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The Works Of Alexander Pope Esq.

In Nine Volumes Complete. With His Last Corrections, Additions, And Improvements; As they were delivered to the Editor a little before his Death

Containing His Moral Essays

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

Moral Essays.

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Moral Essays,
IN
FOUR EPISTLES
TO
Several Persons.

Est brevitæ opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
Impediat verbis lassis onerantibus aures :
Et sermone opus est modo tristi, sæpe jocosæ,
Defendente vicem modo Rhetoris atque Poetæ,
Interdum urbani, parentis viribus, atque
Extenuantis eas consultò.

HOR.

MORAL
MORAL ESSAYS
IN
FOUR EPISTLES
TO
SEVERAL PERSONS.

By
MORAL
ESSAYS
IN
FOUR EPISTLES
TO
SEVERAL PERSONS.
LONDON:
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MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE I.

T O

Sir Richard Temple, Lord Cobham.

A R G U M E N T.

Of the Knowledge and Characters of MEN.

T H A T it is not sufficient for this knowledge to consider Man in the Abstract: Books will not serve the purpose, nor yet our own Experience singly, § 1. General maxims, unless they be formed upon both, will be but notional, § 10. Some Peculiarity in every man, characteristic to himself, yet varying from himself, § 15. Difficulties arising from our own Passions, Fancies, Faculties, &c. § 31. The shortness of Life, to observe in, and the uncertainty of the Principles of action in men, to observe by, § 37, &c. Our own Principle of action often hid from ourselves, § 41. Some few Characters plain, but in general confounded, dissembled, or inconsistent, § 51. The same man utterly different in different places and seasons, § 71. Unimaginable weaknesses in the greatest, § 70, &c. Nothing constant and certain but God and Nature, § 95. No judging of

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the Motives from the actions; the same actions proceeding from contrary Motives, and the same Motives influencing contrary actions, § 100. II. Yet to form Characters, we can only take the strongest actions of a man's life, and try to make them agree: The utter uncertainty of this, from Nature itself, and from Policy, § 120. Characters given according to the rank of men of the world, § 135. And some reason for it, § 140. Education alters the Nature, or at least Character of many, § 149. Actions, Passions, Opinions, Manners, Humours, or Principles all subject to change. No judging by Nature, from § 158 to 178. III. It only remains to find (if we can) his RULING PASSION: That will certainly influence all the rest, and can reconcile the seeming or real inconsistency of all his actions, § 175. Instanced in the extraordinary character of Clodio, § 179. A caution against mistaking second qualities for first, which will destroy all possibility of the knowledge of mankind, § 210. Examples of the strength of the Ruling Passion, and its continuation to the last breath, § 222, &c.



N. Blakey inv. & del.

J. Scottin Sculp.

Boastfull & rough your first Son is a Squire;
The next a Tradesman, meek and much a Siar;
Tom struts a Soldier, open, bold and Brave;
Will sneaks a Scrivener, an exceeding Knave.

Char: of Men.

EPISTLE I.

YES, you despise the man to Books confin'd,
 Who from his study rails at human kind;
 Tho' what he learns he speaks, and may advance
 Some gen'ral maxims, or be right by chance.

COMMENTARY.

Epistle of the Knowledge and Characters of Men.] Whoever compares this with the former Editions of this poem, will observe that the order and disposition of the several parts are entirely changed and transposed, tho' with hardly the Alteration of a single Word. When the Editor, at the Author's desire, first examined this Epistle, he was surprized to find it contain a number of fine observations, without order, connexion, or dependence: but much more so, when, on an attentive review, he saw, that, if put into a different form, on an idea he then conceived, it would have all the clearness of method, and force of connected reasoning. Indeed the observations then appeared to him so jumbled and confounded in one another, as if the several parts of a regular poem had been rolled up in tickets, drawn at random, and then set down as they arose. The author appeared as much struck with the observation as the editor, and agreed to put it in the present form, which has given the poem all the justness of a true composition. The introduction of the epistle on Riches was in the same condition, and underwent the same reform.

NOTES.

Moral Essays.] The ESSAY ON MAN was intended to have been comprised in Four Books:

The *First* of which, the Author has given us under that title, in four Epistles.

The *Second* was to have consisted of the same number:

1. Of the extent and limits of human Reason. 2. Of those Arts and Sciences, and of the

parts of them, which are useful, and therefore attainable, together with those which are unuseful, and therefore unattainable. 3. Of the Nature, Ends, Use, and Application of the different Capacities of Men. 4. Of the Use of Learning, of the Science of the World, and of Wit; concluding with a Satyr against the Misapplication

The coxcomb bird, so talkative and grave, 5
 That from his cage cries Cuckold, Whore, and Knave,
 Tho' many a passenger he rightly call,
 You hold him no Philosopher at all.

COMMENTARY.

EPISTLE I.] This Epistle is divided into three principal parts or members: The first (from ν 1 to 99) treats of the difficulties in coming at the *Knowledge* and true *Characters of Men*. — The second (from ν 98 to 173) of the *wrong means* which

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of them, illustrated by Pictures, Characters, and Examples.

The *Third* Book regarded Civil Regimen, or the Science of Politics, in which the several forms of a Republic were to have been examined and explained; together with the several Modes of Religious Worship, as far forth as they affect Society; between which the Author always supposed there was the most interesting relation and closest connection; so that this part would have treated of Civil and Religious Society in their full extent.

The *Fourth* and last Book concerned private Ethics or practical Morality, considered in all the Circumstances, Orders, Professions, and Stations of human Life.

The Scheme of all this had been maturely digested, and communicated to the L. Bolinbroke, Dr. Swift, and one or two more, and was intended

for the only work of his riper Years: but was, partly thro' ill health, partly through discouragements from the depravity of the times, and partly on prudential and other considerations, interrupted, postponed, and, lastly, in a manner laid aside.

But as this was the Author's favourite Work, which more exactly reflected the Image of his strong capacious Mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the *disjecta membra Poetæ* that now remain, it may not be amiss to be a little more particular concerning each of these projected books.

The *FIRST*, as it treats of Man in the abstract, and considers him in general under every of his relations, becomes the foundation, and furnishes out the subjects, of the *three* following; so that

The *SECOND* BOOK takes up again the *First* and *Second*

And yet the fate of all extremes is such,
Men may be read, as well as Books, too much. 19
To observations which ourselves we make,
We grow more partial for th'Observer's sake ;

COMMENTARY.

both *Philosophers* and *Men of the World* have employed in surmounting those difficulties. And the third (from v 174 to the end) treats of the *right means*, with directions for the application of them.

VER. I. *Yes, you despise the man &c.*] The Epistle is introduced (from v 1 to 15) in observing, that the *Knowledge of Men* is neither to be gained by Books nor Experience alone, but by the joint use of both ; for that the *Maxims* of the *Philosopher* and the *Conclusions* of the *Man of the World* can, separately, but supply a vague and superficial knowledge : And often not so much ; as those *Maxims* are founded in the abstract notions of the writer ; and these *conclusions* are drawn from the uncertain

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Epistles of the *First* Book, and treats of man in his intellectual Capacity at large, as has been explained above. Of this, only a small part of the conclusion (which, as we said, was to have contained a Satire against the misapplication of Wit and Learning) may be found in the *Fourth* book of the *Dunciad*, and up and down, occasionally, in the other *three*.

The *THIRD* Book, in like manner, reassumes the subject of the *Third* Epistle of the *First*, which treats of Man in his Social, Political, and Religious Capacity. But this part the Poet afterwards conceived might be best executed in an

EPIC POEM ; as the Action would make it more animated, and the Fable less invidious ; in which all the great Principles of true and false Governments and Religions should be chiefly delivered in feigned Examples.

The *FOURTH* and last Book pursues the subject of the *Fourth* Epistle of the *First*, and treats of *Ethics*, or practical Morality ; and would have consisted of many members ; of which the four following Epistles were detached Portions : the *two first*, on the *Characters of Men and Women*, being the *introductory* part of this concluding Book.

To written Wisdom, as another's, less :
Maxims are drawn from Notions, those from Guess.

COMMENTARY.

conjectures of the observer : But when the writer joins his *speculation* to the *experience* of the observer, his *notions* are rectified into *principles* : and when the observer regulates his *experience* on the *general principles* of the writer, his *conjectures* advance into *science*. Such is the reasoning of this introduction ; which, besides its propriety to the general subject of the Epistle, has a peculiar relation to each of its parts or members : For the *causes of the difficulty* in coming at the knowledge and characters of men, explained in the first, will shew the importance of what is here delivered, of the *joint* assistance of speculation and practice to surmount it ; and the *wrong means*, which both *philosophers* and *men of the world* have employed in overcoming those difficulties discoursed of in the second, have their source here deduced, which is seen to be a *separate* adherence of each to his own method of studying men, and a mutual contempt of the others. Lastly, the *right means* delivered in the third, will be of little use in the application, without the direction here delivered : For tho' *observation* discovered a *ruling passion*, yet, without a *philosophic* knowledge of the human mind, we may easily mistake a *secondary* and *subsidiary* passion for the *principal*, and so be never the nearer in the Knowledge of Men. But the elegant and easy *Form* of the *introduction* equals the Propriety of its *matter* ; for the epistle being addressed to a noble person, distinguished for his knowledge of the World, it opens, as it were, in the midst of a familiar converse, which lets us at once into his character ; where the poet, by affecting *only* to ridicule the useless Knowledge of Men confined to Books, and under the appearance of extolling *only* that acquired by the World, artfully insinuates how equally defective this may be, when conducted on the same narrow principle : Which is too often the case, as *men of the world* are more than ordinarily prejudiced in favour of their own observations for the sake of the

NOTES.

VER. 5. *The coxcomb bird,* &c.] A fine turn'd allusion to what Philostratus said of Euxenus, the Tutor of Apollonius, that he could only repeat some sentences of Pythagoras, like those *coxcomb birds*, who were taught their *ὀργάνη* and their

There's some Peculiar in each leaf and grain, 15
 Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein:
 Shall only Man be taken in the gross?
 Grant but as many sorts of Mind as Moss.
 That each from other differs, first confess;
 Next, that he varies from himself no less: 20

COMMENTARY.

observer, and, for the same reason, less indulgent to the discoveries of others.

I.

VER. 15. *There's some Peculiar &c.*] The poet enters on the First division of his subject, *the difficulties of coming at the Knowledge and true Characters of Men.* The first cause of this difficulty which he prosecutes (from v 14 to 19) is the great *diversity of Characters*, of which, to abate our wonder, and not discourage our inquiry, he only desires we would *grant* him

— *but as many sorts of Mind as Moss.*

Hereby artfully insinuating, that if Nature has varied the most worthless vegetable into above three hundred species, we need not wonder at the like diversity in the human mind: And if a variety in that vegetable has been thought of importance enough to employ the leisure of a serious enquirer, much more will the same quality in this master-piece of Nature deserve our study and attention.

VER. 19. *That each from other differs, &c.*] A second cause of this difficulty (from v 18 to 21) is *Man's inconstancy*, whereby not only one man differs from another, but each man from himself.

NOTES.

Zeús ἰδεως, but knew not what they signified.

VER. 10. *And yet — Men may be read, as well as Books too much, &c.*] The poet has here covertly describ'd a famous system of a *man of the world*, the celebrated *Maxims of M.*

de la Rochefoucault, which are one continued *satire* on human Nature, and hold much of the ill language of the Parrot: The *reason* of the censure, our author's system of *L. uan*' nature will explain.

L 4

Add Nature's, Custom's, Reason's, Passion's strife,
And all Opinion's colours cast on life.

Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds,
Quick whirls, and shifting eddies, of our minds?
On human actions reason tho' you can, 25
It may be Reason, but it is not Man:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 21. *Add Nature's, &c.*] A third cause (from v 20 to 23) is that *obscurity* thrown over the Characters of men, through the strife and contest between *nature* and *custom*, between *reason* and *appetite*, between *truth* and *opinion*. And as most men, either thro' *education*, *temperature*, or *profession*, have their Characters warp'd by *custom*, *appetite*, and *opinion*, the obscurity arising from thence is almost universal.

VER. 23. *Our depths who fathoms, &c.*] A fourth cause (from v 20 to 25) is deep *dissimulation*, and restless *caprice*, whereby the shallows of the mind are as difficult to be *found*, as the depths of it to be *fathom'd*.

VER. 25. *On human actions &c.*] A fifth cause (from v 24 to 31) is the sudden change of his *Principle of action*, either on the point of its being laid open and detected, or thro' mere inconstancy.

NOTES.

VER. 22. *And all Opinion's colours cast on life.*] The poet refers here only to the *effects*: In the *Essay on Man* he gives

both the *efficient* and the *final cause*: The First in the third Ep. v 231.

E'er Wit oblique had broke that steady light.

For *oblique Wit* is *Opinion*. The other, in the second Ep. v 283.

*Mean-while Opinion gilds with varying rays
These painted clouds that beautify our days, &c.*

VER. 26. *It may be Reason, but it is not Man.*] *i. e.* The Philosopher may invent a *rational hypothesis* that shall account for the appearances he

would investigate; and yet that *hypothesis* be all the while very wide of *truth* and the *nature of things*.

His Principle of action once explore,
 That instant 'tis his Principle no more.
 Like following life thro' creatures you dissect,
 You lose it in the moment you detect. 30

Yet more; the difference is as great between
 The optics seeing, as the objects seen.

All Manners take a tincture from our own;
 Or come discolour'd thro' our Passions shown.
 Or Fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies, 35
 Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.

Nor will Life's stream for Observation stay,
 It hurries all too fast to mark their way:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 31. *Yet more; the difference &c.*] Hitherto the poet hath spoken of the causes of difficulty arising from the *obscurity of the Object*; he now comes to those which proceed from *defects in the Observer*. The First of which, and a sixth cause of difficulty, he shews (from 30 to 37) is the *perverse manners, affections, and imagination* of the observer, whereby the Characters of others are rarely seen either in their true *light, complexion, or proportion*.

VER. 37. *Nor will Life's stream for Observation &c.*] The

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VER. 29. *Like following life thro' creatures you dissect, — You lose it in the moment you detect.*] This Simile is extremely beautiful. To shew the difficulty of discovering the operations of the heart in a *moral sense*, he illustrates it by another attempt still more difficult, the discovery of its operations in a *natural*: For the

seat of animal life being in the *heart*, our endeavours of tracing it thither must necessarily drive it from thence.

VER. 33. *All Manners take a tincture from our own; — Or come discolour'd thro' our Passions shown.*] These two lines are remarkable for the exactness and propriety of expression. The word *tincture*,

In vain sedate reflections we wou'd make,
 When half our knowledge we must snatch, not take.
 Oft, in the Passions' wild rotation tost, 41
 Our spring of action to ourselves is lost:
 Tir'd, not determin'd, to the last we yield,
 And what comes then is master of the field.

COMMENTARY.

Second of these, and seventh cause of difficulty (from ψ 36 to 41) is the *shortness of human life*, which will not suffer the observer to select and weigh out his knowledge, but just to snatch it as it rolls rapidly by him down the current of Time.

VER. 41. *Oft, in the Passions' &c.*] We come now to the eighth and last cause, which very properly concludes the account, as, in a sort, it sums up all the difficulties in one (from ψ 40 to 51) namely, that very often the *man himself is ignorant of his own motive of action*; the cause of which ignorance our author has admirably explain'd: When the mind (says he) is now quite tired out by the long conflict of opposite motives, it withdraws its attention, and suffers the *will* to be seized upon by the first that afterwards obtrudes itself, without taking notice what that motive is. This is finely illustrated by what he supposes the general cause of dreams; where the fancy, just let loose, possesses itself of the *last image* which it meets with on the confines between sleep and waking, and on that erects all its visionary operation; yet this image is, with great difficulty, recollected; and never, but when some accident happens to interrupt our first slumbers: Then (which proves the truth of the hypothesis) we are sometimes able to trace the workings of the Fancy backwards, from image to image, in a chain, till we come to that from whence they all arose.

NOTES,

which implies a weak colour given by degrees, well describes the influence of the <i>Manners</i> ; and the word <i>dis-</i>	<i>colour</i> , which implies a quicker change and by a deeper dye, denotes as well the operation of the <i>Passions</i> .
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As the last image of that troubled heap, 45
 When Sense subsides, and Fancy sports in sleep,
 ('Tho' past the recollection of the thought)
 Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought:
 Something as dim to our internal view,
 Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do, 50
 True, some are open, and to all men known;
 Others so very close, they're hid from none;
 (So Darkness strikes the sense no less than Light)
 'Thus gracious CHANDOS is belov'd at sight;
 And ev'ry child hates Shylock, tho' his soul 55
 Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 51. *True, some are open, &c.*] But now in answer to all this, an *objector*, as the author shews (from v 50 to 61) may say, "That these difficulties seem to be aggravated: For many Characters are so plainly marked, that no man can mistake them: And not so only in the more *open* and *frank*, but in the very *closest* and most *recluse* likewise." Of each of which the objector gives an instance, whereby it appears, that the forbidding closeness and concealed hypocrisy in the one, are as conspicuous to all mankind, as the gracious openness and frank

NOTES.

VER. 56. — *peeps not from its hole.*] Which shews that this grave person was content with his present situation; as finding but small satisfaction in what a famous poet reckons one of the great advantages of old age,

*The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
 Lets in new light from chinks that time has made.* SCRIBL.

At half mankind when gen'rous Manly raves,
 All know 'tis Virtue, for he thinks them knaves :
 When universal homage Umbra pays,
 All see 'tis Vice, and itch of vulgar praise. 60
 When Flatt'ry glares, all hate it in a Queen,
 While one there is who charms us with his Spleen.
 But these plain Characters we rarely find ;
 Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind :
 Or puzzling Contraries confound the whole ; 65
 Or Affectations quite reverse the foul.

COMMENTARY.

plain-dealing of the other.—The Reader sees this objection is more particularly level'd at the doctrine of *vs* 23.

Our depths who fathoms, and our shallows finds?

for it here endeavours to prove, that both are equally explorable.

VER. 63. *But these plain Characters &c.*] To this objection, therefore, our author replies (from *vs* 60 to 67) that indeed the fact may be true in the instances given, but that such *plain characters* are extremely rare: And for the truth of this, he not only appeals to experience, but explains the causes of it: 1. The First of which is, the *vivacity of the Imagination*; for that when the bias of the Passions is enough determin'd to mark out the Character, yet then, as the vigour of the Fancy generally rises in proportion to the strength of the Appetites, the one no sooner directs the bias, than the other reverses it,

Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind.

2. A Second cause is the *contrariety of Appetites*, which drawing several ways, as *Avarice* and *Luxury*, *Ambition* and *Indolence*, &c. they must needs make the same Character inconsistent to itself, and consequently inexplicable to the observer,

Or puzzling Contraries confound the whole.

VER. 66. *Or Affectations &c.*] 3. A Third cause is *Affectation*,

The Dull, flat Falshood serves, for policy;
 And in the Cunning, Truth itself's a lye:
 Unthought-of Frailties cheat us in the Wise;
 The Fool lies hid in inconsistencies. 70

See the same man, in vigour, in the gout;
 Alone, in company; in place, or out;
 Early at Bus'ness, and at Hazard late;
 Mad at a Fox-chace, wise at a Debate;
 Drunk at a Borough, civil at a Ball; 75
 Friendly at Hackney, faithless at Whitehall.

Catius is ever moral, ever grave,
 Thinks who endures a knave, is next a knave,
 Save just at dinner—then prefers, no doubt,
 A Rogue with Ven'son to a Saint without. 80

COMMENTARY.

that aspires to qualities, which neither *nature* nor *education* has given us, and which, consequently, neither *art* nor *use* will ever render graceful or becoming. On this account it is, he well observes, that *Affectation reverses the soul*; other *natural passions* may indeed turn it from that bias which the *ruling one* has given it; but the *affected passions* distort all its faculties, and cramp all its operations; so that it acts with the same constraint that a tumbler walks upon his hands.

VER. 69. *Unthought-of frailties &c.*] 4. A Fourth cause lies in the *Inequalities in the human mind*, which expose the *wise* to unexpected frailties, and conduct the *weak* to as unlooked for wisdom.

VER. 71. *See the same man, &c.*] Of all these Four causes he here gives examples: 1. Of the *vivacity of the Imagination* (from *ÿ 71 to 77*) — 2. Of the *contrariety of Appetites* (from *ÿ 76 to 81*) — 3. Of *Affectation* (from *ÿ 80 to 87*) — and 4. Of the *Inequalities of the human mind* (from *ÿ 86 to 95*.)

Who would not praise Patritio's high desert,
 His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,
 His comprehensive head! all Int'rests weigh'd,
 All Europe fav'd, yet Britain not betray'd.
 He thanks you not, his pride is in Picquette, 85
 New-market-fame, and judgment at a Bett.

What made (say Montagne, or more sage Charron!)
 Otho a warrior, Cromwell a buffoon?
 A perjur'd Prince a leaden Saint revere,
 A godless Regent tremble at a Star? 90

VARIATIONS.

After \S 86. in the former Editions,

Triumphant leaders, at an army's head,
 Hemm'd round with glories, pilfer cloth or bread;
 As meanly plunder as they bravely fought,
 Now save a People, and now save a groat.

NOTES.

VER. 81. *Patritio*] Lord
 G—n.

VER. 87. — *say Montagne,*
or more sage Charron!] Charron
 was an admirer of Montagne;
 had contracted a strict friend-
 ship with him; and has trans-
 ferred an infinite number of
 his thoughts into his famous
 book *De la Sageffe*; but his
 moderating every-where the
 extravagant Pyrrhonism of his
 friend, is the reason why the
 poet calls him *more sage Char-*
rion.

VER. 89. *Aperjur'd Prince*]
 Louis XI. of France, wore in
 his Hat a leaden image of the
 Virgin Mary, which when he
 swore by, he feared to break
 his oath. P.

VER. 90. *A godless Regent*
tremble at a Star?] Philip
 Duke of Orleans, Regent of
 France in the minority of
 Louis XV. superstitious in ju-
 dicial astrology, tho' an unbe-
 liever in all religion. The
 same has been observed of
 many other *Politicians.* The

The throne a Bigot keep, a Genius quit,
 Faithless thro' Piety, and dup'd thro' Wit?
 Europe a Woman, Child, or Dotard rule,
 And just her wisest monarch made a fool?

NOTES.

Italians, in general, are not more noted for their refined *Politics* than for their attachment to the dotages of *Astrology*. It may be worth while to enquire into the cause of so singular a phenomenon, as it may probably do honour to Religion. These men observing (and none have equal opportunities of so doing) how perpetually public events fall out besides their expectation, and contrary to the best-laid schemes of worldly policy, cannot but confess that human affairs are ordered by some power extrinsecal. To acknowledge a God and his

Providence would be next to introducing a morality destructive of that public system which they think necessary for the government of the world. They have recourse therefore to that absurd scheme of Power which rules by no other law than *Fate* or *Destiny*. The consideration of this perhaps was the reason that the poet, to keep up decorum, and to preserve the distinction between a *Patriot* and a *Politician*, makes the former rely on *Providence* for the public safety, in the concluding words of the Epistle,

*Such in those moments as in all the past,
 O save my Country, Heav'n! shall be your last.*

VER. 91. *The throne a Bigot keep, a Genius quit,*] Philip V. of Spain, who, after renouncing the throne for Religion, resumed it to gratify his Queen; and Victor Amadeus II. King of Sardinia, who resigned the crown, and trying to reassume it, was im-

prisoned till his death. P.

VER. 93. *Europe a Woman, Child, and Dotard rule,—And just her ablest monarch made a fool?*] The Czarina, the King of France, the Pope, and the abovementioned King of Sardinia.

Know, GOD and NATURE only are the same :
 In Man, the judgment shoots at flying game, 96
 A bird of passage! gone as soon as found,
 Now in the Moon perhaps, now under ground.
 In vain the Sage, with retrospective eye,
 Would from th'apparent What conclude the Why,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 95. *Know, God and Nature &c.*] Having thus proved what he had proposed, the *premisses* naturally lead him into a moral reflexion, with which he concludes his *first part*, namely, that constancy is to be expected in no human Character whatsoever, but to be found only in God and his Laws: That as to Man, he is not only perpetually shifting and varying, even while *within the verge* of his own nature; but is frequently flying out into each extreme both *above* and *below* it: Now associating in good earnest with Brutes; and now again affecting the imaginary conversation of Angels [See *Essay on Man*, Ep. ii. v. 8.]

*A bird of passage! gone as soon as found,
 Now in the Moon perhaps, now under ground.*

II.

VER. 99. *In vain the Sage, &c.*] The author having shewn the difficulties in coming to the Knowledge and true Characters of men, enters now upon the *second division* of his Poem, which is *of the wrong means that both Philosophers and Men of the world*

NOTES.

VER. 95. *Know, God and Nature &c.*] By *Nature* is not here meant any imaginary substitute of God, called a *Plastic nature*; but his *moral laws*: And this observation was inserted with great propriety and discretion, in the conclusion of a long detail of the various characters of men: For, from this circumstance, *Montagne* and others have been bold enough to insinuate, that morality is founded more in custom and fashion than in the nature of things. The speaking therefore of a moral law of God as having all the constancy and durability of his Essence, had an high expediency in this place.

Infer the Motive from the Deed, and shew, 101
 That what we chanc'd was what we meant to do.
 Behold! If Fortune or a Mistress frowns,
 Some plunge in bus'ness, others shave their crowns:
 To ease the Soul of one oppressive weight, 105
 This quits an Empire, that embroils a State:
 The same adust complexion has impell'd
 Charles to the Convent, Philip to the Field.

COMMENTARY.

have employed in surmounting those difficulties. He had, in the Introduction, spoken of the absurd conduct of both, in despising the assistance of each other: He now justifies his censure by an examination of their peculiar doctrines; and, to take them in their own way, considers them, as they would be considered, *separately.* And *first,* of the *Philosopher,* whose principal mistake is in supposing that *Actions best decipher the Motive of the actor.* This he confutes (from ψ 98 to 109) by shewing that *different Actions* proceed often from the *same motive*; whether of *accident,* as disappointed views; or of *temperature,* as an adust complexion; which he thus illustrates,

Behold! If Fortune or a Mistress frowns, &c.

In judging therefore of *Motives* by *Actions,* the *Philosopher* must needs be frequently misled; because the passion or appetite, which, when impelling to *Action,* we call the *Motive,* may be equally gratified in the pursuit of quite different measures.

NOTES.

VER. 107. *The same adust complexion has impell'd --- Charles to the Convent, Philip to the Field.*] The atrabilaire complexion of Philip II. is well known, but not so well that he derived it from his father

Charles V. whose health, the historians of his life tell us, was frequently disorder'd by bilious fevers. But what the author meant principally to observe here was, that this humour made both these princes act

Not always Actions shew the man: we find
 Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind; 110
 Perhaps Prosperity becalm'd his breast,
 Perhaps the Wind just shifted from the east:
 Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat,
 Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great:
 Who combats bravely is not therefore brave, 115
 He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 109. *Not always Actions shew the man: &c.*] The Philosopher's second mistake is, that *Actions decipher the Character of the actor*. This too, the author confutes (from v 108 to 135) and, as in correcting the foregoing mistake, he proved, that *different Actions often proceed from the same Motive*; so here he proves, that *the same Action often proceeds from different Motives*; thus a *kind Action*, he observes, as commonly arises from the accidents of prosperity or fine weather, as from a natural disposition to humanity; a *modest Action*, as well from pride, as humility; a *brave Action*, as easily from habit or fashion, as magnanimity; and a *prudent Action* as often from vanity, as wisdom. Now the *Character* being really determined by the *Motives*, and various, nay contrary *Motives* producing the same *Action*, the *Action* can never decipher the *Character of the actor*. But further (continues the poet) if we attend to what has been said, we shall discover another circumstance in the case, that will not only make it extremely difficult, but absolutely impracticable to decipher the *Character* by the *Action*; and that is, the *discordancy of Action* in the same *Character*; a necessary consequence of the two principles proved above, that *different Actions proceed from the same Motive*, and that *the same Action proceeds from different Motives*.

NOTES.

contrary to their Character; |
 Charles, who was an active |
 man, when he retired into a |
 | Convent; Philip, who was a
 | man of the Closet, when he
 | gave the battle of St. Quintin.

Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise,
His pride in Reas'ning, not in Acting lies.

But grant that Actions best discover man; 119
Take the most strong, and sort them as you can.

The few that glare each character must mark,
You balance not the many in the dark.

What will you do with such as disagree?

Suppress them, or miscall them Policy?

Must then at once (the character to save) 125

The plain rough Hero turn a crafty Knave?

COMMENTARY.

VER. 119. *But grant that Actions &c.*] If you will judge of man by his *Actions*, you are not to select such only as you like, or can manage, you must fairly take all you find: But, when you have got these together, they will prove so very discordant that no consistent Character can possibly be made out of them. What is then to be done? Will you *suppress* all those you cannot reconcile to the few capital Actions which you chuse for the foundation of your Character? But this the laws of truth will not permit. Will you then miscall them? and say they were not the natural workings of the man, but the disguises of the politician? But what will you get by that, but reversing the best known Character, and making the owner of it the direct opposite of himself? And this (says our author) the reasoning and philosophic historian has been always ready to do with the *Actions* of great men; of which he gives two famous instances in the life of Cæsar. The conclusion, from the whole, is, that *Actions do not shew the Man.*

NOTES.

VER. 117. *Who reasons wisely &c.*] By *reasoning* is not here meant *speculating*; but deliberating and resolving in public counsels; for this instance is given as *one*, of a variety of *actions*.

Alas! in truth the man but chang'd his mind,
 Perhaps was fick, in love, or had not din'd.
 Ask why from Britain Cæsar would retreat?
 Cæsar himself might whisper he was beat. 130
 Why risk the world's great empire for a Punk?
 Cæsar perhaps might answer he was drunk.
 But, sage historians! 'tis your task to prove
 One action Conduct; one, heroic Love.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 129. in the former Editions,

Ask why from Britain Cæsar made retreat?
 Cæsar himself would tell you he was beat.
 The mighty Czar what mov'd to wed a Punk?
 The mighty Czar would tell you he was drunk.

Alter'd as above, because Cæsar wrote his Commentaries of this war, and does *not* tell you he was beat. As Cæsar too afforded an instance of both cases, it was thought better to make him the single Example.

NOTES.

VER. 130. *Cæsar himself might whisper he was beat.* Cæsar wrote his *Commentaries*, in imitation of the Greek Generals, for the entertainment of the world: But had his friend asked him, in his ear, the reason of his sudden retreat from Britain, after so many signal victories, we have cause to suspect, even from his own public relation of that matter, that he would have *whisper'd he was beat.*

world's great empire for a Punk?] After the battle of Pharsalia, Cæsar pursued his enemy to Alexandria, where being infatuated with the charms of Cleopatra, instead of pushing his advantages, and dispersing the relicks of the Pharsalian quarrel, having narrowly escaped the violence of an enraged people, he brought upon himself an unnecessary war, at a time his arms were most wanted elsewhere.

VER. 131. *Why risque the*

'Tis from high Life high Characters are drawn ;
 A Saint in Crape is twice a Saint in Lawn ; 136
 A Judge is just, a Chanc'lor juster still ;
 A Gownman, learn'd ; a Bishop, what you will ;
 Wife, if a Minister ; but, if a King,
 More wise, more learn'd, more just, more ev'ry thing.
 Court-virtues bear, like Gems, the highest rate, 141
 Born where Heav'n's influence scarce can penetrate :
 In life's low vale, the foil the Virtues like,
 They please as beauties, here as wonders strike.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 135. [*'Tis from high Life, &c.*] The poet having done with the *Philosopher*, now turns to the *Man of the world* ; whose first mistake is in supposing men's true *Characters may be known by their station*. This, tho' a mere mob-opinion, is the opinion in fashion, and cherished by the Mob of all ranks ; therefore, tho' beneath the poet's reasoning, he thought it deserving of his ridicule ; and the strongest was what he gives (from v 134 to 141) a naked exposition of the fact ; to which he has subjoined (from v 140 to 149) an ironical apology, that, as Virtue is cultivated with infinitely more labour in Courts than in

NOTES.

VER. 141. *Court-virtues bear, like Gems, &c.*] This whole reflexion, and the similitude brought to support it, have a great delicacy of ridicule.—A man dispos'd to cavil would fancy the similitude not exact ; for that the principal reason of our preferring the

Gem is for its durability. But does he not see it is equally for its rarity ; and that when once a Court-virtue rises and comes in the way of such a lover of it as our poet, it seldom sets again, but bids fair for being immortal ?

Tho' the same Sun with all-diffusive rays 145
 Blush in the Rose, and in the Di'mond blaze,
 We prize the stronger effort of his pow'r,
 And justly set the Gem above the Flow'r.

'Tis Education forms the common mind,
 Just as the Twig is bent, the Tree's inclin'd. 150
 Boastful and rough, your first son is a 'Squire;
 The next a Tradesman, meek, and much a lyar;

COMMENTARY.

Cottages, it is but just to set an infinitely higher value on it; which, says he with much pleasantry, is most agreeable to all the fashionable ways of estimation. For why do the connoisseurs prefer the lively colour in a Gem before that in a Flower, but for its extreme rarity and difficulty of production?

VER. 149. 'Tis Education forms, &c.] This *second* mistake of the *Man of the world* is more serious; it is, that *Characters are best judged of by the general Manners*. This the poet confutes in a lively enumeration of examples (from v 148 to 158) which shew, that how similar or different soever the *Manners* be by *Nature*, yet they are all new model'd by *Education* and *Profession*; where each man invariably receives that exotic form which the mould he falls into, is fitted to imprint. The *natural Character* therefore can never be judged of by these *fictitious Manners*.

NOTES.

VER. 152. *The next a Tradesman, meek, and much a lyar;*] be given to *lying*, it is certainly on a more substantial motive, and will therefore rather deserve the name, which this philosopher gives it, of *wisdom*; it being indeed the *wisdom of this world*, by which all things in it are governed. SCRIBL.

“ The only glory of a Tradesman (says Hobbes) is to grow excessively rich by the wisdom of buying and selling.” A pursuit very wide of all *vain-glory*; so that if he

Tom struts a Soldier, open, bold, and brave;
 Will sneaks a Scriv'ner, an exceeding knave: 154
 Is he a Churchman? then he's fond of pow'r: }
 A Quaker? fly: A Presbyterian? sow'r: }
 A smart Free-thinker? all things in an hour. }

Ask men's Opinions: Scots now shall tell
 How Trade increases, and the World goes well;
 Strike off his Pension, by the setting sun, 160
 And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

That gay Free-thinker, a fine talker once,
 What turns him now a stupid silent dunce?
 Some God, or Spirit he has lately found;
 Or chanc'd to meet a Minister that frown'd. 165

Judge we by Nature? Habit can efface,
 Int'rest o'ercome, or Policy take place:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 158. *Ask mens Opinion's: &c.*] The third mistake is in judging of mens characters by their *Opinions and turn of thinking*. But these, the poet shews by two examples (from v 157 to 166.) are generally swayed by *Interest*, both in the *affairs of Life and Speculation*.

VER. 166. *Judge we by Nature? &c.*] The poet having

NOTES.

VER. 164, 165. *Some God, or Spirit he has lately found, Or chanc'd to meet a Minister that frown'd.*] Disasters the most unlooked for, as they were what the Free-thinker's *Specu-*

lations and Practice were principally directed to avoid.—The poet here alludes to the ancient classical opinion, that the sudden vision of a God was supposed to strike the irreverend

By Actions? those Uncertainty divides :
 By Passions? these Diffimulation hides :
 Opinions? they still take a wider range: 170
 Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.

Manners with Fortunes, Humours turn with
 Climes,
 Tenets with Books, and Principles with Times.

COMMENTARY.

gone through the *mistakes* both of the *Philosopher* and *Man of the world*, separately, turns now to *both*; and (from ν 165 to 174) jointly addresses them in a *recapitulation* of his reasoning against *both*: He shews, that if we pretend to develope the *Character* by the *natural disposition in general*, we shall find it extremely difficult, because this is often *effaced* by *Habit*, *overswayed* by *Interest*, and *suspended* by *Policy*.—If by *Actions*, their contrariety will leave us in utter doubt and uncertainty.—If by *Passions*, we shall be perpetually misled by the mask of *Diffimulation*.—If by *Opinions*, all these concur together to perplex the enquiry. Shew us, then, says he, in the whole range of your *Philosophy* and *Experience*, the thing we can be *certain* of: For (to sum up all in a word)

Manners with Fortunes, Humours turn with Climes,
 Tenets with Books, and Principles with Times.

We must seek therefore some other road to the point we aim at.

NOTES.

observer speechless. He has only a little extended the conceit, and supposed, that the terrors of a *Court-God* might have the like effect on a very devoted worshipper. SCRIBL.

VER. 172, 173. *Manners with Fortunes, Humours turn with Climes, Tenets with Books, and Principles with Times.*]

The poet had hitherto reckon'd up the several *simple* causes that hinder our knowledge of the natural characters of men. In these two fine lines he describes the *complicated* causes. *Humours* bear the same relation to *Manners*, that *Principles* do to *Tenets*; that is, the former are *modes* of the latter;

Search then the RULING PASSION: There, alone,
 The Wild are constant, and the Cunning known;
 The Fool consistent, and the False sincere; 176
 Priests, Princes, Women, no dissemblers here.
 This clue once found, unravels all the rest,
 The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confest.
 Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days, 180
 Whose ruling Passion was the Lust of Praise:
 Born with whate'er could win it from the Wise,
 Women and Fools must like him or he dies;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 174. *Search then the Ruling Passion: &c.*] And now we enter on the *third* and last part; which treats of the *right means* of surmounting the difficulties in coming to the *Knowledge and Characters of Men*: This the poet shews, is by *investigating the RULING PASSION*; of whose origin and nature we may find an exact account in the second Ep. of the *Essay on Man*. This *Principle* he rightly observes (from ν 173 to 180) is the clue that must guide us thro' all the intricacies in the ways of men: To convince us of which, he applies it (from ν 179 to 210) to the most wild and inconsistent Character that ever was; which (when drawn out at length, in a spirit of poetry as rare as the character itself) we see, this *Principle* unravels, and renders throughout of one plain consistent thread.

NOTES.

our *Manners* are warped from nature by our *Fortunes* or *Stations*; our *Tenets*, by our *Books* or *Professions*; and then each drawn still more oblique, into *humour* and *political principles*, by the temperature of the *climate*, and the constitution of

the *government*.

VER. 174. *Search then the Ruling Passion:*] See *Essay on Man*, Ep. ii. ν 133. & seq.

VER. 181. *the Lust of Praise:*] This very well expresses the *grossness* of his appetite for it; where the *strength*

Tho' wond'ring Senates hung on all he spoke,
 The Club must hail him master of the joke. 185
 Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
 He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too.
 Then turns repentant, and his God adores
 With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;
 Enough if all around him but admire, 190
 And now the Punk applaud, and now the Fryer.
 Thus with each gift of nature and of art,
 And wanting nothing but an honest heart;
 Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt;
 And most contemptible, to shun contempt; 195
 His Passion still, to covet gen'ral praise,
 His Life, to forfeit it a thousand ways;
 A constant Bounty which no friend has made;
 An angel Tongue, which no man can persuade;
 A Fool, with more of Wit than half mankind, 200
 Too rash for Thought, for Action too refin'd:

NOTES.

of the Passion had destroyed all the delicacy of the Sensation.

VER. 187. John Wilmot, E. of Rochester, famous for his Wit and Extravagancies in the time of Charles the Second. P.

VER. 189. *With the same spirit*] Spirit, for principle, not

passion.

VER. 200. *A Fool, with more of Wit*] Folly, joined with much *Wit*, produces that behaviour which we call *Aburdity*; and this *Aburdity* the poet has here admirably described in the words,

Too rash for Thought, for Action too refin'd:

A Tyrant to the wife his heart approves;
 A Rebel to the very king he loves;
 He dies, sad out-cast of each church and state,
 And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great. 205
 Ask you why Wharton broke thro' ev'ry rule?
 'Twas all for fear the Knaves should call him Fool.

Nature well known, no prodigies remain,
 Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.

VARIATIONS.

In the former Editions, *vs* 208.

Nature well known, no *Miracles* remain.

Alter'd, as above, for very obvious reasons.

NOTES.

by which we are made to understand, that the person described gave a loose to his *Fancy* when he should have used his *Judgment*; and pursued his *Speculations* when he should have trusted to his *Experience*.

VER. 205. *And, harder still, flagitious, yet not great.*) To arrive at what the world calls *Greatness*, a man must either hide and conceal his vices, or he must openly and stedily

practise them, in the pursuit and attainment of one important end. This unhappy Nobleman did neither.

VER. 207. *'Twas all for fear &c.*] To understand this, we must observe, that the *Lust of general praise* made the person, whose Character is here so admirable drawn, both *extravagant* and *flagitious*; his *Madness* was to please the Fools,

Women and Fools must like him, or he dies.

And his *Crimes* to avoid the censure of the Knaves,

'Twas all for fear the Knaves should call him Fool.

Prudence and *Honesty* being the two qualities that Fools and Knaves are most interested,

and consequently most industrious, to misrepresent.

VER. 209. *Comets are regu-*

Yet, in this search, the wisest may mistake, 210
 If second qualities for first they take.
 When Catiline by rapine swell'd his store ;
 When Cæsar made a noble dame a whore ;
 In this the Lust, in that the Avarice 214
 Were means, not ends ; Ambition was the vice.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 210. *Yet, in this search, &c.*] But here (from v 209 to 222) he gives one very necessary caution, that, in developing the *Ruling Passion*, we must be careful not to mistake a *subsidiary* passion for the *principal* ; which, without great attention, we may be very liable to do ; as the *subsidiary*, acting in support of the *principal*, has frequently all its *vigour* and much of its *perseverance* : This error has misled several both of the ancient and modern historians ; as when they supposed *Lust* and *Luxury* to be Characteristics of *Cæsar* and *Lucullus* ; whereas, in truth, the *Ruling Passion* of both was *Ambition* ; which is so certain, that, at whatsoever different time of the Republic these men had lived, their *Ambition*, as the *Ruling Passion*, had been the

NOTES.

lar, and Wharton plain.] This illustration has an exquisite beauty, arising from the exactness of the analogy : For, as the appearance of irregularity, in a Comet's motion, is occasioned by the greatness of the *force* which pushes it round a very eccentric orb ; so it is the *violence* of the *Ruling Passion*, that, impatient for its object, in the impetuosity of its course towards it, is frequently hurried to an immense distance from it, which occasions all that

puzzling inconsistency of conduct we observe in it.

VER. 213. — *a noble Dame a whore,*] The sister of Cato, and mother of Brutus.

VER. 215. *Ambition was the vice.*] *Pride, Vanity, and Ambition* are such bordering and neighbourly vices, and hold so much in common, that we generally find them going together, and therefore, as generally mistake them for one another. This does not a little contribute to our confounding

That very Cæsar, born in Scipio's days,
 Had aim'd, like him, by Chastity at praise.
 Lucullus, when Frugality could charm,
 Had roasted turnips in the Sabin farm.
 In vain th' observer eyes the builder's toil, 220
 But quite mistakes the scaffold for the pile.
 In this one Passion man can strength enjoy,
 As Fits give vigour, just when they destroy.

COMMENTARY.

fame; but a different time had changed their *subsidiary* ones of *Lust* and *Luxury*, into their very opposites of *Chastity* and *Frugality*. 'Tis in vain therefore, says our author, for the observer of human nature to fix his attention on the *Workman*, if he all the while mistakes the *Scaffold* for the *Building*.

VER. 222. *In this one Passion &c.*] But now it may be objected to our philosophic poet, that he has indeed shewn *the true means* of coming to *the Knowledge and Characters of men* by a *Principle* certain and infallible, when found, yet, by his own account, of so difficult investigation, that its *Counterfeit*, and it is always attended with one, may be easily mistaken for it. To

NOTES.

Characters; for they are, in reality, very different and distinct; so much so, that 'tis remarkable, the three greatest men in Rome, and contemporaries, possessed each of these separately, without the least mixture of the other two: The men I mean were Cæsar, Cato, and Cicero: For Cæsar had *Ambition* without either vanity or pride; Cato had *Pride* without ambition or vanity; and

Cicero had *Vanity* without pride or ambition.

VER. 223. *As Fits give vigour, just when they destroy.*] The similitude is extremely apposite; as most of the instances he has afterwards given of the vigorous exertion of the *Ruling Passion* in the last moments, are from such who had hastened their death by an immoderate indulgence of *that Passion*.

Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,
 Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand. 225
 Consistent in our follies and our sins,
 Here honest Nature ends as she begins.

Old Politicians chew on wisdom past,
 And totter on in bus'ness to the last;
 As weak, as earnest; and as gravely out, 230
 As sober Laneb'row dancing in the gout.

Behold a rev'rend sire, whom want of grace
 Has made the father of a nameless race,

C O M M E N T A R Y.

remove this difficulty, therefore, and consequently the objection that arises from it, the poet has given (from ν 221 to 228) one certain and infallible criterion of the *Ruling Passion*, which is this, that all the *other* passions, in the course of time, change and wear away; while *this* is ever constant and vigorous; and still going on from strength to strength, to the very moment of its demolishing the miserable machine that it has now at length overworked. Of this great truth, the poet (from ν 227 to the end) gives various instances in all the principal *Ruling Passions* of our nature, as they are to be found in the *Man of Business*, the *Man of Pleasure*, the *Epicure*, the *Parcimonious*, the *Toast*, the

N O T E S.

VER. 227. *Here honest Nature ends as she begins.*] Human nature is here humourously called *honest*, as the impulse of the *ruling passion* (which she gives and cherishes) makes her more and more impatient of disguise.

VER. 231. *Laneb'row.*] An

ancient Nobleman, who continued this practice long after his legs were disabled by the gout. Upon the death of Prince George of Denmark, he demanded an audience of the Queen, to advise her to preserve her health and dispel her grief by *Dancing*. P.

Shov'd from the wall perhaps, or rudely prefs'd
 By his own son, that passes by unblefs'd: 235
 Still to his wench he crawls on knocking knees,
 And envies ev'ry sparrow that he sees.

A salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate;
 The doctor call'd, declares all help too late:
 "Mercy! cries Helluo, mercy on my soul! 240
 "Is there no hope?—Alas!—then bring the jowl."

The frugal Crone, whom praying priests attend,
 Still tries to save the hallow'd taper's end,
 Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,
 For one puff more, and in that puff expires. 245

"Odious! in woollen! 'twould a Saint provoke,
 (Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke)
 "No, let a charming Chintz, and Bruffels lace
 "Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:

COMMENTARY.

Courtier, the *Miser*, and the *Patriot*; which last instance the poet has had the art, under the appearance of Satire, to turn into the noblest Compliment on the person to whom the Epistle is addressed.

NOTES.

VER. 247. — *the last words that poor Narcissa spoke*] This story, as well as the others, is founded on fact, tho' the author had the goodness not to mention the names. Several attribute this in particular to a very celebrated Actress, who, in detestation of the thought of being buried in woollen, gave these her last orders with her dying breath. P.

‘ One would not, sure, be frightful when one’s dead—

“ And — Betty — give this Cheek a little Red.”

The Courtier smooth, who forty years had shin’d
An humble servant to all human kind,
Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could
stir,

“ If — where I’m going — I could serve you, Sir?

“ I give and I devise (old Euclio said, 256
And sigh’d) “ my lands and tenements to Ned.

Your money, Sir; “ My money, Sir, what all?

“ Why, — if I must — (then wept) I give it Paul.

The Manor, Sir? — “ The Manor! hold, he cry’d,

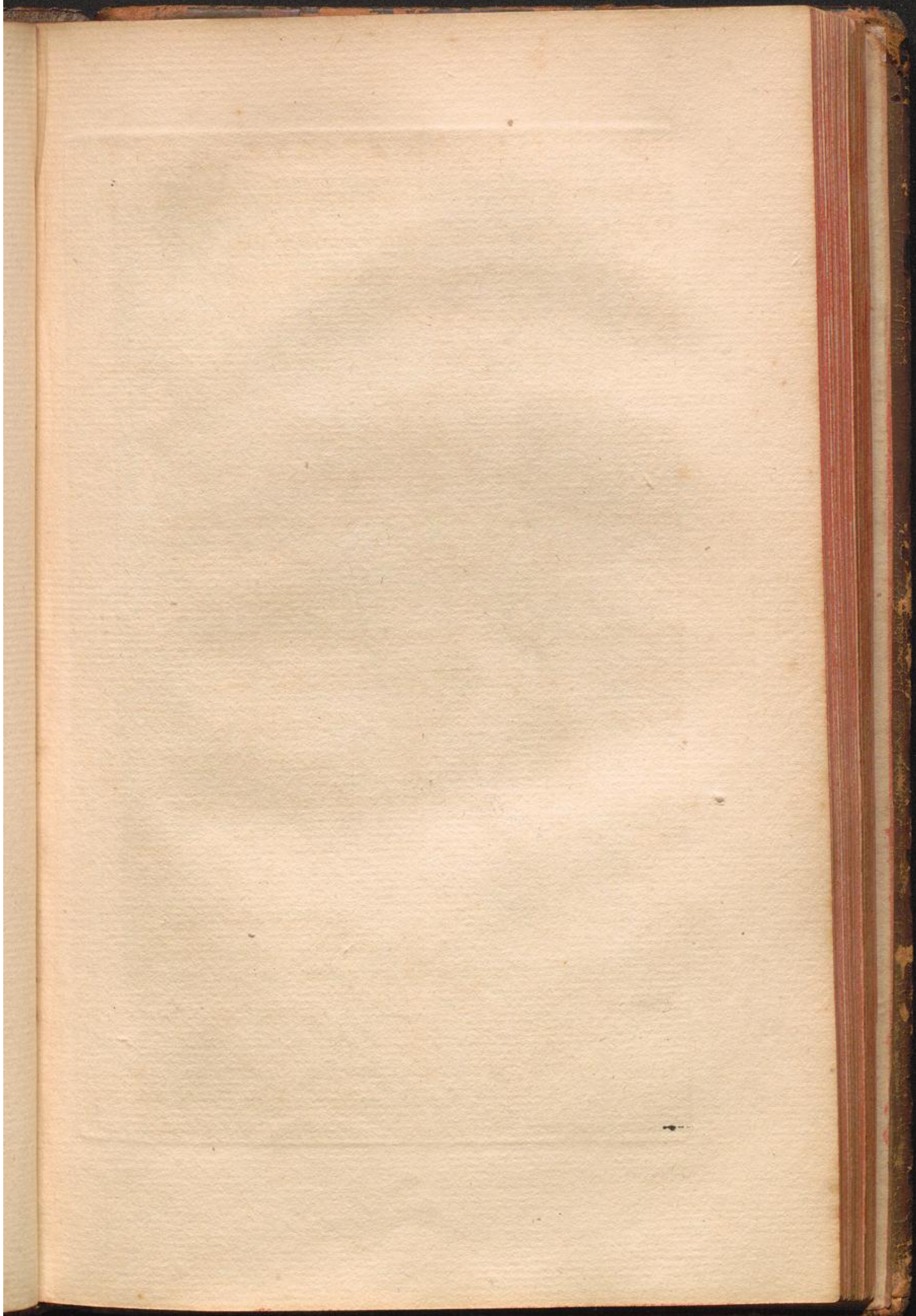
“ Not that, — I cannot part with that” — and dy’d.

And you! brave COBHAM, to the latest breath
Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death:

Such in those moments as in all the past,

“ Oh, save my Country, Heav’n!” shall be your last.







N. Blakely inv. & del.

G. Scottin sculp.

In Men, we various ruling Passions find,
In Women, two almost divide the Kind;
Those only fix'd, they first or last obey,
The Love of Pleasure, and the Love of Sway.

Char: of Women.

MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE II.

T O

A L A D Y.

Of the Characters of Women.

NOTHING so true as what you once let fall,
 "Most Women have no Characters at all."
 Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
 And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.

N O T E S.

Of the Characters of Women.] There is nothing in Mr. Pope's works more highly finished than this Epistle: Yet its success was in no proportion to the pains he took in composing it. Something he chanced to drop in a short Advertisement prefixed to it, on its first publication, may per-

haps account for the small attention given to it. He said, that *no one character in it was drawn from the life.* The Public believed him on his word, and expressed little curiosity about a Satire in which there was nothing personal.

VER. I. *Nothing so true &c.*] The reader perhaps may

N

How many pictures of one Nymph we view, 5
All how unlike each other, all how true!

NOTES.

be disappointed to find that this *Epistle*, which proposes the same subject with the preceding, is conducted on very different rules of method; for instead of being disposed in the same logical connection, and filled with the like philosophical remarks, it is wholly taken up in drawing a great variety of capital Characters: But if he would reflect, that the *two Sexes* make but *one Species*, and consequently, that the Characters of both must be studied and explained on the same principles, he would see, that when the poet had done this in the preceding *Epistle*, his business here was, not to repeat what he had already delivered, but only to verify and illustrate his doctrine, by every *view* of that perplexity of Nature, which *his* philosophy only can explain. If the reader therefore will but be at the

pains to study these Characters with any degree of attention, as they are here masterly drawn, one important particular (for which the poet has artfully prepared him by the introduction) will very forcibly strike his observation; and that is, that all the great strokes in the several Characters of *Women* are not only infinitely perplexed and discordant, like those in *Men*, but absolutely inconsistent, and in a much higher degree *contradictory*. As strange as this may appear, yet he will see that the poet has all the while strictly followed Nature, whose ways, we find by the former *Epistle*, are not a little mysterious; and a mystery this might have remained, had not our author explained it at *l* 207, where he shuts up his *Characters* with this philosophical reflexion:

*In Men, we various ruling Passions find;
In Women, two almost divide the kind;
Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,
The love of Pleasure, and the love of Sway.*

If this account be true, we see the perpetual necessity (which is not the case in *Men*) that *Women* lye under of *disguising*

their *ruling passion*. Now the variety of arts employed to this purpose must needs draw them into infinite contradic-

Arcadia's Countess, here, in ermin'd pride,
Is there, Pastora by a fountain side.

NOTES.

tions in those *Actions* from whence their general and obvious Character is denominated: To verify this observation, let the reader examine all the Characters here drawn, and try whether with this key he cannot discover that all their Contradictions arise from a desire to hide the *ruling Passion*.

But this is not the worst. The poet afterwards (from ν 218 to 249) takes notice of another mischief arising from this necessity of hiding their ruling Passions; which is, that generally the end of each is defeated even there where they are most violently pursued: For the necessity of hiding them inducing an habitual disposition of mind, Reason,

whose office it is to regulate the *ruling Passion*, loses all its force and direction; and these unhappy victims to their principles, tho' with their attention still *fixed* upon them, are ever prosecuting the means destructive of their end, and thus become ridiculous in youth, and miserable in old age.

Let me not omit to observe the great beauty of the conclusion: It is an Encomium on an imaginary Lady to whom the Epistle is addressed, and artfully turns upon the fact which makes the subject of the Epistle, the *contradiction of a Woman's Character*, in which contradiction he shews that all the lustre even of the best Character consists:

*And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
Woman's at best a Contradiction still, &c.*

VER. 5. *How many pictures*] The poet's purpose here is to shew, that the Characters of Women are generally inconsistent with themselves; and this he illustrates by so happy a *Similitude*, that we see the folly, described in it, arises from that very principle which gives birth to this inconsistency of Character.

VER. 7, 8, 10, &c. *Arcadia's Countess,—Pastora by a fountain—Leda with a swan.—Magdalen—Cecilia—*] Attitudes in which several ladies affected to be drawn, and sometimes one lady in them all —The poet's politeness and complaisance to the sex is observable in this instance, amongst others, that, whereas

Here Fannia, leering on her own good man,
 And there, a naked Leda with a Swan. 10
 Let then the Fair one beautifully cry,
 In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye,
 Or drest in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,
 With simp'ring Angels, Palms, and Harps divine;
 Whether the Charmer finner it, or faint it, 15
 If Folly grow romantic, I must paint it.

Come then, the colours and the ground prepare!
 Dip in the Rainbow, trick her off in Air;
 Chuse a firm Cloud, before it fall, and in it 19
 Catch, e'er she change, the Cynthia of this minute.

Rufa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the Park,
 Attracts each light gay meteor of a Spark,
 Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,
 As Sappho's di'monds with her dirty smock;

NOTES.

in the *Characters of Men* he has sometimes made use of real names, in the *Characters of Women* always fictitious. P.

VER. 20. *Catch, e'er she change, the Cynthia of this minute.*] Alluding to the precept of *Fresnoy*,

formæ veneres captando fugaces.

VER. 21. Instances of con-

trarieties, given even from such Characters as are most strongly mark'd, and seemingly therefore most consistent: As, I. In the *Affected*, § 21, &c. P.

VER. 23. *Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,*] This thought is expressed with great humour in the following stanza:

Or Sappho at her toilet's greazy task, 25

With Sappho fragrant at an ev'ning Mask :

So morning Insects that in muck begun,

Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting-sun.

How soft is Silia ! fearful to offend ;

The Frail one's advocate, the Weak one's friend :

To her, Calista prov'd her conduct nice ; 31

And good Simplicius asks of her advice.

Sudden, she storms ! she raves ! You tip the wink,

But spare your censure ; Silia does not drink.

All eyes may see from what the change arose, 35

All eyes may see—a Pimple on her nose.

Papillia, wedded to her am'rous spark,

Sighs for the shades—"How charming is a Park !"

A Park is purchas'd, but the Fair he sees

All bath'd in tears—"Oh odious, odious Trees !"

Ladies, like variegated Tulips, show ; 41

'Tis to their Changes half their charms we owe ;

NOTES.

*Tho' Artemesia talks, by fits,
Of councils, classics, fathers, wits ;
Reads Malbranche, Boyle, and Locke :
Yet in some things, methinks, she fails,
'Twere well if she wou'd pare her nails,
And wear a cleaner smock.*

VER. 29 and 37. II. Contrarities in the *Soft-natured*. P.

Fine by defect, and delicately weak.
 Their happy Spots the nice admirer take,
 'Twas thus Calypso once each heart alarm'd, 45
 Aw'd without Virtue, without Beauty charm'd;
 Her Tongue bewitch'd as odly as her Eyes,
 Less Wit than Mimic, more a Wit than wife;
 Strange graces still, and stranger flights she had,
 Was just not ugly, and was just not mad; 50
 Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,
 As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,
 To make a wash, would hardly stew a child;
 Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a Lover's pray'r, 55
 And paid a Tradesman once to make him stare;
 Gave alms at Easter, in a Christian trim,
 And made a Widow happy, for a whim.

NOTES.

VER. 45. III. Contrarieties
 in the *Cunning* and *Artful*. P.

VER. 52. *As when she
 touch'd the brink of all we hate.*
 Her charms consisted in the
 singular turn of her vivacity;
 consequently the stronger she
 exerted this vivacity the more
 forceable must be her attrac-
 tion. But the point, where it
 came to excess, would destroy
 all the delicacy, and expose all

the coarseness of sensuality.

VER. 53. IV. In the *Whim-
 sical*. P.

VER. 57. — *in a Christian
 trim,*] This is finely expressed,
 implying that her very charity
 was as much an exterior of
 Religion, as the ceremonies of
 the season. It was not even in
 a *Christian humour*, it was only
 in a *Christian trim*.

Why then declare Good-nature is her scorn,
 When 'tis by that alone she can be born? 60
 Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?
 A fool to Pleasure, yet a slave to Fame:
 Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,
 Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres:
 Now Conscience chills her, and now Passion burns;
 And Atheism and Religion take their turns; 66
 A very Heathen in the carnal part,
 Yet still a sad, good Christian at her heart.
 See Sin in State, majestically drunk;
 Proud as a Peerefs, prouder as a Punk; 70
 Chaste to her Husband, frank to all beside,
 A teeming Mistrefs, but a barren Bride.
 What then? let Blood and Body bear the fault,
 Her Head's untouch'd, that noble Seat of Thought:
 Such this day's doctrine—in another fit 75
 She sins with Poets thro' pure Love of Wit.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 77. *What has not fir'd &c.*] in the MS.
 In whose mad brain the mixt ideas roll
 Of Tall-boy's breeches, and of Cæsar's foul.

NOTES.

VER. 69. V. In the *Lewd and Vicious*. P.

What has not fir'd her bosom or her brain?
 Cæsar and Tall-boy, Charles and Charlema'ne.
 As Helluo, late Dictator of the Feast,
 'The Nose of Hautgout, and the Tip of Taste, 80
 Critick'd your wine, and analyz'd your meat,
 Yet on plain Pudding deign'd at-home to eat;
 So Philomedé, lect'ring all mankind
 On the soft Passion, and the Taste refin'd,
 Th'Address, the Delicacy—stoops at once, 85
 And makes her hearty meal upon a Dunce.

Flavia's a Wit, has too much sense to Pray;
 To Toast our wants and wishes, is her way;
 Nor asks of God, but of her Stars, to give
 The mighty blessing, "while we live, to live." 90
 Then all for Death, that Opiate of the soul!
 Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl.
 Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?
 A Spark too fickle, or a Spouse too kind.
 Wise Wretch! with Pleasures too refin'd to please;
 With too much Spirit to be e'er at ease; 96

NOTES.

VER. 87. VI. Contrarieties in the <i>Witty and Refin'd</i> . P. VER. 89. <i>Nor asks of God,</i> <i>but of her Stars.—Death, that</i>	<i>Opiate of the soul!</i>] See Note on y 90. of Ep. to Lord <i>Cobham.</i>
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With too much Quickness ever to be taught ;
 With too much Thinking to have common Thought :
 You purchase Pain with all that Joy can give,
 And die of nothing but a Rage to live. 100

Turn then from Wits ; and look on Simo's Mate,
 No Afs so meek, no Afs so obstinate.

Or her, that owns her Faults, but never mends,
 Because she's honest, and the best of Friends.

Or her, whose life the Church and Scandal share,
 For ever in a Passion, or a Pray'r. 106

Or her, who laughs at Hell, but (like her Grace)
 Cries, "Ah! how charming, if there's no such place!"

Or who in sweet vicissitude appears
 Of Mirth and Opium, Ratafie and Tears, 110

The daily Anodyne, and nightly Draught,
 To kill those foes to Fair ones, Time and Thought.

Woman and Fool are two hard things to hit ;
 For true No-meaning puzzles more than Wit.

But what are these to great Atossa's mind? 115
 Scarce once herself, by turns all Womankind!

NOTES.

VER. 107. Or her, who laughs at Hell, but (like her Grace)—Cries, "Ah! how charming if there's no such place!" i. e. Her who affects to laugh out of fashion, and strives to disbelieve out of fear.

Who, with herself, or others, from her birth
 Finds all her life one warfare upon earth:
 Shines, in exposing Knaves, and painting Fools,
 Yet is, whate'er she hates and ridicules. 120
 No Thought advances, but her Eddy Brain
 Whisks it about, and down it goes again.
 Full sixty years the World has been her Trade,
 The wisest Fool much Time has ever made.
 From loveless youth to unrespected age, 125
 No Passion gratify'd except her Rage.
 So much the Fury still out-ran the Wit,
 The Pleasure mis'd her, and the Scandal hit.
 Who breaks with her, provokes Revenge from Hell,
 But he's a bolder man who dares be well. 130
 Her ev'ry turn with Violence pursu'd,
 Nor more a storm her Hate than Gratitude:
 To that each Passion turns, or soon or late;
 Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate:
 Superiors? death! and Equals? what a curse! 135
 But an Inferior not dependant? worse.

VARIATIONS.

After ∇ 122. in the MS.

Oppress'd with wealth and wit, abundance sad!
 One makes her poor, the other makes her mad.

Offend her, and she knows not to forgive ;
 Oblige her, and she'll hate you while you live :
 But die, and she'll adore you—Then the Bust
 And Temple rise—then fall again to dust. 140
 Last night, her Lord was all that's good and great;
 A Knave this morning, and his Will a Cheat.
 Strange ! by the Means defeated of the Ends,
 By Spirit robb'd of Pow'r, by Warmth of Friends,
 By Wealth of Follow'rs ! without one distress 145
 Sick of herself thro' very selfishness !
 Atossa, curs'd with ev'ry granted pray'r,
 Childless with all her Children, wants an Heir.
 To Heirs unknown descends th'unguarded store,
 Or wanders, Heav'n-directed, to the Poor. 150
 Pictures like these, dear Madam, to design,
 Asks no firm hand, and no unerring line ;

VARIATIONS.

After v 148. in the MS.

This Death decides, nor lets the blessing fall
 On any one she hates, but on them all.
 Curs'd chance ! this only could afflict her more,
 If any part should wander to the poor.

NOTES.

VER. 150. *Or wanders, Heav'n-directed, &c.* Alluding and referring to the great principle of his Philosophy, which he never loses sight of, and which teaches, that Providence is incessantly turning the evils arising from the follies and vices of men to general good.

Some wand'ring touches, some reflected light,
 Some flying stroke alone can hit 'em right:
 For how should equal Colours do the knack? 155
 Chameleons who can paint in white and black?

“Yet Cloe sure was form'd without a spot”—
 Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot.

NOTES.

VER. 156. *Chameleons who can paint in white and black?*] There is one thing that does a very distinguished honour to the accuracy of our poet's judgment, of which, in the course of these observations, I have given many instances, and shall here explain in what it consists; it is this, that the *Similitudes* in his didactic poems, of which he is not sparing, and which are highly poetical, are always chosen with such exquisite discernment of Nature, as not only to illustrate the particular point he is upon, but to establish the general principles he would enforce; so, in the instance before us, he compares the inconstancy and contradiction in the Characters of Women, to the change of colours in the Chameleon; yet 'tis nevertheless the great principle of this poem to shew that the general Characteristic of the Sex, as to the Ruling Passion, which they all have, is more uniform than that in

Man: Now for this purpose, all Nature could not have supplied such another illustration as this of the Chameleon; for tho' it instantaneously assumes much of the colour of every subject on which it chances to be placed, yet, as the most accurate *Virtuosi* have observed, it has two native colours of its own, which, amidst all these changes are never totally discharged, but, tho' often discoloured by the neighbourhood of adventitious ones, still make the foundation, and give a tincture to all those which, from thence, it occasionally assumes.

VER. 157. “*Yet Cloe sure &c.*”] The purpose of the poet in this Character is important: It is to shew that the politic or prudent government of the passions is not enough to make a Character amiable, nor even to secure it from being ridiculous, if the end of that government be not pursued, which is the free exercise of the social appetites after the selfish

" With ev'ry pleasing, ev'ry prudent part,
 " Say, what can Cloe want?"—She wants a Heart.
 She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought; 161
 But never, never, reach'd one gen'rous Thought.
 Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,
 Content to dwell in Decencies for ever.
 So very reasonable, so unmov'd, 165
 As never yet to love, or to be lov'd.
 She, while her Lover pants upon her breast,
 Can mark the figures on an Indian chest;
 And when she sees her Friend in deep despair,
 Observes how much a Chintz exceeds Mohair. 170
 Forbid it Heav'n, a Favour or a Debt
 She e'er should cancel—but she may forget.
 Safe is your Secret still in Cloe's ear;
 But none of Cloe's shall you ever hear.
 Of all her Dears she never slander'd one, 175
 But cares not if a thousand are undone.
 Would Cloe know if you're alive or dead?
 She bids her Footman put it in her head.

NOTES.

ones have been subdued; for that if, tho' reason govern, the heart be never consulted, we interest ourselves as little in the	fortune of such a Character, as in any of the foregoing, which passions or caprice drive up and down at random.
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Cloe is prudent—Would you too be wife?
 Then never break your heart when Cloe dies. 180
 One certain Portrait may (I grant) be seen,
 Which Heav'n has varnish'd out, and made a *Queen*:
 THE SAME FOR EVER! and describ'd by all
 With Truth and Goodness, as with Crown and Ball.
 Poets heap Virtues, Painters Gems at will, 185
 And show their zeal, and hide their want of skill.
 'Tis well—but, Artists! who can paint or write,
 To draw the Naked is your true delight.
 That Robe of Quality so struts and swells,
 None see what Parts of Nature it conceals: 190
 Th'exactest traits of Body or of Mind,
 We owe to models of an humble kind.
 If QUEENSBERRY to strip there's no compelling,
 'Tis from a Handmaid we must take a Helen.
 From Peer or Bishop 'tis no easy thing 195
 To draw the man who loves his God, or King:
 Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)
 From honest Mah'met, or plain Parson Hale.

NOTES.

VER. 181. *One certain Portrait—the same for ever!—*] Character; so that the satire falls not on any particular *Character*, but on the *Character-maker* only. See Note on v 78.
 I Dialogue 1738.
 VER. 198. *Mah'met*, ser-

But grant, in Public Men sometimes are shown,
 A Woman's seen in Private life alone : 200
 Our bolder Talents in full light display'd ;
 Your Virtues open fairest in the shade.
 Bred to disguise, in Public 'tis you hide ;
 There, none distinguish 'twixt your Shame or Pride,

VARIATIONS.

After v 198. in the MS.

Fain I'd in Fulvia spy the tender Wife,
 I cannot prove it on her, for my life :
 And, for a noble pride, I blush no less,
 Instead of Berenice, to think on Bess.
 Thus while immortal Cibber only sings
 (As * and H**y preach) for queens and kings,
 The nymph, that ne'er read Milton's mighty line,
 May, if the love, and merit verse, have mine.

NOTES.

vant to the late King, said to be the son of a Turkish Bassa, whom he took at the Siege of Buda, and constantly kept about his person. P.

Ibid. Dr. Stephen Hale, not more estimable for his useful discoveries as a natural Philosopher, than for his exemplary Life and Pastoral Charity as a Parish Priest.

VER. 199. *But grant, in Public, &c.*] In the former Editions, between this and the foregoing lines, a want of Connexion might be perceived, occasioned by the omission of cer-

tain *Examples* and *Illustrations* to the Maxims laid down ; and tho' some of these have since been found, viz. the Characters of *Philomedé, Atossa, Cloe*, and some verses following, others are still wanting, nor can we answer that these are exactly inserted.

VER. 203. *Bred to disguise, in Public 'tis you hide ;*] There is something particular in the turn of this assertion, as making their disguising in public the necessary effect of their being *bred to disguise* ; but if we consider that female Education

Weakness or Delicacy ; all so nice, 205

That each may seem a Virtue, or a Vice.

In Men, we various Ruling Passions find ;
In Women, two almost divide the kind ;
Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,
The Love of Pleasure, and the Love of Sway. 210

That, Nature gives ; and where the lesson taught
Is but to please, can Pleasure seem a fault ?

VARIATIONS.

VER. 207. in the first Edition,

In sev'ral Men we sev'ral passions find ;
In Women, two almost divide the Kind.

NOTES.

is an art of teaching not to *be*, but to *appear*, we shall have no reason to find fault with the exactness of the expression.

VER. 206. *That each may seem a Virtue or a Vice.*] For Women are taught Virtue so artificially, and Vice so naturally, that, in the nice exercise of them, they may be easily mistaken for one another.

VER. 207. The former part having shewn, that the *particular Characters* of Women are more various than those of Men, it is nevertheless observed, that the *general Characteristic* of the sex, as to the *ruling Passion*, is more uniform.

VER. 211. This is occasioned partly by their *Nature*, partly their *Education*, and in some degree by *Necessity*. P.

VER. 211, 212. — *and where the lesson taught—Is but to please, can, &c.*] The delicacy of the poet's address is here observable, in his manner of informing us what this *Pleasure* is, which makes one of the two objects of Woman's *ruling Passion*. He does it in an ironical apology for it, arising from its being a Pleasure of the *beneficent* and *communicative* kind, and not merely selfish, like those which the other sex generally pursues.

VER. 213. *Experience this, &c.*] The ironical apology con-

Experience, this; by Man's oppression curst,
They seek the second not to lose the first.

Men, some to Bus'ness, some to Pleasure take;
But ev'ry Woman is at heart a Rake: 216

Men, some to Quiet, some to public Strife;
But ev'ry Lady would be Queen for life.

Yet mark the fate of a whole Sex of Queens!
Pow'r all their end, but Beauty all the means: 220

In Youth they conquer, with so wild a rage,
As leaves them scarce a subject in their Age:

For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;
No thought of peace or happiness at home.

But Wisdom's triumph is well-tim'd Retreat, 225
As hard a science to the Fair as Great!

Beauties, like Tyrants, old and friendless grown,
Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone,

NOTES.

tinued: That the Second is, as it were, forced upon them by the tyranny and oppression of man, in order to secure the first

VER. 216. *But ev'ry Woman is at heart a Rake:*] "Some men (says the Poet) take to business, some to pleasure, but every woman would willingly make pleasure her bu-

“*siness* :” which being the peculiar characteristic of a *Rake*, we must needs think that he includes (in his use of the word here) no more of the *Rake*'s ill qualities than are implied in this definition, of *one who makes pleasure his business*.

VER. 219. What are the *Aims* and the *Fate* of this Sex?
—I. As to *Power*. P.

Worn out in public, weary ev'ry eye,
Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die. 230

Pleasures the sex, as children Birds, pursue,
Still out of reach, yet never out of view ;
Sure, if they catch, to spoil the Toy at most,
To covet flying, and regret when lost :

At last, to follies Youth could scarce defend, 235

It grows their Age's prudence to pretend ;

Asham'd to own they gave delight before,

Reduc'd to feign it, when they give no more :

As Hags hold Sabbaths, less for joy than spight,

So these their merry, miserable Night ; 240

Still round and round the Ghosts of Beauty glide,

And haunt the places where their Honour dy'd.

See how the World its Veterans rewards !

A Youth of Frolicks, an old Age of Cards ;

Fair to no purpose, artful to no end, 245

Young without Lovers, old without a Friend ;

A Fop their Passion, but their Prize a Sot,

Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot !

Ah ! Friend ! to dazzle let the Vain design ;

To raise the Thought, and touch the Heart be
thine ! 250

NOTES.

VER. 231. — II. As to *Plea-*
sure. P.

VER. 249. Advice for their
true Interest. P.

That Charm shall grow, while what fatigues the
Ring,

Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing :
So when the Sun's broad beam has tir'd the fight,
All mild ascends the Moon's more sober light,
Serene in Virgin Modesty she shines, 255
And unobserv'd the glaring Orb declines.

Oh! blest with Temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow chearful as to-day ;
She, who can love a Sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a Daughter with unwounded ear ; 260

NOTES.

VER. 253. *So when the Sun's broad beam &c.*] One of the great beauties observable in the poet's management of his *Similitudes*, is the ceremonious preparation he makes for

them, in gradually raising the imagery of the similitude in the lines preceding, by the use of metaphors taken from the subject of it :

— *while what fatigues the ring,*
Flaunts and goes down, *an unregarded thing.*

And the civil dismissal he gives them by the continuance of the same metaphor, in the lines following, whereby the traces of the imagery gradually decay,

and give place to others, and the reader is never offended with the sudden or abrupt disappearance of it,

Oh! blest with Temper, whose unclouded ray &c.
Another instance of the same kind we have in this epistle, in the following lines,

*Choose a firm cloud before it fall, and in it
Catch, e'er she change, the Cynthia of this minute.
Rusa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the Park,
Attracts each light gay Meteor of a Spark, &c.*

She, who ne'er answers till a Husband cools,
 Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules;
 Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
 Yet has her humour most, when she obeys;
 Let Fops or Fortune fly which way they will; 265
 Disdains all loss of Tickets, or Codille;
 Spleen, Vapours, or Small-pox, above them all,
 And Mistress of herself, tho' China fall.

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
 Woman's at best a Contradiction still. 270

Heav'n, when it strives to polish all it can
 Its last best work, but forms a softer Man;
 Picks from each sex, to make the Fav'rite blest,
 Your love of Pleasure, our desire of Rest:
 Blends, in exception to all gen'ral rules, 275
 Your Taste of Follies, with our Scorn of Fools:
 Reserve with Frankness, Art with Truth ally'd,
 Courage with Softness, Modesty with Pride;

NOTES.

VER. 269. The Picture of an estimable Woman, with the best kind of contrarieties, created out of the poet's imagination; who therefore feigned those circumstances of a *Husband*, a *Daughter*, and love for a *Sister*, to prevent her being mistaken for any of his acquaintance. And having thus made his *Woman*, he did, as the ancient poets were wont, when they had made their *Muse*, invoke, and address his poem to, her.

Fix'd Principles, with Fancy ever new ;
Shakes all together, and produces—You. 280

Be this a Woman's Fame : with this unblest,
Toasts live a scorn, and Queens may die a jest.
This Phœbus promis'd (I forget the year)
When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere;
Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care,
Averted half your Parents' simple Pray'r ; 286
And gave you Beauty, but deny'd the Pelf
That buys your sex a Tyrant o'er itself.
The gen'rous God, who Wit and Gold refines,
And ripens Spirits as he ripens Mines, 290
Kept Dross for Duchesses, the world shall know it,
To you gave Sense, Good-humour, and a Poet.

NOTES.

VER. 285. &c. *Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care, Averted half your Parents' simple Pray'r ; And gave you Beauty, but deny'd the Pelf*] The poet concludes his Epistle with a fine *Moral*, that deserves the serious attention of the public : It is this, that all the extravagances of these *vicious* Characters here described, are much inflamed by a wrong Education, hinted at in *ÿ* 203; and that even the *best* are rather secured by a *good natural* than by the prudence and providence of parents ; which ob-

servation is conveyed under the sublime classical machinery of Phœbus in the ascendant, watching the natal hour of his favourite, and averting the ill effects of her parents mistaken fondness : For Phœbus, as the god of Wit, confers Genius ; and, as one of the astronomical influences, defeats the adventitious bias of education.

In conclusion, the great Moral from both these Epistles together is, that the two rarest things in all Nature are a DISINTERESTED MAN, and a REASONABLE WOMAN.

MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE III.

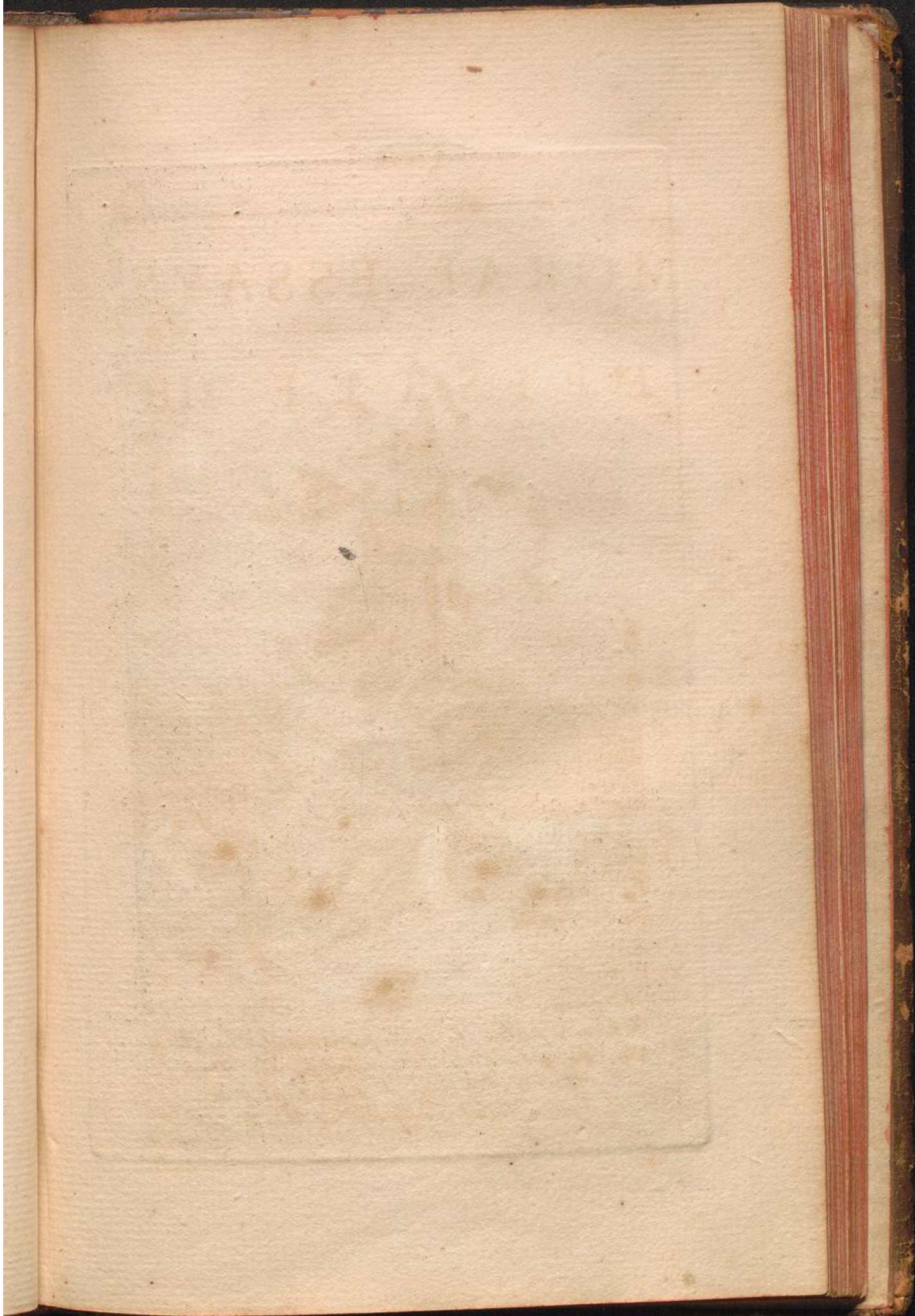
T O

Allen Lord Bathurst.

A R G U M E N T.

Of the Use of RICHES.

*T*HAT it is known to few, most falling into one of the extremes, Avarice or Profusion, § 1, &c. The Point discuss'd, whether the invention of Money has been more commodious, or pernicious to Mankind, § 21 to 77. That Riches, either to the Avaricious or the Prodigal, cannot afford Happiness, scarcely Necessaries, § 89 to 160. That Avarice is an absolute Frenzy, without an End or Purpose, § 113, &c. 152. Conjectures about the Motives of Avaricious men, § 121 to 153. That the conduct of men, with respect to Riches, can only be accounted for by the ORDER OF PROVIDENCE, which works the general Good out of Extremes, and brings all to its great End by perpetual Revolutions, § 161 to 178. How a Miser acts upon Principles which appear to him reasonable, § 179. How a Prodigal does the same, § 199. The due Medium, and true use of Riches, § 219. The Man of Rofs, § 250. The fate of the Profuse and the Covetous, in two examples; both miserable in Life and in Death, § 300, &c. The Story of Sir Balaam, § 339 to the end.





N. Blakey inv. & del.

G. Scotin sculp.

Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his Store,
Sees but a backward Steward for the Poor;—
This Year a Reservoir, to keep and spare;—
The next, a Fountain, spouting thro his Fleir.—

Ep. on Riches.

E P I S T L E III.

P. WHO shall decide, when Doctors disagree,
And soundest Casuists doubt, like you
and me?

You hold the word, from Jove to Momus giv'n,
That Man was made the standing jest of Heav'n;

C O M M E N T A R Y.

EPISTLE III.] This Epistle was written after a violent outcry against our Author, on a supposition that he had ridiculed a worthy nobleman merely for his wrong taste. He justified himself upon that article in a letter to the Earl of Burlington; at the end of which are these words: "I have learnt that there are
" some who would rather be wicked than ridiculous; and there-
" fore it may be safer to attack vices than follies. I will there-
" fore leave my betters in the quiet possession of their idols, their
" groves, and their high places; and change my subject from
" their pride to their meanness, from their vanities to their mi-
" series; and as the only certain way to avoid misconstructions,
" to lessen offence, and not to multiply ill-natured applications;
" I may probably, in my next, make use of real names instead
" of fictitious ones." P.

VER. 1. *Who shall decide, &c.*] The address of the *Introduc-
tion* (from ν 1 to 21) is remarkable: The poet represents him-
self and the noble Lord his friend, as in a conversation, philo-
sophising on the *final cause* of *Riches*; and it proceeds by way of

N O T E S.

VER. 3. *Momus giv'n,*] A-
mongst the earliest abuses of
reason, one of the first was to
cavil at the ways of Provi-
dence. But as, in those times,
every Vice as well as Virtue,
had its Patron-God, MOMUS

came to be at the head of the
old *Free-thinkers*. Him, the
Mythologists very ingeniously
made the Son of *Sleep* and
Night, and so, consequently,
half-brother to *Dulness*. But
having been much employ'd,

And Gold but sent to keep the fools in play, 5
For some to heap, and some to throw away.

But I, who think more highly of our kind,
(And surely, Heav'n and I are of a mind)
Opine, that Nature, as in duty bound,
Deep hid the shining mischief under ground: 10

COMMENTARY.

dialogue, which most writers use to hide want of method; our Author only to soften and enliven the dryness and severity of it. *You* (says the poet)

— hold the word from *Jove* to *Momus* giv'n,
But I, who think more highly of our kind, &c.
Opine that Nature, &c.

As much as to say, “ You, my Lord, hold the subject we are upon as fit only for *Satire*; I, on the contrary, esteem it a case of *Philosophy* and profound *Ethics*: But as we both agree in the main *Principle*, that *Riches were not given for the reward of Virtue, but for very different purposes* (See *Essay on Man*, Ep. iv.) let us compromise the matter, and consider the subject jointly, both under your idea and mine, *i. e. Satirically and Philosophically*.”—And this, in fact, we shall find to be the true character of this poem, which is a *Species* peculiar to itself, and partaking equally of the nature of his *Ethic Epistles* and his *Satires*, as the best pieces of *Lucian* arose from a combination of the *Dialogues* of *Plato*, and the *Scenes* of *Aristophanes*. This it will be necessary to carry with us, if we would see either the *Wit* or the *Reasoning* of this *Epistle* in their true light.

NOTES.

in after ages, by the *Greek* *Satirists*, he came, at last, to pass for a *Wit*; and under this idea, he is to be considered in the place before us.

VER. 9. *Opine*,] A term

sacred to controversy and high debate.

VER. 9. —that Nature, as in duty bound,] This, though ludicrously, is yet exactly, expressed; to shew, that, by

But when by Man's audacious labour won,
 Flam'd forth this rival to, its Sire, the Sun,
 Then careful Heav'n supply'd two forts of Men,
 To squander These, and Those to hide agen.

Like Doctors thus, when much dispute has past,
 We find our tenets just the same at last. 16

Both fairly owning, Riches, in effect,
 No grace of Heav'n or token of th'Elect;
 Giv'n to the Fool, the Mad, the Vain, the Evil,
 To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the Devil. 20

NOTES.

Nature, the poet meant, not the God of nature, but the instrument and substitute of his providence.

VER. 12. *Flam'd forth this rival to, its Sire, the Sun,*] The rival of its Sire in its brightness, and in its power of drawing mankind into error and delusion; the two first idols of the world, *natural* and *moral*, being the *Sun* and *Gold*.

VER. 20. JOHN WARD of Hackney Esq; Member of Parliament, being prosecuted by the Duchess of Buckingham, and convicted of Forgery, was first expelled the House, and then stood in the Pillory on the 17th of March 1727. He was suspected of joining in

a conveyance with Sir John Blunt; to secrete fifty thousand pounds of that Director's Estate, forfeited to the South-Sea company by Act of Parliament. The Company recovered the fifty thousand pounds against Ward; but he set up prior conveyances of his real estate to his brother and son, and conceal'd all his personal, which was computed to be one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. These conveyances being also set aside by a bill in Chancery, Ward was imprisoned, and hazarded the forfeiture of his life, by not giving in his effects till the last day, which was that of his examination. During his confinement, his amusement was

B. What Nature wants, commodious Gold bestows,
'Tis thus we eat the bread another sows.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 21. *What Nature wants, &c.*] Having thus settled the terms of the *Debate*, before he comes to the *main Question*, the *Use of Riches*, it was necessary to discuss a *previous one*, whether indeed they are, upon the whole, *useful to mankind or not*; (which he does from *v* 20 to 77.) It is commonly observed, says he (from *v* 21 to 35) *That Gold most commodiously supplies the wants of Nature*: "Let us first consider the proposition in general, both in *Matter and Expression*; 1. As it regards the *Supply*; and this we shall find to be very *unequal*: 2. As it regards the *Wants*; and these, we shall see, are very *ambiguous*; under

NOTES.

to give poison to dogs and cats, and see them expire by slower or quicker torments. To sum up the *worth* of this gentleman, at the several æra's of his life, At his standing in the Pillory he was *worth above two hundred thousand pounds*; at his commitment to Prison, he was *worth one hundred and fifty thousand*; but has been since so far diminished in his reputation, as to be thought a *worse man by fifty or sixty thousand*. P.

FR. CHARTRES, a man infamous for all manner of vices. When he was an ensign in the army, he was drumm'd out of the regiment for a cheat; he was next banish'd Bruffels, and drumm'd out of Ghent on the same account. After a hundred tricks at the gaming-tables, he took to lending of

money at exorbitant interest and on great penalties, accumulating premium, interest, and capital into a new capital, and seizing to a minute when the payments became due; in a word, by a constant attention to the vices, wants, and follies of mankind, he acquired an immense fortune. His house was a perpetual bawdy-house. He was twice condemn'd for rapes, and pardoned; but the last time not without imprisonment in Newgate, and large confiscations. He died in Scotland in 1731, aged 62. The populace at his funeral rais'd a great riot, almost tore the body out of the coffin, and cast dead dogs, &c. into the grave along with it. The following Epitaph contains his character very justly drawn by Dr. Arbuthnot:

P. But how unequal it bestows, observe,
 'Tis thus we riot, while, who sow it, starve:

COMMENTARY.

“ that term, all our fantastick and imaginary, as well as real
 “ wants being comprized. Hitherto the use is not very ap-

NOTES.

HERE continueth to rot
 The Body of FRANCIS CHARTRES,
 Who with an INFLEXIBLE CONSTANCY,
 and INIMITABLE UNIFORMITY of Life,
 PERSISTED,
 In spite of AGE and INFIRMITIES,
 In the Practice of EVERY HUMAN VICE;
 Excepting PRODIGALITY and HYPOCRISY:
 His insatiable AVARICE exempted him from the first,
 His matchless IMPUDENCE from the second.
 Nor was he more singular
 in the undeviating *Pravity* of his *Manners*,
 Than successful
 in *Accumulating WEALTH*,
 For, without TRADE or PROFESSION,
 Without TRUST of PUBLIC MONEY,
 And without BRIBE-WORTHY Service,
 HE acquired, or more properly created,
 A MINISTERIAL ESTATE.
 He was the only Person of his Time,
 Who could CHEAT without the Mask of HONESTY,
 Retain his Primeval MEANNESS
 When possess'd of TEN THOUSAND a Year,
 And having daily deserved the GIBBET for what he *did*,
 Was at last condemn'd to it for what he *could not do*.
 Oh Indignant Reader!
 Think not his Life useles to Mankind!
 PROVIDENCE conniv'd at his execrable Designs,
 To give to After-ages
 A conspicuous PROOF and EXAMPLE,
 Of how small Estimation is EXORBITANT WEALTH
 in the Sight of GOD,
 By his bestowing it on the most UNWORTHY of ALL MORTALS.

What Nature wants (a phrase I much distrust) 25
Extends to Luxury, extends to Lust:

COMMENTARY.

“ parent. Let us in the second place, therefore, consider the
“ proposition in *particular*, or how Gold supplies the *wants of*
“ *Nature* both in private and public life: 1. As to *private*;
“ it aids us, indeed, to support life; but it, at the same time,
“ hires the assassin: 2. As to *Society*; it may procure Friend-
“ ships and extend Trade; but it allures Robbers, and corrupts
“ our acquaintance. 3. As to *Government*; it pays the Guards
“ necessary for the support of public liberty; but it may, with
“ the same ease, bribe a Senate to overturn it.”

The matter, therefore, being thus problematical, the poet, instead of formally balancing between the *Good* and *Ill*, chuses to leave this *previous Question undetermined* (as *Tacitus* had done before him; where, speaking of the ancient *Germans*, he says, *Argentum et aurum propitii aut irati Dii negaverint dubito*;) and

NOTES.

This Gentleman was worth seven thousand pounds a year estate in Land, and about one hundred thousand in Money. P.

Mr. WATERS, the third of these worthies, was a man no way resembling the former in his military, but extremely so in his civil capacity; his great fortune having been rais'd by the like diligent attendance on the necessities of others. But this gentleman's history must be deferred till his death, when his *worth* may be known more certainly. P.

VER. 20. — *Chartres and*

the Devil.] Alluding to the vulgar opinion, that all mines of metal and subterraneous treasures are in the guard of the Devil: which seems to have taken its rise from the pagan fable of *Plutus* the God of Riches.

VER. 21. *What Nature wants, commodious Gold bestows,*] The epithet *commodious* gives us the very proper idea of a *Bawd* or *Pander*; and this thought produced the two following lines, which were in all the former editions, but, for their bad reasoning, omitted,

And if we count amongst the needs of life
Another's Toil, why not another's Wife;

Useful, I grant, it serves what life requires,
But dreadful too, the dark Affassin hires:

B. Trade it may help, Society extend.

P. But lures the Pyrate, and corrupts the Friend.

B. It raises Armies in a Nation's aid. 31

P. But bribes a Senate, and the Land's betray'd.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

falls at once upon what he esteems the *principal* of these abuses, *public Corruption*.

For having in the last instance, of the *Use of Riches* in Government, spoken of *venal Senates*, he goes on to lament the mischief as desperate and remediless; *Gold*, by its power to corrupt with *Secrecy*, defeating all the efforts of public Spirit, whether exerted in the Courage of Heroes, or in the Wisdom of Patriots.

'Tis true indeed (continues the poet from ν 34 to 49) the very weight of the Bribery has sometimes detected the Corruption:

From the crack'd bag the dropping Guinea spoke, &c.

But this inconvenience was soon repaired, by the invention of *Paper credit*: Whose dreadful effects on public Liberty he describes in all the colouring of his poetry, heightened by the warmest concern for virtue; which now makes him willing to give up, as it were, the *previous question*, in a passionate wish (from ν 48 to 59) for the return of that incumbrance attendant on public Corruption, before the so *common* use of money.

And pleased with this flattering idea, he goes on (from ν 58 to 77) to shew the other advantages that would accrue from *Riches only in kind*; which are, that neither *Avarice* could contrive to hoard, nor *Prodigality* to lavish, in so mad and boundless a manner as they do at present. Here he shews particularly, in a fine ironical description of the embarras on *Gaming*, how effectually it would eradicate that execrable practice.

But this whole *Digression* (from ν 34 to 77) has another very uncommon beauty; for, at the same time that it arises naturally from the *last* consideration in the debate of the *previous Question*,

In vain may Heroes fight, and Patriots rave;
 If secret Gold sap on from knave to knave.
 Once, we confess, beneath the Patriot's cloak, 35
 From the crack'd bag the dropping Guinea spoke,
 And gingling down the back-stairs, told the crew,
 "Old Cato is as great a Rogue as you."
 Blest paper-credit! last and best supply!
 That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly! 40

COMMENTARY.

it artfully denounces, in our entrance on the *main Question*, the principal topics intended to be employed for the dilucidation of it, namely AVARICE, PROFUSION, and PUBLIC CORRUPTION.

NOTES.

VER. 33. — *and Patriots rave;*] The character of modern Patriots was, in the opinion of our poet, very equivocal; as the name was undistinctly bestowed on every one in opposition to the court; of whose virtues he gives a hint in *l* 139. of this Epistle. Agreeably to these sentiments, his predicate of them here is as equivocal,

In vain—may Patriots rave;
 which they may do either in earnest or in jest; and is a conduct, in the opinion of *Sempronius* in the Play, best fitted to hide their game.

VER. 34. *If secret Gold sap on from knave to knave.*]

The expression is fine, and gives us the image of a place invested, where the approaches are made by communications which support each other; as the connexions amongst knaves, after they have been taken in by a state engineer, serve to screen and encourage one another's private corruptions.

VER. 35. — *beneath the Patriot's cloak,*] This is a true story, which happened in the reign of William III. to an unsuspected old Patriot, who coming out at the back-door from having been closeted by the King, where he had received a large bag of Guineas, the bursting of the bag discovered his business there. P.

Gold imp'd by thee, can compass hardest things,
 Can pocket States, can fetch or carry Kings;
 A single leaf shall waft an Army o'er,
 Or ship off Senates to a distant Shore;
 A leaf, like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro 45
 Our fates and fortunes, as the winds shall blow:
 Pregnant with thousands flits the Scrap unseen,
 And silent sells a King, or buys a Queen.

Oh! that such bulky Bribes as all might see,
 Still, as of old, incumber'd Villainy! 50
 Could France or Rome divert our brave designs,
 With all their brandies or with all their wines?

VARIATIONS.

After *γ* 50. in the MS.

To break a trust were Peter brib'd with wine,
 Peter! 'twould pose as wise a head as thine.

NOTES.

VER. 42.—*fetch or carry Kings;*] In our author's time, many Princes had been sent about the world, and great changes of Kings projected in Europe. The partition-treaty had disposed of Spain; France had set up a King for England, who was sent to Scotland, and back again; King Stanislaus was sent to Poland, and back again; the Duke of Anjou was sent to Spain, and Don Carlos to Italy. P.

VER. 44. *Or ship off Senates to some distant Shore;*] Alludes to several Ministers, Counsellors, and Patriots banished in our times to Siberia, and to that MORE GLORIOUS FATE of the PARLIAMENT of PARIS, banished to Pontoise in the year 1720. P.

VER. 47. *Pregnant with thousands flits the Scrap unseen,*] The imagery is very sublime, and alludes to the course of a destroying pesti-

What could they more than Knights and Squires
confound;

Or water all the Quorum ten miles round?

A Statesman's slumbers how this speech would spoil!

" Sir, Spain has sent a thousand jars of oil; 56

" Huge bales of British cloth blockade the door;

" A hundred oxen at your levee roar."

Poor Avarice one torment more would find;

Nor could Profusion squander all in kind. 60

Astride his cheese Sir Morgan might we meet;

And Worldly crying coals from street to street,

Whom with a wig so wild, and mien so maz'd,

Pity mistakes for some poor tradesman craz'd.

Had Colepepper's whole wealth been hops and hogs,

Could he himself have sent it to the dogs? 66

His Grace will game: to White's a Bull be led,

With spurning heels and with a butting head.

NOTES.

lence: The Psalmist, in his expression of *the pestilence that walketh in darkness*, supplied him with the grandeur of his idea.

VER. 63. Some Misers of great wealth, proprietors of the coal-mines, had entered at this time into an association to keep up coals to an extravagant price, whereby the poor

were reduced almost to starve, till one of them taking the advantage of underfelling the rest, defeated the design. One of these Misers was *worth ten thousand*, another *seven thousand* a year. P.

VER. 65. *Colepepper*] Sir WILLIAM COLEPEPPER, Bart. a person of an ancient family, and ample fortune,

To White's be carry'd, as to ancient games,
 Fair Courfers, Vases, and alluring Dames. 70
 Shall then Uxorio, if the stakes he sweep,
 Bear home six Whores, and make his Lady weep?
 Or soft Adonis, so perfum'd and fine,
 Drive to St. James's a whole herd of swine?
 Oh filthy check on all industrious skill, 75
 To spoil the nation's last great trade, Quadrille!
 Since then, my Lord, on such a World we fall,
 What say you? B. Say? Why take it, Gold and all,

VARIATIONS.

VER. 77. *Since then, &c.*] In the former Edd.
 Well then, since with the world we stand or fall,
 Come take it as we find it, Gold and all.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 77. *Since then, my Lord, on such a World &c.*] Having thus ironically described the incumbrance which the want of money would occasion to all criminal excesses in the use of Riches, particularly to *Gaming*; which being now become of public concern, he affects much regard to:

*Oh filthy check on all industrious skill,
 To spoil the Nation's last great trade, Quadrille!*

NOTES.

without one other quality of a Gentleman, who, after ruining himself at the Gaming-table, pass the rest of his days in sitting there to see the ruin of others; preferring to sub-

sist upon borrowing and begging; rather than to enter into any reputable method of life, and refusing a post in the army which was offered him. P.

P. What Riches give us let us then enquire :
 Meat, Fire, and Cloaths. B. What more? P. Meat,
 Cloaths, and Fire. 80

COMMENTARY.

he concludes the *previous Question* without deciding it, in the same *ironical* manner,

*Since then, my Lord, on such a World we fall :
 What say you? Say? Why take it, Gold and all.*

That is, since for these great purposes we must have *Money*, let us now *seriously* inquire into its *true Use*.

VER. 79. *What Riches give us &c.*] He examines therefore in the *first* place (from v 78 to 97) I. *Of what Use Riches are to ourselves :*

*What Riches give us let us then enquire :
 Meat, Fire, and Cloaths. What more? Meat, Cloaths, and Fire.*

The mere *turn* of the expression here shews, without further reasoning, that all the infinite ways of spending *on ourselves*, contrived in the insolence of Wealth, by those who would *more than live*, are only these *three* things diversified throughout every wearied mode of Luxury and Wantonness.

Yet as little as this is, adds the poet (from v 81 to 85) it is only to be had by the *moderate use* of Riches; *Avarice* and *Profusion* not allowing the possessors of the most exorbitant wealth even this little :

*Alas! 'tis more than Turner finds they give.
 Alas! 'tis more than (all his visions past)
 Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last!*

But what is it you would expect them to give? continues the poet (from v 84 to 91) Would you have them capable of *restoring* those *real* blessings, which men have *lost* by their *Vices* or their *Villainies*; or of *satisfying* those *imaginary* ones, which they have *gotten* by their *irregular Appetites* and *Passions*? *These*, sure, the bad or foolish man cannot have the face to demand; and *those*, by the wise provision of Nature, Riches are incapable of giving, if he had.

Is this too little? would you more than live?
 Alas! 'tis more than Turner finds they give.
 Alas! 'tis more than (all his Visions past)
 Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last!
 What can they give? to dying Hopkins, Heirs; 85
 To Chartres, Vigour; Japhet, Nose and Ears?

COMMENTARY.

But now admit, pursues our author (from v̄ 90 to 97) that wealth might, in some cases, alleviate the unmerited miseries of life, by procuring medicines both for the mind and body; yet it

NOTES.

VER. 82. *Turner*] One, who, being possessed of three hundred thousand pounds, laid down his Coach, because Interest was reduced from five to four *per cent.* and then put seventy thousand into the Charitable Corporation for better interest; which sum having lost, he took it so much to heart, that he kept his chamber ever after. It is thought he would not have outlived it, but that he was heir to another considerable estate, which he daily expected, and that by this course of life he saved both cloaths and all other expences. P.

VER. 84. *Unhappy Wharton*,] A Nobleman of great qualities, but as unfortunate in the application of them, as if they had been vices and follies. See his Character in the first Epistle. P.

VER. 85. *Hopkins*,] A Citizen, whose rapacity obtained him the name of *Vultur Hopkins*. He lived worthless, but died worth three hundred thousand pounds, which he would give to no person living, but left it so as not to be inherited till after the second generation. His counsel representing to him how many years it must be, before this could take effect, and that his money could only lie at interest all that time, he expressed great joy thereat, and said, "They would then be as long in spending, as he had been in getting it." But the Chancery afterwards set aside the will, and gave it to the heir at law. P.

VER. 86. *Japhet, Nose and Ears?*] JAPHET CROOK, alias Sir Peter Stranger, was punished with the loss of those

Can they, in gems bid pallid Hippia glow,
 In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below;
 Or heal, old Narses, thy obscener ail,
 With all th'embroid'ry plaister'd at thy tail? 90
 They might (were Harpax not too wise to spend)
 Give Harpax self the blessing of a Friend;
 Or find some Doctor that would save the life
 Of wretched Shylock, spite of Shylock's Wife:
 But thousands die, without or this or that, 95
 Die, and endow a College, or a Cat.

COMMENTARY.

is not to be thought it should operate like a charm, while only worn about one: Yet this, these *poor men of self* expect from it; while *Avarice*, on the one hand, with-holds them from giving at all, even to the *Doctor* in extremity; or *Vanity* diverts the donation from a *Friend* in life, to the Endowment of a *Cat* or *College* at their death. It is true, *Riches* might give the greatest of all blessings, a *virtuous consciousness* of our having employed them as became the *substitutes of Providence*,

To ease or emulate the care of Heav'n, § 230.

in acts of BENEFICENCE and CHARITY; and this *Use* is next to be considered.

NOTES.

parts, for having forged a conveyance of an Estate to himself, upon which he took up several thousand pounds. He was at the same time sued in Chancery for having fraudulently obtained a Will, by which he possessed another considerable Estate, in wrong

of the brother of the deceased. By these means he was worth a great sum, which (in reward for the small loss of his ears) he enjoyed in prison till his death, and quietly left to his executor. P.

VER. 96. *Die, and endow a College, or a Cat.*] A famous

To some, indeed, Heav'n grants the happier fate,
T'enrich a Bastard, or a Son they hate.

Perhaps you think the Poor might have their part?
Bond damns the Poor, and hates them from his heart:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 97. *To some, indeed, &c.*] For now the poet comes in the second place, to examine, II. *Of what use Riches are to others*; which he teaches, as is his way throughout this poem by the *abuse* that stands opposed to it: Thus he shews (from *l* 96 to 107) that with regard to acts of *Beneficence*, the utmost Heaven will grant to those who so greatly abuse its blessings, is either to enrich some favourite *Bastard*, and so perpetuate their vice and infamy; or else, contrary to their intent, a legitimate *Son they hated*, and so expose to public scorn and ridicule, the defeat of their unnatural cruelty. But with regard to acts of *Charity*, they are given up to so reprobate a sense, as to believe they are then seconding the designs of Heaven, when they pursue the indigent with imprecations, or leave them in the midst of their distresses unrelieved, as the common enemies of God and Man.

NOTES.

Dutchess of R. in her last Will left considerable legacies and annuities to her Cats. P.

VER. 100. *Bond damns the Poor, &c.*] This epistle was written in the year 1730, when a corporation was established to lend money to the poor upon pledges, by the name of the *Charitable Corporation*; but the whole was turned only to an iniquitous method of enriching particular people, to the ruin of such numbers, that it became a parliamentary concern to endeavour the relief of those unhappy sufferers, and

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three of the managers, who were members of the house, were expelled. By the report of the Committee, appointed to enquire into that iniquitous affair, it appears, that when it was objected to the intended removal of the office, that the Poor, for whose use it was erected, would be hurt by it, Bond, one of the Directors, replied, *Damn the Poor*. That "God hates the poor," and, "That every man in want is a knave or fool," &c. were the genuine apothegms of some of the persons here mentioned. P.

P 3

The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule, 101
 That " ev'ry man in want is knave or fool :
 " God cannot love (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)
 " The wretch he starves"—and piously denies :
 But the good Bishop, with a meeker air, 105
 Admits, and leaves them, Providence's care.

Yet, to be just to these poor men of pelf,
 Each does but hate his neighbour as himself :

COMMENTARY.

VER. 107. *Yet, to be just, &c.*] Having thus shewn the *true use* of Riches in a description of the *abuse*, and how that use is perpetually defeated by *Profusion* and *Avarice*; it was natural to enquire into the spring and original of these vices; as the *abuse* they occasion, must be well understood, before it can be corrected. The disposition, therefore, of his subject now calls upon him to come to the *Philosophy* of it: And he examines particularly into the *Motives* of *Avarice*: But what is observable, he, all along, satirically intermixes with the *real motives*, several

NOTES.

VER. 102. *That ev'ry man in want is knave or fool.*] None are more subject to be deluded by this vain mistake, *that prudence does all in human affairs* than those who have been most befriended by Fortune. The reason is, that, in this situation *Prudence* has never been brought to the test, nor *Vanity* ever mortified. So that the first will be always ready to take to herself what fortune encourages the other to call her

due. And then want of success will of course be imputed to want of wit.

VER. 105. *But the good Bishop, &c.*) In this place, and in the first Dialogue of 1738, the Poet had named a very worthy Person of Condition, who, for a course of many years had shined in public Stations much to the advantage and honour of his Country. But being at once oppressed by popular prejudice and a public cen-

Damn'd to the Mines, an equal fate betides
The Slave that digs it, and the Slave that hides.

B. Who suffer thus, mere Charity should own,
Must act on motives pow'rful, tho' unknown.

P. Some War, some Plague, or Famine they foresee,
Some Revelation hid from you and me.

Why Shylock wants a meal, the cause is found,
He thinks a Loaf will rise to fifty pound. 116

COMMENTARY.

imaginary; and those as wild as imagination could conceive. This, which at first sight might seem to vitiate the purpose of his *philosophical inquiry*, is found, when duly considered, to have the highest art of design. His business, the reader sees, was to prove that the *real motives* had the highest extravagancy: Nothing could more conduce to this end, than the setting them by, and comparing them with, the most extravagant that the fancy itself could invent; in which situation it was seen, that the *real* were full as wild as the *fictitious*. To give these images all the force they were capable of, he first describes (from \times 118. to 123,

NOTES.

sure, it was no wonder, the poet, to whom he was personally a stranger, should think hardly of him. I had the honour to be well known to this truly illustrious Person, and to be greatly obliged by him. From my intimate knowledge of his Character, I was fully persuaded of his innocence, and that he was unwarily drawn in by a pack of infamous Cheats, to his great loss of fortune as well as reputation.

At my request, therefore, the poet with much satisfaction retracted, and struck out, in both places, his ill-grounded censure. I have since had the pleasure to understand, from the best authority, that my favourable sentiments of him have lately been fully justified in the course of some proceedings in the high court of Chancery, the most unerring investigator of Truth and Falshood.

What made Directors cheat in South-sea year ?
 To live on Ven'son when it sold so dear.
 Ask you why Phryne the whole Auction buys ?
 Phryne foresees a general Excise. 120
 Why she and Sappho raise that monstrous sum ?
 Alas ! they fear a man will cost a plum.

COMMENTARY.

the *real* and a different *imaginary* motive in the *same person* : and then (from v 122 to 133) an *imaginary* one, and a *real* the very same with the imaginary, in *different persons*. This address the poet himself alludes to, v 155.

Lets mad the wildest whimsy we can frame, &c.

Let me observe, that this has still a further beauty, arising from the *nature* of the poem, which (as we have shewn) is partly *satirical*, and partly *philosophical*.—With regard to the *particular* beauties of this disposition, I shall only take notice of one; where the poet introduces the *fictitious* motive of Blunt's avarice, by a wizard's prophecy :

“ At length Corruption, like a gen’ral flood
 “ (So long by watchful Ministers withstood)
 “ Shall deluge all; and Av’rice creeping on
 “ Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun, &c.
 “ See Britain sunk in lucre’s sordid charms,
 “ And France reveng’d on Anne’s and Edward’s arms !

For it was the poet’s purpose, in this poem, to shew, that the *main* and *principal* abuse of Riches arises from AVARICE.

NOTES.

VER. 118. *To live on Ven’son*] In the extravagance and luxury of the South-sea year, the price of a haunch of Venison was from three to five pounds. P.

VER. 120. — *general Ex-*

cise] Many people about the year 1733, had a conceit that such a thing was intended, of which it is not improbable this lady might have some intimation. P.

Wise Peter sees the World's respect for Gold,
 And therefore hopes this Nation may be sold:
 Glorious Ambition! Peter, swell thy store, 125
 And be what Rome's great Didius was before.

The Crown of Poland, venal twice an age,
 To just three millions stinted modest Gage.
 But nobler scenes Maria's dreams unfold,
 Hereditary Realms, and worlds of Gold. 130
 Congenial souls! whose life one Av'rice joins,
 And one fate buries in th'Asturian Mines.

Much injur'd Blunt! why bears he Britain's hate?
 A wizard told him in these words our fate:

NOTES.

VER. 123. *Wise Peter*] PETER WALTER, a person not only eminent in the wisdom of his profession, as a dextrous attorney, but allowed to be a good, if not a safe, conveyancer; extremely respected by the Nobility of this land, tho' free from all manner of luxury and ostentation: his Wealth was never seen, and his bounty never heard of, except to his own son, for whom he procured an employment of considerable profit, of which he gave him as much as was necessary. Therefore the taxing this gentleman with any Ambition, is certainly a great wrong to him. P

VER. 126. *Rome's great Didius*] A Roman Lawyer, so rich as to purchase the Empire when it was set to sale upon the death of Pertinax. P.

VER. 127. *The Crown of Poland, &c.*] The two persons here mentioned were of Quality, each of whom in the Mississippi despis'd to realize above three hundred thousand pounds; the Gentleman with a view to the purchase of the Crown of Poland, the Lady on a vision of the like royal nature. They since retired into Spain, where they are still in search of gold in the mines of the Asturias. P.

VER. 133. *Much injur'd Blunt!*] Sir JOHN BLUNT,

" At length Corruption, like a gen'ral flood, 135
 " (So long by watchful Ministers withstood)
 " Shall deluge all; and Av'rice creeping on,
 " Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun;
 " Statesman and Patriot ply alike the stocks,
 " Peerefs and Butler share alike the Box, 140
 " And Judges job, and Bishops bite the town,
 " And mighty Dukes pack cards for half a crown.
 " See Britain sunk in lucre's fordid charms,
 " And France reveng'd of ANNE's and EDWARD's
 " arms?"

NOTES.

originally a scrivener, was one of the first projectors of the South-sea company, and afterwards one of the directors and chief managers of the famous scheme in 1720. He was also one of those who suffer'd most severely by the bill of pains and penalties on the said directors. He was a Dissenter of a most religious deportment, and profess'd to be a great believer. Whether he did really credit the prophecy here mentioned is not certain, but it was constantly in this very style he declaimed against the corruption and luxury of the age, the partiality of Parliaments, and the misery of party-spirit. He was particularly eloquent against *Avarice* in great and noble persons, of

which he had indeed lived to see many miserable examples. He died in the year 1732. P.

VER. 137. — *Av'rice creeping on, Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun;*] The similitude is extremely apposite, implying that this vice is of base and mean original; hatched and nursed up amongst Scriveners, Stock-jobbers, and Citts; and unknown, 'till of late, to the Nobles of this land; But now, in the fulness of time, she rears her head, and aspires to cover the most illustrious stations in her dark and pestilential shade. The Sun, and other luminaries of Heaven, signifying, in the high eastern style, the Grandees and Nobles of the earth.

'Twas no Court-badge, great Scriv'ner! fir'd thy brain,
 Nor lordly Luxury, nor City Gain: 146
 No, 'twas thy righteous end, a sham'd to see
 Senates degen'rate, Patriots disagree,
 And nobly wishing Party-rage to cease,
 To buy both sides, and give thy Country peace. 150

“All this is madness,” cries a sober sage:
 But who, my friend, has reason in his rage?
 “The ruling Passion, be it what it will,
 “The ruling Passion conquers Reason still.”

COMMENTARY.

VER. 151. “*All this is madness,*” &c.] But now the Sage, who has confined himself to *books*, which prescribe the *government of the passions*; and never looked out upon the world, where he might see them let loose, and, like Milton's devils, *riding the air in whirlwind*, cries out, *All this is madness*. True, replies the poet (from ν 151 to 177) but this madness is a common one, and only to be prevented by a severe attention to the rule laid down in the *Essay*,

Reason still use, to Reason still attend, Ep. ii. ν 68.

for with the generality of men, and without the greatest circumspection,

*The ruling Passion, be it what it will,
 The ruling Passion conquers Reason still.*

But then (continues he) as wild as this passion appears, by the sway of its overbearing bias, it would be still more senseless had it no bias at all. You have seen us here intermix with the *real*, the most *fantastical* and extravagant that imagination could form; yet even these are less extravagant than a *ruling Passion without a constant aim*. Would you know the reason? then listen to this important truth: “’Tis HEAVEN itself that gives
 “the *ruling Passion*, and thereby directs different men to different ends: But these being exerted through the ministry of

Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame, 155
 Than ev'n that Passion, if it has no Aim ;
 For tho' such motives Folly you may call,
 The Folly's greater to have none at all.

Hear then the truth : " 'Tis Heav'n each Passion
 " fends,
 " And diff'rent men directs to diff'rent ends. 160
 " Extremes in Nature equal good produce,
 " Extremes in Man concur to gen'ral use.

COMMENTARY.

" NATURE (of whom the great Bacon truly observes, *modum*
 " *tenera nescia est*, Aug. Scient. l. ii. c. 13.) they are very apt
 " to run into extremes : To correct which, Heaven, at the
 " same time, added the moderatrix *Reason* ; not to take the
 " ruling *Passion* out of the hands and ministry of *Nature*, but
 " to restrain and rectify its irregular impulses (See *Essay*, Ep. ii.
 " § 151, & *seq.*) and what extremes, after this, remained un-
 " corrected in the administration of this *weak Queen* (§ 140,
 " Ep. ii.) the divine artist himself has, in his heavenly skill and
 " bounty, set to rights ; by so ordering, that these of the *moral*,
 " like those of the *natural* world, should, even by the very
 " means of their contrariety and diversity, concur to defeat the
 " malignity of one another :

Extremes in Nature equal good produce,
Extremes in Man concur to gen'ral use.

" For as the various seasons of the year are supported and sus-
 " tained by the reconciled extremes of *Wet* and *Dry*, *Cold* and
 " *Heat* ; so all the *orders* and *degrees* of civil life are kept up
 " by *Avarice* and *Profusion*, *Selfishness* and *Vanity*. The Miser
 " being but the Steward of the Prodigal ; and only so much the
 " more backward as the other is violent and precipitate."

This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare ;
The next a Fountain, spouting thro' his hair.

Ask we what makes one keep, and one bestow?
 That Pow'r who bids the Ocean ebb and flow,
 Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain, 165
 Thro' reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain,
 Builds Life on Death, on Change Duration founds,
 And gives th'eternal wheels to know their rounds.

Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,
 Wait but for wings, and in their season fly. 170

Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,
 Sees but a backward steward for the Poor;
 This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare;
 The next, a Fountain, spouting thro' his Heir,
 In lavish streams to quench a Country's thirst, 175
 And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.

NOTES.

VER. 173. *This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare; The next, a Fountain, spouting thro' his Heir,*] Besides the obvious beauties of this fine similitude, it has one still more exquisite, tho' less observable, which is its being taken from a circumstance in the most elegant part of improved life. For tho' in *Society*, the follies of hoarding and squandering may correct each other, and produce real advantage to the *whole*; as *Reservoirs* and *Fountains*

may be both useful and ornamental amongst the other improvements of art; yet in a *State of Nature* either kind of excess would be pernicious; because, in that State, the *quantity* of natural goods, unimproved by art, would not suffer, without great danger of want to the whole body, either an immoderate hoarding, or a lavish profusion. And therefore Providence has wisely ordered that, in that State, by there being no *fantastic*

Old Cotta sham'd his fortune and his birth,
 Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth :
 What tho' (the use of barb'rous spits forgot)
 His kitchen vy'd in coolness with his grot? 180
 His court with nettles, moats with cresses stor'd,
 With soups unbought and fallads bless'd his board?
 If Cotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more
 Than Bramins, Saints, and Sages did before ;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 177. *Old Cotta sham'd his fortune &c.*] The poet now proceeds to support the principles of his Philosophy by *examples*. But before we come to these, it will be necessary to look back upon the general œconomy of the poem.

In the first part, to v 109, the *use* and *abuse* of Riches are *satirically* delivered in *precept*. From thence, to v 177, the causes of the abuse are *philosophically* inquired into: And from thence to the end, the *use* and *abuse* are *historically* illustrated in *examples*. Where we may observe, that the conclusion of the *first* part, concerning the Miser's cruelty to others, naturally introduces the *second*, by a satirical apology, shewing that he is full as cruel to himself: The explanation of which extraordinary phenomenon brings the author into the *Philosophy* of his subject;

NOTES.

wants, there should be no possible temptation to either. The which noble truth our poet | hints at in the beginning of the Epistle:

*But when by Man's audacious labour won,
 Flam'd forth this Rival to it's Sire, the sun,
 Then careful Heav'n supply'd two sorts of men,
 To squander These, and These to hide again. v 11, &c.*

IMITATIONS.

VER. 182. *With soups unbought,*]

— dapibus menfas onerabat inemptis. VIRG. P.

To cram the Rich was prodigal expence, 185
 And who would take the Poor from Providence?
 Like some lone Chartreux stands the good old Hall,
 Silence without, and Fasts within the wall;
 No rafter'd roofs with dance and tabor sound,
 No noontide-bell invites the country round: 190
 Tenants with sighs the smoakless tow'rs survey,
 And turn th'unwilling steeds another way:
 Benighted wanderers, the forest o'er,
 Curse the sav'd candle, and unop'ning door;
 While the gaunt mastiff growling at the gate, 195
 Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.

COMMENTARY.

and this ending in an observation of Avarice and Profusion's correcting and reconciling one another, as naturally introduces the *third*, which proves the truth of the observation from *fact*. And thus the *Philosophy* of his subject standing between his *Precepts* and *Examples*, gives strength and light to both, and receives it reflected back again from both.

He first gives us two examples (from v 176 to 219) of these opposite *ruling Passions*, and (to see them in their full force) taken from *subjects*, as he tells us, *not void of wit or worth*; from such as could *reason* themselves (as we see by v 183, & *seqq.* and v 205, & *seqq.*) into the whole length of each extreme: For the poet had observed of the *ruling passion*, that

*Wit, Spirit, Faculties, but make it worse;
 Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r.*

Essay, Ep. ii. v 146.

Old *Cotta* therefore and his *Son* afforded him the most happy illustration of his own doctrine.

Not so his Son, he mark'd this oversight,
 And then mistook reverse of wrong for right.
 (For what to shun will no great knowledge need,
 But what to follow, is a task indeed.) 200
 Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,
 More go to ruin Fortunes, than to raise.
 What slaughter'd hecatombs, what floods of wine,
 Fill the capacious Squire, and deep Divine !
 Yet no mean motive this profusion draws, 205
 His oxen perish in his country's cause ;
 'Tis GEORGE and LIBERTY that crowns the cup,
 And Zeal for that great House which eats him up.

NOTES.

VER. 199. (*For what to shun will no great knowledge need, But what to follow, is a task indeed.*)] The poet is here speaking only of the knowledge gained by *experience*. Now there are so many miserable examples of ill conduct, that no one, with his eyes open, can be at a loss to know *what to shun* ; but, *very* inviting examples of a good conduct are extremely rare : Besides, the mischiefs of folly are eminent and obvious ; but the fruits of prudence, remote and retired from common observation ; and if seen at all, yet their dependance on their causes

not being direct and immediate, they are not easily understood.

VER. 201, 202. *Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise, More go to ruin Fortunes, than to raise.*] This, tho' a certain truth, will, as I apprehend, never make its fortune in the *City* : yet, for all that, the poet has fully approved his maxim in the following description.

VER. 203. *What slaughter'd hecatombs, &c.*] Our author represents this, as it truly was designed, a *Sacrifice* to the Church, to render it propitious, in a time of danger, to the State. SCRIBL.

The Woods recede around the naked feat, 209
 The Sylvans groan—no matter—for the Fleet:
 Next goes his Wool—to clothe our valiant bands,
 Last, for his Country's love, he sells his Lands.
 To town he comes, completes the nation's hope,
 And heads the bold Train-bands, and burns a Pope.
 And shall not Britain now reward his toils, 215
 Britain, that pays her Patriots with her Spoils?
 In vain at Court the Bankrupt pleads his cause,
 His thankless Country leaves him to her Laws.
 The Sense to value Riches, with the Art
 T' enjoy them, and the Virtue to impart, 220

VARIATIONS.

After v 218. in the MS.

Where one lean herring furnish'd Cotta's board,
 And nettles grew, fit porridge for their Lord;
 Where mad good-nature, bounty misapply'd,
 In lavish Curio blaz'd awhile and dy'd;
 There Providence once more shall shift the scene,
 And shewing H—Y, teach the golden mean.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 219. *The Sense to value Riches, &c.*] Having now largely exposed the ABUSE of Riches by *example*, not only the *Plan*, but the *Philosophy* of his *Poem*, required, that he should in the same way, shew the USE likewise: He therefore (from v 218 to 249) calls for an EXAMPLE, in which may be found, against

NOTES.

VER. 219, 220. *The Sense* | *T' enjoy them, and the Virtue to*
to value Riches, with the Art, | *impart.*] *The Sense to value*

Q

Not meanly, nor ambitiously purfu'd,
 Not sunk by sloth, nor rais'd by servitude;
 To balance Fortune by a just expence,
 Join with Oeconomy, Magnificence;
 With Splendor, Charity; with Plenty, Health; 225
 Oh teach us, BATHURST! yet unspoil'd by wealth!
 That secret rare, between th' extremes to move
 Of mad Good-nature, and of mean Self-love.

VARIATIONS.

After y. 226. in the MS.

That secret rare, with affluence hardly join'd,
 Which W—n lost, yet B—y ne'er could find;
 Still mis'd by Vice, and scarce by Virtue hit,
 By G—'s goodness, or by S—'s wit.

COMMENTARY.

the *Prodigal*, the *Sense to value Riches*; against the *Vain*, the *Art to enjoy them*; and against the *Avaricious*, the *Virtue to impart them*, when acquired. This whole Art (he tells us) may be comprized in one great and general precept, which is this,
 "That the rich man should consider himself as the substitute
 "of Providence in this unequal distribution of things; as the
 "person who is

To ease, or emulate, the care of Heav'n;

"To mend the faults of fortune, or to justify her graces." And thus the poet slides naturally into the prosecution of his subject in an *Example of the true Use of Riches*.

NOTES.

Riches, is not, in the City-meaning, the *Sense in valuing them*: For as *Riches* may be enjoyed without *Art*, and *imparted* with *Virtue*, so they may be valued without *Sense*. That man therefore only shews he has the *sense to value Riches*, who keeps what he has acquired, in order to enjoy one part

B. To Worth or Want well-weigh'd, be Bounty
 giv'n,
 And ease, or emulate, the care of Heav'n; 230
 (Whose measure full o'erflows on human race)
 Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.
 Wealth in the gross is death; but life diffus'd;
 As Poison heals, in just proportion us'd:
 In heaps, like Ambergrise, a stink it lies, 235
 But well-dispers'd, is Incense to the Skies.

P. Who starves by Nobles, or with Nobles eats?
 The Wretch that trusts them, and the Rogue that
 cheats.

Is there a Lord, who knows a chearful noon
 Without a Fiddler, Flatt'rer, or Buffoon? 240
 Whose table, Wit, or modest Merit share,
 Un-elbow'd by a Gamester, Pimp, or Play'r?
 Who copies Your's, or OXFORD's better part,
 To ease th'oppress'd, and raise the sinking heart?

NOTES.

of it innocently and elegantly, in such measure and degree as his station may justify, which the poet calls the *Art of enjoying*; and to impart the remainder amongst objects of *worth, or want well weigh'd*; which is, indeed, the *Vir:us of imparting*.

VER. 231, 232. (*Whose measure full o'erflows on human*

race, Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.] i. e. Such of the Rich whose full measure overflows on human race, repair the wrongs of Fortune done to the indigent; and, at the same time, justify the favours she had bestowed upon themselves.

VER. 243. OXFORD's better part.] Edward Harley;

Where-e'er he shines, oh Fortune, gild the scene,
 And Angels guard him in the golden Mean! 246
 There, English Bounty yet a-while may stand,
 And Honour linger e'er it leaves the land.

But all our praises why should Lords engross?
 Rise, honest Muse! and sing the MAN of ROSS: 250

VARIATIONS.

After ψ 250. in the MS.

Trace humble worth beyond Sabrina's shore,
 Who sings not him, oh may he sing no more!

COMMENTARY.

VER. 249. *But all our praises why should Lords engross? Rise, honest Muse!*] This invidious expression of the poet's unwillingness that the Nobility should ingross all his praises, is strongly ironi-

NOTES.

Earl of Oxford. The son of Robert, created Earl of Oxford and Earl Mortimer by Queen Anne. This Nobleman died regretted by all men of letters, great numbers of whom had experienced his benefits. He left behind him one of the most noble Libraries in Europe. P.

VER. 245. *Where-e'er he shines, oh Fortune, gild the scene, And Angels guard him in the golden Mean!*] This is exceedingly sublime—The sense of it arises from what had been said a little before of such a character's *justifying the graces of fortune*; which made it,

therefore, but reasonable to expect She should continue them. But the more constant these were, the more need had He of some superior assistance to keep him in the *golden mean*: which the ancients seem'd so well apprised of, that they gave to every man *two* Guardian Angels (here alluded to) as if, without standing on either side of him, he could not possibly be kept long in the *mean* or middle: nothing therefore could be more seasonable than this pathetic prayer on so critical an occasion.

VER. 250. *The MAN of Ross:*] The person here cele-

Pleas'd Vaga echoes thro' her winding bounds,
 And rapid Severn hoarse applause refounds.
 Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?
 From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?

COMMENTARY.

cal; their example having been given hitherto only to shew the *abuse* of Riches. But there is great justness of *Design*, as well as agreeableness of *Manner* in the preference here given to the *Man of Rofs*. The purpose of the poet is to shew, that an *immense* fortune is not wanted for all the good that Riches are capable of doing; he therefore chuses such an instance, as proves, that a man with five hundred pounds a year could become a blessing to a whole country; and, consequently, that the poet's precepts for the *true use of money*, are of more *general* service than a bad heart will give an indifferent head leave to conceive. This was a truth of the greatest importance to inculcate: He therefore (from ν 249 to 297) exalts the character of a *very private* man, one Mr. J. Kyrle, of Herefordshire: And, in ending his description, struck as it were with admiration at a sublimity of *his own creating*, and warmed with sentiments of a gratitude he had raised in himself in behalf of the public, the poet bursts out,

*And what? no monument, inscription, stone?
 His race, his form, his name almost unknown?*

Then transported with indignation at a contrary object, he exclaims,

NOTES.

brated, who with a small Estate actually performed all these good works, and whose true name was almost lost (partly by the title of the *Man of Rofs* given him by way of eminence, and partly by being buried without so much as an inscription) was called Mr. John Kyrle. He died in the year 1724, aged

90, and lies interred in the chancel of the church of Rofs in Herefordshire. P.

We must understand what is here said, of *actually performing*, to mean by the contributions which the *Man of Rofs*, by his assiduity and interest, collected in his neighbourhood.

Not to the skies in useleſs columns toſt, 255
 Or in proud falls magnificently loſt,
 But clear and artleſs, pouring thro' the plain
 Health to the ſick, and ſolace to the ſwain.
 Whoſe Cauſe-way parts the vale with ſhady rows?
 Whoſe Seats the weary Traveller reſoſe? 260
 Who taught that heav'n-directed ſpire to riſe?
 "The MAN of ROSS," each liſping babe replies.
 Behold the Market-place with poor o'erſpread!
 The MAN of ROSS divides the weekly bread:
 He feeds yon Alms-houſe, neat, but void of ſtate,
 Where Age and Want fit ſmiling at the gate: 266
 Him portion'd maids, apprentic'd orphans bleſt,
 The young who labour, and the old who reſt.

COMMENTARY.

*When Hopkins dies, a thouſand lights attend
 The wretch, who living ſav'd a candle's end:
 Should'ring God's altar a vile image ſtands,
 Belies his features, nay, extends his hands.*

I take notice of this deſcription of the portentous vanity of a miſerable Extortioner, chiefly for the uſe we ſhall now ſee he makes of it, in carrying on his ſubject.

NOTES.

VER. 255. *Not to the ſkies in uſeleſs columns toſt, Or in proud falls magnificently loſt,* }
 The intimation, in the firſt line, well ridicules the madneſs of fashionable Magnificence; theſe columns aspiring }
 to prop the ſkies, in a very different ſenſe from the *heav'n-directed ſpire*, in the verſe that follows: As the *expreſſion*, in the ſecond line, expoſes the *meanneſs* of it, in *falling proudly*, to no purpoſe.

Is any sick? the MAN of ROSS relieves,
 Prescribes, attends, the med'cine makes, and gives.
 Is there a variance; enter but his door, 271
 Balk'd are the Courts, and contest is no more.
 Despairing Quacks with curses fled the place,
 And vile Attorneys, now an useless race.

B. Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue 275
 What all so wish, but want the pow'r to do!
 Oh say, what sums that gen'rous hand supply?
 What mines, to swell that boundless charity?

P. Of Debts, and Taxes, Wife and Children clear,
 This man possess—five hundred pounds a year. 280
 Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, withdraw
 your blaze!

Ye little Stars! hide your diminish'd rays.

B. And what? no monument, inscription, stone?
 His race, his form, his name almost unknown?

NOTES.

VER. 275. *Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue, &c.—boundless charity?*] These four lines (which the poet, with the highest propriety, puts into the mouth of his noble friend) very artfully introduce the two following, as by the equivocal expression they raise our expectations to hear of millions, which come out, at last, to be only five hundred pounds a year. A circum-

stance, as we see in the Comment, of great importance to be inculcated.

VER. 281. *Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, withdraw your blaze! &c.*] In this sublime apostrophe, they are not bid to *blush* because *outripped* in virtue, for no such contention is supposed: but for being *outshined* in their own proper pretensions to Splendour and Magnificence. SCRIBL.

P. Who builds a Church to God, and not to Fame,
 Will never mark the marble with his Name: 286
 Go, search it there, where to be born and die,
 Of rich and poor makes all the history;
 Enough, that Virtue fill'd the space between;
 Prov'd, by the ends of being, to have been. 290
 When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend
 The wretch, who living sav'd a candle's end:
 Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,
 Belies his features, nay extends his hands;
 That live-long wig which Gorgon's self might own,
 Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone. 296

VARIATIONS.

VER. 287. thus in the MS.

The Register inrolls him with his Poor,
 Tells he was born and dy'd, and tells no more.
 Just as he ought, he fill'd the Space between;
 Then stole to rest, unheeded and unseen.

NOTES.

VER. 287. *Go, search it there,*] The Parish-register.

VER. 293. *Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands, Belies his features, nay extends his hands;*] The description is inimitable. We see him *should'ring the altar* like one who impiously affected to draw off the reverence of God's worshippers, from the sacred ta-

ble, upon himself; whose *Features* too the sculptor had *belied* by giving them the traces of humanity: And, what was still a more impudent flattery, had insinuated, by *extending his hands*, as if that humanity had been, some time or other, brought into act.

VER. 296. *Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.*] The

Behold what blessings Wealth to life can lend !
 And see, what comfort it affords our end.

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,
 The floors of plaister, and the walls of dung, 300
 On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,
 With tape-ty'd curtains, never meant to draw,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 297. *Behold what blessings Wealth to life can lend !
 Now see what comfort it affords our end.*]

In the *first* part of this Epistle the author had shewn, from *Reason*, that Riches abused afford no comfort either in *life* or *death*. In *this* part, where the same truth is taught by *examples*, he had, in the case of *Cotta* and his son, shewn, that they afford no comfort in *life*: the other member of the division remained to be spoken to,

Now see what Comfort they afford our end.

And this he illustrates (from v 298 to 339) in describing the unhappy deaths of the last Villers, Duke of Buckingham, and Sir J. Cutler; whose profusion and avarice he has beautifully contrasted. The miserable end of these two extraordinary persons naturally leads the poet into this humane reflexion, however ludicrously expressed,

*Say, for such worth, are other worlds prepar'd ?
 Or are they both, in this, their own reward ?*

NOTES.

poet ridicules the wretched taste of carving large periwigs on busto's, of which there are several vile examples in the tombs at Westminster and elsewhere. P.

VER. 299. *In the worst inn's worst room, &c.*] It is remarkable, that, in the description

of the scene of action, in several parts of this poem, the poet's imagination has painted with such truth and spirit, that one would believe he had been upon the spot, whereas he only hit upon what *was*, from a clear conception of what *was natural and likely*.

The George and Garter dangling from that bed
 Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
 Great Villers lies—alas! how chang'd from him,
 That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim! 306
 Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,
 The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury and love;
 Or just as gay, at Council, in a ring
 Of mimick'd Statesmen, and their merry King. 310
 No Wit to flatter, left of all his store!
 No Fool to laugh at, which he valu'd more.

COMMENTARY.

And now, as if fully determined to resolve this doubtful question, he assumes the air and importance of a Professor ready address'd to plunge himself into the very depths of theology:

A knotty point! to which we now proceed—
 when, on a sudden, the whole scene is changed,
But you are tir'd.—I'll tell a tale—Agreed.

And thus, by the most easy transition, we are come to the concluding doctrine of his poem.

NOTES.

VER. 305. *Great Villers lies—*] This Lord, yet more famous for his vices than his misfortunes, after having been possess'd of about 50,000 *l.* a year, and pass'd thro' many of the highest posts in the kingdom, died in the year 1687, in a remote inn in Yorkshire, reduced to the utmost misery. P.

VER. 307. *Cliveden*] A delightful palace, on the banks of

the Thames, built by the D. of Buckingham. P.

VER. 308. *Shrewsbury*] The Countess of Shrewsbury, a woman abandoned to gallantries. The Earl her husband was kill'd by the Duke of Buckingham in a duel; and it has been said, that during the combat she held the Duke's horses in the habit of a page. P.

VER. 312. *No Fool to laugh at, which he valued mere.*] That

There, Victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
And fame; this lord of useleſs thousands ends.

His Grace's fate ſage Cutler could foreſee, 315
And well (he thought) advis'd him, "Like like me."

As well his Grace reply'd, "Like you, Sir John?"

"That I can do, when all I have is gone."

Reſolve me, Reaſon, which of theſe is worſe,

Want with a full, or with an empty purſe? 320

NOTES.

is, he had a greater gout for oblique and diſguiſed flattery than for the more direct and bare-faced. And no wonder a man of wit ſhould have this taſte. For the taking pleaſure in fools, for the ſake of laughing at them, is nothing elſe but the complaiſance of flattering ourſelves, by an advantageous compariſon, which the mind, in that emotion, makes between itſelf and the object laughed at. Hence too we may ſee the Reaſon of men preferring *this* to other kinds of flattery. For we are always inclined to think that work beſt done which we do ourſelves.

VER. 313. *There, Victor of his health, of fortune, friends, And fame—*] The term implies the difficulty he had to get the better of all theſe incumbrances. And it is true, as

his hiſtory informs us, he had the impediment of good parts, which, from time to time, a little hindered, and retarded his *Victories*.

VER. 319. *Reſolve me, Reaſon, which of theſe is worſe, Want with a full, or with an empty purſe?*] The poet did well in appealing to *Reaſon*, from the parties concerned; who, it is likely, had made but a very ſorry deciſion. The *abhorrence* of an empty purſe would have certainly perverted the judgment of *Want with a full one*: And the *longings* for a full one would probably have as much miſſed *Want with an empty one*. Whereas *Reaſon* reſolves this matter in a trice. There being a poſſibility that *Want with an empty purſe* may be relieved; but none, that *Want with a full purſe* ever can.

Thy life more wretched, Cutler, was confes'd,
 Arise, and tell me, was thy death more blefs'd?
 Cutler saw tenants break, and houses fall,
 For very want; he could not build a wall.
 His only daughter in a stranger's pow'r, 325
 For very want; he could not pay a dow'r.
 A few grey hairs his rev'rend temples crown'd,
 'Twas very want that sold them for two pound.
 What ev'n deny'd a cordial at his end,
 Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend? 330
 What but a want, which you perhaps think mad,
 Yet numbers feel, the want of what he had!
 Cutler and Brutus, dying both exclaim,
 "Virtue! and Wealth! what are ye but a name!"

NOTES.

VER. 322. — *Cutler—Arise and tell me, &c.*] This is to be understood as a *solemn evocation* of the *Shade* of this illustrious knight, in the manner of the Ancients; who used to call up their departed Heroes by two things they principally loved and detested, as the most potent of all charms. Hence this Sage is conjured by the powerful mention of a *full*, and of an *empty purse*. SCRIBL.

VER. 333. *Cutler and Brutus, dying both exclaim, "Virtue! and wealth! what are ye but*

"a name!"] There is a greater beauty in this comparison than the common reader is aware of. *Brutus* was, in *morals* at least, a *Stoic*, like his uncle. And how much addicted to that sect in general, appears from his professing himself of the old academy, and being a most passionate admirer of *Antiochus Ascalonites*, an essential *Stoic*, if ever there was any. Now *Stoical virtue* was, as our author truly tells us, not *exercise*, but *apathy*—*Contracted all, retiring to the breast*. In

Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd?
 Or are they both, in this their own reward? 336
 A knotty point! to which we now proceed.
 But you are tir'd—I'll tell a tale——B. Agreed.

P. Where London's column, pointing at the skies
 Like a tall bully, lifts the head, and lyes; 340

VARIATIONS.

VER. 337. in the former Editions,
 That knotty point, my Lord, shall I discuss,
 Or tell a tale?—A Tale.—It follows thus.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 339. *Where London's column, &c.*] For, the foregoing examples of *profusion* and *avarice* having been given to shew, that misapplied wealth was *not enjoyed*; it only remained to prove that in such circumstances wealth became the *heaviest punishment*; and this was the very point to be concluded with, as the great MORAL of this instructive poem; which is to teach us, *how miserable men make themselves by not endeavouring to restrain the ruling Passion, tho' it be indeed implanted in the constitution of*

NOTES.

a word, like Sir J. Cutler's *purse*, nothing for use, but kept close shut, and center'd all within himself.—Now *virtue* and *wealth*, thus circumstanced, are indeed no other than mere *names*.

VER. 339. *Where London's column,*] The Monument, built in memory of the fire of London, with an inscription, importing that city to have been burnt by the Papists. P.

VER. 340. *Like a tall bully, lifts the head, and lies.*] Tho' Scriblerus is not insensible to the humour of this line; yet his gravity makes him wish that the *City-monument* had been honoured with a comparison of more dignity. He thinks, particularly, it should rather have been compared to the *Court-champion*; as, like him, it only spoke the sense of the Government; which, at

There dwelt a Citizen of sober fame,
 A plain good man, and Balaam was his name ;
 Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth ;
 His word would pass for more than he was worth.
 One solid dish his week-day meal affords, 345
 An added pudding solemniz'd the Lord's :
 Constant at Church, and Change ; his gains were sure ;
 His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.

The Dev'l was piqu'd such faintship to behold,
 And long'd to tempt him like good Job of old : 350

COMMENTARY.

things ; while, at the same time, it is an answer to the latter part of the question,

*Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd ?
 Or are they both, in this their own reward ?*

For the solution of which only, this example was jocularly pretended to have been given.

All this the poet has admirably supported, in the artful construction of his fable of Sir Balaam ; whose character is so drawn, as to let the reader see he had it in his power to regulate the *ruling Passion* by reason, as having in himself the seeds of Integrity, Religion, and Sobriety. These are gradually worked out by an insatiable *thirst of Wealth* ; and this again (thro' a false sense of his own abilities in acquiring it) succeeded by as immoderate a *Vanity* : Which will lead us to another beauty in the management of the Story. For, in order to see, in one conclud-

NOTES.

that time, no man could have denied without the danger of a challenge, of Jury, at least : *When, as a great writer observes, a jealousy of Popery heated the* | *minds of men to such a degree, that it seems almost wonderful the Plague was not imputed to the Papists as peremptorily as the Fire. Diff. upon Parties.*

But Satan now is wiser than of yore,
 And tempts by making rich, not making poor.
 Rouz'd by the Prince of Air, the whirlwinds sweep
 The surge, and plunge his Father in the deep ;
 Then full against his Cornish lands they roar, 355
 And two rich ship-wrecks bless the lucky shore.

COMMENTARY.

ing example, the miseries of exorbitant wealth ill employed ; it was necessary to set before the Reader all the misuse, that flowed from avarice and profusion at once. The vices of the *Citizen* and the *Noble*, therefore, which were separated and contrasted in the foregoing instances, are here shewn incorporated in a *Courtly Cit.* Perhaps it will be said, that the character has, by this means, the appearance of two *ruling passions* : but those studied in human nature know the contrary : and that *alieni appetens sui profusus*, is frequently as much one as either the profuse or avaricious apart. Indeed, this is so far from an inaccuracy, that it produces a new beauty. The *Ruling Passion* is of two kinds, the *simple* and the *complex*. The first sort the poet had given examples of before. Nothing then remained to complete his philosophic plan, but concluding with the latter. Let me only observe farther, that the author, in this *Tale*, has artfully summed up and recapitulated those three principal mischiefs in the *abuse* of money, which the *satirical* part of this poem throughout was employed to expose, namely AVARICE, PROFUSION, and PUBLIC CORRUPTION.

NOTES.

VER. 355. *Cornish*] The author has placed the scene of these shipwrecks in Cornwall, not only from their frequency on that coast, but from the inhumanity of the inhabitants to those to whom that misfortune arrives : When a ship happens to be stranded there, they have been known to bore holes in it, to prevent its getting off ; to plunder, and sometimes even to massacre the people : Nor has the Parliament of England been yet able wholly to suppress these barbarities. P.

Sir Balaam now, he lives like other folks,
 He takes his chirping pint, and cracks his jokes :
 " Live like yourself," was soon my Lady's word ;
 And lo ! two puddings smoak'd upon the board. 360

Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,
 An honest factor stole a Gem away :
 He pledg'd it to the knight ; the knight had wit,
 So kept the Di'mond, and the rogue was bit.
 Some scruple rose, but thus he eas'd his thought,
 " I'll now give six-pence where I gave a groat ; 366
 " Where once I went to church, I'll now go twice—
 " And am so clear too of all other vice."

The Tempter saw his time ; the work he ply'd ;
 Stocks and Subscriptions pour on ev'ry side, 370

NOTES.

VER. 360. *And lo ! &c.*] The poet had observed above, that when the luxuriously-selfish had got more than they knew how to use, they would try to do *more than live* ; instead of imparting the least pittance of it to those whom fortune had reduced to do *less than live* : The VANITY of which chimerical project he well exposed in these lines :

*What Riches give us let us then enquire,
 Meat, Fire, and Cloaths. What more ? Meat, Cloaths, and Fire.*

But here, in one who had not yet learnt the art of disguising the Poverty of Wealth by the Refinements of Luxury, he shews, with admirable humour, the ridicule of that project :

And lo ! two Puddings smoak'd upon the board.

"Till all the Dæmon makes his full descent
 In one abundant show'r of Cent per Cent,
 Sinks deep within him, and possesses whole,
 Then dubs Director, and secures his soul.

Behold Sir Balaam, now a man of spirit, 375
 Ascribes his gettings to his parts and merit;
 What late he call'd a Blessing, now was Wit,
 And God's good Providence, a lucky Hit.
 Things change their titles, as our manners turn:
 His Compting-house employ'd the Sunday-morn;
 Seldom at Church ('twas such a busy life) 381
 But duly sent his family and wife.

NOTES.

VER. 377. *What late he call'd a Blessing, now was Wit, &c.*] This is an admirable picture of human nature: In the entrance on life, all, but coxcombs-born, are modest; and esteem the favours of their superiors to be marks of their benevolence: But, if these favours happen to increase; then, instead of advancing in gratitude to our benefactors, we only improve in the good opinion of ourselves; and the constant returns of such favours make us consider them no longer as accommodations to our wants, or the hire of our service, but debts due to our

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merit: Yet, at the same time, to do justice to our common nature, we should observe, that this does not proceed so often from downright vice as is imagined, but frequently from mere infirmity; of which, the reason is evident; for, having small knowledge, and yet an excessive opinion, of ourselves, we estimate our merit by the passions and caprice of others; and this perhaps would not be so much amiss, were we not apt to take their favours for a declaration of the sense of our merits. How often, for instance, has it been seen, in the several learned Professions,

R

There (so the Dev'l ordain'd) one Christmas-tide
My good old Lady catch'd a cold, and dy'd.

A Nymph of Quality admires our Knight ; 385
He marries, bows at Court, and grows polite :
Leaves the dull Cits, and joins (to please the fair)
The well-bred cuckolds in St. James's air :
First, for his Son a gay Commission buys,
Who drinks, whores, fights, and in a duel dies :
His daughter flaunts a Viscount's tawdry wife ; 391
She bears a Coronet and P—x for life.
In Britain's Senate he a feat obtains,
And one more Pensioner St. Stephen gains.
My Lady falls to play ; so bad her chance, 395
He must repair it ; takes a bribe from France ;

NOTES.

that a Man, who, had he continued in his primeval meanness, would have circumscribed his knowledge within the modest limits of Socrates ; yet, being *push'd up*, as the phrase is, has felt himself growing into

a *Hooker*, a *Hales*, or a *Sydenham* ; while, in the rapidity of his course, he imagined he saw, at every new station, a new door of science opening to him, without so much as staying for a Flatterer to let him in ?

— *Beatus enim jam
Cum pulchris tunicis sumet nova consilia.*

IMITATIONS.

VER. 394. *And one more Pensioner St. Stephen gains.]*

—atque unum civem donare *Sibyllæ*

JUV.

The House impeach him ; Coningsby harangues ;
 The Court forsake him, and Sir Balaam hangs :
 Wife, son, and daughter, Satan ! are thy own,
 His wealth, yet dearer, forfeit to the Crown : 400
 The Devil and the King divide the prize,
 And sad Sir Balaam curses God and dies.

NOTES.

VER. 401. *The Devil and the King divide the Prize.*] This is to be understood in a very sober and *decent* sense ; as a Satire only on such Ministers of State which History informs us have been found, who aided the *Devil* in his *temptations*, in order to foment, if not to make, Plots for the sake of confiscations. So sure always, and just is our author's satire, even in those places where he seems most to have indulged himself only in an elegant badinage. But this Satire on the *abuse* of the general Laws of forfeiture for high treason, which all

well-policied communities have found expedient to provide themselves withal, is by no means to be understood as a reflexion on the Laws themselves, whose necessity, equity, and even lenity have been excellently well vindicated in that very learned and elegant Discourse, intitled *Some Considerations on the Law of Forfeiture for high Treason. Third Edition, London, 1748.*

VER. ult. — *curses God and dies.*] i. e. Fell under the temptation ; alluding to the story of Job referred to above.



MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE IV.

TO

Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington,

A R G U M E N T.

Of the Use of RICHES.

The Vanity of Expence in People of Wealth and Quality. The abuse of the word Taste, § 13. That the first principle and foundation, in this as in every thing else, is Good Sense, § 40. The chief proof of it is to follow Nature, even in works of mere Luxury and Elegance. Instanced in Architecture and Gardening, where all must be adapted to the Genius and Use of the Place, and the Beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it, § 50. How men are disappointed in their most expensive undertakings, for want of this true Foundation, without which nothing can please long, if at all; and the best Examples and Rules will but be perverted into something burdensome or ridiculous, § 65, &c. to 92. A description of the false Taste of Magnificence; the first grand Error of which is to imagine that Greatness consists in the Size and Dimension, instead of the Proportion and Harmony of the whole, § 97. and the second, either in joining together

Parts incoherent, or too minutely resembling, or in the Repetition of the same too frequently, § 105, &c. A word or two of false Taste in Books, in Music, in Painting, even in Preaching and Prayer, and lastly in Entertainments, § 133, &c. Yet PROVIDENCE is justified in giving Wealth to be squandered in this manner, since it is dispersed to the Poor and Laborious part of mankind, § 169 [recurring to what is laid down in the first book, Ep. ii. and in the Epistle preceding this, § 159, &c.] What are the proper Objects of Magnificence, and a proper field for the Expence of Great Men, § 177, &c. and finally, the Great and Public Works which become a Prince, § 191, to the end.

EPISTLE IV.

'Tis strange, the Miser should his Cares employ
 To gain those Riches he can ne'er enjoy :
 Is it less strange, the Prodigal should wast
 His wealth, to purchase what he ne'er can taste ?

COMMENTARY.

EPISTLE IV.] The extremes of *Avarice* and *Profusion* being treated of in the foregoing Epistle; this takes up one particular branch of the latter, the *Vanity of Expence* in people of wealth and quality; and is therefore a corollary to the preceding, just as the Epistle on the *Characters of Women* is to that of the *Knowledge and Characters of Men*. It is equally remarkable for exactness of method with the rest. But the nature of the subject, which is less philosophical, makes it capable of being analysed in a much narrower compass.

VER. 1. 'Tis strange, &c.] The poet's introduction (from *l. 1* to 39) consists of a very curious *remark*, arising from his intimate knowledge of nature; together with an *illustration* of it, taken from his observations on life. It is this, That the Prodigal no more *enjoys* his Profusion, than the Miser, his Rapacity. It was generally thought that *Avarice* only *kept* without enjoyment; but the poet here first acquaints us with a circumstance in human life much more to be lamented, viz. that *Profusion* too can *communicate* without it; whereas *Enjoyment* was thought to be as peculiarly the reward of the *beneficent* passions (of which this has the appearance) as *want* of enjoyment was the punishment of the *selfish*. The phænomenon observed is odd enough. But if we look more narrowly into this matter, we shall find, that Prodigality, when in pursuit of *Taste*, is only a *Mode of Vanity*, and consequently as selfish a passion as even avarice itself; and it is of the ordonance and constitution of all selfish passions, when growing to excess, to defeat their own end, which is *Self-enjoyment*. But besides the accurate



N. Blakey inv. et del.

Ravenet Sculp.

What brought S.^r Visto's ill-got Wealth to waste?
Some Daemon whisper'd, Visto! have a Taste...
Ep. on Taste.

Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats ; 5
 Artists must chuse his Pictures, Music, Meats :
 He buys for Topham, Drawings and Designs,
 For Pembroke Statues, dirty Gods, and Coins ;
 Rare monkish Manuscripts for Hearne alone,
 And Books for Mead, and Butterflies for Sloane. 10

COMMENTARY.

philosophy of this observation, there is a fine *Morality* contained in it; namely, that *ill-got* Wealth is not only as *unreasonably*, but as *uncomfortably* squandered as it was raked together; which the poet himself further insinuates in v 15.

What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste?

—He then illustrates the above observation by divers examples in every branch of *wrong Taste*; and to set their absurdities in the strongest light, he, in conclusion, contrasts them with several instances of the *true*, in the Nobleman to whom the Epistle is addressed. This disposition is productive of various beauties; for, by this means, the *Introduction* becomes an *epitome* of the body of the Epistle; which, as we shall see, consists of general reflections on *Taste*, and particular examples of *bad* and *good*. And his friend's Example concluding the Introduction, leads the poet gracefully into the subject itself; for the Lord, here celebrated for his good *Taste*, was now at hand to deliver the first and fundamental precept of it himself, which gives authority and dignity to all that follow.

NOTES.

VER. 7. *Topham*] A Gentleman famous for a judicious collection of Drawings. P.

VER. 8. *For Pembroke Statues, dirty Gods, and Coins.*] The author speaks here not as a Philosopher or Divine, but as a *Connoisseur* and Antiquary;

consequently the *dirty* attribute here assigned these Gods of old renown, is not in disparagement of their worth, but in high commendation of their genuine pretensions. SCRIBL.

VER. 9. *Rare monkish Manuscripts for Hearne alone,*]

R 4

Think we all these are for himself? no more
Than his fine Wife, alas! or finer Whore.

For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?
Only to show, how many Tastes he wanted. 14
What brought Sir Visto's ill got wealth to waste?
Some Daemon whisper'd, "Visto! have a Taste."

NOTES.

This is not to be understood in the strictness of the letter, as if Mr. Tho. Hearne enjoy'd these rarities without a partaker; for he has been often known to exemplify these precious relics under the authority of the Clarendon Printing-house, where the good seed has sometimes produced forty or fifty fold. Hence, and from their still continuing as much rarities as ever, it may be reasonably concluded they were not the delight of Mr. T. Hearne alone. SCRIBL.

VER. 10. *And Books for Mead, and Butterflies for Sloane.*] Two eminent Physicians; the one had an excellent Library, the other the finest collection in Europe of natural curiosities; both men of great learning and humanity. P.

VER. 12. *Than his fine Wife,*

alas! or finer Whore.] By the Author's manner of putting together these two different Utensils of *false Magnificence*, it appears, that, properly speaking, neither the *Wife* nor the *Whore* is the real object of *modern taste*, but the *Finery* only: And whoever wears it, whether the *Wife* or the *Whore*, it matters not; any further than that the *latter* is thought to deserve it best, as appears from her having most of it; and so indeed becomes, by accident, the more fashionable Thing of the two. SCRIBL.

VER. 17. *Heav'n visits with a Taste the wealthy fool,*] The present rage of *Taste*, in this overflow of general Luxury, may be very properly represented by a *desolating pestilence*, alluded to in the word *visit*, where *Taste* becomes, as the poet says, that

— planetary Plague, when Jove
Does o'er some high-vic'd City hang his poison
In the sick air —

Heav'n visits with a Taste the wealthy fool,
 And needs no Rod but Ripley with a Rule.
 See! sportive fate, to punish aukward pride,
 Bids Bubo build, and sends him such a Guide: 20
 A standing sermon, at each year's expence,
 That never Coxcomb reach'd Magnificence!

You show us, Rome was glorious, not profuse,
 And pompous buildings once were things of Use,

VARIATIONS.

After v 22. in the MS.

Must Bishops, Lawyers, Statesmen, have the skill
 To build, to plant, judge paintings, what you will?
 Then why not Kent as well our treaties draw,
 Bridgman explain the Gospel, Gibs the Law?

NOTES.

VER. 18. Ripley] This man was a carpenter, employed by a first Minister, who raised him to an Architect, without any genius in the art; and after some wretched proofs of his insufficiency in public Buildings, made him Comptroller of the Board of works. P.

VER. 19. See! sportive fate, to punish aukward pride,] Pride is one of the greatest mischiefs, as well as absurdities of our nature; and therefore, as appears both from profane and sacred History, has ever been the more peculiar object of divine vengeance.

But *aukward Pride* intimates such abilities in its owner, as eases us of the apprehension of much *mischief* from it; so that the poet supposes such a one secure from the serious resentment of Heaven, though it may permit *fate* or *fortune* to bring him into the public contempt and ridicule, which his native badness of heart so well deserves.

VER. 23. The Earl of Burlington was then publishing the Designs of Inigo Jones, and the Antiquities of Rome by Palladio. P.

Yet shall (my Lord) your just, your noble rules 25
 Fill half the land with Imitating-Fools ;
 Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,
 And of one beauty many blunders make ;
 Load some vain Church with old Theatric state,
 Turn Arcs of triumph to a Garden-gate ; 30

NOTES.

VER. 28. *And of one beauty many blunders make;*] Because the road to *Taste*, like that to Truth, is but *one*; and those to Error and Absurdity a *thousand*.

VER. 29. *Load some vain Church with old Theatric state,*] In which there is a complication of absurdities, arising both from their different *natures* and *forms*: For the one being for *holy service*, and the other only for *civil amusement*, it is impossible that the profuse and lascivious ornaments of the latter should become the retenuë, reverence, and sanctity of the other. Nor will any examples of this vanity of ornament in the sacred buildings of antiquity justify this imitation; for those ornaments might be very suitable to a Temple of Bacchus, or Venus, which would ill become the sobriety and purity of the present Religion.

Again, we should consider, that the usual form of a Theatre would only permit the ar-

chitectonic ornaments to be placed on the outward face; whereas those of a Church may be as commodiously, and are more properly put within; particularly in great and close pent-up Cities, where the incessant driving of the smoke, in a little time corrodes and destroys all outward ornaments of this kind; especially if the members, as is the common taste, be small and little.

Our Gothic ancestors had juster and manlier notions than these modern mimics of Greek and Roman magnificence: which, because the thing does honour to their genius, I shall endeavour to explain. All our ancient churches are called, without distinction, *Gothic*; but erroneously. They are of two sorts; the one built in the Saxon times; the other during our Norman race of kings. Several *Cathedral* and *Collegiate* Churches of the first sort are yet remaining, either in whole or in part; of which this was the Original:

Reverse your Ornaments, and hang them all
On some patch'd dog-hole ek'd with ends of wall;

NOTES.

When the Saxon kings became christian, their piety, (which was the piety of the times) consisted in building Churches at home, and performing pilgrimages to the Holy Land: and these spiritual exercises assisted and supported one another. For the most venerable as well as most elegant models of religious edifices were then in Palestine. From these our Saxon Builders took the whole of their ideas, as may be seen by comparing the drawings which travellers have given us of the churches yet standing in that country, with the Saxon remains of what we find at home; and particularly in that sameness of style in the *later* religious edifices of the Knights Templars (professedly built upon the model of the church of the holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem) with the *earlier* remains of our Saxon Edifices. Now the architecture of the Holy Land was entirely Grecian, but greatly fallen from its ancient elegance. Our Saxon performance was indeed a bad copy of it, and as much inferior to the works of St. Helene, as her's were to the Grecian models she had followed: Yet still the footsteps of an-

cient art appeared in the circular arches, the entire columns, the division of the entablature, into a sort of Architrave, Frize and Cornich, and a solidity equally diffused over the whole mass. This, by way of distinction, I would call the SAXON Architecture.

But our Norman works had a very different original. When the *Goths* had conquered Spain, and the genial warmth of the climate, and the religion of the old Inhabitants, had ripened their wits, and inflamed their mistaken piety (both kept in exercise by the neighbourhood of the Saracens, thro' emulation of their science and aversion to their superstition,) they struck out a new species of Architecture unknown to Greece and Rome; upon original principles, and ideas much nobler than what had given birth even to classical magnificence. For having been accustomed, during the gloom of paganism, to worship the Deity in GROVES (a practice common to all nations) When their new Religion required covered edifices, they ingeniously projected to make them resemble *Groves*, as nearly as the

Then clap four slices of Pilaster on't,
That, lac'd with bits of rustic, makes a Front,

NOTES.

distance of Architecture would permit; at once indulging their old prejudices, and providing for their present conveniencies, by a cool receptable in a sultry climate. And with what art and success they executed the project appears from hence, That no attentive observer ever viewed a regular Avenue of well grown trees intermixing their branches over head, but it presently put him in mind of the long Visto thro' a Gothic Cathedral; or ever entered one of the larger and more elegant Edifices of this kind, but it represented to his imagination an Avenue of trees. And this alone is that which can be truly called the *GOthic* style of Building.

Under this idea of so extraordinary a species of Architecture, all the irregular transgressions against art, all the monstrous offences against nature, disappear; every thing has its reason, every thing is in order, and an harmonious Whole arises from the studious application of means proper and proportioned to the end. For could the *Arches* be otherwise than *pointed* when the Workman was to imitate that curve which branches make by their

interfection with one another? Or could the *Columns* be otherwise than spilt into distinct shafts, when they were to represent the Stems of a group of Trees? On the same principle was formed the spreading ramification of the stone-work in the windows, and the stained glass in the interstices; the one being to represent the branches, and the other the leaves of an opening Grove; and both concurring to preserve that gloomy light inspiring religious horror. Lastly, we see the reason of their studied aversion to *apparent* solidity in these stupendous masses, deemed so absurd by men accustomed to the *apparent* as well as *real* strength of Grecian Architecture. Had it been only a wanton exercise of the Artist's skill, to shew he could give real strength without the appearance of any, we might indeed admire his superior science, but we must needs condemn his ill judgment. But when one considers, that this surprizing lightness was necessary to complete the execution of his idea of a rural place of worship, one cannot sufficiently admire the ingenuity of the contrivance.

This too will account for

Shall call the winds thro' long arcades to roar, 35
 Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door ;
 Conscious they act a true Palladian part,
 And if they starve, they starve by rules of art.

NOTES.

the contrary qualities in what I call the *Saxon Architecture*. These artists copied, as has been said, from the churches in the holy Land, which were built on the models of Grecian architecture ; but corrupted by prevailing barbarism ; and still further depraved by a religious idea. The first places of Christian worship were Sepulchres and subterraneous caverns, places, of necessity, low and heavy. When Christianity became the Religion of the State, and sumptuous Temples began to be erected, they yet, in regard to the first pious ages, preserved the massive Style : which was made still more venerable by the *Church of the holy Sepulchre* : This, on a double account being more than ordinary heavy, was for its superior sanctity generally imitated.

VOL. III.

Such then was **GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE**. And it would be no discredit to the warmest admirers of *Jones* and *Palladio* to acknowledge it has its merit. They must at least confess it had a nobler birth, tho' an humbler fortune, than the **GREEK and ROMAN ARCHITECTURE**.

VER. 30. *Turns Arcs of triumph to a Garden-gate ;*] This absurdity seems to have arisen from an injudicious imitation of what these Builders might have heard of, at the entrance of the antient Gardens of Rome : But they don't consider, that those were *public Gardens*, given to the people by some great man after a triumph ; to which, therefore, *Arcs* of this kind were very suitable ornaments.

VER. 36. *Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door ;*] In the

Oft have you hinted to your brother Peer,
 A certain truth, which many buy too dear: 40
 Something there is more needful than Expence,
 And something previous ev'n to Taste—'tis Sense:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 39. *Oft have you hinted to your brother Peer,
 A certain truth,—]*

and in this artful manner begins the body of the Epistle.

I.

The first part of it (from ν 38 to 99) delivers rules for attaining to the MAGNIFICENT in just expence; which is the same in Building and Planting, that the SUBLIME is in Painting and Poetry; and, consequently, the qualities necessary for the attainment of both must have the same relation.

I. The first and *fundamental*, he shews (from ν 38 to 47) to be SENSE:

*Good Sense, which only is the gift of Heav'n,
 And, tho' no Science, fairly worth the seven.*

And for *that* reason; not only as it is the foundation and parent of them all, and the constant regulator and director of their operations, or, as the poet better expresses it, — *of every art of the soul*; but likewise as it alone can, in case of need, very often supply the offices of every one of them.

NOTES.

foregoing instances, the poet exposes the absurd imitation of foreign and discordant *Manners* in *public* buildings; here he turns to the still greater absurdity of taking their models from a discordant *Climate*, in their *private*; which folly, he supposes, may be more easily redressed, as men will be sooner brought to *feel for themselves* than to *see for the public*.

VER. 39. *Oft have you hinted, &c. Something there is more needful than Expence,]* To convince a great man of so strange a Paradox, that *Taste* cannot be bought, even after it is well

Good Sense, which only is the gift of Heav'n,
 And tho' no Science, fairly worth the seven:
 A Light, which in yourself you must perceive; 45
 Jones and Le.Nôtre have it not to give.

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
 To rear the Column, or the Arch to bend,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 47. *To build, to plant, &c.*] 2. The next quality, for dignity and use, is TASTE, and but the next: For, as the poet truly observes, there is — *something previous ev'n to Taste—'tis Sense*; and this, in the order of things: For *Sense* is a taste and true conception of *Nature*; and *Taste* is a sense or true conception of *beautiful Nature*; but we must first know the *Essences* of things, before we can judge truly of their *Qualities*. The business of *Taste*, therefore, in the pursuit of *Magnificence*, is, as the poet shews us (from v 46 to 65) 1. (to v 51) To catch or lay hold on *Nature*, where she appears most in her charms. 2. (to v 57) To adorn her, when taken, as best suits her dignity and quality; that is, to dress her in the light and modest habit of a virgin, not load her with the gaudy ornaments of a prostitute. This rule observed, will prevent a transgression in the following, which is, not to let all its beauties be seen at once, but in succession; for that advantage is inseparable from a graceful and well-dressed person. 3. (to v 65) To take care that

NOTES.

paid for, will need a very broad *hint* indeed; especially when followed by another as strange, that there is

— *something previous ev'n to Taste—'tis Sense.*

Yet as severe a subject of humiliation as all this is to the *Rich*, it was but necessary to inculcate it, in order to work in them, if possible, that teachableness of mind necessary for their profiting by the following instructions.

VER. 46. *Inigo Jones* the celebrated Architect, and *M. Le Nôtre*, the designer of the best Gardens of France. P.

To swell the Terras, or to sink the Grot ;
 In all, let Nature never be forgot. 50
 But treat the Goddess like a modest fair,
 Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare ;
 Let not each beauty ev'ry where be spy'd,
 Where half the skill is decently to hide.
 He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds, 55
 Surprizes, varies, and conceals the Bounds.

COMMENTARY.

the ornaments be well suited to *that part*, which it is your purpose to adorn ; and, as in dressing out a *modest Fair* (which is the poet's own comparison) the colours are proportioned to her complexion ; the stuff, to the enbonpoint of her person ; and the fashion, to her air and shape ; so in ornamenting a villa, *the rise or fall of waters* should correspond to its acclivities or declivities ; the *artificial hills or vales* to its cover or exposure ; and the manner of *calling in the country*, to the disposition of its aspect. But again, as in the illustration, whatever be the variety in colour, stuff, or fashion, they must still be so suited with respect to one another, as to produce an agreement and harmony in their assemblage ; so woods, waters, mountains, vales, and vistas must, amidst all their diversity, be so disposed with a relation to each other, as to create a perfect symmetry resulting from the whole ; and this, the *Genius* of the place, when reli-

NOTES.

VER. 53. *Let not each beauty ev'ry where be spy'd,*] For when the same beauty obtrudes itself upon you over and over ; when it meets you full at whatever place you stop, or to whatever point you turn, then Nature loses her proper charms of a *modest fair* ; and you be-

gin to hate and nauseate her as a prostitute.

VER. 54. *Where half the skill is decently to hide.*] If the poet was right in comparing the true dress of *Nature* to that of a *modest fair*, it is a plain consequence, that one half of the designer's art must be, *de-*

Consult the Genius of the Place in all ;
 That tells the Waters or to rise, or fall ;
 Or helps th'ambitious Hill the heav'ns to scale,
 Or scoops in circling theatres the Vale ; 60
 Calls in the Country, catches op'ning glades,
 Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades ;
 Now breaks or now directs, th' intending Lines ;
 Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.

COMMENTARY.

giously consulted, will never fail to inform us of; who, as the poet says,

*Now breaks, and now directs th' intending lines,
 Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.*

And this is a full and complete description of the *office of Taste.*

NOTES.

cently to hide ; as the other half is, gracefully to discover.

VER. 57. *Consult the Genius of the Place, &c. — to designs, & 64.]* The personalizing or rather *deifying* the *Genius of the place*, in order to be consulted as an *Oracle*, has produced one of the noblest and most sublime descriptions of *Design*, that poetry could express. Where this *Genius*, while presiding over the work, is represented by little and little, as advancing from a simple *adviser*, to a *creator* of all the beauties of improved Nature, in a *variety* of bold metaphors and al-

lusions, all rising one above another, till they complete the *unity* of the general idea.

First, the *Genius* of the place *tells the waters*, or only simply gives directions: Then he *helps th' ambitious hill*, or is a fellow-labourer: Then again he *scoops the circling Theatre*, or works alone, or in chief. Afterwards, rising fast in our idea of dignity, he *calls in the country*, alluding to the orders of princes in their progress, when accustomed to display all their state and magnificence: His character then grows sacred, he *joins willing woods*, a

Still follow Sense, of ev'ry Art the Soul, 65
 Parts answ'ring parts shall slide into a whole,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 65. *Still follow Sense, &c.*] But now when *Good Sense* has led us up to *Taste*, our fondness for the elegancies of our new mistress, oftentimes occasions us to neglect the plainness and simplicity of the old; we are but too apt to forsake our Guide, and to give ourselves up solely to *Taste*. Our author's next rule therefore 3. is, *Still to follow Sense*, and let it perpetually accompany us thro' all the works of *Taste*.

Still follow Sense, of ev'ry art the Soul.

That is, *Good Sense* should never be a moment absent from the works of *Taste*, any more than the Soul from the Body; for just as the Soul animates and informs every air and feature of a beautiful body, so *Sense* gives life and vigour to all the products of *Taste*.

VER. 66. *Parts answ'ring parts, &c.*] The particular advantages of the union of Sense with Taste he then explains (from this verse to 71) 1. That the beautiful parts which *Taste* has laid

NOTES.

metaphor taken from the office of the priesthood, in the administration of one of its holy rites; till at length, he

becomes a Divinity, and creates and presides over the whole;

*Now breaks, or now directs th'intending lines,
 Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.*

Much in the same manner as the *plastic Nature* is supposed to do, in the work of human generation.

VER. 65. *Still follow Sense, &c.*] The not observing this rule, bewilder'd a late noble writer (distinguished for his *philosophy of Taste*) in the pursuit of the Grand and Magnificent in moral life; who, when *Good*

Sense had led him up to the τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὸ ὀρεπτόν, of ancient renown, discharged his Guide; and, captivated with the delights of *Taste*, resolved all into the elegancies of that idea: And now, Reason, Morality, Religion, and the truth of things, were nothing else but TASTE; which, (that he might not be thought altoge-

Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
 Start ev'n from Difficulty, strike from Chance;
 Nature shall join you; Time shall make it grow
 A Work to wonder at—perhaps a Strow. 70

COMMENTARY.

out and contrived, *Sense* makes to answer one another, and to slide naturally, without violence, *into a whole*. 2. That many beauties will *spontaneously* offer themselves, suggested from the very necessity which *Sense* lays upon us, of conforming the parts to the whole, that no original invention of *Taste* would have supplied. 3. A third advantage is, that you are then always sure to have *Nature on your side*,

Nature shall join you ———

The expression is important, when we were bid to *begin with Sense* we were shewn how this would lead us to *Taste*, in the pursuit of *Nature*: but now that he bids us to go on with *Sense*, or *still to follow it*, after having arrived at *Taste*, he tells us, that *Nature* will then *join* us of her own accord: This has a great beauty, which arises from the Philosophic Truth of the observation. For, as we observed before,—*Sense* being a right conception of *Nature*; and *Taste* a right conception of *beautiful Nature*; when these are in conjunction, *Nature* can stand out

NOTES.

ther to have deserted his sage conductress) he sometimes dignified with the name of the *moral sense*: And he succeeded, in the pursuit of Truth, accordingly.

VER. 66. *Parts answer'ing parts shall slide into a whole,* i. e. shall not be forced, but go of themselves; as if both the parts and whole were not of yours, but of *Nature's* making. The metaphor is taken from

a piece of mechanism finished by some great master, where all the parts are so previously fitted, as to be easily put together by any ordinary workman: and each part slides into its place, as it were thro' a groove ready made for that purpose.

VER. 70. The seat and gardens of the Lord Viscount Cobham in Buckinghamshire. P.

Without it, proud Versailles! thy glory falls;
 And Nero's Terraces desert their walls:
 The vast Parterres a thousand hands shall make,
 Lo! COBHAM comes, and floats them with a Lake:

COMMENTARY.

no longer, but presents herself to you without further pains or search.

VER. 71. *Without it, proud Versailles! &c.*] To illustrate this doctrine, the poet next shews us (from \S 70 to 99) that without this continued support of *Good Sense*, things even of the *highest Taste* and *utmost Magnificence*, such as the Buildings of *Versailles*, the Gardens of *Villarion*, and the Groves of *Sabinus*, (which are the instances he gives) all, in a very little time, come to nothing, and no wonder. For the exercise of *Taste* WITHOUT SENSE is, where something that is *not beautiful Nature* is mistaken for it; and *ornamented* as beautiful Nature should be: These ornaments, therefore, being destitute of all real support, must be continually subject to change. Sometimes the owner himself will grow weary of them (as in the case of *Villarion*) and find at last, that *Nature* is to be preferred before them,

*Tir'd of the scene Parterres and Fountains yield,
 He finds at last he better likes a Field.*

NOTES.

VER. 72. *And Nero's Terraces desert their walls:*] The expression is very significant. Had the *Walls* been said to *desert* the *Terraces*, this would have given us the image of a destruction; effected by time only; which had been foreign to the poet's intention; who is here speaking of the punishment of *unsupported Taste*, in the designed subversion of it, either by *good* or *bad*, as it happens; one of which is sure to do its

business, and that soon; therefore it is with great propriety, he says, that the *Terraces desert their walls*, which implies purpose and violence in their subversion.

VER. 74. *Lo! COBHAM comes, and floats them with a Lake:*] An high compliment to the noble person on whom it is bestowed, as making him the *substitute of Good Sense*.—This office, in the original plan of the poem, was given to an-

Or cut wide views thro' Mountains to the Plain, 75
 You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again,
 Ev'n in an ornament its place remark,
 Nor in an Hermitage set Dr. Clarke.

Behold Villario's ten-years toil compleat ;
 His Quincunx darkens, his Espaliers meet ; 80
 The Wood supports the Plain, the parts unite,
 And strength of Shade contends with strength of
 Light ;

COMMENTARY.

Sometime, again, the Heir (like *Sabinus's*) will be changing
 a bad Taste for a worse,

*One boundless green, or flourish'd carpet views,
 With all the mournful family of Yews.*

So that *mere Taste* standing expos'd between the *true* and *false*,
 like the decent man, between the rigidly virtuous, and tho-
 roughly profligate, hated and despis'd by both, can never long
 support itself ; and with this the *first part* of the Epistle concludes.

NOTES.

other Man of TASTE ; who
 not having the SENSE to see
 a compliment was intended
 him, convinced the poet it did
 not belong to him.

VER. 75, 76. *Or cut wide
 views thro' Mountains to the
 Plain, You'll wish your hill or
 shelter'd seat again.*] This was
 done in Hertfordshire, by a
 wealthy citizen, at the expence
 of above 5000*l.* by which
 means (merely to overlook a
 dead plain) he let in the north-

wind upon his house and par-
 terre, which were before ad-
 orn'd and defend'd by beau-
 tiful woods. P.

VER. 78. — *set Dr. Clarke.*]
 Dr. S. Clarke's busto placed by
 the Queen in the Hermitage,
 while the Dr. duely frequented
 the Court. P.

VER. 81, 82. *The Wood
 supports the Plain, the parts
 unite, And strength of Shade
 contends with strength of Light.*]

The imagery is here taken from

A waving Glow the bloomy beds display,
 Blushing in bright diversities of day,
 With silver-quiv'ring rills mæander'd o'er— 85
 Enjoy them, you! Villario can no more;

NOTES.

Painting in the judicious execution of the *Pencil*, and in the happy improvement of it by *time*. To understand what is meant by *supporting* (which is a term of art common both to *Planting* and *Painting*) we must consider what things make the natural defect or weakness of a rude uncultivated *Plain*; and these are, the having a disagreeable *flatness*, and the not having a *proper termination*. But a *Wood*, rightly disposed, takes away the one, and gives what is wanting of the other.

— *The parts unite.*

The utmost which art can do, when it does its full office, is to give the work a *consent* of parts; but it is *time* only that can make the *union* here spoken of; there being the same difference between these, as between a simple *Contrast*, and a *Consummation*. So in painting the skill of the *master* can go no further, in the chromatic part, than to set those colours together, which have a natural friendship and sympathy for each other; But nothing

but *time* can unite and incorporate their tints:

And strength of Shade contends with strength of Light.

And now the work becomes a *very* picture; which the poet informs us of, in the sublime way of poetical instruction, by setting that picture before our eyes; and not merely a picture, but a *perfect* picture, in which the lights and shades, not only bear a *proportion* to one another in their force (which is implied in the word *contends*) but are both at their *height*, (which the word *strength* signifies.) As the use of the singular number in the terms *Shade* and *Light*, alludes to another precept of the art, that not only the shades and lights should be great and broad, but that the masses of the *clair-obscuré*, in a groupe of objects, should be so managed, by a subordination of the groups to the unity of design, as that the whole together may afford one great *shade* and *light*.

VER. 84. *Blushing in bright diversities of day,*] i. e. The

Tir'd of the scene Parterres and Fountains yield,
He finds at last he better likes a Field.

Thro' his young Woods how pleas'd Sabinus stray'd
Or sat delighted in the thick'ning shade, 90
With annual joy the red'ning shoots to greet,
Or see the stretching branches long to meet!
His Son's fine Taste an op'ner Vista loves,
Foe to the Dryads of his Father's groves;
One boundless Green, or flourish'd Carpet views,
With all the mournful family of Yews; 96
The thriving plants ignoble broomsticks made,
Now sweep those Alleys they were born to shade.

NOTES.

several colours of the grove in bloom, give several different tints to the lights and shades.

VER. 94. *Foe to the Dryads of his Father's groves;*] Finely intimating, by this sublime classical image, that the Father's taste was *enthusiastical*; in which passion there is always

something great and noble; tho' it be too apt, in its flights, to leave *sense* behind it: and this was the good man's case. But his Son's was a poor despicable *superstition*, a low sombrous passion, whose perversity of Taste could only gratify itself

With all the mournful family of Yews.

VER. 95. The two extremes in parterres, which are equally faulty; a *boundless Green*, large and naked as a field, or a *flourish'd Carpet*, where the greatness and nobleness of the piece is lessened by being divided in-

to too many parts, with scroll'd works and beds, of which the examples are frequent. P.

VER. 96. — *mournful family of Yews;*] Touches upon the ill taste of those who are so fond of Ever-greens (parti-

At Timon's Villa let us pass a day,
 Where all cry out, "What fums are thrown away!
 So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air, 101
 Soft and Agreeable come never there.
 Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a draught
 As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.
 To compass this, his building is a Town, 105
 His pond an Ocean, his parterre a Down:

COMMENTARY.

II.

VER. 99. *At Timon's Villa, &c.*] As the first part ended with exposing the works of *Taste without Sense*, the second begins with a description (from v 98 to 173) of *false Magnificence WITHOUT EITHER SENSE OR TASTE*, in the gardens, buildings, table furniture, library, and way of living of Lord *Timon*; who, in none of these, could distinguish between *greatness* and *vastness*, between *regularity* and *form*, between *dignity* and *state*, or between *learning* and *pedantry*. But what then? says the poet, here resuming the great *principle of his Philosophy* (which these moral Epistles were written to illustrate, and consequently on which they are all regulated) tho'

*Heav'n visits with a Taste the wealthy Fool,
 And needs no Rod ———*

NOTES.

cularly Yews, which are the most tonfile) as to destroy the nobler Forest-trees, to make way for such little ornaments as Pyramids of dark-green continually repeated, not unlike a Funeral procession. P.

VER. 99. *At Timon's Villa*] This description is intend-

ed to comprize the principles of a false Taste of Magnificence, and to exemplify what was said before, that nothing but Good Sense can attain it. P.

VER. 104. — *all Brobdignag*] A region of giants, in the satires of *Gulliver*.

Who but must laugh, the Master when he sees,
 A puny insect, shiv'ring at a breeze!
 Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!
 The whole, a labour'd Quarry above ground. 110
 Two Cupids squirt before: a Lake behind
 Improves the keenness of the Northern wind.
 His Gardens next your admiration call,
 On ev'ry side you look, behold the Wall!
 No pleasing Intricacies intervene, 115
 No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
 Grove nods at grove, each Alley has a brother,
 And half the platform just reflects the other.

COMMENTARY.

Yet the punishment is confined as it ought; and the evil is turned to the benefit of others: For

*—hence the Poor are cloath'd, the Hungry fed;
 Health to himself, and to his Infants bread,
 The Lab'rer bears; what his hard heart denies,
 His charitable vanity supplies.*

NOTES.

VER. 109. *Lo! what huge heaps of littleness around,*] Grandeur in building, as in the human frame, takes not its denomination from the *body*, but the *soul* of the work: when the soul therefore is lost or incumber'd in its envelope, the unanimated parts, how *huge* soever, are not members of grandeur, but mere *heaps of littleness*.

VER. 117, 118. *Grove nods at grove, each Alley has a brother, And half the platform just reflects the other.*] This is exactly the *two puddings* of the citizen in the foregoing fable, only served up a little more magnificently: But both on the same absurd principle of wrong taste, viz. that one can never have too much of a good thing.

The suff'ring eye inverted Nature sees,
 Trees cut to Statues, Statues thick as trees ; 120
 With here a Fountain, never to be play'd ;
 And there a Summer-house, that knows no shade ;
 Here Amphitrite sails thro' myrtle bow'rs ;
 There Gladiators fight, or die in flow'rs ;
 Un-water'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn, 125
 And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty Urn.

My Lord advances with majestic mien,
 Smit with the mighty pleasure, to be seen :
 But soft—by regular approach—not yet—
 First thro' the length of yon hot Terrace sweat ; 130
 And when up ten steep slopes you've drag'd your
 thighs,

Just at his Study-door he'll bless your eyes.

His Study ! with what Authors is it stor'd ?
 In Books, not Authors, curious is my Lord ;

NOTES.

Ibid. *Grove nods at grove,*
 &c.] The exquisite humour of
 this expression arises solely from
 its significancy. These *groves*,
 that have no meaning, but very
 near relation-ship, can express
 themselves only like twin-ideots
 by *nods* ; which just serve to let
 us understand, that they know
 one another, as having been
 nursed, and brought up by

one common parent.

VER. 124. The two Statues
 of the *Gladiator pugnans* and
Gladiator moriens. P.

VER. 130. The *Approaches*
 and *Communication* of house
 with garden, or of one part
 with another, ill judged, and
 inconvenient. P.

VER. 133. *His Study! &c.*
 The false Taste in Books ; a

To all their dated Backs he turns you round: 135
 These Aldus printed, those Du Suëil has bound.
 Lo some are Vellom, and the rest as good
 For all his Lordship knows, but they are Wood.
 For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look,
 These shelves admit not any modern book. 140

And now the Chapel's silver bell you hear,
 That summons you to all the Pride of Pray'r:
 Light quirks of Music, broken and uneven,
 Make the soul dance upon a Jig to Heav'n.
 On painted Cielings you devoutly stare, 145
 Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio or Laguerre,

NOTES.

satire on the vanity in collecting them, more frequent in men of Fortune than the study to understand them. Many delight chiefly in the elegance of the print, or of the binding; some have carried it so far, as to cause the upper shelves to be filled with painted books of wood; others pique themselves so much upon books in a language they do not understand, as to exclude the most useful in one they do. P.

VER. 142. The false Taste in *Music*, improper to the subjects, as of light airs in churches, often practised by the organists, &c. P.

VER. 142. *That summons you to all the Pride of Pray'r:]* This absurdity is very happily expressed; *Pride*, of all human follies, being the first we should leave behind us when we approach the sacred altar. But he who could take *Meanness* for *Magnificence*, might easily mistake *Humility* for *Meanness*.

VER. 145. —And in *Painting* (from which even Italy is not free) of naked figures in Churches, &c. which has obliged some Popes to put draperies on some of those of the best masters. P.

VER. 146. *Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio and Laguerre,]*

Of gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
And bring all Paradise before your eye.

NOTES.

This was not only said to deride the indecency and aukward position of the figures, but to insinuate the want of dignity in the subjects. Raphael's pagans, as the devils in Milton, act a nobler part than the Gods and *Saints* of ordinary poets and painters. The cartons at Hampton-Court are talked of by every body; they have been copied, engraved, and criticised; and yet so little studied or considered, that in the noblest of them, of which more, too, has been said than of all the rest, we are as much strangers to St. Paul's audience in the Areopagus, as to those he preached before at Thessalonica or Berœa.

The story from whence the painter took his subject is this, — “ St. Paul came to Athens, “ was encountered by the Epicureans and Stoics, taken up “ by them to the court of Areopagus, before which he made “ his apology; and amongst his “ converts at this time, were “ Dionysius, the Areopagite, “ and a woman named Damaris.” On this simple plan he exercises his invention. Paul is placed on an eminence in the act of speaking, the audience

round him in a circle; and a statue of Mars in the front of his temple denotes the scene of Action.

The first figure has been taken notice of for the force of it's expression. We see all the marks of conviction, and resignation to the will of the divine Messenger. But I do not know, that it has been suspected, that a particular character was here represented. And yet the Platonic countenance, and the female attendant, shew plainly, that the painter designed DIONYSIUS, whom Ecclesiastical story makes of this sect, and to whom sacred history has given this companion. For the woman is DAMARIS mentioned, with him, in the *Acts*, as a joint convert. Either the Artist mistook his text, and supposed her converted with him at this audience; or, what is more likely, he purposely committed the indecorum of bringing a woman into the Areopagus, the better to mark out his *Dionysius*; a character of great fame in the Romish Church, from a voluminous mystic impostor who has assumed his titles. Next to this PLATONIST of open visage and extended

To rest, the Cushion and soft Dean invite,
Who never mentions Hell to ears polite. 150

NOTES.

arms, is a figure deeply collected within himself, immersed in thought, and ruminating on what he hears. Conformable to his state, are his arms buried in his garment, and his chin reposing on his bosom; in a word, all his lineaments denote the STOIC; the symbol of which sect was, *Ne te quaesiveris extra*. Adjoining to him is an old man with a squalid beard and habit, leaning on his crouch, and turning his eyes upwards on the Apostle; but with a countenance so sour and canine, that one cannot hesitate a moment in pronouncing him a CYNIC. The next that follows, by his elegance of dress, and placid air of raillery and neglect, betrays the EPI-CUREAN: As the other which stands close by him, with his finger on his lips denoting *silence*, plainly marks out a follower of PYTHAGORAS. After these come a groupe of figures caveling in all the rage of disputation, and criticising the divine Speaker. These plainly design the ACADEMICS, the genius of whose school was to debate *de quolibet ente*, and never come to a

determination. Without the Circle, and behind the principal figures, are a number of young faces to denote the scholars and disciples of the several sects. These are all before the apostle. Behind him are two other Figures: One regarding the Apostle's action, with his face turned upwards; in which the passions of malicious zeal and disappointed rage are so strongly marked that we needed not the *red bonnet* to see he was a Jewish Rabbi. The other is a pagan priest full of anxiety for the danger of the established Religion.

Thus has this great Master, in order to heighten the dignity of his subject, brought in the heads of every sect of philosophy and religion which were most averse to the principles, and most opposed to the success of the Gospel; so that one may truly esteem this carton as the greatest effort of his divine genius.

VER. 146. *Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio, or Laguerre.*] The fine image here, given in a single word, admirably exposes the unnatural po-

But hark ! the chiming Clocks to dinner call ;
 A hundred footsteps scrape the marble Hall :
 The rich Buffet well-colour'd Serpents grace,
 And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.

NOTES.

fiction of the picture, and the too natural postures of its female figures.

Ibid. *Verrio or Laguerre.*] Verrio (Antonio) painted many cielings, &c. at Windsor, Hampton-court, &c. and Laguerre at Blenheim-castle, and other places. P.

VER. 150. *Who never mentions Hell to ears polite.*] This is a fact; a reverend Dean preaching at Court, threatned the sinner with punishment in "a place which he thought it not decent to name in so polite an assembly." P.

VER. 153. Taxes the incongruity of *Ornaments* (tho' sometimes practis'd by the ancients) where an open mouth ejects the water into a fountain, or where the shocking images of serpents, &c. are introduced in Grotto's or Buffets. P.

VER. 153. *The rich Buffet well-colour'd Serpents grace,*] The circumstance of being *well-colour'd* shews this ornament not only to be very absurd, but very *odious* too; and has a peculiar beauty, as, in one in-

stance of false Taste, viz. an *injudicious choice in imitation*, he gives (in the epithet employ'd) the suggestion of another, which is an *injudicious manner of it*. For those disagreeable objects which, when *painted*, give pleasure; if *coloured* after nature, in *relief*, become shocking, as a toad, or dead carcase in wax-work: yet these things are the delight of all people of bad Taste. However, the Ornament itself pretends to science, and would justify its use by antiquity, tho' it betrays the most miserable ignorance of it. The *Serpent* amongst the ancients, was sacred, and full of venerable mysteries. Now things do not excite ideas so much according to their own natural impressions, as by fictitious ones, arising from foreign and accidental combinations; consequently the view of this animal raised in *them* nothing of that abhorrence which it is wont to do in us; but, on the contrary, very agreeable sensations, correspondent to those foreign associations. Hence, and more e-

Is this a dinner? this a Genial room? 155

No, 'tis a Temple, and a Hecatomb.

A solemn Sacrifice, perform'd in state,

You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.

So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear

Sancho's dread Doctor and his Wand were there.

NOTES.

specially, because the Serpent was the peculiar *Symbol of health*, it became an extreme proper ornament to the *genial rooms* of the ancients. In the mean time, we who are strangers to all this superstition, yet make ourselves liable to one much more absurd, which is, idolizing the very *fashions* that arose from it. But if these pretenders to Taste can so widely mistake, it is no wonder that those who pretend to none, I mean the verbal Critics, should a little *hallucinate* in this matter. I remember, when the short Latin inscription on Shakespear's monument was first set up, and in the very style of elegant and simple antiquity, the Newspapers were full of these small critics; in which the only observation that looked like learning, was founded in this ignorance of Taste and Antiquity. One of these Critics objected to the word *Mors* (in the in-

scription) because the Roman writers of the purest times scrupled to employ it; but, in its stead, used an improper, that is, a figurative word, or otherwise a circumlocution. But had he considered that it was their Superstition of *lucky and unlucky words* which occasion'd this delicacy, he must have seen that a Christian writer, in a Christian inscription, acted with great judgment in avoiding so senseless an affectation of, what he miscalls, classical expression.

VER. 155. *Is this a dinner, &c.*] The proud Festivals of some men are here set forth to ridicule, where pride destroys the ease, and formal regularity all the pleasurable enjoyment of the entertainment. P.

VER. 156. — *a Hecatomb*] Alluding to the *hundred foot-steps* before.

VER. 160. *Sancho's dread Doctor*] See Don Quixote, chap. xlvii. P.

Between each Act the trembling salvers ring, 161
 From soup to sweet-wine, and God blefs the King.
 In plenty starving, tantaliz'd in state,
 And complaisantly help'd to all I hate,
 Treated, carefs'd, and tir'd, I take my leave, 165
 Sick of his civil Pride from Morn to Eve ;
 I curse fuch lavish cost, and little skill,
 And swear no Day was ever past so ill.

Yet hence the Poor are cloath'd, the Hungry fed ;
 Health to himself, and to his Infants bread 170
 The Lab'rer bears : What his hard Heart denies,
 His charitable Vanity supplies.

Another age shall see the golden Ear
 Imbrown the Slope, and nod on the Parterre,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 173. *Another age, &c.*] But now a difficulty sticks with me, (answers an objector) this load of evil still remains a monument of folly to future ages ; an incumbrance to the plain on which it stands ; and a nuisance to the neighbourhood round about, filling it

— with imitating fools.

NOTES.

VER. 169. *Yet hence the Poor &c.*] The *Moral* of the whole, where PROVIDENCE is justified in giving Wealth to those who squander it in this manner. A bad Taste employs more hands, and diffuses Ex-

pence more than a good one. This recurs to what is laid down in Book i. Epist. II. § 230—7, and in the Epistle preceding this, § 161, &c. P.

VER. 173. *Another age &c.*] Had the Poet lived but

Deep Harvests bury all his pride has plann'd, 175
 And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.

Who then shall grace, or who improve the Soil?
 Who plants like BATHURST, or who builds like
 BOYLE.

COMMENTARY.

For men are apt to take the example next at hand; and aptest of all to take a bad one. No fear of that, replies the poet, (from *l* 172 to 177.) Nothing absurd or wrong is exempt from the jurisdiction of Time, which is always sure to do full justice on it;

*Another age shall see the golden Ear
 Imbrown the Slope, and nod on the Parterre,
 Deep Harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,
 And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.*

For the prerogative of

———Time shall make it grow,

is only due to the designs of true Taste joined to Use: And

'Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expence;

and nothing but the sanctity of *that* can arrest the justice of Time. And thus the second part concludes; which consisting of an *example* of false Taste in every attempt to Magnificence, is full of concealed *precepts* for the true: As the first part, which contains *precepts* for true Taste, is full of *examples* of the false.

III.

VER. 177. *Who then shall grace, &c.*] We come now to the third and last part, (from *l* 176 to the end) and, as in the first, the poet had given examples of wrong judged *Magnificence*, in

NOTES.

three Years longer, he had seen this prophecy fulfilled.

VER. 176. *And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.*] The

great beauty of this line is an instance of the art peculiar to our poet; by which he has so disposed a trite classical figure,

T

'Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expence,
 And Splendor borrows all her rays from Sense. 180
 His Father's Acres who enjoys in peace,
 Or makes his Neighbours glad, if he encrease :
 Whose chearful Tenants bless their yearly toil,
 Yet to their Lord owe more than to the soil

COMMENTARY.

things of *Taste without Sense* ; and, in the second, an example of others *without either Sense or Taste* ; so the third is employed in two examples of *Magnificence in Planting and Building* ; where *both Sense and Taste* highly prevail : The one in him, to whom this Epistle is addressed ; and the other, in the truly noble person whose amiable Character bore so conspicuous a part in the foregoing.

Who then shall grace, or who improve the Soil?

Who plants like BATHURST, or who builds like BOYLE.

Where in the fine description he gives of these two species of *Magnificence*, he artfully insinuates, that tho', when executed in a *true Taste*, the great end and aim of both be the same. viz. the *general good*, in use or ornament ; yet that their progress to this end is carried on in direct contrary courses ; that, in

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as not only to make it do its vulgar office, of representing a *very plentiful harvest*, but also to assume the *Image of Nature*, re-establishing herself in her rights, and *mocking* the vain efforts of false magnificence, which would keep her out of them.

VER. 179, 180. 'Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expence, And Spendor borrows all her

rays from sense.] Here the poet, to make the *examples of good Taste* the better understood, introduces them with a summary of his *Precepts* in these two sublime lines : for, the consulting *Use* is *beginning with Sense* ; and the making *Splendor* or *Taste* borrow all its rays from thence, is *going on with Sense*, after she has led us up to *Taste*. The art of this can never be

Whose ample Lawns are not asham'd to feed 185
 The milky heifer and deserving steed ;
 Whose rising Forests, not for pride or show,
 But future Buildings, future Navies, grow :
 Let his plantations stretch from down to down,
 First shade a Country, and then raise a Town. 190

COMMENTARY.

Planting, the private advantage of the neighbourhood is first promoted, till, by time, it rises up to a public benefit :

*Whose ample Lawns are not asham'd to feed
 The milky heifer and deserving steed ;
 Whose rising Forests, not for pride or show,
 But future Buildings, future Navies grow.*

On the contrary, the wonders of Architecture ought first to be bestowed on the public :

*Bid Harbors open, public Ways extend,
 Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend ;
 Bid the broad Arch the dang'rous flood contain ;
 The Mole projected break the roaring main.*

And when the public has been properly accommodated and adorned, then, and not till then, the works of private *Magnificence* may take place. This was the order observ'd by those two great Empires, from whom we received all we have of this polite art: We read not of any *Magnificence* in the private buildings of Greece or Rome, till the generosity of their public spirit had adorned the State with Temples, Emporiums, Council-houses, Common-Porticos, Baths, and Theatres.

NOTES.

sufficiently admired. But the Expression is equal to the Thought. This <i>sanctifying</i> of expence gives us the idea of something consecrated and set apart for sacred uses; and in-	deed, it is the idea under which it may be properly considered : For wealth employed according to the <i>intention</i> of Providence, is its true consecration; and the real uses of humanity
---	--

You too proceed! make falling Arts your care,
 Erect new wonders, and the old repair;
 Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,
 And be whate'er Vitruvius was before:
 Till Kings call forth th' Ideas of your mind, 195
 (Proud to accomplish what such hands design'd,)
 Bid Harbors open, public Ways extend,
 Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend;
 Bid the broad Arch the dang'rous Flood contain,
 The Mole projected break the roaring Main; 200

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were certainly *first* in its *intention*.

VER. 195, 197, &c. 'Till Kings—*Bid Harbors open, &c.*] The poet after having touched upon the proper objects of Magnificence and Expence, in the private works of great men, comes to those great and publick works which become a

prince. This Poem was published in the year 1732, when some of the new-built churches, by the act of Queen Anne, were ready to fall, being founded in boggy land (which is satirically alluded to in our author's imitation of Horace, Lib. ii. Sat. 2.

Shall half the new-built Churches round thee fall)

others were vilely executed, thro' fraudulent cabals between undertakers, officers, &c. Dagenham-breach had done very great mischiefs; many of the Highways throughout England were hardly passable; and most of those which were repaired by Turnpikes were made jobs for private lucre, and infamously

executed, even to the entrances of London itself: The proposal of building a Bridge at Westminster had been petition'd against and rejected; but in two years after the publication of this poem, an Act for building a Bridge pass'd thro' both houses. After many debates in the committee, the

Back to his bounds their subject Sea command,
And roll obedient Rivers thro' the Land :
These Honours, Peace to happy Britain brings,
These are Imperial Works, and worthy Kings.

NOTES.

execution was left to the car- | one; to which our author al-
penter above-mentioned, who | ludes in these lines,
would have made it a wooden

*Who builds a Bridge that never drove a pile?
Should Ripley venture, all the world would smile.*

See the notes on that place. P.



MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE V.

To Mr. *ADDISON*.

Occasion'd by his Dialogues on *MEDALS*.

SEE the wild Waste of all-devouring years!
How Rome her own sad Sepulchre appears,
With nodding arches, broken temples spread!
The very Tombs now vanish'd like their dead!

NOTES.

THIS was originally written in the year 1715, when Mr. Addison intended to publish his book of medals; it was sometime before he was secretary of State; but not published till Mr. Tickell's Edition of his works; at which time the verses on Mr. Craggs, which conclude the poem, were added, viz. in 1720.

P.

EPIST. V.] As the third Epistle treated of the extremes of *Avarice* and *Profusion*; and the fourth took up one particular branch of the latter, namely, the *vanity of expence* in people of wealth and quality, and was therefore a corollary to the third; so this treats of one circumstance of that *Vanity*, as it appears in the common collectors of old coins;

Imperial wonders rais'd on Nations spoil'd, 5
 Where mix'd with Slaves the groaning Martyr toil'd:
 Huge Theatres, that now unpeopled Woods,
 Now drain'd a distant country of her Floods:
 Fanes, which admiring Gods with pride survey,
 Statues of Men, scarce less alive than they! 10
 Some felt the silent stroke of mould'ring age,
 Some hostile fury, some religious rage.
 Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,
 And Papal piety, and Gothic fire.

NOTES.

and is, therefore, a corollary to the fourth.

VER. 6. *Where mix'd with slaves the groaning Martyr toil'd*] The inattentive reader might

wonder how this circumstance came to find a place here. But let him compare it with *l* 13, 14, and he will see the Reason,

*Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,
 And papal piety, and gothic fire.*

For the *Slaves* mentioned above were of the same nation with the *Barbarians* here: and the *Christians* here, the Successors of the *Martyrs* there: Providence ordaining, that *these* should ruin what *those* were so injuriously employed in rearing: for the poet never loseth sight of his great principle.

VER. 9. *Fanes, which ad-*

*Nil admirari prope res est una, Numici,
 Solaque quæ possit facere & servare beatum.*

Admiration implying our ignorance of other things; *pride*, our ignorance of ourselves.

miring Gods with pride survey,] These Gods were the then Tyrants of Rome, to whom the Empire rais'd Temples. The epithet, *admiring*, conveys a strong ridicule; that passion, in the opinion of Philosophy, always conveying the ideas of ignorance and misery:

Perhaps, by its own ruins sav'd from flame, 15
 Some bury'd marble half preserves a name;
 That Name the learn'd with fierce disputes pursue,
 And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.

Ambition figh'd: She found it vain to trust
 The faithless Column and the crumbling Bust:
 Huge moles, whose shadow stretch'd from shore to
 shore, 21
 Their ruins perish'd, and their place no more!
 Convinc'd, she now contracts her vast design,
 And all her Triumphs shrink into a Coin.
 A narrow orb each crouded conquest keeps, 25
 Beneath her Palm here sad Judæa weeps.
 Now scantier limits the proud Arch confine,
 And scarce are seen the prostrate Nile or Rhine;
 A small Euphrates thro' the piece is roll'd,
 And little Eagles wave their wings in gold. 30

NOTES.

VER. 18. *And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.*] A fine insinuation of the entire want of Taste in Antiquaries; whose ignorance of Characters misleads them, (supported only by a name) against Reason and History.

VER. 25. *A narrow Orb*

each crowded Conquest keeps,] A ridicule on the pompous title of *Orbis Romanus*, which the Romans gave to their empire.

VER. 27. — *the proud Arch*] i. e. The triumphal Arch, which was generally an enormous mass of building.

The Medal, faithful to its charge of fame,
 Thro' climes and ages bears each form and name:
 In one short view subjected to our eye
 Gods, Emp'rors, Heroes, Sages, Beauties, lie.
 With sharpen'd sight pale Antiquaries pore, 35
 Th' inscription value, but the rust adore.
 This the blue varnish, that the green endears,
 The sacred rust of twice ten hundred years!
 To gain Pescennius one employs his schemes,
 One grasps a Cecrops in ecstatic dreams. 40
 Poor Vadius, long with learned spleen devour'd,
 Can taste no pleasure since his Shield was scour'd:
 And Curio, restless by the Fair-one's side,
 Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride.
 Theirs is the Vanity, the Learning thine: 45
 Touch'd by thy hand, again Rome's glories shine;
 Her Gods, and god-like Heroes rise to view,
 And all her faded garlands bloom a-new.

NOTES.

VER. 35. *With sharpen'd
 sight pale Antiquaries pore,*
Microscopic glasses, invented
 by philosophers to discover the
 beauties in the minuter works
 of nature, ridiculously applied
 by Antiquaries, to detect the
 cheats of counterfeit medals.

VER. 37. *This the blue var-*
nish, that the green endears]
 i. e. This a collector of silver;
 That, of brass coins.

VER. 41. *Poor Vadius]* See
 his history, and that of his
 Shield, in the *Memoirs of Scrib-*
lerus.

Nor blush, these studies thy regard engage;
 These pleas'd the Fathers of poetic rage; 50
 The verse and sculpture bore an equal part,
 And Art reflected images to Art.

Oh when shall Britain, conscious of her claim,
 Stand emulous of Greek and Roman fame?
 In living medals see her wars enroll'd, 55
 And vanquish'd realms supply recording gold?
 Here, rising bold, the Patriot's honest face;
 There Warriors frowning in historic brass:
 Then future ages with delight shall see
 How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's looks agree; 60

NOTES.

VER. 49. *Nor blush, these Studies thy regard engage;*] A senseless affectation which some writers of eminence have betrayed; who when fortune, or their talents have raised them to a condition to do without those arts, for which only they gained our esteem, have pretended to think letters below their Character. This false shame M. Voltaire has very well, and with proper indignation, expos'd in his account of Mr. Congreve: "He had one Defect, which was, his entertaining too mean an Idea of his first Profession, (that of a Writer) tho' 'twas to this he

"ow'd his Fame and Fortune. He spoke of his Works as of Trifles that were beneath him; and hinted to me in our first Conversation, that I should visit him upon no other Foot than that of a Gentleman, who led a Life of plainness and simplicity. I answer'd, that, had he been so unfortunate as to be a mere Gentleman, I should never have come to see him; and I was very much disgust-ed at so unseasonable a piece of vanity. *Letters concerning the English Nation*, xix.

VER. 53. *Oh when shall Britain, &c.*] A compliment to one of Mr. Addison's papers in

Or in fair series laurell'd Bards be shown,
 A Virgil there, and here an Addison.
 Then shall thy CRAGGS (and let me call him mine)
 On the cast ore, another Pollio, shine;
 With aspect open, shall erect his head, 65
 And round the orb in lasting notes be read,
 " Statesman, yet friend to Truth! of soul sincere,
 " In action faithful, and in honour clear;
 " Who broke no promise, serv'd no private end,
 " Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend;
 " Ennobled by himself, by all approv'd,
 " And prais'd, unenvy'd, by the Muse he lov'd.

NOTES.

the Spectator on this subject.

VER. 67. "*Statesman, yet friend to truth, &c.*] It should be remembered that this poem was written to be printed before Mr. Addison's *discourse on Medals*, in which there is the following censure of long legends upon coins: "The first
 " fault I find with a modern
 " legend is its diffusiveness.
 " You have sometimes the
 " whole side of a medal over-
 " run with it. One would
 " fancy the Author had a De-
 " sign of being Ciceronian—
 " but it is not only the tedi-
 " ciousness of these inscriptions

" that I find fault with; sup-
 " posing them of a moderate
 " length, why must they be in
 " verse? We should be fur-
 " prized to see the title of a
 " serious book in rhyme.—
 Dial. iii.

VER. ult. *And prais'd un-
 envy'd by the Muse he lov'd.*] It was not likely that men acting in so different spheres as were those of Mr. Craggs and Mr. Pope, should have their friendship disturbed by Envy. We must suppose then that some circumstances in the friendship of Mr. Pope and Mr. Addison are hinted at in this place.

F I N I S.

Or in fair faces invisible hands be shown
 A Vigil there, and here an Addition,
 Then shall thy Orators (and let me call them mine)
 On the one, another follow, thus;
 With aspect open, shall each his head
 And round the orb in looking now to rest
 "Sustained, yet fixed to Truth; of doubting
 "In action fickle, and in honour clear;
 "Who broke no promise, say'd no private end,
 "Who said no lies, and whose no friend
 "Enabled by himself, by all approv'd,
 "And praise, quench'd, by the blind behov'd."

METHOD

the first of these things
 Ver. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.
 11. 12. 13. 14. 15.
 16. 17. 18. 19. 20.
 21. 22. 23. 24. 25.
 26. 27. 28. 29. 30.
 31. 32. 33. 34. 35.
 36. 37. 38. 39. 40.
 41. 42. 43. 44. 45.
 46. 47. 48. 49. 50.