſent Government*; a performance which he thought convenient, after the Revolution, to extenuate and excuſe.

The ſame year, being clerk of the cloſet to the king, he was made dean of the chapel-royal; and the year afterwards received the laſt proof of his maſter's confidence, by being appointed one of the commiſſioners for eccleſiaſti-

cal affairs. On the critical day, when the *Declaration* diſtinguiſhed the true ſons of the church of England, he ſtood neuter, and permitted it to be read at Weſtminſter; but preſſed none to violate his conſcience; and when the biſhop of London was brought before them, gave his voice in his favour.

Thus far he ſuffered intereſt or obedience to carry him; but further he refuſed to go. When he found that the powers of the eccleſiaſtical commiſſion were to be exerciſed againſt thoſe who had refuſed the Declaration, he wrote to the lords, and other commiſſioners, a formal profeſſion of his unwillingneſs to exerciſe that authority any longer, and withdrew himſelf from them. Af-

ter they had read his letter, they adjourned for ſix months, and ſcarcely ever met afterwards.

When king James was frighted away, and a new government was to be ſettled, Sprat was one of thoſe who conſidered, in a conference, the great queſtion, whether the Crown was vacant, and manfully ſpoke in favour of his old maſter.

He complied, however, with the new eſtabliſhment, and was left unmoleſted; but in 1692 a ſtrange attack was made upon him by one *Robert Young* and *Stephen Blackhead*, both men convicted of infamous crimes, and both, when the ſcheme was laid, priſoners in Newgate. Theſe men drew up an aſſociation, in which they whoſe names were ſubſcribed de-

declared their resolution to restore king James; to seize the princess of Orange, dead or alive; and to be ready with thirty thousand men to meet king James when he should land. To this they put the names of Sancroft, Sprat, Marlborough, Salisbury, and others. The copy of Dr. Sprat's name was obtained by a fictitious request, to which an answer *in his own hand* was desired. His hand was copied so well, that he confessed it might have deceived himself. Blackhead, who had carried the letter, being sent again with a plausible message, was very curious to see the house, and particularly importunate to be let into the study; where, as is supposed, he designed to leave the Association. This how-

however was denied him, and he dropt it in a flower-pot in the parlour.

Young now laid an information before the Privy Council; and May 7, 1692, the biſhop was arreſted, and kept at a meſſenger's under a ſtrict guard eleven days. His houſe was ſearched, and directions were given that the flower-pots ſhould be inſpected. The meſſengers however miſſed the room in which the paper was left. Blackhead went therefore a third time; and, finding his paper where he had left it, brought it away.

The biſhop, having been enlarged, was, on June the 10th and 13th, examined again before the Privy Council, and confronted with his accuſers. Young per-

perſiſted with the moſt obdurate impudence, againſt the ſtrongeſt evidence; but the reſolution of Blackhead by degrees gave way. There remained at laſt no doubt of the biſhop's innocence, who, with great prudence and diligence, traced the progreſs, and detected the characters of the two informers, and publiſhed an account of his own examination, and deliverance; which made ſuch an impreſſion upon him, that he commemorated it through life by an yearly day of thankſgiving.

With what hope, or what intereſt, the villains had contrived an accuſation which they muſt know themſelves utterly unable to prove, was never diſcovered.

After

After this, he paſſed his days in the quiet exerciſe of his function. When the cauſe of Sacheverell put the publick in commotion, he honeſtly appeared among the friends of the church. He lived to his ſeventy-ninth year, and died May 20, 1713.

Burnet is not very favourable to his memory; but he and Burnet were old rivals. On ſome publick occaſion they both preached before the houſe of commons. There prevailed in thoſe days an indecent cuſtom: when the preacher touched any favourite topick in a manner that delighted his audience, their approbation was expreſſed by a loud *hum*, continued in proportion to their zeal or pleaſure. When Burnet preach-

ed,

ed, part of his congregation *hummed* ſo loudly and ſo long, that he ſat down to enjoy it, and rubbed his face with his handkerchief. When Sprat preached, he likewiſe was honoured with the like animating *hum*; but he ſtretched out his hand to the congregation, and cried, "Peace, peace, I pray you, "peace."

This I was told in my youth by an old man, who had been no careleſs obſerver of the paſſages of thoſe times.

Burnet's ſermon, ſays Salmon, was remarkable for ſedition, and Sprat's for loyalty. Burnet had the thanks of the houſe; Sprat had no thanks, but a good living from the king; which, he ſaid,

was of as much value as the thanks of the Commons.

The works of Sprat, beſides his few poems, are, The Hiſtory of the Royal Society, the Life of Cowley, The Anſwer to Sorbiere, The Hiſtory of the Ryehouſe Plot; the Relation of his own Examination, and a volume of Sermons. I have heard it obſerved, with great juſtneſs, that every book is of a different kind, and that each has its diſtinct and characteriſtical excellence.

My buſineſs is only with his poems. He conſidered Cowley as a model; and ſuppoſed that as he was imitated, perfection was approached. Nothing therefore but Pindarick liberty was to be expected. There is in his few productions

tions no want of ſuch conceits as he thought excellent; and of thoſe our judgement may be ſettled by the firſt that appears in his praiſe of Cromwell, where he ſays that Cromwell's *fame, like man, will grow white as it grows old.*

ROSCOMMON.

WENTWORTH DILLON, earl of Roſcommon, was born in Ireland, during the lieutenancy of Strafford, who, being his godfather, gave him his own ſurname. His father had been converted by Uſher to the proteſtant religion; and when the popiſh rebellion broke out, Strafford, thinking the family in great danger from the fury of the Iriſh, ſent for his godſon, and placed him at his own ſeat in York-

ſhire, where he was inſtructed in Latin; which he learned ſo as to write it with purity and elegance, though he was never able to retain the rules of grammar.

Such is the account given by Mr. *Fenton*, from whoſe notes on Waller moſt of this account muſt be borrowed, though I know not whether all that he relates is certain. The inſtructer whom he aſſigns to Roſcommon is one Dr. *Hall*, by whom he cannot mean the famous *Hall*, then an old man and a biſhop.

When the ſtorm broke out upon Strafford, his houſe was a ſhelter no longer; and Dillon, by the advice of Uſher, went to *Caen*, where the Proteſtants

teſtants had then an univerſity, and continued his ſtudies under *Bochart*.

Young Dillon, who was ſent to ſtudy under Bochart, and who is repreſented as having already made great proficiency in literature, could not be more than nine years old. Strafford went to govern Ireland in 1633, and was put to death eight years afterwards. That he was ſent to Caen is certain; that he was a great ſcholar may be doubted.

At Caen he is ſaid to have had ſome preternatural intelligence of his father's death.

" The lord Roſcommon, being a boy " of ten years of age, at Caen in Nor- " mandy, one day was, as it were, mad- " ly extravagant, in playing, leaping,

" getting over the tables, boards, &c.
" He was wont to be ſober enough;
" they ſaid, God grant this bodes no ill-
" luck to him. In the heat of this ex-
" travagant fit, he cries out, *My father*
" *is dead.* A fortnight after news came
" from Ireland that his father was dead.
" This account I had from Mr. Knolles,
" who was his governor, and then with
" him,—ſince ſecretary to the earl of
" Strafford; and I have heard his lord-
" ſhip's relations confirm the ſame." *Aubrey's Miſcellany.*

The preſent age is very little inclined to favour any accounts of this kind, nor will the name of Aubrey much recommend it to credit: it ought not, however, to be omitted, becauſe better evi-

dence

dence of a fact cannot eafily be found than is here offered, and it muft be by preferving fuch relations that we may at laft judge how much they are to be regarded. If we ftay to examine this account, we fhall fee difficulties on both fides: here is a relation of a fact given by a man who had no intereft to deceive, and who could not be deceived himfelf; and here is, on the other hand, a miracle which produces no effect; the order of nature is interrupted to difcover not a future, but only a diftant event, the knowledge of which is of no ufe to him to whom it is revealed. Between thefe difficulties, what way fhall be found? Is reafon or teftimony to be rejected? I believe what Ofborne fays

of an appearance of ſanctity, may be applied to ſuch impulſes or anticipations as this: *Do not wholly ſlight them, becauſe they may be true; but do not eaſily truſt them, becauſe they may be falſe.*

The ſtate both of England and Ireland was at this time ſuch, that he who was abſent from either country had very little temptation to return: and therefore Roſcommon, when he left Caen, travelled into Italy, and amuſed himſelf with its antiquities, and particularly with medals, in which he acquired uncommon ſkill.

At the Reſtoration, with the other friends of monarchy, he came to England, was made captain of the band of penſioners, and learned ſo much of

the

the diſſoluteneſs of the court, that he addicted himſelf immoderately to gaming, by which he was engaged in frequent quarrels, and which undoubtedly brought upon him its uſual concomitants, extravagance and diſtreſs.

After ſome time a diſpute about part of his eſtate forced him into Ireland, where he was made by the duke of Ormond captain of the guards, and met with an adventure thus related by *Fenton:*

" He was at Dublin as much as ever " diſtempered with the ſame fatal affec- " tion for play, which engaged him in one " adventure that well deſerves to be re- " lated. As he returned to his lodgings " from a gaming table, he was attacked

" in the dark by three ruffians, who
" were employed to aſſaſſinate him.
" The earl defended himſelf with ſo
" much reſolution, that he diſpatched
" one of the aggreſſors; whilſt a gen-
" tleman, accidentally paſſing that way,
" interpoſed and diſarmed another: the
" third ſecured himſelf by flight. This
" generous aſſiſtant was a diſbanded of-
" ficer, of a good family and fair re-
" putation; who, by what we call the
" partiality of fortune, to avoid cen-
" ſuring the iniquities of the times,
" wanted even a plain ſuit of cloaths to
" make a decent appearance at the
" Caſtle. But his lordſhip, on this oc-
" caſion, preſenting him to the duke of
" Ormond, with great importunity pre-
" vailed

"vailed with his grace, that he might "resign his post of captain of the guards "to his friend; which for about three "years the gentleman enjoyed, and, "upon his death, the duke returned "the commission to his generous bene-"factor."

When he had finished his business, he returned to London; was made master of the horse to the dutchess of York; and married the lady Frances, daughter of the earl of Burlington, and widow of colonel Courteney.

He now busied his mind with literary projects, and formed the plan of a society for refining our language, and fixing its standard; *in imitation*, says Fenton, *of those learned and polite socie-*

ties

ties with which he had been acquainted abroad. In this design his friend Dryden is said to have assisted him.

The same design, it is well known, was revived by Dr. Swift in the ministry of Oxford; but it has never since been publickly mentioned, though at that time great expectations were formed by some at least of its establishment and its effects. Such a society might, perhaps, without much difficulty be collected; but that it would produce what is expected from it, may be doubted.

The Italian academy seems to have obtained its end. The language was refined, and so fixed that it has changed but little. The French academy thought that they refined their language, and

doubtleſs thought rightly; but the event has not ſhewn that they fixed it; for the French of the preſent time is very different from that of the laſt century.

In this country an academy could be expected to do but little. If an academician's place were profitable, it would be given by intereſt; if attendance were gratuitous, it would be rarely paid, and no man would endure the leaſt diſguſt. Unanimity is impoſſible, and debate would ſeparate the aſſembly.

But ſuppoſe the philological decree made and promulgated, what would be its authority? In abſolute governments, there is ſometimes a general reverence paid to all that has the ſanction of power, and the countenance of greatneſs.

neſs. How little this is the ſtate of our country needs not to be told. We live in an age in which it is a kind of publick ſport to refuſe all reſpect that cannot be enforced. The edicts of an Engliſh academy would probably be read by many, only that they might be ſure to diſobey them.

That our language is in perpetual danger of corruption cannot be denied; but what prevention can be found? The preſent manners of the nation would deride authority, and therefore nothing is left but that every writer ſhould criticiſe himſelf.

All hopes of new literary inſtitutions were quickly ſuppreſſed by the contentious turbulence of king James's reign; and

and Roſcommon, foreſeeing that ſome violent concuſſion of the State was at hand, purpoſed to retire to Rome, alleging, that *it was beſt to ſit near the chimney when the chamber ſmoaked*; a ſentence of which the application ſeems not very clear.

His departure was delayed by the gout; and he was ſo impatient either of hinderance or of pain, that he ſubmitted himſelf to a French empirick, who is ſaid to have repelled the diſeaſe into his bowels.

At the moment in which he expired, he uttered, with an energy of voice that expreſſed the moſt fervent devotion, two lines of his own verſion of *Dies Viæ*:

My

My God, my Father, and my Friend,
Do not forſake me in my end.

—He died in 1684; and was buried with great pomp in Weſtminſter-abbey.

His poetical character is given by Mr. Fenton:

"In his writings," ſays Fenton, "we "view the image of a mind which was "naturally ſerious and ſolid; richly fur-"niſhed and adorned with all the orna-"ments of learning, unaffectedly diſpoſed "in the moſt regular and elegant order. "His imagination might have probably "been more fruitful and ſprightly, if his "judgement had been leſs ſevere. But "that ſeverity (delivered in a maſculine, "clear, ſuccinct ſtile) contributed to

"make

" make him ſo eminent in the didactical
" manner, that no man, with juſtice, can
" affirm he was ever equalled by any of
" our nation, without confeſſing at the
" ſame time that he is inferior to none.
" In ſome other kinds of writing his
" genius ſeems to have wanted fire to
" attain the point of perfection; but
" who can attain it?"

From this account of the riches of his mind, who would not imagine that they had been diſplayed in large volumes and numerous performances? Who would not, after the peruſal of this character, be ſurpriſed to find that all the proofs of this genius, and knowledge and judgement, are not ſufficient to form a ſingle book, or to appear

other-

otherwiſe than in conjunction with the works of ſome other writer of the ſame petty ſize? But thus it is that characters are written: we know ſomewhat, and we imagine the reſt. The obſervation, that his imagination would probably have been more fruitful and ſprightly if his judgement had been leſs ſevere, may be anſwered, by a remarker ſomewhat inclined to cavil, by a contrary ſuppoſition, that his judgement would probably have been leſs ſevere, if his imagination had been more fruitful. It is ridiculous to oppoſe judgement to imagination; for it does not appear that men have neceſſarily leſs of one as they have more of the other.

We muſt allow of Roſcommon, what Fenton has not mentioned ſo diſtinctly as he ought, and, what is yet very much to his honour, that he is perhaps the only correct writer in verſe before Addiſon; and that, if there are not ſo many or ſo great beauties in his compoſitions as in thoſe of ſome contemporaries, there are at leaſt fewer faults. Nor is this his higheſt praiſe; for Mr. Pope has celebrated him as the only moral writer of king Charles's reign:

Unhappy Dryden! in all Charles's days,
Roſcommon only boaſts unſpotted lays.

His great work is his Eſſay on tranſlated Verſe; of which Dryden writes

thus in the preface to his Miſcellanies:

"It was my lord Roſcommon's Eſſay "on tranſlated Verſe," ſays Dryden, "which made me uneaſy, till I tried "whether or no I was capable of fol- "lowing his rules, and of reducing the "ſpeculation into practice. For many "a fair precept in poetry is like a "ſeeming demonſtration in mathema- "ticks, very ſpecious in the diagram, "but failing in the mechanick opera- "tion. I think I have generally ob- "ſerved his inſtructions: I am ſure my "reaſon is ſufficiently convinced both of "their truth and uſefulneſs; which, in "other words, is to confeſs no leſs a "vanity than to pretend that I have, at

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

"leaſt in ſome places, made examples "to his rules."

This declaration of Dryden will, I am afraid, be found little more than one of thoſe curſory civilities which one author pays to another; for when the ſum of lord Roſcommon's precepts is collected, it will not be eaſy to diſcover how they can qualify their reader for a better performance of tranſlation than might have been attained by his own reflections.

He that can abſtract his mind from the elegance of the poetry, and confine it to the ſenſe of the precepts, will find no other direction than that the author ſhould be ſuitable to the tranſlator's genius; that he ſhould be ſuch as may

deſerve a tranſlation; that he who intends to tranſlate him ſhould endeavour to underſtand him; that perſpicuity ſhould be ſtudied, and unuſual and uncouth names ſparingly inſerted; and that the ſtile of the original ſhould be copied in its elevation and depreſſion. Theſe are the rules that are celebrated as ſo definite and important, and for the delivery of which to mankind ſo much honour has been paid. Roſcommon has indeed deſerved his praiſes, had they been given with diſcernment, and beſtowed not on the rules themſelves, but the art with which they are introduced, and the decorations with which they are adorned.

The

The Eſſay, though generally excellent, is not without its faults. The ſtory of the Quack, borrowed from Boileau, was not worth the importation: he has confounded the Britiſh and Saxon mythology:

I grant that from ſome moſſy idol oak,
In double rhymes, our *Thor* and *Woden* ſpoke.

The oak, as I think Gildon has obſerved, belonged to the Britiſh druids, and *Thor* and *Woden* were Saxon deities. Of the *double rhymes*, which he ſo liberally ſuppoſes, he certainly had no knowledge.

His interpoſition of a long paragraph of blank verſes is unwarrantably licentious. Latin poets might as well have

introduced a ſeries of iambicks among their heroicks.

His next work is the tranſlation of the Art of Poetry; which has received, in my opinion, not leſs praiſe than it deſerves. Blank verſe, left merely to its numbers, has little operation either on the ear or mind: it can hardly ſupport itſelf without bold figures and ſtriking images. A poem frigidly didactick, without rhyme, is ſo near to proſe, that the reader only ſcorns it for pretending to be verſe.

Having diſentangled himſelf from the difficulties of rhyme, he may juſtly be expected to give the ſenſe of Horace with great exactneſs, and to ſuppreſs no ſubtilty of ſentiment for the difficulty

of

of expreſſing it. This demand, however, his tranſlation will not ſatisfy; what he found obſcure, I do not know that he has ever cleared.

Among his ſmaller works, the Eclogue of Virgil and the *Dies Iræ* are well tranſlated; though the beſt line in the *Dies Iræ* is borrowed from Dryden. In return, ſucceeding poets have borrowed from Roſcommon.

In the verſes on the Lap-dog, the pronouns *thou* and *you* are offenſively confounded; and the turn at the end is from Waller.

His verſions of the two odes of Horace are made with great liberty, which is not recompenſed by much elegance or vigour.

His

His political verſes are ſpritely, and when they were written muſt have been very popular.

Of the ſcene of *Guarini*, and the prologue to *Pompey*, Mrs. Phillips, in her letters to Sir Charles Cotterel, has given the hiſtory.

" Lord Roſcommon," ſays ſhe, " is " certainly one of the moſt promiſing " young noblemen in Ireland. He has " paraphraſed a Pſalm admirably, and " a ſcene of *Paſtor Fido* very finely, in " ſome places much better than Sir " Richard Fanſhaw. This was under- " taken merely in compliment to me, " who happened to ſay that it was " the beſt ſcene in Italian, and the

" worſt

"worſt in Engliſh. He was only two "hours about it. It begins thus:

"Dear happy groves, and you the
"dark retreat
"Of ſilent horrour, Reſt's eternal
"ſeat."

From theſe lines, which are ſince ſomewhat mended, it appears that he did not think a work of two hours fit to endure the eye of criticiſm without reviſal.

When Mrs. Phillips was in Ireland, ſome ladies that had ſeen her tranſlation of Pompey, reſolved to bring it on the ſtage at Dublin; and, to promote

their deſign, Lord Roſcommon gave them a prologue, and Sir Edward Dering an epilogue; " which," ſays he, " are the beſt performances of thoſe " kinds I ever ſaw." If this is not criticiſm, it is at leaſt gratitude. The thought of bringing Cæſar and Pompey into Ireland, the only country over which Cæſar never had any power, is lucky.

Of Roſcommon's works, the judgement of the publick ſeems to be right. He is elegant, but not great; he never labours after exquiſite beauties, and he ſeldom falls into groſs faults. His verſification is ſmooth, but rarely vigorous, and his rhymes are remarkably exact.

He

He improved taſte, if he did not enlarge knowledge, and may be numbered among the benefactors to Engliſh literature.

ROCHESTER.

JOHN WILMOT, afterwards earl of Rocheſter, the ſon of Henry earl of Rocheſter, better known by the title of Lord Wilmot, ſo often mentioned in Clarendon's Hiſtory, was born in April, 1648, at Ditchley in Oxfordſhire. After a grammatical education at the ſchool of Burford, he entered a nobleman into Wadham College in 1659, only eleven years old; and in 1661, at thirteen, was, with ſome other perſons

of high rank, made maſter of arts by lord Clarendon in perſon.

He travelled afterwards into France and Italy; and, at his return, devoted himſelf to a Court. In 1665 he went to ſea with Sandwich, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf at Bergen by uncommon intrepidity; and the next ſummer ſerved again on board Sir Edward Spragge, who, in the heat of the engagement, having a meſſage of reproof to ſend to one of his captains, could find no man ready to carry it but Wilmot, who, in an open boat, went and returned amidſt the ſtorm of ſhot.

But his reputation for bravery was not laſting: he was reproached with ſlinking away in ſtreet quarrels, and leaving

leaving his companions to ſhift as they could without him; and Sheffield duke of Buckingham has left a ſtory of his refuſal to fight him.

He had very early an inclination to intemperance, which he totally ſubdued in his travels; but when he became a courtier, he unhappily addicted himſelf to diſſolute and vitious company, by which his principles were corrupted, and his manners depraved. He loſt all ſenſe of religious reſtraint; and, finding it not convenient to admit the authority of laws which he was reſolved not to obey, ſheltered his wickedneſs behind infidelity.

As he excelled in that noiſy and licentious merriment which wine incites,

his companions eagerly encouraged him in excefs, and he willingly indulged it; till, as he confeffed to Dr. Burnet, he was for five years together continually drunk, or fo much inflamed by frequent ebriety, as in no interval to be mafter of himfelf.

In this ftate he played many frolicks, which it is not for his honour that we fhould remember, and which are not now diftinctly known. He often purfued low amours in mean difguifes, and always acted with great exactnefs and dexterity the characters which he affumed.

He once erected a ftage on Tower-hill, and harangued the populace as a mountebank; and, having made phy-

fick

ſick part of his ſtudy, is ſaid to have practiſed it ſucceſsfully.

He was ſo much in favour with king Charles, that he was made one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber, and comptroller of Woodſtock Park.

Having an active and inquiſitive mind, he never, except in his paroxyſms of intemperance, was wholly negligent of ſtudy: he read what is conſidered as polite learning ſo much, that he is mentioned by Wood as the greateſt ſcholar of all the nobility. Sometimes he retired into the country, and amuſed himſelf with writing libels, in which he did not pretend to confine himſelf to truth.

His favourite author in French was Boileau, and in Engliſh Cowley.

Thus in a courſe of drunken gaiety, and groſs ſenſualty, with intervals of ſtudy perhaps yet more criminal, with an avowed contempt of all decency and order, a total diſregard to every moral, and a reſolute denial of every religious obligation, he lived worthleſs and uſeleſs, and blazed out his youth and his health in laviſh voluptuouſneſs; till, at the age of one and thirty, he had exhauſted the fund of life, and reduced himſelf to a ſtate of weakneſs and decay.

At this time he was led to an acquaintance with Dr. Burnet, to whom he laid open with great freedom the tenour of his opinions, and the courſe of his life, and from whom he received ſuch con-

viction of the reaſonableneſs of moral duty, and the truth of Chriſtianity, as produced a total change both of his manners and opinions. The account of thoſe ſalutary conferences is given by Burnet, in a book intituled, *Some Paſſages of the Life and Death of* John *earl of* Rocheſter; which the critick ought to read for its elegance, the philoſopher for its arguments, and the ſaint for its piety. It were an injury to the reader to offer him an abridgement.

He died July 26, 1680, before he had completed his thirty-third year; and was ſo worn away by a long illneſs, that life went out without a ſtruggle.

Lord Rocheſter was eminent for the vigour of his colloquial wit, and re-

markable for many wild pranks, and ſallies of extravagance. The glare of his general character diffuſed itſelf upon his writings; the compoſitions of a man whoſe name was heard ſo often, were certain of attention, and from many readers certain of applauſe. This blaze of reputation is not yet quite extinguiſhed, and his poetry ſtill retains ſome ſplendour beyond that which genius has beſtowed.

Wood and Burnet give us reaſon to believe, that much was imputed to him which he did not write. I know not by whom the original collection was made, or by what authority its genuineneſs was aſcertained. The firſt edition was publiſhed in the year of his death, with an

air

air of concealment, profeſſing in the title-page to be printed at *Antwerp*.

Of ſome of the pieces, however, there is no doubt. The Imitation of Horace's Satire, the Verſes to Lord Mulgrave, the Satire againſt Man, the Verſes upon *Nothing*, and perhaps ſome others, are I believe genuine, and perhaps moſt of thoſe which this collection exhibits.

As he cannot be ſuppoſed to have found leiſure for any courſe of continued ſtudy, his pieces are commonly ſhort, ſuch as one fit of reſolution would produce.

His ſongs have no particular character: they tell, like other ſongs, in ſmooth and eaſy language, of ſcorn and kindneſs, diſmiſſion and deſertion, ab-

ſence

ſence and inconſtancy, with the common places of artificial courtſhip. They are commonly ſmooth and eaſy; but have little nature, and little ſentiment.

His imitation of Horace on Lucilius is not inelegant or unhappy. In the reign of Charles the Second began that adaptation, which has ſince been very frequent, of ancient poetry to preſent times, and perhaps few will be found where the parallelifm is better preſerved than in this. The verſification is indeed ſometimes careleſs, but it is ſometimes vigorous and weighty.

The ſtrongeſt effort of his Muſe is his poem upon *Nothing*. He is not the firſt who has choſen this barren topick for the boaſt of his fertility. There

is

is a poem called *Nihil* in Latin by *Paſſerat*, a poet and critick of the ſixteenth century in France; who, in his own epitaph, expreſſes his zeal for good poetry thus:

—Molliter oſſa quieſcent
Sint modo carminibus non onerata malis.

His works are not common, and therefore I ſhall ſubjoin his verſes.

In examining this performance, *Nothing* muſt be conſidered as having not only a negative but a kind of poſitive ſignification; as, I need not fear thieves, I have *nothing*; and *nothing* is a very powerful protector. In the firſt part of the ſentence it is taken negatively; in the

the ſecond it is taken poſitively, as an agent. In one of Boileau's lines it was a queſtion, whether he ſhould uſe *a rien faire*, or *a ne rien faire*; and the firſt was preferred, becauſe it gave *rien* a ſenſe in ſome ſort poſitive. *Nothing* can be a ſubject only in its poſitive ſenſe, and ſuch a ſenſe is given it in the firſt line:

> *Nothing*, thou elder brother ev'n to ſhade.

In this line, I know not whether he does not allude to a curious book *de Umbra*, by Wowerus, which, having told the qualities of *Shade*, concludes with a poem in which are theſe lines:

Jam

Jam primum terram validis circumſpice
clauſtris
Suſpenſam totam, decus admirabile
mundi
Terraſque tractuſque maris, campoſque
liquentes
Aeris, & vaſti laqueata palatia cœli—
Omnibus UMBRA prior.

The poſitive ſenſe is generally preſerved, with great ſkill, through the whole poem; though ſometimes, in a ſubordinate ſenſe, the negative *nothing* is injudiciouſly mingled. Paſſerat confounds the two ſenſes.

Another of his moſt vigorous pieces is his Lampoon on Sir Car Scroop, who,

in

in a poem called *The Praiſe of Satire*, had ſome lines like theſe*:

He who can puſh into a midnight fray
His brave companion, and then run away,
Leaving him to be murder'd in the ſtreet,
Then put it off with ſome buffoon conceit;
Him, thus diſhonour'd, for a wit you own,
And court him as top fidler of the town.

This was meant of Rocheſter, and drew from him thoſe furious verſes; to

* I quote from memory.

which

which Scroop made in reply an epigram, ending with theſe lines :

Thou canſt hurt no man's fame with thy ill word;
Thy pen is full as harmleſs as thy ſword.

Of the ſatire againſt *Man*, Rocheſter can only claim what remains when all Boileau's part is taken away.

In all his works there is ſprightlineſs and vigour, and every where may be found tokens of a mind which ſtudy might have carried to excellence; and what more can be expected from a life ſpent in oſtentatious contempt of regularity, and ended before the abilities of many other men began to be diſplayed?

Poema

Poema CL. V. JOANNIS PASSERATII, Regij in Academia Parisiensi Professoris.

Ad ornatissimum virum ERRICVM MEMMIVM.

Janus adest, festæ poscunt sua dona Kalendæ,
Munus abest festis quod possim offerre Kalendis.
Siccine Castalius nobis exaruit humor?
Usque adeò ingenii nostri est exhausta facultas,
Immunem ut videat redeuntis janitor anni?
Quod nusquā est, potius nova per vestigia quærā.
Ecce autem partes dum sese versat in omnes
Invenit mea Musa NIHIL, ne despice munus.
Nam NIHIL est gemmis, NIHIL est pretiosius auro.
Huc animum, huc igitur vultus adverte benignos:
Res nova narratur quæ nulli audita priorum,
Ausonii & Graii dixerunt cætera vates,
Ausoniæ indictum NIHIL est Græcæque Camœnæ.

E cœlo

E cœlo quacunque Ceres ſua proſpicit arva,
Aut genitor liquidis orbem complectitur ulnis
Oceanus, NIHIL interitus & originis expers.
Immortale NIHIL, NIHIL omni parte beatum.
Quòd ſi hinc majeſtas & vis divina probatur,
Num quid honore deûm, num quid dignabimur aris?
Conſpectu lucis NIHIL eſt jucundius almæ,
Vere NIHIL, NIHIL irriguo formoſius horto,
Floridius pratis, Zephyri clementius aura;
In bello ſanctum NIHIL eſt, Martiſque tumultu:
Juſtum in pace NIHIL, NIHIL eſt in fœdere tutum.
Felix cui NIHIL eſt; (fuerant hæc vota Tibullo)
Non timet inſidias: fures, incendia temnit:
Sollicitas ſequitur nullo ſub judice lites.
Ille ipſe invictis qui ſubjicit omnia fatis
Zenonis ſapiens, NIHIL admiratur & optat.
Socraticique gregis fuit iſta ſcientia quondam,

Scire NIHIL, ſtudio cui nunc incumbitur uni.
Nec quicquam in ludo mavult didiciſſe juventus,
Ad magnas quia ducit opes, & culmen honorum.
Noſce NIHIL, noſces fertur quod Pythagoreæ
Grano hærere fabæ, cui vox adjuncta negantis.
Multi Mercurio freti duce viſcera terræ
Pura liquefaciunt ſimul, & patrimonia miſcent,
Arcano inſtantes operi, & carbonibus atris,
Qui tandem exhauſti damnis, fractique labore,
Inveniunt atque inventum NIHIL uſque requirunt.
Hoc dimetiri non ulla decempeda poſſit:
Nec numeret Libycæ numerum qui callet arenæ:
Et Phœbo ignotum NIHIL eſt, NIHIL altius aſtris.
Túque, tibi licet eximium ſit mentis acumen,
Omnem in naturam penetrans, & in abdita rerum,
Pace tua, Memmi, NIHIL ignorare vidêris.
Sole tamen NIHIL eſt, & puro clarius igne.
Tange NIHIL, diceſque NIHIL ſine corpore tangi.

Cerne

Cerne NIHIL, cerni dices NIHIL absque colore.
Surdum audit loquitúrque NIHIL sine voce, volátque
Absque ope pennarum, & graditur sine cruribus ullis.
Absque loco motuque NIHIL per inane vagatur.
Humano generi utilius NIHIL arte medendi.
Ne rhombos igitur, neu Thessala murmura tentet
Idalia vacuum trajectus arundine pectus,
Neu legat Idæo Dictæum in vertice gramen.
Vulneribus sævi NIHIL auxiliatur amoris.
Vexerit & quemvis trans mœstas portitor undas,
Ad superos imo NIHIL hunc revocabit ab orco.
Inferni NIHIL inflectit præcordia regis,
Parcarúmque colos, & inexorabile pensum.
Obruta Phlegræis campis Titania pubes
Fulmineo sensit NIHIL esse potentius ictu:
Porrigitur magni NIHIL extra mœnia mundi:

Diíque NIHIL metuunt. Quid longo carmine plura
Commemorem? virtute NIHIL præſtantius ipſa,
Splendidius NIHIL eſt; NIHIL eſt Jove denique majus.
Sed tempus finem argutis imponere nugis:
Ne tibi ſi multa laudem mea carmina charta,
De NIHILO NIHILI pariant faſtidia verſus.

YALDEN.

THOMAS YALDEN, the ſixth ſon of Mr. John Yalden of Suſſex, was born in the city of Exeter in 1671. Having been educated in the grammar-ſchool belonging to Magdalen College in Oxford, he was in 1690, at the age of nineteen, admitted commoner of Magdalen Hall, under the tuition of *Joſeph Pullen*, a man whoſe name is ſtill remembered in the univerſity. He became next year one of the ſcholars of

Magdalen College, where he was diſtinguiſhed by a lucky accident.

It was his turn, one day, to pronounce a declamation; and Dr. Hough, the preſident, happening to attend, thought the compoſition too good to be the ſpeaker's. Some time after, the doctor, finding him a little irregularly buſy in the library, ſet him an exerciſe for puniſhment; and, that he might not be deceived by any artifice, locked the door. Yalden, as it happened, had been lately reading on the ſubject given, and produced with little difficulty a compoſition which ſo pleaſed the preſident, that he told him his former ſuſpicions, and promiſed to favour him.

Among his contemporaries in the college were Addiſon and Sacheverell, men who were in thoſe times friends, and who both adopted Yalden to their intimacy. Yalden continued, throughout his life, to think as probably he thought at firſt, yet did not loſe the friendſhip of Addiſon.

When Namur was taken by king William, Yalden made an ode. There was never any reign more celebrated by the poets than that of William, who had very little regard for ſong himſelf, but happened to employ miniſters who pleaſed themſelves with the praiſe of patronage.

Of this ode mention is made in an humorous poem of that time, called

The Oxford Laureat; in which, after many claims had been made and rejected, Yalden is repreſented as demanding the laurel, and as being called to his trial, inſtead of receiving a reward,

His crime was for being a felon in verſe,
And preſenting his theft to the king;
The firſt was a trick not uncommon or ſcarce,
But the laſt was an impudent thing:
Yet what he had ſtol'n was ſo little worth ſtealing,
They forgave him the damage and coſt;
Had he ta'en the whole ode, as he took it piece-mealing,
They had fin'd him but ten pence at moſt.

The

The poet whom he was charged with robbing was Congreve.

He wrote another poem on the death of the duke of Glouceſter.

In 1710 he became fellow of the college; and next year, entering into orders, was preſented by the ſociety with a living in Warwickſhire, conſiſtent with his fellowſhip, and choſen lecturer of moral philoſophy, a very honourable office.

On the acceſſion of queen Anne he wrote another poem; and is ſaid, by the author of the *Biographia*, to have declared himielf of the party who had the honourable diſtinction of High-churchmen.

In

In 1706 he was received into the family of the duke of Beaufort. Next year he became doctor in divinity, and ſoon after reſigned his fellowſhip and lecture; and, as a token of his gratitude, gave the college a picture of their founder.

He was made rector of *Chalton* and *Clearville*, two adjoining towns and benefices in Hertfordſhire; and had the prebends, or ſinecures, of *Deans*, *Hains*, and *Pendles* in Devonſhire. He had before been choſen, in 1698, preacher of Bridewell Hoſpital, upon the reſignation of Dr. Atterbury.

From this time he ſeems to have led a quiet and inoffenſive life, till the clamour was raiſed about Atterbury's plot.

Every

Every loyal eye was on the watch for abettors or partakers of the horrid conſpiracy; and Dr. Yalden having ſome acquaintance with the biſhop, and being familiarly converſant with Kelly his ſecretary, fell under ſuſpicion, and was taken into cuſtody.

Upon his examination he was charged with a dangerous correſpondence with Kelly. The correſpondence he acknowledged; but maintained, that it had no treaſonable tendency. His papers were ſeized; but nothing was found that could fix a crime upon him, except two words in his pocket-book, *thorough-paced doctrine*. This expreſſion the imagination of his examiners had impregnated with treaſon, and the doctor was

en-

enjoined to explain them. Thus preſſed, he told them that the words had lain unheeded in his pocket-book from the time of queen Anne, and that he was aſhamed to give an account of them; but the truth was, that he had gratified his curioſity one day, by hearing *Daniel Burgeſs* in the pulpit, and thoſe words was a memorial hint of a remarkable ſentence by which he warned his congregation to *beware of* thorough-paced doctrine, *that doctrine, which, coming in at one ear, paces through the head, and goes out at the other.*

Nothing worſe than this appearing in his papers, and no evidence ariſing againſt him, he was ſet at liberty.

It

It will not be ſuppoſed that a man of this character attained high dignities in the church; but he ſtill retained the friendſhip, and frequented the converſation, of a very numerous and ſplendid body of acquaintance. He died July 16, 1736, in the 66th year of his age.

Of his poems, many are of that irregular kind, which, when he formed his poetical character, was ſuppoſed to be Pindarick. Having fixed his attention on Cowley as a model, he has attempted in ſome ſort to rival him, and has written a *Hymn* to *Darkneſs*, evidently as a counter-part to Cowley's *Hymn* to *Light*.

This hymn ſeems to be his beſt performance, and is, for the moſt part, imagined with great vigour, and expreſſed with great propriety. I will not tranſcribe it. The ſeven firſt ſtanzas are good; but the third, fourth, and ſeventh are the beſt: the eighth ſeems to involve a contradiction; the tenth is exquiſitely beautiful; the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, are partly mythological, and partly religious, and therefore not ſuitable to each other: he might better have made the whole merely philoſophical.

There are two ſtanzas in this poem where Yalden may be ſuſpected, though hardly convicted, of having conſulted the *Hymnus ad Umbram* of *Wowerus*, in

the

the ſixth ſtanza, which anſwers in ſome ſort to theſe lines:

Illa ſuo præeſt nocturnis numine ſacris—
Perque vias errare novis dat ſpectra figuris,
Maneſque excitos medios ululare per agros
Sub noctem, & queſtu notos complere penates.

And again, at the concluſion;

Illa ſuo ſenium ſecludit corpore toto
Haud numerans jugi fugientia ſecula lapſu,
Ergo ubi poſtremum mundi compage ſolutâ
Hanc rerum molem ſuprema abſumpſerit hora
Ipſa leves cineres nube amplectetur opacâ,
Ea priſes imperio rurſus dominabitur UMBRA.

His *Hymn* to *Light* is not equal to the other. He ſeems to think that there is an Eaſt abſolute and poſitive where the Morning riſes.

In

In the laſt ſtanza, having mentioned the ſudden eruption of new created Light, he ſays,

Awhile th' Almighty wondering ſtood.

He ought to have remembered that Infinite Knowledge can never wonder. All wonder is the effect of novelty upon ignorance.

Of his other poems it is ſufficient to ſay that they deſerve peruſal, though they are not always exactly poliſhed, and the rhymes are ſometimes very ill ſorted, and though his faults ſeem rather the omiſſions of idleneſs than the negligences of enthuſiaſm.

OTWAY.

OF THOMAS OTWAY, one of the firſt names in the Engliſh drama, little is known; nor is there any part of that little which his biographer can take pleaſure in relating.

He was born at Trottin in Suſſex, March 3, 1651, the ſon of Mr. Humphry Otway, rector of *Woolbeding*. From Wincheſter-ſchool, where he was educated, he was entered in 1669 a com-

moner of Chriſt-church; but left the univerſity without a degree, whether for want of money, or from impatience of academical reſtraint, or mere eagerneſs to mingle with the world, is not known.

It ſeems likely that he was in hope of being buſy and conſpicuous; for he went to London, and commenced player; but found himſelf unable to gain any reputation on the ſtage.

This kind of inability he ſhared with Shakeſpeare and Jonſon, as he ſhared likewiſe ſome of their excellencies. It ſeems reaſonable to expect that a great dramatick poet ſhould without difficulty become a great actor; that he who can feel, could expreſs; that he who can excite paſ-

ſion,

ſion, ſhould exhibit with great readineſs its external modes: but ſince experience has fully proved that of thoſe powers, whatever be their affinity, one may be poſſeſſed in a great degree by him who has very little of the other; it muſt be allowed that they depend upon different faculties, or on different uſe of the ſame faculty; that the actor muſt have a pliancy of mien, a flexibility of countenance, and a variety of tones, which the poet may be eaſily ſuppoſed to want; or that the attention of the poet and the player have been differently employed; the one has been conſidering thought, and the other action; one has watched the heart, and the other contemplated the face.

Though he could not gain much notice as a player, he felt in himself ſuch powers as might qualify for a dramatick author; and in 1675, his twenty-fifth year, produced *Alcibiades*, a tragedy; whether from the *Alcibiade* of *Palaprat*, I have not means to enquire. Langbain, the great detector of plagiariſm, is ſilent.

In 1677 he publiſhed *Titus and Berenice*, tranſlated from Rapin, with the *Cheats of Scapin* from Moliere; and in 1678 *Friendſhip in Faſhion*, a comedy, which, whatever might be its firſt reception, was, upon its revival at Drury-lane in 1749, hiſſed off the ſtage for immorality and obſcenity.

Want

Want of morals, or of decency, did not in thoſe days exclude any man from the company of the wealthy and the gay, if he brought with him any powers of entertainment; and Otway is ſaid to have been at this time a favourite companion of the diſſolute wits. But, as he who deſires no virtue in his companion has no virtue in himſelf, thoſe whom Otway frequented had no purpoſe of doing more for him than to pay his reckoning. They deſired only to drink and laugh; their fondneſs was without benevolence, and their familiarity without friendſhip. Men of wit, ſays one of Otway's biographers, received at that time no favour from the great but to ſhare their riots; *from which they were*

dismissed again to their own narrow circumstances. Thus they languished in poverty without the support of imminence.

Some exception, however, must be made. The earl of Plymouth, one of king Charles's natural sons, procured for him a cornet's commission in some troops then sent into Flanders. But Otway did not prosper in his military character; for he soon left his commission behind him, whatever was the reason, and came back to London in extreme indigence; which Rochester mentions with merciless insolence in the *Session of the Poets:*

Tom Otway came next, Tom Shadwell's dear zany,
And swears for heroicks he writes best of any;

Don

Don Carlos his pockets ſo amply had fill'd,
That his mange was quite cured, and his lice were all kill'd.
But Apollo had ſeen his face on the ſtage,
And prudently did not think fit to engage
The ſcum of a play-houſe, for the prop of an age.

Don Carlos, from which he is repreſented as having received ſo much benefit, was played in 1675. It appears, by the Lampoon, to have had great ſucceſs, and is ſaid to have been played thirty nights together. This however it is reaſonable to doubt, as ſo long a continuance of one play upon the

ſtage is a very wide deviation from the practice of that time; when the ardour for theatrical entertainments was not yet diffuſed through the whole people, and the audience, conſiſting nearly of the ſame perſons, could be drawn together only by variety.

The *Orphan* was exhibited in 1680. This is one of the few plays that keep poſſeſſion of the ſtage, and has pleaſed for almoſt a century, through all the viciſſitudes of dramatick faſhion. Of this play nothing new can eaſily be ſaid. It is a domeſtick tragedy drawn from middle life. Its whole power is upon the affections; for it is not written with much comprehenſion of thought, or elegance of expreſſion. But if the heart is

in-

interested, many other beauties may be wanting, yet not be missed.

The same year produced *The History and Fall of Caius Marius*; much of which is borrowed from the *Romeo and Juliet* of Shakespeare.

In 1683 was published the first and next year the second parts of *The Soldier's Fortune*, two comedies now forgotten; and in 1685 his last and greatest dramatick work, *Venice preserved*, a tragedy, which still continues to be one of the favourites of the publick, notwithstanding the want of morality in the original design, and the despicable scenes of vile comedy with which he has diversified his tragick action. By comparing this with his *Orphan*, it will

appear

appear that his images were by time become ſtronger, and his language more energetick. The ſtriking paſſages are in every mouth; and the publick ſeems to judge rightly of the faults and excellencies of this play, that it is the work of a man not attentive to decency, nor zealous for virtue; but of one who conceived forcibly, and drew originally, by conſulting nature in his own breaſt.

Together with thoſe plays he wrote the poems which are in this collection, and tranſlated from the French the *Hiſtory of the Triumvirate.*

All this was performed before he was thirty-four years old; for he died April 14, 1685, in a manner which I am unwilling to mention. Having been compelled

pelled by his neceſſities to contract debts, and hunted, as is ſuppoſed, by the terriers of the law, he retired to a publick houſe on Tower-hill, where he died of want, or, as it is related by one of his biographers, by ſwallowing, after a long faſt, a piece of bread which charity had ſupplied. He went out, as is reported, almoſt naked, in the rage of hunger, and finding a gentleman in a neighbouring coffee-houſe, aſked him for a ſhilling. The gentleman gave him a guinea; and Otway going away bought a roll, and was choaked with the firſt mouthful. All this, I hope, is not true; but that indigence, and its concomitants, ſorrow and deſpondency, brought him to the grave has never been denied.

Of the poems which this collection admits, the longeſt is the *Poet's Complaint of his Muſe*, part of which I do not underſtand; and in that which is leſs obſcure I find little to commend. The language is often groſs, and the numbers are harſh. Otway had not much cultivated verſification, nor much repleniſhed his mind with general knowledge. His principal power was in moving the paſſions, to which Dryden in his latter years left an illuſtrious teſtimony. He appears, by ſome of his verſes, to have been a zealous royaliſt: and had what was in thoſe times the common reward of loyalty; he lived and died neglected.

DUKE.

OF Mr. RICHARD DUKE I can find few memorials. He was bred at Weſtminſter and Cambridge; and Jacob relates, that he was ſome time tutor to the duke of Richmond.

He appears from his writings to have been not ill qualified for poetical compoſitions; and being conſcious of

his powers, when he left the univerſity he enliſted himſelf among the wits. He was the familiar friend of Otway; and was engaged, among other popular names, in the tranſlations of Ovid and Juvenal. In his *Review*, though unfiniſhed, are ſome vigorous lines. His poems are not below mediocrity; nor have I found much in them to be praiſed.

With the wit he ſeems to have ſhared the diſſoluteneſs of the times; for ſome of his compoſitions are ſuch as he muſt have reviewed with deteſtation in his later days, when he publiſhed thoſe Sermons which *Felton* has commended.

Perhaps, like ſome other fooliſh young men, he rather talked than

lived

lived viciouſly, in an age when he that would be thought a wit was afraid to ſay his prayers; and whatever might have been the firſt part of his life, it was ſurely condemned and reformed by his better judgement.

In 1683, being then maſter of arts, and fellow of Trinity College in Cambridge, he wrote a poem on the marriage of the Lady Anne with George Prince of Denmark.

He took orders; and being made prebendary of Glouceſter, became a proctor in convocation for that church, and chaplain to Queen Anne.

In 1710, he was preſented by the biſhop of Wincheſter to the wealthy living of Witney in Oxfordſhire, which he

he enjoyed but a few months. On February 10, 1710-11, having returned from an entertainment, he was found dead the next morning. His death is mentioned in Swift's Journal.

DORSET.

OF the Earl of Dorset the character has been drawn so largely and so elegantly by Prior, to whom he was familiarly known, that nothing can be added by a casual hand; and, as it will appear in the subsequent volumes of this collection, it would be useless officiousness to transcribe it.

Charles Sackville was born January 24, 1637. Having been educated under a private tutor, he travelled into

Italy, and returned a little before the Reſtoration. He was choſen into the firſt parliament that was called, for Eaſt Grinſtead in Suſſex, and ſoon became a favourite of Charles the Second; but undertook no publick employment, being too eager of the riotous and licentious pleaſures which young men of high rank, who aſpired to be thought wits, at that time imagined themſelves intitled to indulge.

One of theſe frolicks has, by the induſtry of Wood, come down to poſterity. Sackville, who was then Lord Buckhurſt, with Sir Charles Sedley and Sir Thomas Ogle, got drunk at the Cock in Bow-ſtreet by Covent-garden, and, going into the balcony, expoſed them-

ſelves to the populace in very indecent poſtures. At laſt, as they grew warmer, Sedley ſtood forth naked, and harangued the populace in ſuch profane language, that the publick indignation was awakened; the crowd attempted to force the door, and being repulſed, drove in the performers with ſtones, and broke the windows of the houſe.

For this miſdemeanour they were indicted, and Sedley was fined five hundred pounds: what was the ſentence of the others is not known. Sedley employed Killigrew and another to procure a remiſſion from the king; but, mark the friendſhip of the diſſolute, they begged the fine for themſelves, and exacted it to the laſt groat.

In 1665, lord Buckhurſt attended the duke of York as a volunteer in the Dutch war; and was in the battle of June 3, when eighteen great Dutch ſhips were taken, and fourteen others deſtroyed; and Opdam the admiral, who engaged the duke, was blown up beſide him, with all his crew.

On the day before the battle, he is ſaid to have compoſed the celebrated ſong, *To all you Ladies now at land*, with equal tranquillity of mind and promptitude of wit. Seldom any ſplendid ſtory is wholly true. I have heard from the late earl of Orrery, who was likely to have good hereditary intelligence, that lord Buckhurſt had been a week employed upon it, and only retouched or

finiſhed it on the memorable evening. But even this, whatever it may ſubſtract from his facility, leaves him his courage.

He was ſoon after made a gentleman of the bedchamber, and ſent on ſhort embaſſies to France.

In 1674, the eſtate of his uncle James Cranfield, earl of Middleſex, came to him by its owner's death, and the title was conferred on him the year after. In 1677, he became, by the death of his father, earl of Dorſet, and inherited the eſtate of his family.

In 1684, having buried his firſt wife, of the family of Bagot, who left him no child, he married a daughter of

the earl of Northampton, celebrated both for beauty and underſtanding.

He received ſome favourable notice from king James; but ſoon found it neceſſary to oppoſe the violence of his innovations, and with ſome other lords appeared in Weſtminſter-hall to countenance the biſhops at their trial.

As enormities grew every day leſs ſupportable, he found it neceſſary to concur in the Revolution. He was one of thoſe lords who ſat every day in council to preſerve the publick peace, after the king's departure; and, what is not the moſt illuſtrious action of his life, was employed to conduct the princeſs Anne to Nottingham with a guard, ſuch as might alarm the populace, as they

paſſed, with falſe apprehenſions of her danger. Whatever end may be deſigned, there is always ſomething deſpicable in a trick.

He became, as may be eaſily ſuppoſed, a favourite of king William, who, the day after his acceſſion, made him lord chamberlain of the houſehold, and gave him afterwards the garter. He happened to be among thoſe that were toſſed with the king in an open boat ſixteen hours, in very rough and cold weather, on the coaſt of Holland. His health afterwards declined; and on Jan. 19, 1705-6, he died at Bath.

He was a man whoſe elegance and judgement were univerſally confeſſed, and whoſe bounty to the learned and

witty was generally known. To the indulgent affection of the publick, lord Rochester bore ample testimony in this remark: *I know not how it is, but* lord Buckhurst *may do what he will, yet is never in the wrong.*

If such a man attempted poetry, we cannot wonder that his works were praised. Dryden, whom, if Prior tells truth, he distinguished by his beneficence, and who lavished his blandishments on those who are not known to have so well deserved them, undertaking to produce authors of our own country superior to those of antiquity, says, *I would instance your lordship in satire, and Shakespeare in tragedy.* Would it be imagined that, of this rival to an-

tiquity,

tiquity, all the ſatires were little perſonal invectives; and that his longeſt compoſition was a ſong of eleven ſtanzas?

The blame, however, of this exaggerated praiſe falls on the encomiaſt, not upon the author; whoſe performances are, what they pretend to be, the effuſions of a man of wit; gay, vigorous, and airy. His verſes to Howard ſhew great fertility of mind, and his *Dorinda* has been imitated by Pope.

HALIFAX.

THE life of the earl of Halifax was properly that of an artful and active ſtateſman, employed in balancing parties, contriving expedients, and combating oppoſition, and expoſed to the viciſſitudes of advancement and degradation: but in this collection poetical merit is the claim to attention; and the account which is here to be expected may properly be proportioned not to his influence in the ſtate, but to his rank among the writers of verſe.

Charles

Charles Montague was born April 16, 1661, at Horton in Northamptonſhire, the ſon of Mr. George Montague, a younger ſon of the earl of Mancheſter. He was educated firſt in the country, and then removed to Weſtminſter; where in 1677 he was choſen a king's ſcholar, and recommended himſelf to Buſby by his felicity in extemporary epigrams. He contracted a very intimate friendſhip with Mr. Stepney; and in 1682, when Stepney was elected to Cambridge, the election of Montague being not to proceed till the year following, he was afraid leſt by being placed at Oxford he might be ſeparated from his companion, and therefore ſolicited to be removed

moved to Cambridge, without waiting for the advantages of another year.

It ſeems indeed time to wiſh for a removal; for he was already a ſchool-boy of one and twenty.

His relation Dr. Montague was then maſter of the college in which he was placed a fellow-commoner, and took him under his particular care. Here he commenced an acquaintance with the great Newton, which continued through his life, and was at laſt atteſted by a legacy.

In 1685, his verſes on the death of king Charles made ſuch impreſſion on the earl of Dorſet, that he was invited to town, and introduced by that univerſal patron to the other wits. In 1687, he

he joined with Prior in the *City Mouſe and Country Mouſe*, a burleſque of Dryden's *Hind and Panther*. He ſigned the invitation to the Prince of Orange, and ſat in the convention. He about the ſame time married the counteſs dowager of Mancheſter, and intended to have taken orders; but afterwards altering his purpoſe, he purchaſed for 1500 *l.* the place of one of the clerks of the council.

After he had written his epiſtle on the victory of the *Boyne*, his patron Dorſet introduced him to king William with this expreſſion: *Sir, I have brought a* Mouſe *to wait on your Majeſty.* To which the king is ſaid to have replied, *You do well to put me in the way of making*

a Man

a Man *of him*; and ordered him a penſion of five hundred pounds. This ſtory, however current, ſeems to have been made after the event. The king's anſwer implies a greater acquaintance with our proverbial and familiar diction than king William could poſſibly have attained.

In 1691, being member in the houſe of commons, he argued warmly in favour of a law to grant the aſſiſtance of counſel in trials for high treaſon; and in the midſt of his ſpeech falling into ſome confuſion was for a while ſilent; but, recovering himſelf, obſerved, "how "reaſonable it was to allow counſel to "men called as criminals before a court "of juſtice, when it appeared how

"much

"much the presence of that assembly "could disconcert one of their own body."

After this he rose fast into honours and employments, being made one of the commissioners of the treasury, and called to the privy council. In 1694, he became chancellor of the Exchequer; and the next year engaged in the great attempt of the recoinage, which was in two years happily completed. In 1696, he projected the *general fund*, and raised the credit of the Exchequer; and, after enquiry concerning a grant of Irish crown-lands, it was determined by a vote of the commons, that Charles Montague esquire *had deserved his Majesty's favour*. In 1698, being advanced to the first commission of the treasury, he was

ap-

appointed one of the regency in the king's abſence: the next year he was made auditor of the Exchequer; and the year after created *baron Halifax*. He was however impeached by the commons; but the articles were diſmiſſed by the lords.

At the acceſſion of queen Anne he was diſmiſſed from the council; and in the firſt parliament of her reign was again attacked by the commons, and again eſcaped by the protection of the lords. In 1704, he wrote an anſwer to Bromley's ſpeech againſt occaſional conformity. He headed the Enquiry into the danger of the Church. In 1706, he propoſed and negotiated the Union with Scotland; and when the elector of Ha-

nover received the garter, after the act had paſſed for ſecuring the Proteſtant Succeſſion, he was appointed to carry the enſigns of the order to the electoral court. He ſat as one of the judges of Sacheverell; but voted for a mild ſentence. Being now no longer in favour, he contrived to obtain a writ for ſummoning the electoral prince to parliament as duke of Cambridge.

At the queen's death he was appointed one of the regents; and at the acceſſion of George the Firſt was made earl of Halifax, knight of the garter, and firſt commiſſioner of the treaſury, with a grant to his nephew of the reverſion of the auditorſhip of the Exchequer. More was not to be had, and this he

kept

kept but a little while; for on the 19th of May, 1715, he died of an inflammation of his lungs.

Of him, who from a poet became a patron of poets, it will be readily believed that the works would not miſs of celebration. Addiſon began to praiſe him early, and was followed or accompanied by other poets; perhaps by almoſt all, except Swift and Pope; who forbore to flatter him in his life, and after his death ſpoke of him, Swift with ſlight cenſure, and Pope in the character of Bufo with acrimonious contempt.

He was, as Pope ſays, *fed with dedications*; for Tickell affirms that no dedicator was unrewarded. To charge

all unmerited praiſe with the guilt of flattery, and to ſuppoſe that the encomiaſt always knows and feels the falſehood of his aſſertions, is ſurely to diſcover great ignorance of human nature and human life. In determinations depending not on rules, but on experience and compariſon, judgement is always in ſome degree ſubject to affection. Very near to admiration is the wiſh to admire.

Every man willingly gives value to the praiſe which he receives, and conſiders the ſentence paſſed in his favour as the ſentence of diſcernment. We admire in a friend that underſtanding that ſelected us for confidence; we admire more, in a patron, that judgement which,

inſtead of ſcattering bounty indiſcriminately, directed it to us; and thoſe performances which gratitude forbids us to blame, affection will eaſily diſpoſe us to exalt.

To theſe prejudices, hardly culpable, intereſt adds a power always operating, though not always, becauſe not willingly, perceived. The modeſty of praiſe wears gradually away; and perhaps the pride of patronage may be in time ſo increaſed, that modeſt praiſe will no longer pleaſe.

Many a blandiſhment was practiſed upon Halifax, which he would never have known, had he had no other attractions than thoſe of his poetry, of which a ſhort time has withered the beauties. It

would now be eſteemed no honour, by a contributor to the monthly bundles of verſes, to be told, that, in ſtrains either familiar or ſolemn, he ſings like Montague.

STEPNEY.

GEORGE STEPNEY, descended from the Stepneys of Pendegraſt in Pembrokeſhire, was born at Weſtminſter in 1663. Of his father's condition or fortune I have no account. Having received the firſt part of his education at Weſtminſter, he went to Cambridge, where he continued a friendſhip begun at ſchool with Mr. Montague, afterwards earl of Halifax. They came to London together, and are ſaid to have been

been invited into publick life by the duke of Dorſet.

His qualifications recommended him to many foreign employments, ſo that his time ſeems to have been ſpent in negotiations. In 1692 he was ſent envoy to the elector of Brandenburgh; in 1693 to the Imperial Court; in 1694 to the elector of Saxony; in 1696 to the electors of Mentz and Cologne, and the congreſs at Francfort; in 1698 a ſecond time to Brandenburgh; in 1699 to the king of Poland; in 1701 again to the Emperor; and in 1706 to the States General. In 1697 he was made one of the commiſſioners of trade. His life was buſy, and not long. He died in 1707; and is buried in Weſt-

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

minſter-

minſter-abbey with this epitaph, which *Jacob* tranſcribed.

H. S. E.

GEORGIUS STEPNEIUS, Armiger,

Vir

Ob Ingenii acumen,

Literarum Scientiam,

Morum Suavitatem,

Rerum Uſum,

Virorum Ampliſſimorum Conſuetudinem,

Linguæ Styli ac Vitæ Elegantiam,

Præclara Officia cum Britanniæ tum Europæ

præſtita,

Suæ ætate multum celebratus,

Apud poſteros ſemper celebrandus;

Plurimas Legationes obiit

Ea Fide, Diligentia, ac Felicitate,

Ut Auguſtiſſimorum Principum

Gulielmi & Annæ

Spem

Spem in illo repoſitam
Nunquam fefellerit,
Haud raro ſuperavit.
Poſt longum honorum Curſum
Brevî Temporis Spatio confectum,
Cum Naturæ parvæ Fama ſatis vixerat,
Animam ad altiora aſpirantem placide effluvit.

On the Left Hand :

G. S.

Ex Equeſtri Familia Stepneiorum,
De Pendegraſt, in Comitatu
Pembrochienſi oriundus,
Weſtmonaſterii natus eſt, A. D. 1663.
Electus in Collegium
Sancti Petri Weſtmonaſt. A. 1676.
Sancti Trinitatis Cantab. 1682.
Conſiliariorum quibus Commercii
Cura commiſſa eſt 1697.

Chel.

Chelſeiæ mortuus, & comitante
Magna Procerum
Frequentia huc elatus, 1707.

It is reported that the juvenile compoſitions of Stepney *made grey authors bluſh*. I know not whether his poems will appear ſuch wonders to the preſent age. One cannot always eaſily find the reaſon for which the world has ſometimes conſpired to ſquander praiſe. It is not very unlikely that he wrote very early as well as he ever wrote; and the performances of youth have many favourers, becauſe the authors yet lay no claim to publick honours, and are therefore not conſidered as rivals by the diſtributors of fame.

He

He apparently profeſſed himſelf a poet, and added his name to thoſe of the other wits in the verſion of Juvenal; but he is a very licentious tranſlator, and does not recompenſe his neglect of the author by beauties of his own. In his original poems, now and then, a happy line may perhaps be found, and now and then a ſhort compoſition may give pleaſure. But there is in the whole little either of the grace of wit, or the vigour of nature.

WALSH.

WILLIAM WALSH, the ſon of Joſeph Walſh, Eſq; of Abberley in Worceſterſhire, was born in 1663, as appears from the account of Wood; who relates, that at the age of fifteen he became, in 1678, a gentleman commoner of Wadham college.

He left the univerſity without a degree, and purſued his ſtudies in London and at home; that he ſtudied, in whatever place, is apparent from the effect; for

for he became, in Mr. Dryden's opinion, *the beſt critick in the nation.*

He was not, however, merely a critick or a ſcholar. He was likewiſe a member of parliament and a courtier, knight of the ſhire for his native county in ſeveral parliaments; in another the repreſentative of Richmond in Yorkſhire, and gentleman of the horſe to Queen Anne under the duke of Somerſet.

Some of his verſes ſhew him to have been a zealous friend to the Revolution; but his political ardour did not abate his reverence or kindneſs for Dryden, to whom he gave a Diſſertation on Virgil's Paſtorals, in which, however ſtudied, he diſcovers ſome ignorance of the laws of French verſification.

In

In 1705, he began to correſpond with Mr. Pope, in whom he diſcovered very early the power of poetry. Their letters are written upon the paſtoral comedy of the Italians, and thoſe paſtorals which Pope was then preparing to publiſh.

The kindneſſes which are firſt experienced are ſeldom forgotten. Pope always retained a grateful memory of Walſh's notice, and mentioned him in one of his latter pieces among thoſe that had encouraged his juvenile ſtudies:

——Granville the polite,
And knowing Walſh, would tell me I could write.

In his Eſſay on Criticiſm he had given him more ſplendid praiſe, and, in the opi-

opinion of his learned commentator, ſacrificed a little of his judgement to his gratitude.

The time of his death I have not learned. It muſt have happened between 1707, when he wrote to Pope, and 1711, when Pope praiſed him in the Eſſay. The epitaph makes him forty-ſix years old: if Wood's account be right, he died in 1709.

He is known more by his familiarity with greater men, than by any thing done or written by himſelf.

His works are not numerous. In proſe he wrote *Eugenia, a defence of women*; which Dryden honoured with a Preface.

Eſculapius, or the Hoſpital of Fools, publiſhed after his death.

A Col-

A Collection of Letters and Poems, amorous and gallant, was publiſhed in the volumes called Dryden's Miſcellany, and ſome other occaſional pieces.

To his Poems and Letters is prefixed a very judicious preface upon Epiſtolary Compoſition and Amorous Poetry.

In his *Golden Age reſtored,* there was ſomething of humour, when the facts were recent; but it now ſtrikes no longer. In his imitation of Horace, the firſt ſtanzas are happily turned; and in all his writings there are pleaſing paſſages. He has however more elegance than vigour, and ſeldom riſes higher than to be pretty.

GARTH.

SAMUEL GARTH was of a good family in Yorkſhire, and from ſome ſchool in his own country became a ſtudent at Peter-houſe in Cambridge, where he reſided till he commenced doctor of phyſick on July the 7th, 1691. He was examined before the College at London on March the 12th, 1691-2, and admitted fellow July 26th, 1692. He was ſoon ſo much diſtinguiſhed, by his converſation and accompliſhments, as to obtain very extenſive practice;

and, if a pamphlet of thoſe times may be credited, had the favour and confidence of one party, as Ratcliffe had of the other.

He is always mentioned as a man of benevolence; and it is juſt to ſuppoſe that his deſire of helping the helpleſs, diſpoſed him to ſo much zeal for the *Diſpenſary*; an undertaking of which ſome account, however ſhort, is proper to be given.

Whether what Temple ſays be true, that phyſicians have had more learning than the other faculties, I will not ſtay to enquire; but, I believe, every man has found in phyſicians great liberality, and dignity of ſentiment, very prompt effuſion of beneficence, and willingneſs

to

to exert a lucrative art, where there is no hope of lucre. Agreeably to this character, the College of Phyſicians, in July 1687, publiſhed an edict, requiring all the fellows, candidates, and licentiates, to give gratuitous advice to the neighbouring poor.

This edict was ſent to the Court of Aldermen; and a queſtion being made to whom the appellation of the *poor* ſhould be extended, the College anſwered, that it ſhould be ſufficient to bring a teſtimonial from a clergyman officiating in the pariſh where the patient reſided.

After a year's experience, the phyſicians found their charity fruſtrated by ſome malignant oppoſition, and made

to a great degree vain by the high price of phyſick; they therefore voted, in Auguſt 1688, that the laboratory of the College ſhould be accommodated to the preparation of medicines, and another room prepared for their reception; and that the contributers to the expence ſhould manage the charity.

It was now expected that the Apothecaries would have undertaken the care of providing medicines; but they took another courſe. Thinking the whole deſign pernicious to their intereſt, they endeavoured to raiſe a faction againſt it in the College, and found ſome phyſicians mean enough to ſolicit their patronage, by betraying to them

them the counſels of the College. The greater part, however, enforced by a new edict in 1694, the former order of 1687, and ſent it to the mayor and aldermen, who appointed a committee to treat with the College, and ſettle the mode of adminiſtring the Charity.

It was deſired by the aldermen, that the teſtimonials of churchwardens and overſeers ſhould be admitted; and that all hired ſervants, and all appren tices to handicraftſmen, ſhould be conſidered as *poor*. This likewiſe was granted by the College.

It was then conſidered who ſhould diſtribute the medicines, and who ſhould ſettle their prices. The phyſicians pro-

cured ſome apothecaries to undertake the diſpenſation, and offered that the warden and company of the apothecaries ſhould adjuſt the price. This offer was rejected; and the apothecaries who had engaged to aſſiſt the charity were conſidered as traytors to the company, threatened with the impoſition of troubleſome offices, and deterred from the performance of their engagements. The apothecaries ventured upon publick oppoſition, and preſented a kind of remonſtrance againſt the deſign to the committee of the city, which the phyſicians condeſcended to confute: and at laſt the traders ſeem to have prevailed among the ſons of trade; for the propoſal of the college having

been considered, a paper of approbation was drawn up, but postponed and forgotten.

The physicians still persisted; and in 1696 a subscription was raised by themselves, according to an agreement prefixed to the Dispensary. The poor were for a time supplied with medicines; for how long a time, I know not. The medicinal charity, like others, began with ardour, but soon remitted, and at last died gradually away.

About the time of the subscription begins the action of the *Dispensary*. The poem, as its subject was present and popular, co-operated with passions and prejudices then prevalent,

and with ſuch auxiliaries to its intrinſick merit, was univerſally and liberally applauded. It was on the ſide of charity againſt the intrigues of intereſt, and of regular learning againſt licentious uſurpation of medical authority, and was therefore naturally favoured by thoſe who read and can judge of poetry.

In 1697, Garth ſpoke that which is now called the *Harveian* Oration; which the authors of the Biographia mention with more praiſe than the paſſage quoted in their notes will fully juſtify. Garth, ſpeaking of the miſchiefs done by quacks, has theſe expreſſions: "Non tamen telis vulnerat iſta agyrta-"rum colluvies, ſed theriacâ quadam "magis

"magis perniciosa, non pyrio, sed pul-
"vere nescio quo exotico certat, non
"globulis plumbeis, sed pilulis æque
"lethalibus interficit." This was certainly thought fine by the author, and is still admired by his biographer. In October 1702 he became one of the censors of the College.

Garth, being an active and zealous Whig, was a member of the Kit-cat club, and by consequence familiarly known to all the great men of that denomination. In 1710, when the government fell into other hands, he writ to lord Godolphin, on his dismission, a short poem, which was criticised in the *Examiner*, and so successfully either defended or excused by Mr. Addison, that,

for the ſake of the vindication, it ought to be preſerved.

At the acceſſion of the preſent Family his merits were acknowledged and rewarded. He was knighted with the ſword of his hero, Marlborough; and was made phyſician in ordinary to the king, and phyſician-general to the army.

He then undertook an edition of Ovid's Metamorphoſes, tranſlated by ſeveral hands; which he recommended by a Preface, written with more oſtentation than ability: his notions are half-formed, and his materials immethodically confuſed. This was his laſt work. He died Jan. 18, 1717-18, and was buried at Harrow-on-the-Hill.

His

His perſonal character ſeems to have been ſocial and liberal. He communicated himſelf through a very wide extent of acquaintance; and though firm in a party, at a time when firmneſs included virulence, yet he imparted his kindneſs to thoſe who were not ſuppoſed to favour his principles. He was an early encourager of Pope, and was at once the friend of Addiſon and of Granville. He is accuſed of voluptuouſneſs and irreligion; and Pope, who ſays that "if ever there was a good "Chriſtian, without knowing himſelf "to be ſo, it was Dr. Garth," ſeems not able to deny what he is angry to hear and loth to confeſs.

His

His poetry has been praiſed at leaſt equally to its merit. In the *Diſpenſary* there is a ſtrain of ſmooth and free verſification; but few lines are eminently elegant. No paſſages fall below mediocrity, and few riſe much above it. The plan ſeems formed without juſt proportion to the ſubject; the means and end have no neceſſary connection. *Reſnel*, in his Preface to *Pope's* Eſſay, remarks, that Garth exhibits no diſcrimination of characters; and that what any one ſays might with equal propriety have been ſaid by another. The general deſign is perhaps open to criticiſm; but the compoſition can ſeldom be charged with inaccuracy or negligence. The author never ſlumbers in ſelf-

indulgence;

indulgence; his full vigour is always exerted; ſcarce a line is left unfiniſhed, nor is it eaſy to find an expreſſion uſed by conſtraint, or a thought imperfectly expreſſed. It was remarked by Pope, that the *Diſpenſary* had been corrected in every edition, and that every change was an improvement. It appears, however, to want ſomething of poetical ardour, and ſomething of general delectation; and therefore, ſince it has been no longer ſupported by accidental and extrinſick popularity, it has been ſcarcely able to ſupport itſelf.

K I N G.

WILLIAM KING was born in London in 1663 the ſon of Ezekiel King, a gentleman. He was allied to the family of Clarendon.

From Weſtminſter-ſchool, where he was a ſcholar on the foundation under the care of Dr. Buſby, he was at eighteen elected to Chriſt-church, in 1681; where he is ſaid to have proſecuted his ſtudies with ſo much intenſeneſs and activity, that, before he was eight years ſtanding, he had read over, and made

remarks upon, twenty-two thouſand odd hundred books and manuſcripts. The books were certainly not very long, the manuſcripts not very difficult, nor the remarks very large; for the calculator will find that he diſpatched ſeven a-day, for every day of his eight years, with a remnant that more than ſatisfies moſt other ſtudents. He took his degree in the moſt expenſive manner, as a *grand compounder*; whence it is inferred that he inherited a conſiderable fortune.

In 1688, the ſame year in which he was made maſter of arts, he publiſhed a confutation of Varillas's account of Wicliffe; and, engaging in the ſtudy of the Civil Law, became doctor in

1692,

1692, and was admitted advocate at Doctors Commons.

He had already made ſome tranſlations from the French, and written ſome humorous and ſatirical pieces; when, in 1694, Moleſworth publiſhed his *Account of Denmark*, in which he treats the Danes and their monarch with great contempt; and takes the opportunity of inſinuating thoſe wild principles, by which he ſuppoſes liberty to be eſtabliſhed, and his adverſaries ſuſpect that all ſubordination and government is endangered.

This book offended prince George; and the Daniſh miniſter preſented a memorial againſt it. The principles of its author did not pleaſe Dr. King, and

therefore he undertook to confute part, and laugh at the reſt. The controverſy is now forgotten; and books of this kind ſeldom live long, when intereſt and reſentment have ceaſed.

In 1697 he mingled in the controverſy between Boyle and Bentley; and was one of thoſe who tried what Wit could perform in oppoſition to Learning.

In 1699 was publiſhed by him *a Journey to London*, after the method of Dr. *Martin Liſter*. And in 1700 he ſatiriſed the Royal Society, at leaſt Sir *Hans Sloane* their preſident, in two dialogues, intituled *The Tranſactioneer*.

Though he was a regular advocate in the courts of civil and canon law,

he did not love his profeſſion, nor indeed any kind of buſineſs which interrupted his voluptuary dreams, or forced him to rouſe from that indulgence in which only he could find delight. His reputation as a civilian was yet maintained by his judgements in the courts of Delegates, and raiſed very high by the addreſs and knowledge which he diſcovered in 1700, when he defended the earl of Angleſea againſt his lady, afterwards dutcheſs of Buckinghamſhire, who ſued for a divorce, and obtained it.

The expence of his pleaſures, and neglect of buſineſs, had now leſſened his revenues; and he was willing to accept of a ſettlement in Ireland, where,

about 1702, he was made judge of the admiralty, commiſſioner of the prizes, keeper of the records in Birmingham's tower, and vicar-general to Dr. Marſh the primate.

But it is vain to put wealth within the reach of him who will not ſtretch out his hand to take it. King ſoon found a friend as idle and thoughtleſs as himſelf, in *Upton*, one of the judges, who had a pleaſant houſe called Mountown, near Dublin, to which King frequently retired; delighting to neglect his intereſt, forget his cares, and deſert his duty.

Here he wrote *Mully of Mountown*, a poem, by which, though fanciful readers in the pride of ſagacity have given it a poli-

a political interpretation, was meant originally no more than it expressed, as it was dictated only by the author's delight in the quiet of *Mountown*.

In 1708, when lord Wharton was sent to govern Ireland, King returned to London, with his poverty, his idleness, and his wit; and published some essays called *Useful Transactions*. His *Voyage to the Island of Cajamai* is particularly commended. He then wrote the *Art of Love*, a poem remarkable, notwithstanding its title, for purity of sentiment; and in 1709 imitated Horace in an *Art of Cookery*, which he published, with some letters to Dr. Lister.

In 1710 he appeared, as a lover of the Church, on the side of Sacheverell;

and was ſuppoſed to have concurred at leaſt in the projection of *The Examiner*. His eyes were open to all the operations of Whiggiſm; and he beſtowed ſome ſtrictures upon Dr. Kennet's adulatory ſermon at the funeral of the duke of Devonſhire.

The *Hiſtory of the Heathen Gods*, a book compoſed for ſchools, was written by him in 1711. The work is uſeful; but might have been produced without the powers of King. The ſame year he publiſhed *Rufinus*, an hiſtorical eſſay, and a poem, intended to diſpoſe the nation to think as he thought of the duke of Marlborough and his adherents.

In

In 1711, competence, if not plenty, was again put into his power. He was, without the trouble of attendance, or the mortification of a requeſt, made gazetteer. Swift, Freind, Prior, and other men of the ſame party, brought him the key of the gazetteer's office. He was now again placed in a profitable employment, and again threw the benefit away. An Act of Inſolvency made his buſineſs at that time particularly troubleſome; and he would not wait till hurry ſhould be at an end, but impatiently reſigned it, and returned to his wonted indigence and amuſements.

One of his amuſements at Lambeth, where he reſided, was to mortify Dr. Tenniſon, the archbiſhop, by a publick

feſti-

festivity, on the surrender of Dunkirk to Hill; an event with which Tennison's political bigotry did not suffer him to be delighted. King was resolved to counteract his sullenness, and at the expence of a few barrels of ale filled the neighbourhood with honest merriment.

In the Autumn of 1712 his health declined; he grew weaker by degrees, and died on Christmas-day. Though his life had not been without irregularity, his principles were pure and orthodox, and his death was pious.

After this relation, it will be naturally supposed that his poems were rather the amusements of idleness than efforts of study; that he endeavoured rather to divert than astonish; that his

thoughts

thoughts ſeldom aſpired to ſublimity; and that, if his verſe was eaſy and his images familiar, he attained what he deſired. His purpoſe is to be merry; though perhaps, to enjoy his mirth, it may be ſometimes neceſſary to think well of his opinions.

PHILIPS.

JOHN PHILIPS was born on the 30th of December, 1676, at Bampton in Oxfordſhire; of which place his father Dr. Stephen Philips, archdeacon of Salop, was miniſter. The firſt part of his education was domeſtick, after which he was ſent to Wincheſter, where, as we are told by Dr. Sewel, his biographer, he was ſoon diſtinguiſhed by the ſuperiority of his exerciſes; and, what is leſs eaſily to be credited, ſo much endeared himſelf to his ſchool-

fellows, by his civility and good-nature, that they, without murmur or ill-will, ſaw him indulged by the maſter with particular immunities. It is related, that, when he was at ſchool, he ſeldom mingled in play with the other boys, but retired to his chamber; where his ſovereign pleaſure was to ſit, hour after hour, while his hair was combed by ſomebody, whoſe ſervice he found means to procure.

At ſchool he became acquainted with the poets ancient and modern, and fixed his attention particularly on Milton.

In 1694 he entered himſelf at Chriſt-church; a college at that time in the higheſt reputation, by the tranſmiſſion of Buſby's ſcholars to the care firſt of

Fell,

Fell, and afterwards of *Aldrich*. Here he was diſtinguiſhed as a genius eminent among the eminent, and for a friendſhip particularly intimate with Mr. Smith, the author of *Phædra and Hippolytus*. The profeſſion which he intended to follow was that of phyſick; aud he took much delight in natural hiſtory, of which botany was his favourite part.

His reputation was confined to his friends and to the univerſity; till about 1703 he extended it to a wider circle by the *Splendid Shilling*, which ſtruck the publick attention with a mode of writing new and unexpected.

This performance raiſed him ſo high, that when Europe reſounded with the

victory of Blenheim, he was, probably with an occult oppoſition to Addiſon, employed to deliver the acclamation of the Tories. It is ſaid that he would willingly have declined the taſk, but that his friends urged it upon him. It appears that he wrote this poem at the houſe of St. John.

Blenheim was publiſhed in 1705. The next year produced his greateſt work, the poem upon *Cider*, in two books; which was received with loud praiſes, and continued long to be read as an imitation of Virgil's *Georgick*, which needed not ſhun the preſence of the original.

He then grew probably more confident of his own abilities, and began to meditate a poem on the *Laſt Day*; a ſub-

ſubject on which no mind can hope to equal expectation.

This work he did not live to finiſh: his diſeaſes, a ſlow conſumption and an aſthma, put a ſtop to his ſtudies; and on Feb. 15, 1708, at the beginning of his thirty-third year, put an end to his life. He was buried in the cathedral of Hereford; and Sir *Simon Harcourt*, afterwards Lord Chancellor, gave him a monument in Weſtminſter Abbey. The inſcription at Weſtminſter was written, as I have heard, by Dr. *Atterbury*, though commonly given to Dr. *Freind*:

His Epitaph at Hereford :

JOHANNES PHILIPS

Obiit 15 die Feb. Anno { Dom. 1708. / Ætat. ſuæ 32.

Cujus

Oſſa ſi requiras, hanc Urnam inſpice,

Si Ingenium neſcias, ipſius Opera conſule ;

Si Tumulum deſideras,

Templum adi *Weſtmonaſterienſe :*

Qualis quantuſque Vir fuerit,

Dicat elegans illa & præclara,

Quæ cenotaphium ibi decorat

Inſcriptio.

Quàm interim erga Cognatos pius & officioſus,

Teſtetur hoc ſaxum

A MARIA PHILIPS Matre ipſius pientiſſimâ,

Dilecti Filii Memoriæ non ſine Lacrymis dicatum.

His

His Epitaph at Weſtminſter :

Herefordiæ conduntur Oſſa,
Hoc in Delubro ſtatuitur Imago,
Britanniam omnem pervagatur Fama
JOHANNIS PHILIPS:
Qui Viris bonis doctiſque juxta charus,
Immortale ſuum Ingenium,
Eruditione multiplici excultum,
Miro animi candore,
Eximiâ morum ſimplicitate,
Honeſtavit.
Litterarum Amœniorum ſitim,
Quam Wintoniæ Puer ſentire cœperat,
Inter Ædis Chriſti Alumnos jugiter explevit,
In illo Muſarum Domicilio
Præclaris Æmulorum ſtudiis excitatus,
Optimis ſcribendi Magiſtris ſemper intentus,
Carmina ſermone Patrio compoſuit

A Græcis Latiniſque fontibus feliciter deducta,
Atticis Romaniſque auribus omnino digna,
Verſuum quippe Harmoniam
Rythmo didicerat.
Antiquo illo, libero, multiformi
Ad res ipſas apto prorſus, & attemperato,
Non Numeris in eundem ferè orbem redeuntibus,
Non Clauſularum ſimiliter cadentium ſono
Metiri:
Uni in hoc laudis genere Miltono ſecundus,
Primoque pœne Par.
Res ſeu Tenues, ſeu Grandes, ſeu Mediocres
Ornandas ſumſerat,
Nuſquam, non quod decuit,
Et videt, & aſſecutus eſt,
Egregius, quocunque Stylum verteret,
Fandi author, & Modorum artifex.
Fas ſit Huic,
Auſo licèt à tuâ Metrorum Lege diſcedere

O Poeſis

O Poesis Anglicanæ Pater, atque Conditor Chaucer,
Alterum tibi latus claudere,
Vatum certe Cineres, tuos undique stipantium
Non dedecebit Chorum.
SIMON HARCOURT Miles,
Viri benè de se, de quo Litteris meriti
Quoad viveret, Fautor,
Post Obitum piè memor,
Hoc illi Saxum poni voluit.

J. PHILIPS, STEPHANI, S. T. P. Archidiaconi
Salop, Filius, natus est Bamptoniæ
in agro Oxon. Dec. 30, 1676.
Obiit Herefordiæ, Feb. 15, 1708.

Philips has been always praiſed, without contradiction, as a man modeſt, blameleſs, and pious; who bore a narrow fortune without diſcontent, and tedious and painful maladies without impatience; beloved by thoſe that knew him, but not ambitious to be known. He was probably not formed for a wide circle. His converſation is commended for its innocent gaiety, which ſeems to have flowed only among his intimates; for I have been told, that he was in company ſilent and barren, and employed only upon the pleaſures of his pipe. His addiction to tobacco is mentioned by one of his biographers, who remarks that in all his writings, except *Blenheim*, he has found an opportunity

cele-

celebrating the fragrant fume. In common life he was probably one of thoſe who pleaſe by not offending, and whoſe perſon was loved becauſe his writings were admired. He died honoured and lamented, before any part of his reputation had withered, and before his patron St. John had diſgraced him.

His works are few. The *Splendid Shilling* has the uncommon merit of an original deſign, unleſs it may be thought precluded by the ancient *Centos*. To degrade the ſounding words and ſtately conſtruction of Milton, by an application to the loweſt and moſt trivial th ngs, gratifies the mind with a momentary triumph over that grandeur which hitherto held its captives in ad-

miration; the words and things are presented with a new appearance, and novelty is always grateful where it gives no pain.

But the merit of ſuch performances begins and ends with the firſt author. He that ſhould again adapt Milton's phraſe to the groſs incidents of common life, and even adapt it with more art, which would not be difficult, muſt yet expect but a ſmall part of the praiſe which Philips has obtained; he can only hope to be conſidered as the repeater of a jeſt.

"The parody on Milton," ſays Gildon, "is the only tolerable produc-"tion of its author." This is a cenſure too dogmatical and violent. The

poem of *Blenheim* was never denied to be tolerable, even by thoſe who do not allow it ſupreme excellence. It is indeed the poem of a ſcholar, *all inexpert of war*; of a man who writes books from books, and ſtudies the world in a college. He ſeems to have formed his ideas of the field of *Blenheim* from the battles of the heroick ages, or the tales of chivalry, with very little comprehenſion of the qualities neceſſary to the compoſition of a modern hero, which Addiſon has diſplayed with ſo much propriety. He makes *Marlborough* behold at diſtance the ſlaughter made by *Tallard*, then haſte to encounter and reſtrain him, and mow his way through ranks made headleſs by his ſword.

He

He imitates Milton's numbers indeed, but imitates them very injudiciouſly. Deformity is eaſily copied; and whatever there is in Milton which the reader wiſhes away, all that is obſolete, peculiar, or licentious, is accumulated with great care by Philips. Milton's verſe was harmonious, in proportion to the general ſtate of our metre in Milton's age; and, if he had written after the improvements made by Dryden, it is reaſonable to believe that he would have admitted a more pleaſing modulation of numbers into his work; but Philips ſits down with a reſolution to make no more muſick than he found; to want all that his maſter wanted, though he is very far from having what his maſter

had.

had. Thoſe aſperities, therefore, that are venerable in the *Paradiſe Loſt* are contemptible in the *Blenheim*.

There is a Latin ode written to his patron St. John, in return for a preſent of wine and tobacco, which cannot be paſſed without notice. It is gay, and elegant, and exhibits ſeveral artful accommodations of claſſick expreſſions to new purpoſes. It ſeems better turned than the odes of *Hannes* *.

* This ode I am willing to mention, becauſe there ſeems to be an error in all the printed copies, which is, I find, retained in this. They all read;

Quam Gratiarum cura decentium
O! O! labellis cui Venus inſidet.

The author probably wrote,

Quam Gratiarum cura decentium
Ornat; labellis cui Venus inſidet.

To

To the poem on *Cider*, written in imitation of the *Georgicks*, may be given this peculiar praiſe, that it is grounded in truth; that the precepts which it contains are exact and juſt; and that it is therefore, at once, a book of entertainment and of ſcience. This I was told by Miller, the great gardener and botaniſt, whoſe expreſſion was, that *there were many books written on the ſame ſubject in proſe, which do not contain ſo much truth as that poem.*

In the diſpoſition of his matter, ſo as to interſperſe precepts relating to the culture of trees, with ſentiments more generally pleaſing, and in eaſy and graceful tranſitions from one ſubject to another,

ther, he has very diligently imitated his maſter; but he unhappily pleaſed himſelf with blank verſe, and ſuppoſed that the numbers of Milton, which impreſs the mind with veneration, combined as they are with ſubjects of inconceivable grandeur, could be ſuſtained by images which at moſt can riſe only to elegance. Contending angels may ſhake the regions of heaven in blank verſe; but the flow of equal meaſures, and the embelliſhment of rhyme, muſt recommend to our attention the art of engrafting, and decide the merit of the *redſtreak* and *pearmain*.

What ſtudy could confer, Philips had obtained; but natural deficience can-

not be ſupplied. He ſeems not born to greatneſs and elevation. He is never lofty, nor does he often ſurpriſe with unexpected excellence; but perhaps to his laſt poem may be applied what Tully ſaid of the work of Lucretius, that *it is written with much art, though with few blazes of genius.*

The

The following Fragment, written by Edmund Smith, upon the works of Philips, has been tranſcribed from the Bodleian manuſcripts.

" A prefatory Diſcourſe to the Poem on Mr. Philips, with a character of his writings.

" IT is altogether as equitable ſome account ſhould be given of thoſe who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their writings, as of thoſe who are renowned for great actions. It is but reaſonable they, who contribute ſo much to the immortality of others, ſhould have ſome ſhare in it themſelves; and ſince their genius only is diſcovered by their works, it is juſt that their virtues ſhould be re-

corded by their friends. For no modeſt men (as the perſon I write of was in perfection) will write their own panegyricks; and it is very hard that they ſhould go without reputation, only becauſe they the more deſerve it. The end of writing Lives is for the imitation of the readers. It will be in the power of very few to imitate the duke of Marlborough; we muſt be content with admiring his great qualities and actions, without hopes of following them. The private and ſocial virtues are more eaſily tranſcribed. The Life of Cowley is more inſtructive, as well as more fine, than any we have in our language. And it is to be wiſhed, ſince Mr. Philips had ſo many of the good qualities of that poet, that I

had

had ſome of the abilities of his hiſtorian.

The Grecian philoſophers have had their Lives written, their morals commended, and their ſayings recorded. Mr. Philips had all the virtues to which moſt of them only pretended, and all their integrity without any of their affectation.

The French are very juſt to eminent men in this point; not a learned man nor a poet can die, but all Europe muſt be acquainted with his accompliſhments. They give praiſe and expect it in their turns: they commend their Patru's and Moliere's as well as their Conde's and Turenne's; their Pelliſons and Racines have their elogies as well as the prince

whom they celebrate; and their poems, their mercuries, and orations, nay their very gazettes, are filled with the praiſes of the learned.

I am ſatisfied, had they a Philips among them, and known how to value him; had they had one of his learning, his temper, but above all of that particular turn of humour, that altogether new genius, he had been an example to their poets, and a ſubject of their panegyricks, and perhaps ſet in competition with the ancients, to whom only he ought to ſubmit.

I ſhall therefore endeavour to do juſtice to his memory, ſince nobody elſe undertakes it. And indeed I can aſſign no cauſe why ſo many of his acquain-

tance

tance (that are as willing and more able than myſelf to give an account of him), ſhould forbear to celebrate the memory of one ſo dear to them, but only that they look upon it as a work entirely belonging to me.

I ſhall content myſelf with giving only a character of the perſon and his writings, without meddling with the tranſactions of his life, which was altogether private: I ſhall only make this known obſervation of his family, that there was ſcarce ſo many extraordinary men in any one. I have been acquainted with five of his brothers (of which three are ſtill living), all men of fine parts, yet all of a very unlike temper and genius. So that their fruitful mother, like

the mother of the gods, ſeems to have produced a numerous offſpring, all of different though uncommon faculties. Of the living, neither their modeſty nor the humour of the preſent age permits me to ſpeak: of the dead, I may ſay ſomething.

One of them had made the greateſt progreſs in the ſtudy of the law of nature and nations of any one I know. He had perfectly maſtered, and even improved, the notions of Grotius, and the more refined ones of Puffendorf. He could refute Hobbes with as much ſolidity as ſome of greater name, and expoſe him with as much wit as Echard. That noble ſtudy, which requires the greateſt reach of reaſon and nicety of diſtinction,

was

was not at all difficult to him. 'Twas a national loſs to be deprived of one who underſtood a ſcience ſo neceſſary, and yet ſo unknown in England. I ſhall add only, he had the ſame honeſty and ſincerity as the perſon I write of, but more heat: the former was more inclined to argue, the latter to divert: one employed his reaſon more; the other his imagination: the former had been well qualified for thoſe poſts, which the modeſty of the latter made him refuſe. His other dead brother would have been an ornament to the college of which he was a member. He had a genius either for poetry or oratory; and, though very young, compoſed ſeveral very agreeable pieces. In all probability he would have

wrote

wrote as finely, as his brother did nobly. He might have been the Waller, as the other was the Milton of his time. The one might celebrate Marlborough, the other his beautiful offspring. This had not been ſo fit to deſcribe the actions of heroes as the virtues of private men. In a word, he had been fitter for my place: and while his brother was writing upon the greateſt men that any age ever produced, in a ſtile equal to them, he might have ſerved as a panegyriſt on him.

This is all I think neceſſary to ſay of his family. I ſhall proceed to himſelf and his writings; which I ſhall firſt treat of, becauſe I know they are cenſured

by ſome out of envy, and more out of ignorance.

The *Splendid Shilling*, which is far the leaſt conſiderable, has the more general reputation, and perhaps hinders the character of the reſt. The ſtile agreed ſo well with the burleſque, that the ignorant thought it could become nothing elſe. Every body is pleaſed with that work. But to judge rightly of the other, requires a perfect maſtery of poetry and criticiſm, a juſt contempt of the little turns and witticiſms now in vogue, and, above all, a perfect underſtanding of poetical diction and deſcription.

All that have any taſte of poetry will agree, that the great burleſque is much to be preferred to the low. It is much

eaſier

eaſier to make a great thing appear little, than a little one great: Cotton and others of a very low genius have done the former; but Philips, Garth, and Boileau only the latter.

A picture in miniature is every painter's talent; but a piece for a cupola, where all the figures are enlarged, yet proportioned to the eye, requires a maſter's hand.

It muſt ſtill be more acceptable than the low burleſque, becauſe the images of the latter are mean and filthy, and the language itſelf entirely unknown to all men of good breeding. The ſtile of Billingſgate would not make a very agreeable figure at St. James's. A gentleman would take but little pleaſure

in

in language, which he would think it hard to be accoſted in, or in reading words which he could not pronounce without bluſhing. The lofty burleſque is the more to be admired, becauſe, to write it, the author muſt be maſter of two of the moſt different talents in nature. A talent to find out and expoſe what is ridiculous, is very different from that which is to raiſe and elevate. We muſt read Virgil and Milton for the one, and Horace and Hudibraſs for the other. We know that the authors of excellent comedies have often failed in the grave ſtile, and the tragedian as often in comedy. Admiration and Laughter are of ſuch oppoſite natures, that they are ſeldom created by the ſame perſon. The

man

man of mirth is always obſerving the follies and weakneſſes, the ſerious writer the virtues or crimes of mankind; one is pleaſed with contemplating a beau, the other a hero. Even from the ſame object they would draw different ideas: Achilles would appear in very different lights to Therſites and Alexander. The one would admire the courage and greatneſs of his ſoul; the other would ridicule the vanity and raſhneſs of his temper. As the ſatyriſt ſays to Hannibal:

—I curre per Alpes,
Ut pueris placeas, & declamatio fias.

The contrariety of ſtile to the ſubject pleaſes the more ſtrongly, becauſe it is more ſurpriſing; the expectation of the

reader

reader is pleaſantly deceived, who expects an humble ſtile from the ſubject, or a great ſubject from the ſtile. It pleaſes the more univerſally becauſe it is agreeable to the taſte both of the grave and the merry; but more particularly ſo to thoſe who have a reliſh of the beſt writers, and the nobleſt ſort of poetry. I ſhall produce only one paſſage out of this poet, which is the misfortune of his Galligaſkins:

My Galligaſkins, which have long withſtood
The winter's fury and encroaching froſts,
By time ſubdued (what will not time ſubdue!)

This

This is admirably pathetical, and ſhews very well the viciſſitude of ſublunary things. The reſt goes on to a prodigious height; and a man in Greenland could hardly have made a more pathetick and terrible complaint. Is it not ſurpriſing that the ſubject ſhould be ſo mean, and the verſe ſo pompous? that the leaſt things in his poetry, as in a microſcope, ſhould grow great and formidable to the eye? eſpecially conſidering that, not underſtanding French, he had no model for his ſtile; that he ſhould have no writer to imitate, and himſelf be inimitable? that he ſhould do all this before he was twenty? at an age, which is uſually pleaſed with a glare of falſe thoughts, little turns,

and

and unnatural fuſtian; at an age, at which Cowley, Dryden, and I had almoſt ſaid Virgil, were inconſiderable. So ſoon was his imagination at its full ſtrength, his judgement ripe, and his humour complete.

This poem was written for his own diverſion, without any deſign of publication. It was communicated but to *me*; but ſoon ſpread, and fell into the hands of pirates. It was put out, vilely mangled, by Ben. Bragge; *and impudently ſaid to be corrected by the author*. This grievance is now grown more epidemical; and no man now has a right to his own thoughts, or a title to his own writings. Xenophon anſwered the Perſian, who demanded his arms, "We

" have nothing now left but our arms " and our valour; if we ſurrender the " one, how ſhall we make uſe of the " other?" Poets have nothing but their wits and their writings; and if they are plundered of the latter, I don't ſee what good the former can do them. To pirate, and publickly own it, to prefix their names to the works they ſteal, to own and avow the theft, I believe, was never yet heard of but in England. It will ſound oddly to poſterity, that, in a polite nation, in an enlightened age, under the direction of the moſt wiſe, moſt learned, and moſt generous encouragers of knowledge in the world, the property of a mechanick ſhould be better ſecured than that of a ſcholar; that the

pooreſt manual operations ſhould be more valued than the nobleſt products of the brain; that it ſhould be felony to rob a cobler of a pair of ſhoes, and no crime to deprive the beſt author of his whole ſubſiſtence; that nothing ſhould make a man a ſure title to his own writings but the ſtupidity of them: that the works of Dryden ſhould meet with leſs encouragement than thoſe of his own Flecnoe, or Blackmore; that Tillotſon and St. George, Tom Thumb and Temple, ſhould be ſet on an equal foot. This is the reaſon why this very paper has been ſo long delayed; and while the moſt impudent and ſcandalous libels are publickly vended by the pi-

rates, this innocent work is forced to ſteal abroad as if it were a libel.

Our preſent writers are, by theſe wretches, reduced to the ſame condition Virgil was, when the centurion ſeized on his eſtate. But I don't doubt but I can fix upon the Mæcenas of the preſent age, that will retrieve them from it. But, whatever effect this piracy may have upon us, it contributed very much to the advantage of Mr. Philips; it helped him to a reputation, which he neither deſired nor expected, and to the honour of being put upon a work of which he did not think himſelf capable; but the event ſhewed his modeſty. And it was reaſonable to hope, that he, who

could

could raiſe mean ſubjects ſo high, ſhould ſtill be more elevated on greater themes; that he, that could draw ſuch noble ideas from a ſhilling, could not fail upon ſuch a ſubject as the duke of Marlborough, *which is capable of heightening even the moſt low and trifling genius*. And, indeed, moſt of the great works which have been produced in the world, have been owing leſs to the poet than the patron. Men of the greateſt genius are ſometimes lazy, and want a ſpur; often modeſt, and dare not venture in publick: they certainly know their faults in the worſt things; and even their beſt things they are not fond of, becauſe the idea of what they ought to

be is far above what they are. This induced me to believe that Virgil desired his work might be burnt, had not the same Augustus that desired him to write them, preserved them from destruction. A scribling beau may imagine a Poet *may* be induced to write, by the very pleasure he finds in writing; but that is seldom, when people are necessitated to it. I have known men row, and use very hard labour, for diversion, which, if they had been tied to, they would have thought themselves very unhappy.

But to return to *Blenheim*, that work so much admired by some, and censured by others. I have often wished he had

wrote

wrote it in Latin, that he might be out of the reach of the empty criticks, who would have as little underſtood his meaning in that language, as they do his beauties in his own.

Falſe criticks have been the plague of all ages; Milton himſelf, in a very polite court, has been compared to the rumbling of a wheel-barrow; he had been on the wrong ſide, and therefore could not be a good poet. *And this, perhaps, may be Mr. Philips's caſe.*

But I take generally the ignorance of his readers to be the occaſion of their diſlike. People that have formed their taſte upon the French writers, can have no reliſh for Philips: they admire points

and

and turns, and conſequently have no judgement of what is great and majeſtick: he muſt look little in their eyes, when he ſoars ſo high as to be almoſt out of their view. I cannot therefore allow any admirer of the French to be a judge of Blenheim, nor any who takes Bouhours for a compleat critick. He generally judges of the ancients by the moderns, and not the moderns by the ancients; he takes thoſe paſſages of their own authors to be really ſublime which come the neareſt to it; he often calls that a noble and great thought which is only a pretty and a fine one, and has more inſtances of the ſublime

out

out of Ovid de Triſtibus, than he has out of all Virgil.

I ſhall allow, therefore, only thoſe to be judges of Philips, who make the antients, and particularly Virgil, their ſtandard.

But, before I enter on this ſubject, I ſhall conſider what is particular in the ſtyle of Philips, and examine what ought to be the ſtyle of heroick poetry, and next, enquire how far he is come up to that ſtyle.

His ſtyle is particular; becauſe he lays aſide rhyme, and writes in blank verſe, and uſes old words, and frequently poſtpones the adjective to the ſubſtantive, and the ſubſtantive to the verb;

verb; and leaves out little particles, *a*, and *the*; *her*, and *his*; and uſes frequent appoſitions. Now let us examine, whether theſe alterations of ſtyle be conformable to the true ſublime.

* * * * *

SMITH.

EDMUND SMITH is one of thoſe lucky writers who have, without much labour, attained high reputation, and who are mentioned with reverence rather for the poſſeſſion than the exertion of uncommon abilities.

Of his life little is known; and that little claims no praiſe but what can be given to intellectual excellence, ſeldom employed to any virtuous purpoſe. His character, as given by Mr. Oldiſworth, with all the partiality of friendſhip,

which is ſaid by Dr. Burton to ſhow *what fine things one man of parts can ſay of another*; and which, however, compriſes great part of what can be known of Mr. Smith, it is better to tranſcribe at once, than to take by pieces. I ſhall ſubjoin ſuch little memorials as accident has enabled me to collect.

Mr. EDMUND SMITH was the only ſon of an eminent merchant, one Mr. Neale, by a daughter of the famous baron Lechmere. Some misfortunes of his father, which were ſoon after followed by his death, were the occaſion of the ſon's being left very

very young in the hands of a near relation (one who married Mr. Neale's ſiſter) whoſe name was Smith.

This gentleman and his lady treated him as their own child, and put him to Weſtminſter-ſchool under the care of Dr. Buſby; whence after the loſs of his faithful and generous guardian (whoſe name he aſſumed and retained) he was removed to Chriſt-church in Oxford, and there by his aunt handſomely maintained till her death; after which he continued a member of that learned and ingenious ſociety, till within five years of his own; though ſome time before his leaving Chriſt-church, he was ſent for by his mother to Worceſter, and owned and acknowledged as her

legitimate ſon; which had not been mentioned, but to wipe off the aſperſions that were ignorantly caſt by ſome on his birth. It is to be remembered for our author's honour, that, when at Weſtminſter election he ſtood a candidate for one of the univerſities, he ſo ſignally diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his conſpicuous performances, that there aroſe no ſmall contention between the repreſentative electors of Trinity-college in Cambridge and Chriſt-church in Oxon, which of thoſe two royal ſocieties ſhould adopt him as their own. But the electors of Trinity-college having the preference of choice that year, they reſolutely elected him; who yet, being invited at the ſame time to Chriſt-church,

choſe

chose to accept of a studentship there. Mr. Smith's perfections, as well natural as acquired, seem to have been formed upon Horace's plan; who says in his Art of Poetry,

—Ego nec studium sine divite venâ,
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium: alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res, & conjurat amice.

He was endowed by Nature with all those excellent and necessary qualifications which are previous to the accomplishment of a great man. His memory was large and tenacious, yet by a *curious felicity chiefly* susceptible of the finest impressions, it received from the best authors he read, which it always

preſerved in their primitive ſtrength and amiable order.

He had a quickneſs of apprehenſion, and vivacity of underſtanding, which eaſily took in and ſurmounted the moſt ſubtle and knotty parts of mathematicks and metaphyſicks. His wit was prompt and flowing, yet ſolid and piercing; his taſte delicate, his head clear, and his way of expreſſing his thoughts perſpicuous and engaging. I ſhall ſay nothing of his perſon, which yet was ſo well *turned*, that no neglect of himſelf in his dreſs could render it diſagreeable; inſomuch that the fair ſex, who obſerved and eſteemed him, at once commended and reproved him by the name of the *hand-*

ſome ſloven. An eager but generous and noble emulation grew up with him; which (as it were a rational ſort of inſtinct) puſhed him upon ſtriving to excel in every art and ſcience that could make him a credit to his college, and that college the ornament of the moſt learned and polite univerſity; and it was his happineſs to have ſeveral contemporaries and fellow-ſtudents, who exerciſed and excited this virtue in themſelves and others, thereby becoming ſo deſervedly in favour with this age, and ſo good a proof of its nice diſcernment. His judgement, naturally good, ſoon ripened into an exquiſite fineneſs and diſtinguiſhing ſagacity, which as it was active and buſy, ſo it was vigo-

rous and manly, keeping even paces with a rich and ſtrong imagination, always upon the wing, and never tired with aſpiring. Hence it was, that, though he writ as young as Cowley, he had no puerilities; and his earlieſt productions were ſo far from having any thing in them mean and trifling, that, like the junior compoſitions of Mr. Stepney, they may make grey authors bluſh. There are many of his firſt eſſays in oratory, in epigram, elegy, and epique, ſtill handed about the univerſity in manuſcript, which ſhew a maſterly hand; and, though maimed and injured by frequent tranſcribing, make their way into our moſt celebrated miſcellanies, where they ſhine with uncom-

mon luſtre. Beſides thoſe verſes in the Oxford books, which he could not help ſetting his name to, ſeveral of his compoſitions came abroad under other names, which his own ſingular modeſty, and faithful ſilence, ſtrove in vain to conceal. The Encœnia and publick Collections of the Univerſity upon State Subjects were never in ſuch eſteem, either for elegy or congratulation, as when he contributed moſt largely to them; and it was natural for thoſe who knew his peculiar way of writing to turn to his ſhare in the work, as by far the moſt reliſhing part of the entertainment. As his parts were extraordinary, ſo he well knew how to improve them; and not only to poliſh the diamond, but en-

chaſe

chaſe it in the moſt ſolid and durable metal. Though he was an academick the greateſt part of his life, yet he contracted no ſourneſs of temper, no ſpice of pedantry, no itch of diſputation, or obſtinate contention for the old or new philoſophy, no aſſuming way of dictating to others, which are faults (though excuſable) which ſome are inſenſibly led into, who are conſtrained to dwell long within the walls of a private college. His converſation was pleaſant and inſtructive; and what Horace ſaid of Plotius, Varius, and Virgil, might juſtly be applied to him:

Nil ego contulerim jucundo ſanus Amico.

Sat. v. l. 1.

As

As correct a writer as he was in his moſt elaborate pi ces, he read the works of others with candor, and reſerved his greateſt ſeverity for his own compoſitions; being readier to cheriſh and advance, than damp or depreſs a riſing genius, and as patient of being excelled himſelf (if any could excel him) as induſtrious to excel others.

'Twere to be wiſhed he had confined himſelf to a particular profeſſion, who was capable of ſurpaſſing in any; but in this, his want of application was in a great meaſure owing to his want of due encouragement.

He paſſed through the exerciſes of the college and univerſity with unuſual applauſe; and though he often ſuffered

his

his friends to call him off from his retirements, and to lengthen out thoſe jovial avocations, yet his return to his ſtudies was ſo much the more paſſionate, and his intention upon thoſe refined pleaſures of reading and thinking ſo vehement (to which his facetious and unbended intervals bore no proportion) that the habit grew upon him, and the ſeries of meditation and reflection being kept up whole weeks together, he could better ſort his ideas, and take in the ſundry parts of a ſcience at one view, without interruption or confuſion. Some indeed of his acquaintance, who were pleaſed to diſtinguiſh between the wit and the ſcholar, extolled him altogether on the account of the firſt of theſe titles;

but

but others, who knew him better, could not forbear doing him juſtice as a prodigy in both kinds. He had ſignalized himſelf in the ſchools, as a philoſopher and polemick of extenſive knowledge and deep penetration; and went through all the courſes with a wiſe regard to the dignity and importance of each ſcience. I remember him in the Divinity-ſchool reſponding and diſputing with a perſpicuous energy, a ready exactneſs, and commanding force of argument, when Dr. Jane worthily preſided in the chair; whoſe condeſcending and diſintereſted commendation of him, gave him ſuch a reputation as ſilenced the envious malice of his enemies, who durſt not contradict the approbation of ſo profound a

maſter

maſter in theology. None of thoſe ſelf-ſufficient creatures, who have either trifled with philoſophy by attempting to ridicule it, or have encumbered it with novel terms, and burdenſome explanations, underſtood its real weight and purity half ſo well as Mr. Smith. He was too diſcerning to allow of the character of unprofitable, rugged, and abſtruſe, which ſome ſuperficial ſciolifts (ſo very ſmooth and polite as to admit of no impreſſion), either out of an unthinking indolence, or an ill-grounded prejudice, had affixed to this ſort of ſtudies. He knew the thorny terms of philoſophy ſerved well to fence-in the true doctrines of religion; and looked upon ſchool-divinity as upon a rough but well-

well-wrought armour, which might at once adorn and defend the Chriſtian hero, and equip him for the combat.

Mr. Smith had a long and perfect intimacy with all the Greek and Latin Claſſicks; with whom he had carefully compared whatever was worth peruſing in the French, Spaniſh, and Italian (to which languages he was no ſtranger), and in all the celebrated writers of his own country. But then, according to the curious obſervation of the late earl of Shaftſbury, he kept the poet in awe by regular criticiſm, and, as it were, married the two arts for their mutual ſupport and improvement. There was not a tract of credit, upon that ſubject, which he had not diligently examined,

mined, from Ariſtotle down to Hedelin and Boſſû; ſo that, having each rule conſtantly before him, he could carry the art through every poem, and at once point out the graces and deformities. By this means he ſeemed to read with a deſign to correct, as well as imitate.

Being thus prepared, he could not but taſte every little delicacy that was ſet before him; though it was impoſſible for him at the ſame time to be fed and nouriſhed with any thing but what was ſubſtantial and laſting. He conſidered the antients and moderns not as parties or rivals for fame, but as architects upon one and the ſame plan, the Art of Poetry; according to which he judged,

ap-

approved, and blamed, without flattery or detraction. If he did not always commend the compoſitions of others, it was not ill-nature (which was not in his temper), but ſtrict juſtice that would not let him call a few flowers ſet in ranks, a glib meaſure, and ſo many couplets by the name of poetry: he was of Ben Jonſon's opinion, who could not admire,

—Verſes as ſmooth and ſoft as cream,
In which there was neither depth nor ſtream.

And therefore, though his want of complaiſance for ſome mens overbearing vanity made him enemies, yet the better part of mankind were obliged by the freedom of his reflections.

His Bodleian Speech, though taken from a remote and imperfect copy, hath ſhewn the world how great a maſter he was of the Ciceronian eloquence, mixed with the conciſeneſs and force of Demoſthenes, the elegant and moving turns of Pliny, and the acute and wiſe reflections of Tacitus.

Since Temple and Roſcommon, no man underſtood Horace better, eſpecially as to his happy diction, rolling numbers, beautiful imagery, and alternate mixture of the ſoft and the ſublime. This endeared Dr. Hannes's odes to him, the fineſt genius for Latin lyrick ſince the Auguſtan age. His friend Mr. Philips's ode to Mr. St. John (late lord Bolingbroke), after the manner of Horace's

race's Lusory or Amatorian Odes, is certainly a master-piece: but Mr. Smith's Pocockius is of the sublimer kind, though, like Waller's writings upon Oliver Cromwell, it wants not the most delicate and surprising turns peculiar to the person praised. I do not remember to have seen any thing like it in Dr. Bathurst, who had made some attempts this way with applause. He was an excellent judge of humanity; and so good an historian, that in familiar discourse he would talk over the most memorable facts in antiquity, the lives, actions, and characters of celebrated men, with amazing facility and accuracy. As he had thoroughly read and digested Thuanus's works, so he was able to copy after him:

and his talent in this kind was ſo well known and allowed, that he had been ſingled out by ſome great men to write a hiſtory, which it was for their intereſt to have done with the utmoſt art and dexterity. I ſhall not mention for what reaſons this deſign was dropped, tho' they are very much to Mr. Smith's honour. The truth is, and I ſpeak it before living witneſſes, whilſt an agreeable company could fix him upon a ſubject of uſeful literature, nobody ſhone to greater advantage: he ſeemed to be that Memmius whom Lucretius ſpeaks of;

—Quem tu, Dea, tempore in omni
Omnibus ornatum voluiſti excellere rebus.

His

His works are not many, and thoſe ſcattered up and down in Miſcellanies and Collections, being wreſted from him by his friends with great difficulty and reluctance. All of them together make but a ſmall part of that much greater body which lies diſperſed in the poſſeſſion of numerous acquaintance; and cannot perhaps be made entire, without great injuſtice to him, becauſe few of them had his laſt hand, and the tranſcriber was often obliged to take the liberties of a friend. His condolance for the death of Mr. Philips is full of the nobleſt beauties, and hath done juſtice to the aſhes of that ſecond Milton, whoſe writings will laſt as long as the Engliſh language, generoſity, and valour.

For him Mr. Smith had contracted a perfect friendſhip; a paſſion he was moſt ſuſceptible of, and whoſe laws he looked upon as ſacred and inviolable.

Every ſubject that paſſed under his pen had all the life, proportion, and embelliſhments beſtowed on it, which an exquiſite ſkill, a warm imagination, and a cool judgement, could poſſibly beſtow on it. The epique, lyrick, elegiac, every ſort of poetry he touched upon (and he had touched upon a great variety), was raiſed to its proper height, and the differences between each of them obſerved with a judicious accuracy. We ſaw the old rules and new beauties placed in admirable order by each other; and there was a predominant fancy and ſpirit of

his

his own infuſed, ſuperior to what ſome draw off from the ancients, or from poeſies here and there culled out of the moderns, by a painful induſtry and ſervile imitation. His contrivances were adroit and magnificent; his images lively and adequate; his ſentiments charming and majeſtick; his expreſſions natural and bold; his numbers various and ſounding; and that enameled mixture of claſſical wit, which, without redundance and affectation, ſparkled through his writings, and was no leſs pertinent than agreeable.

His *Phædra* is a conſummate tragedy, and the ſucceſs of it was as great as the moſt ſanguine expectations of his friends could promiſe or foreſee. The number

of nights, and the common method of filling the houſe, are not always the ſureſt marks of judging what encouragement a play meets with: but the generoſity of all the perſons of a refined taſte about town was remarkable on this occaſion; and it muſt not be forgotten how zealouſly Mr. Addiſon eſpouſed his intereſt, with all the elegant judgement and diffuſive good-nature for which that accompliſhed gentleman and author is ſo juſtly valued by mankind. But as to *Phædra*, ſhe has certainly made a finer figure under Mr. Smith's conduct, upon the Engliſh ſtage, than either Rome or Athens; and if ſhe excels the Greek and Latin *Phædra*, I need not ſay ſhe ſurpaſſes the French one, tho' embelliſhed with whatever regular

gular beauties and moving ſoftneſs Racine himſelf could give her.

No man had a juſter notion of the difficulty of compoſing than Mr. Smith, and he ſometimes would create greater difficulties than he had reaſon to apprehend. Writing with eaſe, what (as Mr. Wycherley ſpeaks) may be eaſily written, moved his indignation. When he was writing upon a ſubject, he would ſeriouſly conſider what Demoſthenes, Homer, Virgil, or Horace, if alive, would ſay upon that occaſion, which whetted him to exceed himſelf as well as others. Nevertheleſs he could not, or would not, finiſh ſeveral ſubjects he undertook; which may be imputed either to the briſkneſs of his fancy, ſtill

hunt-

hunting after new matter, or to an occaſional indolence, which ſpleen and laſſitude brought upon him, which, of all his foibles, the world was leaſt inclined to forgive. That this was not owing to conceit and vanity, or a fulneſs of himſelf (a frailty which has been imputed to no leſs men than Shakeſpeare and Jonſon), is clear from hence; becauſe he left his works to the entire diſpoſal of his friends, whoſe moſt rigorous cenſures he even courted and ſolicited; ſubmitting to their animadverſions, and the freedom they took with them, with an unreſerved and prudent reſignation.

I have ſeen ſketches and rough draughts of ſome poems he deſigned, ſet out analytically; wherein the fable,

ſtructure, and connexion, the images, incidents, moral, epiſodes, and a great variety of ornaments, were ſo finely laid out, ſo well fitted to the rules of art, and ſquared ſo exactly to the precedents of the antients, that I have often looked on theſe poetical elements with the ſame concern, with which curious men are affected at the ſight of the moſt entertaining remains and ruins of an antique figure or building. Thoſe fragments of the learned, which ſome men have been ſo proud of their pains in collecting, are uſeleſs rarities, without form and without life, when compared with theſe embryo's, which wanted not ſpirit enough to preſerve them; ſo that I cannot help thinking, that, if ſome of

them

them were to come abroad, they would be as highly valued by the poets, as the ſketches of Julio and Titian are by the painters; though there is nothing in them but a few out-lines, as to the deſign and proportion.

It muſt be confeſſed, that Mr. Smith had ſome defects in his conduct, which thoſe are moſt apt to remember who could imitate him in nothing elſe. His freedom with himſelf drew ſeverer acknowledgements from him than all the malice he ever provoked was capable of advancing, and he did not ſcruple to give even his misfortunes the hard name of faults; but if the world had half his good-nature, all the ſhady parts would be entirely ſtruck out of his character.

A man,

A man, who, under poverty, calamities, and diſappointments, could make ſo many friends, and thoſe ſo truly valuable, muſt have juſt and noble ideas of the paſſion of friendſhip, in the ſucceſs of which conſiſted the greateſt, if not the only, happineſs of his life. He knew very well what was due to his birth, though Fortune threw him ſhort of it in every other circumſtance of life. He avoided making any, though perhaps reaſonable, complaints of her diſpenſations, under which he had honour enough to be eaſy, without touching the favours ſhe flung in his way when offered to him at the price of a more durable reputation. He took care to have no dealings with mankind, in

which

which he could not be juſt; and he deſired to be at no other expence in his pretenſions than that of intrinſick merit, which was the only burthen and reproach he ever brought upon his friends. He could ſay, as Horace did of himſelf, what I never yet ſaw tranſlated;

—*Meo ſum pauper in ære.*

At his coming to town, no man was more ſurrounded by all thoſe who really had or pretended to wit, or more courted by the great men, who had then a power and opportunity of encouraging arts and ſciences, and gave proofs of their fondneſs for the name of Patron in many inſtances, which will ever be remembered to their glory. Mr. Smith's

cha-

character grew upon his friends by intimacy, and outwent the ſtrongeſt prepoſſeſſions, which had been conceived in his favour. Whatever quarrel a few ſour creatures, whoſe obſcurity is their happineſs, may poſſibly have to the age; yet amidſt a ſtudied neglect, and total diſuſe of all thoſe ceremonial attendances, faſhionable equipments, and external recommendations, which are thought neceſſary introductions into the *grande monde*, this gentleman was ſo happy as ſtill to pleaſe; and whilſt the rich, the gay, the noble, and honourable, ſaw how much he excelled in wit and learning, they eaſily forgave him all other differences. Hence it was that both his acquaintance and retirements were his

own

own free choice. What Mr. Prior obſerves upon a very great character, was true of him; *that moſt of his faults brought their excuſe with them.*

Thoſe who blamed him moſt underſtood him leaſt; it being the cuſtom of the vulgar to charge an exceſs upon the moſt complaiſant, and to form a character by the morals of a few, who have ſometimes ſpoiled an hour or two in good company. Where only fortune is wanting to make a great name, that ſingle exception can never paſs upon the beſt judges and moſt equitable obſervers of mankind; and when the time comes for the world to ſpare their pity, we may juſtly enlarge our demands upon them for their admiration.

Some few years before his death, he had engaged himſelf in ſeveral conſiderable undertakings; in all which he had prepared the world to expect mighty things from him. I have ſeen about ten ſheets of his *Engliſh Pindar*, which exceeded any thing of that kind I could ever hope for in our own language. He had drawn out the plan of a tragedy of the *Lady Jane Grey*, and had gone through ſeveral ſcenes of it. But he could not well have bequeathed that work to better hands than where, I hear, it is at preſent lodged; and the bare mention of two ſuch names may juſtify the largeſt expectations, and is ſufficient to make the town an agreeable invitation.

His greateſt and nobleſt undertaking was *Longinus*. He had finiſhed an entire tranſlation of the *Sublime*, which he ſent to the reverend Mr. Richard Parker, a friend of his, late of Merton College, an exact critick in the Greek tongue, from whom it came to my hands. The French verſion of Monſieur Boileau, though truly valuable, was far ſhort of it. He propoſed a large addition to this work, of notes and obſervations of his own, with an entire ſyſtem of the Art of Poetry, in three books, under the titles of *Thought*, *Diction*, and *Figure*. I ſaw the laſt of theſe perfect, and in a fair copy, in which he ſhewed prodigious judgement and reading; and particularly had reformed the Art of

Rhe-

Rhetorick, by reducing that vaſt and confuſed heap of terms, with which a long ſucceſſion of pedants had encumbered the world, to a very narrow compaſs, comprehending all that was uſeful and ornamental in poetry. Under each head and chapter, he intended to make remarks upon all the ancients and moderns, the Greek, Latin, Engliſh, French, Spaniſh, and Italian poets, and to note their ſeveral beauties and defects.

What remains of his works is left, as I am informed, in the hands of men of worth and judgement, who loved him. It cannot be ſuppoſed they would ſuppreſs any thing that was his, but out of reſpect to his memory, and

for want of proper hands to finiſh what ſo great a genius had begun.

SUCH is the declamation of Oldiſworth, written while his admiration was yet freſh, and his kindneſs warm; and therefore ſuch as, without any criminal purpoſe of deceiving, ſhews a ſtrong deſire to make the moſt of all favourable truth. I cannot much commend the performance. The praiſe is often indiſtinct, and the ſentences are loaded with words of more pomp than uſe. There is little however that can be contradicted, even when a plainer tale comes to be told.

EDMUND NEAL, known by the name of Smith, was born at Handley, the ſeat of the Lechmeres in Worceſterſhire. The year of his birth is uncertain.

He was educated at Weſtminſter. It is known to have been the practice of Dr. Buſby to detain thoſe youths long at ſchool, of whom he had formed the higheſt expectations. Smith took his Maſter's degree on the 8th of July 1696: he therefore was probably admitted into the univerſity in 1689, when we may ſuppoſe him twenty years old.

His reputation for literature in his college was ſuch as has been told; but the indecency and licentiouſneſs of his behaviour drew upon him, Dec. 24,

1694, while he was yet only Batchelor, a publick admonition, entered upon record, in order to his expulſion. Of this reproof the effect is not known. He was probably leſs notorious. At Oxford, as we all know, much will be forgiven to literary merit; and of that he had given ſufficient evidence by his excellent ode on the death of the great Orientaliſt, Dr. Pocock, who died in 1691, and whoſe praiſe muſt have been written by Smith when he had been yet but two years in the univerſity.

This ode, which cloſed the ſecond volume of the *Muſæ Anglicanæ*, though perhaps ſome objections may be made to its Latinity, is by far the beſt Lyrick compoſition in that collection; nor do I

know

know where to find it equalled among the modern writers. It expreſſes, with great felicity, images not claſſical in claſſical diction: its digreſſions and returns have been deſervedly recommended by Trapp as models for imitation.

He has ſeveral imitations of Cowley:

Veſtitur hinc tot ſermo coloribus
Quot tu, Pococki, diſſimilis tui
Orator effers, quot viciſſim
Te memores celebrare gaudent.

I will not commend the figure which makes the orator *pronounce colours*, or give to *colours memory* and *delight*. I quote it, however, as an imitation of theſe lines;

So many languages he had in ſtore,
That only Fame ſhall ſpeak of him in more.

The ſimile, by which an old man, retaining the fire of his youth, is compared to Ætna flaming through the ſnow, which Smith has uſed with great pomp, is ſtolen from Cowley, however little worth the labour of conveyance.

He proceeded to take his degree of Maſter of Arts July 8, 1696. Of the exerciſes which he performed on that occaſion, I have not heard any thing memorable.

As his years advanced, he advanced in reputation; for he continued to cultivate his mind; but he did not amend his

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

his irregularities, by which he gave ſo much offence, that, April 24, 1700, the Dean and Chapter declared "the "place of Mr. Smith void, he having "been convicted of riotous miſbeha-"viour in the houſe of Mr. Cole an "apothecary; but it was referred to the "Dean when and upon what occaſion "the ſentence ſhould be put in execu-"tion."

Thus tenderly was he treated: the governors of his college could hardly keep him, and yet wiſhed that he would not force them to drive him away.

Some time afterwards he aſſumed an appearance of decency; in his own phraſe, he *whitened* himſelf, having a deſire to obtain the cenſorſhip, an office

of honour and ſome profit in the college; but when the election came, the preference was given to Mr. *Foulkes*, his junior; the ſame, I ſuppoſe, that joined with *Freind* in an edition of part of Demoſthenes; it not being thought proper to truſt the ſuperintendance of others to a man who took ſo little care of himſelf.

From this time Smith employed his malice and his wit againſt the Dean, Dr. Aldrich, whom he conſidered as the opponent of his claim. Of his lampoon upon him, I once heard a ſingle line too groſs to be repeated.

But he was ſtill a genius and a ſcholar, and Oxford was unwilling to loſe him: he was endured, with all his

pranks

pranks and his vices, two years longer; but on Dec. 20, 1705, at the inſtance of all the canons, the ſentence declared five years before was put in execution.

The execution was, I believe, ſilent and tender; for one of his friends, from whom I learned much of his life, appeared not to know it.

He was now driven to London, where he aſſociated himſelf with the Whigs, whether becauſe they were in power, or becauſe the Tories had expelled him, or becauſe he was a Whig by principle, may perhaps be doubted. He was however careſſed by men of great abilities, whatever were their party, and was ſupported by the liberality of thoſe who delighted in his converſation.

There

There was once a design hinted at by Oldisworth to have made him useful. One evening, as he was sitting with a friend at a tavern, he was called down by the waiter; and, having staid some time below, came up thoughtful. After a pause, said he to his friend, "He "that wanted me below was Addison, "whose business was to tell me that a "History of the Revolution was in-"tended, and to propose that I should "undertake it. I said, what shall I do "with the character of lord Sunder-"land? and Addison immediately re-"turned, When, Rag, were you drunk "last? and went away."

Captain *Rag* was a name which he got at Oxford by his negligence of dress.

This

This ſtory I heard from the late Mr. Clark of Lincoln's Inn, to whom it was told by the friend of Smith.

Such ſcruples might debar him from ſome profitable employments; but as they could not deprive him of any real eſteem, they left him many friends; and no man was ever better introduced to the theatre than he, who, in that violent conflict of parties, had a Prologue and Epilogue from the firſt wits on either ſide.

But learning and nature will now and then take different courſes. His play pleaſed the criticks, and the criticks only. It was, as Addiſon has recorded, hardly heard the third night. Smith had indeed truſted entirely to his merit; had

had enſured no band of applauders, nor uſed any artifice to force ſucceſs, and found that naked excellence was not ſufficient for its own ſupport.

The play, however, was bought by Lintot, who advanced the price from fifty guineas, the current rate, to ſixty; and Halifax, the general patron, accepted the dedication. Smith's indolence kept him from writing the dedication, till Lintot, after fruitleſs importunity, gave notice that he would publiſh the play without it. Now therefore it was written; and Halifax expected the author with his book, and had prepared to reward him with a place of three hundred pounds a year. Smith, by pride, or caprice, or indolence, or baſhfulneſs,

neglected to attend him, though doubtleſs warned and preſſed by his friends, and at laſt miſſed his reward by not going to ſolicit it.

Addiſon has, in the *Spectator*, mentioned the neglect of Smith's tragedy as diſgraceful to the nation, and imputes it to the fondneſs for operas then prevailing. The authority of Addiſon is great; yet the voice of the people, when to pleaſe the people is the purpoſe, deſerves regard. In this queſtion, I cannot but think the people in the right. The fable is mythological, a ſtory which we are accuſtomed to reject as falſe, and the manners are ſo diſtant from our own, that we know them not by ſympathy but by ſtudy: the ignorant do not under-

ſtand

ſtand the action, the learned reject it as a ſchool-boy's tale; *incredulus odi.* What I cannot for a moment believe, I cannot for a moment behold with intereſt or anxiety. The ſentiments thus remote from life, are removed yet further by the diction, which is too luxuriant and ſplendid for dialogue, and envelopes the thoughts rather than diſplays them. It is a ſcholar's play, ſuch as may pleaſe the reader rather than the ſpectator; the work of a vigorous and elegant mind, accuſtomed to pleaſe itſelf with its own conceptions, but of little acquaintance with the courſe of life.

Dennis tells, in one of his pieces, that he had once a deſign to have written the tragedy of *Phædra*; but was convinced

that

that the action was too mythological.

In 1709, a year after the exhibition of *Phædra*, died John Philips, the friend and fellow-collegian of Smith, who, on that occasion, wrote a poem, which justice must place among the best elegies which our language can shew, an elegant mixture of fondness and admiration, of dignity and softness. There are some passages too ludicrous; but every human performance has its faults.

This elegy it was the mode among his friends to purchase for a guinea; and, as his acquaintance was numerous, it was a very profitable poem.

Of his *Pindar*, mentioned by Oldisworth, I have never otherwise heard. His

Longinus he intended to accompany with ſome illuſtrations, and had ſelected his inſtances of the falſe *Sublime* from the works of Blackmore.

He reſolved to try again the fortune of the Stage, with the ſtory of Lady Jane Grey. It is not unlikely that his experience of the inefficacy and incredibility of a mythological tale, might determine him to chooſe an action from Engliſh Hiſtory, at no great diſtance from our own times, which was to end in a real event, produced by the operation of known characters.

A ſubject will not eaſily occur that can give more opportunities of informing the underſtanding, for which Smith was unqueſtionably qualified, or for moving

moving the paſſions, in which I ſuſpect him to have had leſs power.

Having formed his plan, and collected materials, he declared that a few months would complete his deſign; and, that he might purſue his work with fewer avocations, he was, in June 1710, invited by Mr. George Ducket to his houſe at Gartham in Wiltſhire. Here he found ſuch opportunities of indulgence as did not much forward his ſtudies, and particularly ſome ſtrong ale, too delicious to be reſiſted. He eat and drank till he found himſelf plethorick: and then, reſolving to eaſe himſelf by evacuation, he wrote to an apothecary in the neighbourhood a preſcription of a purge ſo forcible, that the apothecary

thought it his duty to delay it till he had given notice of its danger. Smith, not pleaſed with the contradiction of a ſhopman, and boaſtful of his own knowledge, treated the notice with rude contempt, and ſwallowed his own medicine, which, in July 1710, brought him to the grave. He was buried at Gartham.

Many years afterwards, Ducket communicated to Oldmixon the hiſtorian an account, pretended to have been received from Smith, that Clarendon's Hiſtory was, in its publication, corrupted by Aldrich, Smalridge, and Atterbury; and that Smith was employed to forge and inſert the alterations.

This ſtory was publiſhed triumphantly by Oldmixon, and may be ſuppoſed

to have been eagerly received: but its progreſs was ſoon checked; for finding its way into the Journal of Trevoux, it fell under the eye of Atterbury, then an exile in France, who immediately denied the charge, with this remarkable particular, that he never in his whole life had once ſpoken to Smith; his company being, as muſt be inferred, not accepted by thoſe who attended to their characters.

The charge was afterwards very diligently refuted by Dr. Burton of Eaton; a man eminent for literature, and, though not of the ſame party with Aldrich and Atterbury, too ſtudious of truth to leave them burthened with a falſe charge. The teſtimonies which

he has collected, have convinced mankind that either Smith or Ducket were guilty of wilful and malicious falſehood.

This controverſy brought into view thoſe parts of Smith's life, which with more honour to his name might have been concealed.

Of Smith I can yet ſay a little more. He was a man of ſuch eſtimation among his companions, that the caſual cenſures or praiſes which he dropped in converſation were conſidered, like thoſe of Scaliger, as worthy of preſervation.

He had great readineſs and exactneſs of criticiſm, and by a curſory glance over a new compoſition would exactly tell all its faults and beauties.

He

He was remarkable for the power of reading with great rapidity, and of retaining with great fidelity what he ſo eaſily collected.

He therefore always knew what the preſent queſtion required; and when his friends expreſſed their wonder at his acquiſitions, made in a ſtate of apparent negligence and drunkenneſs, he never diſcovered his hours of reading or method of ſtudy, but involved himſelf in affected ſilence, and fed his own vanity with their admiration and conjectures.

One practice he had, which was eaſily obſerved: if any thought or image was preſented to his mind, that he could uſe or improve, he did not ſuffer it to be loſt; but, amidſt the jollity of a

tavern, or in the warmth of converſation, very diligently committed it to paper.

Thus it was that he had gathered two quires of hints for his new tragedy; of which Rowe, when they were put into his hands, could make, as he ſays, very little uſe, but which the collector conſidered as a valuable ſtock of materials.

When he came to London, his way of life connected him with the licentious and diſſolute; and he affected the airs and gaiety of a man of pleaſure; but his dreſs was always deficient: ſcholaſtick cloudineſs ſtill hung about him, and his merriment was ſure to produce the ſcorn of his companions.

With

With all his careleſſneſs, and all his vices, he was one of the murmurers at Fortune; and wondered why he was ſuffered to be poor, when Addiſon was careſſed and preferred: nor would a very little have contented him; for he eſtimated his wants at ſix hundred pounds a year.

In his courſe of reading it was particular, that he had diligently peruſed, and accurately remembered, the old romances of knight errantry.

He had a high opinion of his own merit, and ſomething contemptuous in his treatment of thoſe whom he conſidered as not qualified to oppoſe or contradict him. He had many frailties; yet it cannot but be ſuppoſed that he

had

had great merit, who could obtain to the ſame play a prologue from Addiſon, and an epilogue from Prior; and who could have at once the patronage of Halifax, and the praiſe of Oldiſworth.

For the power of communicating theſe minute memorials, I am indebted to my converſation with Gilbert Walmſley, late regiſter of the eccleſiaſtical court of Litchfield, who was acquainted both with Smith and Ducket; and declared, that, if the tale concerning Clarendon were forged, he ſhould ſuſpect Ducket of the falſehood; *for Rag was a man of great veracity.*

Of Gilbert Walmſley, thus preſented to my mind, let me indulge myſelf in the remembrance. I knew him very

early;

early; he was one of the firſt friends that literature procured me, and I hope that at leaſt my gratitude made me worthy of his notice.

He was of an advanced age, and I was only not a boy; yet he never received my notions with contempt. He was a Whig, with all the virulence and malevolence of his party; yet difference of opinion did not keep us apart. I honoured him, and he endured me.

He had mingled with the gay world, without exemption from its vices or its follies, but had never neglected the cultivation of his mind; his belief of Revelation was unſhaken; his learning preſerved his principles; he grew firſt regular, and then pious.

His

His ſtudies had been ſo various, that I am not able to name a man of equal knowledge. His acquaintance with books was great; and what he did not immediately know, he could at leaſt tell where to find. Such was his amplitude of learning, and ſuch his copiouſneſs of communication, that it may be doubted whether a day now paſſes in which I have not ſome advantage from his friendſhip.

At this man's table I enjoyed many chearful and inſtructive hours, with companions ſuch as are not often found; with one who has lengthened, and one who has gladdened life; with Dr. James, whoſe ſkill in phyſick will be long remembered; and with David Garrick,

rick, whom I hoped to have gratified with this character of our common friend: but what are the hopes of man! I am diſappointed by that ſtroke of death, which has eclipſed the gaiety of nations, and impoveriſhed the publick ſtock of harmleſs pleaſure.

In

In the Library at Oxford is the following ludicrous Analyſis of *Pocockius*:

EX AUTOGRAPHO.

Written by the Author.

OPUSCULUM hoc, Halberdarie ampliſſime, in lucem proferre hactenus diſtuli, judicii tui acumen ſubveritus magis quam bipennis. Tandem aliquando Oden hanc ad te mitto ſublimem, teneram, flebilem, ſuavem, qualem demum divinus (ſi muſis vacaret) ſcripſiſſet Gaſtrellus. Adeo ſcilicet ſublimem ut inter legendum dormire, adeo flebilem ut ridere velis. Cujus elegantiam ut melius inſpicias, verſum, ordinem & materiam breviter referam. 1mus verſus de

duobus præliis decantatis. 2dus & 3us de Lotharingio, cuniculis ſubterraneis, ſaxis, ponto, hoſtibus, & Aſia. 4tus & 5us de catenis, ſudibus, uncis, draconibus, tigribus & crocodilis. 6us, 7us, 8us, 9us, de Gomorrha, de Babylone, Babele, & quodam domi ſuæ preregrino. 10us aliquid de quodam Pocockio. 11us, 12us, de Syriâ, Solymâ. 13us, 14us, Hoſeâ & quercu & de juvene quodam valde ſene. 15us, 16us, de Ætnâ & quomodo Pocockio ſit valde ſimilis. 17us, 18us, de tubâ, aſtro, umbrâ, flammis, rotis, Pocockio non neglecto. Cætera de Chriſtianis, Ottomanno, Babyloniis, Arabibus, & graviſſimâ agrorum melancholiâ, de Cæſare, Flacco, Neſtore, & miſerando juvenis cujuſdam florentiſſimi fato, anno

ætatis

ætatis ſuæ centeſimo præmaturè abrepto. Quæ omnia cum accuratè expenderis, neceſſe eſt ut Oden hanc meam admirandâ planè varietati conſtare fatearis. Subito ad Batavos proficiſcor lauro ab illis donandus. Prius vero Pembrochienſes voco ad certamen Poeticum. Vale.

Illuſtriſſima tua deoſculor crura.

E. SMITH.

POMFRET.

OF Mr. JOHN POMFRET nothing is known but from a ſlight and confuſed account prefixed to his poems by a nameleſs friend; who relates, that he was the ſon of the Rev. Mr. Pomfret, rector of Luton in Bedfordſhire; that he was bred at Cambridge, entered into orders, and was rector of Malden in Bedfordſhire, and might have riſen in the Church; but that, when he applied to Dr. Compton, biſhop of London, for inſtitution to a

living of confiderable value, to which he had been prefented, he found a troublefome obftruction raifed by a malicious interpretation of fome paffage in his *Choice*; from which it was inferred, that he confidered happinefs as more likely to be found in the company of a miftrefs than of a wife.

This reproach was eafily obliterated: for it had happened to Pomfret as to almoft all other men who plan fchemes of life; he had departed from his purpofe, and was then married.

The malice of his enemies had however a very fatal confequence: the delay conftrained his attendance in London, where he caught the fmall-pox,

and

and died in 1703, in the thirty-ſixth year of his age.

He publiſhed his poems in 1699; and has been always the favourite of that claſs of readers, who, without vanity or criticiſm, ſeek only their own amuſement.

His *Choice* exhibits a ſyſtem of life adapted to common notions, and equal to common expectations; ſuch a ſtate as affords plenty and tranquillity, without excluſion of intellectual pleaſures. Perhaps no compoſition in our language has been oftener peruſed than Pomfret's *Choice*.

In his other poems there is an eaſy volubility; the pleaſure of ſmooth metre

tre is afforded to the ear, and the mind is not oppreſſed with ponderous or entangled with intricate ſentiment. He pleaſes many, and he who pleaſes many muſt have merit.

HUGHES.

JOHN HUGHES, the ſon of a citizen of London, and of Anne Burgeſs, of an ancient family in Wiltſhire, was born at Marlborough, July 29, 1677. He was educated at a private ſchool; and though his advances in literature are in the *Biographia* very oſtentatiouſly diſplayed, the name of his maſter is ſomewhat ungratefully concealed.

At nineteen he drew the plan of a tragedy; and paraphrafed, rather too diffufely, the ode of Horace which begins *Integer Vitæ*. To poetry he added the fcience of mufick, in which he feems to have attained confiderable fkill, together with the practice of defign, or rudiments of painting.

His ftudies did not withdraw him wholly from bufinefs, nor did bufinefs hinder him from ftudy. He had a place in the office of ordnance, and was fecretary to feveral commiffions for purchafing lands neceffary to fecure the royal docks at Chatham and Portfmouth; yet found time to acquaint himfelf with modern languages.

In

In 1697 he publiſhed a poem on the *Peace of Ryſwick*; and in 1699 another piece, called the *Court of Neptune*, on the return of king William, which he addreſſed to Mr. Montague, the general patron of the followers of the Muſes. The ſame year he produced a ſong on the duke of Glouceſter's birth-day.

He did not confine himſelf to poetry, but cultivated other kinds of writing with great ſucceſs; and about this time ſhewed his knowledge of human nature by an *Eſſay on the Pleaſure of being deceived*. In 1702 he publiſhed, on the death of king William, a Pindarick ode called the *Houſe of Naſſau*; and wrote another paraphraſe on the *Otium Divos* of Horace.

In 1703 his ode on Muſick was performed at Stationer's Hall; and he wrote afterwards ſix cantatas, which were ſet to muſick by the greateſt maſter of that time, and ſeem intended to oppoſe or exclude the Italian opera, an exotick and irrational entertainment, which has been always combated, and always has prevailed.

His reputation was now ſo far advanced, that the publick began to pay reverence to his name; and he was ſolicited to prefix a preface to the tranſlation of *Boccalini*, a writer whoſe ſatirical vein coſt him his life in Italy; but who never, I believe, found many readers in this country, even though

intro-

introduced by ſuch powerful recommendation.

He tranſlated Fontanelle's *Dialogues of the Dead*; and his verſion was perhaps read at that time, but is now neglected; for by a book not neceſſary, and owing its reputation wholly to its turn of diction, little notice can be gained but from thoſe who can enjoy the graces of the original. To the dialogues of Fontanelle he added two compoſed by himſelf; and, though not only an honeſt but a pious man, dedicated his work to the earl of Wharton. He judged ſkilfully enough of his own intereſt; for Wharton, when he went lord lieutenant to Ireland, offered to take Hughes with him, and eſtabliſh him; but Hughes,

having hopes or promiſes from another man in power, of ſome proviſion more ſuitable to his inclination, declined Wharton's offer, and obtained nothing from the other.

He tranſlated the *Miſer* of Moliere; but never offered it to the Stage; and occaſionally amuſed himſelf with making verſions of favourite ſcenes in other plays.

Being now received as a wit among the wits, he paid his contributions to literary undertakings, and aſſiſted both the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*. In 1712 he tranſlated Vertot's Hiſtory of the *Revolution of Portugal*; produced an *Ode to the Creator of the World, from the Fragments of Orpheus*; and brought upon the

the Stage an opera called *Calypſo and Telemachus*, intended to ſhew that the Engliſh language might be very happily adapted to muſick. This was impudently oppoſed by thoſe who were employed in the Italian opera; and, what cannot be told without indignation, the intruders had ſuch intereſt with the duke of Shrewſbury, then lord chamberlain, who had married an Italian, as to obtain an obſtruction of the profits, though not an inhibition of the performance.

There was at this time a project formed by Tonſon for a tranſlation of the *Pharſalia*, by ſeveral hands; and Hughes engliſhed the tenth book. But this deſign, as muſt often happen where

the concurrence of many is neceſſary, fell to the ground; and the whole work was afterwards performed by Rowe.

His acquaintance with the great writers of his time appears to have been very general; but of his intimacy with Addiſon there is a remarkable proof. It is told, on good authority, that *Cato* was finiſhed and played by his perſuaſion. It had long wanted the laſt act, which he was deſired by Addiſon to ſupply. If the requeſt was ſincere, it proceeded from an opinion, whatever it was, that did not laſt long; for when Hughes came in a week to ſhew him his firſt attempt, he found half the act written by Addiſon himſelf.

He

He afterwards publiſhed the works of *Spenſer*, with his Life, a Gloſſary, and a Diſcourſe on Allegorical Poetry; a work for which he was well qualified, as a judge of the beauties of writing, but perhaps wanted an antiquary's knowledge of the obſolete words. He did not much revive the curioſity of the publick; for near thirty years elapſed before his edition was reprinted. The ſame year produced his *Apollo and Daphne*, of which the ſucceſs was very earneſtly promoted by Steele, who, when the rage of party did not miſguide him, ſeems to have been a man of boundleſs benevolence.

Hughes had hitherto ſuffered the mortifications of a narrow fortune; but in

1717 the lord chancellor Cowper ſet him at eaſe, by making him ſecretary to the Commiſſions of the Peace; in which he afterwards, by a particular requeſt, deſired his ſucceſſor lord Parker to continue him. He had now affluence; but ſuch is human life, that he had it when his declining health could neither allow him long poſſeſſion nor quick enjoyment.

His laſt work was his tragedy, *The Siege of Damaſcus*; after which *a Siege* became a popular title. This play, which ſtill continues on the Stage, and of which it is unneceſſary to add a private voice to ſuch continuance of approbation, is not acted or printed according

cording to the author's original draught, or his ſettled intention. He had made *Phocyas* apoſtatize from his religion; after which the abhorrence of *Eudocia* would have been reaſonable, his miſery would have been juſt, and the horrours of his repentance exemplary. The players, however, required that the guilt of *Phocyas* ſhould terminate in deſertion to the enemy; and Hughes, unwilling that his relations ſhould loſe the benefit of his work, complied with the alteration.

He was now weak with a lingering conſumption, and not able to attend the rehearſal; yet was ſo vigorous in his faculties, that only ten days before

his

his death he wrote the dedication to his patron lord Cooper. On February 17, 1719-20, the play was repreſented, and the author died. He lived to hear that it was well received; but paid no regard to the intelligence, being then wholly employed in the meditations of a departing Chriſtian.

A man of his character was undoubtedly regretted; and Steele devoted an eſſay, in the paper called *The Theatre*, to the memory of his virtues. His Life is written in the Biographia with ſome degree of favourable partiality; and an account of him is prefixed to his works, by his relation the late Mr. Duncombe, a man whoſe blameleſs elegance deſerved the ſame reſpect.

The

The character of his genius I ſhall tranſcribe from the correſpondence of *Swift* and *Pope*.

A month ago," ſays Swift, " was " ſent me over, by a friend of mine, " the works of *John Hughes*, Eſquire. " They are in proſe and verſe. I ne- " ver heard of the man in my life, " yet I find your name as a ſubſcriber. " He is too great a poet for me; and " I think among the *mediocriſts*, in proſe " as well as verſe."

To this Pope returns: " To anſwer " your queſtion as to Mr. *Hughes*; " what he wanted in genius, he made " up as an honeſt man; but he was of " the claſs you think him."