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V I D A's
ART of POETRY,

Translated into
ENGLISH VERSE,

By the Reverend

Mr. CHRISTOPHER PITT, A. M.

Late FELLOW of *New-College* in *Oxford*,
Rector of *Pimperm* in *Dorsetshire*, and Chaplain to
the Right Honourable *PHILIP*, Earl *STAN-*
HOP E, &c.



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To the Right Honourable

P H I L I P,

EARL *Stanhope*, VISCOUNT
Mahon, and BARON *Elvaston*.

T H I S

TRANSLATION

O F

VIDA's ART of POETRY

Is Dedicated by

HIS LORDSHIP'S

Humble Servant and

Chaplain,

CHRISTOPHER PITT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

PHYSICS 309

LECTURE 1

MECHANICS

PROBLEM SET

PROBLEM 1

PROBLEM 2

PROBLEM 3

PROBLEM 4



V I D A's

Art of Poetry, &c.

BOOK I.



I V E me ye sacred muses, to impart
The hidden secrets of your tuneful art ;
Give me your awful mysteries to sing,
Unlock, and open wide, your sacred
spring ;

While from his infancy the *Bard* I lead,
And seat him on your mountain's lofty head ;
Direct his course, and point him out the road
To sing, in *Epick* strains, an hero or a god.

WHAT youth, whose gen'rous bosom pants for praise,
Will dare with *me* to beat those arduous ways ?
O'er high *Parnassus*' painful steeps to go,
And leave the grov'ling multitude below :
Where the glad muses sing, and form the choir,
While bright *Apollo* strikes the silver lyre.
Approach thou first, great *FRANCIS*, nor refuse
To pay due honours to the sacred muse ;

While

While *Gallia* waits for thy auspicious reign,
 'Till age compleats the monarch in the man ;
 Mean time the muse may bring some small relief,
 To charm thy anguish, and suspend thy grief ;
 While guilty fortune's stern decrees detain
 Thee, and thy brother, in the realms of *Spain* ;
 Far, far transported from your native place,
 Your country's, father's, and your friend's embrace !
 Such are the terms the cruel fates impose
 On your brave father, struggling with his woes,
 These are their hard conditions : - - - They require
 The sons to purchase, and redeem the fire.
 But yet, brave youth, from grief, from tears abstain,
 Fate may relent, and heav'n grow mild again ;
 At last perhaps the glorious day may come,
 The day that brings our royal exile home ;
 When, to thy native realms in peace restor'd,
 The ravish'd crowds shall hail their passing lord ;
 When each transported city shall rejoice,
 And nations bless thee with a publick voice ;
 To the throng'd fanes the matrons shall repair ;
 Absolve their vows ; and breath their souls in pray'r.
 'Till then, let ev'ry muse engage thy love,
 With me at large o'er high *Parnassus* rove,
 Range ev'ry bow'r, and sport in ev'ry grove.

First then observe that *verse* is ne'er confin'd
 To one fixt measure, or determin'd kind ;
 Tho' at its birth it sung the gods alone,
 And then religion claim'd it for her own ;
 In sacred verse address the deity,
 And spoke a language worthy of the sky ;
 New themes succeeding bards began to chuse,
 And in a wider field engag'd the muse ;
 The common bulk of subjects to rehearse
 In all the rich varieties of *verse*.
 Yet none of all with equal honours shine,
 (But those which celebrate the pow'rs divine,)
 To those exalted *measures* which declare,
 The deeds of heroes, and the sons of war.

From hence posterity the name bestow'd
 On this rich present of the delphick god:
 Fame, says *Phæmonoe* in this measure gave
Apollo's answers from the *Pythian* cave.

BUT e'er you write, consult your strength, and chuse
 A theme proportion'd justly to your muse.
 For tho' in chief these precepts are bestow'd
 On *him*, who sings an hero or a god;
 To other themes their gen'ral use extends,
 And serves in diff'rent views to diff'rent ends.
 Whether the lofty muse with tragick rage,
 Would proudly stalk in buskins on the stage;
 Or in soft elegies our pity move,
 And show the youth in all the flames of love;
 Or sing the shepherd's woes in humble strains,
 And the low humours of contending swains;
 These faithful rules shall guide the bard along
 In every *measure*, *argument* and *song*.

BE sure, (whatever you propose to write,)
 Let the chief motive be your own delight,
 And well-weigh'd choice; --- A task enjoyn'd refuse,
 Unless a monarch should command your muse.
 (If we may hope these golden times to see,
 When bards become the care of majesty.)
 Free and spontaneous the smooth numbers glide,
 Where choice determines, and our wills preside;
 But, at command, we toil with fruitless pain,
 And drag th' involuntary load in vain.

NOR, at its birth, indulge your warm desire,
 On the first glimm'ring of the sacred fire;
 Defer the mighty task; and weigh your pow'r;
 And every part in every view explore;
 And let the theme in diff'rent prospects roll
 Deep in your thoughts, and grow into the soul.

BUT e'er with sails unfurl'd you fly away,
 And cleave the bosom of the boundless sea;
 A fund of *words* and *images* prepare,
 And lay the bright materials up with care,
 Which, at due time, occasion may produce,
 All rang'd in order for the poet's use.

VIDA'S ART of

Some happy objects by meer chance are brought
From hidden causes to th' unconscious thought ;
Which if once lost, we labour long in vain
To catch th' ideal fugitives again.

Nor must I fail their conduct to extol,
Who, when they lay the basis of the whole,
Explore the *antients* with a watchful eye,
Lay all their charms and elegancies by,
Then to their use the precious spoils apply.

A T first without the least restraint compose,
And mould the future *poem* into *prose* ;
A full and proper series to maintain,
And draw the just connection in a chain ;
By stated bounds your progress to controul,
To join the parts, and regulate the whole.

A N D now 'tis time to spread the op'ning sails
Wide to the wanton winds, and flatt'ring gales ;
'Tis time we now prescribe the genuine laws
To raise the beauteous fabrick with applause ;
But first some method requisite appears
To form the boy ; and mould his tender years.
In vain the bard the sacred wreath pursues,
Unless train'd up, and season'd to the muse.
Soon as the prattling innocent shall reach
To the first use and rudiments of speech,
Ev'n then, by *Helicon* he ought to rove,
Ev'n then the tuneful nine should win his love
By just degrees. - - - But make his guide your choice
For his chaste phrase, and elegance of voice ;
That he at first successfully may teach
The methods, laws, and discipline of speech ;
Lest the young charge, mistaking right and wrong,
With vicious habits prejudice his tongue,
Habits, whose subtle seeds may mock your art,
And spread the roots and poison thro' his heart.
Whence none shall move me to approve the wretch,
Who wildly born above the vulgar reach,
And big with vain pretences to impart
Vast shows of learning, and a depth of art,
For sense, th' impertinence of *terms* affords ;
An idle cant of formidable words ;

The pedant's pride, and the delight of Fools ;
 The vile disgrace, and lumber of the schools :
 In vain the circling youths, a blooming throng,
 Dwell on th' eternal jargon of his tongue.
 Deluded Fools! ——— The same is their mistake,
 Who at the limpid stream their thirst may slake,
 Yet choose the tainted waters of the lake.
 Let no such pest approach the blooming care,
 Deprave his *style*, and violate his ear ;
 But far, oh far, to some remoter place
 Drive the vile wretch to teach a barb'rous race.



NOW to the muse's stream the pupil bring,
 To drink large draughts from the *Pierian* spring ;
 And from his birth the sacred bard adore,
 Nurst by the nine, on *Mincio's* flow'ry shore ;
 And ask the gods his numbers to inspire,
 With like invention, majesty, and fire.
 He reads *Ascanius'* deeds with equal flame,
 And longs with *him* to run at nobler game.
 For youths of ages past he makes his moan,
 And learns to pity years so like his own,
 Which with too swift, and too severe a doom,
 The fate of war had hurry'd to the tomb.
 His eyes, for *Pallas* and for *Lausus* flow,
 Mourn with their fires, and weep another's woe.
 But when *Euryalus*, in all his charms,
 Is snatch'd by fate from his dear mother's arms,
 And as he rolls in death, the purple flood
 Streams out, and stains his snowy limbs with blood,
 His soul the pangs of gen'rous sorrow pierce,
 And a new tear steals out at ev'ry verse.
 Mean time with bolder steps the youth proceeds,
 And the *Greek* poets in succession reads ;
 Seasons to either tongue his tender ears ;
 Compares the heroes glorious characters ;
 Sees, how *Æneas* is himself alone,
 The draught of *Peleus'* and *Laertes'* son ;
 How, by the poet's art, in *one*, conspire
Ulysses' conduct, and *Achilles'* fire.

B

BUT

BUT now, young bard, with strict attention hear,
 And drink my precepts in at either ear ;
 Since a vast crowd of poets you may find,
 Both of the *Græcian* and *Ausonian* kind,
 Learn hence what bards to quit or to pursue,
 To shun the false, and to embrace the true ;
 Nor is it hard to cull each noble piece,
 And point out ev'ry glorious son of *Greece*,
 Above whose numbers *Homer* sits on high,
 And shines supreme in distant Majesty ;
 Whom with a rev'rend eye the rest regard,
 And owe their raptures to the sov'reign bard ;
 Thro' *him* the god their panting souls inspires,
 Swells every breast, and warms with all his fires.
 Blest were the poets with the hallow'd rage,
 Train'd up in *that*, and the succeeding age :
 As to his time each poet nearer drew,
 His spreading fame in just proportion grew.
 By like degrees the next degen'rate race
 Sunk from the height of honour to disgrace.
 And now the fame of *Greece* extinguish'd lies,
 Her ancient *language* with her glory dies.
 Her banish'd princes mourn their ravish'd crowns,
 Driv'n from their old hereditary thrones ;
 Her drooping natives rove o'er worlds unknown,
 And weep their woes in regions not their own ;
 She feels thro' all her states the dreadful blow,
 And mourns the fury of a barb'rous foe.

BUT when our bards brought o'er th' *Aonian* maids,
 From their own *Helicon*, to *Tyber's* shades ;
 When first they settled on *Hesperia's* plains,
 Their numbers ran in rough unpolish'd strains.
 Void of the *Græcian* art their measures flow'd ;
 Pleas'd the wild satyrs, and the sylvan crow'd.
 Low shrubs, and lofty forests *whilom* rung,
 With *uncouth* ver'è, and antiquated song ;
 Nor yet old *Ennius* sung in artless strains,
 Fights, arms, and hosts embattled on the plains,
 Who first aspir'd to pluck the verdant crown
 From *Græcian* heads, and fix it on his own.

New wonders the succeeding bards explore,
 Which slept conceal'd in nature's womb before;
 Her awful secrets the bold poet sings,
 And sets to view the principles of *things*;
 Each part was fair, and beautiful the whole,
 And ev'ry line was nectar to the soul.
 By such degrees, the *verse*, as ages roll'd,
 Was stamp'd to form, and took the beauteous mould.
Aufonia's bards drew off from every part
 The barb'rous dregs, and civiliz'd the art.
 'Till like the day, all shining and serene,
 That drives the clouds, and clears the gloomy scene,
 Refines the air, and brightens up the skies,
 See the majestick head of *Virgil* rise;
Phæbus' undoubted son! - - - who clears the rust
 From the great *Ancients*, and shakes off their dust,
 He on their works a nobler grace bestow'd;
 He thought, and spoke, in ev'ry word a god.
 To grace this mighty bard, ye muses, bring
 Your choicest flow'rs, and rife all the spring;
 See! how the *Grecian* bards, at distance thrown,
 With rev'rence bow to this distinguish'd son;
 Immortal sounds his golden lines impart,
 And nought can match his *genius* but his *art*.
 Ev'n *Greece* turns pale, and trembles at his fame,
 Which shades the lustre of her *Homer's* name.
 'Twas then *Aufonia* saw her language rise,
 In all its strength and glory, to the skies;
 Such glory never could she boast before,
 Nor could succeeding poets make it more.
 From that blest period the poetick state
 Ran down the precipice of time and fate;
 Degen'rate souls succeed, a wretched train,
 And her old fame at once drew back again.
 One to his *genius* trusts, in ev'ry part,
 And scorns the rules, and discipline of *art*,
 While this, an empty tide of sound affords,
 And roars and thunders in a storm of *words*,
 Some, musically dull, all methods try
 To win the ear with *sweet stupidity*;

Unruffled strains for solid wit dispense,
 And give us *numbers*, when we call for *sense*.
 'Till from th' *Hesperian* plains and *Tyber* chas'd,
 From *Rome* the banish'd sisters fled at last;
 Driv'n by the barb'rous nations, who from far
 Burst into *Latium* with a tide of war.
 Hence a vast change of their old manners sprung,
 And forc'd the slaves to speak their master's tongue;
 No honours now were paid the sacred muse,
 But all were bent on mercenary views;
 'Till *Latium* saw with joy th' *Aonian* train,
 By the great *Medici*, restor'd again;
 Th' illustrious *Medici*, of *Tuscan* race,
 Were born to cherish learning in disgrace,
 New life in ev'ry science to bestow,
 And lull the cries of *Europe* in her woe.
 With pity they beheld these turns of fate,
 And prop'd the ruins of the *Grecian* state;
 For lest her wit should perish with her fame,
 Their care supported still the *Argive* name,
 They call'd th' aspiring youths from distant parts,
 To plant *Aufonia* with the *Grecian* arts;
 To bask in ease, and science to diffuse,
 And to restore the empire of the muse;
 They sent to ravag'd provinces with care,
 And cities wasted by the rage of war.
 To buy the ancients works, of deathless fame,
 And snatch th' immortal labours from the flame;
 To which the foes had doom'd each glorious piece,
 Who reign and lord it in the realms of *Greece*.
 (But we, ye gods, would raise a foreign lord,
 As yet untaught to sheath the civil sword;) }
 Thro' many a period *this* has been the fate,
 And *this* the list of the poetick state.

HENCE sacred *Virgil* from thy soul adore
 Above the rest, and to thy utmost pow'r
 Pursue the glorious paths he struck before.
 If he supplies not all your wants, peruse
 Th' immortal scenes of each *Augustine* muse.

There

There stop, - - - nor rashly seek to know the rest;
 But drive the dire ambition from thy breast,
 'Till riper years and Judgment form thy thoughts
 To mark their beauties, and avoid their faults.

M E A N time, ye parents, with attention hear,
 And thus advis'd exert your utmost care;
 The blameless tutor from a thousand chuse,
 One from his soul devoted to the muse;
 Who pleas'd the tender pupil to improve,
 Regards, and loves him with a father's love.
 Youth of it self to num'rous ills betray'd,
 Requires a prop, and wants a foreign aid;
 Unless a Master's rules his mind incline
 To love and cultivate the sacred nine,
 His thoughts a thousand objects will employ,
 And from *Parnassus* lead the wand'ring boy.
 So trusts the swain, the saplings to the earth;
 So hopes in time to see the sprouting birth;
 Against the winds defensive props he forms,
 To shield the future forest from the storms,
 That each imbolden'd plant at length may rise
 In verdant pride, and shoot into the skies.

B U T let the guide, if e'er he would improve
 His charge, avoid his hate, and win his love;
 Lest in his rage wrong measures he may take,
 And loath the muses, for the teacher's sake.
 His soul then slacken'd from her native force,
 Flags at the barrier, and forgets the course,
 Curb in your wrath, nor fright the blooming crowd,
 But scorn th' ungen'rous province of the rod;
 Th' offended muses never can sustain
 To hear the shriekings of the tender train,
 But stung with grief and anguish hang behind;
 Damp't is the sprightly vigour of the mind.
 The boy no daring images inspire,
 No bright *ideas* set his thoughts on fire;
 He drags on heavily th' ungrateful load,
 Grown obstinately dull, and season'd to the rod.

I know a pedant who to penance brought
 His trembling pupils for the lightest fault;

His

His soul transported with a storm of ire,
 And all the rage that malice could inspire;
 By turns the tort'ring scourges we might hear,
 By turns the shrieks of wretches stun'd the ear.
 Still to my mind the dire ideas rise,
 When rage unusual sparkled in his eyes;
 When with the dreadful scourge insulting loud,
 The tyrant terrify'd the blooming crowd;
 A boy the fairest of the frighted train,
 Who yet scarce gave the promise of a man,
 Ah, dismal object! idly past the day,
 In all the thoughtless innocence of play;
 When lo! th' imperious wretch, inflam'd with rage,
 Fierce, and regardless of his tender age,
 With fury storms; the fault his clamours urge;
 His hand high-waving brandishes the scourge.
 Tears, vows and pray'rs the tyrant's ears assail
 In vain; - - - nor tears, nor vows, nor pray'rs prevail.
 The trembling innocent, from deep despair,
 Sicken'd, and breath'd his little soul in air.
 For *him* old *Po*, beneath his poplars, mourns;
 For *him* old *Serius* weeps from all his urns;
 For *him* their tears the watry sisters shed,
 Who lov'd him living, and deplor'd him dead.
 The furious pedant, to restrain his rage,
 Should mark th' example of a former age;
 How fierce *Alcides*, warm'd with youthful ire,
 Dash'd on his master's front his vocal lyre.
 But yet, ye youths, confess your master's sway,
 And their commands implicitly obey.

W H O E V E R then this arduous task pursues,
 To form the bard, and cultivate his muse,
 Let him by softer means, and milder ways,
 Warm his ambition with the love of praise;
 Soon as his precepts shall have won his heart,
 And fann'd the rising fire in ev'ry part,
 Light is the task; - - - for then the eager boy
 Pursues the voluntary toil with joy;
 Disdains th' inglorious indolence of rest,
 And feeds th' immortal ardour in his breast.

AND

AND here the common practice of the schools
 By known experience justifies my rules,
 The youths in social studies to engage ;
 For *then* the rivals burn with gen'rous rage,
 Each soul the stings of emulation raise,
 And ev'ry little bosom beats for praise.
 But gifts propos'd will urge them best to rise ;
 Fir'd at the glorious prospect of a prize,
 With noble jealousy, the blooming bard
 Reads, labours, glows and strains for the reward,
 Fears lest his happy rival win the race,
 And build a triumph on his own disgrace.

BUT when once season'd to the rage divine,
 He loves and courts the raptures of the *nine*,
 The sense of glory, and the love of fame,
 Serve but as second motives to the flame ;
 The thrilling pleasure all the bard subdues,
 Lock'd in the strict embraces of the muse.
 See ! when harsh parents force the youth to quit,
 For meaner arts, the dear delights of wit,
 If e'er the wonted warmth his thoughts inspire,
 And with past pleasures set his mind on fire ;
 How from his soul he longs, but longs in vain,
 To haunt the groves, and purling streams again :
 No stern command of parents can controul,
 No force can check the sallies of his soul.
 Thus some fleet courser season'd to the rein,
 That spies his females on a distant plain,
 And longs to act his pleasures o'er again ;
 Fir'd with remembrance of his joys, he bounds,
 He foams, and strives to reach the well-known grounds ;
 The goring spurs his furious flames improve,
 And rouze within him all the rage of love ;
 Ply'd with the scourge he still neglects his haste,
 And moves reluctant, when he moves at last ;
 Looks often back ; regrets the distant mare ;
 And neighs his passion to the dappled fair.

HOW oft the youth would long to change his fate,
 Who high advanc'd to all the pomp of state,

With

With grief his gawdy load of grandeur views,
 Lost at too high a distance from the muse!
 How oft he sighs by warbling streams to rove,
 And quit the palace for the shady grove!
 How oft in *Tyber's* cold retreats to lye
 Beneath the rigour of the watry sky;
 And gladly stoop to cheerful poverty!
 But yet how many curse their fruitless toil,
 Who turn and cultivate a barren soil?
 This, e'er too late, the master may divine
 By a sure omen, and a certain sign;
 The hopeful youth, determin'd by his choice,
 Works without precept, and prevents advice,
 Consults his teacher, plies his task with joy,
 And a quick sense of glory fires the boy.
 He challenges the rest, - - - the conquest o'er,
 He struts away the victor of an hour.
 Then vanquish'd in his turn, o'erwhelm'd with care,
 He weeps, he pines, he sickens with despair;
 Nor looks his little rivals in the face,
 But flies for shelter to some lonely place,
 To hide his shame, and cover his disgrace.
 His master's frowns impatient to sustain,
 Strait he returns, and wins the day again.
 This is the boy, his better fates design
 To rise the future darling of the nine;
 For him the muses weave the sacred crown,
 And bright *Apollo* claims him for his own.
 Not the least hope th' unactive youth can raise,
 Dead to the prospect, and the sense of praise,
 Who your just rules with dull attention hears,
 Nor lends his understanding, but his ears.
 Relolv'd his parts in indolence to keep,
 He lulls his drowzy faculties asleep;
 The wretch your best endeavours will betray,
 And the superfluous care is thrown away.

I fear the bard who ripens e'er his prime;
 For all productions there's a proper time.
 Oh! may no apples in the spring appear,
 Out-grow the seasons, and prevent the year,

Nor mellow yet, till autumn stains the vine,
 And the full presses foam with floods of wine.
 Torn from the parent-tree too soon, they lie
 Trod down by ev'ry swain that passes by.

NOR should the youth too strictly be confin'd,
 'Tis sometimes proper to unbend his mind;
 When tir'd with study let him seek the plains,
 And mark the homely humours of the swains;
 Or pleas'd the toils to spread, or horns to wind,
 Hunt the fleet mountain-goat, or forest-hind.
 Mean time the youth, impatient that the day
 Should pass in pleasures unimprov'd away,
 Steals from the shouting crowd, and quits the plains,
 To sing the sylvan gods in rural strains:
 Or calls the muses to *Albunea's* shades,
 Courts, and enjoys the visionary maids.
 So labour'd fields with crops alternate blest,
 By turns lie fallow, and indulge their rest;
 The swain contented, bids the hungry soil
 Enjoy a sweet vicissitude from toil;
 'Till earth renews her genial pow'rs to bear,
 And pays his prudence with a bounteous year.

ON a strict view your solid judgment frame,
 Nor think that *genius* is in all the same;
 How oft the youth who wants the sacred fire,
 Fondly mistakes for *genius* his *desire*;
 Courts the coy muses, tho' rejected still,
 Nor nature seconds his misguided will:
 He strives, he toils, with unavailing care,
 Nor heav'n relents, nor *Phœbus* hears his pray'r.
 He with success, perhaps, may plead a cause,
 Shine at the bar, and flourish by the laws;
 Perhaps discover nature's sacred springs,
 And bring to light th' originals of *things*:
 But sometimes *precept* will such force impart,
 That *nature* bends beneath the pow'r of *art*.

BESIDES, 'tis no light province to remove
 From the rash boy the fiery pangs of love;
 'Till ripe in years, and more confirm'd in age,
 He learns to bear the flames of *Cupid's* rage;

Oft hidden fires on all his vitals prey,
 Devour the youth, and melt his soul away
 By slow degrees; - - - blot out his golden dreams,
 The tuneful poets, and *Castalian* streams;
 Struck with a secret wound, he weeps and sighs;
 In ev'ry thought the darling phantoms rise;
 The fancy'd charmer swims before his sight,
 His theme all day, his vision all the night:
 The wand'ring object takes up all his care,
 Nor can he quit th' imaginary fair.

Mean time his fire, unconscious of his pain,
 Applies the temper'd medicines in vain;
 The plague, so deeply rooted in his heart,
 Mocks ev'ry slight attempt of *Pæan*'s art;
 The flames of *Cupid* all his breast inspire,
 And in the lover's quench the poet's fire.

WHEN in his riper years, without controul,
 The nine have took possession of his soul;
 When, sacred to their god, the crown he wears,
 To other authors let him bend his cares,
 Consult their styles, examine ev'ry part,
 And a new tincture take from ev'ry art.
 First study *Tully*'s language and his sense,
 And range that boundless field of eloquence.
Tully, *Rome*'s other glory, still affords
 The best *expressions* and the richest *words*;
 As high o'er all in eloquence he stood,
 As *Rome*, o'er all the nations she subdu'd.
 Let him read men and manners, and explore
 The site and distances from shore to shore,
 Then let him travel, or to maps repair,
 And see imagin'd cities rising there;
 Range with his eyes the earth's fictitious ball,
 And pass o'er figur'd worlds that hang the wall.
 Some in the bloody shock of arms appear,
 To paint the native horrors of the war;
 Thro' charging hosts they rush, before they write,
 And plunge in all the tumult of the fight.
 But since our lives contracted in their date
 By scanty bounds, and circumscrib'd by fate,

Can never launch thro' all the depths of arts,
 Ye youths, touch only the material parts;
 There stop your labour, there your search controul,
 And draw from thence a notion of the whole.
 From distant climes when the rich merchants come,
 To bring the wealth of foreign regions home,
 Content the friendly havens to explore,
 They only touch upon the winding shore;
 Nor with vain labour wander up and down
 To view the land, and visit ev'ry town;
 That would but call 'em from their former road,
 To spend an age in banishment abroad;
 Too late returning from the dang'rous main,
 To see their countries and their friends again.

STILL be the sacred poets your delight,
 Read 'em by day, consult 'em in the night;
 From those clear fountains all your raptures bring,
 And draw for ever from the muses spring;
 But let your *subject* in your bosom roll,
 Claim ev'ry thought, and draw in all the soul.
 That constant object to your mind display,
 Your toil all night, your labour all the day.

I need not here the rules of verse disclose,
 Nor how their various *measures* to dispose,
 The tutor here with ease his charge may guide
 To join the *parts* and numbers, or *divide*.
 Now let him words to stated laws submit,
 Or yoke to measures, or reduce to feet;
 Now let him softly to himself rehearse,
 His first attempts and rudiments of *verse*;
 Fix on those rich expressions his regard,
 To use made sacred by some ancient bard;
 Tost by a diff'rent gust of hopes and fears,
 He begs of heav'n an hundred eyes and ears.
 Now here, now there, coy nature he pursues,
 And takes one *image* in a thousand views.
 He waits the happy minute that affords
 The noblest *thoughts*, and most expressive *words*.
 He brooks no dull delay, admits no rest,
 A tide of passions struggles in his breast;

Round his dark soul no clear *ideas* play,
 The most familiar objects glide away.
 All fixt in thought, astonisht he appears,
 His soul examines, and consults his ears,
 And racks his faithless memory to find
 Some traces faintly sketch'd upon his mind.
 There he unlocks the glorious magazine,
 And opens ev'ry faculty within,
 Brings out with pride their intellectual spoils,
 And with the noble treasure crowns his toils;
 And oft meer chance shall images display,
 That strike his mind engag'd a diff'rent way.
 Still he persists, regrets no toil nor pain;
 And still the task, he try'd before in vain,
 Plies with unweari'd diligence again.
 For oft unmanagable thoughts appear,
 That mock his labour, and delude his care;
 Th' impatient bard, with all his nerves apply'd,
 Tries all the avenues on ev'ry side;
 Resolv'd and bent the precipice to gain,
 Tho' yet he labours at the rock in vain,
 By his own strength and heav'n, with conquest grac'd,
 He wins th' important victory at last;
 Stretch'd by his hands the vanquish'd monster lies,
 And the proud triumph lifts him to the skies.
 But when ev'n *chance* and all his efforts fail,
 Nor toils, nor vigilance, nor cares prevail;
 His past attempts the boy in vain renews,
 And waits the softer seasons of the muse;
 He quits his work, throws by his fond desires,
 And from his task reluctantly retires.
 T H U S o'er the fields the swain pursues his road,
 Till stopt at length by some impervious flood,
 That from a mountain's brow, o'er-charg'd with rains,
 Bursts in a thund'ring tide, and foams along the plains;
 With horror chill'd, he traverses the shore,
 Sees the waves rise, and hears the torrent roar;
 Then griev'd returns, or waits with vain delay,
 Till the tumultuous deluge rolls away.

BUT

BUT in no *Iliad* let the youth engage
 His tender years, and unexperienc'd age;
 Let him by just degrees and steps proceed,
 Sing with the swains, and tune the slender reed;
 He with success an humbler theme may ply,
 And, *Virgil*-like, immortalize a fly:
 Or sing the mice, their battles and attacks,
 Against the croaking natives of the lakes:
 Or with what art her toils the spider sets,
 And spins her filmy entrails into nets.

AND here embrace, ye teachers, this advice;
 Not to be too inquisitively nice;
 But till the soul enlarg'd in strength appears,
 Indulge the boy, and spare his tender years,
 'Till, to ripe judgment and experience brought,
 Himself discerns and blushes at a fault;
 For if the criticks eyes too strictly pierce,
 To point each blemish out in every verse,
 Void of all hope the stripling may depart,
 And turn his *genius* to another *art*.
 But if, resolv'd his darling faults to see,
 A youth of *genius* should apply to me,
 And court my elder Judgment to peruse
 Th' imperfect labours of his infant muse;
 I should not scruple, with a candid eye,
 To read and praise his verses to the sky;
 With seeming rapture on each line to pause,
 And dwell on each expression with applause.
 But when my praises had inflam'd his mind,
 If some lame verse limp'd slowly up behind;
 One that himself, unconscious, had not found,
 By *numbers* charm'd, and led away by *sound*;
 I should not fear to minister a prop,
 And give him stronger feet to keep it up;
 Teach it to run along more firm and sure;
 Nor would I show the wound before the cure.

FOR what remains, the poet I enjoin
 To form no glorious scheme, no great design,
 'Till free from business he retires alone,
 And flies the giddy tumult of the town;

Seeks rural pleasures, and enjoys the glades,
 And courts the thoughtful silence of the shades,
 Where the fair dryads haunt their native woods
 With all the orders of the sylvan gods.
 Here in their soft retreats the poets lie,
 Serene, and blest with chearful poverty ;
 No guilty schemes of wealth their souls molest,
 No cares, no prospects discompose their rest ;
 No scenes of grandeur glitter in their view ;
Here they the joys of innocence pursue,
 And taste the pleasures of the happy few.

From a rock's entrails the barbarian sprung,
 Who dares to violate the sacred throng
 By deeds or words. - - - The wretch by fury driv'n,
 Assaults the darling colony of heav'n !
 Some have look'd down, we know, with scornful eyes
 On the bright muse who taught 'em how to rise,
 And paid, when rais'd to grandeur, no regard,
 From that high station, to the sacred bard.
 Uninjur'd, mortals, let the poets lie,
 Or dread th' impending vengeance of the sky ;
 The gods still listen'd to their constant pray'r,
 And made the poets their peculiar care.
 They, with contempt, on fortune's gifts look down,
 And laugh at kings, who fill an envy'd throne.
 Rais'd on the noble prospect of the mind,
 From that proud eminence they view mankind
 Lost in a cloud ; they see them toil below,
 All busie to promote their common woe.
 Of guilt unconscious, with a steady soul,
 They see the lightnings flash, and hear the thunders roll.
 When girt with terrors, heav'n's almighty fire
 Launches his triple bolts, and forky fire,
 When o'er high tow'rs the red destroyer plays,
 And strikes the mountains with the pointed blaze,
 Safe in their innocence, like gods, they rise,
 And lift their souls serenely to the skies.

F L Y ye profane ; - - - the sacred nine were giv'n
 To bless these lower worlds by bounteous heav'n :

Of old, *Prometheus*, from the realms above,
 Brought down these daughters of almighty *Jove*,
 When to his native earth the robber came,
 Charg'd with the plunder of ethereal flame.
 As due compassion touch'd his gen'rous mind,
 To see the savage state of human kind ;
 When led to range at large the bright abodes,
 And share th' ambrosial banquets of the gods,
 In many a whirl he saw *Olympus* driv'n,
 And heard th' eternal harmony of heav'n.
 Turn'd round and round the consort charm'd his ears,
 With all the musick of the dancing spheres ;
 The sacred nine his wond'ring eyes behold,
 As each her orb in just divisions roll'd ;
 The thief beholds them, with ambitious eyes,
 And bent on fraud, he meditates the prize ;
 As the most noble gift he could bestow
 (Next to the fire) on human race below :
 At length th'immortals reconcil'd, resign'd
 The fair celestial sisters to mankind.
 Tho' bound to *Caucasus* with solid chains,
 Th'aspiring robber groan'd in endless pains ;
 By which deter'd, for ages lay supine
 The race of mortals, nor invoc'd the *nine*,
 'Till heav'n in *verse* shew'd man his future state,
 And open'd ev'ry distant scene of fate.
 First the great father of the gods above,
 Sung in *Dodona*, and the *Lybian* grove ;
 Next to th' enquiring nations *Themis* gave
 Her sacred answers from the *Phocian* cave ;
 Then *Phæbus* warn'd 'em, from the *Delphick* dome,
 Of future times, and ages yet to come ;
 And rev'rend *Faunus* utter'd truths divine
 To the first founders of the *Latian* line.
 Next the great race of hallow'd prophets came,
 With them the sybils of immortal fame,
 Inspir'd with all the god, who rapt on high
 With more than mortal rage, unbounded fly,
 And range the dark recesses of the sky.

Next;

Next at their feasts, the people sung their lays,
 (The same their prophets sung in former days)
 Their theme an hero, and his deathless praise.

W H A T has to man of nobler worth been giv'n,
 Than this the best and greatest gift of heav'n?
 Whatever pow'r the glorious gift bestow'd;
 We trace the certain footsteps of a god;
 By thee inspir'd, the daring poet flies,
 His soul mounts up, and tow'rs above the skies;
 Thou art the source of pleasure, and we see
 No joy, no transport, when debarr'd of thee.
 Thy tuneful deity the feather'd throng
 Confess in all the measure of their song:
 Thy great commands the savages obey,
 And every silent native of the sea:
 Led by thy voice the starting rocks advance;
 And list'ning forests mingle in the dance.
 On thy sweet notes the damn'd rejoice to dwell,
 Thy strains suspended all the din of hell;
 Lull'd by the sound the furies rag'd no more,
 And hell's infernal porter ceas'd to roar.
 Thy pow'rs exalt us to the realms above,
 To feast with gods, and sit the guests of *Jove*;
 Thy sov'reign presence softens every grief,
 And reconciles the bitter load of life;
 Hail thou bright comfort of these low abodes!
 Thou joy of men and darling of the gods!
 As *Priest* and *Poet* in these humble lays,
 I boldly labour to resound thy praise;
 To hang thy shrines this gift I bring along,
 And to thy altars guide the tender throng.

The End of the First BOOK.

V I D A'S
ART of POETRY,

Translated into

ENGLISH VERSE,

By the Reverend

Mr. CHRISTOPHER PITT, A. M.

Late FELLOW of *New-College* in *Oxford*,
Rector of *Pimpern* in *Dorsetshire*, and Chaplain to
the Right Honourable PHILIP, Earl STAN-
HOPE, &c.

BOOK II.



D U B L I N :

Printed by J. Watts, for J. Thompson, at the
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W. A. D. W.

ART of Poetry

THOMAS

ENGLISH

THE GREAT ...
...
...
...

BOOK



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...
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...



V I D A's

Art of Poetry, &c.

BOOK II.



ROCEED ye nine, descended from above,
Ye tuneful daughters of almighty *Jove*;
To teach the future age I hasten on,
And open ev'ry source of *Helicon*.
Your priest and bard with rage divine
inspire,

While to your shrine I lead the blooming choir.
Hard was the way, and dubious, which we trod,
Now show, ye goddesses, a surer road;
Point out those paths, which you can find alone,
To all the world, but to your selves unknown;
Lo! all th' *Hesperian* youths with me implore
Your softer influence, and propitious pow'r,
Who, rang'd beneath my banners, boldly tread
Those arduous tracks, to reach your mountain's head;
New rules 'tis now my province to impart;
First to *invent*, and then *dispose* with art;

Each a laborious task ; but they who share
 Heav'n's kinder bounty, and peculiar care ;
 A glorious train of images may find,
 Preventing hope, and crowding on the mind.
 The other task to settle ev'ry part,
 Depends on judgment, and the pow'rs of art ;
 From whence in chief the poet hopes to raise
 His future glory, and immortal praise.

T H I S, as a rule, the noblest bards esteem,
 To touch at first in gen'ral on the theme ;
 To hint at all the subject in a line ;
 And draw in miniature the whole design.
 Nor in themselves confide ; but *next* implore
 The timely aid of some celestial pow'r ;
 To guide your labours, and point out your road ;
 Choose, as you please, your tutelary god ;
 But still invoke some guardian deity,
 Some pow'r, to look auspicious from the sky ;
 To nothing great should mortals bend their care,
 'Till *Jove* be solemnly address'd in pray'r.
 'Tis not enough to call for aid divine,
 And court but once the favour of the nine ;
 When objects rise, that mock your toil and pain,
 Above the labour and the reach of man ;
 Then you may supplicate the blest abodes,
 And ask the friendly succour of the gods.
 Shock not your reader, nor begin too fierce,
 Nor swell and bluster in a pomp of verse ;
 At first all needless ornament remove,
 To shun his prejudice, and win his love.
 When you set out, you meet with most success,
 In plain *expression*, and a modest dress.
 For if too arrogant you vaunt your might,
 You fall with greater scandal in the fight,
 When on the nicest point your fortune stands,
 And all your courage, all your strength demands,
 With gradual *flights* surprize us as we read,
 And let more glorious *images* succeed,
 To wake our souls, to kindle our desire
 Still to read on, and fan the rising fire.

But

But ne'er the *subject* of your wit proclaim
 In its own colours, and its genuine name;
 Let it by distant tokens be convey'd,
 And wrapt in other *words*, and cover'd in their shade,
 At last the subject from the friendly shroud
 Bursts out, and shines the brightest from the cloud;
 Then the dissolving darkness breaks away,
 And ev'ry object glares in open day.
 And hence * *Ulysses*' toils were I to choose,
 For the main theme that should employ my muse;
 By his long labours of immortal fame,
 I'd paint my hero, but conceal his name;
 As one, who lost at sea, had nations seen,
 And mark'd their towns, their manners, and their men,
 Since *Troy* was level'd to the dust by *Greece*;
 'Till a few lines epitomiz'd the piece.

BUT study now what order to maintain,
 To link the work in one continu'd chain,
 That when the muse unravels all her scheme,
 And at the proper time unfolds the theme;
 Each part may find its own determin'd place,
 Laid out with method, and dispos'd with grace;
 That to the destin'd scope the piece may tend,
 And keep one constant tenor to the end.
 First to surprizing *novelties* inclin'd,
 The bards some unexpected objects find,
 To wake attention, and suspend the mind.
 A cold dull order bravely they forsake;
 Fixt and resolv'd the winding way to take,
 They nobly deviate from the beaten track.
 The poet marks th' occasion, as he sings,
 To launch out boldly from the midst of *things*,
 Where some distinguisht incident he views,
 Some shining action that deserves a muse;
 Thence by degrees the wond'ring reader brings
 To trace the subject backward to its springs,
 Lest at his ent'rance he should idly stay,
 Shock'd at his toil, and dubious of his way;

* Vid. *Hom. Odyss.* Lib. 1,

For when set down so near the promis'd goal,
 The flatt'ring prospect tempts and fires his soul;
 Already past the treach'rous bounds appear,
 Then most at distance, when they seem so near;
 Far from his grasp the fleeting haven flies,
 Courts his pursuit, but mocks his dazzled eyes;
 The promis'd land which he with joy had spy'd,
 Vast tracts of oceans from his reach divide;
 Still must he backward steer his lengthen'd way,
 And plough a wide interminable sea.

No skilful poet would his muse employ,
 From *Paris*' vote to trace the fall of *Troy*,
 Nor ev'ry deed of *Hector* to relate,
 While his strong arm suspended *Ilium*'s fate;
 Work for some annalists, some heavy fool,
 Correctly dry, and regularly dull.

* Best near the end those dreadful scenes appear,
 Wake *then*, and rouse the furies of the war.

But for his ravisht fair at first engage,
Peleides' soul in unrelenting rage.

Be this the cause that ev'ry *Phrygian* flood
 Swells with red waves, and rolls a tide of blood;
 That *Xanthus*' urns a purple deluge pour,
 And the deep trenches float with human gore.

Nor former deeds in silence must we lose,
 The league at *Aulis*, and the mutual vows,
 The *Spartan* raging for his ravisht spouse;
 The thousand ships, the woes which *Ilium* bore
 From *Greece*, for nine revolving years before.

This † rule with judgment should the bard maintain,
 Who brings *Laertes*' wand'ring son again,
 From burning *Ilium* to his native reign.

Let him not launch from *Ida*'s strand his ships,
 With his attendant friends into the deeps;

Nor stay to vanquish the *Ciconian* host;
 But set him down, (his dear companion's lost,
 With fair *Calypso* on th'*Ogygian* coast.

* See *Homer's Iliad*.

† See his *Odysssey*.

From thence, a world of toils and dangers past,
 Waft him to rich *Phaacia's* realms at last.
 There at the feast his wand' rings to relate,
 His friends dire change, his own relentless fate.
 But if the bard of former actions sings,
 He wisely draws, from those remoter springs,
 The present order, and the course of things.
 As yet unfold th' *event* on no pretence,
 'Tis your chief task to keep us in suspense.
 Nor tell what * presents *Atreus'* son prepares,
 To reconcile *Achilles* to the wars;
 Or † by what god's auspicious conduct led,
 From *Polyphemus'* den *Ulysses* fled.
 Pleas'd with the toil, and on the prospect bent,
 Our souls leap forward to the wish'd event.
 No call of nature can our search restrain,
 And sleep, and thirst, and hunger plead in vain.
 Glad we pursue the labour we embrac'd,
 And leave reluctant, when we leave at last.
 See! how the bard, triumphant in his art,
 Sports with our passions, and commands the heart!
 Now here, now there he turns the varying song,
 And draws at will the captive soul along;
 Fixt on the dark *event*, in ev'ry sense
 We feel the pleasing anguish of suspense.
 When ‡ *Homer* once has promis'd to rehearse
 Bold *Paris'* fight, in many a sounding verse,
 He soon perceives his reader's warm desire
 Wrapt in th' *event*, and all his soul on fire;
 Then he with art contrives some specious stay,
 Before he tells the fortune of the day.
 'Till *Helen* to the king and elders show,
 From some tall tow'r, the leaders of the foe,
 And name the heroes in the fields below.
 || When chaste *Penelope*, to gain her end,
 Invites her suitors the tough bow to bend;

* See *Iliad*. Lib. 19.
 || *Odyssey* 21.

† *Odyssey* 9.

‡ *Iliad* 3.

(Her nuptial bed, the victor's promis'd prize)
 With what address her various arts she plies,
 Skill'd in delays, and politickly slow,
 To search her treasures for her hero's bow?
 NONE lead the reader in the dark along
 To the last goal that terminates the song;
 Sometimes th' *event* must glance upon the sight,
 By a short glimm'ring, and malignant light,
 That shifts, and *just* diversifies the night.
 'Tis thus *Anchises* to his son relates
 The various series of his future fates;
 For this the † prophets see on *Tyber's* shore,
 Wars, horrid wars, and *Latium* red with gore,
 A new *Achilles* rising to destroy,
 With boundless rage, the poor remains of *Troy*;
 But raise his mind with prospects of success,
 And give the promise of a lasting peace.
 This knew the hero, when he fought the plains,
 Sprung * from his ships, and charg'd th' embattled swains,
 Hew'd down the *Latian* troops with matchless might,
 (The first, auspicious omen of the fight,)
 And at one blow gigantick *Theron* kill'd,
 Bold, but in vain, and foremost of the field.
 Thus too ‡ *Patroclus* with his latest breath,
 Foretold his unregarding victor's death;
 His parting soul anticipates the blow
 That waits on *Hector* from a greater foe.
 Thou too, poor *Turnus*, long before thy doom,
 Couldst read thy end, and antedate a tomb,
 When o'er thy head the baleful fury flew,
 And in dire omens set thy fate to view;
 A bird obscene, she flutter'd o'er the field,
 And scream'd thy death, and beat thy sounding shield.
 For lo! the time, the fatal time is come,
 Charg'd with thy death, and heavy with thy doom;
 When *Turnus*; tho' in vain, shall rue the day,
 Shall curse the golden belt he bore away;

† Vid. *Æneid*, Lib. VI. v. 890. • *Æn.* III. v. 498

‡ *Æneid*, Lib. I. v. 531.

Shall wish too late young *Pallas*' spoils unfought,
 And mourn the conquest he so dearly bought.
 Th' *event* should glimmer thro' its gloomy shrow'd,
 Tho' yet confus'd and struggling in the cloud.

So, to the trav'ler, as he journeys on,
 To reach the walls of some far distant town.
 If, high in air, the dubious turrets rise,
 Peep o'er the hills, and dance before his eyes;
 Pleas'd the refreshing prospect to survey,
 Each stride he lengthens, and beguiles the way.
 More pleas'd, (the tempting scene in view) to go,
 Than pensively to walk the gloomy vales below.

UNLESS the theme within your bosom roll,
 Work in each thought, and run thro' all the soul;
 Unless you alter with incessant pain,
 Pull down and build the fabrick o'er again;
 In vain, when rival-wits your wonder raise,
 You'll strive to match those beauties which you praise.

TO one just scope with fixt design go on;
 Let sov'reign reason dictate from her throne,
 By what determin'd methods to advance,
 But never trust to arbitrary chance.
 Where chance presides, all *objects* wildly join'd,
 Crowd on the reader, and distract his mind;
 From *theme* to *theme* unwilling is he tost,
 And in the dark variety is lost.
 You see some bards, who bold excursions make,
 In long *digressions*, from the beaten track,
 And paint a wild unnecessary throng,
 Of things and *objects* foreign to the song,
 For new descriptions from the road depart,
 Devoid of order, discipline and art.
 So, many an anxious toil and danger past,
 Some wretch returns from banishment at last,
 With fond delay to range the shady wood,
 Now here, now there, he wanders from the road;
 From field to field, from stream to stream, he roves,
 And courts the cooling shelter of the groves.

For why should * *Homer* deck the gorgeous car,
 When our rais'd souls are eager for the war ;
 Or dwell on ev'ry wheel, when loud alarms,
 And *Mars* in thunder, calls the hosts to arms ;
 When with his heroes we some † dastard find,
 Of a vile aspect, and malignant mind,
 His awkward figure is not worth our care,
 His monstrous length of head, or want of hair.
 Tho' the wretch goes with mountain shoulders by,
 Short of a foot, or blinking in an eye,
 Such trivial objects call us off too long
 From the main drift, and tenor of the song.
 † *Drances* appears a juster character,
 In council bold, but cautious in the war ;
 Factious and loud the list'ning throng he draws,
 And swells with wealth, and popular applause ;
 But what in our's would never find a place,
 The bold *Greek* language may admit with grace.

W H Y should I here the stratagems recite,
 And the low tricks of ev'ry little wit :
 Some out of time their stock of knowledge boast,
 'Till in the pedant all the bard is lost.
 Such without care their useless lumber place,
 One black, confus'd and undigested mass ;
 With a wild heap encumbers ev'ry part,
 Nor rang'd with grace, nor methodiz'd with art.
 But *then* in chief, when things abstruse they teach,
 Themes too abstracted for the vulgar reach ;
 The hidden nature of the deities ;
 The secret laws and motions of the skies ;
 Or from what dark original began
 The fiery soul, and kindled up the man.
 Oft they in odious instances engage,
 And for *examples* ransack ev'ry age,
 With ev'ry realm ; no hero will they pass,
 But act against the rules of *time* and *place*.

* Vid. *Homer's Iliad*. Lib. 5. v. 722. * Vid. *Il.* 2.
 v. 212. † Vid. *Virg. Æneid*. Lib. 11. v. 336.

Avoid, ye youths, these practises, nor raise
 Your swelling souls to such a thirst of praise.
 Some bards of eminence there are, we own,
 Who sing sometimes the journeys of the sun,
 The rising stars, and labours of the moon:
 What impulse bids the ocean rise and fall;
 What motions shake, and rock the trembling ball,
 Tho' foreign subjects had engag'd their care,
 The rage, the din and thunder of the war,
 Thro' the loud field, the genius of the earth;
 Or precepts to improve the vegetable birth.
 Yet 'tis But seldom, and when *time* and *place*
 Require the thing, and reconcile to grace,
 Those foreign objects necessary seem,
 And flow, to all appearance, from the theme
 With so much art, and well conceal'd; they please,
 When wrought with skill, and introduc'd with ease.
 Should not * *Anchises*, such occasion shown,
 Resolve the questions of his god-like son?
 If souls depriv'd of heav'n's fair light repair
 Once more to day, and breathe the vital air?
 Or if from high *Olympus* first they came,
 Inspir'd with portions of ethereal flame,
 Tho' here encumber'd with the mortal frame?
 Tire not too long *one* subject when you write,
 For 'tis variety that gives delight;
 But when to *that* variety inclin'd,
 You seek new objects to relieve the mind;
 Be sure let nothing forc'd or labour'd seem,
 But watch your time, and steal from off your theme.
 Conceal with care, your longing to depart,
 For art's chief glory 'tis, to cover art.
 So † *Mulciber* in future ages skill'd,
 Engrav'd *Rome's* glories on *Æneas's* shield,
 On the bright orb her future fame enroll'd;
 And with her triumphs charg'd the rising gold;
 Here figur'd fights the blazing rounds adorn;
 There his long line of heroes yet unborn.

* Vid. *Æneid.* Lib. 6.

† *Æn.* Lib. 8. v. 266.

But if a * poet of *Ausonian* birth,
 Describes the various kingdoms of the earth,
 Wide intersperst, the *Medes* or swarthy *Moors*;
 The diff'rent natures of their soils explores,
 And paints the trees that bloom on *India's* shores.
 Of his own land regardless he appears,
 Unless he praise *Ausonia* to the stars;
 To all the rest his country he prefers,
 And makes the woods of *Bactria* yield to her's:
 With proud *Panchaia*, thro' the groves she boasts,
 And breaths a cloud of incense from her coasts.

H E A R then, ye gen'rous youths, on this regard,
 I should not blame the conduct of the bard,
 Who in soft numbers, and a flowing strain,
 Relieves and reconciles our ears again.
 When I the various implements had sung
 That to the fields, and rural trade belong,
 In sweet harmonious measures would I tell
 † How nature mourn'd when the great *Cæsar* fell.
 When *Bacchus'* curling vines had grac'd my lays,
 The rural pleasures next † should share my praise.
 The labour ended, and compleat the whole,
 Some bards with pleasure wander round the goal,
 The flights and sallies of the muse prolong,
 And add new beauties to the finish'd song;
 Pleas'd with th'excurſion of the charming strain,
 We strive to quit the work, but strive in vain.
 Thus, were the bees the subject of my muse,
 Their laws, their natures and celestial dews;
 Poor || *Aristæus* should his fate disclose,
 His mother's counsel should assuage his woes;
 Old *Proteus* here should struggle in his chain,
 There in soft verse the *Thracian* bards complain,
 (As *Philomela* on a poplar's bough,
 Bewails her young, melodious in her woe)
Pangæan sleeps his sorrows should return,
 And vocal *Thrace* with *Rhodope* should mourn,
 And groaning *Hebras* weep from ev'ry urn.

* Vid. *Virg. Georg.* Lib. 2. v. 136. † *Ibid.* Lib. 1. v. 456.
 † *Georg.* 8. Lib. 2. v. 45 || *Id.* 11. v. 317. Thus

Thus too the poets, who the names declare,
 Of kings and nations gath'ring to the war,
 Sometimes diversifie the strain, and sing
 The wond'rous change of the * *Ligurian* king.
 While for his *Phaeton* his sorrows flow,
 And his harmonious strains beguile his woe,
 The snowy feathers steal o'er all the man,
 And turn the poet to a tuneful swan.
 Thus too † *Hippolitus* by *Dian's* care,
 And *Paan's* art returns to upper air.
 The bards now paint the arms their heroes wield,
 And each bold figure on the glitt'ring shield.
 Fair ‡ *Aventinus*, fair *Alcides's* son,
 Wore the proud trophy which his father won;
 An hundred serpents o'er the buckler roll'd,
 And *Hydra* hiss from all her heads in gold.
 Now blooming *Tempe's* cool retreats they sing,
 And now with flow'ry beauties paint the spring.
 Now with a sylvan scene the floods they hide;
 Or teach'd the fam'd *Eridanus* to glide;
 Or sport on fabled *Achelous's* side.
 Or hoary *Nereus's* num'rous race display,
 The hundred azure sisters of the sea.
 With them the nymphs that haunt their native woods,
 And the long orders of the sylvan gods.

WITH gay descriptions sprinkle here and there,
 Some grave instructive sentences with care,
 That touch on life, some moral good pursue,
 And give us virtue in a transient view;
 Rules, which the future sire may make his own,
 And point the golden precepts to his son.

SOMETIMES on little images to fall,
 And thus illustrate mighty things by small;
 And that with due success the poet dares,
 When to the || ants the *Phrygians* he compares,
 Who leaving *Carthage* gather to the seas;
 Or the laborious *Tyrians* to the * bees.

* *Æn.* Lib. 10. v. 185. † *Ib.* L. 7. v. 756. ‡ *Ib.* v. 655. || *Æn.* Lib. 9. v. 402. ** *Ib.* L. 1. v. 434.

But

But swarms of * flies; offensive animals,
 That buz incessant o'er the smoaking pails,
 Are images too low to paint the hosts,
 That roll, and blacken o'er *Ausonia's* coasts.
 The lofty muse who sung the *Latian* war,
 Would think such trivial things beneath her care;
 How from his majesty would *Virgil* fall,
 If *Turnus* scarce repell'd from *Illion's* wall,
 Retiring grimly with a tardy pace,
 Should then be figur'd by the patient † ass,
 Whom unregarded troops of boys surround,
 While o'er his sides their rattling strokes resound,
 Slow he gives way, and crops the springing grain:
 Turns on each side, and stops to graze again;
 In ev'ry point the thing is just, we know,
 But then the image is it self too low.
 For *Turnus*, sprung from such a glorious race,
 Disdains the vile resemblance of an ass.
 With better grace the ‡ lion you'll apply,
 When wrath and courage both forbid to fly;
 Tho' not sufficient in himself alone
 To fight a multitude oppos'd to one.

SINCE *fictions* are allow'd, be sure, ye youths,
 Your *fictions* wear at least the air of truths.
 When || *Glaucus* meets *Tydides* on the plain,
 Inflam'd with rage, and reeking from the slain;
 Some think they could not pass the time away,
 In such long narratives, and cool delay,
 Amidst the raging tumult of the day.
 But yet we hear fierce *Diomed* relate,
 The crime of bold *Lycurgus* and his fate;
 And *Glaucus* talks of brave *Bellerophon*,
 Doom'd for a lawless passion, not his own;
 Sets forth the hero's great exploits to view,
 How the bold chief the dire *Chimera* slew,
 The *Solyman* host, and *Amazonian* crew.

* *Iliad* Lib. 2. v. 469. † *Il.* L. 11. v. 557. ‡ *Æn.*
 L. 9 v. 792. *Il.* L. 6. v. 119.

For those surprizing *fictions* are design'd,
 With their sweet falshoods to delight the mind;
 The bards expect no credit should be giv'n
 To the bare eye, tho' authoriz'd by heav'n,
 Which oft with confidence they vent abroad,
 Beneath the needful sanction of a god.

'Twas thus the * roasted heifers of the sun
 Spoke o'er the fire, with accents not their own;
 'Twas thus † *Achilles*' sneed his silence broke,
 And † *Trojan* ships in human voices spoke;
 As wrought by heav'n these wonders they relate,
 All airy visions of the ivory gate.

S P E A K things but once if order be your care,
 For more the cloy'd attention will not bear,
 And tedious repetitions fire the ear.

In this we differ from the *Grecian* train,
 Who || tell *Atrides*' visions o'er again.

'Tis not enough with *them* to tell the cause,
 Why great *Achilles* from the war withdraws,
 Unless the * weeping hero on the shore,
 Tells his blue mother all we heard before.

So much on punctual niceties they stand,
 That when their kings dispatch some high command,
 All, word for word, th' †† embassadors rehearse,
 In the same tenor of unvary'd verse.

Not so did ** *Venulus* from *Arpi* bring
 The final answer of th' *Ætolian* king.

L E T others labour on a vast design,
 A less, but polisht with due care, be thine.
 To change its structure be your last delight,
 Thus spend the day, and exercise the night.
 Incessant in your toil, but if you choose
 A larger field and subject for your muse;
 If scanty limits should the theme confine,
 Learn with just art to lengthen the design

* Vid. *Odyss.* Lib. 12. v. 395. † *Ill.* L. 17. v. 496.
 † *Æneid.* L. 10. v. 228. || Vid. *Iliad.* L. 2. * *Ib.*
 L. 1. v. 370. †† *Ib.* L. 9. v. 264. ** *Æneid.* Lib.
 11. v. 243.

Beyond its native bounds, the roving mind
 A thousand methods to this end may find;
 Un-numbered *fictions* may with truths be join'd.
 Nature supplies a fund of matter still;
 Then cull the rich variety at will.

See how the * bard calls down th'embattled gods,
 All rang'd in factions from the bright abodes;
 Who fir'd with mutual hate their arms employ,
 And in the field declare for *Greece* or *Troy*;
 'Till *Jove* convenes a council to assuage
 Their rising fury, and suspend their rage;
 Tho' the blest gods, remov'd from human eyes,
 Live in immortal ease within the distant skies.

And now th' infernal realm his theme he makes,
 The reign of *Pluto*, the *Tartarean* lakes,
 The furies dreadful with their curling snakes.
 He gathers omens from each bird that flies,
 And signs from ev'ry wing that beats the skies.
 He now describes a banquet where the guest,
 Prolongs with narratives the royal feast.
 Or at the glorious hero's tomb we read,
 Of games ordain'd in honour of the dead.
 And oft for mercies in old times display'd
 To their own gods their annual rites are paid.
 For monstrous *Python* slain, their voices rise,
 And lift the fame of *Phæbus* to the skies.
 In hymns *Alcides*' labours they resound,
 While *Cacus* lies extended on the ground,
 Alternate sing the labours of his hands,
 Enjoin'd by first *Eurystheus*' stern commands;
 The den of *Cacus* crowns the grateful strain,
 Where the grim monster breathes his flames in vain.

MARK how sometimes the bard without controul,
 Exerts his fire, and pours forth all his soul,
 His lines so daring, and his words so strong,
 We see the subject figur'd in the song.

* All these particulars to the end of this paragraph,
 are taken from Homer and Virgil.

When with the winds old * *Ocean* he deforms,
 Or paints the rage and horrors of the storms,
 Or drives on pointed rocks the bursting ships,
 Tost on the *Euxine* or *Sicilian* deeps.
 Or sings the † plagues that blast the livid sky,
 When beasts by herds, and men by nations dye;
 Or the fierce ‡ flames that out of *Ætna* rise,
 When from her mouth the bursting vapour flies,
 And charg'd with ruin thunders to the skies.
 While drifts of smoke in sooty whirlwinds play,
 And clouds of cinders stain the golden day.
 See! as the poet sounds the dire alarms,
 Calls on the war, and sets the hosts in arms;
 Squadrons on squadrons driv'n, confus'dly dye;
 Grim *Mars* in all his terrors strikes the eye;
 More than description rising to the fight,
 Presents the real horrors of the fight;
 A new creation seems our praise to claim,
 (Hence *Greece* derives the sacred .*. poet's name;) }
 The dreadful clang of clashing arms we hear;
 The agonizing groan, the fruitless pray'r, }
 And shrieks of suppliants thicken on the ear.
 Who, when he reads a || city storm'd, forbears
 To feel her woes, and sympathize in tears!
 When o'er the palaces the flames aspire
 From wall to wall, and wrap the domes in fire.
 The fire, with years and hostile rage oppress!
 The starting infant, clinging to the breast!
 The trembling mother runs, with piercing cries
 Thro' friends and foes, and shrieking rends the skies.
 Dragg'd from the altar, the distracted fair,
 Beats her white breast, and tears her golden hair.
 Here in thick crowds the vanquish'd fly away,
 There the proud victors heap the wealthy prey;
 With rage relentless ravish their abodes,
 Nor spare the sacred temples of the gods.
 O'er the whole town they run with wild affright,
 Tumultuous haste, and violence of flight.

* Vid. *Æneid.* Lib. 1. v. 571. † *Ibid.* L. 3. v. 137. ‡ *Ib.*
 .*. ἀτὴ ποιεῖν. || Vid. *Æneid.* Lib. 2.

WHY should I mention how our souls aspire,
 Lost in the raptures of the sacred fire?
 For ev'n the soul not always holds the same,
 But knows at diff'rent times, a diff'rent frame.
 Whether with rolling seasons she complies,
 Turns with the sun, or changes with the skies.
 Or thro' long toil, remissive of her fires,
 Droops with the mortal frame her force inspires.
 Or that our minds alternately appear
 Now bright with joy, and now o'er-cast with care.
 The gods, the gods much rather must supply
 The glorious fires, they speak the deity.
 Then blest is he who waits th' auspicious nod,
 The warmth divine, and presence of the god;
 Who his suspended labours can refrain,
 'Till heav'n's serene indulgence smile again.
 But strive, on no pretence, against your pow'r,
 'Till time brings back the voluntary hour.
 Sometimes their verdant honours leave the woods,
 And their dry urns defraud the thirsty floods;
 Nor rivers always a full channel yield,
 Nor spring with flow'ry beauties paints the field;
 The bards no less such fickle changes find,
 Damp't is the noble ardour of the mind;
 Their wonted toil her weary'd pow'rs refuse;
 Their souls grow slack and languid to the muse.
 Deaf to their call, their efforts are withstood;
 Round their cold hearts congeals the freezing blood.
 You'd think the muses fled, the god no more
 Would fire the bosom where he dwelt before;
 How often, ah! how often, tho' in vain,
 The poet would renew the wonted strain!
 Nor sees the gods who thwart his fruitless care,
 Nor angry heav'n relentless to his pray'r.
 Some read the ancient bards, of deathless fame,
 And from their raptures catch the noble flame;
 By just degrees, they feed the glowing vein,
 And all th' immortal ardour burns again
 In its full light and heat; the sun's bright ray,
 Thus, (when the clouds disperse) restores the day:
 Whence shot this sudden flash that gilds the pole?
 The god, the god comes rushing on his soul;

Fires with æthereal vigour ev'ry part ;
 Thro' ev'ry trembling limb he seems to dart,
 Works in each vein, and swells his rising heart.
 Deep in his breast the heav'nly tumult plays,
 And sets his mounting spirits on a blaze.
 Nor can the raging flames themselves contain,
 For the whole god descends into the man.
 He quits mortality ; he knows no bounds ;
 But sings inspir'd in more than human sounds.
 Nor from his breast can shake th'immortal load,
 But pants and raves impatient of the god ;
 And rapt beyond himself admires the force
 That drives him on, reluctant to the course.
 He *calls* on *Phæbus* by the god oppress'd,
 Who breathes excessive spirit in his breast ;
 No *force* of thirst or hunger can controul
 The fierce, the ruling transport of his soul.
 Oft in their sleep inflam'd with rage divine,
 Some bards enjoy the visions of the nine ;
 Visions ! themselves with due applause may crown,
 And ev'n *Apollo* would not blush to own.
 To such an height the god exalts the flame,
 And so unbounded is their thirst of fame.
 But here, ye youths, exert your timely care,
 Nor trust th'ungovernable rage too far ;
 Use not your fortune, nor unfurl your sails,
 Tho' *call'd*, tho' courted by the flatt'ring gales,
 Refuse them still, and *call* your judgment in,
 While the fierce god exults and reigns within ;
 To reason's standard be your thoughts confin'd,
 Let *reason* rule the fallies of the mind.
 Indulge your heat with conduct, and restrain,
 Learn when to draw, and when to give the rein.
 But always wait, 'till the warm raptures cease,
 And lull the tumults of the soul to peace ;
 Then, nor 'till then, examine strictly o'er,
 What your wild fallies might suggest before.
 BE sure, from *nature* never to depart ;
 To copy *nature* is the task of *art*.
 The noblest poets own her sov'reign sway,
 And always follow where she leads the way.

From *her* the diff'rent *characters* they trace
 That mark the human or the savage race,
 Each various and distinct; in every stage
 They paint mankind; their humours, sex and age;
 They shew what manners the slow sage become,
 What the brisk youth in all his sprightly Bloom.
 In ev'ry *word* and sentiment explain,
 How the proud monarch differs from the swain.
 I nauseate all confounded characters,
 Where young *Telemachus* too grave appears,
 Or rev'rend *Nestor* acts beneath his years.
 The poet suits his *speeches*, when he sings
 To proper *persons*, and the state of *things*;
 On each their just distinctions are bestow'd,
 To mark a male, a female, or a god.
 Thus when in * heav'n seditious tumults rise,
 Amongst the radiant senate of the skies,
 The fire of gods, and sov'reign of mankind,
 In a few words unfolds his sacred mind:
 Not so fair *Venus*, who at large replies,
 And pities *Troy*, and counts her miseries
 Woes undeserv'd; but with contention fir'd,
 And with the spirit of revenge inspir'd,
 Fierce *Juno* storms amidst the blest abodes,
 And stuns with loud complaints the list'ning gods.
 When youthful † *Turnus* the stern combat claims,
 His heart beats courage, and his soul's in flames,
 Impell'd by rage, and bent to prove his might,
 His *soul* springs forward, and prevents the fight;
 Rouz'd to revenge, his kindling spirits glow,
 Confirm his challenge, and provoke the foe,
 The fugitive of *Troy*. - - - But while his rage
 And youthful courage prompts him to engage;
 On *Latium's* king incumbent it appears,
 Grown old in prudence, piety and years,
 To weigh events, and youthful heat assuage
 With the cold caution, and the fears of age.
 In *Dido's* various character is seen
 The furious lover, and the gracious queen;

* Vid. *Aeneid*. Lib. 10.† *Aeneid*. Lib. 12. ver. 9.

When *Troy's* fam'd chief commanded from above,
 Prepares to quit her kingdom, and her love,
 She raves, she storms with unavailing care,
 Grown wild with grief, and frantick with despair.
 Thro' ev'ry street she flies, with anguish stung,
 And broken accents flutter on her tongue;
 Her words confus'd, and interrupted flow,
 Speak and exprefs the hurry of her woe.

Ah! how is *Dido*, in that *Dido* lost,
 Who late receiv'd the *Trojans* on her coast,
 And bad 'em banish grief, and share her throne,
 Dismiss their fears, and think her realms their own.

N E X T the great orators consult, and thence
 Draw all the moving turns of eloquence;
 That * *Simon* may his *Phrygian* foes betray,
 And lead the crowd, as fraud directs the way;
 That wise † *Ulysses* may the *Greeks* detain,
 While *Troy* yet stood, from meas'ring back the main.
 Need I name ‡ *Nestor*, who could talk to peace,
 With melting words, the factious kings of *Greece*;
 Whose soft address their fury could controul,
 Mould ev'ry passion, and subdue the soul!
 These soothing arts to || *Venus* sure were known,
 To beg immortal arms, to grace her son.
 Her injur'd spouse each thrilling word inspires,
 With ev'ry pang of love to second her desires.
 With nicest art the fair adult'refs draws
 Her fond addressees from a distant cause;
 And all her guileful accents are design'd
 To catch his passions, and ensnare his mind.
 'Tis hence the poet learns in ev'ry part,
 To bend the soul, and give with wond'rous art,
 A thousand diff'rent motions to the heart.
 Hence, as his subject gay or sad appears,
 He claims our joy, or triumphs in our tears.
 Who, when he sees how * * *Orpheus'* sorrows flow,
 Weeps not his tears, and answers woe for woe?
 When he his dear *Euridice* deplores,
 To the deaf rocks, and solitary shores;

* *Æneid*. Lib. 2. † *Iliad*. L. 2. ‡ *Ib*. L. 1. v. 246.
 || *Æneid*. Lib. 8. v. 404. * * *Georg*. 4. v. 464.

With the soft harp the bard relieves his pain,
 For thee, when morning dawns, prolongs the strain,
 For thee, when *Phæbus* seeks the seas again.
 Or when the young * *Euryalus* is kill'd,
 And rolls in death along the bloody field;
 Like some fair flow'r beneath the share he lies,
 His head declin'd, and drooping as he dies,
 The reader's soul is touch'd with gen'rous woe,
 And longs to rush with *Nisus* on the foe;
 He burns with friendly pity to the dead,
 To raise the youth, and prop his sinking head;
 And strives in vain to stop the gushing blood,
 That stains his bosom with a purple flood.

BUT if the bard such images pursues,
 That raise the blushes of the virgin-muse;
 Let them be slightly touch'd, and ne'er express;
 Give but an hint, and let us guess the rest.
 If *Jove* commands the gath'ring storms to rise,
 And with deep thunders rends the vaulted skies,
 In the same cave together may be seen
 The † *Trojan* hero, and the *Tyrian* queen;
 The poet's modesty must add no more;
 Enough, that earth had giv'n the sign before;
 The conscious *Æther* was with flames o'erspread,
 The nymphs ran shrieking round the mountain's head;
 Nor let young *Troilus*, unhappy boy,
 Meet fierce *Achilles* in the plains of *Troy*;
 But shew th' unequal youth's untimely fall
 To great *Æneas* on the *Tyrian* wall;
 Supine and hanging from his empty ear,
 Drag'd by his panting coursers thro' the war.
 This, from our bright examples you may trace,
 To write with judgment, decency and grace;
 From others learn *invention* to increase,
 And search in chief the glorious sons of *Greece*;
 For her bright treasures *Argos'* realms explore,
 Bring home triumphant all her gather'd store,
 And with her spoils enrich the *Latian* shore,
 Nor is the glory of *translation* less,
 To give the *Grecian* bards a *Roman* dress,

* *Æneid*, 9. v. 433.

† *Ibid.* 4. v. 165.

If *Phœbus*'s gracious smiles the labour crown,
 Than if some new invention were your own.
Mincio's and *Manto*'s glorious son behold ;
 Th'immortal *Virgil* sheath'd in foreign gold,
 Shines out unsham'd, and tow'rs above the rest
 In the rich spoils of godlike *Homer* drest.

Let *Greece* in triumph boast that she imparts,
 To *Latium*'s conqu'ring realms her glorious arts ;
 While *Latium*'s sons improve her best designs,
 'Till by degrees each polish'd labour shines ;
 While *Rome* advances now in arts, as far
 Above all cities, as of old in war.

YE gods of *Rome*, ye guardian deities,
 Who lift our nation's glory to the skies ;
 And thou, *Apollo*, the great source of *Troy*,
 Let *Rome* at least this single palm enjoy,
 To shine in arts supreme, as once in pow'r,
 And teach the nations she subdu'd before ;
 Since discord all *Ausonia*'s kings alarms,
 And clouds the ancient glories of her arms.
 In our own breasts we sheath the civil sword,
 Our country naked to a foreign lord ;
 Which lately prostrate, started from despair,
 Burn'd with new hopes, and arm'd her hands for war ;
 But arm'd in vain ; - - - th'inexorable heat
 Of envious fortune, call'd her to her fate,
 Infatiate in her rage ; her frowns oppose
 The *Latian* fame, and heap up woes on woes.
 Our dread alarms each foreign monarch took,
 Thro' all their tribes the distant nations shook ;
 To earth's last bounds the fame of *Leo* runs,
Nile heard, and *Indus* trembled for his sons.
Arabia heard the *Medicean* line,
 The first of men, and sprung from race divine.
 The sov'reign priest, and mitred king appears
 With his lov'd *Julius* join'd, who kindly shares
 The reins of empire, and the publick cares,
 To break their country's chains, the gen'rous pair
 Concert their schemes, and meditate the war.
 On *Leo* *Europe*'s monarchs turn their eyes,
 On him alone the western world relies ;

48 *VIDA'S ART of POETRY.*

And each bold chief attends his dread alarms,
 While the proud crescent fades before his arms.
 High on his splendid car, immortal *Rome*,
 Thine eyes had seen the holy warrior come,
 Lord of the vanquish'd world, in triumph home.
 Thy streams, old *Tyber*, swell'd with conscious pride,
 Had born thy kindred warrior down thy tide;
 While crowded up in heaps thy waves admire
 The captive nations, and their strange attire;
 Behind his wheels march a numerous train
 Of scepter'd slaves reluctant to the chain;
 Forget their haughty threats, and boast in vain.
 Tho' the proud foe, of *Jury's* realm possesst,
 Now spreads his wide dominion thro' the east;
 Sees his dread standard there at large unfurl'd,
 And grasps in thought the empire of the world;
 And now (ye gods) increas't in barb'rous pow'r,
 His armies hover o'er th' *Hesperian* shore.
 To see the passing pomp, the ravisht throng
 Thro' ev'ry street should flow in tides along;
 The sacred father, as the numbers roll'd,
 Should his dear citizens again behold,
 High o'er the shouting crowds enthron'd in gold;
 Should shew the trophies of his glorious toils,
 And hang the shrines with consecrated spoils.
 Piles of *Barbarick* gold should glitter there,
 The wealth of kingdoms, and the pomp of war;
 But, by your crime, ye gods, our hopes are cross't,
 And those imaginary triumphs lost;
 Interr'd with *Leo*, in one fatal hour,
 Our prospects perish'd, as they liv'd before.

The End of the second Book.

V I D A's
ART of POETRY,
Translated into
ENGLISH VERSE,

By the Reverend

Mr. CHRISTOPHER PITT, A. M.

Late FELLOW of *New-College* in *Oxford*,
Rector of *Pimpern* in *Dorsetshire*, and Chaplain to
the Right Honourable *PHILIP*, Earl *STAN-*
HOP E, &c.

B O O K III.



D U B L I N:

Printed by *J. Watts*, for *J. Thompson*, at the
Sign of the *Bible* on *Cork-Hill*, next Door to
Lucas's Coffee-House. MDCCLXXVI.

Handwritten text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is extremely faint and illegible due to the quality of the scan. It appears to be organized into several paragraphs or sections, but the specific words and sentences cannot be discerned.



V I D A's

Art of Poetry, &c.

BOOK III.



THAT *style*, what *language* suits the poet's
lays,

To claim *Apollo's*, and the muses praise,
I now unfold, to this last bound I tend,
And see my promis'd labours at an end.

FIRST, then with care a just *ex-*
pression chuse,

Led by the kind indulgence of the muse,
To dress up ev'ry subject when you write,
And set all objects in a proper light.

But lest the distant prospect of the goal (troul, }
Should damp your vigour, and your strength con- }
Rouse ev'ry pow'r, and call forth all the soul.

See! how the nine the panting youth invite,
With one loud voice to reach *Parnassus'* height ;
See! how they hold aloft th'immortal crown,
To urge the course, and call the victor on ;

See from the clouds each lavish goddess pours,
 Full o'er thy head, a sudden spring of flow'rs,
 And roses fall in odorif'rous show'rs,
 Celestial scents, in balmy breezes fly,
 And shed ambrosial spirits from the sky.

IN chief avoid *obscurity*, nor shroud
 Your *thoughts* and dark *conceptions* in a cloud;
 For * some we know affect to lose the light,
 Lost in forc'd *figures*, and involv'd in night,
 Studious and bent to shun the common way,
 They skulk in darkness, and abhor the day.
 Oh! may the sacred nine inspire my lays,
 To shine with pride in their own native rays;
 For this we need not importune the skies,
 In our own pow'r and will the blessing lies.
Expression, boundless in extent displays,
 A thousand forms, a thousand several ways,
 In diff'rent hues from diff'rent quarters brought,
 It makes unnumber'd dresses for a *thought*;
 Such vast varieties of ways we find,
 To paint *conception*, and unfold the mind.
 If e'er you toil, but toil without success,
 To give your *images* a shining dress,
 Quit your pursuit, and chuse a diff'rent way,
 'Till breaking forth the voluntary ray
 Cuts the thick darkness, and lets down the day.
 SINCE then a thousand forms you may pursue,
 A thousand *figures* rising to the view,
 Unless confin'd and streighten'd in your scheme,
 With the short limits of a scanty theme,
 From these to those with boundless freedom pass,
 And to each *image* give a diff'rent face.
 The readers hence a wond'rous pleasure find,
 That charms the ear, and captivates the mind
 In this the laws of nature we obey,
 And act as her example points the way,
 Which has on ev'ry diff'rent species thrown
 A shape distinct, and figure of its own;

* *Perfius* and *Lycophron*.

Man differs from the beast that haunts the woods,
The bird from ev'ry native of the floods.

SEE how the poet banishes with grace
A native term to give a * stranger place;
From diff'rent images with just success,
He cloaths his matter in the borrow'd drefs,
The borrow'd drefs the things themselves admire,
And wonder whence they drew the strange attire.
Proud of their ravisht spoils they now disclaim
Their former colour, and their genuine name,
And in another garb more beauteous grown,
Prefer the foreign habit to their own.
Oft as he paints a battle on the plain,
The battle's imag'd by the roaring main;
Now he the fight a fiery deluge names,
That pours along the fields a flood of flames;
In airy *conflict*, now the winds appear,
Alarm the deeps, and *wage* the stormy war;
To the fierce *shock* th'*embattled* tempests pour,
Waves *charge* on waves; th'*encountering* billows roar.
Thus in a vary'd drefs the subject shines,
By turns the objects shift their proper scenes;
From shape to shape alternately they run,
To borrow other's charms, and lend their own;
Pleas'd with the borrow'd charms, the readers find,
A crowd of diff'rent images combin'd
Rise from a single object to the mind. }
So the pleas'd trav'ler from a mountain's brow,
Views the calm surface of the seas below;
Tho' wide beneath the floating ocean lies,
The first *immediate* object of his eyes,
He sees the forests tremble from within,
And gliding meadows paint the deeps with green;
While to his eyes the fair delusions pass
In gay succession, thro' the watry glass.
'Tis thus the bard diversifies his song,
Now here, now there, he calls the soul along.

* *The Metaphor.*

The rich variety, he sets to sight,
 Cloys not the mind, but adds to our delight.
 Now with a frugal choice the bard affords
 The strongest light, and energy of words;
 While humble subjects, he contrives to raise
 With borrow'd splendors, and a foreign blaze.
 This, if on old tradition we rely,
 Was once the current language of the sky;
 Which first the muses brought to these abodes,
 Who taught to men the secrets of the gods.
 For in the court of *Jove* their choirs advance,
 And sing alternate, as they lead the dance;
 Mixt with the gods, they hear *Apollo's* lyre;
 And from high heav'n the panting bard inspire,
 Nor bards alone, but other *writers* reach
 This bold, this daring privilege of speech;
 In chief, the orators to raise their sense,
 In this strong *figure* dress their eloquence.
 When with persuasive strokes they plead a cause,
 And bridle vice, and vindicate the laws;
 Or on the dreadful verge of death defend,
 And snatch from fate a poor devoted friend.
 Ev'n the rough hinds delight in such a strain,
 When the *glad* harvest waves with *golden* grain,
 And *thirsty* meadows drink the *pearly* rain;
 On the *proud* vine her purple *gems* appear;
 The *smiling* fields rejoice, and hail the *pregnant* year.
 First from necessity the *figure* sprung
 For things, that would not suit our scanty tongue,
 When no true names were offer'd to the view,
 Those they transferr'd that border'd on the true;
 Thence by degrees the noble licence grew.
 The bards those daring liberties embrac'd,
 Thro' want at first, thro' luxury at last:
 They now to alien things, at will, confirm
 The borrow'd honours of a foreign term.
 So man, at first, the ratt'ling storm to fly,
 And the bleak horrors of the wintry sky.
 Rais'd up a Roof of osiers o'er his head,
 And clos'd with homely clay the slender shed.

Now,

Now, regal palaces, of wond'rous size,
 With brazen beams, on *Parian* columns rise,
 That heave the pompous fabrick to the skies.
 But other writers sprinkle here and there
 These bolder beauties, with a frugal care;
 So vast a freedom is allow'd to none,
 But suits the labours of the bard alone;
 Who in the laws of *verse* himself restrains,
 Ty'd up to time in voluntary chains,
 Others, by no restraint or stop with-held,
 May range the compass of a wider field;
 The sacred poets, who their labours fill
 With pleasing fictions, or with truths at will,
 Their thoughts in bolder liberties express,
 Which look more beauteous in a foreign dress.
 To all, unusual colours they impart,
 Nor blush, if e'er detested in their art.

‡ SOMETIMES beyond the bounds of truth
 they fly,

And boldly lift their subject to the sky;
 When with tumultuous shouts the heav'ns rebound,
 And all *Olympus* trembles with the sound.

Or with repeated accents they relate

The fall of *Troy*, and dwell upon her fate;

* Oh fire! oh country, once with glory crown'd!

Oh wretched race of *Priam*, once renown'd!

Oh *Jove*! see *Ilium* smoaking on the ground!

THEY now name *Ceres* for the golden grain,

Bacchus for wine, and *Neptune* for the main;

Or from the father's name point out the son;

Or for her people introduce a town:

So when alarm'd her natives dread their fates,

Pale *Africk* shakes, and trembles thro' her states;

And some by *Achelous*'s streams alone,

Comprise the floods of all the world in one.

‡ L O! now they start aside, and change the strain,

To fancy'd converse with an absent swain;

‡ The Hyperbole.
Poeta citat Cicero.

* *Hæc verba ex incerti nominis*
 ‡ The Apostrophe.

To grots and caverns all their cares disclose,
 Or tell the solitary rocks their woes;
 To scenes inanimate proclaim their love,
 Talk with an hill, or whisper to a grove.
 On you they call, ye unattentive woods,
 And wait an answer from your bord'ring floods.

* S O M E T I M E S they speak one thing, but leave
 behind

Another secret meaning in the mind.

A fair expression artfully dispense,
 But use a word that clashes with the sense.
 † Thus pious *Helen* stole the faithful sword,
 While *Troy* was flaming, from her sleeping lord.
 ‡ So glorious *Drances* tow'r'd amid the plain,
 And pil'd the camp with mountains of the slain;
 Immortal trophies rais'd from squadrons kill'd,
 And with vast spoils ennobled all the field.

|| B U T now to mention farther I forbear,
 With what strong charms they captivate the ear;
 When the *same terms* they happily repeat,
 The *same repeated* seem more soft and sweet.
 This, * were *Arcadia* judge, if *Pan* withstood,
Pan's judge *Arcadia* would condemn her god.

B U T tho' our fond indulgence grants the muse,
 A thousand liberties in diff'rent views;
 When e'er you chuse an *image* to express
 In foreign *terms*, and scorn the native dress,
 Yet be discreet, nor strain the point too far,
 Let the transition still unforc'd appear,
 Nor e'er discover an excess of care;
 For some we know with awkward violence
 Distort the *subject*, and disjoint the *sense*;
 Quite change the genuine figure, and deface
 The native shape, with ev'ry living grace;
 And force unwilling *objects* to put on
 An alien face, and features not their own.

* The Irony.
 † The Anaphora.

‡ *Æneid*. L. 6.
 * See *Virgil*. *Ecl*og. 4.

† See *Æn*. 11.

A low conceit in disproportion'd terms,
 Is like a boy dress'd up in giants arms;
 Blind to the truth, all reason they exceed,
 * Who name a stall, the palace of the steed,
 Or graze the tresses of great *Rhæa's* head.
 'Tis best sometimes an image to express
 In its own colours, and its native dress.
 The genuine words with happy care to use,
 If nicely cull'd, and worthy of the muse.

SOME things alternately compar'd are shown,
 Both names still true, and mutually their own;
 But here the least redundance you must shun;
 Tell us in short, from whence the hint you drew,
 And set the whole comparison to view;
 Left, mindless of your first design, you seem
 To lead the mind away, and rove from theme to theme.

BUT now pursue the method, that affords
 The fittest *terms*, and wisest choice of *words*.
 Not all deserve alike the same regard,
 Nor suit the god-like labours of the bard;
 For *words* as much may differ in degree,
 As the most various kinds of poetry.
 Tho' many a common *term* and *word* we find
 Dispers'd, promiscuously thro' ev'ry kind.
 Those that will never suit th'heroick rage,
 Might grace the buskin, and become the stage;
 Their large, their vast variety explore
 With piercing eyes, and range the mighty store.
 From their deep fund the richest words unfold,
 With nicest care be each expression cull'd,
 To deck your numbers in the purest gold.
 The vile, the dark degen'rate crowd refuse,
 And scorn a dress that would disgrace the muse.
 Then to succeed your search, pursue the road,
 And beat the track the glorious antients trod.
 To those eternal monuments repair;
 There read, and meditate for ever there,

* The *Catichresis*.

If o'er the rest some mighty genius shines,
 Mark the sweet charms, and vigour of his lines.
 As far as *Phœbus* and the heav'nly pow'rs
 Smile on your labours, make his *diction* your's.
 Your style by *his* authentick standard frame,
 Your voice, your habit, and addres the same.
 With him proceed to cull the rest; for there
 A full reward will justify your care.
 Examine all; and bring from all away,
 Their various treasures, as a lawful prey.
 Nor would I scruple, with a due regard,
 To read sometimes a rude unpolish'd bard.
 Among whose labours I may find a line,
 Which from unsightly rust I may refine,
 And, with a better grace, adopt it into mine.
 How often may we see a troubled flood,
 Stain'd with unsettled ouze, and rising mud?
 Which, (if a well the bord'ring natives sink)
 Supplies the thirsty multitude with drink.
 The trickling stream by just degrees refines,
 'Till in its course the limpid current shines;
 And taught thro' secret labyrinths to flow,
 Works itself clear among the sands below.
 For nothing looks so gloomy, but will shine
 From proper care, and timely discipline;
 If, with due vigilance and conduct, wrought
 Deep in the soul, it labours in the thought.
 Hence on the *antients* we must rest alone,
 And make their golden sentences our own.
 To cull their best expressions claims our cares,
 To form our *notions*, and our *styles* on theirs.
 See how we bear away their precious spoils,
 And with the glorious dress enrich our *styles*;
 Their bright inventions for our use convey,
 Bring all the spirit of their *words* away,
 And make their *words* themselves our lawful prey.
 Unsham'd in other colours to be shown,
 We speak our thoughts in accents not our own.
 But your design with modest caution weigh,
 Steal with due care, and meditate the prey.

Invert

Invert the order of the words with art,
 And change their former site in ev'ry part:
 Thus win your readers, thus deceive with grace,
 And let th'*expression* wear a diff'rent face;
 Your self at last, the glorious labour done,
 Will scarce discern his *diction* from your own.
 Some, to appear of diffidence bereft,
 Steal in broad-day, and glory in the theft;
 When with just art, design and confidence,
 On the same words they grant a diff'rent sense;
 Preserve th'unvary'd terms and order too,
 But change their former spirit for a new.
 Or, with the sense of emulation bold,
 With antient bards a glorious contest hold:
 Their richest spoils triumphant they explore,
 Which, rang'd with better grace, they varnish o'er,
 And give them charms they never knew before. }
 So trees, that change their soils, more proudly rise,
 And lift their spreading honours to the skies;
 And, when transplanted, nobler Fruits produce,
 Exalt their nature, and ferment their juice,
 So Troy's fam'd chief the *Asian* empire bore,
 With better omens, to the *Latian* shore;
 Tho' from the realm, O *Dido*! to the sea,
 Call'd by the gods reluctantly away;
 Nor the first nuptial pleasures could controul
 The fixt, the stubborn purpose of his soul.
 Unhappy queen! Thy woes suppress thy breath;
 Thy cares pursu'd thee, and surviv'd in death.
 Had not the *Dardan* fleet thy kingdom sought,
 Thy life had shone unfully'd with a fault.

COME then, ye youths, and urge your gen'rous
 toils;

Come, strip the antients, and divide the spoils
 Your hands have won - - - but shun the fault of such,
 Who with fond rashness trust themselves too much,
 For some, we know, who by their pride betray'd,
 With vain contempt reject a foreign aid;
 Who scorn those great examples to obey,
 Nor follow where the antients point the way.

While from the theft their cautious hands refrain,
 Vain are their fears; their superstition vain.
 Nor *Phœbus*' smiles th' unhappy poet crown;
 The fate of all his works prevents his own.
 Himself his mould'ring monument survives,
 And sees his labours perish while he lives:
 His fame is more contrasted than his span,
 And the frail *Author* dies before the *Man*.
 How would he wish the labour to forbear,
 And follow other arts with more successful care?

I like a fair *allusion* cleanly wrought;
 When the same *words* express a diff'rent *thought*,
 And such a theft true criticks dare not blame,
 Which late posterity shall crown with fame.
 Void of all fear, of ev'ry doubt bereft,
 I would not blush, but triumph in the theft.
 Nor on the *Antients* for the whole rely,
 The whole is more than all their works supply;
 Some things your own invention must explore,
 Some virgin *images* untouch'd before.

NEW *terms* no laws forbid us to induce,
 To coin a word, and sanctify to use;
 But yet admit no *words* into the song,
 Unless they prove the stock from whence they sprung;
 Point out their family; their kindred trace,
 And set to view the series of their race;
 But where you find your native tongue too poor,
 Transport the riches of the *Grecian* store.
 Inform the lump, and work it into grace,
 And with new life inspire th'unwieldy mass;
 'Till chang'd by discipline, the *word* puts on
 A foreign nature, and forgets its own.
 So *Latium*'s language found a rich increase,
 And grew and flourish'd from the wealth of *Greece*,
 'Till use in time had rifled *Argos*' stores,
 And brought all *Athens* to th'*Hesperian* shores.
 How many words from rich *Mycenæ* come?
 Of *Greek* extraction in the dress of *Rome*?
 That live with ours, our rights and freedom claim,
 Their nature diff'rent, but their looks the same;

Thro'

Thro' *Latium's* realms, in *Latium's* garb they go,
 At once her strangers, and her natives too.
 Long has her poverty been fled, and long
 With native riches has she grac'd her tongue.
 Nor search the poet's only, but explore
 Immortal *Tully's* unexhausted store;
 And other authors, born in happier days
 Shall answer all your wants, and beautify your lays.

O F T, in old bards, a verse above the rest
 Shines, in *Barbarick* spoils and trophies drest;
 Thus *Gaul*, her victor's triumph to compleat,
 Supplies those words that paint her own defeat;
 And vanquish'd *Macedon*, to tell her doom,
 Gives up her language with her arms to *Rome*.
 Then, can we fear with groundless diffidence
 A want of words that shall express our sense?

E U T if compell'd by want, you may produce
 And bring an antiquated word in use;
 A word *earst* well receiv'd in days of *Yore*,
 A word our old forefathers us'd before:
 O'er ages past, the daring bard may climb,
Nathless, and *maugre* the dark walks of time.
 Well pleas'd the reader's wonder to engage,
 He brings our grandsires habit on the stage,
 And garbs that *whilom* grac'd an *uncouth* age.
 Yet must not such appear in ev'ry place;
 When rang'd too thick, the poem they disgrace.
 Since of new *words* such numbers you command,
 Deal out the old ones with a sparing hand.
 * When e'er your *images* can lay no claim
 To a fixt term, and want a certain name;
 To paint one thing, the licens'd bard affords
 A pompous circle, and a crowd of words.

T W O plighted *words*, in one with grace appear,
 When they with ease glide smoothly o'er the ear.
 Two may embrace at once, but seldom more,
 No verse can bear the mingled shape of four;
 Nor triple monsters dwell on *Latium's* shore.

* *The Periphrasis,*

When mixt with smooth, these harsher strains are found,
 We start with horror at the frightful sound;
 The Grecian bards, in whom such freedoms please,
 May match with more success such words at these;
 Heap hills on hills, and bid the structure rise,
 'Till the vast pile of mountains prop the skies.

WHAT words soever of vast bulk we view,
 One of less size may sometimes split in two;
 Sometimes we separate from the whole a part,
 And prune the more luxuriant limbs with art.
 Thus when the names of heroes we declare,
 Names, whose unpolisht sounds offend the ear,
 We add, or lop some branches which abound,
 Till the harsh accents are with smoothness crown'd
 That mellows ev'ry word, and softens ev'ry sound.

By such an happy change, *Sicharbas* came
 To sink his roughness in *Sichæus'* name.
 Hence would I rather choose those dire alarms
 Of vast *Enceladus*, and heav'n in arms,
 And the fierce *Titan's* battles to rehearse,
 Harmonious names, that glide into the verse;
 Than count the rough, the barb'rous nations o'er,
 Which *Rome* subdu'd of old from shore to shore.

LET things submit to words on no pretence,
 But make your words subservient to your sense.
 Not for their sake admit a single line,
 But what contributes to your main design.
 Thro' ev'ry part most diligently pierce,
 And weigh the sound and sense of ev'ry verse.
 Unless your strictest caution you display,
 Some words may lead the heedless bard away;
 Steal from their duty, and desert their post,
 And skulk in darkness, indolently lost;
 Or while their proper parts their fellows ply,
 Contribute nought but sound and harmony.
 This to prevent, consult your words; and know
 How far their strength, extent and nature go.
 To all their charges, and their labours fit,
 To all, their several provinces of wit.

Without

Without this care, the poem will abound
 With empty noise, and impotence of sound ;
 In meaning terms will crowd in ev'ry part,
 Delude the ear, but never reach the heart,
 Yet would I sometimes venture to disperse
 Some words, whose splendor should adorn my verse ;
 Words, that to wit and thought have no pretence,
 And rather vehicles of *sound* than *sense* ;
 Till in the gorgeous dress the lines appear,
 And court with gentle harmony the ear.
 Nor with too fond a care such words pursue,
 They meet your sight, and rise in ev'ry view.
 Oft, from its chains the shackled verse unloose,
 And give it liberty to walk in prose ;
 Renew the poem with unweary'd pain,
 Bind and cement the shatter'd parts again ;
 The lurking faults and errors you may see,
 When the words run unmanacled and feed.

A T T E N D, young bard, and listen while I sing ;

Lo ! I unlock the muses sacred spring,
 Lo ! *Phœbus* calls thee to his inmost shrine ;
 Hark ! in one common voice, the tuneful nine
 Invite and court thee to the rites divine. }
 When first to man the privilege was giv'n,
 To hold by verse an intercourse with heav'n,
 Unwilling that th'immortal art should lye,
 Cheap, and expos'd to ev'ry vulgar eye,
 Great *Jove*, to drive away the grov'ling crowd,
 To narrow bounds confin'd the glorious road,
 For more exalted spirits to pursue,
 And left it open to the sacred few.
 For many a painful task, in ev'ry part,
 Claims all the poet's vigilance and art.
 'Tis not enough his verses to compleat,
 In measure, numbers, or determin'd feet ;
 Or render *things*, by clear *expression* bright,
 And set each *object* in a proper light.
 To all, proportion'd *terms* he must dispense,
 And make the *sound* a picture of the *sense* ;

The

The correspondent *words* exactly frame,
 The looks, the features and the mien the same :
 His *thoughts* the bard must suitably express,
 Each in a diff'rent face, and diff'rent dress.
 Lest in unvary'd looks the crowd be shown,
 And the whole multitude appear as one.
 With rapid feet and wings, without delay,
 This swiftly flies, and smoothly skims away :
 That, vast of size, his limbs huge, broad and strong,
 Moves pond'rous, and scarce drags his bulk along.
 This, blooms with youth and beauty in his face,
 And *Venus* breaths on ev'ry limb a grace :
 That, of rude form, his uncouth members shows,
 Looks horrible, and frowns with his rough brows :
 His monstrous tail in many a fold and wind,
 Voluminous and vast, curls *up* behind :
 At once the image and the lines appear
 Rude to the eye, and frightful to the ear,
 Nor are those figures giv'n, without a cause,
 But fix'd and settled by determin'd laws ;
 All claim and wear, as their deserts are known,
 A voice, a face, and habit of their own.
 * Lo ! when the sailors steer the pond'rous ships,
 And plough, with brazen beaks, the foamy deeps,
 Incumbent on the main that roars around ;
 Beneath their lab'ring oars the waves resound
 The prows wide-ecchoing thro' the dark profound :
 To the loud call each distant rock replies,
 Toft by the storm the tow'ring surges rise ;
 While the hoarse ocean beats the founding shore,
 Dasht from the strand, the flying waters roar,
 Flash at the shock, and gath'ring in an heap.
 The liquid mountains rise, and over-hang the deep.
 See thro' her shores *Trinacria's* realms rebound.
 Starting and trembling at the bellowing sound ;
 High-bounding o'er the waves the mountains ride,
 And clash with floating mountains on the tide.

* Most of these examples are drawn word for word from Virgil.

But

But when blue *Neptune* from his car surveys,
 And calms at one regard the raging seas;
 Stretcht like a peaceful lake the deep subsides,
 And the pitch'd vessel o'er the surface glides.
 The poet's art and conduct we admire,
 When angry *Vulcan* rolls a flood of fire;
 When on the groves and fields the deluge preys,
 And wraps the *crackling stubble* in the blaze.
 Nor less our pleasure, when the flame divides,
 And climbs aspiring round the cauldron's sides;
 From the dark bottom work the waters up,
 Swell, boil and hiss, and bubble to the top.
 Thus in smooth lines, smooth subjects we rehearse,
 But the * rough rock requires as rough a *verse*.
 If gay the subject, gay must be the song;
 And the brisk numbers quickly glide along:
 When the fields flourish; or the skies unfold
 Swift from the flying hinge their gates of gold.
 If sad the theme, then each grave line moves slow,
 The mournful Numbers languishingly flow,
 And drag, and labour with a weight of woe;
 If e'er the boding bird of night, who mourns
 O'er ruins, desolation, graves and urns,
 With piercing streams the darkness should invade,
 And break the silence of the dismal shade.
 When things are small, the terms should still be so,
 For low words please us, when the theme is low.
 But when some giant, horrible and grim,
 Enormous in his gate, and vast in ev'ry limb,
 Stalks tow'ring on; the swelling words must rise
 In just proportion to the monster's size.
 If some large weight his huge arms strive to shove,
 The verse too labours; the throng'd words scarce move.
 When each stiff clod beneath the pond'rous plough,
 Crumbles and breaks; th'encumber'd lines march slow.
 Nor less; when pilots catch the friendly gales,
 Unfurl their shrouds, and hoist the *wide-stretcht sails*.

* ———— *Sonat hac de nave canina*

Littera. ————

Vid. *Persium*.

But if the poem suffers from delay,
 Let the lines fly precipitate away.
 And when the viper issues from the brake;
 Be quick; with stones, and brands, and fire, attack
 His rising crest, and drive the serpent back.
 When night descends; or stun'd by num'rous strokes,
 And groaning, to the earth drops the vast ox;
 The line too sinks with correspondent sound,
 Flat with the steer, and heading to the ground.
 When the wild waves subside, and tempests cease,
 And hush the roarings of the sea to peace;
 So oft we see the interrupted strain
 Stopt in the midst, . . . and with the silent main,
 Pause for a space . . . at last it glides again.
 When *Priam* strains his aged arm, to throw
 His unavailing jav'lin at the foe;
 (His blood congeal'd, and ev'ry nerve constring'd)
 Then with the theme complies the artful song;
 Like him, the solitary numbers flow
 Weak, trembling, melancholly, stiff and slow.
 Not so young *Pyrrhus*, who with rapid force
 Beats down embattled armies in his course,
 The raging youth on trembling *Ilion* falls,
 Bursts her strong gates, and shakes her lofty walls;
 Provokes his flying courser to his speed,
 In full career to charge the warlike steed;
 He piles the field with mountains of the slain;
 He pours, he storms, he thunders thro' the plain.
 In this the poet's justest conduct lies,
 When with his various subjects he complies,
 To sink with judgment, and with judgment rise.
 We see him now, remissive of his speed,
 Glide with a low, and inoffensive course;
 Stript of the gawdy dress of words he goes;
 And scarcely lifts the poem up from prose:
 And now he brings with loosen'd reins along
 All in a full career the boundless song,
 In wide array luxuriantly he pours
 A crowd of words, and opens all his stores.

The lavish eloquence redundant flows,
 Thick as the fleeces of the winter-snows.
 When *Jove* invests the naked *Alps*, and sheds
 The silent tempest on their hoary heads,
 Sometimes the god-like fury he restrains,
 Checks his impetuous speed, and draws the reins;
 Balanc'd and pois'd, he neither sinks nor soars,
 But plows the midmost space, and steers between the
 shores,

And shaves the confines; — till, all dangers past,
 He shoots with joy into the port at last.

FOR what remains unsung; I now declare
 What claims the poet's last and strictest care.
 When, all adventures past, his labours tend
 In one continu'd order to their end;
 When the proud victor on his conquest smiles,
 And safe enjoys the triumphs of his toils;
 Let him by timely diffidence be aw'd,
 Nor trust too soon th' unpolish'd piece abroad.
 Oh! may his rash ambition ne'er inflame
 His breast, with such a dang'rous thirst of fame,
 But let the terror of disgrace controul
 The warm, the partial fondness of his soul;
 And force the bard to throw his passion by,
 Nor view his off-spring with a parent's eye;
 Till his affections are by justice cross'd,
 And all the father in the judge is lost.
 He seeks his friends, nor trusts himself alone,
 But asks their judgment, and resigns his own;
 Begs them, with urgent pray'rs, to be sincere,
 Just and exact, and rigidly severe;
 Due verdict to pronounce on every thought,
 Nor spare the slightest shadow of a fault;
 But, bent against himself, and strictly nice,
 He thanks each critick that detects a vice;
 Tho' charg'd with what his judgment can defend,
 He joins the partial sentence of his friend.
 The piece thrown by; the bard again reviews
 The long-forgotten labours of his muse:

• Lo! on all sides far diff'rent objects rise,
 And a new prospect strikes his wond'ring eyes.
 Warm from the brain, the *lines* his love engross,
 Now in themselves their former selves are lost.
 Now his own labours he begins to blame,
 And blushing reads them with regret and shame.
 He loaths the piece; condemns it; nor can find
 The genuine stamp, and image of his mind.
 This *thought* and that, indignant he rejects;
 When most secure, some danger he suspects;
 Anxious he adds, and trembling he corrects.
 With kind severities, and timely art,
 Lops the luxuriant growth of ev'ry part,
 Prunes the superfluous boughs, that wildly stray,
 And cuts the rank redundancies away.
 Thus arm'd with proper discipline he stands,
 By day, by night, applies his healing hands.
 From ev'ry line to wipe out ev'ry blot,
 Till the whole piece is guiltless of a fault.
 Hard is the task, but needful, if your aim
 Tends to the prospect of immortal fame.
 If some unfinish'd numbers limp behind,
 When the warm poet rages unconfin'd,
 Then when his swift invention scorns to stay,
 By a full tide of genius whirl'd away;
 He brings the sov'reign cure their failings claim,
 Confirms the sickly, and supports the lame.
 Oft as the seasons roll, renew thy pain,
 And bring thy poem to the test again.
 In diff'rent lights th'*expression* must be rang'd,
 The garb and colours of the *words* be chang'd.
 With endless care thy watchful eyes must pierce,
 And mark the parts distinct of ev'ry verse.
 In this persist; for oft' one day denies
 The kind assistance which the next supplies;
 As oft', without your vigilance and care,
 Some faults detected by themselves appear.
 And now a thousand errors you explore,
 That lay involv'd in mantling clouds before,

Oft to improve his muse, the bard should try,
 By turns, the temper of a diff'rent sky.
 For thus his *genius* takes a diff'rent face
 From each respective *genius* of a place.
 The soul too varies; and the bard may find
 A thousand diff'rent motions in his mind.
 New gleams of light will ev'ry moment rise,
 While from each part the scatt'ring darkness flies,
 And, as he alters what appears amiss,
 He adds new flow'rs to beautifie the piece.
 But here, ev'n *here*, avoid th'extream of such,
 Who with excess of care correct too much;
 Whose barb'rous hands no calls of pity bound,
 While with th'infected parts they cut the sound,
 And make the cure more dang'rous than the wound.
 Till, all the blood and spirits drain'd away,
 The body sickens, and the parts decay;
 The native beauties die; the limbs appear
 Seam'd and deform'd with one continu'd scar.
 No fix'd determin'd number will I set;
 But when some years the labour shall compleat,
 Reflect on life; and, mindful of thy span,
 Whose scanty limit bounds the days of man,
 Wide o'er the spacious world, without delay,
 Permit the finish't Piece to take its way;
 Till all mankind admires the heav'nly song,
 The theme of ev'ry hand and ev'ry tongue;
 See! thy pleas'd friends thy spreading glory draws,
 Each with his voice to swell the vast applause;
 The vast applause shall reach the starry frame,
 No years, no ages shall obscure thy fame,
 And earth's last ends shall hear thy darling name.
 Shall we then doubt to scorn all worldly views,
 And not prefer the raptures of the muse! (obey

TH R I C E happy bards! who, taught by Heav'n,
 These rules, and follow where they lead the way;
 And hear the faithful precepts I bestow'd,
 Inspir'd with rage divine, and lab'ring with the god.
 But art alone, and human means must fail,
 Nor these instructive precepts will prevail,

Unless

Unless the gods their present aid supply,
 And look with kind indulgence from the sky.
 I only pointed out the paths, that lead
 The panting youth to steep *Parnassus'* head ;
 And show'd the tuneful muses from afar,
 Mixt in a solemn choir and dancing there.
 Thither forbidden by the fates to go,
 I sink and grovel in the world below.
 Deter'd by them, in vain I labour up,
 And stretch these hands to grasp the distant top.
 Enough for me, at distance if I view
 Some bard, some happier bard the path pursue ;
 Who, taught by me to reach *Parnassus'* crown,
 Mounts up, and calls his slow companions on.
 But yet these rules, perhaps these humble lays,
 May claim a title to a share of praise ;
 When, in a crowd, the gath'ring youths shall hear
 My voice, and precepts with a willing ear ;
 Close in a ring shall press the list'ning throng,
 And learn from me to regulate their song.
 Then, if the pitying Fates prolong my breath,
 And from my youth avert the dart of death ;
 Whene'er I sink in life's declining stage,
 Trembling and fainting on the verge of age,
 To help their wearied master shall they run,
 And lend their friendly hands to guide him on ;
 Thro' blooming groves his tardy progress wait,
 And set him gently down at *Phœbus'* gate,
 The while he sings before the hallow'd shrine,
 The sacred poets, and the tuneful nine.
 Here then in *Roman* numbers will we rise,
 And lift the fame of *Virgil* to the skies ;
Ausonia's pride and boast, who brings along
 Strength to my lines, and spirit to my song :
 First how the mighty bard transported o'er
 The sacred muses from th' *Aonian* shore ;
 Led the fair sisters to th' *Hesperian* plains ;
 And sung in *Roman* towns the *Grecian* strains ;
 How in his youth to woods and groves he fled,
 And sweetly tun'd the soft *Sicilian* reed ;

Next,

Next, how in pity to th' *Ausonian* swains,
 He rais'd to heav'n the honours of the plains;
 Rapt in *Triptolemus* his car on high,
 He scatter'd peace and plenty from the sky:
 Fir'd with his country's fame, with loud alarms,
 At last he rous'd all *Latium* up to arms;
 In just array the *Phrygian* troops bestow'd,
 And spoke the voice and language of a god.
 Father of verse, from thee our honours spring;
 We! from all parts, our bards attend their king;
 Beneath thy banners rang'd, thy fame increase,
 And rear proud trophies from the spoils of *Greece*.
 Low, in *Elyzium's* vales, her tuneful throng
 Bow to thy laurels, and adore thy song:
 On thee, on thee, thy country turns her eyes;
 On thee, the fame of all her bards relies:
 They crowd to thee, and court thy aid divine;
 (For all their honours but depend on thine,)
 Taught from the womb thy numbers to rehearse,
 And sip the balmy sweets of ev'ry *verse*.
 Unrival'd bard! all ages shall decree
 The first unenvy'd palm of fame to thee;
 Thrice happy bard! thy boundless glory flies,
 Where never mortal must attempt to rise;
 Such heav'nly numbers in thy song we hear,
 And more than human accents charm the ear!
 To thee, his darling, *Phœbus*' hands impart
 His soul, his genius, and immortal art.
 What help or merit in these rules are shown,
 The youth must owe to thee, and thee alone.
 The youth, whose wand'ring feet with care I led
 Aloft, o'er steep *Parnassus*' sacred head:
 Taught from thy great example to explore
 Those arduous paths, which thou hast trod before.
 Hail, pride of *Italy*! thy country's grace!
 Hail, glorious light of all the tuneful race!
 For thee, we weave the crown, and altars raise;
 For thee, with incense bid the temples blaze;
 Our solemn hymns shall still resound thy praise.

Hail

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Hail holy bard, and boundless in renown !
Thy fame, dependent on thy self alone,
Requires no song, no numbers but thy own.
Look down propitious, and my thoughts inspire ;
Warm my chaste bosom with thy sacred fire !
Let all thy flames with all their raptures roll
Deep in my breast, and kindle all my soul.

T H E E N D .



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