Of this epitaph, short as it is, the faults seem not to be very few. Why part should be Latin and part English, it is not easy to discover. In the Latin, the opposition of *Immortalis* and *Mortalis*, is a mere sound, or a mere quibble; he is not *immortal* in any sense contrary to that in which he is *mortal*.

In the verses the thought is obvious, and the words *night* and *light* are too nearly allied.

XIII.

On EDMUND *Duke of* BUCKINGHAM,[1] *who died in the 19th Year of his Age*, 1735.

"If modest youth, with cool reflection crown'd,
And every opening virtue blooming round,
Could save a parent's justest pride from fate,
Or add one patriot to a sinking state;
This weeping marble had not ask'd thy tear,
Or sadly told, how many hopes lie here!
The living virtue now had shone approv'd,
The senate heard him, and his country lov'd,
Yet softer honours, and less noisy fame
Attend the shade of gentle Buckingham:
In whom a race, for courage fam'd and art,
Ends in the milder merit of the heart;
And chiefs or sages long to Britain given,
Pays the last tribute of a saint to heaven."

This epitaph Mr. Warburton prefers to the rest, but I know not for what reason. To *crown* with *reflection* is surely a mode of speech approaching to nonsense. *Opening virtues blooming round*, is something like tautology; the six following lines are poor and prosaick. *Art* is in another couplet used for *arts*, that a rhyme may be had to *heart*. The six last lines are the best, but not excellent.

[1] Ald. *P.* vol. iii. p. 143. E. and C. vol. iv. p. 391.

The rest of his sepulchral performances hardly deserve the notice of criticism. The contemptible *Dialogue* between He and She [1] should have been suppressed for the author's sake.

In his last epitaph on himself, in which he attempts to be jocular upon one of the few things that make wise men serious, he confounds the living man with the dead:

> "Under this stone, or under this sill,
> Or under this turf, &c."

When a man is once buried, the question, under what he is buried, is easily decided. He forgot that though he wrote the epitaph in a state of uncertainty, yet it could not be laid over him till his grave was made. Such is the folly of wit when it is ill employed.

The world has but little new; even this wretchedness seems to have been borrowed from the following tuneless lines:

> "Ludovici Areosti humantur ossa
> Sub hoc marmore, vel sub hac humo, seu
> Sub quicquid voluit benignus hæres
> Sive hærede benignior comes, seu
> Opportunius incidens Viator;
> Nam scire haud potuit futura, sed nec
> Tanti erat vacuum sibi cadaver
> Ut utnam cuperet parare vivens,
> Vivens ista tamen sibi paravit.
> Quæ inscribi voluit suo sepulchro
> Olim siquod haberetis sepulchrum.

Surely Ariosto [2] did not venture to expect that his trifle would have ever had such an illustrious imitator.

[1] Dr. Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, and his daughter. E. and C. vol. iv. p. 390.

[2] Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), one of the most famous of Italian poets, author of *Orlando Furioso*. The sense of the Latin lines in the text is as follows: "The bones of Ludovico Ariosto lie buried

under this stone, or under this sod, or under whatsoever his kind heir chose, or a comrade kinder than his heir, or a traveller lighting by good hap on his remains. For what wou'd befall him he could not tell, but neither did he esteem his empty carcass enough to desire to provide for it an urn in his lifetime; howbeit in his lifetime he provided this inscription for his sepulchre, if any sepulchre he was hereafter to have."
—MATT. ARNOLD.

It may not be improper here to observe, that since Johnson wrote, the discoveries of Mr. Dilke (see *Athenæum*, 1854) and Mr. Elwin (in the edition just completed by Mr. Courthope's *Life*) have proved that Pope carried the manufacture of correspondence much farther than Johnson supposed, and have opened a new chapter in the history of Pope's reputation. But the poet's character, nevertheless, remains much where Johnson left it.

PITT.

PITT.

CHRISTOPHER PITT, of whom whatever I shall relate, more than has been already published, I owe to the kind communication of Dr. Warton, was born in 1699 at Blandford, the son of a physician much esteemed.

He was, in 1714, received as a scholar into Winchester College, where he was distinguished by exercises of uncommon elegance; and, at his removal to New College in 1719, presented to the electors, as the product of his private and voluntary studies, a compleat version of Lucan's poem, which he did not then know to have been translated by Rowe.

This is an instance of early diligence which well deserves to be recorded. The suppression of such a work, recommended by such uncommon circumstances, is to be regretted. It is indeed culpable, to load libraries with superfluous books; but incitements to early excellence are never superfluous, and from this example the danger is not great of many imitations.

When he had resided at his College three years, he was presented to the rectory of Pimpern in Dorsetshire (1722), by his relation, Mr. Pitt of Stratfeildsea in Hampshire; and, resigning his fellowship, continued at Oxford two years longer, till he became Master of Arts (1724).

He probably about this time translated "Vida's Art of Poetry,"[1] which Tristram's splendid edition had then made

[1] *De Arte Poeticæ*, Libri III. accedunt Bombycum Lib. II. et Sacchiæ

popular. In this translation he distinguished himself, both by its general elegance, and by the skilful adaptation of his numbers, to the images expressed; a beauty which Vida[1] has with great ardour enforced and exemplified.

He then retired to his living, a place very pleasing by its situation, and therefore likely to excite the imagination of a poet; where he passed the rest of his life, reverenced for his virtue, and beloved for the softness of his temper and the easiness of his manners. Before stangers he had something of the scholar's timidity or distrust; but when he became familiar he was in a very high degree chearful and entertaining. His general benevolence procured general respect; and he passed a life placid and honourable, neither too great for the kindness of the low, nor too low for the notice of the great.

At what time he composed his miscellany, published in 1727, it is not easy not necessary to know: those which have dates appear to have been very early productions, and I have not observed that any rise above mediocrity.

The success of his "Vida" animated him to a higher undertaking; and in his thirtieth year he published a version of the first book of the "Eneid." This being, I suppose, commended by his friends, he some time afterwards added three or four more; with an advertisement, in which he represents himself as translating with great indifference, and with a progress of which himself was hardly conscious. This can hardly be true, and, if true, is nothing to the reader.

At last, without any further contention with his modesty, or any awe of the name of Dryden, he gave us a complete English "Eneid," which I am sorry not to see joined in the

Indus, Oxon, 1701. 8vo. Editio secunda cum notis *J. Tristram*, 1723. 12mo. *The Art of Poetry*, translated into English verse by Chr. Pitt. Lond. 1725.

[1] Marcus Hier. Vida, Pope's "immortal Vida." *Essay on Criticism*, l. 704. His *Art of Poetry* was written about 1520, and was the first of the many similar discourses by Italian poets.

late publication with his other poems. It would have been pleasing to have an opportunity of comparing the two best translations that perhaps were ever produced by one nation of the same author.

Pitt engaging as a rival with Dryden, naturally observed his failures, and avoided them; and, as he wrote after Pope's "Iliad," he had an example of an exact, equable, and splendid versification. With these advantages, seconded by great diligence, he might successfully labour particular passages, and escape many errors. If the two versions are compared, perhaps the result would be, that Dryden leads the reader forward by his general vigour and sprightliness, and Pitt often stops him to contemplate the excellence of a single couplet; that Dryden's faults are forgotten in the hurry of delight, and that Pitt's beauties are neglected in the languor of a cold and listless perusal; that Pitt pleases the critics, and Dryden the people; that Pitt is quoted, and Dryden read.

He did not long enjoy the reputation which this great work deservedly conferred; for he left the world in 1748, and lies buried under a stone at Blandford, on which is this inscription:

In memory of
CHR. PITT, clerk, M.A.
Very eminent
for his talents in poetry;
and yet more
for the universal candour of
his mind, and the primitive
simplicity of his manners.
He lived innocent,
and died beloved,
Apr. 13, 1748,
aged 48.

Mr. Cunningham remarks here, "Whoever is curious to know more about Christopher Pitt should turn to his letters in Hughe's *Correspondence*."

THOMSON.

THOMSON.

JAMES THOMSON, the son of a minister well esteemed for his piety and diligence, was born September 7, 1700, at Ednam, in the shire of Roxburgh, of which his father was pastor. His mother, whose name was Hume,[1] inherited as co-heiress a portion of a small estate.[2] The revenue of a parish in Scotland is seldom large; and it was probably in commiseration of the difficulty with which Mr. Thomson supported his family, having nine children, that Mr. Riccarton,[3] a neighbouring minister, discovering in James uncommon promises of future excellence, undertook to superintend his education, and provide him books.

He was taught the common rudiments of learning at the school of Jedburg, a place which he delights to recollect in his poem of "Autumn";[4] but was not considered by his master as superior to common boys, though in those early days he amused his patron and his friends with poetical compositions; with which however he so little pleased himself, that on every new-year's day he threw into the fire all the productions of the foregoing year.

From the school he was removed to Edinburgh, where

[1] Thomson's mother's maiden name was Trotter. See Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iii. p. 356.

[2] Widehope in the county of Roxburgh.

[3] Mr. Riccaltoun. "Mr. Rickelton's poem on Winter, which I still have, first put the design into my head. In it are some masterly strokes that awak. ned me." Thomson to Cranston, Sept. 1725. Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. xxviii.

[4] *Autumn*, line 890, Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. 131.

he had not resided two years when his father died, and left all his children to the care of their mother, who raised upon her little estate what money a mortgage could afford, and, removing with her family to Edinburgh, lived to see her son rising into eminence.

The design of Thomson's friends was to breed him a minister. He lived at Edinburgh, as at school, without distinction or expectation, till, at the usual time, he performed a probationary exercise by explaining a psalm. His diction was so poetically splendid, that Mr. Hamilton, the professor of Divinity, reproved him for speaking language unintelligible to a popular audience, and he censured one of his expressions as indecent, if not profane.

This rebuke is reported to have repressed his thoughts of an ecclesiastical character, and he probably cultivated with new diligence his blossoms of poetry, which however were in some danger of a blast; for, submitting his productions to some who thought themselves qualified to criticise, he heard of nothing but faults, but, finding other judges more favourable, he did not suffer himself to sink into despondence.

He easily discovered that the only stage on which a poet could appear, with any hope of advantage, was London; a place too wide for the operation of petty competition and private malignity, where merit might soon become conspicuous, and would find friends as soon as it became reputable to befriend it. A lady, who was acquainted with his mother, advised him to the journey, and promised some countenance or assistance, which at last he never received; however, he justified his adventure by her encouragement, and came to seek in London patronage and fame.[1]

At his arrival he found his way to Mr. Mallet,[2] then

[1] See his letter to Dr. Cranston, dated April 3rd, 1725. London. Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. xx.

[2] Daniel Malloch, or Mallet, the poet. *Vid. infr. Life of Mallet.*

tutor to the sons of the duke of Montrose. He had recommendations to several persons of consequence, which he had tied up carefully in his handkerchief; but as he passed along the street, with the gaping curiosity of a new-comer, his attention was upon every thing rather than his pocket, and his magazine of credentials was stolen from him.

His first want was of a pair of shoes. For the supply of all his necessities, his whole fund was his "Winter," which for a time could find no purchaser; till, at last, Mr. Millan was persuaded to buy it at a low price; and this low price he had for some time reason to regret; but, by accident, Mr. Whatley, a man not wholly unknown among authors, happening to turn his eye upon it, was so delighted that he ran from place to place celebrating its excellence. Thomson obtained likewise the notice of Aaron Hill,[1] whom, being friendless and indigent, and glad of kindness, he courted with every expression of servile adulation.

"Winter" [2] was dedicated to Sir Spencer Compton, but attracted no regard from him to the author; till Aaron Hill awakened his attention by some verses addressed to Thomson, and published in one of the newspapers, which censured the great for their neglect of ingenious men. Thomson then received a present of twenty guineas, of which he gives this account to Mr. Hill:

[1] *Vid. supr. Life of Savage*, vol. ii. p. 315.

[2] *Winter.* Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. 147. Wordsworth in his fine criticism on Thomson (*Works*, vol. iii. pp. 332-336) speaks of this poem as "a work of inspiration," and points out "that, excepting the *Nocturnal Reverie* of Lady Winchelsea, and a passage or two in the *Windsor Forest* of Pope, the period intervening between the publication of the *Paradise Lost* and the *Seasons* does not contain a single new image of external nature, and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination."

"I hinted to you in my last, that on Saturday morning I was with Sir Spencer Compton. A certain gentleman, without my desire, spoke to him concerning me; his answer was, that I had never come near him. Then the gentleman put the question, if he desired that I should wait on him? he returned, he did. On this, the gentleman gave me an introductory Letter to him. He received me in what they commonly call a civil manner; asked me some common-place questions, and made me a present of twenty guineas. I am very ready to own that the present was larger than my performance deserved; and shall ascribe it to his generosity, or any other cause, rather than the merit of the address."

The poem, which, being of a new kind, few would venture at first to like, by degrees gained upon the publick; and one edition was very speedily succeeded by another.

Thomson's credit was now high, and every day brought him new friends; among others Dr. Rundle,[1] a man afterwards unfortunately famous, sought his acquaintance, and found his qualities such, that he recommended him to the lord Chancellor Talbot.

"Winter" was accompanied, in many editions, not only with a preface and a dedication, but with poetical praises by Mr. Hill, Mr. Mallet (then *Malloch*), and *Mira*, the fictitious name of a lady once too well known. Why the dedications are, to "Winter" and the other seasons, contrarily to custom, left out in the collected words, the reader may enquire.

The next year (1727) he distinguished himself by three publications; of "Summer,"[2] in pursuance of his plan; of

[1] Afterwards Bishop of Derry. He incurred the suspicion of heresy, and was defended by Thomson as, "Driven from your friends, By slanderous zeal, and politics infirm, jealous of worth." Ald. *T.* vol. ii. p. 217.

[2] *Summer*, Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. 41.

a "Poem on the Death of Sir Isaac Newton," [1] which he was enabled to perform as an exact philosopher by the instruction of Mr. Gray; [2] and of "Britannia," [3] a kind of poetical invective against the ministry, whom the nation then thought not forward enough in resenting the depredations of the Spaniards. By this piece he declared himself an adherent to the opposition, and had therefore no favour to expect from the Court.

Thomson, having been some time entertained in the family of the lord Binning, was desirous of testifying his gratitude by making him the patron of his "Summer;" but the same kindness which had first disposed lord Binning to encourage him, determined him to refuse the dedication, which was by his advice addressed to Mr. Doddington; [4] a man who had more power to advance the reputation and fortune of a poet.

"Spring" [5] was published next year, with a dedication to the countess of Hertford; [6] whose practice it was to invite every Summer some poet into the country, to hear her

[1] *To the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton.* Ald. *T.* vol. ii. p. 175. Sir Isaac Newton died March 20, 1727, and this poem appeared in the following June in folio; it was dedicated in very flattering terms to Sir Robert Walpole, but the dedication was omitted in subsequent editions.

[2] John Gray, F.R.S., author of a treatise on Gunnery, who in 1765 was elected Rector of Mareschal College, Aberdeen, and died 1769. Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. xlix.

[3] Ald. *T.* vol. ii. p. 183. This poem was not published till 1729.

[4] The celebrated Bubb Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe (died 1762).

[5] *Spring* was published by Andrew Millar (died 1768), who continued Thomson's publisher, and contributed largely to the handsome quarto edition of 1762, the profits of which were spent on the poet's monument in Westminster Abbey. For *Spring* he received fifty guineas.—P. Cunningham.

[6] The lady who interceded for Savage with the Queen; she became afterwards Duchess of Somerset. *Vid. supr.* vol. ii. p. 342.

verses, and assist her studies. This honour was one Summer conferred on Thomson, who took more delight in carousing with lord Hertford and his friends then assisting her ladyship's poetical operations, and therefore never received another summons.

"Autumn,"[1] the season to which the "Spring" and "Summer" are preparatory, still remained unsung, and was delayed till he published (1730) his works collected.[2]

He produced in 1727 the tragedy of "Sophonisba," which raised such expectation, that every rehearsal was dignified with a splendid audience, collected to anticipate the delight that was preparing for the publick. It was observed however, that nobody was much affected, and that the company rose as from a moral lecture.

It had upon the stage no unusual degree of success. Slight accidents will operate upon the taste of pleasure. There was a feeble line in the play;

"O Sophonisba, Sophonisba, O!"

This gave occasion to a waggish parody;

"O, Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy Thomson, O!"

which for a while was echoed through the town.

I have been told by Savage, that of the Prologue to "Sophonisba" the first part was written by Pope, who could not be persuaded to finish it, and that the concluding lines were added by Mallet.

Thomson was not long afterwards,[3] by the influence of Dr. Rundle, sent to travel with Mr. Charles Talbot, the eldest son of the Chancellor. He was yet young enough to receive new impressions, to have his opinions rectified, and

[1] *Autumn.* Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. 101.

[2] In quarto, by subscription. 387 subscribers took 454 copies. Pope subscribed for three copies.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

[3] In 1730.

his views enlarged; nor can he be supposed to have wanted that curiosity which is inseparable from an active and comprehensive mind. He may therefore now be supposed to have revelled in all the joys of intellectual luxury; he was every day feasted with instructive novelties; he lived splendidly without expence, and might expect when he returned home a certain establishment.

At this time a long course of opposition to Sir Robert Walpole had filled the nation with clamours for liberty, of which no man felt the want, and with care for liberty, which was not in danger. Thomson, in his travels on the continent, found or fancied so many evils arising from the tyranny of other governments, that he resolved to write a very long poem, in five parts, upon Liberty.[1]

While he was busy on the first book, Mr. Talbot died;[2] and Thomson, who had been rewarded for his attendance by the place of secretary of the Briefs, pays in the initial lines a decent tribute to his memory.

Upon this great poem two years were spent, and the author congratulated himself upon it as his noblest work; but an author and his reader are not always of a mind. "Liberty" called in vain upon her votaries to read her praises and reward her encomiast: her praises were condemned to harbour spiders, and to gather dust; none of Thomson's performances were so little regarded.

The judgement of the publick was not erroneous; the recurrence of the same images must tire in time; an enumeration of examples to prove a position which nobody denied, as it was from the beginning superfluous, must quickly grow disgusting.

[1] This poem was originally published in 4to, in five separate parts, the first part appeared in 1734, the second and third in the following year, and the fourth and fifth parts in 1736. It was afterwards revised by Thomson for the 8vo. edition of his works. Ald. *T.* vol. ii. p. 1.

[2] In September, 1733, aged 23.

The poem of "Liberty" does not now appear in its original state; but when the author's works were collected, after his death, was shortened by Sir George Lyttleton, with a liberty which, as it has a manifest tendency to lessen the confidence of society, and to confound the characters of authors, by making one man write by the judgement of another, cannot be justified by any supposed propriety of the alteration, or kindness of the friend.—I wish to see it exhibited as its author left it.[1]

Thomson now lived in ease and plenty, and seems for a while to have suspended his poetry; but he was soon called back to labour by the death of the Chancellor,[2] for his place then became vacant; and though the lord Hardwicke delayed for some time to give it away, Thomson's bashfulness, or pride, or some other motive perhaps not more laudable, withheld him from soliciting; and the new Chancellor would not give him what he would not ask.

He now relapsed to his former indigence; but the prince of Wales was at that time struggling for popularity, and by the influence of Mr. Lyttelton professed himself the patron of wit: to him Thomson was introduced, and being gaily interrogated about the state of his affairs, said, *that they were in a more poetical posture than formerly;* and had a pension allowed him of one hundred pounds a year.

Being now obliged to write, he produced (1738) the tragedy of "Agamemnon," which was much shortened in the representation. It had the fate which most commonly attends mythological stories, and was only endured, but not favoured. It struggled with such difficulty through the first night, that Thomson, coming late to his friends

[1] This was done by Murdoch in the subscription quarto of 1762. (See *Murdoch's Letter to Millar in Woolf's Warton*, p. 252).—P. Cunningham.

[2] Sir Charles Talbot, died February, 1737. See Thomson's Poem to his Memory. Ald. *T.* vol. ii. p. 210.

with whom he was to sup, excused his delay by telling them how the sweat of his distress had so disordered his wig, that could not come till he had been refitted by a barber.

He so interested himself in his own drama, that, if I remember right,[1] as he sat in the upper gallery he accompanied the players by audible recitation, till a friendly hint frighted him to silence. Pope countenanced "Agamemnon," by coming to it the first night, and was welcomed to the theatre by a general clap; he had much regard for Thomson, and once expressed it in a poetical Epistle sent to Italy, of which however he abated the value, by translating some of the lines into his "Epistle to Arbuthnot."

About this time the Act was passed for licensing plays, of which the first operation was the prohibition of "Gustavus Vasa," a tragedy of Mr. Brooke, whom the publick recompensed by a very liberal subscription; the next was the refusal of "Edward and Eleonora," offered by Thomson. It is hard to discover why either play should have been obstructed.[2] Thomson likewise endeavoured to repair his loss by a subscription, of which I cannot now tell the success.[3]

When the publick murmured at the unkind treatment of Thomson, one of the ministerial writers remarked, that *he had taken a* Liberty *which was not agreeable to* Britannia *in any* Season.

He was soon after employed, in conjunction with Mr.

[1] Johnson arrived in London, 1737. Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. i. p. 66.

[2] Sir Harris Nicolas shows that *Edward and Eleonora* contained political allusions which it was impossible not to understand (in relation to the Prince of Wales and his father George II.) hence the suppression of the piece was neither surprising nor unreasonable. Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. lxxxix.

[3] Mr. Cunningham gives an advertisement from the *Daily Post*, April 7, 1739. "Speedily will be published by Subscription, Edwin and Eleanora, a Tragedy the representation of which on the stage has been prohibited by *authority*, &c., &c."

Mallet, to write the masque of "Alfred," which was acted before the Prince at Cliefden-house.[1]

His next work (1745) was "Tancred and Sigismunda,"[2] the most successful of all his tragedies; for it still keeps its turn upon the stage. It may be doubted whether he was, either by the bent of nature or habits of study, much qualified for tragedy. It does not appear that he had much sense of the pathetick, and his diffusive and descriptive style produced declamation rather than dialogue.

His friend Mr. Lyttelton was now in power, and conferred upon him the office of surveyor-general of the Leeward Islands; from which, when his deputy was paid, he received about three hundred pounds a year.

The last piece that he lived to publish was the "Castle of Indolence,"[3] which was many years under his hand, but was at last finished with great accuracy. The first canto opens a scene of lazy luxury, that fills the imagination.

He was now at ease, but was not long to enjoy it; for, by taking cold on the water between London and Kew, he caught a disorder, which, with some careless exasperation, ended in a fever that put an end to his life, August 27, 1748. He was buried in the church of Richmond, without an inscription; but a monument has been erected to his memory in Westminster-abbey.

[1] *Alfred* was performed in the gardens at Clifden on the 1st August, 1740, before a brilliant audience, including H.R.H. the Prince and Princess of Wales. This piece, which contained "Rule Britannia," was some years after acted at Covent Garden with new music. Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. xci.

[2] First acted at Drury Lane, 18th March, 1745. Mr. Cunningham states that Garrick played Tancred, and that at the revival of the play long after Thomson's death, Mrs. Siddons played Sigismunda.

[3] Ald. *T.* vol. ii. p. 258. Wordsworth (*Works*, ed. 1837, vol. iii. p. 335), observes that in this poem Thomson's true characteristics as an imaginative poet "were almost as conspicuously displayed (as in the *Seasons*) and in verse more harmonious, and diction more pure."

Thomson was of stature above the middle size, and *more fat than bard beseems*,[1] of a dull countenance, and a gross, unanimated, uninviting appearance; silent in mingled company, but chearful among select friends, and by his friends very tenderly and warmly beloved.

He left behind him the tragedy of "Coriolanus," which was, by the zeal of his patron Sir George Lyttelton, brought upon the stage for the benefit of his family, and recommended by a Prologue,[2] which Quin, who had long lived with Thomson in fond intimacy, spoke in such a manner as shewed him *to be*, on that occasion, *no actor*. The commencement of this benevolence is very honourable to Quin; who is reported to have delivered Thomson, then known to him only for his genius, from an arrest, by a very considerable present; and its continuance is honourable to both; for friendship is not always the sequel of obligation. By this tragedy a considerable sum was raised, of which part discharged his debts, and the rest was remitted to his sisters, whom, however removed from them by place or condition, he regarded with great tenderness, as will appear by the following Letter, which I communicate with much pleasure, as it gives me at once an opportunity of recording the fraternal kindness of Thomson, and reflecting on the friendly assistance of Mr. Boswell, from whom I received it.[3]

"Hagley in Worcestershire,
"October the 4th, 1747.

"My dear Sister,

"I thought you had known me better than to interpret

[1] *Castle of Indolence*, canto i. lxviii. Ald. *T.* vol. ii. p. 283.

[2] Mr. P. Cunningham considers this Prologue one of the best in the English language.

[3] See two interesting letters from Boswell in answer to Johnson's request for information about Thomson. Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iii. pp. 150, 356.

my silence into a decay of affection, especially as your behaviour has always been such as rather to increase than diminish it. Don't imagine, because I am a bad correspondent, that I can ever prove an unkind friend and brother. I must do myself the justice to tell you, that my affections are naturally very fixed and constant; and if I had ever reason of complaint against you (of which by the bye I have not the least shadow), I am conscious of so many defects in myself, as dispose me to be not a little charitable and forgiving.

"It gives me the truest heart-felt satisfaction to hear you have a good kind husband, and are in easy contented circumstances; but were they otherwise, that would only awaken and heighten my tenderness towards you. As our good and tender-hearted parents did not live to receive any material testimonies of that highest human gratitude I owed them (than which nothing could have given me equal pleasure), the only return I can make them now is by kindness to those they left behind them: would to God poor Lizy had lived longer, to have been a farther witness of the truth of what I say, and that I might have had the pleasure of seeing once more a sister, who so truly deserved my esteem and love. But she is happy, while we must toil a little longer here below: let us however do it chearfully and gratefully, supported by the pleasing hope of meeting yet again on a safer shore, where to recollect the storms and difficulties of life will not perhaps be inconsistent with that blissful state. You did right to call your daughter by her name; for you must needs have had a particular tender friendship for one another, endeared as you were by nature, by having passed the affectionate years of your youth together; and by that great softener and engager of hearts, mutual hardship. That it was in my power to ease it a little, I account one of most exquisite pleasures of my life.—But enough of this melancholy though not unpleasing strain.

"I esteem you for your sensible and disinterested advice to Mr. Bell, as you will see by my Letter to him: as I approve entirely of his marrying again, you may readily ask me why I don't marry at all. My circumstances have hitherto been so variable and uncertain in this fluctuating world, as induce to keep me from engaging in such a state; and now, though they are more settled, and of late (which you will be glad to hear) considerably improved, I begin to think myself too far advanced in life for such youthful undertakings, not to mention some other petty reasons that are apt to startle the delicacy of difficult old batchelors. I am, however, not a little suspicious that was I to pay a visit to Scotland (which I have some thoughts of doing soon) I might possibly be tempted to think of a thing not easily repaired if done amiss. I have always been of opinion that none make better wives than the ladies of Scotland; and yet, who more forsaken than they, while the gentlemen are continually running abroad all the world over? Some of them, it is true, are wise enough to return for a wife. You see I am beginning to make interest already with the Scots ladies.—But no more of this infectious subject.—Pray let me hear from you now and then; and though I am not a regular correspondent, yet perhaps I may mend in that respect. Remember me kindly to your husband, and believe me to be,

"Your most affectionate brother,

"James Thomson."

(Addressed) "To Mrs. Thomson in Lanark."

The benevolence of Thomson was fervid, but not active; he would give, on all occasions, what assistance his purse would supply; but the offices of intervention or solicitation he could not conquer his sluggishness sufficiently to perform. The affairs of others, however, were not more neglected than his own. He had often felt the inconveni-

ences of idleness, but he never cured it: and was so conscious of his own character, that he talked of writing an Eastern Tale of "the Man who loved to be in Distress."

Among his peculiarities was a very unskilful and inarticulate manner of pronouncing any lofty or solemn composition. He was once reading to Doddington,[1] who, being himself a reader eminently elegant, was so much provoked by his odd utterance, that he snatched the paper from his hand, and told him that he did not understand his own verses.

The biographer of Thomson has remarked, that an author's life is best read in his works: his observation was not well-timed. Savage, who lived much with Thomson, once told me, how he heard a lady remarking that she could gather from his works three parts of his character, that he was a *great Lover, a great Swimmer*, and *rigorously abstinent;* but, said Savage, he knows not any love but that of the sex; he was perhaps never in cold water in his life; and he indulges himself in all the luxury that comes within his reach. Yet Savage always spoke with the most eager praise of his social qualities, his warmth and constancy of friendship, and his adherence to his first acquaintance when the advancement of his reputation had left them behind him.[2]

As a writer, he is entitled to one praise of the highest kind: his mode of thinking, and of expressing his thoughts, is original. His blank verse is no more the blank verse of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauses, his diction, are of his own growth, without transcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius; he looks round on Nature and on Life, with the eye which Nature bestows only on a

[1] *Vid. supr.* p. 167.

[2] See Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. ii. p. 73.

poet; the eye that distinguishes, in every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute. The reader of the "Seasons"[1] wonders that he never saw before what Thomson shews him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomson impresses.

His is one of the works in which blank verse seems properly used; Thomson's wide expansion of general views, and his enumeration of circumstantial varieties, would have been obstructed and embarrassed by the frequent intersection of the sense, which are the necessary effects of rhyme.

His descriptions of extended scenes and general effects bring before us the whole magnificence of Nature, whether pleasing or dreadful. The gaiety of *Spring*, the splendour of *Summer*, the tranquillity of *Autumn*, and the horror of *Winter*, take in their turns possession of the mind. The poet leads us through the appearances of things as they are successively varied by the vicissitudes of the year, and imparts to us so much of his own enthusiasm, that our thoughts expand with his imagery, and kindle with his sentiments. Nor is the naturalist without his part in the entertainment; for he is assisted to recollect and to combine, to arrange his discoveries, and to amplify the sphere of his contemplation.

The great defect of the "Seasons" is want of method; but for this I know not that there was any remedy. Of many appearances subsisting all at once, no rule can be given why one should be mentioned before another; yet the memory wants the help of order, and the curiosity is not excited by suspense or expectation.

His diction is in the highest degree florid and luxuriant,

[1] Ald. *T.* vol. i. p. 1.

such as may be said to be to his images and thoughts *both their lustre and their shade;* such as invest them with splendour, through which perhaps they are not always easily discerned. It is too exuberant, and sometimes may be charged with filling the ear more than the mind.

These Poems, with which I was acquainted at their first appearance, I have since found altered and enlarged by subsequent revisals,[1] as the author supposed his judgement to grow more exact, and as books or conversation extended his knowledge and opened his prospects. They are, I think, improved in general; yet I know not whether they have not lost part of what Temple[2] calls their *race;* a word which, applied to wines, in its primitive sense, means the flavour of the soil.

"Liberty,"[3] when it first appeared, I tried to read, and soon desisted. I have never tried again, and therefore will not hazard either praise or censure.

The highest praise which he has received ought not to be suppressed: it is said by Lord Lyttelton in the Prologue to his posthumous play, that his works contained

"No line which, dying, he could wish to blot."

[1] Wordsworth observes (*Works*, vol. iii. p. 335, ed. 1837) that even the 2nd edition of Thomson's *Seasons* does not contain the most striking passages which Warton (in his *Essay on Pope*) points out for admiration, and that these and other improvements in the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

[2] For an account of Boswell's friend, the Rev. William Johnson Temple, and the strange recovery of Boswell's letters to him, see Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. i. p. 347.

[3] Ald. *T.* vol. ii. p. 5.

WATTS.

WATTS.

THE Poems of Dr. Watts were by my recommendation inserted in the late Collection;[1] the readers of which are to impute to me whatever pleasure or weariness they may find in the perusal of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden.

Isaac Watts was born July 17, 1674, at Southampton, where his father, of the same name, kept a boarding-school for young gentlemen, though common report makes him a shoemaker.[2] He appears, from the narrative of Dr. Gibbons,[3] to have been neither indigent nor illiterate.

Isaac, the eldest of nine children, was given to books from his infancy; and began, we are told, to learn Latin when he was four years old, I suppose, at home. He was afterwards taught Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, by Mr. Pinhorne, a clergyman, master of the Freeschool at Southampton, to whom the gratitude of his scholar afterwards inscribed a Latin ode.

His proficiency at school was so conspicuous, that a subscription was proposed for his support at the University;

[1] Johnson, in writing to beg for details of Watts's life, says: "I wish to distinguish Watts, a man who never wrote but for a good purpose." See Letter to Mr. W. Sharp, Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iii. p. 159.

[2] Mr. P. Cunningham states that this is a mistake.

[3] Dr. Gibbons, 1720-1785. In 1743 he was "called" to the pastoral charge of the Independent congregation at Haberdasher Hall, and continued it till his death. He wrote a life of Isaac Watts (1780), and assisted Johnson with materials for his life of Watts. Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iv. p. 76 note.

but he declared his resolution to take his lot with the Dissenters.[1] Such he was as every Christian Church would rejoice to have adopted.

He therefore repaired in 1690 to an academy taught by Mr. Rowe, where he had for his companions and fellow-students Mr. Hughes the poet, and Dr. Horte, afterwards Archbishop of Tuam. Some Latin Essays, supposed to have been written as exercises at this academy, shew a degree of knowledge, both philosophical and theological, such as very few attain by a much longer course of study.

He was, as he hints in his Miscellanies, a maker of verses from fifteen to fifty, and in his youth he appears to have paid attention to Latin poetry. His verses to his brother, in the *glyconick*[2] measure, written when he was seventeen, are remarkably easy and elegant. Some of his other odes are deformed by the Pindarick folly then prevailing, and are written with such neglect of all metrical rules as is without example among the ancients; but his diction, though perhaps not always exactly pure, has such copiousness and splendour, as shews that he was but at a very little distance from excellence.

His method of study was to impress the contents of his books upon his memory by abridging them, and by interleaving them to amplify one system with supplements from another.

With the congregation of his tutor Mr. Rowe, who were, I believe, Independents, he communicated in his nineteenth year.

[1] His father was a Nonconformist, and in the reign of Charles II. was imprisoned for nonconformity, and on his release was, as his son records, "forced to leave his family, and live privately in London for two years." Milner, *Life of Watts*, 8vo, 1834, p. 60.

[2] Glyconic, a kind of verse so called from its inventor *Glycon*. It consisted of three feet, a spondee, a pyrrhic, and a choriamb.

At the age of twenty he left the academy, and spent two years in study and devotion at the house of his father, who treated him with great tenderness; and had the happiness, indulged to few parents, of living to see his son eminent for literature and venerable for piety.[1]

He was then entertained by Sir John Hartopp five years, as domestick tutor to his son; and in that time particularly devoted himself to the study of the Holy Scriptures; and being chosen assistant to Dr. Chauncey, preached the first time on the birth-day that compleated his twenty-fourth year; probably considering that as the day of a second nativity, by which he entered on a new period of existence.

In about three years he succeeded Dr. Chauncey; but, soon after his entrance on his charge, he was seized by a dangerous illness, which sunk him to such weakness, that the congregation thought an assistant necessary, and appointed Mr. Price.[2] His health then returned gradually, and he performed his duty, till (1712) he was seized by a fever of such violence and continuance, that, from the feebleness which it brought upon him, he never perfectly recovered.

This calamitous state made the compassion of his friends necessary, and drew upon him the attention of Sir Thomas Abney,[3] who received him into his house; where, with a constancy of friendship and uniformity of conduct not often to be found, he was treated for thirty-six years with all the kindness that friendship could prompt, and all the attention that respect could dictate. Sir Thomas died

[1] His father died Feb. 10, 1736-7.

[2] Samuel Price, died 1756, and buried in Bunhill Fields, where on his grave is recorded, at his own request, that he was assistant and copartner to the truly Reverend Dr. Watts for forty-five years.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

[3] Sir Thomas Abney (1639-1722), Lord Mayor in 1700. He had a principal share in founding the Bank of England.

about eight years afterwards; but he continued with the lady and her daughters to the end of his life. The lady died about a year after him.

A coalition like this, a state in which the notions of patronage and dependence were overpowered by the perception of reciprocal benefits, deserves a particular memorial; and I will not withhold from the reader Dr. Gibbons's[1] representation, to which regard is to be paid as to the narrative of one who writes what he knows, and what is known likewise to multitudes besides.

"Our next observation shall be made upon that remarkably kind Providence which brought the Doctor into Sir Thomas Abney's family, and continued him there till his death, a period of no less than thirty-six years. In the midst of his sacred labours for the glory of God, and good of his generation, he is seized with a most violent and threatening fever, which leaves him oppressed with great weakness, and puts a stop at least to his publick services for four years. In this distressing season, doubly so to his active and pious spirit, he is invited to Sir Thomas Abney's family, nor ever removes from it till he had finished his days. Here he enjoyed the uninterrupted demonstrations of the truest friendship. Here, without any care of his own, he had every thing which could contribute to the enjoyment of life, and favour the unwearied pursuits of his studies. Here he dwelt in a family, which, for piety, order, harmony, and every virtue, was an house of God. Here he had the privilege of a country recess, the fragrant bower, the spreading lawn, the flowery garden, and other advantages, to sooth his mind and aid his restoration to health; to yield him, whenever he chose them, most grateful intervals from his laborious studies, and enable him to return to them with redoubled vigour and delight. Had it

[1] Thomas Gibbons, D.D., in his *Memoir of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D.* Lond. 1780. 8vo.

not been for this most happy event, he might, as to outward view, have feebly, it may be painfully, dragged on through many more years of languor, and inability for publick service, and even for profitable study, or perhaps might have sunk into his grave under the overwhelming load of infirmities in the midst of his days; and thus the church and world would have been deprived of those many excellent sermons and works, which he drew up and published during his long residence in this family. In a few years after his coming hither, Sir Thomas Abney dies; but his amiable consort survives, who shews the Doctor the same respect and friendship as before, and most happily for him and great numbers besides; for, as her riches were great, her generosity and munificence were in full proportion; her thread of life was drawn out to a great age, even beyond that of the Doctor's; and thus this excellent man, through her kindness, and that of her daughter, the present Mrs. Elizabeth Abney, who in a like degree esteemed and honoured him, enjoyed all the benefits and felicities he experienced at his first entrance into this family, till his days were numbered and finished, and, like a shock of corn in its season, he ascended into the regions of perfect and immortal life and joy."

If this quotation has appeared long, let it be considered that it comprises an account of six-and-thirty years, and those the years of Dr. Watts.

From the time of his reception into this family, his life was no otherwise diversified than by successive publications. The series of his works I am not able to deduce; their number, and their variety, shew the intenseness of his industry, and the extent of his capacity.

He was one of the first authors that taught the Dissenters to court attention by the graces of language. Whatever they had among them before, whether of learning or acuteness, was commonly obscured and blunted by coarse-

ness and inelegance of style. He shewed them, that zeal and purity might be expressed and enforced by polished diction.

He continued to the end of his life the teacher of a congregation, and no reader of his works can doubt his fidelity or diligence. In the pulpit, though his low stature, which very little exceeded five feet, graced him with no advantages of appearance, yet the gravity and propriety of his utterance made his discourses very efficacious. I once mentioned the reputation which Mr. Foster[1] had gained by his proper delivery to my friend Dr. Hawkesworth, who told me, that in the art of pronunciation he was far inferior to Dr. Watts.

Such was his flow of thoughts, and such his promptitude of language, that in the latter part of his life he did not precompose his cursory sermons; but having adjusted the heads, and sketched out some particulars, trusted for success to his extemporary powers.

He did not endeavour to assist his eloquence by any gesticulations; for, as no corporeal actions have any correspondence with theological truth, he did not see how they could enforce it.

At the conclusion of weighty sentences he gave time, by a short pause, for the proper impression.

To stated and publick instruction he added familiar visits and personal application, and was careful to improve the opportunities which conversation offered of diffusing and increasing the influence of religions.

By his natural temper he was quick of resentment; but,

[1] The Rev. James Foster (1697-1752), an eloquent preacher. Author of a *Defence of Christian revelation against Tindal*, etc. Pope thus describes him:—

> "Let modest Foster, if he will, excel,
> Ten metropolitans in preaching well."
> *Epilogue to the Satires*, Ald. *Pope*, vol. iii. p. 107.

by his established and habitual practice, he was gentle, modest, and inoffensive. His tenderness appeared in his attention to children, and to the poor. To the poor, while he lived in the family of his friend, he allowed the third part of his annual revenue, though the whole was not a hundred a year; and for children, he condescended to lay aside the scholar, the philosopher, and the wit, to write little poems of devotion, and systems of instruction, adapted to their wants and capacities, from the dawn of reason through its gradations of advance in the morning of life. Every man, acquainted with the common principles of human action, will look with veneration on the writer who is at one time combating Locke, and at another making a catechism for children in their fourth year. A voluntary descent from the dignity of science is perhaps the hardest lesson that humility can teach.

As his mind was capacious, his curiosity excursive, and his industry continual, his writings are very numerous, and his subjects various. With his theological works I am only enough acquainted to admire his meekness of opposition, and his mildness of censure. It was not only in his book but in his mind that *orthodoxy* was *united* with *charity*.

Of his philosophical pieces, his Logick has been received into the universities, and therefore wants no private recommendation: if he owes part of it to Le Clerc, it must be considered that no man who undertakes merely to methodise or illustrate a system, pretends to be its author.

In his metaphysical disquisitions, it was observed by the late learned Mr. Dyer,[1] that he confounded the idea of *space* with that of *empty space*, and did not consider that though space might be without matter, yet matter being extended, could not be without space.

[1] Samuel Dyer, died 1772. See account in Malone's *Life of Dryden*, p. 181.

Few books have been perused by me with greater pleasure than his "Improvement of the Mind," of which the radical principles may indeed be found in Locke's "Conduct of the Understanding," but they are so expanded and ramified by Watts, as to confer upon him the merit of a work in the highest degree useful and pleasing. Whoever has the care of instructing others, may be charged with deficience in his duty if this book is not recommended.

I have mentioned his treatises of Theology as distinct from his other productions; but the truth is, that whatever he took in hand was, by his incessant solicitude for souls, converted to Theology. As piety predominated in his mind, it is diffused over his works: under his direction it may be truly said, *Theologiæ Philosophia ancillatur*, philosophy is subservient to evangelical instruction; it is difficult to read a page without learning, or at least wishing, to be better. The attention is caught by indirect instruction, and he that sat down only to reason is on a sudden compelled to pray.

It was therefore with great propriety that, in 1728, he received from Edinburgh and Aberdeen an unsolicited diploma, by which he became a Doctor of Divinity. Academical honours would have more value, if they were always bestowed with equal judgement.

He continued many years to study and to preach, and to do good by his instruction and example; till at last the infirmities of age disabled him from the more laborious part of his ministerial functions, and, being no longer capable of publick duty, he offered to remit the salary appendant to it; but his congregation would not accept the resignation.

By degrees his weakness increased, and at last confined him to his chamber and his bed; where he was worn gradually away without pain, till he expired Nov. 25, 1748, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

Few men have left behind such purity of character, or such monuments of laborious piety. He has provided instruction for all ages, from those who are lisping their first lessons, to the enlightened readers of Malbranche and Locke; he has left neither corporeal nor spiritual nature unexamined; he has taught the art of reasoning, and the science of the stars.

His character, therefore, must be formed from the multiplicity and diversity of his attainments, rather than from any single performance; for it would not be safe to claim for him the highest rank in any single denomination of literary dignity; yet perhaps there was nothing in which he would not have excelled, if he had not divided his powers to different pursuits.

As a poet, had he been only a poet, he would probably have stood high among the authors with whom he is now associated. For his judgement was exact, and he noted beauties and faults with very nice discernment; his imagination, as the "Dacian Battle" proves, was vigorous and active, and the stores of knowledge were large by which his fancy was to be supplied. His ear was well-tuned, and his diction was elegant and copious. But his devotional poetry is, like that of others, unsatisfactory. The paucity of its topicks enforces perpetual repetition, and the sanctity of the matter rejects the ornaments of figurative diction. It is sufficient for Watts to have done better than others what no man has done well.

His poems on other subjects seldom rise higher than might be expected from the amusements of a Man of Letters, and have different degrees of value as they are more or less laboured, or as the occasion was more or less favourable to invention.

He writes too often without regular measures, and too often in blank verse; the rhymes are not always sufficiently correspondent. He is particularly unhappy in coining

names expressive of characters. His lines are commonly smooth and easy, and his thoughts always religiously pure; but who is there that, to so much piety and innocence, does not wish for a greater measure of spriteliness and vigour? He is at least one of the few poets with whom youth and ignorance may be safely pleased; and happy will be that reader whose mind is disposed by his verses, or his prose, to imitate him in all but his non-conformity, to copy his benevolence to man, and his reverence to God.

A. PHILIPS.

A. PHILIPS.

OF the birth or early part of the life of AMBROSE PHILIPS I have not been able to find any account. His academical education he received at St. John's College in Cambridge,[1] where he first solicited the notice of the world by some English verses, in the Collection published by the University on the death of queen Mary.

From this time how he was employed, or in what station he passed his life, is not yet discovered. He must have published his "Pastorals" before the year 1708, because they are evidently prior to those of Pope.[2]

He afterwards (1709) addressed to the universal patron, the duke of Dorset,[3] a "poetical Letter from Copenhagen," which was published in the "Tatler," and is by Pope in one of his first Letters mentioned with high praise, as the production of a man *who could write very nobly*.

Philips was a zealous Whig, and therefore easily found access to Addison and Steele; but his ardour seems not to have procured him any thing more than kind words; since he was reduced to translate the "Persian Tales" for Tonson, for which he was afterwards reproached, with this addition of contempt, that he worked for half-a-crown. The book is divided into many sections, for each of which

[1] Ambrose Philips matriculated Sizar of St. John's College, 8th July, 1693. He took his B.A. 1696-7, M.A., 1700.

[2] *Lucy* appeared in the same volume (the 6th) of Tonson's *Miscellanies* with the *Pastorals* of Pope, published 1709.

[3] Earl of Dorset. His son Lionel was the first Duke of Dorset.

if he received half-a-crown, his reward, as writers then were paid, was very liberal; but half-a-crown had a mean sound.

He was employed in promoting the principles of his party, by epitomising Hacket's "Life of Archbishop Williams." The original book is written with such depravity of genius, such mixture of the fop and pedant, as has not often appeared. The Epitome is free enough from affectation, but has little spirit or vigour.

In 1712 he brought upon the stage "The Distrest Mother," almost a translation of Racine's "Andromaque." Such a work requires no uncommon powers; but the friends of Philips exerted every art to promote his interest. Before the appearance of the play a whole "Spectator," [1] none indeed of the best, was devoted to its praise; while it yet continued to be acted, another "Spectator" was written, to tell what impression it made upon Sir Roger; [2] and on the first night a select audience, says Pope,* was called together to applaud it.

It was concluded with the most successful Epilogue that was ever yet spoken on the English theatre. The three first nights it was recited twice; and not only continued to be demanded through the run, as it is termed, of the play, but whenever it is recalled to the stage, where by peculiar fortune, though a copy from the French, it yet keeps its place, the Epilogue is still expected, and is still spoken.

The propriety of epilogues in general, and consequently of this, was questioned by a correspondent of the "Spectator," whose Letter was undoubtedly admitted for the sake of the Answer, which soon followed, written with much zeal and acrimony. The attack and the defence equally contributed to stimulate curiosity and continue attention.

* Spence.—JOHNSON.[3]

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[1] *Spectator*, No. 290, Feb. 1st, 1712.

[2] *Ibid.* No. 335, March 25, 1712.

[3] Ed. Singer, p. 46.

It may be discovered in the defence, that Prior's Epilogue to "Phædra" had a little excited jealousy; and something of Prior's plan may be discovered in the performance of his rival.

Of this distinguished Epilogue the reputed author was the wretched Budgel, whom Addison used to denominate * *the man who calls me cousin;* and when he was asked how such a silly fellow could write so well, replied, *The Epilogue was quite another thing when I saw it first.*[1] It was known in Tonson's family, and told to Garrick, that Addison was himself the author of it,[2] and that when it had been at first printed with his name, he came early in the morning, before the copies were distributed, and ordered it to be given to Budgel, that it might add weight to the solicitation which he was then making for a place.

Philips was now high in the ranks of literature. His play was applauded; his translations from "Sappho" had been published in the "Spectator;"[3] he was an important and distinguished associate of clubs witty and political; and nothing was wanting to his happiness, but that he should be sure of its continuance.

The work which had procured him the first notice from the publick was his "Six Pastorals," which, flattering the imagination with Arcadian scenes, probably found many readers, and might have long passed as a pleasing amusement, had they not been unhappily too much commended.

The rustic Poems of Theocritus[4] were so highly valued

* Spence.—Johnson.[5]

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[1] Pope in Spence by Singer, p. 257.

[2] See Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. i. p. 134.

[3] *Spectator*, No. 223, Nov. 5, 1711, and No. 229, Nov. 22, 1711.

[4] The "father of bucolic poetry" was a native of Syracuse, third century B.C.

[5] Ed. Singer, p. 161.

by the Greeks and Romans, that they attracted the imitation of Virgil, whose "Eclogues" seem to have been considered as precluding all attempts of the same kind; for no shepherds were taught to sing by any succeeding poet, till Nemesian[1] and Calphurnius[2] ventured their feeble efforts in the lower age of Latin literature.

At the revival of learning in Italy, it was soon discovered that a dialogue of imaginary swains might be composed with little difficulty; because the conversation of shepherds excludes profound or refined sentiment; and, for images and descriptions, Satyrs and Fauns, and Naiads and Dryads, were always within call; and woods and meadows, and hills and rivers, supplied variety of matter; which, having a natural power to soothe the mind, did not quickly cloy it.

Petrarch[3] entertained the learned men of his age with the novelty of modern Pastorals in Latin. Being not ignorant of Greek, and finding nothing in the word *Eclogue* of rural meaning, he supposed it to be corrupted by the copiers, and therefore called his own productions *Æglogues*, by which he meant to express the talk of goatherds, though it will mean only the talk of goats. This new name was adopted by subsequent writers, and amongst others by our Spenser.

More than a century afterwards (1498) Mantuan[4] pub-

[1] M. Aur. Olympius Nemesianus.

[2] Calphurnius. Sicilian poet of the third century.

[3] Petrarch (1304-1374), was more proud of his Latin poem called *Africa*, the subject of which is the termination of the Second Punic War, than of the sonnets and odes which have made his name immortal. . . . His eclogues, many of which are covert satires on the court of Avignon, appear to me more poetical than the *Africa*, and are sometimes very beautifully expressed. Hallam, *Lit. Eur.* vol. i. p. 80.

[4] Baptista Mantuan, a Latin poet, once of great celebrity. Hallam calls him "long the poet of schoolrooms," and relates that his contemporaries, believing that he would be placed by posterity next to Virgil,

lished his "Bucolicks" with such success, that they were soon dignified by Badius[1] with a comment, and, as Scaliger complained, received into schools, and taught as classical; his complaint was vain, and the practice, however injudicious, spread far and continued long. Mantuan was read, at least in some of the inferior schools of this kingdom, to the beginning of the present century. The speakers of Mantuan carried their disquisitions beyond the country, to censure the corruptions of the Church; and from him Spenser learned to employ his swains on topicks of controversy.

The Italians soon transferred Pastoral Poetry into their own language: Sannazaro[2] wrote "Arcadia" in prose and verse; Tasso[3] and Guarini[4] wrote "Favole Boschareccie," or Sylvan Dramas; and all nations of Europe filled volumes with "Thyrsis and Damon," and "Thestylis and Phyllis."

Philips thinks it *somewhat strange to conceive how, in an age so addicted to the Muses, Pastoral Poetry never comes to be so much as thought upon.* His wonder seems very unseasonable; there had never, from the time of Spenser, wanted writers to talk occasionally of *Arcadia* and *Strephon;* and half the book, in which he first tried his powers, consists of dialogues on queen Mary's death, between *Tityrus* and *Corydon*, or *Mopsus* and *Menalcas.* A series or book

the Marquis of Mantua, anticipating this suffrage, erected their statues side by side. Mantuan has long been utterly neglected, and does not find a place in most selections of Latin poetry.

[1] Badius, T. (1462-1535), one of the earliest French printers, a man of considerable learning.

[2] Giacomo Sannazaro (1458-1530), Italian poet, born at Naples, quoted by Johnson in *Life of Cowley, vid. supr.* vol. i. p. 48.

[3] Tasso (1544-1595), published *Rinaldo*, 1562, *La Gerusalemme Liberata*, 1579.

[4] Battista Guarini (1537-1612), published his great poem, *Il Pastor Fido*, 1594.

of Pastorals, however, I know not that any one had then lately published.[1]

Not long afterwards[2] Pope made the first display of his powers in four Pastorals, written in a very different form. Philips had taken Spenser, and Pope took Virgil for his pattern. Philips endeavoured to be natural, Pope laboured to be elegant.

Philips was now favoured by Addison, and by Addison's companions, who were very willing to push him into reputation. The "Guardian" gave an account of "Pastoral," partly critical, and partly historical; in which, when the merit of the moderns is compared, Tasso and Guarini are censured for remote thoughts and unnatural refinements; and, upon the whole, the Italians and French are all excluded from rural poetry, and the pipe of the Pastoral Muse is transmitted by lawful inheritance from Theocritus to Virgil, from Virgil to Spenser, and from Spenser to Philips.

With this inauguration of Philips, his rival Pope was not much delighted; he therefore drew a comparison of Philips's performance with his own, in which, with an unexampled and unequalled artifice of irony, though he has himself always the advantage, he gives the preference to Philips. The design of aggrandising himself he disguised with such dexterity, that, though Addison discovered it, Steele was deceived, and was afraid of displeasing Pope by publishing his paper. Published however it was ("Guard." 40), and from that time Pope and Philips lived in a perpetual reciprocation of malevolence.

In poetical powers, of either praise or satire, there was no proportion between the combatants; but Philips, though he could not prevail by wit, hoped to hurt Pope with

[1] See *The Rambler*, Nos. 36 and 37.

[2] They were published in the same volume with those of Philips.

another weapon, and charged him, as Pope thought, with Addison's approbation, as disaffected to the government.

Even with this he was not satisfied; for, indeed, there is no appearance that any regard was paid to his clamours. He proceeded to grosser insults, and hung up a rod at Button's, with which he threatened to chastise Pope, who appears to have been extremely exasperated; for in the first edition of his "Letters" he calls Philips *rascal*, and in the last still charges him with detaining in his hands the subscriptions for Homer delivered to him by the Hanover Club.

I suppose it was never suspected that he meant to appropriate the money; he only delayed, and with sufficient meanness, the gratification of him by whose prosperity he was pained.

Men sometimes suffer by injudicious kindness; Philips became ridiculous, without his own fault, by the absurd admiration of his friends, who decorated him with honorary garlands which the first breath of contradiction blasted.

When upon the succession of the House of Hanover every Whig expected to be happy, Philips seems to have obtained too little notice; he caught few drops of the golden shower, though he did not omit what flattery could perform. He was only made a Commissioner of the Lottery [1] (1717), and, what did not much elevate his character, a Justice of the Peace.

The success of his first play must naturally dispose him to turn his hopes towards the stage: he did not however soon commit himself to the mercy of an audience, but contented himself with the fame already acquired, till after nine years he produced (1721) "The Briton," a tragedy which, whatever was its reception, is now neglected; though one of the scenes, between *Vanoc* the British Prince and

[1] He was made paymaster of the lottery by Treasury warrant of 25 January, 1715, with a yearly salary of £500.

Valens the Roman General, is confessed to be written with great dramatick skill, animated by spirit truly poetical.

He had not been idle though he had been silent; for he exhibited another tragedy the same year, on the story of "Humphry Duke of Gloucester." This tragedy is only remembered by its title.

His happiest undertaking was of a paper called "The Freethinker," in conjunction with associates, of whom one was Dr. Boulter,[1] who, then only minister of a parish in Southwark, was of so much consequence to the government, that he was made first bishop of Bristol, and afterwards primate of Ireland, where his piety and his charity will be long honoured.

It may easily be imagined that what was printed under the direction of Boulter, would have nothing in it indecent or licentious; its title is to be understood as implying only freedom from unreasonable prejudice. It has been reprinted in volumes, but is little read; nor can impartial criticism recommend it as worthy of revival.

Boulter was not well qualified to write diurnal essays; but he knew how to practise the liberality of greatness and the fidelity of friendship. When he was advanced to the height of ecclesiastical dignity, he did not forget the companion of his labours. Knowing Philips to be slenderly supported, he took him to Ireland, as partaker of his fortune; and, making him his secretary, added such preferments, as enabled him to represent the county of Armagh in the Irish Parliament.

[1] Dr. Hugh Boulter, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland. He died Sept. 27, 1742, at which time he was for the thirteenth time one of the Lords Justices of that kingdom. "Premium Madden" celebrated him in a poem called *Boulter's Monument*. Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. i. p. 249.

Boulter was the "one Bishop" to whom "Philips seemed a wit." Pope, *Epist. to Dr. Arbuthnot*, Ald. *P.* vol. iii. p. 6.

In December 1726 he was made secretary to the Lord Chancellor; and in August 1733 became judge of the Prerogative Court.[1]

After the death of his patron he continued some years in Ireland; but at last longing, as it seems, for his native country, he returned (1748) to London, having doubtless survived most of his friends and enemies, and among them his dreaded antagonist Pope.[2] He found however the duke of Newcastle still living, and to him he dedicated his poems collected into a volume.

Having purchased an annuity of four hundred pounds, he now certainly hoped to pass some years of life in plenty and tranquillity; but his hope deceived him: he was struck with a palsy, and died June 18, 1749, in his seventy-eighth year.

Of his personal character all that I have heard is, that he was eminent for bravery and skill in the sword, and that in conversation he was solemn and pompous. He had great sensibility of censure, if judgement may be made by a single story which I heard long ago from Mr. Ing, a gentleman of great eminence in Staffordshire. "Philips," said he, "was once at table, when I asked him, How came thy king of Epirus to drive oxen, and to say *I'm goaded on by love?* After which question he never spoke again."

Of the "Distrest Mother" not much is pretended to be his own, and therefore it is no subject of criticism: his other two tragedies, I believe, are not below mediocrity, nor above it. Among the Poems comprised in the late collection, the "Letter from Denmark" may be justly praised; the Pastorals, which by the writer of the "Guardian" were ranked as one of the four genuine productions of the rus-

[1] He was registrar and not judge, and obtained his appointment in Sept. 1734.

[2] Ambrose Philips has been said to be the original of Pope's *Macer, A Character*, Ald. *P.* vol. ii. p. 184.

tick Muse, cannot surely be despicable. That they exhibit a mode of life which does not exist, nor ever existed, is not to be objected; the supposition of such a state is allowed to Pastoral. In his other poems he cannot be denied the praise of lines sometimes elegant; but he has seldom much force, or much comprehension. The pieces that please best are those which, from Pope and Pope's adherents, procured him the name of *Namby Pamby*,[1] the poems of short lines, by which he paid his court to all ages and characters, from Walpole the *steerer of the realm*, to miss Pulteney in the nursery. The numbers are smooth and spritely, and the diction is seldom faulty. They are not loaded with much thought, yet if they had been written by Addison they would have had admirers: little things are not valued but when they are done by those who cannot do greater.

In his translations from Pindar he found the art of reaching all the obscurity of the Theban bard, however he may fall below his sublimity; he will be allowed, if he has less fire, to have more smoke.

He has added nothing to English poetry, yet at least half his book deserves to be read: perhaps he valued most himself that part, which the critick would reject.[2]

[1] In the first edition of the *Dunciad*, line 326 stood thus:

"And Namby Pamby be preferred for Wit."

This nickname was afterwards replaced by "Ambrose Philips."

[2] Boswell gives a few "readings" in this Life. Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iv. p. 18.

WEST.

WEST.

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

He was the son of the reverend Dr. West; perhaps him who published "Pindar"[1] at Oxford about the beginning of this century. His mother was sister to Sir Richard Temple, afterwards lord Cobham. His father, purposing to educate him for the Church, sent him first to Eton, and afterwards to Oxford;[2] but he was seduced to a more airy mode of life, by a commission in a troop of horse procured him by his uncle.

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

His adherence to lord Townshend ended in nothing but a nomination (May 1729) to be clerk-extraordinary of the

[1] *Pindari Carmina, &c.*, Cura R. West et Rob. Welsted, Oxon, 1697, fol.

[2] Gilbert West, son of Richard, of Westminster, doctor, Christchurch, matriculated 16th March, 1721-2, aged 18; B.A., 1725; D.C.L. by diploma, 20th March, 1748. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses.*

Privy Council, which produced no immediate profit; for it only placed him in a state of expectation and right of succession, and it was very long before a vacancy admitted him to profit.

Soon afterwards he married, and settled himself in a very pleasant house at Wickham in Kent, where he devoted himself to learning, and to piety. Of his learning the late Collection exhibits evidence, which would have been yet fuller if the dissertations which accompany his version of "Pindar"[1] had not been improperly omitted. Of his piety the influence has, I hope, been extended far by his "Observations on the Resurrection," published in 1747, for which the University of Oxford created him a Doctor of Laws by diploma (March 30, 1748) and would doubtless have reached yet further had he lived to complete what he had for some time meditated, the Evidences of the truth of the New Testament. Perhaps it may not be without effect to tell, that he read the prayers of the publick liturgy every morning to his family, and that on Sunday evening he called his servants into the parlour, and read to them first a sermon, and then prayers. Crashaw is now not the only maker of verses to whom may be given the two venerable names of "Poet and Saint."[2]

He was very often visited by Lyttelton[3] and Pitt, who, when they were weary of faction and debates, used at Wickham to find books and quiet, a decent table, and literary conversation. There is at Wickham a walk made by

[1] *Odes of Pindar*, with several other pieces in prose and verse translated from the Greek; to which is prefixed a dissertation on the Olympic games by Gilbert West, D.C.L., Lond. 1749. 4to.

[2] "Poet and saint! to thee alone are given
The two most sacred names of Earth and Heaven."

Cowley on the Death of Mr. Crashaw.

[3] His first cousin.

Pitt; and, what is of far more importance, at Wickham Lyttelton received that conviction which produced his "Dissertation on St. Paul."

These two illustrious friends had for a while listened to the blandishments of infidelity, and when West's book was published, it was bought by some who did not know his change of opinion, in expectation of new objections against Christianity; and as Infidels do not want malignity, they revenged the disappointment by calling him a methodist.

Mr. West's income was not large; and his friends endeavoured, but without success, to obtain an augmentation. It is reported, that the education of the young prince[1] was offered to him, but that he required a more extensive power of superintendence than it was thought proper to allow him.

In time, however, his revenue was improved; he lived to have one of the lucrative clerkships of the Privy Council (1752), and Mr. Pitt at last had it in his power to make him treasurer of Chelsea Hospital.[2]

He was now sufficiently rich; but wealth came too late to be long enjoyed: nor could it secure him from the calamities of life; he lost (1755) his only son; and the year after (March 26), a stroke of the palsy brought to the grave one of the few poets to whom the grave might be without its terrors.[3]

Of his translations I have only compared the first Olympick Ode with the original,[4] and found my expectation surpassed, both by its elegance and its exactness. He does not confine himself to his author's train of stanzas; for he

[1] Afterwards George III.

[2] West was under treasurer. The paymaster of the forces was treasurer.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

[3] Mrs. Montagu (*Letters*, vol. iii. p. 105), has left a charming account of his wife, who survived him and died Sept. 1757.

[4] Pindar, *Olymp.* i. 5-10.

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

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

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

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

which however is less exuberant than the former passage.

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

His "Institution of the Garter"[1] (1742) is written with sufficient knowledge of the manners that prevailed in the age to which it is referred, and with great elegance of diction; but, for want of a process of events, neither knowledge nor elegance preserve the reader from weariness.

His "Imitations of Spenser" are very successfully performed, both with respect to the metre, the language, and the fiction; and being engaged at once by the excellence of

[1] *A Dramatick Poem.* Dodsley, 1742. 4to.

the sentiments, and the artifice of the copy, the mind has two amusements together. But such compositions are not to be reckoned among the great atchievements of intellect, because their effect is local and temporary ; they appeal not to reason or passion, but to memory, and pre-suppose an accidental or artificial state of mind. An Imitation of Spenser is nothing to a reader, however acute, by whom Spenser has never been perused. Works of this kind may deserve praise, as proofs of great industry, and great nicety of observation ; but the highest praise, the praise of genius, they cannot claim. The noblest beauties of art are those of which the effect is co-extended with rational nature, or at least with the whole circle of polished life ; what is less than this can be only pretty, the plaything of fashion, and the amusement of a day.

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

COLLINS.

COLLINS.

WILLIAM COLLINS was born at Chichester on the twenty-fifth of December, about 1720.[1] His father was a hatter of good reputation. He was in 1733, as Dr. Warton has kindly informed me, admitted scholar of Winchester College, where he was educated by Dr. Burton. His English exercises were better than his Latin.

He first courted the notice of the publick by some verses to a *Lady weeping*,[2] published in "The Gentleman's Magazine."[3]

In 1740, he stood first in the list of the scholars to be received in succession at New College; but unhappily there was no vacancy. This was the original misfortune of his life. He became a Commoner of Queen's College,[4] probably with a scanty maintenance; but was in about half a year elected a *Demy* of Magdalen College,[5] where he continued till he had taken a Bachelor's degree,[6] and then suddenly left the University; for what reason I know not that he told.

He now (about 1744) came to London a literary adven-

[1] The date of his baptism in the register of the parish of St. Peter the Great is 1721-2, 1st January. See Life prefixed to the Aldine *Collins*, by William Moy Thomas.

[2] Ald. *Collins*, p. 100.

[3] *Gent.'s Mag.* for January, 1739, signed Amasius, and see Johnson's note to Nichols in *Gent.'s Mag.*, January, 1785.

[4] March 22nd, 1739-40.

[5] In 1741.

[6] Nov. 18th, 1743.

turer, with many projects in his head, and very little money in his pocket. He designed many works; but his great fault was irresolution, or the frequent calls of immediate necessity broke his schemes, and suffered him to pursue no settled purpose. A man, doubtful of his dinner, or trembling at a creditor, is not much disposed to abstracted meditation, or remote enquiries. He published proposals for a History of the Revival of Learning; and I have heard him speak with great kindness of Leo the Tenth, and with keen resentment of his tasteless successor.[1] But probably not a page of the History was ever written. He planned several tragedies, but he only planned them. He wrote now-and-then odes and other poems, and did something, however little.

About this time I fell into his company. His appearance was decent and manly; his knowledge considerable, his views extensive, his conversation elegant, and his disposition chearful. By degrees I gained his confidence; and one day was admitted to him when he was immured by a bailiff, that was prowling in the street. On this occasion recourse was had to the booksellers, who, on the credit of a translation of Aristotle's Poeticks, which he engaged to write with a large commentary, advanced as much money as enabled him to escape into the country. He shewed me the guineas safe in his hand. Soon afterwards his uncle, Mr. Martin,[2] a lieutenant-colonel, left him about two thousand pounds; a sum which Collins could scarcely think exhaustible, and which he did not live to exhaust. The guineas were then repaid, and the translation neglected.

But man is not born for happiness. Collins, who, while

[1] Warton's *Essay on Pope*, vol. i. p. 18.

[2] Martin Bladen, uncle to William Collins, left him an estate, etc. He published a translation of Cæsar's Commentaries, and was Comptroller of the Customs in 1714. Gilbert, *Hist. City of Dublin*, vol. i. p. 12.

he *studied to live*,[1] felt no evil but poverty, no sooner *lived to study* than his life was assailed by more dreadful calamities, disease and insanity.

Having formerly written his character,[2] while perhaps it was yet more distinctly impressed upon my memory, I shall insert it here.

"Mr. Collins was a man of extensive literature, and of vigorous faculties. He was acquainted not only with the learned tongues, but with the Italian, French, and Spanish languages. He had employed his mind chiefly upon works of fiction, and subjects of fancy; and, by indulging some peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of inchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the water-falls of Elysian gardens.

"This was however the character rather of his inclination than his genius; the grandeur of wildness, and the novelty of extravagance, were always desired by him, but were not always attained. Yet as diligence is never wholly lost; if his efforts sometimes caused harshness and obscurity, they likewise produced in happier moments sublimity and splendour. This idea which he had formed of excellence, led him to oriental fictions and allegorical imagery; and perhaps, while he was intent upon description, he did not sufficiently cultivate sentiment. His poems are the productions of a mind not deficient in fire, nor unfurnished with knowledge either of books or life, but somewhat obstructed in its progress by deviation in quest of mistaken beauties.

[1] Cf. Johnson's line in the Prologue on opening Drury Lane Theatre, "For we that live to please, must please to live."

[2] In *Fawkes and Woty's Poetical Calendar*, vol. xii. p. 110.

"His morals were pure, and his opinions pious: in a long continuance of poverty, and long habits of dissipation, it cannot be expected that any character should be exactly uniform. There is a degree of want by which the freedom of agency is almost destroyed; and long association with fortuitous companions will at last relax the strictness of truth, and abate the fervour of sincerity. That this man, wise and virtuous as he was, passed always unentangled through the snares of life, it would be prejudice and temerity to affirm; but it may be said that at least he preserved the source of action unpolluted, that his principles were never shaken, that his distinctions of right and wrong were never confounded, and that his faults had nothing of malignity or design, but proceeded from some unexpected pressure, or casual temptation.

"The latter part of his life cannot be remembered but with pity and sadness. He languished some years under that depression of mind which enchains the faculties without destroying them, and leaves reason the knowledge of right without the power of pursuing it. These clouds which he perceived gathering on his intellects, he endeavoured to disperse by travel, and passed into France; but found himself constrained to yield to his malady, and returned. He was for some time confined in a house of lunaticks, and afterwards retired to the care of his sister[1] in Chichester, where death in 1756 came to his relief.[2]

"After his return from France, the writer of this character paid him a visit at Islington, where he was waiting for his sister, whom he had directed to meet him: there was

[1] Afterwards married to the Rev. Dr. Durnford. She died at Chichester, Nov. 1789.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

[2] Collins died on the 12th June, 1759, and on the 15th was buried in the church of St. Andrew's, Chichester. There is a mural monument to his memory in Chichester Cathedral, with a fine *bas-relief* by Flaxman.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

then nothing of disorder discernible in his mind by any but himself; but he had withdrawn from study, and travelled with no other book than an English Testament, such as children carry to the school: when his friend took it into his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a Man of Letters had chosen, *I have but one book*, said Collins, *but that is the best.*"[1]

Such was the fate of Collins, with whom I once delighted to converse, and whom I yet remember with tenderness.

He was visited at Chichester, in his last illness, by his learned friends Dr. Warton and his brother; to whom he spoke with disapprobation of his Oriental Eclogues, as not sufficiently expressive of Asiatick manners, and called them his Irish Eclogues. He shewed them, at the same time, an ode inscribed to Mr. John Hume,[2] on the superstitions of the Highlands; which they thought superior to his other works, but which no search has yet found.[3]

His disorder was not alienation of mind, but general laxity and feebleness, a deficiency rather of his vital than intellectual powers. What he spoke wanted neither judgement nor spirit; but a few minutes exhausted him, so that he was forced to rest upon the couch, till a short cessation restored his powers, and he was again able to talk with his former vigour.

[1] See an interesting letter, describing Collins, from Gilbert White (the celebrated author of the *Natural History of Selborne*) to the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Ald. *Collins*, p. xxxi.; see also Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. i. p. 214.

[2] Mr. John Home, author of the *Tragedy of Douglas*, who visited Winchester during the year 1749, and there made the acquaintance of Collins.

[3] Home seems to have carried away with him an unfinished sketch of this poem, which many years after the death of Collins was found and published in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. This publication was quickly followed by a complete edition, the authenticity of which has, however, been disputed.

The approaches of this dreadful malady he began to feel soon after his uncle's death; and, with the usual weakness of men so diseased, eagerly snatched that temporary relief with which the table and the bottle flatter and seduce. But his health continually declined, and he grew more and more burthensome to himself.

To what I have formerly said of his writings may be added, that his diction was often harsh, unskilfully laboured, and injudiciously selected. He affected the obsolete when it was not worthy of revival; and he puts his words out of the common order, seeming to think, with some later candidates for fame, that not to write prose is certainly to write poetry. His lines commonly are of slow motion, clogged and impeded with clusters of consonants. As men are often esteemed who cannot be loved, so the poetry of Collins may sometimes extort praise when it gives little pleasure.[1]

Mr. Collins's first production is added here from the "Poetical Calendar":

TO MISS AURELIA C——R,

ON HER WEEPING AT HER SISTER'S WEDDING.[2]

"Cease, fair Aurelia, cease to mourn;
Lament not Hannah's happy state;
You may be happy in your turn,
And seize the treasure you regret.

"With Love united Hymen stands,
And softly whispers to your charms;
'Meet but your lover in my bands,
'You'll find your sister in his arms.'"

[1] A monument by Flaxman was erected by subscription in 1789 in Chichester Cathedral.

[2] Ald. *Collins*, p. 100. Mr. Cunningham points out that Collins's *Odes*, the volume which endears his name to every reader of true poetry, is a small octavo of fifty-two pages, dated 1747, and published by Andrew Millar, and that the Oriental Eclogues were published in 1742.

DYER.

DYER.

JOHN DYER, of whom I have no other account to give than his own Letters, published with Hughes's correspondence, and the notes added by the editor, have afforded me, was born in 1700,[1] the second son of Robert Dyer of Aberglasney, in Caermarthenshire, a solicitor of great capacity and note.

He passed through Westminster-school under the care of Dr. Freind, and was then called home to be instructed in his father's profession. But his father died soon, and he took no delight in the study of the law, but, having always amused himself with drawing, resolved to turn painter, and became pupil to Mr. Richardson,[2] an artist then of high reputation, but now better known by his books than by his pictures.

Having studied awhile under his master, he became, as he tells his friend, an itinerant painter, and wandered about South Wales and the parts adjacent;[3] but he mingled poetry with painting, and about 1727 printed "Grongar Hill" in Lewis's "Miscellany."

[1] This date is given by Mr. Cunningham as 1698 or 1699.

[2] Jonathan Richardson, 1665-1745. After the death of Kneller (1723) he became the most popular portrait painter of the day. He wrote several essays on painting and the criticism of painting, and, with his son, explanatory notes on *Paradise Lost*.

[3] The altar-piece at Newtown, in Monmouthshire, "The Last Supper," is said to be by Dyer.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

Being, probably, unsatisfied with his own proficiency, he, like other painters, travelled to Italy; and coming back in 1740, published the "Ruins of Rome."

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

His ecclesiastical provision was a long time but slender. His first patron, Mr. Harper, gave him, in 1741, Calthorp in Leicestershire of eighty pounds a year, on which he lived ten years, and then exchanged it for Belchford in Lincolnshire of seventy-five. His condition now began to mend. In 1751, Sir John Heathcote gave him Coningsby, of one hundred and forty pounds a year; and in 1755 the Chancellor [1] added Kirkby, of one hundred and ten. He complains that the repair of the house at Coningsby, and other expences, took away the profit.

In 1757 he published the "Fleece," his greatest poetical work; of which I will not suppress a ludicrous story. Dodsley the bookseller was one day mentioning it to a critical visiter, with more expectation of success than the other could easily admit. In the conversation the author's age was asked; and being represented as advanced in life, *He will,* said the critick, *be buried in woollen.*

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

Dyer is not a poet of bulk or dignity sufficient to require

[1] Lord Hardwicke.

an elaborate criticism. "Grongar Hill" is the happiest of his productions: it is not indeed very accurately written; but the scenes which it displays are so pleasing, the images which they raise so welcome to the mind, and the reflections of the writer so consonant to the general sense or experience of mankind, that when it is once read, it will be read again.

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

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

Of the "Fleece,"[1] which never became popular, and is now universally neglected, I can say little that is likely to recall it to attention. The woolcomber and the poet appear to me such discordant natures, that an attempt to bring them together is to *couple the serpent with the fowl.* When Dyer, whose mind was not unpoetical, has done his utmost, by interesting his reader in our native commodity, by interspersing rural imagery, and incidental digressions, by cloathing small images in great words, and by all the writer's arts of delusion, the meanness naturally adhering, and the irreverence habitually annexed to trade and manufacture, sink him under insuperable oppression; and the disgust which blank verse, encumbering and encumbered, superadds to an unpleasing subject, soon repels the reader, however willing to be pleased.

Let me however honestly report whatever may counterbalance this weight of censure. I have been told that

[1] "How can a man write poetically of serges and druggets?"—Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iii. p. 37.

Akenside, who, upon a poetical question, has a right to be heard, said, "That he would regulate his opinion of the reigning taste by the fate of Dyer's 'Fleece;' for, if that were ill received, he should not think it any longer reasonable to expect fame from excellence."

SHENSTONE.

SHENSTONE.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, the son of Thomas Shenstone and Anne Pen, was born in November 1714,[1] at the Leasowes in Hales-Owen, one of those insulated districts which, in the division of the kingdom, was appended, for some reason not now discoverable, to a distant county; and which, though surrounded by Warwickshire and Worcestershire, belongs to Shropshire, though perhaps thirty miles distant from any other part of it.

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

As he grew older, he went for a while to the Grammar-school in Hales-Owen, and was placed afterwards with Mr Crumpton, an eminent school-master at Solihul, where he distinguished himself by the quickness of his progress.

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

[1] Shenstone matriculated 25th May, 1732, aged 17.

From school he was sent in 1732 to Pembroke College in Oxford,[1] a society which for half a century has been eminent for English poetry and elegant literature. Here it appears that he found delight and advantage; for he continued his name in the book ten years, though he took no degree. After the first four years he put on the Civilian's gown, but without shewing any intention to engage in the profession.

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

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

He then for a time wandered about, to acquaint himself with life; and was sometimes at London, sometimes at Bath, or any other place of publick resort; but he did not forget his poetry. He published in 1740 his "Judgement of Hercules," addressed to Mr. Lyttelton, whose interest he supported with great warmth at an election: this was two years afterwards followed by the "School-mistress."

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

Now was excited his delight in rural pleasures, and his ambition of rural elegance: he began from this time to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, to entangle his walks, and to wind his waters; which he did with such

[1] Johnson's College, of which he said, "Sir, we are a nest of singing birds." Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. i. p. 43.

judgement and such fancy, as made his little domain the envy of the great, and the admiration of the skilful; a place to be visited by travellers, and copied by designers. Whether to plant a walk in undulating curves, and to place a bench at every turn where there is an object to catch the view; to make water run where it will be heard, and to stagnate where it will be seen; to leave intervals where the eye will be pleased, and to thicken the plantation where there is something to be hidden, demands any great powers of mind, I will not enquire; perhaps a sullen and surly speculator may think such performances rather the sport than the business of human reason. But it must be at least confessed, that to embellish the form of nature is an innocent amusement; and some praise must be allowed by the most supercilious observer to him, who does best what such multitudes are contending to do well.

This praise was the praise of Shenstone; but, like all other modes of felicity, it was not enjoyed without its abatements. Lyttelton was his neighbour and his rival, whose empire, spacious and opulent, looked with disdain on the *petty State* that *appeared behind it.* For a while the inhabitants of Hagley affected to tell their acquaintance of the little fellow that was trying to make himself admired; but when by degrees the Leasowes forced themselves into notice, they took care to defeat the curiosity which they could not suppress, by conducting their visitants perversely to inconvenient points of view, and introducing them at the wrong end of a walk to detect a deception; injuries of which Shenstone would heavily complain. Where there is emulation there will be vanity, and where there is vanity there will be folly.

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

His house was mean, and he did not improve it; his care was of his grounds. When he came home from his walks he might find his floors flooded by a shower through the broken roof; but could spare no money for its reparation.[1]

In time his expences brought clamours about him, that overpowered the lamb's bleat and the linnet's song; and his groves were haunted by beings very different from fawns and fairies. He spent his estate in adorning it, and his death was probably hastened by his anxieties. He was a lamp that spent its oil in blazing. It is said, that if he had lived a little longer he would have been assisted by a pension: such bounty could not have been ever more properly bestowed; but that it was ever asked is not certain; it is too certain that it never was enjoyed.

He died at Leasowes,[1] of a putrid fever, about five on Friday morning, February 11, 1763; and was buried by the side of his brother in the church-yard of Hales-Owen.

He was never married, though he might have obtained the lady, whoever she was, to whom his "Pastoral Ballad" was addressed. He is represented by his friend Dodsley as a man of great tenderness and generosity, kind to all that were within his influence; but, if once offended, not easily appeased; inattentive to œconomy, and careless of his expences; in his person larger than the middle size, with something clumsy in his form; very negligent of his cloaths, and remarkable for wearing his grey hair in a particular manner; for he held that the fashion was no rule

[1] Mr. Cunningham here gives a long extract from a letter of Bishop Percy, giving a very different account of Shenstone's house and gardens, and adds, "I have heard Mr. Rogers (the poet) speak most highly of the beauty of the Leasowes, as he in his youth remembered the "*ferme ornée.*"

[2] Johnson visited the Leasowes in 1774. Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. v. p. 397.

of dress, and that every man was to suit his appearance to his natural form.[1]

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

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

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

"I have read too an octavo volume of Shenstone's 'Letters.' Poor man! he was always wishing for money, for fame, and other distinctions; and his whole philosophy consisted in living against his will in retirement, and in a place which his taste had adorned; but which he only enjoyed when people of note came to see and commend it: his correspondence is about nothing else but this place and his own writings, with two or three neighbouring clergymen, who wrote verses too."[2]

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

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

[1] Dodsley's preface to Shenstone's *Works*.

[2] Gray to Mr. Nicholls, June 24, 1769.

That of which the essence is uniformity will be soon described. His Elegies have therefore too much resemblance of each other.

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

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

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

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

In the first part are two passages, to which if any mind denies its sympathy, it has no acquaintance with love or nature:

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

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

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

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

"I have found out a gift for my fair;
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed:
But let me that plunder forbear,
She will say 'twas a barbarous deed:

"For he ne'er could be true, she averr'd,
Who could rob a poor bird of its young;
And I lov'd her the more, when I heard
Such tenderness fall from her tongue."

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

"'Tis his with mock passion to glow;
'Tis his in smooth tales to unfold,
How her face is as bright as the snow,
And her bosom, be sure, is as cold:

"How the nightingales labour the strain,
With the notes of his charmer to vie;
How they vary their accents in vain,
Repine at her triumphs, and die."

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

"Alas! from the day that we met,
What hope of an end to my woes?
When I cannot endure to forget
The glance that undid my repose.

"Yet Time may diminish the pain:
The flower, and the shrub, and the tree,
Which I rear'd for her pleasure in vain,
In time may have comfort for me."

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

Of the Moral Poems the first is the "Choice of Hercules," from Xenophon. The numbers are smooth, the diction elegant, and the thoughts just; but something of vigour perhaps is still to be wished, which it might have had by brevity and compression. His "Fate of Delicacy" has an air of gaiety, but not a very pointed general moral. His blank verses, those that can read them may probably find to be like the blank verses of his neighbours. "Love and Honour" is derived from the old ballad, "Did you not hear of a Spanish Lady"—I wish it well enough to wish it were in rhyme.

The "School-mistress," of which I know not what claim it has to stand among the Moral Works, is surely the most pleasing of Shenstone's performances.[1] The adoption of a particular style, in light and short compositions, contributes much to the increase of pleasure: we are entertained at once with two imitations, of nature in the sentiments, of the original author in the style, and between them the mind is kept in perpetual employment.

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

[1] Mr. Cunningham states that this was a blunder of Dodsley's, Shenstone having added a *ludicrous* index "to show (fools) that I am in jest." Mr. D'Israeli printed this index in his *Curiosities of Literature*.

YOUNG.

YOUNG.

THE following life was written,[1] at my request, by a gentleman [2] who had better information than I could easily have obtained; and the publick will perhaps wish that I had solicited and obtained more such favours from him.

"DEAR SIR,

"In consequence of our different conversations about authentick materials for the Life of Young, I send you the following detail. It is not, I confess, immediately in the line of my profession; but hard indeed is our fate at the bar, if we may not call a few hours now-and-then our own.

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

Edward Young was born at Upham, near Winchester, in June 1681. He was the son of Edward Young, at that time Fellow of Winchester College and Rector of Upham; who was the son of Jo. Young of Woodhay in Berkshire, styled by Wood *gentleman*. In September 1682 the Poet's father was collated to the prebend of Gillingham Minor, in the church of Sarum, by bishop Ward.

[1] See Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iv. p. 12.

[2] Mr. (afterwards Sir) Herbert Croft.

When Ward's faculties were impaired by age, his duties were necessarily performed by others. We learn from Wood, that, at a visitation of Sprat, July the 12th, 1686, the Prebendary preached a Latin sermon, afterwards published, with which the Bishop was so pleased, that he told the Chapter he was concerned to find the preacher had one of the worst prebends in their church. Some time after this, in consequence of his merit and reputation, or of the interest of Lord Bradford, to whom, in 1702, he dedicated two volumes of sermons, he was appointed chaplain to King William and Queen Mary, and preferred to the deanery of Sarum. Jacob, who wrote in 1720, says, he was chaplain and clerk of the closet to the late Queen, who honoured him by standing godmother to the Poet. His fellowship of Winchester he resigned in favour of a Mr. Harris, who married his only daughter. The Dean died at Sarum, after a short illness, in 1705, in the sixty-third year of his age. On the Sunday after his decease Bishop Burnet preached at the cathedral, and began his sermon with saying, "Death has been of late walking round us, and making breach upon breach upon us, and has now carried away the head of this body with a stroke; so that he, whom you saw a week ago distributing the holy mysteries, is now laid in the dust. But he still lives in the many excellent directions he has left us, both how to live and how to die."

The Dean placed his son upon the foundation at Winchester College, where he had himself been educated. At this school Edward Young remained till the election after his eighteenth birth-day, the period at which those upon the foundation are superannuated. Whether he did not betray his abilities early in life, or his masters had not skill enough to discover in their pupil any marks of genius for which he merited reward, or no vacancy at Oxford afforded them an opportunity to bestow upon him the

reward provided for merit by William of Wykeham; certain it is, that to an Oxford fellowship our Poet did not succeed. By chance, or by choice, New College does not number among its Fellows him who wrote the "Night Thoughts."

On the 13th of October, 1703, he was entered an Independent Member of New College, that he might live at little expence in the Warden's lodgings, who was a particular friend of his father, till he should be qualified to stand for a fellowship at All-souls. In a few months the warden of New College died. He then removed to Corpus College. The President of this Society, from regard also for his father, invited him thither, in order to lessen his academical expences. In 1708, he was nominated to a law fellowship at All-souls by Archbishop Tennison, into whose hands it came by devolution.—Such repeated patronage, while it justifies Burnet's praise of the father, reflects credit on the conduct of the son. The manner in which it was exerted seems to prove that the father did not leave behind him much wealth.

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

Soon after he went to Oxford, he discovered, it is said, an inclination for pupils. Whether he ever commenced tutor is not known. None has hitherto boasted to have received his academical instruction from the author of the "Night Thoughts."

It is certain that his college was proud of him no less as a scholar than as a poet; for, in 1716, when the foundation of the Codrington Library was laid, two years after he had taken his Batchelor's degree, he was appointed to speak the Latin oration. This is at least particular for being dedicated in English *To the Ladies of the Codrington Family.* To these Ladies he says, "that he was unavoidably flung

into a singularity, by being obliged to write an epistle-dedicatory void of common-place, and such an one as was never published before by any author whatever:—that this practice absolved them from any obligation of reading what was presented to them;—and that the bookseller approved of it, because it would make people stare, was absurd enough, and perfectly right."

Of this oration there is no appearance in his own edition of his works; and prefixed to an edition by Curll and Tonson, in 1741, is a letter from Young to Curll, if Curll may be credited, dated December the 9th, 1739, wherein he says he has not leisure to review what he formerly wrote, and adds, "I have not the 'Epistle to Lord Lansdowne.' If you will take my advice, I would have you omit that, and the oration on *Codrington*. I think the collection will sell better without them."

There are who relate, that, when first Young found himself independent, and his own master at All-souls, he was not the ornament to religion and morality which he afterwards became.

The authority of his father, indeed, had ceased some time before by his death; and Young was certainly not ashamed to be patronized by the infamous Wharton. But Wharton befriended in Young, perhaps, the poet, and particularly the tragedian. If virtuous authors must be patronized only by virtuous peers, who shall point them out?

Yet Pope is said by Ruffhead [1] to have told Warburton, that "Young had much of a sublime genius, though without common sense; so that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombast. This made him, pass a *foolish youth*, the sport of peers and poets: but his having a very good heart enabled him to

[1] Ruffhead's *Life of Pope*, p. 291.

support the clerical character when he assumed it, first with decency, and afterwards with honour."

They who think ill of Young's morality in the early part of his life, may perhaps be wrong; but Tindal could not err in his opinion of Young's warmth and ability in the cause of religion. Tindal used to spend much of his time at All-souls. "The other boys," said the atheist, "I can always answer, because I always know whence they have their arguments, which I have read an hundred times; but that fellow Young is continually pestering me with something of his own."

After all, Tindal and the censurers of Young may be reconcileable. Young might, for two or three years, have tried that kind of life, in which his natural principles would not suffer him to wallow long. If this were so, he has left behind him not only his evidence in favour of virtue, but the potent testimony of experience against vice.

We shall soon see that one of his earliest productions was more serious than what comes from the generality of unfledged poets.

Young perhaps ascribed the good fortune of Addison to the "Poem to his Majesty," presented, with a copy of verses, to Somers; and hoped that he also might soar to wealth and honours on wings of the same kind. His first poetical flight was when Queen Anne called up to the House[1] Lords the sons of the Earls of Northampton and Aylesbury, and added, in one day, ten others to the number of peers. In order to reconcile the people to one at least of the new Lords, he published in 1712 "An Epistle to the Right Honourable George Lord Lansdowne." In this composition the poet pours out his panegyrick with the extravagance of a young man, who thinks his present stock of wealth will never be exhausted.

The poem seems intended also to reconcile the publick to

[1] House *of* Lords.

the late peace. This is endeavoured to be done by shewing that men are slain in war, and that in peace *harvests wave, and commerce swells her sail.* If this be humanity, is it politicks? Another purpose of this epistle appears to have been, to prepare the publick for the reception of some tragedy of his own. His Lordship's patronage, he says, will not let him *repent his passion for the stage;*—and the particular praise bestowed on "Othello" and "Oroonoko" looks as if some such character as *Zanga* was even then in contemplation. The affectionate mention of the death of his friend Harrison of New College, at the close of this poem, is an instance of Young's art, which displayed itself so wonderfully some time afterwards in the "Night Thoughts," of making the publick a party in his private sorrow.

Should justice call upon you to censure this poem, it ought at least to be remembered that he did not insert it into his works; and that in the letter to Curll, as we have seen, he advises its omission. The booksellers, in the late Body of English Poetry, should have distinguished what was deliberately rejected by the respective authors. This I shall be careful to do with regard to Young. "I think, says he, the following pieces in *four* volumes to be the most excuseable of all that I have written; and I wish *less apology* was needful for these. As there is no recalling what is got abroad, the pieces here republished I have revised and corrected, and rendered them as *pardonable* as it was in my power to do."

Shall the gates of repentance be shut only against literary sinners?

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

On the appearance of his "Poem on the Last Day," Addison did not return Young's compliment; but "The

Englishman" of October 29, 1713, which was probably written by Addison, speaks handsomely of this poem. The "Last Day" was published soon after the peace. The vice-chancellor's *imprimatur*, for it was first printed at Oxford, is dated May the 19th, 1713. From the Exordium Young appears to have spent some time on the composition of it. While other bards *with Britain's hero set their souls on fire*, he draws, he says, a deeper scene. Marlborough *had been* considered by Britain as her *hero;* but, when the "Last Day" was published, female cabal had blasted for a time the laurels of Blenheim. This serious poem was finished by Young as early as 1710, before he was thirty; for part of it is printed in the "Tatler." It was inscribed to the Queen, in a dedication, which, for some reason, he did not admit into his works. It tells her, that his only title to the great honour he now does himself is the obligation he formerly received from her royal indulgence.

Of this obligation nothing is now known, unless he alluded to her being his godmother. He is said indeed to have been engaged at a settled stipend as a writer for the court. In Swift's "Rhapsody on poetry" are these lines, speaking of the court——

> "Whence Gay was banish'd in disgrace,
> Where Pope will never show his face,
> Where Y—— must torture his invention
> To flatter knaves, or lose his pension."

That Y—— means Young, is clear from four other lines in the same poem.

> "Attend, ye Popes and Youngs and Gays,
> And tune your harps and strew your bays;
> Your panegyrics here provide;
> You cannot err on flattery's side."

Yet who shall say with certainty that Young was a pen-

sioner?[1] In all modern periods of this country, have not the writers on one side been regularly called Hirelings, and on the other Patriots?

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

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

Before the Queen's death, "The force of Religion, or Vanquished Love," was sent into the world. This poem is founded on the execution of Lady Jane Gray and her husband Lord Guildford in 1554—a story chosen for the subject of a tragedy by Edmund Smith, and wrought into a tragedy by Rowe. The dedication of it to the countess of Salisbury does not appear in his own edition. He hopes it

[1] Mr. Cunningham gives a copy of the warrant signed by George I. for the pension of £200 a-year, dated May 3rd, 1726.

may be some excuse for his presumption that the story could not have been read without thoughts of the Countess of Salisbury, though it had been dedicated to another. "To behold," he proceeds, "a person *only* virtuous, stirs in us a prudent regret; to behold a person *only* amiable to the sight, warms us with a religious indignation; but to turn our eyes on a Countess of Salisbury, gives us pleasure and improvement; it works a sort of miracle, occasions the biass of our nature to fall off from sin, and makes our very senses and affections converts to our religion, and promoters of our duty." His flattery was as ready for the other sex as for ours, and was at least as well adapted.

August the 27th, 1714, Pope writes to his friend Jervas, that he is just arrived from Oxford—that every one is much concerned for the Queen's death, but that no panegyricks are ready yet for the King. Nothing like friendship had yet taken place between Pope and Young; for, soon after the event which Pope mentions, Young published a poem on the Queen's death, and his Majesty's accession to the throne. It is inscribed to Addison, then secretary to the Lords Justices. Whatever was the obligation which he had formerly received from Anne, the poet appears to aim at something of the same sort from George. Of the poem the intention seems to have been, to shew that he had the same extravagant strain of praise for a King as for a Queen. To discover, at the very outset of a foreigner's reign, that the Gods bless his new subjects in such a King, is something more than praise. Neither was this deemed one of his *excuseable pieces*. We do not find it in his works.[1]

Young's father had been well acquainted with Lady Anne Wharton, the first wife of Thomas Wharton, Esq.; afterwards Marquis of Wharton—a Lady celebrated for

[1] That is, in the edition of his Works published by the poet himself in 1762, 4 vols. 12mo.

her poetical talents by Burnet and by Waller. To the Dean of Sarum's visitation sermon, already mentioned, were added some verses "by that excellent poetess Mrs. Anne Wharton," upon its being translated into English, at the instance of Waller, by Atwood. Wharton, after he became ennobled, did not drop the son of his old friend. In him, during the short time he lived, Young found a patron, and in his dissolute descendant a friend and a companion. The Marquis died in April 1715. The beginning of the next year the young Marquis set out upon his travels, from which he returned in about a twelvemonth. The beginning of 1717 carried him to Ireland; where, says the Biographia, "on the score of his extraordinary qualities, he had the honour done him of being admitted, though under age, to take his seat in the House of Lords."

With this unhappy character it is not unlikely that Young went to Ireland. From his Letter to Richardson on "Original Composition," it is clear he was, at some period of his life, in that country. "I remember," says he, in that Letter, speaking of Swift, "as I and others were taking with him an evening walk, about a mile out of *Dublin*, he stopt short; we passed on; but, perceiving he did not follow us, I went back, and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upward at a noble elm, which in its uppermost branches was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it," he said, "I shall be like that tree, I shall die at top."—Is it not probable, that this visit to Ireland was paid when he had an opportunity of going thither with his avowed friend and patron?

From "The Englishman" it appears that a tragedy by Young was in the theatre so early as 1713. Yet "Busiris" was not brought upon Drury-Lane Stage till 1719. It was inscribed to the Duke of Newcastle,[1] "because the late in-

[1] Afterwards Prime Minister, died 1768.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

stances he had received of his Grace's undeserved and uncommon favour, in an affair of some consequence, foreign to the theatre, had taken from him the privilege of chusing a patron." The Dedication he afterwards suppressed.

"Busiris" was followed in the year 1721 by "The Revenge." Left at liberty now to chuse his patron, he dedicated this famous tragedy to the Duke of Wharton. "Your Grace," says the Dedication, "has been pleased to make yourself accessary to the following scenes, not only by suggesting the most beautiful incident in them, but by making all possible provision for the success of the whole."

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

Dryden dedicated "Marriage à la Mode" to Wharton's infamous relation Rochester; whom he acknowledges not only as the defender of his poetry, but as the promoter of his fortune. Young concludes his address to Wharton thus—"My present fortune is his bounty, and my future his care; which I will venture to say will be always remembered to his honour, since he, I know, intended his generosity as an encouragement to merit, though, through his very pardonable partiality to one who bears him so sincere a duty and respect, I happen to receive the benefit of it." That he ever had such a patron as Wharton, Young took all the pains in his power to conceal from the world, by excluding this dedication from his works. He should have remembered, that he at the same time concealed his obligation to Wharton for *the most beautiful incident* in what is surely not his least beautiful composition. The passage just quoted is, in a poem afterwards addressed to Walpole, literally copied:

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

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

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

It will surprize you to see me cite second Atkins, Case 136, Stiles *versus* the Attorney General, 14 March 1740; as authority for the Life of a Poet. But Biographers do not always find such certain guides as the oaths of those whose lives they write. Chancellor Hardwicke was to determine whether two annuities, granted by the Duke of Wharton to Young, were for legal considerations. One was dated the 24th of March 1719, and accounted for his Grace's bounty in a style princely and commendable, if not legal—"considering that the publick good is advanced by the encouragement of learning and the polite arts, and being pleased therein with the attempts of Dr. Young, in consideration thereof, and of the love he bore him, &c." The other was dated the 10th of July, 1722.

Young, on his examination, swore that he quitted the Exeter family, and refused an annuity of 100*l.* which had been offered him for his life if he would continue tutor to Lord Burleigh, upon the pressing solicitations of the Duke of Wharton, and his Grace's assurances of providing for him in a much more ample manner. It also appeared

that the Duke had given him a bond for 600*l.* dated the 15th of March 1721, in consideration of his taking several journies, and being at great expences, in order to be chosen member of the House of Commons at the Duke's desire, and in consideration of his not taking two livings of 200*l.* and 400*l.* in the gift of All-souls College, on his Grace's promises of serving and advancing him in the world.

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

In 1719 he lamented the death of Addison, in a Letter addressed to their common friend Tickell. For the secret history of the following lines, if they contain any, it is now vain to seek:

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

From your account of Tickell it appears that he and Young used to "communicate to each other whatever verses they wrote, even to the least things."

In 1719 appeared a "Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job." Parker, to whom it is dedicated, had not long, by means of the seals, been qualified for a patron. Of this

work the author's opinion may be known from his Letter to Curll: "You seem, in the Collection you propose, to have omitted what I think may claim the first place in it; I mean 'a Translation from Part of Job,' printed by Mr. Tonson." The Dedication, which was only suffered to appear in Tonson's edition, while it speaks with satisfaction of his present retirement, seems to make an unusual struggle to escape from retirement. But every one who sings in the dark does not sing from joy. It is addressed, in no common strain of flattery, to a Chancellor, of whom he clearly appears to have had no kind of knowledge.

Of his Satires it would not have been impossible to fix the dates without the assistance of first editions, which, as you had occasion to observe in your account of Dryden, are with difficulty found. We must then have referred to the Poems, to discover when they were written. For these internal notes of time we should not have referred in vain. The first Satire laments that "Guilt's chief foe in Addison is fled." The second, addressing himself, asks,

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

The Satires were originally published separately in folio, under the title of "The Universal Passion." These passages fix the appearance of the first to about 1725, the time at which it came out. As Young seldom suffered his pen to dry, after he had once dipped it in poetry, we may conclude that he began his Satires soon after he had written the "Paraphrase on Job." The last Satire was certainly finished in the beginning of the year 1726. In December 1725 the King, in his passage from Helvoetsluys, escaped with great difficulty from a storm by landing at Rye; and the conclusion of the Satire turns the escape into a miracle, in such an encomiastick strain of compliment as poetry too often seeks to pay to royalty.

From the sixth of these poems we learn,

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

since the grateful poet tells us in the next couplet,

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

Her Majesty had stood godmother and given her name to a daughter of the Lady whom Young married in 1731.

The fifth Satire, "On Women," was not published till 1727; and the sixth not till 1728.

To these Poems, when, in 1728, he gathered them into one publication, he prefixed a Preface; in which he observes, that "no man can converse much in the world but, at what he meets with, he must either be insensible or grieve, or be angry or smile. Now to smile at it, and turn it into ridicule," adds he, "I think most eligible, as it hurts ourselves least, and gives vice and folly the greatest offence.—Laughing at the misconduct of the world, will, in a great measure, ease us of any more disagreeable passion about it. One passion is more effectually driven out by another than by reason, whatever some teach." So wrote, and so of course thought, the lively and witty Satirist at the grave age of almost fifty, who, many years earlier in life, wrote the "Last Day." After all, Swift pronounced of these Satires, that they should either have been more angry, or more merry.

Is it not somewhat singular that Young preserved, without any palliation, this Preface, so bluntly decisive in favour of laughing at the world, in the same collection of his works which contains the mournful, angry, gloomy "Night Thoughts?"

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

the addition, "that Poetry, like Love, is a little subject to blindness, which makes her mistake her way to preferments and honours; and that she retains a dutiful admiration of her father's family; but divides her favours, and generally lives with her mother's relations." Poetry, it is true, did not lead Young to preferments or to honours; but was there not something like blindness in the flattery which he sometimes forced her, and her sister Prose, to utter? She was always, indeed, taught by him to entertain a most dutiful admiration of riches; but surely Young though nearly related to Poetry, had no connexion with her whom Plato makes the mother of Love. That he could not well complain of being related to Poverty appears clearly from the frequent bounties which his gratitude records, and from the wealth which he had left behind him. By "The Universal Passion" he acquired no vulgar fortune, more than three thousand pounds. A considerable sum has already been swallowed up in the South-Sea. For this loss he took the vengeance of an author. His Muse makes poetical use more than once of a "South-Sea Dream."

It is related by Mr. Spence, in his "Manuscript Anecdotes,"[1] on the authority of Mr. Rawlinson, that Young, upon the publication of his "Universal Passion," received from the Duke of Grafton[2] two thousand pounds; and that, when one of his friends exclaimed, *Two thousand pounds for a poem!* he said it was the best bargain he ever made in his life, for the poem was worth four thousand.

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

[1] *Anecdotes, Observations and Characters of Books and Men, collected from the Conversation of Mr. Pope and others*, ed. Singer, 1820; also by Ed. Malone in the same year.

[2] Mr. Cunningham alters Grafton to Wharton.

After inscribing his Satires, not without the hope of preferments and honours, to the Duke of Dorset, Mr. Dodington, Mr. Spencer Compton, Lady Elizabeth Germain, and Sir Robert Walpole, he returns to plain panegyric. In 1726 he addressed a poem to Sir Robert Walpole, of which the title sufficiently explains the intention. If Young was a ready celebrator, he did not endeavour, or did not choose, to be a lasting one. "The Instalment" is among the pieces he did not admit into the number of his *excuseable writings*. Yet it contains a couplet which pretends to pant after the power of bestowing immortality:

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

The bounty of the former reign seems to have been continued, possibly increased, in this.[1] Whatever it was, the poet thought he deserved it;—for he was not ashamed to acknowledge what, without his acknowledgement, would now perhaps never have been known:

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

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

The reign of the new monarch was ushered in by Young with "Ocean, an Ode." The hint of it was taken from the royal speech, which recommended the increase and encouragement of the seamen; that they might be *invited, rather than be compelled by force and violence, to enter into the service of their country*;—a plan which humanity must lament that policy has not even yet been able, or willing, to carry into execution. Prefixed to the original publica-

[1] Mr. P. Cunningham states that it was continued, but not increased. He also prints a letter of Young's in his most abject mood as a servile courtier.

were an "Ode to the King," "Pater Patriæ," and an "Essay on Lyrick Poetry." It is but justice to confess, that he preserved neither of them; and that the ode itself, which in the first edition, and in the last, consists of seventy-three stanzas, in the author's own edition is reduced to forty-nine. Amongst the omitted passages is "A Wish," that concluded the poem, which few would have suspected Young of forming; and of which few, after having formed it, would confess something like their shame by suppression.

It stood originally so high in the author's opinion, that he intitled the Poem, "Ocean, an Ode. *Concluding with a Wish.*" This wish consists of thirteen stanzas. The first runs thus:

"O may I *steal*
Along the *vale*
Of humble life, secure from foes!
My friend sincere,
My judgment clear,
And gentle business my repose!"

The three last stanzas are not more remarkable for just rhymes; but, altogether, they will make rather a curious page in the life of Young.

"Prophetic schemes,
And golden dreams,
May I, unsanguine, cast away!
Have what I *have*,
And live, not *leave*,
Enamoured of the present day!

"My hours my own!
My faults unknown!
My chief revenue in content!
Then leave one *beam*
Of honest *fame!*
And scorn the laboured monument!

"Unhurt my urn
Till that great *turn*
When mighty nature's self shall die,
Time cease to glide,
With human pride,
Sunk in the ocean of eternity!"

It is whimsical that he, who was soon to bid adieu to rhyme, should fix upon a measure in which rhyme abounds even to satiety. Of this he said, in his "Essay on Lyrick Poetry," prefixed to the Poem,—"For the more *harmony* likewise I chose the frequent return of rhyme, which laid me under great difficulties. But difficulties, overcome, give grace and pleasure. Nor can I account for the *pleasure of rhyme in general* (of which the moderns are too fond) but from this truth." Yet the moderns surely deserve not much censure for their fondness of what, by his own confession, affords pleasure, and abounds in harmony.

The next paragraph in his *essay* did not occur to him when he talked of *that great turn* in the stanza just quoted. "But then the writer must take care that the difficulty is overcome. That is, he must make rhyme consistent with as perfect sense and expression, as could be expected if he was perfectly free from that shackle."

Another part of this Essay will convict the following stanza of, what every reader will discover in it, "involuntary burlesque."

"The northern blast,
The shattered mast,
The syrt, the whirlpool, and the rock,
The breaking spout,
The *stars gone out*,
The boiling streight, the monster's shock."

But would the English poets fill quite so many volumes, if all their productions were to be tried, like this, by an

elaborate essay on each particular species of poetry of which they exhibit specimens?

If Young be not a Lyric poet, he is at least a critic in that sort of poetry; and, if his Lyric poetry can be proved bad, it was first proved so by his own criticism. This surely is candid.

Milbourne was styled by Pope *the fairest of Critics*, only because he exhibited his own version of Virgil to be compared with Dryden's which he condemned, and with which every reader had it otherwise in his power to compare it. Young was surely not the most unfair of poets for prefixing to a Lyric composition an essay on Lyric Poetry so just and impartial as to condemn himself.

We shall soon come to a work, before which we find indeed no critical Essay, but which disdains to shrink from the touchstone of the severest critic; and which certainly, as I remember to have heard you say, if it contains some of the worst, contains also some of the best things in the language.

Soon after the appearance of "Ocean," when he was almost fifty, Young entered into Orders. In April 1728, not long after he put on the gown, he was appointed chaplain to George the Second.

The tragedy of "The Brothers," which was already in rehearsal, he immediately withdrew from the stage. The managers resigned it with some reluctance to the delicacy of the new clergyman. The Epilogue to "The Brothers," the only appendage to any of his three plays which he added himself, is, I believe, the only one of the kind. He calls it an *historical* Epilogue. Finding that *Guilt's dreadful close his narrow scene denied*, he, in a manner, continues the tragedy in the Epilogue, and relates how Rome revenged the shade of Demetrius, and punished Perseus *for this night's deed*.

Of Young's taking Orders something is told by the

biographer of Pope,[1] which places the easiness and simplicity of the poet in a singular light. When he determined on the Church, he did not address himself to Sherlock, to Atterbury, or to Hare, for the best instructions in Theology, but to Pope; who, in a youthful frolick, advised the diligent perusal of "Thomas Aquinas." With this treasure Young retired from interruption to an obscure place in the suburbs. His poetical guide to godliness hearing nothing of him during half a year, and apprehending he might have carried the jest too far, sought after him, and found him just in time to prevent what Ruffhead calls *an irretrievable derangement.*

That attachment to his favourite study which made him think a poet the surest guide in his new profession, left him little doubt whether poetry was the surest path to its honours and preferments. Not long indeed after he took Orders, he published in prose, 1728, "A true Estimate of Human Life," dedicated, notwithstanding the Latin quotations with which it abounds, to the Queen; and a sermon preached before the House of Commons, 1729, on the martyrdom of King Charles, intituled, "An Apology for Princes, or the Reverence due to Government." But the "Second Discourse," the counterpart of his "Estimate," without which it cannot be called "a *true* estimate," though in 1728 it was announced as "soon to be published," never appeared; and his old friends the Muses were not forgotten. In 1730 he relapsed to poetry, and sent into the world "Imperium Pelagi; a Naval Lyric, written in imitation of Pindar's Spirit, occasioned by His Majesty's Return from Hanover, September, 1729, and the succeeding Peace." It is inscribed to the Duke of Chandos. In the Preface we are told, that the Ode is the most spirited kind of Poetry, and that the Pindaric is the most spirited kind

[1] Ruffhead, *Life of Pope*, p. 291.

of Ode. "This I speak," he adds, with sufficient candour, "at my own very great peril. But truth has an eternal title to our confession, though we are sure to suffer by it." Behold, again, *the fairest of poets*. Young's "Imperium Pelagi," as well as his tragedies, was ridiculed in Fielding's "Tom Thumb;" but, let us not forget that it was one of his pieces which the author of the "Night Thoughts" deliberately refused to own.

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

In July 1730 he was presented by his College to the rectory of Welwyn[1] in Hertfordshire. In May 1731 he married Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the Earl of Litchfield, and widow of Colonel Lee. His connexion with this Lady arose from his father's acquaintance, already mentioned, with Lady Anne Wharton, who was coheiress of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley in Oxfordshire. Poetry had lately been taught by Addison to aspire to the arms of nobility, though not with extraordinary happiness.

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

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

Young enjoys the credit of what is called an "Extempore Epigram" on Voltaire;[2] who, when he was in Eng-

[1] For an account of the visit paid by Johnson and Boswell to Young's son at Welwyn, see Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iv. pp. 70, 71.

[2] See Spence by Singer, p. 375.

land, ridiculed, in the company of the jealous English poet, Milton's allegory of "Sin and Death"—

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

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

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

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

> "While with your Dodington retired you sit,
> Charm'd with his flowing Burgundy and wit," &c.

Thomson, in his "Autumn," addressing Mr. Dodington, calls his seat the seat of the Muses,

> "Where, in the secret bower and winding walk,
> For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay."

The praises Thomson bestows but a few lines before on Philips, the second

> "Who nobly durst, in rhyme-unfettered verse,
> With British freedom sing the British song;"

added to Thomson's example and success, might perhaps induce Young, as we shall see presently, to write his great work without rhyme.

In 1734 he published "The foreign Address, or the best

Argument for Peace; occasioned by the British Fleet and the Posture of Affairs. Written in the Character of a Sailor." It is not to be found in the author's four volumes.

He now appears to have given up all hopes of overtaking Pindar, and perhaps at last resolved to turn his ambition to some original species of poetry. This poem concludes with a formal farewel to Ode, which few of Young's readers will regret:

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

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

Of his wife he was deprived in 1741. She had lost in her life-time, at seventeen years of age, an amiable daughter, who was just married to Mr. Temple, son of Lord Palmerston. This was one of her three children by Colonel Lee. Mr. Temple did not long remain after his wife.* Mr. and Mrs. Temple have always been considered as Philander and Narcissa. If they were, they did not die long before Lady E. Young. How suddenly and how nearly together the deaths of the three persons whom he laments, happened, none who has read the "Night Thoughts," and who has not read them? needs to be informed.

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

To the sorrow Young felt at his losses we are indebted for

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

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

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

> "I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid North,
> And bore her nearer to the sun."

The poet seems to dwell with more melancholy on the deaths of Philander and Narcissa, than of his wife. But it is only for this reason. He who runs and reads may remember, that in the "Night Thoughts" Philander and Narcissa are often mentioned, and often lamented. To recollect lamentations over the author's wife, the memory must have been charged with distinct passages. This Lady brought him one child, Frederick, now living, to whom the Prince of Wales was godfather.

That domestick grief is, in the first instance, to be thanked for these ornaments to our language it is impossible to deny. Nor would it be common hardiness to contend, that worldly discontent had no hand in these joint productions of poetry and piety. Yet am I by no means sure that, at any rate, we should not have had something of the same colour from Young's pencil, notwithstanding the liveliness of his satires. In so long a life, causes for discontent and occasions for grief must have occurred. It is not clear to me that his Muse was not sitting upon the watch for the first which happened. "Night Thoughts" were not uncommon to her, even when first she visited the poet, and at a time when he himself was remarkable neither

for gravity nor gloominess. In his "Last Day," almost his earliest poem, he calls her the *melancholy Maid*,

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

In the prayer which concludes the second book of the same poem, he says——

> "—Oh! permit the gloom of solemn night
> To sacred thought may forcibly invite.
> Oh! how divine to tread the milky way,
> To the bright palace of Eternal Day!"

When Young was writing a tragedy, Grafton[1] is said by Spence to have sent him a human skull, with a candle in it, as a lamp; and the poet is reported to have used it.

What he calls "The *true* estimate of Human Life," which has already been mentioned, exhibits only the wrong side of the tapestry; and being asked why he did not show the right, he is said to have replied he could not—though by others it has been told me that this was finished, but that a Lady's monkey tore it in pieces before there existed any copy.

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

From them who answer in the affirmative it should not be concealed that, though *Invisibilia non decipiunt* was inscribed upon a deception in Young's grounds, and *Ambulantes in horto audiêrunt vocem Dei* on a building in his garden, his parish was indebted to the good humour of the author of the "Night Thoughts" for an assembly and a bowling green.

[1] This should be Wharton, see Spence ed. Singer, p. 255.

Whether you think with me, I know not; but the famous *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, always appeared to me to savour more of female weakness than of manly reason. He that has too much feeling to speak ill of the dead, who, if they cannot defend themselves, are at least ignorant of his abuse, will not hesitate by the most wanton calumny to destroy the quiet, the reputation, the fortune of the living. Censure is not heard beneath the tomb any more than praise. *De mortuis nil nisi verum—De vivis nil nisi bonum* —would approach perhaps much nearer to good sense. After all, the few handfuls of remaining dust which once composed the body of the author of the "Night Thoughts," feel not much concern whether Young passes now for a man of sorrow, or for a *fellow of infinite jest*. To this favour must come the whole family of Yorick.—His immortal part, wherever that now dwells, is still less solicitous on this head.

But to a son of worth and sensibility it is of some little consequence whether contemporaries believe, and posterity be taught to believe, that his debauched and reprobate life cast a Stygian gloom over the evening of his father's days, saved him the trouble of feigning a character completely detestable, and succeeded at last in bringing his *grey hairs with sorrow to the grave*.

The humanity of the world, little satisfied with inventing perhaps a melancholy disposition for the father, proceeds next to invent an argument in support of their invention, and chooses that Lorenzo should be Young's own son. The "Biographia" and every account of Young pretty roundly assert this to be the fact; of the absolute impossibility of which the "Biographia" itself, in particular dates, contains undeniable evidence. Readers I know there are of a strange turn of mind, who will hereafter peruse the "Night Thoughts" with less satisfaction; who will wish they had still been deceived; who will quarrel with me for discover-

ing that no such character as their Lorenzo ever yet disgraced human nature, or broke a father's heart. Yet would these admirers of the sublime and terrible be offended, should you set them down for cruel and for savage.

Of this report, inhuman to the surviving son, if it be untrue, in proportion as the character of Lorenzo is diabolical, where are we to find the proofs? Perhaps it is clear from the poems.

From the first line to the last of the "Night Thoughts," no one expression can be discovered which betrays any thing like the father. In the second "Night" I find an expression which betrays something else; that Lorenzo was his friend; one, it is possible, of his former companions; one of the Duke of Wharton's set. The Poet styles him *gay Friend*—an appellation not very natural from a pious incensed father to such a being as he paints Lorenzo, and that being his son.

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

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

> "Lorenzo, Fortune makes her court to thee."

In the fifth "Night"—

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

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

Eighth "Night"—

"In foreign realms (for thou hast travelled far)"—

which even now does not apply to his son.

In "Night" five—

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

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

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

But, to cut short all enquiry; if any one of these passages, if any passage in the poems be applicable, my friend shall pass for Lorenzo. The son of the author of the "Night Thoughts" was not old enough, when they were written, to recriminate, or to be a father. The "Night Thoughts" were begun immediately after the mournful events of 1741. The first "Nights" appear in the books of the company of Stationers, as the property of Robert Dodsley, in 1742. The Preface to "Night" Seven is dated July the 7th, 1744. The marriage, in consequence of which the supposed Lorenzo was born, happened in May 1731. Young's child was not born till June 1733. In 1741 this Lorenzo, this finished infidel, this *father*, to whose education Vice had for some years put the last hand, was only *eight* years old.

An anecdote of this cruel sort, so open to contradiction, so impossible to be true, who could propagate? Thus easily are blasted the reputations of the living and of the dead.

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

These are questions which I do not pretend to answer. For the sake of human nature, I could wish Lorenzo to have been only the creation of the Poet's fancy—no more

than the Quintius of Anti Lucretius, *quo nomine*, says Polignac, *quemvis Atheum intellige*. That this was the case, many expressions in the "Night Thoughts" would seem to prove, did not a passage in "Night" Eight appear to shew that he had somebody in his eye for the groundwork at least of the painting. Lovelace or Lorenzo may be feigned characters; but a writer does not feign a name of which he only gives the initial letter.

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

The "Biographia,"[1] not satisfied with pointing out the son of Young, in that son's lifetime, as his father's Lorenzo, travels out of its way into the history of the son, and tells of his having been forbidden his college at Oxford for misbehaviour. How such anecdotes, were they true, tend to illustrate the life of Young, it is not easy to discover. If the son of the author of the "Night Thoughts" was indeed forbidden his college for a time, at one of our Universities, the author of "Paradise Lost" is by some supposed[2] to have been disgracefully ejected from the other. From juvenile follies who is free? But, whatever the "Biographia" chooses to relate, the son of Young experienced no dismission from his college either lasting or temporary.

Yet, were nature to indulge him with a second youth, and to leave him at the same time the experience of that which is past, he would probably spend it differently—who would not?—he would certainly be the occasion of less uneasiness to his father. But, from the same experience, he would as certainly, in the same case, be treated differently by his father.[3]

[1] The article on Young in the *Biographia Britannia* appeared in 1766.

[2] *Vid. supr.* vol. i. p. 97, for references in confutation.

[3] See Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. v. p. 232, for an account of the quarrel.

Young was a poet; poets, with reverence be it spoken, do not make the best parents. Fancy and imagination seldom deign to stoop from their heights; always stoop unwillingly to the low level of common duties. Aloof from vulgar life, they pursue their rapid flight beyond the ken of mortals, and descend not to earth but when obliged by necessity. The prose of ordinary occurrences is beneath the dignity of poetry.

He who is connected with the Author of the "Night Thoughts" only by veneration for the Poet and the Christian, may be allowed to observe, that Young is one of those concerning whom, as you remark in your account of Addison, it is proper rather to say "nothing that is false than all that is true."

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

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

> "Think no post needful that demands a knave.
> When late our civil helm was shifting hands,
> So P—— thought: think better if you can."

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

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

The Fourth "Night" was addressed by "a much-indebted Muse" to the Honourable Mr. Yorke, now Lord Hardwicke; who meant to have laid the Muse under still greater obligations, by the living of Shenfield in Essex, if it had become vacant.

The First "Night" concludes with this passage—

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

To the author of these lines was dedicated, in 1756, the first volume of an "Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope," which attempted, whether justly or not, to pluck from Pope his "Wing of Fire," and to reduce him to a rank at least one degree lower than the first class of English poets. If Young accepted and approved the dedication, he countenanced this attack upon the fame of him whom he invokes as his Muse.

Part of "paper-sparing" Pope's Third Book of the "Odyssey," deposited in the Museum, is written upon the back of a letter signed *E. Young*, which is clearly the handwriting of our Young. The letter, dated only May the 3d, seems obscure; but there can be little doubt that the friendship he requests was a literary one, and that he had the highest literary opinion of Pope. The request was a prologue, I am told.

"Dear Sir, May the 2d.

"Having been often from home, I know not if you have done me the favour of calling on me. But, be that as it will, I much want that instance of your friendship I mentioned in my last; a friendship I am very sensible I can receive from no one but yourself. I should not urge this thing so much but for very particular reasons; nor can you be at a loss to conceive how a *trifle of this nature* may be of serious moment to me; and while I am in hopes of the great advantage of your advice about it, I shall not be so absurd as to make any further step without it. I know you are much engaged, and only hope to hear of you at your entire leisure.

"I am, Sir, your most faithful,
"and obedient servant,
"E. Young."

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

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

Either the "Essay," then, was dedicated to a patron who disapproved its doctrine, which I have been told by the author was not the case; or Young, in his old age, bartered for a dedication an opinion entertained of his friend through all that part of life when he must have been best able to form opinions.

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

"Ah me! the five allotted
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long;

Of old so gracious (and let that suffice),
My very master knows me not.

*

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

*

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

*

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

*

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

Deduct from the writer's age *twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,* and you will still leave him more than 40 when he sate down to the miserable siege of *court* favour. He has before told us

"A fool at 40 is a fool indeed."

After all, the siege seems to have been raised only in consequence of what the General thought his *death bed.*

By these extraordinary Poems, written after he was sixty, of which I have been led to say so much, I hope, by the wish of doing justice to the living and the dead, it was the desire of Young to be principally known. He entitled the four volumes which he published himself, "The Works of the Author of the 'Night Thoughts.'"[1] While it is remembered that from these he excluded many of his writings, let it not be forgotten that the rejected pieces contained nothing prejudicial to the cause of virtue, or of

[1] Published in 1762. This is considered the standard text of Young.

religion. Were every thing that Young ever wrote to be published, he would only appear perhaps in a less respectable light as a poet, and more despicable as a dedicator: he would not pass for a worse christian, or for a worse man.—This enviable praise is due to Young. Can it be claimed by every writer? His dedications, after all, he had perhaps no right to suppress. They all, I believe, speak, not a little to the credit of his gratitude, of favours received; and I know not whether the author, who has once solemnly printed an acknowledgement of a favour, should not always print it.

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

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

Notwithstanding the farewell which he seemed to have taken in the "Night Thoughts" of every thing which bore the least resemblance to ambition, he dipped again in politics. In 1745 he wrote "Reflections on the publick Situation of the Kingdom, addressed to the Duke of Newcastle"—indignant, as it appears, to behold

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

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

Prefixed to the second edition of Howe's "Devout Meditations" is a Letter from Young, dated January 19, 1752, addressed to Archibald Macauly, Esq.; thanking

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

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

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

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

The lively Letter in prose on "Original Composition," addressed to Richardson the author of "Clarissa," ap-

peared in 1759. Though he despairs "of breaking through the frozen obstructions of age and care's incumbent cloud, into that flow of thought and brightness of expression which subjects so polite require;" yet is it more like the production of untamed, unbridled youth, than of jaded fourscore. Some sevenfold volumes put him in mind of Ovid's sevenfold channels of the Nile at the conflagration.

"———————— ostia septem
Pulverulenta vocant, septem sine flumine valles."[1]

Such leaden labours are like Lycurgus's[2] iron money, which was so much less in value than in bulk, that it required barns for strong boxes and a yoke of oxen to draw five hundred pounds.

If there is a famine of invention in the land, we must travel, he says, like Joseph's brethren, far for food; we must visit the remote and rich antients. But an inventive genius may safely stay at home; that, like the widow's cruse, is divinely replenished from within, and affords us a miraculous delight. He asks why it should seem altogether impossible, that Heaven's latest editions of the human mind may be the most correct and fair? And Jonson, he tells us, was very learned, as Sampson was very strong, to his own hurt. Blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himself under it.

Is this "care's incumbent cloud," or "the frozen obstructions of age?"

In this letter Pope is severely censured for his "fall from Homer's numbers, free as air, lofty and harmonious as the spheres, into childish shackles and tinkling sounds; for putting Achilles in petticoats a second time;"—but we are told that the dying swan talked over an Epic plan with Young a few weeks before his decease.

[1] Ovid, *Met.* ii. 255, 256. [2] See Plut. *Lyc.* 9.

Young's chief inducement to write this letter was, as he confesses, that he might erect a monumental marble to the memory of an old friend. He, who employed his pious pen for almost the last time in thus doing justice to the exemplary death-bed of Addison, might probably, at the close of his own life, afford no unuseful lesson for the deaths of others.

In the postscript he writes to Richardson, that he will see in his next how far Addison is an original. But no other letter appears.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Poem was accompanied by a Letter.

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

'Dear Sir,

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

"My dear Dr. Young,

"Yours, most cordially,

"MELCOMBE."

In 1762, a short time before his death, Young published "Resignation." Notwithstanding the manner in which it was really forced from him by the world, criticism has treated it with no common severity. If it shall be thought not to deserve the highest praise, on the other side of fourscore by whom, except by Newton and by Waller, has praise been merited?

To Mrs. Montagu, the famous champion of Shakspeare, I am indebted for the history of "Resignation." Observ-

ing that Mrs. Boscawen, in the midst of her grief for the loss of the admiral, derived consolation from the perusal of the "Night Thoughts," Mrs. Montagu proposed a visit to the author. From conversing with Young Mrs. Boscawen derived still further consolation, and to that visit she and the world were indebted for this poem. It compliments Mrs. Montagu in the following lines:

"Yet, write I must. A Lady sues,
How shameful her request!
My brain in labour with dull rhyme,
Her's teeming with the best!"

And again—

"A friend you have, and I the same,
Whose prudent soft address
Will bring to life those healing thoughts
Which died in your distress.

That friend, the spirit of my theme
Extracting for your ease,
Will leave to me the dreg, in thoughts
Too common; such as these."

By the same Lady I am enabled to say, in her own words, that Young's unbounded genius appeared to greater advantage in the companion, than even in the author—that the christian was in him a character still more inspired, more enraptured, more sublime than the poet—and that, in his ordinary conversation,

"—letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky."

Notwithstanding Young had said, in his "Conjectures on original Composition," [1] that "blank verse is verse un-

[1] This piece was read by the author himself to Johnson at the house of Mr. Richardson, the author of *Clarissa*. Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. v. p. 231.

fallen, uncurst; verse reclaimed, reinthroned in the true language of the Gods"—notwithstanding he administered consolation to his own grief in this immortal language—Mrs. Boscawen was comforted in rhyme.

While the poet and the christian were applying this comfort, Young had himself occasion for comfort, in consequence of the sudden death of Richardson, who was printing the former part of the poem. Of Richardson's death he says—

> "When heaven would kindly set us free,
> And earth's enchantment end;
> It takes the most effectual means,
> And robs us of a friend."

To "Resignation" was prefixed an Apology for its appearance: to which more credit is due than to the generality of such apologies, from Young's unusual anxiety that no more productions of his old age should disgrace his former fame. In his will, dated February 1760, he desires of his executors, *in a particular manner*, that all his manuscript books and writings whatever might be burned, except his book of accounts.

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

It may teach mankind the uncertainty of worldly friendships, to know that Young, either by surviving those he loved, or by outliving their affections, could only recollect the names of two friends, his housekeeper and a hatter, to mention in his will; and it may serve to repress that testamentary pride, which too often seeks for sounding names and titles, to be informed that the author of the "Night Thoughts" did not blush to leave a legacy to his "*friend*

Henry Stevens, a hatter at the Temple-gate." Of these two remaining friends, one went before Young. But, at eighty-four "where," as he asks in "The Centaur," "is that world into which we were born?"

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

Young and his housekeeper were ridiculed, with more ill-nature than wit, in a kind of novel published by Kidgell in 1755, called "The Card," under the names of Dr. Elwes and Mrs. Fusby.

In April 1765, at an age to which few attain, a period was put to the life of Young.

He had performed no duty for the last three or four years of his life, but he retained his intellects to the last.

Much is told in the "Biographia," which I know not to have been true, of the manner of his burial—of the master and children of a charity-school, which he founded in his parish, who neglected to attend their benefactor's corpse; and of a bell which was not caused to toll so often as upon those occasions bells usually toll. Had that humanity, which is here lavished upon things of little consequence either to the living or to the dead, been shewn in its proper place to the living, I should have had less to say about Lorenzo. They who lament that these misfortunes happened to Young, forget the praise he bestows upon Socrates, in the Preface to "Night" Seven, for resenting his friend's request about his funeral.

During some part of his life Young was abroad, but I have not been able to learn any particulars.

In his seventh Satire he says,

"When, after battle, I the field have *seen*
Spread o'er with ghastly shapes which once were *men*."

And it is known that from this or from some other *field* he once wandered into the enemy's camp, with a classic in his hand, which he was reading intently; and had some difficulty to prove that he was only an absent poet and not a spy.

The curious reader of Young's life will naturally inquire to what it was owing, that, though he lived almost forty years after he took Orders, which included one whole reign uncommonly long, and part of another, he was never thought worthy of the least preferment. The author of the "Night Thoughts" ended his days upon a Living which came to him from his College without any favour, and to which he probably had an eye when he determined on the Church. To satisfy curiosity of this kind is, at this distance of time, far from easy. The parties themselves know not often, at the instant, why they are neglected, nor why they are preferred. The neglect of Young is by some ascribed to his having attached himself to the Prince of Wales, and to his having preached an offensive sermon at St. James's. It has been told me, that he had two hundred a year in the late reign, by the patronage of Walpole; and that, whenever the King was reminded of Young, the only answer was, *he has a pension*. All the light thrown on this inquiry, by the following Letter from Secker, only serves to shew at what a late period of life the author of the "Night Thoughts" solicited preferment.

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

"Good Dr. Young,

"I have long wondered, that more suitable notice of your great merit hath not been taken by persons in power. But how to remedy the omission I see not. No encourage-

ment hath ever been given me to mention things of this nature to his Majesty. And therefore, in all likelihood, the only consequence of doing it would be weakening the little influence, which else I may possibly have on some other occasions. Your fortune and your reputation set you above the need of advancement; and your sentiments, above that concern for it, on your own account, which, on that of the Public, is sincerely felt by

"Your loving Brother,

"THO^{s}. CANT."

At last, at the age of fourscore, he was appointed, in 1761, Clerk of the Closet to the Princess Dowager.[1]

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

Again, Young was a poet; and again, with reverence be it spoken, poets by profession do not always make the best clergymen. If the author of the "Night Thoughts" composed many sermons, he did not oblige the public with many.

Besides, in the latter part of life, Young was fond of holding himself out for a man retired from the world. But he seemed to have forgotten that the same verse which contains *oblitus meorum*, contains also *obliviscendus & illis.* The brittle chain of worldly friendship and patronage is broken as effectually, when one goes beyond the length of it, as when the other does. To the vessel which is sailing from the shore, it only appears that the shore also recedes; in life it is truly thus. He who

[1] The mother of George III.

retires from the world, will find himself, in reality, deserted as fast, if not faster, by the world. The publick is not to be treated as the coxcomb treats his mistress—to be threatened with desertion, in order to increase fondness.

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

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

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

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

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

report has gained belief in the world, argues, were it not sufficiently known, that the author of the "Night Thoughts" bore some resemblance to *Adams*.

The attention Young bestowed upon the perusal of books is not unworthy imitation. When any passage pleased him, he appears to have folded down the leaf. On these passages he bestowed a second reading. But the labours of man are too frequently vain. Before he returned, a second time, to much of what he had once approved, he died. Many of his books, which I have seen, are by those notes of approbation so swelled beyond their real bulk, that they will not shut.[1]

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

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

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

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

Is it not strange that the author of the "Night

[1] Boswell mentions especially Dr. Young's copy of the *Rambler* as an example of this cruelly destructive mode of expressing his admiration.—Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. i. p. 162.

Thoughts" has inscribed no monument to the memory of his lamented wife? Yet what marble will endure as long as the poems?

Such, my good friend, is the account I have been able to collect of Young.[1] That it may be long before any thing like what I have just transcribed be necessary for you, is the sincere wish of,

Dear Sir,

Your greatly obliged Friend,

HERBERT CROFT, Jun.

Lincoln's Inn, Sept. 1780.

P. S. This account of Young was seen by you in manuscript you know, Sir; and, though I could not prevail on you to make any alterations, you insisted on striking out one passage, only because it said, that, if I did not wish you to live long for your sake, I did for the sake of myself and of the world. But this postscript you will not see before it is printed; and I will say here, in spite of you, how I feel myself honoured and bettered by your friendship—and that, if I do credit to the church, after which I always longed, and for which I am now going to give in exchange the bar, though not at so late a period of life as Young took Orders, it will be owing, in no small measure, to my having had the happiness of calling the author of "The Rambler" my friend.

H. C."

Oxford, Sept. 1782.

Of Young's Poems it is difficult to give any general character; for he has no uniformity of manner: one of his

[1] Burke said of this *Life*, "No, no, it is *not* a good imitation of Johnson; it has all his pomp without his force: it has all the nodosities of the oak without its strength." "It has all the contortions of the Sibyl without the inspiration."—Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iv. p. 21.

pieces has no great resemblance to another. He began to write early, and continued long; and at different times had different modes of poetical excellence in view. His numbers are sometimes smooth, and sometimes rugged; his style is sometimes concatenated, and sometimes abrupt; sometimes diffusive, and sometimes concise. His plan seems to have started in his mind at the present moment, and his thoughts appear the effects of chance, sometimes adverse, and sometimes lucky, with very little operation of judgement.

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

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

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

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

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

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

In his "Night Thoughts" he has exhibited a very wide display of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and striking allusions, a wilderness of thought, in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verse could not be changed for rhyme but with disadvantage. The wild diffusion of the sentiments, and the digressive sallies of imagination, would have been compressed and restrained by confinement to rhyme. The excellence of this work is not exactness, but copiousness; particular lines are not to be regarded; the power is in the whole, and in the whole there is a magnificence like that ascribed to Chinese Plantation, the magnificence of vast extent and endless diversity.

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

His Tragedies not making part of the Collection, I had forgotten, till Mr. Steevens recalled them to my thoughts by remarking, that he seemed to have one favourite catastrophe, as his three Plays all concluded with lavish suicide; a method by which, as Dryden remarked, a poet easily rids his scene of persons whom he wants not to keep alive. In "Busiris" there are the greatest ebullitions of imagination; but the pride of Busiris is such as no other man can have, and the whole is too remote from known life to raise either grief, terror, or indignation. The "Revenge" approaches much nearer to human practices and manners, and therefore keeps possession of the stage: the first design seems suggested by "Othello;" but the reflections, the incidents, and the diction, are original. The moral observations are so introduced, and so expressed, as to have all the novelty that can be required. Of "The Brothers" I may be allowed to say nothing, since nothing was ever said of it by the Publick.

It must be allowed of Young's poetry, that it abounds in thought, but without much accuracy or selection. When he lays hold of an illustration, he pursues it beyond expectation, sometimes happily, as in his parallel of "Quicksilver" with "Pleasure," which I have heard repeated with approbation by a Lady,[1] of whose praise he would have been justly proud, and which is very ingenious, very subtle, and almost exact; but sometimes he is less lucky, as when, in his "Night Thoughts," having it dropped into his mind, that the orbs, floating in space, might be called the *cluster* of Creation, he thinks on a cluster of grapes, and says, that they all hang on the great Vine, drinking the *nectareous juice of immortal Life.*

His conceits are sometimes yet less valuable; in the "Last Day," he hopes to illustrate the re-assembly of the atoms that compose the human body at the *Trump of*

[1] Mrs. Thrale.

Doom, by the collection of bees into a swarm at the tinkling of a pan.

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

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

Let burlesque try to go beyond him.

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

His versification is his own, neither his blank nor his rhyming lines have any resemblance to those of former writers: he picks up no hemistichs, he copies no favourite expressions; he seems to have laid up no stores of thought or diction, but to owe all to the fortuitous suggestions of the present moment. Yet I have reason to believe that, when once he had formed a new design, he then laboured it with very patient industry, and that he composed with great labour, and frequent revisions.

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

MALLET.

MALLET.

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

He was by his original one of the Macgregors,[1] a clan that became, about sixty years ago, under the conduct of Robin Roy, so formidable and so infamous for violence and robbery, that the name was annulled by a legal abolition; and when they were all to denominate themselves anew, the father, I suppose, of this author called himself Malloch.

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

When his pupils were sent to see the world, they were entrusted to his care; and having conducted them round the common circle of modish travels, he returned with them to London, where, by the influence of the family in which he resided, he naturally gained admission to many

[1] Mr. Cunningham states that the Clan Macgregor was outlawed long before Rob Roy's time by an act of the Privy Council of James I. in 1693.

persons of the highest rank, and the highest character, to wits, nobles, and statesmen.

Of his works, I know not whether I can trace the series. His first production[1] was "William and Margaret;" * of which, though it contains nothing very striking or difficult,[2] he has been envied the reputation; and plagiarism has been boldly charged, but never proved.

Not long afterwards he published the "Excursion" (1728); a desultory and capricious view of such scenes of Nature as his fancy led him, or his knowledge enabled him, to describe. It is not devoid of poetical spirit. Many of the images are striking, and many of the paragraphs are elegant. The cast of diction seems to be copied from Thomson, whose "Seasons" were then in their full blossom of reputation. He has Thomson's beauties and his faults.

His poem on "Verbal Criticism" (1733) was written to pay court to Pope,[3] on a subject which he either did not understand or willingly misrepresented; and is little more than an improvement, or rather expansion, of a fragment which Pope printed in a Miscellany long before he en-

* Mallet's *William and Margaret* was printed in Aaron Hill's *Plain Dealer*, N°. 36, July 24, 1724. In its original state it was very different from what it is in the last edition of his works.—JOHNSON.

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[1] Mallet's first pieces were published in the *Edinburgh Miscellany*, printed by a club called the Athenian Society. See Ald. *Thomson*, vol. i. p. xv.

[2] The *Plain Dealer* for Aug. 28th, 1724, contained a letter from Malloch, giving an account of the "unhappy accident" which gave occasion to his ballad.

[3] Pope procured him the situation of travelling tutor to the son of his friend and correspondent, Mrs. Newsham, an office of five years continuance spent in travelling abroad with profit and without expense.—PETER CUNNINGHAM.

grafted it into a regular poem. There is in this piece more pertness than wit, and more confidence than knowledge. The versification is tolerable, nor can criticism allow it a higher praise.

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

Having cleared his tongue from his native pronunciation so as to be no longer distinguished as a Scot,[1] he seems inclined to disencumber himself from all adherences of his original, and took upon him to change his name from Scotch *Malloch* to English *Mallet*,[2] without any imaginable reason of preference which the eye or ear can discover. What other proofs he gave of disrespect to his native country I know not; but it was remarked of him, that he was the only Scot whom Scotchmen did not commend.

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

A new edition of the works of Bacon being prepared

[1] "I never catched Mallet in a Scotch accent; and yet Mallet, I suppose, was past five-and-twenty before he came to London."—Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. ii. p. 156.

[2] This change of name gave Johnson occasion to introduce Mallet into his dictionary under the article *Alias*. See Johnson's 8vo abridgment of 1756, it is not in the earlier folio and quarto editions.

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

When the Prince of Wales was driven from the palace, and, setting himself at the head of the opposition, kept a separate Court, he endeavoured to encrease his popularity by the patronage of literature, and made Mallet his under-secretary, with a salary of two hundred pounds a year: Thomson likewise had a pension; and they were associated in the composition of the Masque of "Alfred," which in its original state was played at Cliefden in 1740; it was afterwards almost wholly changed by Mallet, and brought upon the stage at Drury-Lane in 1751, but with no great success.

Mallet, in a familiar conversation with Garrick, discoursing of the diligence which he was then exerting upon the Life of Marlborough, let him know that in the series of great men, quickly to be exhibited, he should *find a nich* for the hero of the theatre. Garrick professed to wonder by what artifice he could be introduced; but Mallet let him know, that, by a dexterous anticipation, he should fix him in a conspicuous place. "Mr. Mallet," says Garrick, in his gratitude of exultation, "have you left off to write for the stage?" Mallet then confessed that he had a drama in his hands. Garrick promised to act it; and "Alfred" was produced.

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

the lord Molesworth,[1] who had been his favourite in Flanders. When Molesworth died, the same papers were transferred with the same design to Sir Richard Steele, who in some of his exigences put them in pawn. They then remained with the old dutchess,[2] who in her will assigned the task to Glover [3] and Mallet, with a reward of a thousand pounds, and a prohibition to insert any verses. Glover rejected, I suppose, with disdain the legacy, and devolved the whole work upon Mallet; who had from the late duke of Marlborough a pension to promote his industry, and who talked of the discoveries which he made; but left not, when he died, any historical labours behind him.

While he was in the Prince's service he published [4] "Mustapha," with a Prologue by Thomson, not mean, but far inferior to that which he had received from Mallet for "Agamemnon." The Epilogue, said to be written by a friend, was composed in haste by Mallet, in the place of one promised, which was never given. This tragedy was dedicated to the Prince his master. It was acted at Drury-Lane in 1739, and was well received, but was never revived.

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

For some time afterwards he lay at rest. After a long interval, his next work was "Amyntor and Theodora" [5]

[1] Robert, Viscount Molesworth (1656-1725), *vid. supr.* vol. ii. p. 33.

[2] Of Marlborough.

[3] Richard Glover (1712-1785), at sixteen wrote a poem on Sir Isaac Newton, and afterwards several poems and plays. He also figured as a politician, chiefly in commercial subjects. In his *Memoirs*, published after his death, he regrets that "the capricious restrictions of the will compelled him to reject the undertaking," p. 57.

[4] 1739. *Mustapha* was acted fourteen nights, and was attended by the whole of the opposition. Its success as a party piece was complete. —P. Cunningham.

[5] *Amyntor and Theodora, or The Hermit.* A Poem in Three Cantos. London, printed for Paul Vaillant in the Strand. 1747. 4to.

(1747), a long story in blank verse; in which it cannot be denied that there is copiousness and elegance of language, vigour of sentiment, and imagery well adapted to take possession of the fancy. But it is blank verse. This he sold to Vaillant for one hundred and twenty pounds. The first sale was not great, and it is now lost in forgetfulness.

Mallet, by address or accident, perhaps by his dependance on the Prince, found his way to Bolingbroke; a man whose pride and petulance made his kindness difficult to gain, or keep, and whom Mallet was content to court by an act, which, I hope, was unwillingly performed. When it was found that Pope had clandestinely printed an unauthorised number of the pamphlet called "The Patriot King," Bolingbroke, in a fit of useless fury, resolved to blast his memory, and employed Mallet (1747) as the executioner of his vengeance.[1] Mallet had not virtue, or had not spirit, to refuse the office; and was rewarded, not long after, with the legacy of lord Bolingbroke's works.

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

In 1753, his masque of "Britannia" was acted at Drury-Lane, and his tragedy of "Elvira" in 1763; in which year he was appointed keeper of the book of Entries for ships in the port of London.

In the beginning of the last war,[2] when the nation was exasperated by ill success, he was employed to turn the

[1] *Vid. supr.* p. 150.

[2] That is, the Seven Years' War which followed on the alliance between England and Prussia towards the close of 1755. Byng was executed in March, 1757.

publick vengeance upon Byng, and wrote a letter of accusation under the character of a "Plain Man." The paper was with great industry circulated and dispersed; and he, for his seasonable intervention, had a considerable pension bestowed upon him, which he retained to his death.

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

He was twice married, and by his first wife had several children. One daughter, who married an Italian of rank named Cilesia, wrote a tragedy called "Almida," which was acted at Drury-Lane. His second wife was the daughter of a nobleman's steward, who had a considerable fortune, which she took care to retain in her own hands.

His stature was diminutive, but he was regularly formed; his appearance, till he grew corpulent, was agreeable, and he suffered it to want no recommendation that dress could give it.[1] His conversation was elegant and easy. The rest of his character may, without injury to his memory, sink into silence.

As a writer, he cannot be placed in any high class. There is no species of composition in which he was eminent. His Dramas had their day, a short day, and are forgotten; his blank verse seems to my ear the echo of Thomson. His Life of Bacon is known as it is appended to Bacon's volumes, but is no longer mentioned. His works are such as a writer, bustling in the world, shewing himself in publick, and emerging occasionally from time to time into notice, might keep alive by his personal influence; but which, conveying little information, and giving no great pleasure, must soon give way, as the succession of things produces new topicks of conversation, and other modes of amusement.

[1] "Mallet was the prettiest dressed puppet about town, and always kept good company."—Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. v. p. 142.

AKENSIDE.

AKENSIDE.

MARK AKENSIDE[1] was born on the ninth of November, 1721, at Newcastle upon Tyne. His father, Mark, was a butcher of the Presbyterian sect; his mother's name was Mary Lumsden. He received the first part of his education at the grammar-school of Newcastle; and was afterwards instructed by Mr. Wilson, who kept a private academy.

At the age of eighteen he was sent to Edinburgh, that he might qualify himself for the office of a dissenting minister, and received some assistance from the fund which the Dissenters employ in educating young men of scanty fortune. But a wider view of the world opened other scenes, and prompted other hopes: he determined to study physic,[2] and repaid that contribution, which, being received for a different purpose, he justly thought it dishonourable to retain.

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

[1] See various readings in this Life.—Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iv. p. 19.

[2] He was elected a member of the Medical Society of Edinburgh Dec. 30, 1740, and is said to have practised for two years in Newcastle as a surgeon.

tendency is innovation and anarchy, an impetuous eagerness to subvert and confound, with very little care what shall be established.

Akenside was one of those poets who have felt very early the motions of genius,[1] and one of those students who have very early stored their memories with sentiments and images. Many of his performances were produced in his youth; and his greatest work, "The Pleasures of Imagination," appeared in 1744.[2] I have heard Dodsley, by whom it was published, relate, that when the copy was offered him, the price demanded for it, which was an hundred and twenty pounds, being such as he was not inclined to give precipitately, he carried the work to Pope, who, having looked into it, advised him not to make a niggardly offer; for *this was no every-day writer.*

In 1741[3] he went to Leyden, in pursuit of medical knowledge; and three years afterwards (May 16, 1744) became doctor of physick, having, according to the custom of the Dutch Universities, published a thesis, or dissertation The subject which he chose was "the Original and Growth of the Human Fœtus;" in which he is said to have departed, with great judgement, from the opinion then established, and to have delivered that which has been since confirmed and received.

Akenside was a young man, warm with every notion that

[1] In his sixteenth year (1737) he sent to the *Gentleman's Magazine* a poem in imitation of Spenser, *The Virtuoso*, and continued to be a frequent contributor to that journal. He began to write *The Pleasures of Imagination* in 1738, and concluded it in 1743.—Ald. *Akenside*, p. 1.

[2] On the story that this poem was first published in Ireland, see Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. i. p. 284.

[3] Akenside left England, for the first and only time, early in April, 1744, took his degree of Doctor of Physic at Leyden in May of the same year, and in June returned to England to take a physician's practice at Northampton.

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

The result of all the arguments which have been produced in a long and eager discussion of this idle question, may easily be collected. If ridicule be applied to any position as the test of truth, it will then become a question whether such ridicule be just; and this can only be decided by the application of truth, as the test of ridicule. Two men, fearing, one a real and the other a fancied danger, will be for a while equally exposed to the inevitable consequences of cowardice, contemptuous censure, and ludicrous representation; and the true state of both cases must be known, before it can be decided whose terror is rational, and whose is ridiculous; who is to be pitied, and who to be despised. Both are for a while equally exposed to laughter, but both are not therefore equally contemptible.

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

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

Being now to live by his profession, he first commenced physician at Northampton,[1] where Dr. Stonhouse then

[1] In June, 1744.

practised, with such reputation and success, that a stranger was not likely to gain ground upon him. Akenside tried the contest a while; and, having deafened the place with clamours for liberty, removed[1] to Hampstead, where he resided more than two years, and then fixed himself in London,[2] the proper place for a man of accomplishments like his.

At London he was known as a poet, but was still to make his way as a physician; and would perhaps have been reduced to great exigences, but that Mr. Dyson,[3] with an ardour of friendship that has not many examples, allowed him three hundred pounds a year. Thus supported, he advanced gradually in medical reputation, but never attained any great extent of practice, or eminence of popularity. A physician in a great city seems to be the mere play-thing of Fortune; his degree of reputation is, for the most part, totally casual: they that employ him, know not his excellence; they that reject him, know not his deficience. By an acute observer, who had looked on the transactions of the medical world for half a century, a very curious book might be written on the *Fortune of Physicians.*

Akenside appears not to have been wanting to his own success: he placed himself in view by all the common methods; he become a Fellow of the Royal Society;[4] he obtained a degree at Cambridge,[5] and was admitted into the College of Physicians;[6] he wrote little poetry, but

[1] In 1747.

[2] In Bloomsbury Square.

[3] Jeremiah Dyson, Esq., of Stoke, near Guildford, Surrey, many years Secretary to the Treasury, died 1776. Akenside in his will left his "whole estate and effects of whatever kind" to his friend Mr. Dyson.

[4] In 1753.

[5] He was admitted by mandamus to a doctor's degree at Cambridge, in January, 1753.

[6] In April, 1754.

published, from time to time, medical essays and observations; he became physician to St. Thomas's Hospital;[1] he read the Gulstonian Lectures in Anatomy;[2] but began to give, for the Crounian Lecture,[3] a history of the revival of Learning, from which he soon desisted; and, in conversation, he very eagerly forced himself into notice by an ambitious ostentation of elegance and literature.[4]

His "Discourse on the Dysentery" (1764) was considered as a very conspicuous specimen of Latinity, which entitled him to the same height of place among the scholars as he possessed before among the wits; and he might perhaps have risen to a greater elevation of character, but that his studies were ended with his life, by a putrid fever, June 23, 1770, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

Akenside is to be considered as a didactick and lyrick poet. His great work is the "Pleasures of Imagination;"[5] a performance which, published, as it was, at the age of twenty-three, raised expectations that were not afterwards very amply satisfied. It has undoubtedly a just claim to very particular notice, as an example of great felicity of genius, and uncommon amplitude of acquisitions, of a young mind stored with images, and much exercised in combining and comparing them.

With the philosophical or religious tenets of the author I have nothing to do; my business is with his poetry. The

[1] In 1759. Akenside was in the same year appointed principal physician to Christ's Hospital.—E. W. Gosse, *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

[2] In 1755.

[3] In 1756.

[4] That "Akenside when he walked in the streets looked for all the world like one of his own Alexandrines set upright," was a saying of Henderson the actor.—Dyce, *n.* 2, p. lxxvi., Ald. ed., his *Life of Akenside*. The only portrait of Akenside is a characteristic profile by Arthur Pond, drawn 1754, engraved by E. Fisher, 1772. — Cunningham.

[5] Ald. *Akenside*, pp. 1, 87.

subject is well-chosen, as it includes all images that can strike or please, and thus comprises every species of poetical delight. The only difficulty is in the choice of examples and illustrations, and it is not easy in such exuberance of matter to find the middle point between penury and satiety. The parts seem artificially disposed, with sufficient coherence, so as that they cannot change their places without injury to the general design.

His images are displayed with such luxuriance of expression, that they are hidden, like Butler's Moon,[1] by a *Veil of Light;* they are forms fantastically lost under superfluity of dress. *Pars minima est ipsa Puella sui.* The words are multiplied till the sense is hardly perceived; attention deserts the mind, and settles in the ear. The reader wanders through the gay diffusion, sometimes amazed, and sometimes delighted; but, after many turnings in the flowery labyrinth, comes out as he went in. He remarked little, and laid hold on nothing.

To his versification justice requires that praise should not be denied. In the general fabrication of his lines he is perhaps superior to any other writer of blank verse; his flow is smooth, and his pauses are musical; but the concatenation of his verses is commonly too long continued, and the full close does not recur with sufficient frequency. The sense is carried on through a long intertexture of complicated clauses, and as nothing is distinguished, nothing is remembered.

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

[1] *Hudibras*, Pt. ii. canto i. line 905. Ald. *Butler*, vol. i. p. 155.

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

It is generally known to the readers of poetry that he intended to revise and augment this work, but died before he had completed his design.[1] The reformed work as he left it, and the additions which he had made, are very properly retained in the late collection. He seems to have somewhat contracted his diffusion; but I know not whether he has gained in closeness what he has lost in splendor. In the additional book, the "Tale of Solon" is too long.

One great defect of his poem is very properly censured by Mr. Walker, unless it may be said in his defence, that what he has omitted[2] was not properly in his plan. "His picture of man is grand and beautiful, but unfinished. The immortality of the soul, which is the natural consequence of the appetites and powers she is invested with, is scarcely once hinted throughout the poem. This deficiency is amply supplied by the masterly pencil of Dr. Young; who, like a good philosopher, has invincibly proved the immortality of man, from the grandeur of his

[1] In the Aldine *Akenside*, *The Pleasures of Imagination* is printed, as it was first published in 1744, and also as enlarged and published in 1772 by Mr. Dyson.

[2] Mr. Dyce inquires whether if Johnson and Walker had "carefully perused the work, could they have overlooked among other passages of similar tendency, Bk. i. p. 489." Ald. *Akenside*, p. lxxix, and reminds us that Johnson acknowledged that he was unable to read this poem through.—Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. ii. p. 161.

conceptions, and the meanness and misery of his state; for this reason, a few passages are selected from the "Night Thoughts," which, with those from Akenside, seem to form a complete view of the powers, situation, and end of man." "Exercises for Improvement in Elocution," p. 66.[1]

His other poems are now to be considered; but a short consideration will dispatch them. It is not easy to guess why he addicted himself so diligently to lyrick poetry, having neither the ease and airiness of the lighter, nor the vehemence and elevation of the grander ode. When he lays his ill-fated hand upon his harp, his former powers seem to desert him; he has no longer his luxuriance of expression, nor variety of images. His thoughts are cold, and his words inelegant. Yet such was his love of lyricks, that, having written with great vigour and poignancy his "Epistle to Curio,"[2] he transformed it afterwards into an ode disgraceful only to its author.

Of his odes nothing favourable can be said;[3] the sentiments commonly want force, nature, or novelty; the diction is sometimes harsh and uncouth, the stanzas ill-constructed and unpleasant, and the rhymes dissonant, or unskilfully disposed, too distant from each other, or arranged with too little regard to established use, and therefore perplexing to the ear, which in a short composition has not time to grow familiar with an innovation.

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

[1] By John Walker (1732-1807), the philological writer, author of the Pronouncing and Rhyming Dictionaries, etc.

[2] Ald. *Akenside*, p. 171.

[3] It was of a splendid edition of Akenside's works that Johnson said, "One bad ode may be suffered; but a number of them makes one sick." —Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. ii. p. 161.

GRAY.

PREFATORY NOTE.

The references to *Works* in the notes to this Life are to the edition of Gray's *Works* by Edmund Gosse. 4 vols. post 8vo, 1884.

GRAY.

THOMAS GRAY, the son of Mr. Philip Gray, a scrivener of London, was born in Cornhill, November 26, 1716. His grammatical education he received at Eton under the care of Mr. Antrobus, his mother's brother, then assistant to Dr. George; and when he left school, in 1734, entered a pensioner at Peterhouse in Cambridge.[1]

The transition from the school to the college is, to most young scholars, the time from which they date their years of manhood, liberty, and happiness; but Gray seems to have been very little delighted with academical gratifications; he liked at Cambridge neither the mode of life nor the fashion of study, and lived sullenly on to the time when his attendance on lectures was no longer required. As he intended to profess the Common Law, he took no degree.

When he had been at Cambridge about five years, Mr. Horace Walpole, whose friendship he had gained at Eton, invited him to travel with him as his companion. They wandered through France into Italy; and Gray's Letters contain a very pleasing account of many parts of their journey. But unequal friendships are easily dissolved: at Florence they quarrelled, and parted;[2] and Mr. Walpole

[1] Gray matriculated pensioner of Peterhouse, 7th Dec., 1734.

[2] Of the reconciliation with Walpole Gray wrote to Mr. Chute, Oct. 12th, 1750: "I find Mr. Walpole then made some mention of me to you; yes, we are together again. It is about a year, I believe, since he wrote to me to offer it, and there has been, particularly of late, in appearance

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

He returned to England in September 1741, and in about two months afterwards buried his father; who had, by an injudicious waste of money upon a new house, so much lessened his fortune, that Gray thought himself too poor to study the law. He therefore retired to Cambridge, where he soon after became Bachelor of Civil Law;[1] and where, without liking the place or its inhabitants, or professing to like them, he passed, except a short residence at London, the rest of his life.

About this time he was deprived of Mr. West, the son of a chancellor of Ireland, a friend on whom he appears to have set a high value, and who deserved his esteem by the powers which he shews in his Letters, and in the Ode to "May," which Mr. Mason has preserved, as well as by the sincerity with which, when Gray sent him part of "Agrippina,"[2] a tragedy that he had just begun, he gave an

the same kindness and confidence almost as of old. What were his motives I cannot yet guess."—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 207.

[1] He took his degree, LL.B., in 1744.

[2] Gray's first original production in English verse, of which he wrote only one complete scene and a few odd lines. This portion was sent to West in March, 1742, and in consequence of his unfavourable criticism was carried no further.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 101.

opinion which probably intercepted the progress of the work, and which the judgement of every reader will confirm. It was certainly no loss to the English stage that "Agrippina" was never finished.

In this year (1742) Gray seems first to have applied himself seriously to poetry; for in this year were produced the "Ode to Spring," [1] his "Prospect of Eton," [2] and his "Ode to Adversity." [3] He began likewise a Latin poem, "de Principiis cogitandi." [4]

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

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

[1] The *Ode on the Spring* exists in Gray's handwriting among the Stonehewer MSS. at Pembroke College, and is there entitled, "*Noontide, an Ode.*" At the end of the poem Gray has written: "The beginning of June, 1742, sent to Fav.; not knowing he was then dead." Favonius was the name given by Gray to Richard West, who died on the 1st June, 1742, at Hatfield. . . . This poem was first published in Dodsley's *Collection of Poems by several Hands*, 1748, vol. ii. p. 271. —*Works*, vol. i. p. 4.

[2] This was the first of Gray's English productions which appeared in print; it was published anonymously as *An Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*. London. Printed for R. Dodsley, 1747. The motto from Menander and the notes were added by Gray in 1768.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 16.

[3] This poem was first printed in Dodsley's *Collection*, vol. v. p. 7, as *Hymn to Adversity*.

[4] *Works*, vol. i. p. 185.

elected fellow of Pembroke-hall,[1] brought him a companion who was afterwards to be his editor, and whose fondness and fidelity has kindled in him a zeal of admiration, which cannot be reasonably expected from the neutrality of a stranger and the coldness of a critick.[2]

In this retirement he wrote (1747) an ode on the "Death of Mr. Walpole's Cat;" and the year afterwards attempted a poem of more importance, on "Government and Education,"[3] of which the fragments which remain have many excellent lines.

His next production (1750) was his far-famed "Elegy in the Church-yard,"[4] which, finding its way into a Magazine, first, I believe, made him known to the publick.

An invitation from lady Cobham about this time gave occasion to an odd composition called "a Long Story,"[5] which adds little to Gray's character.

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

Some time afterwards (1756) some young men of the

[1] Pembroke College, Cambridge.

[2] For an account of Mason's extraordinary editorship, see Mr. E. Gosse's Preface to Gray's *Works*, p. xi.

[3] Written in 1748. First published in Mason's *Life and Letters of Gray*, 1775.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 113.

[4] This poem was circulated in MS., and on the 10th February, 1751, Gray received a letter from the editor of the *Magazine of Magazines*, asking leave to publish it. The poet refused, and wrote next day to Horace Walpole, directing him to bring it out in pamphlet form. It was published anonymously by Dodsley, with a preface by Horace Walpole, and went through four editions in two months.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 72.

[5] Written in 1750, printed but once (1753) in Gray's lifetime.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 83.

college, whose chambers were near his, diverted themselves with disturbing him by frequent and troublesome noises, and, as he said, by pranks yet more offensive and contemptuous. This insolence, having endured it a while, he represented to the governors of the society, among whom perhaps he had no friends; and, finding his complaint little regarded, removed himself to Pembroke-hall.[1]

In 1757 he published "The Progress of Poetry" and "The Bard," [2] two compositions at which the readers of poetry were at first content to gaze in mute amazement. Some that tried them confessed their inability to understand them, though Warburton said that they were understood as well as the works of Milton and Shakspeare, which it is the fashion to admire. Garrick wrote a few lines in their praise. Some hardy champions undertook to rescue them from neglect, and in a short time many were content to be shewn beauties which they could not see.

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

His curiosity, not long after, drew him away from Cambridge to a lodging near the Museum,[3] where he resided

[1] Pembroke College, Cambridge.

[2] Both these poems were written in 1754 (the notes were added by Gray in 1768), and published together in a thin quarto in 1757.—*Works*, vol. i. p. 29, 41.

[3] Gray writes to Mason, April 10th, 1759, ". . And here is the Museum, which is indeed a treasure. The trustees lay out £1,400 a-year, and have but £900 to spend. If you would see it you must send a fortnight beforehand, it is so crowded." His lodgings were in Southampton Row.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 396, 397.

The British Museum first came into existence in 1753 by the act of 26 Geo. II. chap. xxii., whereby trustees were appointed to take charge of the Cottonian MSS., the collections of Sir Hans Sloane, and the Harleian MSS., and to provide a general repository for them. Montagu House, Bloomsbury, was purchased in 1754, and the collections were at once moved into it. The Museum was opened to the public in January,

near three years, reading and transcribing; and, so far as can be discovered, very little affected by two odes on "Oblivion" and "Obscurity," in which his Lyrick performances were ridiculed with much contempt and much ingenuity.

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

His constitution was weak, and believing that his health was promoted by exercise and change of place, he undertook (1765) a journey into Scotland, of which his account,

1759, three months before the date of Gray's letter. By the statutes which received sanction in December, 1758, the hours of admission were from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. every week-day except Saturday, during the months of September to April. From May to August the same hours were observed, except on Mondays and Fridays, when the Museum was only open from 4 to 8 P.M. Visitors were admitted by printed tickets only, obtained on written application. Not more than ten tickets were issued for each hour of admission, viz., for 9, 10, 11, and 12 o'clock on ordinary days, and for 4 and 5 on the late days. Each party was conducted by one of the officers through the rooms in a specified order; and one hour was allowed for each department—a visit thus lasting three hours. It will therefore be seen that only forty persons at the most could be admitted on an ordinary day. In 1804 a relaxation of the rules was sanctioned, and it was laid down that "Five companies of not more than fifteen persons each may be admitted in the course of the day." At the present time the annual number of visitors to the Museum and its offshoot the Natural History Museum at South Kensington amounts to nearly 900,000. The figures of expenditure which Gray quotes are evidently not meant to be taken as accurate. They must refer to the expenses of establishment; for on purchases the trustees laid out in the first fourteen years only £69. Establishment charges during the same period amounted to £23,215. The total amount expended on *purchases* from the first foundation of the Museum to the present day is nearly one million and a half.—E. MAUNDE THOMPSON.

so far as it extends, is very curious and elegant; for as his comprehension was ample, his curiosity extended to all the works of art, all the appearances of nature, and all the monuments of past events. He naturally contracted a friendship with Dr. Beattie, whom he found a poet, a philosopher, and a good man. The Mareschal College at Aberdeen offered him the degree of Doctor of Laws, which, having omitted to take it at Cambridge, he thought it decent to refuse.

What he had formerly solicited in vain, was at last given him without solicitation. The Professorship of History became again vacant, and he received (1768) an offer of it from the duke of Grafton. He accepted, and retained it to his death; always designing lectures, but never reading them; uneasy at his neglect of duty, and appeasing his uneasiness with designs of reformation, and with a resolution which he believed himself to have made of resigning the office, if he found himself unable to discharge it.

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

His travels and his studies were now near their end. The gout, of which he had sustained many weak attacks, fell upon his stomach, and, yielding to no medicines, produced strong convulsions, which (July 30, 1771) terminated in death.

His character I am willing to adopt, as Mr. Mason has done, from a Letter written to my friend Mr. Boswell,[1] by the Rev. Mr. Temple,[2] rector of St. Gluvias in Cornwall;

[1] James Boswell, author of the inimitable *Life of Johnson*.

[2] The Rev. William Johnson Temple, the "old and most intimate friend" of James Boswell.—Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. i. p. 347.

and am as willing as his warmest well-wisher to believe it true.

"Perhaps he was the most learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the elegant and profound parts of science, and that not superficially but thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil; had read all the original historians of England, France, and Italy; and was a great antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, politics, made a principal part of his study; voyages and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusements; and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening. With such a fund of knowledge, his conversation must have been equally instructing and entertaining; but he was also a good man, a man of virtue and humanity. There is no character without some speck, some imperfection; and I think the greatest defect in his was an affectation in delicacy, or rather effeminacy, and a visible fastidiousness, or contempt and disdain of his inferiors in science. He also had, in some degree, that weakness which disgusted Voltaire so much in Mr. Congreve: though he seemed to value others chiefly according to the progress they had made in knowledge, yet he could not bear to be considered himself merely as a man of letters; and though without birth, or fortune, or station, his desire was to be looked upon as a private independent gentleman, who read for his amusement. Perhaps it may be said, What signifies so much knowledge, when it produced so little? Is it worth taking so much pains to leave no memorial but a few poems? But let it be considered that Mr. Gray was, to others, at least innocently employed; to himself, certainly beneficially. His time passed agreeably; he was every day making some new acquisition in science; his mind was enlarged, his heart softened, his virtue strengthened; the world and mankind were shewn to him without a mask; and he was taught to consider

every thing as trifling, and unworthy of the attention of a wise man, except the pursuit of knowledge and practice of virtue, in that state wherein God hath placed us." [1]

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

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

"You say you cannot conceive how lord Shaftesbury came to be a philosopher in vogue; I will tell you: first, he was a lord; secondly, he was as vain as any of his readers; thirdly, men are very prone to believe what they do not understand; fourthly, they will believe any thing at all, provided they are under no obligation to believe it; fifthly, they love to take a new road, even when that road leads no where; sixthly, he was reckoned a fine writer, and seems always to mean more than he said. Would you have any more reasons? An interval of above forty years has pretty well destroyed the charm. A dead lord ranks with commoners: vanity is no longer interested in the matter; for a new road is become an old one." [2]

Mr. Mason has added, from his own knowledge, that

[1] This letter was published in the *London Magazine*, March 1772.

[2] *Works*, vol. ii. p. 375.

though Gray was poor, he was not eager of money; and that, out of the little he had, he was very willing to help the necessitous.

As a writer he had this peculiarity, that he did not write his pieces first rudely, and then correct them, but laboured every line as it arose in the train of composition; and he had a notion not very peculiar, that he could not write but at certain times, or at happy moments;[1] a fantastick foppery, to which my kindness for a man of learning and of virtue wishes him to have been superior.

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

His ode on "Spring"[2] has something poetical, both in the language and the thought; but the language is too luxuriant, and the thoughts have nothing new. There has of late arisen a practice of giving to adjectives, derived from substantives, the termination of participles; such as the *cultured* plain, the *dasied* bank; but I was sorry to see, in the lines of a scholar like Gray, the *honied* Spring. The morality is natural, but too stale; the conclusion is pretty.

The poem on the "Cat"[3] was doubtless by its author considered as a trifle, but it is not a happy trifle. In the first stanza *the azure flowers* that *blow*, shew[4] resolutely a rhyme is sometimes made when it cannot easily be found. *Selima*, the *Cat*, is called a nymph, with some violence both to language and sense; but there is good use made of it when it is done; for of the two lines,

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

[1] *Vid. supr. Life of Milton*, vol. i. p. 145. [2] *Works*, vol. i. p. 5.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 11. The subject was the death of a favourite cat of Horace Walpole, drowned by falling into a china bowl containing gold fish.

[4] *How* ought surely here to be supplied.

the first relates merely to the nymph, and the second only to the cat. The sixth stanza contains a melancholy truth, that *a favourite has no friend;* but the last ends in a pointed sentence of no relation to the purpose; if *what glistered* had been *gold*, the cat would not have gone into the water; and, if she had, would not less have been drowned.

The "Prospect of Eton College"[1] suggests nothing to Gray, which every beholder does not equally think and feel. His supplication to father *Thames*, to tell him who drives the hoop or tosses the ball, is useless and puerile. Father *Thames* has no better means of knowing than himself. His epithet *buxom health* is not elegant; he seems not to understand the word. Gray thought his language more poetical as it was more remote from common use: finding in Dryden *honey redolent of Spring*, an expression that reaches the utmost limits of our language, Gray drove it a little more beyond common apprehension, by making *gales* to be *redolent of joy and youth*.

Of the "Ode on Adversity,"[2] the hint was at first taken from "O Diva, gratum quæ regis Antium;"[3] but Gray has excelled his original by the variety of his sentiments, and by their moral application. Of this piece, at once poetical and rational, I will not by slight objections violate the dignity.

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

[1] *Works*, vol. i. p. 17. "Every boy who leaves Eton creditably is presented with a copy of the Works of Gray, for which everything has been done that the art of printers, bookbinders, and photographers can devise. This is one of the most curious instances of the triumphs of genius, for there is hardly a single figure in the gallery of Etonians who is so little characteristic of Eton as Gray."—Arthur Benson, in *Macmillan's Magazine*, November, 1888.

[2] *Works*, vol. i. p. 25.

[3] Horace, *Odes*, i. 35.

sally rejected them, many have been since persuaded to think themselves delighted. I am one of those that are willing to be pleased, and therefore would gladly find the meaning of the first stanza of the "Progress of Poetry."[1]

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

The second stanza, exhibiting Mars's car and Jove's eagle, is unworthy of further notice. Criticism disdains to chase a schoolboy to his common places.

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

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

[1] *Works*, vol. i. p. 29.

The third stanza sounds big with *Delphi*, and *Egean*, and *Ilissus*, and *Meander*, and *hallowed fountain* and *solemn sound;* but in all Gray's odes there is a kind of cumbrous splendour which we wish away. His position is at last false: in the time of Dante and Petrarch, from whom he derives our first school of Poetry, Italy was over-run by *tyrant power* and *coward vice;* nor was our state much better when we first borrowed the Italian arts.

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

His account of Milton's blindness, if we suppose it caused by study in the formation of his poem, a supposition surely allowable, is poetically true, and happily imagined. But the *car* of Dryden, with his *two coursers*,[1] has nothing in it peculiar; it is a car in which any other rider may be placed.

"The Bard"[2] appears, at the first view, to be, as Algarotti and others have remarked, an imitation of the prophecy of Nereus.[3] Algarotti thinks it superior to its original; and, if preference depends only on the imagery and animation of the two poems, his judgement is right. There is in "The Bard" more force, more thought, and more variety. But to copy is less than to invent, and the copy has been unhappily produced at a wrong time. The fiction of Horace was to the Romans credible; but its revival disgusts us with apparent and unconquerable falsehood. *Incredulus odi.*[4]

To select a singular event, and swell it to a giant's bulk

[1] See Gray's *Ode on the Progress of Poesy*, vol. i. p. 29.
[2] *Works*, vol. i. p. 41.
[3] Horace, *Odes*, i. 15.
[4] Horace, *Ars Poet.* 188.

by fabulous appendages of spectres and predictions, has little difficulty, for he that forsakes the probable may always find the marvellous. And it has little use; we are affected only as we believe; we are improved only as we find something to be imitated or declined. I do not see that "The Bard" promotes any truth, moral or political.

His stanzas are too long, especially his epodes; the ode is finished before the ear has learned its measures, and consequently before it can receive pleasure from their consonance and recurrence.

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

"*Is there ever a man in all Scotland—*"

The initial resemblances, or alliterations, *ruin, ruthless, helm or hauberk*, are below the grandeur of a poem that endeavours at sublimity.

In the second stanza the "Bard" is well described; but in the third we have the puerilities of obsolete mythology. When we are told that *Cadwallo hush'd the stormy main*, and that *Modred* made *huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-top'd head*, attention recoils from the repetition of a tale that, even when it was first heard, was heard with scorn.

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

the *web* or piece; and the first line was dearly bought by the admission of its wretched correspondent, *Give ample room and verge enough.* He has, however, no other line as bad.

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

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

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

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

In the character of his Elegy [1] I rejoice to concur with the

[1] *Works*, vol. i. p. 73. The only existing copy of the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* in the handwriting of the author was sold 4th August, 1854, for £131. It is written in his small neat hand (he wrote with a crowquil) on one half of a sheet of yellow foolscap folded in two.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

common reader; for by the common sense of readers uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinements of subtilty and the dogmatism of learning, must be finally decided all claim to poetical honours. The "Church-yard" abounds with images which find a mirrour in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. The four stanzas beginning *Yet even these bones*, are to me original: I have never seen the notions in any other place; yet he that reads them here, persuades himself that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him.

LYTTELTON.

LYTTELTON.

GEORGE LYTTELTON,[1] the son of Sir Thomas Lyttelton of Hagley in Worcestershire, was born in 1709. He was educated at Eton, where he was so much distinguished, that his exercises were recommended as models to his school-fellows.

From Eton he went to Christ-church,[2] where he retained the same reputation of superiority, and displayed his abilities to the publick in a poem on "Blenheim."[3]

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

He staid not long at Oxford; for in 1728 he began his travels, and saw France and Italy. When he returned,[4] he obtained a seat in parliament, and soon distinguished himself among the most eager opponents of Sir Robert Walpole,

[1] See Boswell on Johnson's feeling against Lyttelton, with "various readings" in this life.—Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iv. pp. 19, 20.

[2] George Lyttelton was entered as a Gentleman Commoner of Christchurch, 4th Dec., 1725.

[3] Folio, 1728.

[4] April, 1735. He sat for Okehampton.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

though his father, who was Commissioner of the Admiralty, always voted with the Court.

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

The Prince of Wales, being (1737) driven from St. James's, kept a separate court, and opened his arms to the opponents of the ministry. Mr. Lyttelton became his secretary, and was supposed to have great influence in the direction of his conduct. He persuaded his master, whose business it was now to be popular, that he would advance his character by patronage. Mallet was made under-secretary, with 200*l.* and Thomson had a pension of 100*l.* a year. For Thomson Lyttelton always retained his kindness, and was able at last to place him at ease.[1]

Moore[2] courted his favour by an apologetical poem, called "The Trial of Selim," for which he was paid with kind words, which, as is common, raised great hopes, that at last were disappointed.

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

[1] *Life of Thomson, vid. supr.* p. 163.

[2] Edward Moore, author of *The Gamester*, and editor of *The World*, died 1757.

it an honour to be received into the familiarity of so great a poet.

While he was thus conspicuous, he married (1741) Miss Lucy Fortescue of Devonshire, by whom he had a son, the late lord Lyttelton, and two daughters, and with whom he appears to have lived in the highest degree of connubial felicity: but human pleasures are short; she died in childbed about five years afterwards, and he solaced his grief by writing a long poem to her memory.

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

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

Politicks did not, however, so much engage him as to withhold his thoughts from things of more importance. He had, in the pride of juvenile confidence, with the help of corrupt conversation, entertained doubts of the truth of Christianity; but he thought the time now come when it was no longer fit to doubt or believe by chance, and applied himself seriously to the great question. His studies, being honest, ended in conviction. He found that religion was true, and what he had learned he endeavoured to teach (1747), by "Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul;" [1] a treatise to which infidelity has

[1] *Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul in a Letter to Gilbert West, Esq.*, Lond. 1747, 8vo; but Lyttelton, in the Letter to Thomson, May 21, 1747, accompanying the pamphlet, says—"I writ it with a particular view to your satisfaction."—Phillimore's *Lyttelton*, vol. i. p. 307.

never been able to fabricate a specious answer. This book his father had the happiness of seeing, and expressed his pleasure in a letter which deserves to be inserted.

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

"Your affectionate father,

"THOMAS LYTTELTON."

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

As he continued his activity in parliament, he was gradually advancing his claim to profit and preferment; and accordingly was made in time (1754) cofferer and privy counsellor: this place he exchanged next year for the great office of chancellor of the Exchequer; an office, however, that required some qualifications which he soon perceived himself to want.

The year after, his curiosity led him into Wales; of which he has given an account, perhaps rather with too much affectation of delight, to Archibald Bower,[1] a man of whom he had conceived an opinion more favourable than

[1] Author of the *History of the Popes from the Foundation of the See of Rome to the Present Time.* Lond. 1748-66, 4to, 7 vols.

he seems to have deserved, and whom, having once espoused his interest and fame, he never was persuaded to disown. Bower, whatever was his moral character, did not want abilities; attacked as he was by an universal outcry, and that outcry, as it seems, the echo of truth, he kept his ground; at last, when his defences began to fail him, he sallied out upon his adversaries, and his adversaries retreated.

About this time Lyttelton published his "Dialogues of the Dead," which were very eagerly read, though the production rather, as it seems, of leisure than of study, rather effusions than compositions. The names of his persons too often enable the reader to anticipate their conversation; and when they have met, they too often part without any conclusion. He has copied *Fenelon*[1] more than *Fontenelle*.[2]

When they were first published, they were kindly commended by the *Critical Reviewers;* and poor Lyttelton, with humble gratitude, returned, in a note which I have read, acknowledgements which can never be proper, since they must be paid either for flattery or for justice.

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

His last literary production was his "History of Henry the Second," elaborated by the searches and deliberations

[1] François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon (1651-1715), Archbishop of Cambray, perhaps even more widely known from his *Aventures de Télémaque* than his *Dialogues des Morts*, and other religious works filling 9 vols. 4to, Paris, 1787.

[2] Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle (1657-1757), nephew of Corneille, philosopher and mathematician. His *Dialogues des Morts*, published 1683, at once established his fame.

of twenty years, and published with such anxiety as only vanity can dictate.

The story of this publication is remarkable. The whole work was printed twice over, a great part of it three times, and many sheets four or five times. The booksellers paid for the first impression; but the charges and repeated operations of the press were at the expence of the author, whose ambitious accuracy is known to have cost him at least a thousand pounds. He began to print in 1755. Three volumes appeared in 1764, a second edition of them in 1767, a third edition in 1768, and the conclusion in 1771.

Andrew Reid, a man not without considerable abilities, and not unacquainted with letters or with life, undertook to persuade Lyttelton, as he had persuaded himself, that he was master of the secret of punctuation; and, as fear begets credulity, he was employed, I know not at what price, to point the pages of "Henry the Second." The book was at last pointed and printed, and sent into the world. Lyttelton took money for his copy, of which, when he had paid the *Pointer*, he probably gave the rest away; for he was very liberal to the indigent.

When time brought the History to a third edition, Reid was either dead or discarded; and the superintendence of typography and punctuation was committed to a man originally a comb-maker, but then known by the style of Doctor.[1] Something uncommon was probably expected, and something uncommon was at last done; for to the Doctor's edition is appended, what the world had hardly seen before, a list of errors in nineteen pages.

But to politicks and literature there must be an end. Lord Lyttelton had never the appearance of a strong or of a healthy man; he had a slender uncompacted frame, and

[1] Dr. Saunders. See Nichols's *Life of Bowyer*. 4to, 1782, p. 427. —P. CUNNINGHAM.

a meagre face: he lasted however sixty years, and was then seized with his last illness. Of his death a very affecting and instructive account has been given by his physician, which will spare me the task of his moral character.

"On Sunday evening the symptoms of his lordship's disorder, which for a week past had alarmed us, put on a fatal appearance, and his lordship believed himself to be a dying man. From this time he suffered by restlessness rather than pain; though his nerves were apparently much fluttered, his mental faculties never seemed stronger, when he was thoroughly awake.

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

"Though his lordship wished his approaching dissolution not to be lingering, he waited for it with resignation. He said, 'It is a folly, a keeping me in misery, now to attempt to prolong life;' yet he was easily persuaded, for the satisfaction of others, to do or take any thing thought proper for him. On Saturday he had been remarkably better, and we were not without some hopes of his recovery.

"On Sunday, about eleven in the forenoon, his lordship sent for me, and said he felt a great hurry, and wished to have a little conversation with me in order to divert it. He then proceeded to open the fountain of that heart, from whence goodness had so long flowed as from a copious spring. 'Doctor,' said he, 'you shall be my confessor: when I first set out in the world, I had friends who endeavoured to shake my belief in the Christian religion. I saw difficulties which staggered me: but I kept my mind

open to conviction. The evidences and doctrines of Christianity, studied with attention, made me a most firm and persuaded believer of the Christian religion. I have made it the rule of my life, and it is the ground of my future hopes. I have erred and sinned; but have repented, and never indulged any vicious habit. In politicks, and publick life, I have made publick good the rule of my conduct. I never gave counsels which I did not at the time think the best. I have seen that I was sometimes in the wrong, but I did not err designedly. I have endeavoured, in private life, to do all the good in my power, and never for a moment could indulge malicious or unjust designs upon any person whatsoever.'

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

"On the evening, when the symptoms of death came on, he said, 'I shall die; but it will not be your fault.' When lord and lady Valentia came to see his lordship, he gave them his solemn benediction, and said, 'Be good, be virtuous, my lord; you must come to this.' Thus he continued giving his dying benediction to all around him. On Monday morning a lucid interval gave some small hopes, but these vanished in the evening; and he continued dying, but with very little uneasiness, till Tuesday morning, August 22, when between seven and eight o'clock he expired, almost without a groan." [1]

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

[1] Fielding immortalized the personal virtues of Lord Lyttelton in the Dedicatory Letter to *Tom Jones*, and Smollett in the first edition of *Peregrine Pickle* held his tall gaunt figure up to ridicule as Gosling Scrag, Esq.—P. CUNNINGHAM.

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

Lord Lyttelton's Poems are the works of a man of literature and judgement, devoting part of his time to versification.[1] They have nothing to be despised, and little to be admired. Of his "Progress of Love," it is sufficient blame to say that it is pastoral. His blank verse in "Blenheim" has neither much force nor much elegance. His little performances, whether Songs or Epigrams, are sometimes spritely, and sometimes insipid. His epistolary pieces have a smooth equability, which cannot much tire, because they are short, but which seldom *elevates* or *surprizes*. But from this censure ought to be excepted his "Advice to Belinda," which, though for the most part written when he was very young, contains much truth and much prudence, very elegantly and vigorously expressed, and shews a mind attentive to life, and a power of poetry which cultivation might have raised to excellence.

[1] Mr. P. Cunningham observes that Lyttelton's Prologue to Thomson's last play is one of the best in the English language.

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Vol. i. p. 203, note 1, for *Remains*, read *vid. infr.*
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Vol. iii. p. 88, for *vid. supr.* p. 4, read *vid. supr.* p. 62.

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