



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 Satires &c.

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

Dialogue I.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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EPILOGUE
TO THE
SATIRES.

Written in M D C C X X X V I I I.

DIALOGUE I.

FR. **N**OT twice a twelve-month you appear
in Print,
And when it comes, the Court see nothing in't.

VARIATIONS.

After ψ 2. in the MS.

You don't, I hope, pretend to quit the trade,
Because you think your reputation made :
Like good ** of whom so much was said,
That when his name was up, he lay a-bed.
Come, come, refresh us with a livelier song,
Or like ** you'll lie a-bed too long.

NOTES.

VER. 1. *Not twice a twelvemonth etc.*] These two lines are from Horace ; and the only lines that are so in the whole Poem ; being meant to give a handle to that which follows in the character of an impertinent Censurer,

'Tis all from Horace ; etc. P.

VER. 2. *the Court see nothing in't.*] He chose this expression for the sake of its elegant and satiric ambiguity. His writings abound in them.

You grow correct, that once with Rapture writ,
And are, besides, too *moral* for a Wit.

Decay of Parts, alas! we all must feel --- 5

Why now, this moment, don't I see you steal?

'Tis all from Horace; Horace long before ye
Said, "Tories call'd him Whig, and Whigs a Tory;"

And taught his Romans, in much better metre,
"To laugh at Fools who put their trust in Peter."

But Horace, Sir, was delicate, was nice; 11

Bubo observes, he lash'd no sort of *Vice* :

Horace would say, Sir Billy *serv'd the Crown*,

Blunt could *do Bus'ness*, H-ggins *knew the Town*;

VARIATIONS.

P. Sir, what I write, should be correctly writ.

F. Correct! 'tis what no genius can admit.

Besides, you grow too moral for a Wit.

NOTES.

VER. 9. *And taught his Romans, in much better metre, "To laugh at Fools who put their trust in Peter."*] The general turn of the thought is from Boileau,

Avant lui, Juvénal avoit dit en Latin,

Qu'on est assis à l'aise aux sermons de Cotin.

But the irony in the first line, and the satirical equivoque in the second, mark them for his own. His making the objector say, that Horace excelled him in writing verse, is pleasant. And the ambiguity of *putting their trust in Peter*, insinuates that Horace and he had frequently laughed at that specific folly, arising from indolence, which still disposes men to intrust their spiritual and temporal concerns to the absolute disposal of any sanctified or unsanctified cheat, bearing the name of PETER.

VER. 12. *Bubo observes,*] Some guilty person very fond of making such an observation. P.

In Sappho touch the *Failings of the Sex*, 15
 In rev'rend Bishops note some *small Neglects*,
 And own, the Spaniard did a *waggish thing*,
 Who cropt our Ears, and sent them to the King.
 His sly, polite, insinuating style
 Could please at Court, and make AUGUSTUS smile:
 An artful Manager, that crept between 21
 His Friend and Shame, and was a kind of *Screen*.
 But 'faith your very Friends will soon be fore ;
Patriots there are, who wish you'd jest no more ---
 And where's the Glory? 'twill be only thought 25
 The Great man never offer'd you a groat.
 Go see Sir ROBERT ---

NOTES.

VER. 14. *H—ggins*] Formerly Jaylor of the Fleet prison, enriched himself by many exactions, for which he was tried and expelled. P.

VER. 18. *Who cropt our Ears,*] Said to be executed by the Captain of a Spanish ship on one Jenkins a Captain of an English one. He cut off his ears, and bid him carry them to the King his master. P.

VER. 22. *Screen.*]

*Omne vaser vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
 Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit.* Perf. P.

Ibid. Screen.] A metaphor peculiarly appropriated to a certain person in power. P.

VER. 24. *Patriots there are, &c.*] This appellation was generally given to those in opposition to the Court. Though some of them (which our author hints at) had views too mean and interested to deserve that name. P.

VER. 26. *The Great man*] A phrase, by common use, appropriated to the first minister. P.

P. See Sir ROBERT ! --- hum ---
 And never laugh --- for all my life to come ?
 Seen him I have, but in his happier hour
 Of Social Pleasure, ill-exchang'd for Pow'r ; 30
 Seen him, uncumber'd with the Venal tribe,
 Smile without Art, and win without a Bribe.

NOTES.

VER. 29. *Seen him I have, &c.*] This and other strokes of commendation in the following poem, as well as his forbearing him on all occasions, were in acknowledgement of a certain service the Minister had done a Priest at Mr. Pope's solicitation. Our Poet, when he was about seventeen, had a very ill fever in the country, which, it was feared, would end fatally. In this condition, he wrote to Southcot, a Priest of his acquaintance, then in town, to take his last leave of him. Southcot with great affection and sollicitude applied to Dr. Radcliffe for his advice. And not content with that, he rode down post, to Mr. Pope, who was then an hundred miles from London, with the Doctor's directions ; which had the desired effect. A long time after this, Southcot, who had an interest in the Court of France, writing to a common acquaintance in England, informed him that there was a good abbey near Avignon, which he had credit enough to get, were it not from an apprehension that his promotion would give umbrage to the English Court, to which he (Southcot) by his intrigues in the Pretender's service, was become very obnoxious. The person to whom this was written happening to acquaint Mr. Pope with the case, he immediately wrote to Sir Robert Walpole about it ; begged that this embargo might be taken off ; and acquainted him with the grounds of his solicitation : He told him he was indebted to Southcot for his life, and that more than his life was engaged for the discharge of his obligation, for he was certainly to satisfy it in purgatory, if he could not do it here. The Minister received it favourably, and with much good-nature wrote to his brother, then in France, to remove this obstruction. In consequence of which Southcot got the abbey. Mr. Pope ever after retained a grateful sense of this favour.

VER. 31. *Seen him, uncumber'd*] These two verses were

Would he oblige me? let me only find,
 He does not think me what he thinks mankind.
 Come, come, at all I laugh he laughs, no doubt;
 The only diff'rence is, I dare laugh out. 36

F. Why yes: with *Scripture* still you may be free;
 A Horse-laugh, if you please, at *Honesty*;
 A Joke on JEKYL, or some odd *Old Whig*
 Who never chang'd his Principle, or Wig: 40

NOTES.

originally in the poem, though omitted in all the first editions. P.

VER. 34. *what he thinks mankind.*] This request seems somewhat absurd: but not more so than the principle it refers to. That great Minister, it seems, thought all mankind Rogues; and that every one had his price. It was usually given as a proof of his penetration, and extensive knowledge of the world. Others perhaps would think it an instance of a narrow contracted understanding, that, from a few of Rochefaucault's *maxims*, and the corrupt practice of those he commonly conversed with, would thus boldly pronounce upon the Character of his species. It is certain, that a Keeper of Newgate, who should make the same conclusion, would be heartily laughed at.

VER. 37. *Why yes: with Scripture &c.*] A scribler, whose only chance for reputation is the falling in with the fashion, is apt to employ this infamous expedient for the preservation of his momentary existence. But a true Genius could not do a foolisher thing to defeat his own aim. The great Boileau used to say on this occasion, "Une ouvrage severe peut bien plaire aux libertins; mais un ouvrage trop libre ne plaira jamais aux personnes severes."

Ibid. *Why yes: with Scripture still you may be free;*] Thus the Man commonly called *Mother Osborn*, who was in the Minister's pay, and wrote Journals; for one Paper in behalf of Sir Robert, had frequently two against J. C.

VER. 39. *A Joke on Jekyl,*] Sir Joseph Jekyl, Master of the Rolls, a true Whig in his principles, and a man of the utmost

A Patriot is a Fool in ev'ry age,
Whom all Lord Chamberlains allow the Stage :
These nothing hurts; they keep their Fashion still,
And wear their strange old Virtue, as they will.

If any ask you, " Who's the Man, so near 45
" His Prince, that writes in Verse, and has his ear?"
Why, answer, LYTTELTON, and I'll engage
The worthy Youth shall ne'er be in a rage :
But were his Verses vile, his Whisper base,
You'd quickly find him in Lord *Fanny's* case. 50
Sejanus, Wolfey, hurt not honest FLEURY,
But well may put some Statesmen in a fury.

Laugh then at any, but at Fools or Foes ;
These you but anger, and you mend not those.

NOTES.

probity. He sometimes voted against the Court, which drew upon him the laugh here described of ONE who bestowed it equally upon Religion and Honesty. He died a few months after the publication of this poem. P.

VER. 43. *These nothing hurts;*] i. e. offends.

VER. 47. *Why, answer, Lyttelton,*] George Lyttelton, Secretary to the Prince of Wales, distinguished both for his writings and speeches in the spirit of Liberty. P.

VER. 51. *Sejanus, Wolfey,*] The one the wicked minister of Tiberius; the other, of Henry VIII. The writers against the Court usually bestowed these and other odious names on the Minister, without distinction, and in the most injurious manner. See Dial. II. § 137. P.

Ibid. Fleury,] Cardinal: and Minister to Louis XV. It was a Patriot-fashion, at that time, to cry up his wisdom and honesty. P.

Dial. I. TO THE SATIRES. 305

Laugh at your friends, and, if your Friends are fore,
So much the better, you may laugh the more.

To Vice and Folly to confine the jest,
Sets half the world, God knows, against the rest;
Did not the Sneer of more impartial men
At Sense and Virtue, balance all agen. 60

Judicious Wits spread wide the Ridicule,
And charitably comfort Knave and Fool.

P. Dear Sir, forgive the Prejudice of Youth:
Adieu Distinction, Satire, Warmth, and Truth!
Come, harmless Characters that no one hit; 65
Come, Henley's Oratory, Osborn's Wit!
The Honey dropping from Favonio's tongue,
The Flow'rs of Bubo, and the Flow of Y--ng!
The gracious Dew of Pulpit Eloquence,
And all the well-whipt Cream of Courtly Sense, 70
That First was H--vy's, F---'s next, and then
The S---te's, and then H---vy's once agen.

NOTES.

VER. 56. *So much the better, you may laugh the more.*] Their *foreness* being a clear indication of their wanting the frequent repetition of this discipline.

VER. 66. *Henley — Osborn,*] See them in their places in the *Dunciad*. P.

VER. 69. *The gracious Dew*] Alludes to some court sermons, and florid panegyric speeches; particularly one very full of puerilities and flatteries; which afterwards got into an address in

O come, that easy Ciceronian style,
 So Latin, yet so English all the while,
 As, tho' the Pride of Middleton and Bland, 75
 All Boys may read, and Girls may understand!
 Then might I sing, without the least offence,
 And all I sung should be the *Nation's Sense* ;
 Or teach the melancholy Muse to mourn,
 Hang the sad Verse on CAROLINA'S Urn, 80

NOTES.

the same pretty style ; and was lastly served up in an Epitaph, between Latin and English, published by its author. P.

VER. 73. *that easy Ciceronian style,*] A joke upon absurd Imitators ; who in light and familiar compositions, which require *ease*, affect a *Ciceronian style*, which is highly laboured, solemn, and pompous.

VER. 75. *As, tho' the Pride of Middleton and Bland,*] I am led by justice, as well as inclination, to explain the obscurity of this line, as far as it relates to the respectable person first named in it. The Poet had heard, amongst the numberless false reports, which the heat of party contests, at that time, produced, that Dr. Middleton highly approved of the Latinity and composition of the piece in question, and had expressed himself in those common terms of approbation, that he should have been *proud* to be the Author of it. It was of little importance to enquire into the truth or falshood of the report, since what the Poet intended to say, on this occasion, was not to reflect on Dr. Middleton, whom he esteemed and had a personal regard for ; but, on the contrary, to own the excellence of his judgment, in general, in words that only amount to this, *though so able a judge as Dr. Middleton himself should approve the Latinity, I say it is bad and barbarous.* In which he uses no greater freedom with this learned Man than he sometimes did with those he most valued, as Dr. Swift and others.

VER. 76. *All Boys may read, and Girls may understand !*] i. e. full of school-book *phrases* and *Anglicisms.*

VER. 78. *Nation's Sense ;*] The cant of Politics at that time.

VER. 80. *Carolina*] Queen consort to King George II. She

And hail her passage to the Realms of Rest,
 All Parts perform'd, and *all* her Children blest!
 So --- Satire is no more --- I feel it die ---
 No *Gazetteer* more innocent than I ---
 And let, a God's-name, ev'ry Fool and Knave 85
 Be grac'd thro' Life, and flatter'd in his Grave.
 F. Why so? if Satire knows its Time and Place,
 You still may lash the greatest --- in Disgrace:

NOTES.

died in 1737. Her death gave occasion, as is observed above, to many indiscreet and mean performances unworthy of her memory, whose last moments manifested the utmost courage and resolution. P.

How highly our Poet thought of that truly great personage may be seen by one of his letters to Mr. *Allen*, written at that time; in which, amongst others, equally respectful, are the following words: "The Queen shewed, by the confession of
 " all about her, the utmost firmness and temper to her last mo-
 " ments, and through the course of great torments. What
 " character historians will allow her, I do not know; but all
 " her domestic servants, and those nearest her, give her the
 " best testimony, that of sincere tears."

VER. 84. *No Gazetteer more innocent than I.*] The *Gazetteer* is one of the low appendices to the Secretary of State's office, to write the government's news-paper, published by Authority. Sir Richard Steele had once this post. And he describes the condition of it very well, in *the Apology for himself and his writings*: "My next appearance as a writer was in the quali-
 " ty of the lowest minister of state, to wit, in the Office of
 " *Gazetteer*; where I worked faithfully, according to order,
 " without ever erring against the rule observed by all ministers, to
 " keep that paper very innocent and very insipid. It was to the
 " reproaches I heard every Gazette day against the writer of it,
 " that I owe the fortitude of being remarkably negligent of
 " what people say which I do not deserve."

For Merit will by turns forsake them all ;
 Would you know when ? exactly when they fall.
 But let all Satire in all Changes spare 91
 Immortal S---k, and grave De-----re.
 Silent and soft, as Saints remove to Heav'n,
 All Tyes dissolv'd, and ev'ry Sin forgiv'n,
 These may some gentle ministerial Wing 95
 Receive, and place for ever near a King !
 There, where no Passion, Pride, or Shame transport,
 Lull'd with the sweet Nepenthe of a Court ;

NOTES.

VER. 92. *Immortal S---k, and grave De---re !*] A title given that Lord by King James II. He was of the Bedchamber to King William ; he was so to King George I. he was so to King George II. This Lord was very skilful in all the forms of the House, in which he discharged himself with great gravity.
 P.

VER. 93. *Silent and soft, as Saints remove to Heav'n,*] The simile is here employed only to let his reader into his thought : which is a beautiful parody of the poetical descriptions of dying saints, wafted to paradise, on the wings of angels.

VER. 97. *There, where no Passion, etc.*] The excellent writer *De l'Esprit des Loix* gives the following character of the Spirit of Courts, and the Principle of Monarchies : “ Qu'on
 “ life ce que les Historiens de tous les tems ont dit sur la
 “ Cour des Monarques ; qu'on se rapelle les conversations des
 “ hommes de tous les Pais sur le miserable caractère des
 “ COURTISANS ; ce ne sont point des choses de speculation,
 “ mais d'une triste expérience. L'ambition dans l'oïfiveté, la
 “ bassesse dans l'orgueil, le desir de s'enrichir sans travail,
 “ l'averfion pour la vérité ; la flaterie, la trahison, la perfidie,
 “ l'abandon de tous ses engagemens, le mepris des devoirs
 “ du Citoyen, la crainte de la vertu du Prince, l'esperance
 “ de ses foibleffes, et plus, que tout cela, LE RIDICULE
 “ PERPETUEL JETTE SUR LA VERTU, font, je crois,

There, where no Father's, Brother's, Friend's disgrace
 Once break their rest, or stir them from their Place:
 But past the Sense of human Miseries, 101
 All Tears are wip'd for ever from all eyes;
 No cheek is known to blush, no heart to throb,
 Save when they lose a Question, or a Job.

P. Good Heav'n forbid, that I should blast their
 glory, 105

Who know how like Whig Ministers to Tory,
 And when three Sov' reigns dy'd, could scarce be vex't,
 Confid'ring what a *gracious Prince* was next.
 Have I, in silent wonder, seen such things
 As Pride in Slaves, and Avarice in Kings; 110

NOTES.

“ le Caractère de la plupart des Courtisans marqué dans tous
 “ les lieux et dans tous les tems. Or il est très mal-aisé que les
 “ Principaux d'un Etat soient malhonnêtes-gens, et que les in-
 “ ferieurs soient gens-de-bien, que ceux-là soyent trompeurs,
 “ & que ceux-ci consentent à n'être que dupes. Que si dans
 “ le Peuple il se trouve quelque malheureux honnête-homme,
 “ le Cardinal de Richelieu dans son *Testament politique* insinue,
 “ qu'un Monarque doit se garder de s'en servir. Tant-il est
 “ vrai que la Vertu n'est pas le ressort de ce Gouvernement.”

VER. 106. *Who know how like Whig Ministers to Tory,*] He
 must have thought them alike, while he represents them as
 equally ready to receive any body who will do their jobs.

VER. 108. *gracious Prince*] The style of Addresses on an
 accession.

VER. 109. *Have I, in silent wonder, seen such things As
 Pride in Slaves, and Avarice in Kings;*] He makes a wonder
 of what surely was none. *Pride* comes from the ignorance of
 ourselves; and who can know themselves less than such as are

And at a Peer, or Peerefs, fhall I fret,
 Who ftarves a Sifter, or forfwears a Debt?
Virtue, I grant you, is an empty boaft;
 But fhall the Dignity of *Vice* be loft? 114
 Ye Gods! fhall Cibber's Son, without rebuke,
 Swear like a Lord, or Rich out-whore a Duke?
 A Fav'rite's Porter with his Mafter vie,
 Be brib'd as often, and as often lie?
 Shall Ward draw Contracts with a Statesman's fhill?
 Or Japhet pocket, like his Grace, a Will? 120
 Is it for Bond, or Peter, (paltry things)
 To pay their Debts, or keep their Faith, like Kings?

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 112. in fome editions,
 Who ftarves a Mother,

NOTES.

the property of others? Love riles in proportion to the value of its object: and who fhould love money fo well as thofe who beft know what it is able to do? SCRIBL.

VER. 113. *Virtue, I grant you, is an empty boaft;*] A fatirical ambiguity — either that thofe *ftarve who have it*, or that thofe who *boaft of it, have it not*: and both together (he infinuates) make up the prefent ftate of *modern virtue*.

VER. 115. *Cibber's Son, — Rich*] Two Players: look for them in the *Dunciad*. P.

VER. 116. *Swear like a Lord — or out-whore a Duke?*] Elegance demands that thefe fhould be two proverbial expreffions. *To fwear like a Lord*, is fo. But to *out-whore a Duke* certainly is not. However this fhews that the continence and conjugal virtues of the higher nobility muft needs be very exemplary. SCRIBL.

If Blount dispatch'd himself, he play'd the man,
 And so may'st thou, illustrious Passeran!
 But shall a Printer, weary of his life, 125
 Learn, from their Books, to hang himself and Wife?
 This, this, my friend, I cannot, must not bear;
 Vice thus abus'd, demands a Nation's care:

NOTES.

VER. 123. *If Blount*] Author of an impious and foolish book called *the Oracles of Reason*, who being in love with a near kinswoman of his, and rejected, gave himself a stab in the arm, as pretending to kill himself, of the consequence of which he really died. P.

VER. 124. *Passeran!*] Author of another book of the same stamp, called *A philosophical discourse on death*, being a defence of suicide. He was a nobleman of Piedmont, banished from his country for his impieties, and lived in the utmost misery, yet feared to practise his own precepts; of which there went a pleasant story about that time. Amongst his pupils, it seems, to whom he read in moral philosophy, was a noted *Gamester*, who lodged under the same roof with him. This useful citizen, after a run of ill luck, came one morning early into his master's bed-chamber, with two loaded pistols. And, as Englishmen do not understand raillery in a case of this nature, told the philosopher, on presenting him with one of his pistols, that now was come the time to put his doctrine in practice: that as to himself having lost his last stake he was become an *useless* member in society, and so was resolved to quit his *station*; and that, as to him, his *guide*, *philosopher*, and *friend*, surrounded with miseries, the outcast of government, and the sport even of that *Chance* which he adored, he doubtless would rejoice for such an opportunity to bear him company. All this was said and done with so much resolution and solemnity, that the Italian found himself under a necessity to cry out murder, which brought in Company to his relief.— This unhappy man at last died a penitent.

VER. 125. *But shall a Printer, etc.*] A Fact that happened in London a few years past. The unhappy man left behind him

This calls the Church to deprecate our Sin,
 And hurls the Thunder of the Laws on *Gin*. 130
 Let modest FOSTER, if he will, excell
 Ten Metropolitans in preaching well;
 A simple Quaker, or a Quaker's Wife,
 Out-do Landaffe in Doctrine,— yea in Life;
 Let humble ALLEN, with an aukward Shame,
 Do good by stealth, and blush to find it Fame.

NOTES.

a paper justifying his action by the reasonings of some of these authors. P.

VER. 129. *This calls the Church to deprecate our Sin,*] Alluding to the *forms of prayer*, composed in the times of public calamity; where the fault is generally laid upon the *People*.

VER. 130. *Gin.*] A spirituous liquor, the exorbitant use of which had almost destroyed the lowest rank of the *People* till it was restrained by an act of Parliament in 1736. P.

VER. 131. *Let modest FOSTER,*] This confirms an observation which Mr. Hobbes made long ago, That *there be very few Bishops that act a sermon so well, as divers Presbyterians and fanatic Preachers can do*. Hist. of Civ. Wars, p. 62. SCRIBL.

VER. 134. *Landaffe*] A poor Bishoprick in Wales, as poorly supplied. P.

VER. 135. *Let humble ALLEN with an aukward Shame, Do good by stealth, and blush to find it Fame.*] The true Character of our Author's moral pieces, considered as a *supplement to human laws* (the force of which they have deservedly obtained) is, that his praise is always *delicate*, and his reproof *never misplaced*: and therefore the *first* not reaching the *head*, and the *latter* too sensibly touching the *heart* of his vulgar readers, have made him censured as a cold Panegyrist, and a caustic Satirist; whereas, indeed, he was the warmest friend, and the most placable enemy.

The lines above have been commonly given as an instance of this ungenerous backwardness in doing justice to merit. And,

Virtue may chuse the high or low Degree,
'Tis just alike to *Virtue*, and to me;

NOTES.

indeed, if fairly given, would bear hard upon the Author, who believed the person here celebrated to be one of the greatest characters in private life that ever was; and known by him to be, *in fact*, all, and much more than he had feigned in the imaginary virtues of *the man of Ross*. One, who, whether he be considered in his civil, social, domestic, or religious character, is, in all these views, an ornament to human nature.

And, indeed, we shall see, that what is here said of him agrees only with such a Character. But as both the thought and the expression have been censured, we shall consider them in their order.

Let humble ALLEN, with an aukward Shame,
Do good by stealth —

This encomium has been called *obscure* (as well as *penurious*.) It may be so; not from any defect in the conception, but from the deepness of the sense; and, what may seem more strange, (as we shall see afterwards) from the elegance of phrase, and exactness of expression. We are so absolutely governed by custom, that to act contrary to it, creates even in virtuous men, who are ever modest, a kind of diffidence, which is the parent of *Shame*. But when, to this, there is joined a consciousness that, in forsaking custom, you follow truth and reason, the indignation arising from such a conscious virtue, mixing with *shame*, produces that amiable *aukwardness*, in going out of the fashion, which the Poet, here, celebrates.

and blush to find it Fame.

i. e. He blushed at the degeneracy of his times, which, at best, gave his goodness its due commendation (the thing he never aimed at) instead of following and imitating his example, which was the reason why some acts of it were not done by *stealth*, but more openly.

So far as to the *thought*: but it will be said,

tantamne rem tam negligenter?

And this will lead us to say something concerning the expression, which will clear up what remains of the difficulty. In

Dwell in a Monk, or light upon a King,
 She's still the same, belov'd, contented thing. 140
Vice is undone, if she forgets her Birth,
 And stoops from Angels to the Dregs of Earth:
 But 'tis the *Fall* degrades her to a Whore;
 Let *Greatness* own her, and she's mean no more,

NOTES.

these lines, and in those which precede and follow them, are contained an ironical *neglect* of Virtue, and an ironical concern and *care* for Vice. So that the Poet's elegant correctness of composition required, that his language, in the first case, should present something of negligence and censure; which is admirably implied in the *expression* of the thought.

VER. 138. 'Tis just alike to Virtue, and to me;] He gives the reason for it, in the line that presently follows,

She's still the same, belov'd, contented thing.

So that the sense of the text is this, "It is all one to *Virtue* on whom her influence falls, whether on high or low, because it still produces the same effect, *their content*; and it is all one to *me*, because it still produces the same effect, *my love*."

VER. 144. Let *Greatness* own her, and she's mean no more,] The Poet, in this whole passage, would be understood to allude to a very extraordinary story told by *Procopius* in his *Secret history*: the sum of which is as follows.

The Empress THEODORA was the daughter of one Acaces, who had the care of the wild beasts, which the *Green faction* kept for the entertainment of the people. For the Empire was, at that time, divided between the two Factions of the *Green* and *Blue*. But Acaces dying in the infancy of Theodora, and her two Sisters, his place of *Master of the Bears* was disposed of to a stranger; and his widow had no other way of supporting herself than by prostituting her three Daughters, who were all very pretty, on the public Theatre. Thither she brought them in their turns as they came to years of puberty. Theodora first attended her Sisters in the habit and quality of a

Her Birth, her Beauty, Crowds and Courts confefs,
Chafte Matrons praise her, and grave Bifhops blefs;

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flave. And when it came to her turn to mount the ftage, as ſhe could neither dance, nor play on the flute, ſhe was put into the loweſt claſs of Buffoons to make diverſion for the Rabble; which ſhe did in ſo arch a manner, and complained of the indignities ſhe ſuffered in ſo ridiculous a tone, that ſhe became the abſolute favourite of the people. After a complete courſe of infamy and proſtitution, the next place we hear of her is at Alexandria, in great poverty and diſtreſs: from whence (as it was no wonder) ſhe was willing to remove. And to Conſtantinople ſhe came, but after a large circuit thro' the Eaſt, where ſhe worked her way, by a free courſe of proſtitution. JUSTINIAN was at this time conſort in the Empire with his Uncle *Juſtin*, and the management of affairs entirely in his hands. He no ſooner ſaw Theodora than he fell deſperately in love with her, and would have married her immediately, but that the Empreſs *Euphemia*, a barbarian, and unpolite, but not illiberal in her nature, was then alive. And ſhe, altho' ſhe reſuſed him nothing elſe, yet obſtinately reſuſed giving him this inſtance of her complaiſance. But ſhe did not live long: and then, nothing but the ancient Laws, which forbad a ſenator to marry with a common proſtitute, hindered Juſtinian from executing this extraordinary project. Theſe, he obliged Juſtin to revoke; and then, in the face of the ſun, married his dear Theodora. A terrible example (ſays the Hiſtorian) and an encouragement to the moſt ſhameleſs licence. And now no ſooner was THEODORA (in the Poet's phraſe) *owned by Greatneſs*, than ſhe, whom not long before it was thought *unlucky* to meet, and a *pollution* to touch, became the idol of the Court. There was not a ſingle Magiſtrate (ſays Procopius) that expreſſed the leaſt indignation at the ſhame and diſhonour brought upon the ſtate; not a ſingle Prelate that ſhewed the leaſt deſolation for the public ſcandal. They all drove to court ſo precipitately, as if they were ſtriving to prevent one another in her good graces. Nay, the *very ſoldiers* were emulous of the honour of becoming the Champions of her Virtue. As for the common people, who had ſo long been the ſpectators of her ſervility, her Buffoonry,

In golden Chains the willing World she draws,
 And hers the Gospel is, and hers the Laws,
 Mounts the Tribunal, lifts her scarlet head,
 And sees pale Virtue carted in her stead. 150
 Lo! at the wheels of her Triumphal Car,
 Old England's Genius, rough with many a Scar,
 Dragg'd in the dust! his arms hang idly round,
 His Flag inverted trails along the ground!
 Our Youth, all livery'd o'er with foreign Gold,
 Before her dance: behind her, crawl the Old!
 See thronging Millions to the Pagod run,
 And offer Country, Parent, Wife, or Son!
 Hear her black Trumpet thro' the Land proclaim,
 That NOT TO BE CORRUPTED IS THE SHAME.

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and her Prostitution, they all in a body threw themselves at her feet, as slaves at the footstool of their Mistress. In a word, there was no man, of what condition soever, that shewed the least dislike of so monstrous an elevation. In the mean time, Theodora's first care was to fill her Coffers, which she soon did, with immense wealth. To this end, Justinian and she pretended to differ in their principles. The one protected the *blue*, and the other, the *green* faction; till in a long course of intrigue, by sometimes giving up the one to plunder and confiscation, and sometimes the other, they left nothing to either party. See *Procop. Anec. c. ix.—x.*

VER. 148. *And her's the Gospel is, and hers the Laws*] i. e. She disposed of the honours of both.

VER. 149. *scarlet head*] Alluding to the *scarlet Whore* of the *Apocalypse*.

In Soldier, Churchman, Patriot, Man in Pow'r,
 'Tis Av'rice all, Ambition is no more!
 See, all our Nobles begging to be Slaves!
 See, all our Fools aspiring to be Knaves!
 The Wit of Cheats, the Courage of a Whore, 165
 Are what ten thousand envy and adore:
 All, all look up, with reverential Awe,
 At Crimes that 'scape, or triumph o'er the Law:
 While Truth, Worth, Wisdom, daily they decry—
 "Nothing is Sacred now but Villainy." 170
 Yet may this Verse (if such a Verse remain)
 Show, there was one who held it in disdain.

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VER. 164. *See all our fools aspiring to be Knaves!*] This will always be the case when *knavery* is in fashion, because fools always dread the being *unfashionable*; and with good reason, because nothing but the fashion could make them supportable.

VER. 165. *The Wit of Cheats, the Courage of a Whore, Are what ten thousand envy and adore:*] And no wonder, for the *wit of Cheats* being the evasion of Justice, and the *Courage of a Whore* the contempt for reputation; these emancipate men from the two tyrannical restraints upon *free spirits*, fear of punishment, and dread of shame. SCRIBL.