

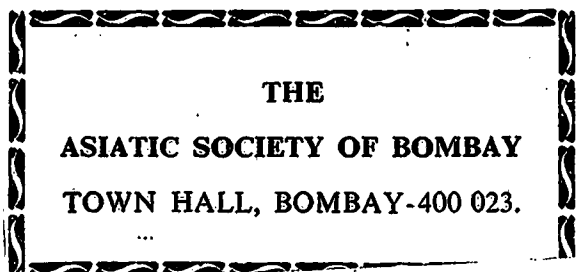
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THE  
WORKS  
OF  
THOMAS GRAY;

Containing his  
POEMS, AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH SEVERAL EMINENT  
LITERARY CHARACTERS.

To which are added,  
MEMOIRS  
OF  
HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,  
BY W. MASON, M. A.

---

THE THIRD EDITION, CAREFULLY CORRECTED.

---

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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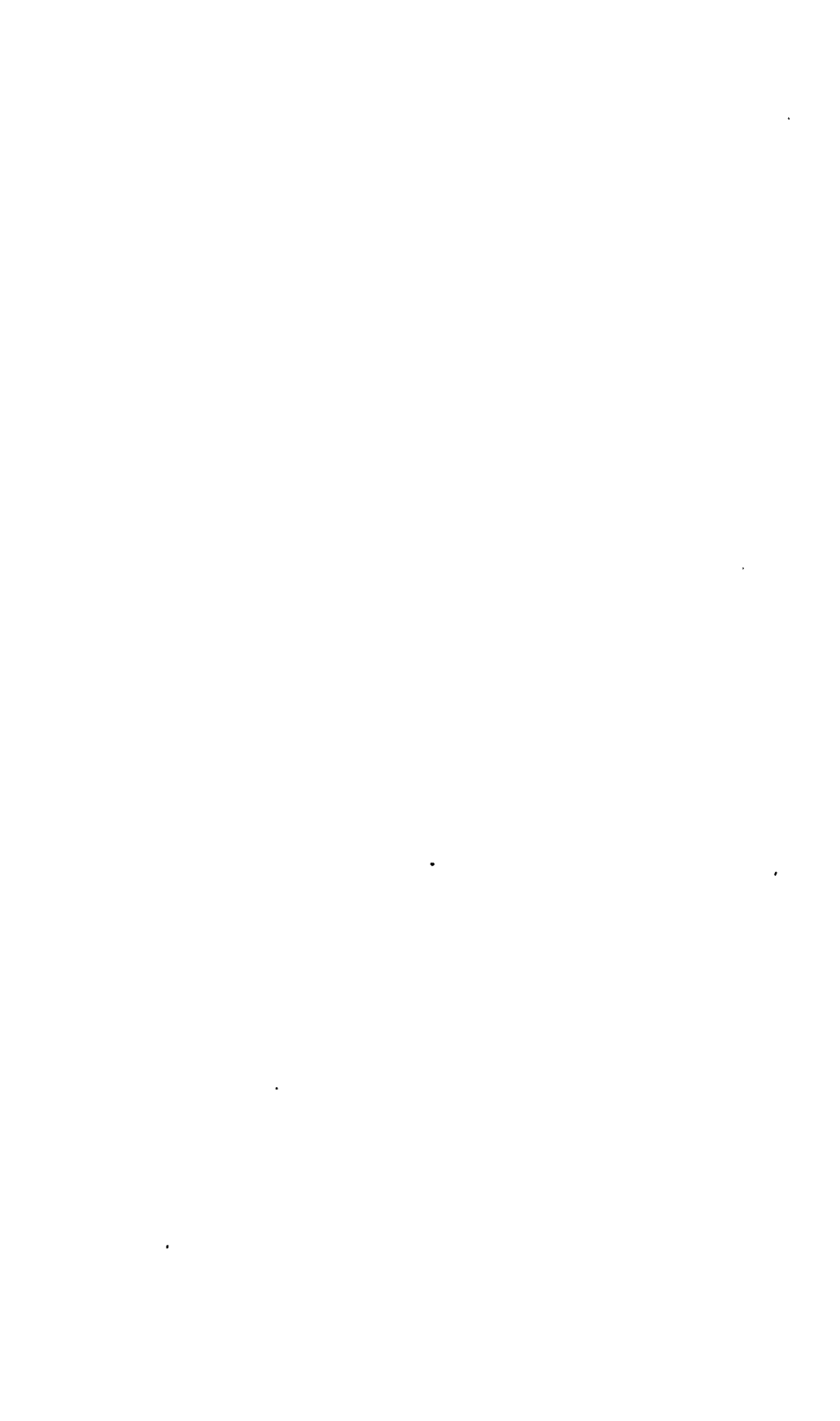


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*Drawn by A. F. Burney.*

*Engraved by John Smith.*

GRAY.

*Published by Vernon, Hoare & Sharpe, Pall Mall, Sept. 1, 1764.*

## CONTENTS.

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	Page
ODE 1. On the Spring . . . . .	1
— 2. On the Death of a Favourite Cat . . . . .	4
— 3. On a distant Prospect of Eton College . . . . .	7
— 4. To Adversity . . . . .	12
— 5. The Progress of Poesy . . . . .	15
— 6. The Bard . . . . .	23
* — 7. For Music . . . . .	33
— 8. The Fatal Sisters . . . . .	39
— 9. The Descent of Odin . . . . .	44
— 10. The Triumphs of Owen . . . . .	49
— 11. The Death of Hoel . . . . .	52
SONNET on the Death of Mr. West . . . . .	54
EPITAPH 1. On Mrs. Clarke . . . . .	55
— 2. On Sir William Williams . . . . .	57
ELEGY written in a Country Church-Yard . . . . .	59
IMITATIONS, VARIATIONS, and ADDITIONAL NOTES . . . . .	67

### MEMOIRS.—SECTION I.

INTRODUCTION.—Mr. GRAY's birth.—Education at Eton, where he commences a friendship with the Hon. Horace Walpole, and Mr. Richard West.—Account of the latter, with whom and with Mr. Walpole a correspondence begins on their leaving school, and going to the university . . . . . p. 127

- LETTER 1. From Mr. WEST.—Complains of his friend's silence . . . . . p. 133
- LETTER 2. To Mr. WEST.—Answer to the former.—A translation of some lines from Statius . . . . . p. 134
- LETTER 3. From Mr. WEST.—Approbation of the version.—Ridicule on the Cambridge Collection of Verses on the marriage of the Prince of Wales . . . . . p. 138

---

Preface of the Editor to the subsequent letter . . . . . p. 140

---

- LETTER 4. To Mr. WEST.—On the little encouragement which he finds given to classical learning at Cambridge.—His aversion to metaphysical and mathematical studies . . . . . p. 141
- LETTER 5. From Mr. WEST.—Answer to the former, advises his correspondent not to give up Poetry when he applies himself to the Law . . . . . p. 143
- LETTER 6. To Mr. WALPOLE.—Excuse for not writing to him, &c. . . . . p. 146
- LETTER 7. From Mr. WEST.—A poetical epistle addressed to his Cambridge friends, taken in part from Tibullus and a prose letter of Mr. Pope . . . . . p. 148
- LETTER 8. To Mr. WEST.—Thanks him for his poetical epistle.—Complains of low spirits.—Lady Walpole's death, and his concern for Mr. H. Walpole . . . . . p. 153
- LETTER 9. To Mr. WALPOLE.—How he spends his own time in the country.—Meets with Mr. Southern, the dramatic poet . . . . . p. 154
- LETTER 10. To Mr. WALPOLE.—Supposed manner in which Mr. Walpole spends his time in the country . . . . . p. 157
- LETTER 11. From Mr. WEST.—Sends him a translation into Latin of a Greek epigram . . . . . p. 158
- LETTER 12. To Mr. WEST.—A Latin epistle in answer to the foregoing . . . . . p. 160
- LETTER 13. From Mr. WEST, on leaving the University, and removing to the Temple . . . . . p. 162

- LETTER 14. To Mr. WEST.—A Sapphic Ode, occasioned by the preceding letter, with a Latin postscript, concluding with an Alcaic fragment . . . . . p. 164
- LETTER 15. From Mr. WEST.—Thanks for his Ode, &c.—His idea of Sir Robert Walpole . . . . . p. 167
- LETTER 16. To Mr. WALPOLE.—Congratulates him on his new place.—Whimsical description of the quadrangle of Peter-House . . . . . p. 169
- LETTER 17. To Mr. WEST.—On his own leaving the University . . . . . p. 171
- LETTER 18. From Mr. WEST.—Sends him a Latin Elegy in answer to Mr. Gray's Sapphic Ode . . . . . p. 173
- 
- Short Narrative concluding the Section . . . . . p. 175

## SECTION II.

- Connecting Narrative.—Mr. Gray goes abroad with Mr. Walpole.—Corresponds, during his tour, with his parents and Mr. West . . . . . p. 177
- LETTER 1. To his MOTHER.—His voyage from Dover.—Description of Calais.—Abbeville.—Amiens.—Face of the country, and dress of the people . . . . . p. 179
- LETTER 2. To Mr. WEST.—Monuments of the kings of France at St. Denis, &c.—French Opera and Music.—Actors, &c. p. 182
- LETTER 3. To Mr. WEST.—Palace of Versailles.—Its gardens and water-works.—Installation of the Knights du S. Esprit p. 187
- LETTER 4. To his MOTHER.—Rheims.—Its cathedral.—Disposition and amusements of its inhabitants . . . . . p. 191
- LETTER 5. To his FATHER.—Face of the country between Rheims and Dijon.—Description of the latter.—Monastery of the Carthusians and Cistercians . . . . . p. 194
- LETTER 6. To Mr. WEST.—Lyons.—Beauty of its environs.—Roman antiquities . . . . . p. 196





## ODE · I.

---

---

### ON THE SPRING.

---

**L**O! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,  
Fair VENUS' train appear,  
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,  
And wake the purple year!  
The Attic warbler pours her throat,  
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,  
The untaught harmony of spring:  
While whisp'ring pleasure as they fly,  
Cool Zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky  
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch  
A broader browner shade;  
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech  
O'er-canopies the glade,

Beside some water's rushy brink  
 With me the Muse shall sit, and think  
 (At ease reclin'd in rustic state)  
 How vain the ardour of the Crowd,  
 How low, how little are the Proud,  
 How indigent the Great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care:  
 The panting herds repose:  
 Yet hark, how thro' the peopled air  
 The busy murmur glows!  
 The insect youth are on the wing,  
 Eager to taste the honied spring,  
 And float amid the liquid noon:  
 Some lightly o'er the current skim,  
 Some shew their gaily-gilded trim  
 Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye  
 Such is the race of Man:  
 And they that creep, and they that fly,  
 Shall end where they began.  
 Alike the Busy and the Gay  
 But flutter thro' life's little day,  
 In fortune's varying colours drest:  
 Brush'd by the hand of rough Mischance,

Or chill'd by Age, their airy dance  
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low  
The sportive kind reply:  
Poor moralist! and what art thou?  
A solitary fly!  
Thy joys no glittering female meets,  
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,  
No painted plumage to display:  
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;  
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone---  
We frolic, while 'tis May:

## ODE II.

---

---

ON THE

### *DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT,*

*Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes.*

---

**T**WAS on a lofty vase's side,  
Where China's gayest art had dy'd  
The azure flowers, that blow;  
Demurest of the tabby kind,  
The pensive Selima reclin'd,  
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declar'd;  
The fair round face, the snowy beard,  
The velvet of her paws,  
Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,  
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,  
She saw; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gaz'd; but 'midst the tide  
 Two angel forms were seen to glide,  
 The Genii of the stream :  
 Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue  
 Thro' richest purple to the view  
 Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw :  
 A whisker first and then a claw,  
 With many an ardent wish,  
 She stretch'd in vain to reach the prize.  
 What female heart can gold despise?  
 What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous Maid! with looks intent  
 Again she stretch'd, again she bent,  
 Nor knew the gulf between.  
 (Malignant fate sat by, and smil'd)  
 The slipp'ry verge her feet beguil'd,  
 She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood  
 She mew'd to ev'ry wat'ry God,  
 Some speedy aid to send.  
 No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd:  
 Nor cruel *Tom*, nor *Susan* heard.  
 A Fav'rite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties undeceiv'd,  
Know, one false step is ne'er retriev'd,  
And be with caution bold.  
Not all that tempts your wand'ring eyes  
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;  
Nor all, that glisters, gold.

## ODE III.

---

ON  
A DISTANT PROSPECT  
OF  
ETON COLLEGE.

---

Ἄνθρωπος ἱκανὴ πρόφασις εἰς τὸ δυσχεῖν.

MENANDER.

---

YE distant spires, ye antique towers,  
That crown the wat'ry glade,  
Where grateful Science still adores  
Her HENRY'S\* holy Shade;  
And ye, that from the stately brow  
Of WINDSOR'S heights th' expanse below

---

\* King HENRY the Sixth, Founder of the College.

Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,  
 Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among  
 Wanders the hoary Thames along  
 His silver-winding way.

Ah happy-hills! ah pleasing shade!  
 Ah fields belov'd in vain,  
 Where once my careless childhood stray'd  
 A stranger yet to pain!  
 I feel the gales that from ye blow,  
 A momentary bliss bestow,  
 As waving fresh their gladsome wing,  
 My weary soul they seem to sooth,  
 And, redolent of joy and youth,  
 To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father THAMES, for thou hast seen  
 Full many a sprightly race  
 Disporting on thy margent green  
 The paths of pleasure trace,  
 Who foremost now delight to cleave  
 With pliant arm thy glassy wave?  
 The captive linnet which enthrall?  
 What idle progeny succeed  
 To chase the rolling circle's speed,  
 Or urge the flying ball?



While some on earnest business bent  
 Their murm'ring labours ply  
 'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint  
 To sweeten liberty:  
 Some bold adventurers disdain  
 The limits of their little reign,  
 And unknown regions dare descry:  
 Still as they run they look behind,  
 They hear a voice in every wind,  
 And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,  
 Less pleasing when possess'd;  
 The tear forgot as soon as shed,  
 The sunshine of the breast:  
 Theirs buxom health of rosy hue,  
 Wild wit, invention ever-new,  
 And lively cheer of vigour born;  
 The thoughtless day, the easy night,  
 The spirits pure, the slumbers light,  
 That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas, regardless of their doom,  
 The little victims play!  
 No sense have they of ills to come,  
 Nor care beyond to-day:

• Yet see how all around 'em wait  
 The Ministers of human fate,  
 And black Misfortune's baleful train!  
 Ah, shew them where in ambush stand  
 To seize their prey the murth'rous band!  
 Ah, tell them they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,  
 The vultures of the mind,  
 Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,  
 And Shame that sculks behind;  
 Or pining Love shall waste their youth,  
 Or Jealousy with rankling tooth,  
 That inly gnaws the secret heart,  
 And Envy wan, and faded Care,  
 Grim-visag'd comfortless Despair,  
 And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,  
 Then whirl the wretch from high,  
 To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,  
 And grinning infamy.  
 The stings of Falshood those shall try,  
 And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,  
 That mocks the tear it forc'd to flow;  
 And keen Remorse with blood defil'd,

And moody Madness laughing wild  
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the vale of years beneath  
A griesly troop are seen,  
The painful family of Death,  
More hideous than their Queen:  
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,  
That every labouring sinew strains,  
Those in the deeper vitals rage:  
Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,  
That numbs the soul with icy hand,  
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his suff'rings: all are men,  
Condemn'd alike to groan;  
The tender for another's pain,  
Th' unfeeling for his own.  
Yet ah! why should they know their fate?  
Since sorrow never comes too late,  
And happiness too swiftly flies.  
Thought would destroy their paradise.  
No more; where ignorance is bliss,  
'Tis folly to be wise.

ODE IV.

---

---

TO

ADVERSITY.

---

Ζῆνα,

Τὸν φρονεῖν Βροτοῦς ὀδύ-  
σαρτα, τῷ πάθει μαθῶν  
Θεία κυρίως ἔχειν.

ÆSCHYLUS, in Agamemnone.

---

**D**AUGHTER of Jove, relentless Power,  
Thou Tamer of the human breast,  
Whose iron scourge and tort'ring hour,  
The Bad affright, afflict the Best!  
Bound in thy adamantine chain  
The Proud are taught to taste of pain,  
And purple Tyrants vainly groan  
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy Sire to send on earth  
 Virtue, his darling Child, design'd,  
 To thee he gave the heav'nly Birth,  
 And bad to form her infant mind.  
 Stern rugged Nurse! thy rigid lore  
 With patience many a year she bore:  
 What sorrow was, thou bad'st her know,  
 And from her own she learn'd to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly  
 Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,  
 Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,  
 And leave us leisure to be good.  
 Light they disperse, and with them go  
 The summer Friend, the flatt'ring Foe;  
 By vain Prosperity receiv'd,  
 To her they vow their truth, and are again believ'd.

Wisdom in sable garb array'd  
 Immers'd in rapt'rous thought profound,  
 And Melancholy, silent maid,  
 With leaden eye, that loves the ground,  
 Still on thy solemn steps attend:  
 Warm Charity, the general Friend,  
 With Justice to herself severe,  
 And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh, gently on thy Suppliant's head,  
 Dread Goddess, lay thy chast'ning hand!  
 Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,  
 Nor circled with the vengeful Band  
 (As by the Impious thou art seen)  
 With thund'ring voice, and threat'ning mien,  
 With screaming Horror's funeral cry,  
 Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty:

Thy form benign, oh Goddess, wear,  
 Thy milder influence impart,  
 Thy philosophic Train be there  
 To soften, not to wound my heart.  
 The generous spark extinct revive,  
 Teach me to love and to forgive,  
 Exact my own defects to scan,  
 What others are to feel, and know myself a Man.

## ODE V.

---

THE  
PROGRESS OF POESY.

---

PINDARIC\*.

Φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν ἔς

Δὲ τὸ πᾶν ἐρμηνέων χαρίζεται.

PINDAR, Olymp. II.

---

I. 1.

**A**WAKE, Æolian lyre, awake,  
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.  
† From Helicon's harmonious springs  
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:

---

\* When the Author first published this and the following Ode, he was advised, even by his Friends, to subjoin some few explanatory Notes; but had too much respect for the understanding of his Readers to take that liberty.

† The subject and simile, as usual with Pindar, are united. The various sources of poetry, which gives life and lustre to all it touches, are here described; its quiet majestic progress enriching every subject (otherwise dry and barren) with a pomp of diction and luxuriant harmony of numbers; and its more rapid and irre-

The laughing flowers, that round them blow,  
 Drink life and fragrance as they flow.  
 Now the rich stream of music winds along  
 Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,  
 Thro' verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign:  
 Now rolling down the steep amain,  
 Headlong, impetuous, see it pour:  
 The rocks and nodding groves, rebellow to the roar.

## I. 2.

\* Oh! Sovereign of the willing soul,  
 Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,  
 Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares,  
 And frantic Passions hear thy soft controul.  
 On Thracia's Hills the Lord of War  
 Has curb'd the fury of his car,  
 And drop'd his thirsty lance at thy command.  
 Perching on the scept'red hand  
 Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king  
 With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:  
 Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie  
 The terror of his beak, and light'nings of his eye.

---

sistible course, when swoln and hurried away by the conflict of tumultuous passions.

\* Power of harmony to calm the turbulent sallies of the soul. The thoughts are borrowed from the first Pythian of Pindar.



## I. 3.

\* Thee the voice, the dance, obey,  
 Temper'd to thy warbled lay.  
 O'er Idalia's velvet-green  
 The rosy-crowned Loves are seen  
 On Cytherea's day  
 With antic sport, and blue-eyed Pleasures,  
 Frisking light in frolic measures;  
 Now pursuing, now retreating,  
 Now in circling troops they meet:  
 To brisk notes in cadence beating  
 Glance their many-twinkling feet.  
 Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare:  
 Where'er she turns the Graces homage pay.  
 With arms sublime, that float upon the air,  
 In gliding state she wins her easy way:  
 O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move,  
 The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

## II. 1.

† Man's feeble race what Ills await,  
 Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,

---

\* Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body.

† To compensate the real and imaginary ill of life, the Muse was given to Mankind by the same Providence that sends the Day by its chearful presence to dispel the gloom and terrors of the Night.

Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,  
 And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate!  
 The fond complaint, my Song, disprove,  
 And justify the laws of Jove.  
 Say, has he giv'n in vain the heav'nly Muse?  
 Night, and all her sickly dews,  
 Her Spectres wan, and Birds of boding cry,  
 He gives to range the dreary sky:  
 Till down the eastern cliffs afar  
 Hyperion's march they spy, and glitt'ring shafts of war.

## II. 2.

\* In climes beyond the solar road,  
 Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,  
 The Muse has broke the twilight-gloom  
 To cheer the shivering Native's dull abode.  
 And oft, beneath the od'rous shade  
 Of Chili's boundless forests laid,  
 She deigns to hear the savage Youth repeat  
 In loose numbers wildly sweet  
 Their feather-cinctur'd Chiefs, and dusky Loves.  
 Her track, where'er the Goddess roves,

---

\* Extensive influence of poetic Genius over the remotest and most uncivilized nations: its connection with liberty, and the virtues that naturally attend on it.—[See the Erse, Norwegian, and Welch Fragments; the Lapland and American Songs.]

Glory pursue, and generous Shame;  
Th' unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

## II. 3.

\* Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,  
Isles, that crown th' Ægean deep,  
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,  
Or where Mæander's amber waves  
In lingering Lab'rins creep,  
How do your tuneful Echoes languish,  
Mute, but to the voice of Anguish!  
Where each old poetic Mountain  
Inspiration breath'd around;  
Ev'ry shade and hallow'd Fountain  
Murmur'd deep a solemn sound:  
Till the sad Nine in Greece's evil hour  
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.  
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant-Power,  
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.  
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,  
They sought, oh, Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

---

\* Progress of Poetry from Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. Chaucer was not unacquainted with the writings of Dante or of Petrarch. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt had travelled in Italy, and formed their taste there; Spenser imitated the Italian writers; Milton improved on them: but this School expired soon after the Restoration, and a new one arose on the French model, which has subsisted ever since.

## III. 1.

Far from the sun and summer-gale,  
 In thy green lap was Nature's \* Darling laid,  
 What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,  
 To him the mighty Mother did unveil  
 Her awful face: The dauntless Child  
 Stretch'd forth his little arms, and smil'd.  
 This pencil take (she said) whose colours clear  
 Richly paint the vernal year:  
 Thine too these golden keys, immortal Boy!  
 This can unlock the gates of Joy;  
 Of Horror that, and thrilling Fears,  
 Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic Tears.

## III. 2.

Nor second He†, that rode sublime  
 Upon the seraph-wings of Extasy,  
 The secrets of th' Abyss to spy.  
 He pass'd the flaming bounds of Place and Time:  
 The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze,  
 Where Angels tremble, while they gaze,  
 He saw; but blasted with excess of light,  
 Clos'd his eyes in endless night.  
 Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car,  
 Wide o'er the fields of Glory bear

\* Shakespeare.

† Milton.

Two Coursers of æthereal race,  
 With necks in thunder cloath'd, and long-resounding  
 pace.

## III. 3.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore!  
 Bright-eyed Fancy hovering o'er  
 Scatters from her pictur'd urn  
 Thoughts, that breathe, and words, that burn.  
 \* But ah! 'tis heard no more-----  
 Oh! Lyre divine, what'daring Spirit  
 Wakes thee now? tho' he inherit  
 Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,  
 † That the Theban Eagle bear  
 Sailing with supreme dominion  
 Thro' the azure deep of air:  
 Yet oft before his infant eyes would run  
 Such forms, as glitter in the Muse's ray

---

\* We have had in our language no other odes of the sublime kind, than that of Dryden on St. Cecilia's day: for Cowley (who had his merit) yet wanted judgment, style, and harmony for such a task. That of Pope is not worthy of so great a man. Mr. Mason, indeed, of late days, has touched the true chords, and with a masterly hand in some of his Choruses,—above all in the last of Caractacus;

“Hark! heard ye not yon footstep dread?” &c.

† Pindar.

With orient hues, unborrow'd of the Sun:  
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way  
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,  
Beneath the Good how far---but far above the Great.

## ODE VI.

---

### THE BARD.

---

PINDARIC\*.

I. 1.

- ‘**R**UIN seize thee, ruthless King!  
‘ Confusion on thy banners wait,  
‘ Tho’ fann’d by Conquest’s crimson wing  
‘ They mock the air with idle state.  
‘ Helm, nor † Hauberk’s twisted mail,  
‘ Nor e’en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail  
‘ To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,  
‘ From Cambria’s curse, from Cambria’s tears!’
- 

\* This Ode is founded on a Tradition current in Wales, that Edward the First, when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the Bards that fell into his hands to be put to death.

† The Hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets, or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail, that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion.

Such were the sounds, that o'er the crested pride  
 Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,  
 As down the steep of \*Snowdon's shaggy side  
 He wound with toilsome march his long array.  
 Stout †Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance:  
 To arms! cried †Mortimer, and couch'd his quiv'ring  
     lance.

## I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow  
 Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,  
 Robed in the sable garb of woe,  
 With haggard eyes the Poet stood;  
 (Loose his beard, and hoary hair  
 Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled air)

---

\* *Snowdon* was a name given by the Saxons to that mountainous tract which the Welch themselves call *Craigian-eryri*: it included all the highlands of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, as far east as the river Conway. R. Hygden, speaking of the castle of Conway, built by King Edward the First, says, "Ad ortum amnis Conway ad clivum montis Eryri;" and Matthew of Westminster, (ad ann. 1283,) "Apud Aberconway ad pedes montis Snowdonia: fecit erigi castrum forte."

† Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, son-in-law to King Edward.

‡ Edmond de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore.

They both were *Lords-Marchers*, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the King in this expedition.



And with a Master's hand, and Prophet's fire,  
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.

' Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert cave,  
' Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!  
' O'er thee, oh King! their hundred arms they wave,  
' Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;  
' Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,  
' To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

## I. 3.

' Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,  
' That hush'd the stormy main:  
' Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:  
' Mountains, ye mourn in vain,  
' Modred, whose magic song  
' Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-top'd head.  
' \* On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,  
' Sinear'd with gore, and ghastly pale:  
' Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;  
' The famish'd † Eagle screams, and passes by.

---

\* The shores of Caernarvonshire opposite to the Isle of Anglesey.

† Camden and others observe, that eagles used annually to build their aerie among the rocks of Snowdon, which from thence (as some think) were named by the Welch *Craigian-eryri*, or the crags of the eagles. At this day (I am told) the highest point of Snowdon is called *the eagle's nest*. That bird is certainly no

' Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,  
 ' Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes,  
 ' Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,  
 ' Ye died amidst your dying country's cries-----  
 ' No more I weep. They do not sleep.  
 ' On yonder cliffs, a griesly band,  
 ' I see them sit, they linger yet,  
 ' Avengers of their native land:  
 ' With me in dreadful harmony they join,  
 ' And \*weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy  
     line.'

## II. 1.

" Weave the warp, and weave the woof,  
 " The winding-sheet of Edward's race.  
 " Give ample room, and verge enough  
 " The characters of hell to trace.  
 " Mark the year, and mark the night,  
 " † When Severn shall re-echo with affright  
 " The shrieks of death, thro' Berkley's roof that ring,  
 " Shrieks of an agonizing King!

---

stranger to this island, as the Scots, and the people of Cumberland; Westmoreland; &c. can testify: it even has built its nest in the Peak of Derbyshire. [See Willoughby's Ornithol. published by Ray.]

\* See the Norwegian Ode, that follows.

† Edward the Second, cruelly butchered in Berkley-Castle.

“ \* She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,  
 “ That tear’st the bowels of thy mangled Mate,  
 “ † From thee be born, who o’er thy-country hangs.  
 “ The scourge of Heav’n. What Terrors round him  
     “ wait!  
 “ Amazement in his van, with Flight combin’d,  
 “ And Sorrow’s faded form, and Solitude behind.

## II. 2.

“ Mighty Victor, mighty Lord,  
 “ † Low on his funeral couch he lies!  
 “ No pitying heart, no eye, afford  
 “ A tear to grace his obsequies.  
 “ Is the sable § Warrior fled?  
 “ Thy son is gone. He rests among the Dead.-  
 “ The Swarm, that in thy noon-tide beam were born?  
 “ Gone to salute the rising Morn.  
 “ Fair || laughs the Morn, and soft the Zephyr blows,  
 “ While proudly riding o’er the azure realm  
 “ In gallant trim the gilded Vessel goes;  
 “ Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;

\* Isabel of France, Edward the Second’s adulterous Queen.

† Triumphs of Edward the Third in France.

‡ Death of that King, abandoned by his Children, and even robbed in his last moments by his Courtiers and his Mistress.

§ Edward, the Black Prince, dead sometime before his Father.

|| Magnificence of Richard the Second’s reign. See Froissard, and other contemporary Writers.

“ Regardless of the sweeping Whirlwind’s sway,  
 “ That, hush’d in grim repose, expects his evening-prey.

## II. 3.

“ \* Fill high the sparkling bowl,  
 “ The rich repast prepare,  
 “ Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:  
 “ Close by the regal chair  
 “ Fell Thirst and Famine scowl  
 “ A baleful smile upon their baffled Guest.  
 “ Heard ye the din of † battle bray,  
 “ Lance to lance, and horse to horse?  
 “ Long years of havock urge their destin’d course,  
 “ And thro’ the kindred squadrons mow their way.  
 “ Ye Towers of Julius, ‡ London’s lasting shame,  
 “ With many a foul and midnight murder fed,  
 “ Revere his § Consort’s faith, his Father’s || fame,

\* Richard the Second, (as we are told by Archbishop Scroop and the confederate Lords in their manifesto, by Thomas of Walsingham, and all the older Writers) was starved to death. The story of his assassination by Sir Piers, of Exon, is of much later date.

† Ruinous civil wars of York and Lancaster.

‡ Henry the Sixth, George Duke of Clarence, Edward the Fifth, Richard Duke of York, &c. believed to be murdered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Cæsar.

§ Margaret of Anjou, a woman of heroic spirit, who struggled hard to save her Husband and her Crown.

|| Henry the Fifth.

" And spare the meek \* Usurper's holy head.  
 " Above, below, the † rose of snow,  
 " Twin'd with her blushing foe, we spread:  
 " The bristled ‡ Boar in infant-gore  
 " Wallows beneath the thorny shade.  
 " Now, Brothers, bending o'er th' accursed loom,  
 " Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

## III. 1.

" Edward, lo! to sudden fate  
 " (Weave we the woof. The thread is spun.)  
 " § Half of thy heart we consecrate.  
 " (The web is wove. The work is done.)  
 ' Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn  
 ' Leave me unblest'd, unpitied, here to mourn:  
 ' In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,  
 ' They melt, they vanish from my eyes.  
 ' But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height

---

\* Henry the Sixth, very near being canonized. The line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the Crown.

† The white and red roses, devices of York and Lancaster.

‡ The silver Boar was the badge of Richard the Third; whence he was usually known, in his own time, by the name of *the Boar*.

§ Eleanor of Castile died a few years after the conquest of Wales. The heroic proof she gave of her affection for her Lord is well known. The monuments of his regret, and sorrow for the loss of her, are still to be seen at Northampton, Geddington, Waltham, and other places.

- ' Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll?  
 ' Visions of glory, spare my aching sight,  
 ' Ye unborn Ages, crowd not on my soul!  
 ' No more our long-lost \* Arthur we bewail.  
 ' All-hail, † ye genuine Kings, Britannia's Issue, hail.

## III. 2.

- ' Girt with many a Baron bold  
 ' Sublime their starry fronts they rear;  
 ' And gorgeous Dames, and Statesmen old  
 ' In bearded majesty, appear.  
 ' In the midst a Form divine!  
 ' Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-Line;  
 ' Her lion-port †, her awe-commanding face,  
 ' Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.  
 ' What strings symphonious tremble in the air,  
 ' What strains of vocal transport round her play!

\* It was the common belief of the Welch nation, that King Arthur was still alive in Fairy-Land, and should return again to reign over Britain.

† Both Merlin and Taliessin, had prophesied, that the Welch should regain their sovereignty over this island; which seemed to be accomplished in the House of Tudor.

‡ Speed, relating an audience given by Queen Elizabeth to Paul Dzialinski, Ambassador of Poland, says, "And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert Orator no less with her stately port and majestic departure, than with the tartnesse of her princelie checkes."

- ‘ Hear from the grave, great Taliessin\*, hear;  
 ‘ They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.  
 ‘ Bright Rapture calls, and soaring, as she sings,  
 ‘ Waves in the eye of Heav’n her many-colour’d wings.

## III. 3.

- ‘ The verse adorn again  
 ‘ Fierce-war, and faithful Love,  
 ‘ And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction drest.  
 ‘ In †buskin’d measures move  
 ‘ Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,  
 ‘ With Horror, Tyrant of the throbbing breast.  
 ‘ A ‡voice as of the Cherub-Choir,  
 ‘ Gales from blooming Eden bear;  
 ‘ § And distant warblings lessen on my ear,  
 ‘ That lost in long futurity expire.  
 ‘ Fond impious Man, think’st thou yon sanguine cloud,  
 ‘ Rais’d by thy breath, has quench’d the Orb of day?  
 ‘ To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,  
 ‘ And warms the nations with redoubled ray.  
 ‘ Enough for me: With joy I see

---

\* Taliessin, Chief of the Bards, flourished in the sixth Century. His works are still preserved, and his memory held in high veneration among his Countrymen.

† Shakespeare. ‡ Milton.

§ The succession of Poets after Milton’s time.

' The different doom our Fates assign.  
' Be thine Despair, and scept' red Care,  
' To triumph, and to die, are mine.'

He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height  
Deep in the roaring tide he plung'd to endless night.



## ODE VII.

---

---

FOR MUSIC\*.

IRREGULAR.

---

I.

“ **H**ENCE, avaunt, ('tis holy ground)  
“ Comus, and his midnight-crew,  
“ And ignorance with looks profound,  
“ And dreaming Sloth of pallid hue,  
“ Mad Sedition's cry profane,  
“ Servitude that hugs her chain,  
“ Nor in these consecrated bowers  
“ Let painted Flatt'ry hide her serpent-train in Flowers.  
“ Nor Envy base, nor creeping Gain  
“ Dare the Muse's walk to stain,

---

---

\* This Ode was performed in the Senate-House at Cambridge, July 1, 1769, at the Installation of his Grace Augustus Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, Chancellor of the University.

“ While bright-eyed Science watches round :  
 “ Hence, away, ’tis holy ground !”

## II.

From yonder realms of empyrean day  
 Bursts on my ear th’ indignant lay :  
 There sit the sainted Sage, the Bard divine,  
 The Few, whom Genius gave to shine  
 Through every unborn age, and undiscover’d clime.  
 Rapt in celestial transport they,  
 Yet hither oft a glance from high  
 They send of tender sympathy  
 To bless the place, where on their opening soul  
 First the genuine ardor stole.  
 ’Twas Milton struck the deep-ton’d shell,  
 And, as the choral warblings round him swell,  
 Meek Newton’s self bends from his state sublime,  
 And nods his hoary head, and listens to the rhyme.

## III.

“ Ye brown o’er-arching Groves,  
 “ That Contemplation loves,  
 “ Where willow Camus lingers with delight !  
 “ Oft at the blush of dawn  
 “ I trod your level lawn,  
 “ Oft woo’d the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright

“ In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,  
 “ With Freedom by my side, and soft-ey’d Melancholy.”

## IV.

But hark! the portals sound, and pacing forth  
 With solemn steps and slow,  
 High Potentates, and Dames of royal birth,  
 And mitred Fathers in long order go :  
 Great \* Edward, with the lilies on his brow  
 From haughty Gallia torn,  
 And † sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn  
 That wept her bleeding Love, and princely ‡ Clare,  
 And § Anjou’s Heroine, and ¶ the paler Rose,

\* Edward the Third; who added the *fleur de lys* of France to the arms of England. He founded Trinity College.

† Mary de Valentia, Countess of Pembroke, daughter of Guy de Chatillon Comte de St. Paul in France: of whom tradition says, that her husband, Audemar de Valentia, Earl of Pembroke, was slain at a Tournament on the day of his nuptials. She was the Foundress of Pembroke College, or Hall, under the Name of Aula Mariæ de Valentia.

‡ Elizabeth de Burg, Countess of Clare, was Wife of John de Burg, son and heir of the Earl of Ulster, and daughter of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, by Joan of Acres, daughter of Edward the First. Hence the Poet gives her the epithet of “Princely.” She founded Clare Hall.

§ Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry the Sixth, foundress of Queen’s College. The Poet has celebrated her conjugal fidelity in the former Ode: V. Epode 2d, Line 13th.

¶ Elizabeth Widville, wife of Edward the Fourth, (hence called

The rival of her crown and of her woes,  
 And \* either Henry there,  
 The murder'd Saint, and the majestic Lord,  
 That broke the bonds of Rome.  
 (Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,  
 Their human passions now no more,  
 Save Charity, that glows beyond the tomb)  
 All that on Granta's fruitful plain  
 Rich streams of regal bounty pour'd,  
 And bad these awful fanes and turrets rise,  
 To hail their Fitzroy's festal morning come;  
 And thus they speak in soft accord  
 The liquid language of the skies.

## v.

“ What is Grandeur, what is Power?  
 “ Heavier toil, superior pain.  
 “ What the bright reward we gain?  
 “ The grateful memory of the Good.  
 “ Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,  
 “ The bee's collected treasures sweet,  
 “ Sweet music's melting fall, but sweeter yet  
 “ The still small voice of Gratitude.”

---

the paler Rose, as being of the House of York.) She added to the foundation of Margaret of Anjou.

\* Henry the Sixth and Eighth. The former the founder of King's, the latter the greatest benefactor to Trinity College.

## VI.

Foremost and leaning from her golden cloud  
The \* venerable Marg'ret see!

- “ Welcome, my noble Son, (shé cries aloud)  
“ To this, thy kindred train, and me:  
“ Pleas'd in thy lineaments we trace  
“ † A Tudor's fire, a Beaufort's grace.  
“ Thy liberal heart, thy judging eye,  
“ The flower unheeded shall descry,  
“ And bid it round heav'n's altars shed  
“ The fragrance of its blushing head:  
“ Shall raise from earth the latent gem  
“ To glitter on the diadem.

## VII.

- “ Lo, Granta waits to lead her blooming band,  
“ Not obvious, not obtrusive, She  
“ No vulgar praise, no venal incense flings;  
“ Nor dares with courtly tongue refin'd  
“ Profane thy inborn royalty of mind:  
“ She reveres herself and thee.  
“ With modest pride to grace thy youthful brow

---

\* Countess of Richmond and Derby; the Mother of Henry the Seventh, foundress of St. John's and Christ's Colleges.

† The Countess was a Beaufort, and married to a Tudor: hence the application of this line to the Duke of Grafton, who claims descent from both these families.

" The laureate wreath, \* that Cecil wore, she brings,  
 " And to thy just, thy gentle hand  
 " Submits the Fasces of her sway,  
 " While Spirits blest above and Men below  
 " Join with glad voice the loud symphonious lay.

## VIII.

" Thro' the wild waves as they roar  
 " With watchful eye and dauntless mien  
 " Thy steady course of honor keep,  
 " Nor fear the rocks, nor seek the shore:  
 " The Star of Brunswick smiles serene,  
 " And gilds the horrors of the deep.

---

\* Lord Treasurer Burleigh was Chancellor of the University, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

## ODE VIII.

---

---

THE

### FATAL SISTERS.

From the Norse-Tongue\*.

---

NOW the Storm begins to lower,  
(Haste, the loom of Hell prepare,)  
Iron-sleet of arrowy shower  
Hurtles in the darken'd air.

Glitt'ring lances are the loom,  
Where the dusky warp we strain,  
Weaving many a Soldier's doom,  
Orkney's woe, and Randver's bane.

---

\* To be found in the ORCADES of THORMODUS TORFÆUS; HAFNIE, 1697, Folio: and also in BARTHOLINUS.

VITT ER ORPIT FYRIR VALFALLI; &c.

The design of Mr. Gray in writing this and the three following imitative Odes is given in the Memoirs of his Life. For the better understanding the first of these, the reader is to be informed, that

See the griesly texture grow,  
 ('Tis of human entrails made,)  
 And the weights, that play below,  
 Each a gasping Warrior's head.

Shafts for shuttles, dipt in gore,  
 Shoot the trembling cords along.  
 Sword, that once a Monarch bore,  
 Keep the tissue close and strong.

in the Eleventh Century, *Sigurd*, Earl of the Orkney-Islands, went with a fleet of ships, and a considerable body of troops into Ireland, to the assistance of *Sictryg with the silken beard*, who was then making war on his father-in-law *Brián*, King of Dublin: the Earl and all his forces were cut to pieces, and *Sictryg* was in danger of a total defeat; but the enemy had a greater loss by the death of *Brián*, their King, who fell in the action. On Christmas-day, (the day of the battle,) a Native of *Caithness*, in Scotland, saw at a distance a number of persons on horseback riding full speed towards a hill, and seeming to enter into it. Curiosity led him to follow them, till looking through an opening in the rocks he saw twelve gigantic figures resembling women: they were all employed about a loom; and as they wove, they sung the following dreadful Song; which, when they had finished, they tore the web into twelve pieces, and (each taking her portion) galloped Six to the North and as many to the South. These were the *Valkyriur*, female Divinities, Servants of *Odin* (or *Woden*) in the Gothic Mythology. Their name signifies *Chusers of the slain*. They were mounted on swift horses, with drawn swords in their hands; and in the throng of battle selected such as were destined to slaughter, and conducted them to *Valkalla*, the hall of *Odin*, or paradise of the Brave; where they attended the banquet, and served the departed Heroes with horns of mead and ale.



Mista black, terrific Maid,  
 Sangrida, and Hilda see,  
 Join the wayward work to aid:  
 'Tis the woof of victory.

Ere the ruddy sun be set,  
 Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,  
 Blade with clattering buckler meet,  
 Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.

(Weave the crimson web of war)  
 Let us go, and let us fly,  
 Where our Friends the conflict share,  
 Where they triumph, where they die.

As the paths of fate we tread,  
 Wading thro' th' ensanguin'd field:  
 Gondula, and Geira, spread  
 O'er the youthful King your shield.

We the reins to slaughter give,  
 Ours to kill, and ours to spare:  
 Spite of danger he shall live.  
 (Weave the crimson web of war.)

They, whom once the desert-beach  
 Fent within its bleak domain,  
 Soon their ample sway shall stretch  
 O'er the plenty of the plain.

Low the dauntless Earl is laid,  
 Gor'd with many a gaping wound:  
 Fate demands a nobler head;  
 Soon a King shall bite the ground.

Long his loss shall Eirin weep,  
 Ne'er again his likeness see;  
 Long her strains in sorrow steep,  
 Strains of Immortality!

Horror covers all the heath,  
 Clouds of carnage blot the sun.  
 Sisters, weave the web of death;  
 Sisters, cease; the work is done.

Hail the task, and hail the hands!  
 Songs of joy and triumph sing!  
 Joy to the victorious bands;  
 Triumph to the younger King.

Mortal, thou that hear'st the tale,  
Learn the tenor of our song.  
Scotland, thro' each winding vale  
Far and wide the notes prolong.

Sisters, hence with spurs of speed:  
Each her thundering faulchion wield;  
Each bestride her sable steed.  
Hurry, hurry to the field.

## ODE IX.

---

THE

### DESCENT OF ODIN\*.

From the Norse-Tongue.

---

U PROSE the King of Men with speed,  
And saddled strait his coal-black steed;  
Down the yawning steep he rode,  
That leads to † HELA's drear abode.  
Him the Dog of Darkness spied,  
His shaggy throat he open'd wide,

---

\* The original is to be found in BARTHOLINUS, de causis contemnendæ mortis; HAFNIÆ, 1689, Quarto.

UPREIS ODINN ALLDA GAUTR, &c.

† *Niflheimr*, the hell of the Gothic nations, consisted of nine worlds, to which were devoted all such as died of sickness, old age, or by any other means than in battle; over it presided HELA, the Goddess of Death.

While from his jaws, with carnage fill'd,  
 Foam and human gore distill'd:  
 Hoarse he bays with hideous din,  
 Eyes that glow, and fangs that grin;  
 And long pursues, with fruitless yell,  
 The Father of the powerful spell.  
 Onward still his way he takes,  
 (The groaning earth beneath him shakes,)  
 Till full before his fearless eyes  
 The portals nine of hell arise.

Right against the eastern gate,  
 By the moss-grown pile he sate;  
 Where long of yore to sleep was laid  
 The dust of the prophetic Maid.  
 Facing to the northern clime,  
 Thrice he trac'd the Runic rhyme;  
 Thrice pronounc'd, in accents dread,  
 The thrilling verse that wakes the Dead;  
 Till from out the hollow ground  
 Slowly breath'd a sullen sound.

*Pr.* What call unknown, what charms presume  
 To break the quiet of the tomb?  
 Who thus afflicts my troubled sprite,  
 And drags me from the realms of night?

Long on these mould'ring bones have beat  
 The winter's snow, the summer's heat,  
 The drenching dews, and driving rain!  
 Let me, let me sleep again.  
 Who is he, with voice unblest,  
 That calls me from the bed of rest?

O. A Traveller, to thee unknown,  
 Is he that calls, a Warrior's Son.  
 Thou the deeds of light shalt know;  
 Tell me what is done below,  
 For whom yon glitt'ring board is spread,  
 Drest for whom yon golden bed.

*Pr.* Mantling in the goblet see  
 The pure bev'rage of the bee;  
 O'er it hangs the shield of gold;  
 'Tis the drink of Balder bold;  
 Balder's head to death is giv'n.  
 Pain can reach the Sons of Heav'n!  
 Unwilling I my lips unclose;  
 Leave me, leave me to repose.

O. Once again my call obey.  
 Prophetess, arise, and say,  
 What dangers Odin's Child await,  
 Who the Author of his fate.

*Pr.* In Hoder's hand the Hero's doom :  
 His brother sends him to the tomb.  
 Now my weary lips I close :  
 Leave me, leave me to repose.

*O.* Prophetess, my spell obey,  
 Once again arise, and say,  
 Who th' Avenger of his guilt,  
 By whom shall Hoder's blood be spilt.

*Pr.* In the caverns of the west,  
 By Odin's fierce embrace comprest,  
 A wond'rous Boy shall Rinda bear,  
 Who ne'er shall comb his raven-hair,  
 Nor wash his visage in the stream,  
 Nor see the sun's departing beam ;  
 Till he on Hoder's corse shall smile  
 Flaming on the fun'ral pile.  
 Now my weary lips I close :  
 Leave me, leave me to repose.

*O.* Yet awhile my call obey.  
 Prophetess, awake, and say,  
 What Virgins these, in speechless woe,  
 That bend to earth their solemn brow,  
 That their flaxen tresses tear,  
 And snowy veils, that float in air.

Tell me whence their sorrows rose:  
Then I leave thee to repose.

*Pr.* Ha! no Traveller art thou,  
King of Men, I know thee now,  
Mightiest of a mighty line-----

*O.* No boding Maid of skill divine  
Art thou, nor Prophetess of good;  
But mother of the giant-brood!

*Pr.* Hie thee hence, and boast at home,  
That never shall Enquirer come  
To break my iron-sleep again;  
Till \* *LoK* has burst his tenfold chain.  
Never, till substantial Night  
Has reassum'd her ancient right;  
Till wrap'd in flames, in ruin hurl'd,  
Sinks the fabric of the world,

---

\* *Lok* is the evil Being, who continues in chains till the *Twilight of the Gods* approaches; when he shall break his bonds; the human race, the stars, and sun, shall disappear; the earth sink in the seas, and fire consume the skies: even *Odin* himself and his kindred-deities shall perish. For a farther explanation of this mythology, see "Introduction à l'Histoire de Dannemarc, par Mons. Mallet," 1755, Quarto; or rather a translation of it, published in 1770, and entitled, "Northern Antiquities," in which some mistakes in the Original are judiciously corrected.



## ODE X.

---

THE  
TRIUMPHS OF OWEN\*.

From the Welch.

---

OWEN's praise demands my song,  
Owen swift, and Owen strong;  
Fairest flower of Roderic's stem,  
† Gwyneth's shield, and Britain's gem.  
He nor heaps his brooded stores,  
Nor on all profusely pours;  
Lord of every regal art,  
Liberal hand, and open heart.

---

\* From Mr. EVANS's specimens of the Welch Poetry; London, 1764, Quarto. Owen succeeded his Father Griffin in the principality of North Wales, A. D. 1120. This battle was fought near forty years afterwards.

† North Wales.

Big with hosts of mighty name,  
 Squadrons three against him came;  
 This the force of Eirin hiding,  
 Side by side as proudly riding,  
 On her shadow long and gay  
 \* Lochlin plows the wat'ry way;  
 There the Norman sails afar  
 Catch the winds, and join the war:  
 Black and huge along they sweep,  
 Burthens of the angry deep.

Dauntless on his native sands  
 † The Dragon-Son of Mona stands;  
 In glitt'ring arms and glory drest,  
 High he rears his ruby crest.  
 There the thund'ring strokes begin,  
 There the press, and there the din;  
 Talymalfra's rocky shore  
 Echoing to the battle's roar.  
 ‡ Check'd by the torrent-tide of blood  
 Backward Meinai rolls his flood;

---

\* Denmark:

† The red Dragon is the device of Cadwallader, which all his descendants bore on their banners.

‡ This and the three following lines are not in the former Editions, but are now added from the author's MS.

While, heap'd his master's feet around,  
Prostrate Warriors gnaw the ground.  
Where his glowing eye-balls turn,  
Thousand Banners round him burn.  
Where he points his purple spear,  
Hasty, hasty Rout is there,  
Marking with indignant eye  
Fear to stop, and shame to fly.  
There Confusion, Terror's child,  
Conflict fierce, and Ruin wild,  
Agony, that pants for breath,  
Despair and honourable Death.

## ODE XI.

---

THE  
*DEATH OF HOEL.*

From the Welch\*.



**H**AD I but the torrent's might,  
With headlong rage and wild affright.  
Upon Deïra's squadrons hurl'd,  
To rush, and sweep them from the world!

Too, too secure in youthful pride  
By them my friend, my Hoel, died,  
Great Cian's Son: of Madoc old  
He ask'd no heaps of hoarded gold;

---

\* Of Aneurim, styled the Monarch of the Bards. He flourished about the time of Taliessin, A. D. 570. This Ode is extracted from the Gododin, (See Mr. Evans's Specimens, p. 71 and 73) and now first published.

Alone in Nature's wealth array'd,  
 He ask'd, and had the lovely Maid.

To Cattraeth's vale in glitt'ring row  
 Twice two hundred Warriors go;  
 Every Warrior's manly neck  
 Chains of regal honour deck,  
 Wreath'd in many a golden link:  
 From the golden cup they drink  
 Nectar, that the bees produce,  
 Or the grape's extatic juice.  
 Flush'd with mirth, and hope they burn:  
 But none from Cattraeth's vale return,  
 Save Aëron brave, and Conan strong,  
 (Bursting thro' the bloody throng)  
 And I, the meanest of them all,  
 That live to weep; and sing their fall.

# SONNET\*

ON THE

*DEATH OF MR. RICHARD WEST.*



**I**N vain to me the smiling Mornings shine,  
And redd'ning Phœbus lifts his golden fire:  
The birds in vain their amorous descant join;  
Or chearful fields resume their green attire:  
These ears, alas! for other notes repine,  
A different object do these eyes require:  
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;  
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.  
Yet Morning smiles the busy race to chear,  
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men:  
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear:  
To warm their little loves the birds complain:  
I fruitless mourn to him, that cannot hear,  
And weep the more, because I weep in vain.

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\* Now first published. See Memoirs, Sect. 8.


## EPITAPH I.

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ON

\* *MRS. CLARKE.*



**L**O! where this silent Marble weeps,  
A Friend, a Wife, a Mother sleeps:  
A Heart, within whose sacred cell  
The peaceful Virtues lov'd to dwell.  
Affection warm, and faith sincere,  
And soft humanity were there.  
In agony, in death resign'd,  
She felt the Wound she left behind.  
Her infant Image, here below,  
Sits smiling on a Father's woe:

---

\* This Lady, the Wife of Dr. Clarke, Physician at Epsom, died April 27, 1757; and is buried in the Church of Beckenham, Kent.

Whom what awaits, while yet he strays  
Along the lonely vale of days?  
A Pang, to secret sorrow dear;  
A Sigh; an unavailing Tear;  
'Till Time shall ev'ry grief remove,  
With Life, with Memory, and with Love,



## EPITAPH II.

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ON

*SIR WILLIAM WILLIAMS.*



**H**ERE, foremost in the dangerous paths of fame,  
Young Williams fought for England's fair renown;  
His mind each muse, each grace adorn'd his frame,  
Nor Envy dar'd to view him with a frown.

At Aix his voluntary sword he drew,  
There first in blood his infant honor seal'd;  
From fortune, pleasure, science, love he flew,  
And scorn'd repose when Britain took the field.

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This Epitaph (hitherto unpublished) was written at the request of Mr. Frederick Montagu, who intended to have inscribed it on a Monument at Bellisle, at the siege of which this accomplished youth was killed, 1761; but from some difficulty attending the erection of it, this design was not executed.

With eyes of flame, and cool undaunted breast  
Victor he stood on Bellisle's rocky steeps-----  
Ah! gallant youth! this marble tells the rest,  
Where melancholy Friendship bends, and weeps.

# ELEGY

Written in

## *A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.*

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**T**HE Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herds wind slowly o'er the lea,  
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,  
The mopeing owl does to the moon complain  
Of such, as wand'ring near her secret bower,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,  
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,  
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,  
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:  
No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;  
How jocund did they drive their team afield!  
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;  
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,  
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
 Await alike th' inevitable hour.

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to These the fault,  
 If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,  
 Where thro' the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault  
 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust  
 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?  
 Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,  
 Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;  
 Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,  
 Or wak'd to extasy the living lyre.

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page  
 Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;  
 Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,  
 And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
 The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:  
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast  
 The little Tyrant of his fields withstood;  
 Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,  
 Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,  
 The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
 To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
 And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad: nor circumscrib'd alone  
 Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;  
 Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,  
 And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,  
 To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,  
 Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride  
 With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,  
 Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;  
 Along the cool sequester'd vale of life  
 They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect  
 Some frail memorial still erected nigh,  
 With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,  
 Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd muse,  
 The place of fame and elegy supply:  
 And many a holy text around she strews,  
 That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,  
 This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,  
 Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
 Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,  
 Some pious drops the closing eye requires;  
 Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,  
 Ev'n in our Ashes live their wonted Fires.

For thee, who mindful of th' unhonour'd Dead  
 Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;  
 If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,  
 Some kindred Spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed Swain may say,  
 ' Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn  
 ' Brushing with hasty steps the dews away  
 ' To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

' There at the foot of yonder nodding beech  
 ' That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,  
 ' His listless length at noontide would he stretch,  
 ' And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

' Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,  
 ' Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove;  
 ' Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,  
 ' Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

' One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,  
 ' Along the heath and near his fav'rite tree;  
 ' Another came; nor yet beside the rill,  
 ' Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;



' The next with dirges due in sad array  
 ' Slow thro' the church-way path we saw him born.  
 ' Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay,  
 ' Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

---

*THE EPITAPH.*

**H**ERE rests his head upon the lap of Earth,  
 A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown:  
 Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,  
 And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,  
 Heav'n did a recompence as largely send:  
 He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear,  
 He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,  
 Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,  
 (There they alike in trembling hope repose)  
 The bosom of his Father and his God.

END OF THE POEMS.



**IMITATIONS, VARIATIONS,**

**AND**

***ADDITIONAL NOTES.***

### ADVERTISEMENT.

IN the foregoing Edition the text of all those pieces, which the Author published in his life-time, is given exactly as he left it in the London and Glasgow editions; and the few added pieces are printed verbatim from his corrected manuscripts. I have also inserted all his explanatory notes at the bottom of their respective pages; but those which only pointed out imitative expressions, have been reserved for these concluding pages, because many of them appeared to me not very material, and therefore would have crowded the text as unnecessarily as my own annotations.

# NOTES,

&c.

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## ODE I.

The original manuscript title which Mr. Gray gave to this Ode, was NOONTIDE; probably he then meant to write two more, descriptive of Morning and Evening. His unfinished Ode (vide infra, p. 74,) opens with a fine description of the former: and his Elegy with as beautiful a picture of the latter, which perhaps he might, at that time, have meditated upon for the exordium of an Ode; but this is only conjecture. It may, however, be remarked, that these three capital descriptions abound with ideas which affect the ear more than the eye; and therefore go beyond the powers of picturesque imitation.

1. O'er-canopies the glade.

*Stanza 2. l. 4.*

### IMITATION.

————— a bank

O'er-canopied with luscious woodbine. G.

*Shakes. Mids. Night's Dream.*

2. How low, how little are the Proud;

How indigent the Great.

*Stanza 2. l. 9 and 10.*

## VARIATION.

How low, how indigent the Proud;  
How little are the Great.

Thus it stood in Dodsley's Miscellany, where it was first published. The author corrected it on account of the point of *little* and *great*. It certainly had too much the appearance of a Concetto, though it expressed his meaning better than the present reading.

3. And float amid the liquid noon.

*Stanza 3. l. 7.*

## IMITATION.

Nare per æstatem liquidam.

*Virgil. Georg. lib. iv. G.*

4. Quick-glancing to the sun.

*Stanza 3. l. 10.*

## IMITATION.

—— sporting with quick glance,

Shew to the sun their way'd coats dropt with gold.

*Milton's Par. Lost, b. vii. G.*

5. To Contemplation's sober eye.

*Stanza 4. l. 1.*

## IMITATION.

While insects from the threshold preach, &c.

*M. GREEN in the Grotto.*

*Dodsley's Misc. vol. v. p. 161. G.*

## ODE II.

1. This little piece, in which comic humour is so happily blended with lyrical fancy, was written, in point of time, some years later than the first, third, and fourth Odes; [See *Memoirs*, Sect. 4. Let. 6.] but as the author had printed it here in his own edition, I have not changed it. Mr. Walpole, since the death of Mr. Gray, has placed the China vase in question on a pedestal at Strawberry-Hill, with the first four lines of the Ode for its inscription.

'Twas on *this* Vase's lofty side, &c.

2. Two angel forms were seen to glide.

*Stanza 3. l. 2.*

### VARIATION.

Two *Beauteous* forms.

*First edition in Dodsley's Misc.*

## ODE III.

1. This was the first English production of Mr. Gray which appeared in print. It was published in folio, by Dodsley, in 1747; about the same time, at Mr. Walpole's request, Mr. Gray sat for his picture to Echart, in which, on a paper which he held in his hand, Mr. Walpole wrote the title of this Ode, and to intimate his own high and just opinion of it, as a first production, added this line of Lucan, by way of motto:

Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre.

*Phars. lib. x. l. 296.*

2. And redolent of Joy and Youth.

*Stanza 2. l. 9.*

### IMITATION.

And bees their honey redolent of spring.

*Dryden's Fable on the Pythag. System. G.*

3. And hard unkindness' alter'd eye.

*Stanza 8. l. 6.*

The elision here is ungraceful, and hurts this otherwise beautiful line: One of the same kind in the second line of the first Ode makes the same blemish; but I think they are the only two to be found in this correct writer: and I mention them here, that succeeding Poets may not look upon them as authorities. The judicious reader will not suppose that I would condemn all elisions of the genitive case, by this stricture on those which are terminated by rough consonants. Many there are which the ear readily admits, and which use has made familiar to it.



4. And moody Madness laughing wild.

*Stanza 8. l. 9.*

IMITATION.

— Madness laughing in her ireful mood.

*Dryden's Palamon and Arcite. G.*

ODE IV.

1. This Ode was first published, with the three foregoing, in Dodsley's Miscellany, under the title of an Hymn to Adversity, which title is here dropped for the sake of uniformity in the page. It is unquestionably as truly lyrical as any of his other Odes.

2. Exact my own defects to scan.

*Stanza 6. l. 7.*

The many hard consonants, which occur in this line, hurt the ear; Mr. Gray perceived it himself, but did not alter it, as the words themselves were those which best conveyed his idea, and therefore he did not choose to sacrifice sense to sound.

HAD Mr. Gray completed the fine lyrical fragment, which I have inserted in the fourth section of the *Memoirs*, I should have introduced it into the text of his *Poems*, as the fifth and last of his monostrophic Odes. In order to fulfil the promise which I there made to my reader, I shall now reprint the piece with my own additions to it. I have already made my apology for the attempt; and therefore shall only add, that although (as is usually done on such occasions) I print my supplemental lines in the italic character, yet I am well aware that their inferiority would but too easily distinguish them without any typographical assistance.

## O D E

ON

*THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM VICISSITUDE.*

NOW the golden Morn aloft  
 Waves her dew-bespangled wing,  
 With vermilion cheek, and whisper soft  
 She wooes the tardy Spring:  
 Till April starts, and calls around  
 The sleeping fragrance from the ground;  
 And lightly o'er the living scene  
 Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,  
 Frisking ply their feeble feet;

Forgetful of their wintry trance,  
 The birds his presence greet:  
 But chief, the Sky-Lark warbles high  
 His trembling thrilling extacy;  
 And, lessening from the dazzled sight,  
 Melts into air and liquid light.

Rise, my Soul! on wings of fire,  
 Rise the rapt'rous Choir among;  
 Hark! 'tis Nature strikes the Lyre,  
 And leads the general song:  
*Warm let the lyric transport flow,*  
*Warm, as the ray that bids it glow;*  
*And animates the vernal grove*  
*With health, with harmony, and love.*

Yesterday the sullen year  
 Saw the snowy whirlwind fly;  
 Mute was the music of the air,  
 The herd stood drooping by:  
 Their raptures now that wildly flow,  
 No yesterday, nor morrow know;  
 'Tis Man alone that joy descries  
 With forward, and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past Misfortune's brow  
 Soft Reflection's hand can trace;

And o'er the cheek of Sorrow throw  
 A melancholy grace;  
 While Hope prolongs our happier hour,  
 Or deepest shades, that dimly lower  
 And blacken round our weary way,  
 Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still, where rosy Pleasure leads,  
 See a kindred Grief pursue;  
 Behind the steps that Misery treads  
 Approaching Comfort view:  
 The hues of bliss more brightly glow,  
 Chastis'd by sabler tints of woe;  
 And blended form, with artful strife,  
 The strength and harmony of life.

See the Wretch, that long has tost  
 On the thorny bed of pain,  
 At length repair his vigour lost,  
 And breathe, and walk again:  
 The meanest floweret of the vale,  
 The simplest note that swells the gale,  
 The common sun, the air, the skies,  
 To Him are opening Paradise.

Humble Quiet builds her cell,  
 Near the source whence Pleasure flows;

She eyes the clear \* crystalline well,  
And tastes it as it goes.

*While far below the madding Croud  
Rush headlong to the dangerous flood,  
Where broad and turbulent it sweeps,  
And perish in the boundless deeps.*

Mark where Indolence, and Pride,  
*Sooth'd by Flattery's tinkling sound,*  
Go, softly rolling, side by side,  
Their dull, but daily round:  
*To these, if Hebe's self should bring  
The purest cup from Pleasure's spring,  
Say, can they taste the flavour high  
Of sober, simple, genuine Joy?*

*Mark Ambition's march sublime  
Up to Power's meridian height;  
While pale-ey'd Envy sees him climb,  
And sickens at the sight.  
Phantoms of Danger, Death, and Dread,  
Float hourly round Ambition's head;*

\* So Milton accents the word:

On the crystalline sky, in sapphire thrond.

P. L. Book vi. v. 772.

*While Spleen, within his rival's breast,  
Sits brooding on her scorpion nest.*

*Happier he, the Peasant, far,  
From the pangs of Passion free,  
That breathes the keen yet wholesome air  
Of rugged Penury.  
He, when his morning task is done,  
Can slumber in the noontide sun;  
And hie him home, at evening's close,  
To sweet repast, and calm repose.*

*He, unconscious whence the bliss,  
Feels, and owns in carols rude,  
That all the circling joys are his,  
Of dear Vicissitude.  
From toil he wins his spirits light,  
From busy day, the peaceful night;  
Rich, from the very want of wealth,  
In Heav'n's best treasures, Peace and Health.*

I have heard Mr. Gray say, that M. Gresset's "Epitre a ma Soeur" (see his works in the Amsterdam edition, 1748, p. 180) gave him the first idea of this Ode: and whoever compares it with the French Poem, will find some slight traits of resemblance, but chiefly in our Author's seventh stanza.

WE come now to Mr. Gray's Pindaric Odes. And I think myself happy, through the favor of Mr. How, (whose acquaintance with Count Algarotti is mentioned in the Memoirs, note on Let. 44. sect. 4.) to be permitted to preface my annotations on them, with a letter which that celebrated foreigner wrote to him on their subject. It does honour at once to the Writer, the Poet, and their common Friend.

*Al Signor GUGLIELMO TAYLOR HOW.*

*Pisa, Dicem. 26, 1762.*

**DEI** moltissimi obblighi, che io ho alla tanta sua gentilezza, non è certo il minore quello dello avermi ella novellamente introdotto in uno de' più riposti Laureti del Parnaso Inglese, avendomi fatto parte di alcune Liriche poesie del Signor Gray. Io non saprei quale Oda non dirò del celebrato Rousseau, ma del Guidi, del Lazzarini, ed anche del Chiabrera, che scrissèro in una lingua più poetica che la Francese non è, paragonar si potesse all' Oda sopra l' Armonia, o a quella contro ad Odoardo Primo del loro novello Pindaro, ed Alceo.

La Poesia dei popoli settentrionali pare a me, che, generalmènte parlando, consista più di pensieri, che d'immagini, si compiaccia delle riflessioni egualmente che dei sentimenti, non sia così particolareggiata, e pittoresca come è la nostra. Virgilio a cagione d' esem-

pio rappresentando Didone quando esce alla caccia fa una tal descrizione del suo vestimento, che tutti i ritrattisti, leggendo quel passo, la vestirebbono a un modo:

*Tandem progreditur, magnâ stipantè catervâ,  
Sidoniam picto chlamydem circumdata limbo:  
Cui pharetra ex auro, crines nodantur in aurum,  
Aurea purpureùm subnectit fibula vestem.*

Non così il Miltono quando descrive la nuda bellezza di Eva;

*Grace was in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,  
In ev'ry gesture, dignity and love.*

Con quella parole generali, e astratte idee di grazia, cielo, amore, e maestà non pare a lei che ognuno si formi in mente una Eva a posta sua? Talchè dietro a quei versi *Rubens* l'avrebbe dipinta come una grossa Bàlia Fiamminga, *Raffaello* come la Venere dâ Medici, quale appunto; il Miltono l'avrebbe dovuta descrivere.

*Envy itself is dumb, in wonder lost,  
And factions strive, who shall applaud him most.*

Dice un loro famoso poeta se ben mi ricordo. Ed ecco come un poeta Italiano, quel medesimo Lazzarini



che ho nominato da principio, ha pittorescamènte atteggiato la medesima Invidia.

*Bello il veder dall'una parte vinta*

*L' Invidia, e cinta*

*Di serpi contro a lei sola rivolte,*

*Meditar molte*

*Menzogne in vano; e poi restarle in gola*

*L' empia parola.*

Cotesta maggior dose di pittura dirò così ch'entra nella nostra poesia è forse uno effetto anch'essa della delicatezza, ed irritabilità della fibra delle nazioni poste sotto climi caldi. Onde sentono, ed immaginano più vivamente delle nazioni settentrionali, più atte per avventura, che noi non siamo, a pensare con pazienza, ad analizzare, a penetrare sino al fondo delle cose\*. In fatti, se fu dato alla Grecia di produrre un Omero che è il principe de' poeti, fu dato all'Inghilterra il produrre un Newtono padre e sovrano della filosofica

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\* All this comparative criticism seems rather ingenious than true. The Count might have found, in another part of the *Paradise Lost*, a description of this very Eve more particularized and picturesque; and two allegorical figures of Sin and Death, full as strongly featured as the Envy of Lazzarini. Spenser would, in almost every page of his *Fairy Queen*, have produced him pictures as boldly imagined and peculiarly marked, as are to be met with in the writings of any more Southern Poet.

famiglia. Comunque sia di ciò l'una di queste Poesie chiamare si potrebbe logica, grafica l'altra. In questo secondo genere io porrei la poesia del Signor Gray, il quale benchè nato verso il Polo, uguaglia i più caldi poeti, che sorsero più vicini al sole. Il *verbum ardens* di Cicerone, *words that burn*, che egli nella prima Oda adatta à Dryden, bene si può appropriare, per la vivacità della espressione, a lui medesimo: E così ancora quei, *thoughts that breathe*; del che egli è cortese all'istesso poeta.

*From Helicon's harmonious springs*

*A thousand rills their mazy progress take:*

*The laughing flowers, that round them blow,*

*Drink life and fragrance as they flow.*

Quel bera dei fiori vita e fragranza dalle acque di Elicona, spira talè soavita, che uno crede respirar veramente la dolce aria dello Elicona medesimo. Vivissima è la pittura del pargoletto Shakespeare, che tende le tenerelle mani e sorride alla Natura che gli svela il reverendo suo sembiante, e dipoi gli fa dono di quelle auree chiavi, che hanno virtù di schiudere le porte del riso, e la sacra fonte del simpatico pianto. Non può essere più poetica la ragione ch'egli fabbrica della cecità del Miltono, il quale; oltrepassati i fiammanti confine dello spazio e del tempo, ebbe ardire di fissare

lo sguardo, colà dove gli angeli stessi paventano di rimirare; e gli occhi suoi affuocati in quel pelago di lucé si chiusero tosto in una notte sempiterna. Con qual bravura non ha egli imitato la grandiosa immagine di Pindaro nella prima delle Pitiche, quando dipinge il Re degli Augelli, l' Aquila ministra del fulmine di Giove vinta anch' essa dalla forza dell' armonia? E non si vedon eglino in quel bel verso,

*Where'er she turns the Graces homage pay-----*

espressi quei due di Tibullo?

*Illam quidquid agat, quoquo vestigià flectat,*

*Componit furtim, subsequiturque decor.*

Pieno degli spiriti dé più nobili antichi autori, non mette già egli il piede nelle loro pedate; ma francamente cammina col garbo, e con la disinvoltura di quelli. Superiore di gran lunga al concettoso Cowley, il quale nella Lirica avea tenuto sinora il campo, ben egli dovea vendicar la causa della poesia contro alla ferità di quell' Odoardo, che, soggiogata la Wallia, vi sparse il gentil seme dei poeti, i quali animando i loro compatrioti a belle imprese, erano i successori, si può dire, degli antichi Druidi, e gli antecessori del medesimo Gray. Con qual forza con quale ardore nol fa egli acceso della sacra fiamma dell' estro e della libertà? Troppo lungo io sarei se esprimer le volessi il piacere

di che mi è stata cagione la varietà grandissima d'immagini ch'egli ha saputo fare entrare nel vaticinio che contro alla razza di Odoardo fulmina il Poeta Wallesse. La dirò bene all' orecchio che quel vaticinio mi sembra di gran lunga superiore al vaticinio di Nereo sopra lo eccidio di Troia. Dico all' orecchio, perché non vorrei avere contro di me la plebe de' letterati. Troppo èlla si scandalizzerebbe all' udire che a una fattura di dieciotto secoli fa se ne voglia preferirè una de' nostri giorni, che non ha avuto il tempo di far la patina che hanno fatto le cose dei Greci e dei Latini. *Æolio carminè nobilis* il Signor Gray si può chiamare a ragione *Britannæ fidicen Lyra*: ed io mi rallegro sommamente con esso lei, che la patria sua vanta presentemente, e in uno de' suoi amici, un poeta, che non la cede a niuno de' quegli antichi,

*Che le Muse lattan più ch' altri mai.*

## ODE V.

1. THIS highly-finished Ode, which Mr. Gray entitled the "Progress of Poesy," describes its power and influence as well as progress, which his explanatory notes at the bottom of the page point out, and this with all the accuracy of metaphysical precision, disguised under the appearance of Pindaric digression. On the first line of it he gave, in his edition, the following note:

"Αἰολῆς μολπή, Αἰολίδες χορδαί, Αἰολιδῶν πνοαὶ αὐλῶν:"

"Æolian song, Æolian strings, the breath of the Æolian flute."

It will seem strange to the learned reader, that he thought such explanation necessary, and he will be apt to look on it as the mere parade of Greek quotation; but his reason for it was, that the Critical Reviewers had mistaken his meaning, (see note on *Let.* 26. sect. 4. of the *Memoirs*) and supposed the Ode addressed to the Harp of Æolus; which they said "was altogether uncertain and irregular, and therefore must be very ill adapted to the *Dance*." See *Epode* i. l. 1. This ridiculous blunder, which he did not think proper openly to advert on, led him to produce his Greek quotations, that they might chew on them at their leisure; but he would hardly have done this; had not the reception his Ode met with, made him abate, not only of respect to his critics, but to his readers in general. See his own note.

2. Awake, Æolian lyre, awake,

*Stanza 1. l. 1.*

### IMITATION.

Awake, my glory: awake, lute and harp.

*David's Ps. G.*

## VARIATION.

In his manuscript it originally stood,  
Awake, my lyre: my glory, wake.

And it would have been lucky for the above-mentioned critics, if it had been thus printed.

## 3. Perching on the scept'red hand.

*Artist. 1. l. 8.*

This description of the Bird of Jupiter, Mr. Gray, in his own edition, modestly calls "a weak imitation of some incomparable lines in the first Pythian of Pindar;" but if they are compared with Mr. Gilbert West's translation of the above lines, (though far from a bad one) their superior energy to his version will appear very conspicuous.

Perch'd on the sceptre of th' Olympian King,  
The thrilling darts of harmony he feels;  
And indolently hangs his rapid wing,  
While gentle sleep his closing eyelid seals,  
And o'er his heaving limbs in loose array,  
To ev'ry bafmy gale the ruffling feathers play.

Here, if we except the second line, we find no imagery or expression of the lyrical cast. The rest are loaded with unnecessary epithets, and would better suit the tamer tones of Elegy.

*West's Pindar, vol. I. p. 85.*

## 4. Glance their many-twinkling feet.

*Ep. 1. l. 11.*

## IMITATION.

Μαρμαρυγὰς θνήϊτο ποδῶν θαύμαζε δι' θυμῶ.

*Homer Od. Θ. G.*

## 5. Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare.

This and the five flowing lines which follow are sweetly introduced by the short and unequal measures that precede them: the whole stanza is indeed a master-piece of rhythm, and charms the ear by its well-varied cadence, as much as the imagery which it contains ravishes the fancy. "There is" (says our author, in one of his manuscript papers) "*a tout ensemble* of sound, as well as of sense, in poetical composition, always necessary to its perfection. What is gone before still dwells upon the ear, and insensibly harmonizes with the present line, as in that succession of fleeting notes which is called Melody." Nothing can better exemplify the truth of this fine observation than his own poetry.

## 6. The bloom of young desire and purple light of love.

*Ep. i. l. 17.*

## IMITATION.

Δάμπαι δ' ἐπὶ πορφύρεσι

Παρίησι φῶς ἔρωτος.

*Phrynichus apud Athenæum. G.*

## 7. Till down the eastern cliffs afar

Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of  
war.

*Stanza 2. l. 11 and 12.*

## IMITATION.

Or seen the morning's well-appointed star,

Come marching up the eastern hills afar.

*Cowley. G.*

## 8. In climes beyond the solar road.

*Antist. ii. l. 1.*

## IMITATION.

Extra anni sōlisque vias——

*Virgil.*

Tutta lontana dal camin del sole.

*Petrarch Canzon ii. G.*

## 9. Far from the sun and summer-gale.

*Stanza 3. l. 1.*

An ingenious person, who sent Mr. Gray his remarks anonymously on this and the following Ode, soon after they were published, gives this stanza and the following a very just and well-expressed eulogy: "A Poet is perhaps never more conciliating than when he praises favourite predecessors in his art. Milton is not more the pride than Shakespeare the love of their country: It is, therefore, equally judicious to diffuse a tenderness and a grace through the praise of Shakespeare, as to extol in a strain more elevated and sonorous the boundless soarings of Milton's epic imagination." The critic has here well noted the beauty of contrast which results from the two descriptions; yet it is further to be observed, to the honor of our Poet's judgment, that the tenderness and grace in the former does not prevent it from strongly characterizing the three capital perfections of Shakespeare's genius; and when he describes his power of exciting terror (a species of the sublime) he ceases to be diffuse, and becomes, as he ought to be, concise and energetic.

## 10. He pass'd the flaming bounds of place and time.

*Antist. iii. l. 4.*

## IMITATION.

—— Flamimantia mænia mundi.

*Lucretius. G.*

## 11. The living throne, the sapphire-blaze.

*Antist. iii. l. 5.*



## IMITATION.

For the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels, and above the firmament that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone—this was the appearance of the glory of the Lord.

*Ezekiel* i. 20, 26, 28. G.

12. Clos'd his eyes in endless night.

*Antist.* iii. l. 8.

## IMITATION.

\*Οφθαλμῶν μὲν ἄμειστον δίδου δ' ἠδῆσαν αἰοιδίην.

*Homer Od.* G.

This has been condemned as a false thought, and more worthy of an Italian Poet than of Mr. Gray. Count Algarotti, we have found in his letter to Mr. How, praises it highly; but as he was an Italian Critic, his judgment, in this point, will not, perhaps by many, be thought to overbalance the objection. The truth is, that this fiction of the cause of Milton's blindness is not beyond the bounds of poetical credibility, any more than the fiction which precedes it concerning the birth of Shakespeare; and therefore would be equally admissible, had it not the peculiar misfortune to encounter a fact too well known: on this account the judgment revolts against it. Milton himself has told us, in a strain of heart-felt exultation, (see his Sonnet to Cyriac Skynner) that he lost his eye-sight

————— overply'd  
IN LIBERTY'S DEFENCE, *his* noble task;  
Whereof all Europe rings from side to side;

And, when we know this to have been the true cause, we cannot admit a fictitious one, however sublimely conceived, or happily expressed. If, therefore, so lofty and unrivalled a description will not atone for this acknowledged defect, in relation to mat

ter of fact, all that the impartial critic can do, is to point out the reason, and to apologize for the Poet, who was necessitated by his subject to consider Milton only in his poetical capacity.

Since the above note was published, Mr. Brand, of East-Dereham, in Norfolk, has favoured me with a letter, in which he informs me of a very similar hyperbole extant in a MS. Commentary upon Plato's Phædon, written by Hermias, a christian philosopher, of the second century, and which is printed in Bayle's Dictionary (Art. Achilles). It contains the following anecdote of Homer:—"That keeping some sheep near the tomb of Achilles, he obtained, by his offerings and supplications, a sight of that Hero; who appeared to him surrounded with so much glory that Homer could not bear the splendor of it, and that he was not only dazzled, but blinded by the sight." The ingenious gentleman makes no doubt but Mr. Gray took his thought from this passage, and applauds him for the manner in which he has improved upon it: he also thinks in general, "that a deviation from historical truth, though it may cast a shade over the middling beauties of poetry, produces no bad effect where the magnificence and brilliancy of the images entirely fill the imagination;" and with regard to this passage in particular, he intimates, "that as the cause of Milton's blindness is not so well known as the thing itself, the licence of poetical invention may allow him to assign a cause different from the real fact." However this may be, the very exact resemblance, which the two thoughts bear to one another, will, I hope, vindicate Mr. Gray's from being a modern conceit in the taste of the Italian school, as it has been deemed to be by some critics. But this resemblance will do more; (and it is on this account chiefly that I produce, and thank the gentleman for communicating it) it will prove the extreme uncertainty of deciding upon poetical imitations; for I am fully persuaded that Mr. Gray had never seen, or at least attended to, this Greek fragment. How scrupulous he was in borrowing even an epithet from another poet, many of his notes on this very Ode fully prove. And as to the passage in question, he would certainly have cited it, for the sake of vindicating his own taste by classical

authority, especially when the thought had been so much controverted.

13. With necks in thunder cloath'd, and long-resounding pace.

*Antist.* iii. l. 12.

IMITATION.

Hast thou cloathed his neck with thunder?

*Job.*

This verse, and the foregoing, are meant to express the stately march and sounding energy of Dryden's Rhymes. G.

14. Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.

*Ep.* iii. l. 4.

IMITATION.

Words that weep, and tears that speak.

*Cowley.* G.

15. That the Theban Eagle bear.

*Ep.* iii. l. 9.

Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιθα θεῖον.

*Olymp.* ii.

Pindar compares himself to that bird, and his enemies to ravens that croak and clamour in vain below, while it pursues its flight, regardless of their noise. G.

16. The Critic, above quoted, concludes his remarks on this Ode, which he had written after his observations on the Bard, in a manner which accounts, in my opinion, for the superior pleasure that it has given to him, and also to the generality of readers. "I quit," says he, "this Ode with the strongest conviction of its abundant merit; though I took it up, (for this last attentive perusal) persuaded that it was not a little inferior to the other. "They are not the treasures of imagination only that have so

“ copiously enriched it: It speaks, but surely less feelingly than  
 “ the Bard, (still my favourite) to the heart. Can we in truth  
 “ be equally interested, for the fabulous exploded Gods of other  
 “ nations, (celebrated in the first half of this Ode) as by the  
 “ story of our own Edwards and Henrys, or allusions to it? Can  
 “ a description, the most perfect language ever attained to, of  
 “ tyranny expelling the muses from Parnassus, seize the mind  
 “ equally with the horrors of Berkley Castle, with the apostro-  
 “ phe to the tower?

“ And spare the meek Usurper’s holy head!

“ I do not mean, however, wholly to decry fabulous subjects or  
 “ allusions, nor more than to suggest the preference due to his-  
 “ torical ones, where happily the Poet’s fertile imagination sup-  
 “ plies him with a plentiful choice of both kinds, and he finds  
 “ himself capable of treating both, according to their respective  
 “ natures, with equal advantage.”

17. It will not surely be improper at the conclusion of this Ode, so peculiarly admirable for the musical flow of its numbers, to mention one circumstance relative to English Lyric Poetry in general, and much to its honour, which has lately been communicated to me by an ingenious friend. It is this:—‘ That it can  
 ‘ fully, at least when in the hands of such a Master, support its  
 ‘ harmony without the assistance of Music. For there is great  
 ‘ reason to believe, that in the Greek-Ode, of which we are  
 ‘ taught to think so highly, the power of Numbers was little  
 ‘ perceived without the effectual aid of a musical accompany-  
 ‘ ment. And we have in proof of this supposition the express  
 ‘ testimonies of Cicero and Quintilian. The first, in his *Orator*  
 ‘ (a finished performance, and of which he speaks himself in the  
 ‘ highest terms, ep. fam. vi. 18.) makes the following observa-  
 ‘ tion: “Sed in versibus res est apertior: quamquam etiam à  
 “ modis quibusdam, cantu remoto, soluta esse videatur oratio,  
 “ maximèque id in optimo quoque eorum poetarum, qui *Λεγιστοὶ*  
 “ à Græcis nominantur: quos cum cantu spoliaveris, nuda pænè  
 “ remanet oratio.”—*Orator*. N<sup>o</sup> 183.—He gives a farther in-  
 ‘ stance from the Poets of his own Country, which I do not here

‘cite as any additional proof of the point in question, but as the  
 ‘ clearest illustration of his meaning in the foregoing quotation.  
 “ Quorum similia sunt quædam etiam apud nostros: velut illa  
 “ in Thyeste,

Quemnam te esse dicam? qui tardâ in senectute:

“ Et quæ sequuntur: quæ, nisi cùm tibicen accessit, orationi  
 “ sunt solutæ simillima.”—*Ibid.*—‘ The second testimony, that  
 ‘ of Quintilian, is also full to our present purpose. “ Poëtas  
 “ certè legendos Oratori futuro concesserint: num igitur hi sine  
 “ Musice? at si quis tam cæcus animi est, ut de aliis dubitet;  
 “ illos certè, qui carmina ad lyram composuerunt.”—*Quintilianus*,  
 ‘ *lib. 1. cap. 17.*—Here we see, that, whatever might be the case  
 ‘ with some other kinds of Poetry, in the Ode the want of an  
 ‘ accompanying Lyre could not be dispensed with.

‘ Thus then, if we rely on these classical authorities, stood the  
 ‘ Greek-Ode; claiming, in the exhibition of a beauty so essen-  
 ‘ tial to its perfection, the kind assistance of an inferior Art:  
 ‘ while the Lyrics of Mr. Gray, with the richness of Imagery  
 ‘ and the glow of Expression, breathe also the various modula-  
 ‘ tions of an intrinsic and independent Melody.

‘ For this singular Advantage, so little known or considered, we  
 ‘ are certainly indebted to Rhyme; and, whatever opinion may  
 ‘ be formed of its use in other kinds of Poetry, we may con-  
 ‘ clude from hence that it is a necessary support to the harmony  
 ‘ of our Ode,’

## ODE VI.

1. I promised the reader, in the Memoirs, (see a note between the 20th and 21st Letter, Sect. 4.) to give him, in this place, the original argument of this capital Ode, as its author had set it down on one of the pages of his common-place book. It is as follows: "The army of Edward I. as they march through a deep valley, are suddenly stopped by the appearance of a venerable figure seated on the summit of an inaccessible rock, who, with a voice more than human, reproaches the King with all the misery and desolation which he had brought on his country; foretells the misfortunes of the Norman race, and with prophetic spirit declares, that all his cruelty shall never extinguish the noble ardour of poetic genius in this island; and that men shall never be wanting to celebrate true virtue and valour in immortal strains, to expose vice and infamous pleasure, and boldly censure tyranny and oppression. His song ended, he precipitates himself from the mountain, and is swallowed up by the river that rolls at its foot." Fine as the conclusion of this Ode is at present, I think it would have been still finer, if he could have executed it according to this plan; but unhappily for his purpose, instances of English Poets were wanting. Spenser had that enchanting flow of verse which was peculiarly calculated to celebrate *Virtue and Valour*; but he chose to celebrate them, not literally, but in allegory. Shakespeare, who had talents for every thing, was undoubtedly capable of exposing *Vice and infamous Pleasure*; and *As You Like It* was a proper vehicle for his satire: but we do not ever see that he professedly made this his object; nay, we know that, as one inimitable character, he has so contrived as to make vices of the worst kind, such as cowardice, drunkenness, dishonesty, and lewdness, not only laughable, but almost amiable; for with all these sins on his head, who can help liking Falstaff? Milton, of all our great

Poets, was the only one *who boldly censured Tyranny and Oppression*: but he chose to deliver this censure, not in poetry, but in prose. Dryden was a mere court parasite to the most infamous of all courts. Pope, with all his laudable detestation of corruption and bribery, was a Tory; and Addison, though a Whig and a fine writer, was unluckily not enough of a Poet for his purpose. On these considerations Mr. Gray was necessitated to change his plan towards the conclusion: Hence we perceive, that in the last epode he praises Spenser only *for his allegory*, Shakespeare *for his powers of moving the passions*, and Milton *for his epic excellence*. I remember the Ode lay unfinished by him for a year or two on this very account; and I hardly believe that it would ever have had his last hand but for the circumstance of his hearing Parry play on the Welch Harp at a concert at Cambridge, (see Letter xxv. sect. iv.) which he often declared inspired him with the conclusion.

2. Mr. Smith, the Musical Composer and worthy pupil of Mr. Handel, had once an idea of setting this Ode, and of having it performed by way of serenata or oratorio. A common friend of his and Mr. Gray's interested himself much in this design, and drew out a clear analysis of the Ode, that Mr. Smith might more perfectly understand the Poet's meaning. He conversed also with Mr. Gray on the subject, who gave him an idea for the overture, and marked also some passages in the Ode in order to ascertain which should be recitative, which air, what kind of air, and how accompanied. The design was, however, not executed; and therefore I shall only (in order to give the reader a taste of Mr. Gray's musical feelings) insert in this place what his sentiments were concerning the overture. "It should be so  
 " contrived as to be a proper introduction to the Ode; it might  
 " consist of two movements, the first descriptive of the horror  
 " and confusion of battle, the last a march grave and majestic,  
 " but expressing the exultation and insolent security of conquest. This movement should be composed entirely of wind  
 " instruments, except the kettle-drum heard at intervals. The  
 " *da capo* of it must be suddenly broke in upon, and put to  
 " silence by the clang of the harp in a tumultuous rapid move-

“ mént, joined with the voice, all at once, and not ushered in  
 “ by any symphony. The harmony may be strengthened by  
 “ any other stringed instrument; but the harp should evéry  
 “ where prevail, and form the continued running accompany-  
 “ ment, submitting itself to nothing but the voice.”

5. Ruin seize thee, ruthless King.

*Strophe 1. l. 1.*

On this noble exordium, the anonymous Critic before-mentioned, thus eloquently expresses his admiration: “ This abrupt execra-  
 “ tion plunges the reader into that sudden fearful perplexity  
 “ which is designed to predominate through the whole. The  
 “ irresistible violence of the prophet’s passions bears him away,  
 “ who, as he is unprepared by a formal ushering in of the  
 “ speaker, is unfortified against the impressions of his poetical  
 “ phrenzy, and overpowered by them, as sudden thunders strike  
 “ the deepest.” All readers of taste, I fancy, have felt this  
 effect from the passage; they will be well pleased, however, to  
 see their own feelings so well expressed as they are in this  
 note.

4. They mock the air with idle state.

*Strophe 1. l. 4.*

IMITATION.

Mocking the air with colours idly spread.

*Shakes. King John. G.*

5. Such were the sounds; that o’er the crested pride.

*Strophe 1. l. 9.*

IMITATION.

The crested adder’s pride.

*Dryden’s Indian Queen. G.*

6. Loose his beard, &c.

*Antist. i. l. 5.*



The image was taken from a well-known picture of Raphael, representing the Supreme Being in the vision of Ezekiel: there are two of these paintings, both believed to be originals, one at Florence, the other in the Duke of Orleans's collection at Paris. G.

Mr. Gray never saw the large Cartoon, done by the same divine hand, in the possession of the Duke of Montagu, at his Seat at Boughton, in Northamptonshire, else I am persuaded he would have mentioned it in this note. The two finished pictures abroad (which I believe are closet-pieces) can hardly have so much spirit in them as this wonderful drawing; it gave me the sublimest idea I ever received from painting. Moses breaking the tables of the law, by Parmegiano, was a figure which Mr. Gray used to say came still nearer to his meaning than the picture of Raphael.

7. Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes;

Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart.

*Ep. i. l. 12 and 13.*

#### IMITATION.

As dear to me as are the ruddy drops,

That visit my sad heart.

*Shakes. Julius Cæsar. G.*

8. No more I weep, &c.

*Ep. i. l. 15.*

Here, says the anonymous Critic, a vision of triumphant revenge is judiciously made to ensue, after the pathetic lamentation which precedes it. Breaks—double rhymes—an appropriated cadence—and an exalted ferocity of language forcibly picture to us the uncontrollable tumultuous workings of the prophet's stimulated bosom.

9. Weave the warp, &c.

*Strophe 2. l. 1.*

Can there be an image more just, apposite, and nobly imagined than this tremendous tragical winding-sheet? In the rest of this stanza the wildness of thought, expression, and cadence are admirably adapted to the character and situation of the speaker, and of the bloody spectres, his assistants. It is not indeed peculiar to it alone, but a beauty that runs throughout the whole composition, that the historical events are briefly sketched out by a few striking circumstances, in which the Poet's office of rather exciting and directing, than satisfying the reader's imagination, is perfectly observed. Such abrupt hints, resembling the several fragments of a vast ruin, suffer not the mind to be raised to the utmost pitch, by one image of horror, but that instantaneously a second and a third are presented to it, and the affection is still uniformly supported.

*Anon. Critic.*

#### 10. Fair laughs the morn, &c.

It is always entertaining, and sometimes useful, to be informed how a writer frequently improves on his original thoughts; on this account I have occasionally set down the few variations which Mr. Gray made in his lyrical compositions. The six lines before us convey, perhaps, the most beautiful piece of imagery in the whole Ode, and were a wonderful improvement on those which he first wrote; which, though they would appear fine in an inferior Poet, are infinitely below those which supplanted them. I find them in one of his corrected manuscripts as follow.

#### VARIATION.

Mirrors of Saxon truth and loyalty,  
 Your helpless old expiring Master view!  
 They hear not: scarce Religion dares supply  
 Her mutter'd Requiems, and her holy dew.  
 Yet thou, proud boy, from Pomfret's walls shall send  
 A sigh, and envy oft thy happy grandsire's end.

## 11. Fill high the sparkling bowl.

*Epode ii. l. 1. &c*

This Stanza (as an ingenious friend remarks) has exceeding merit. It breathes in a lesser compass, what the Ode breathes at large, the high spirit of lyric Enthusiasm. The Transitions are sudden, and impetuous; the language full of fire and force; and the Imagery carried, without impropriety, to the most daring height. The manner of Richard's death by Famine exhibits such beauties of Personification, as only the richest and most vivid Imagination could supply. From thence we are hurried, with the wildest rapidity, into the midst of Battle; and the epithet *kindred* places at once before our eyes all the peculiar horrors of Civil War. Immediately, by a transition most striking and unexpected, the Poet falls into a tender and pathetic Address; which, from the sentiments, and also from the numbers, has all the melancholy flow, and breathes all the plaintive softness, of Elegy. Again the Scene changes; again the Bard rises into an allegorical description of Carnage, to which the metre is admirably adapted: and the concluding Sentence of personal punishment on Edward is denounced with a Solemnity, that chills and terrifies.

## 12. No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.

All hail, ye genuine Kings, Britannia's Issue hail!

*Strophe 3. l. 13 and 14.*

## VARIATION. MS.

From Cambria's thousand hills a thousand strains  
Triumphant tell aloud, another Arthur reigns.

## 13. Girt with many a Baron bold,

Sublime their starry fronts they rear.

*Ant. iii. l. 1, 2.*

## VARIATION. MS.

Youthful Knights, and Barons bold,  
With dazzling helm, and horrent spear.

## 14. Fierce War, and faithful Love.

*Ep. iii. l. 2.*

## IMITATION.

Fierce wars and faithful loves shall moralize my  
song.

*Spenser's Proëme to the Fairy Queen. G.*

15. I cannot quit this and the preceding Ode, without saying a word or two of my own concerning the obscurity which has been imputed to them, and the preference which, in consequence, has been given to his Elegy. It seems as if the persons, who hold this opinion, suppose that every species of Poetry ought to be equally clear and intelligible: than which position nothing can be more repugnant to the several specific natures of composition, and to the practice of ancient art. Not to take Pindar and his Odes for an example, (though what I am here defending were written professedly in imitation of him) I would ask, Are all the writings of Horace, his Epistles, Satires, and Odes equally perspicuous? Amongst his Odes, separately considered, are there not remarkable differences of this very kind? Is the spirit and meaning of that which begins, "Descende cælo, & dic, age, tibiâ," Ode 4. lib. 3: so readily comprehended as "Persicos odi, puer, apparatus," Ode 38. l. 1. And is the latter a finer piece of lyrical composition on that account? Is "Integer vitæ, scelerisq; purus," Ode 22. l. 1. superior to "Pin-darum quisquis. studet æmulari," Ode 2. l. 4. because it may be understood at the first reading, and the latter not without much study and reflection? Now, between these Odes, thus compared, there is surely equal difference in point of perspi-

cuity, as between the Progress of Poesy, and the Prospect of Eton; the Odé on the Spring, and the Bard. But, say these objectors, "The end of Poetry is universally to please. Obscurity, by taking off from our pleasure, destroys that end." I will grant that, if the obscurity be great, constant, and unsurmountable, this is certainly true; but if it be only found in particular passages, proceeding from the nature of the subject and the very genius of the composition, it does not rob us of our pleasure, but superadds a new one which arises from conquering a difficulty; and the pleasure which accrues from a difficult passage when well understood, provided the passage itself be a fine one, is always more permanent than that which we discover at the first glance. The lyric Muse, like other fine Ladies, requires to be courted, and retains her admirers the longer for not having yielded too readily to their solicitations. This argument ending as it does, in a sort of simile, will, I am persuaded, not only have its force with the intelligent readers (the ΣΥΝΕΤΟΙ), but also with the men of fashion; as to critics of a lower class, it may be sufficient to transcribe, for their improvement, an unfinished remark, or rather maxim, which I found amongst our Author's papers; and which he probably wrote on occasion of the common preference given to his Elegy. "The *Gout de Comparaison* (as Bruyere styles it) is the only taste of ordinary minds. They do not know the specific excellency either of an author or a composition: for instance, they do not know that Tibullus spoke the language of Nature and Love; that Horace saw the vanities and follies of mankind with the most penetrating eye, and touched them to the quick; that Virgil ennobled even the most common images by the graces of a glowing, melodious, and well-adapted expression; but they do know that Virgil was a better poet than Horace; and that Horace's *Épistles* do not run so well as the *Elegies of Tibullus*." \* \* \*

## ODE VII.

This Ode, to which, on the title, I have given the epithet of *IRREGULAR*, is the only one of the kind which Mr. Gray ever wrote; and its being written occasionally, and for music, is a sufficient apology for the defect. Exclusive of this, (for a defect it certainly is) it appears to me, in point of lyrical arrangement and expression, to be equal to most of his other Odes. It is remarkable that, amongst the many irregular Odes which have been written in our own language, Dryden's and Pope's, on St. Cecilia's Day, are the only ones that may properly be said to have lived. The reason is (as it is hinted in a note on Let. 20. sect. 4. of the Memoirs) that this mode of composition is so extremely easy, that it gives the writer an opening to every kind of poetical licentiousness: whereas the regularly repeated stanza, and still more the regular succession of strophe, antistrophe, and epode, put so strong a curb on the wayward imagination; that when she has once paced in it, she seldom chooses to submit to it a second time. 'Tis therefore greatly to be wished, in order to stifle in their birth a quantity of compositions, which are at the same time wild and jejune, that regular Odes, and these only, should be deemed legitimate amongst us.

The Cambridge edition (published at the expense of the University) is here followed; but I have added at the bottom of the page a number of explanatory notes, which this Ode seemed to want, still more than that which preceded it; especially when given not to the University only, but the Public in general, who may be reasonably supposed to know little of the particular founders of different Colleges and their history here alluded to. For the sake of uniformity in the page, I have divided the Ode into stanzas, and discarded the musical divisions of Recitative,

Air, and Chorus; but shall here insert them in order, according as the different stanzas were set by Dr. Randal, Professor of Music.

Stanza 1. The first eight lines "Air," the four last "Chorus."

Stanza 2. "Recitative" throughout, but accompanied at the sixth line.

Stanza 3. "Air."

This stanza, being supposed to be sung by Milton, is very judiciously written in the metre which he fixed upon for the stanza of his Christmas-hymn.

"Twas in the winter wild; &c.

Stanza 4. "Recitative" throughout, the last nine lines accompanied.

Stanza 5. "Air Quartetto." The musical reader will easily see and admire how well this stanza is suited to that species of music.

Stanza 6. First six lines "Recitative;" the rest of the stanza, beginning at "thy liberal heart," "Air."

Stanza 7. "Recitative" throughout.

Stanza 8. "Grand Chorus," and well suited for that purpose.

## ODE VIII.

1. The occasion of Mr. Gray's writing (for it may be rather called so than versifying this and the three following Odes, however closely he has done them) is given in the beginning of the 5th section of the Memoirs, and his reason for first publishing them in the 57th letter of the 4th. Their best comment, since it is the best illustration of their excellency, will be to insert here the Latin versions of the originals from whence they were taken; as it is probable that many readers, who have hitherto admired them as compositions, have not compared them with those literal versions for want of having the books (which are not common ones) at hand.

2. Ex Orcadibus Thormodi Torfæi. Hafniæ, 1697.

LATE diffunditur  
Ante stragem futuram  
Sagittarum nubes:  
Depluit sanguis:  
Jam hastis applicatur  
Cineracea  
Tela virorum,  
Quam amicæ texunt  
Rubro subtegmine  
Randveri mortis.



Textitur hæc Tela  
 Intestinis humanis,  
 Staminique strictè alligantur  
 Capita humana,  
 Sunt sanguine rorata  
 Hastæ pro Insilibus,  
 Textoria Instrumenta ferrea,  
 Ac Sagittæ pro Radiis:  
 Densabimus Gladiis  
 Hanc Victoriæ Telam.

Prodeunt ad texendum Hilda,  
 Et Hiorthrimula,  
 Sangrida, & Swipula;  
 Cum strictis Gladiis;  
 Hastile frangetur,  
 Scutum diffindetur,  
 Ensisque  
 Clypeo illidetur.

Texamus, texamus  
 Telam Darradar!  
 Hunc (Gladium) Rex Juvenis  
 Prius possidebat.  
 Prodeamus,  
 Et Cohortes intremus,

Ubi nostri Amici  
Armis dimicant!

Texamus, texamus  
Telam \* Darradi;  
Et Regi deinde  
Deinde adhæreamus!  
Ibi videbant  
Sanguine rorata Scuta  
Gonna & Gondula,  
Quæ Regem tutabantur.

Texamus, texamus  
Telam Darradi!  
Ubi Arma concrepant  
Bellacium Virorum,  
Non sinamus eum  
Vitâ privari:  
Habent Valkyriæ  
Cædis potestatem.

Illi Populi terras regent,  
Qui deserta Promontoria

---

\* So Thormodus interprets it, as though *Darradar* were the Name of the Person who saw this vision; but in reality it signifies a *Range of Spears*, from *Daur* IIasta, and *Radir* Ordo. G.

Anteà incolebant.  
 Dico potenti Regi  
 Mortem imminere.  
 Jam Sagittis occubuit Comes;

Et Hibernis

Dolor accidet,  
 Qui nunquam  
 Apud Viros delebitur.  
 Jam Tela texta est.  
 Campus verò (Sanguine) roratus;  
 Terras percurret  
 Conflictus Militum.

Nunc horrendum est

Circumspicere,  
 Cum Sanguinea Nubes  
 Per Aëra volitet:  
 Tingetur Aer  
 Sanguine Virorum,  
 Antequam Vaticinia nostra  
 Omnia corruant.

Benè canimus

De Rege juyene,  
 Victoriæ Carmina multa:  
 Benè sit nobis canentibus.

Discat autem ille,  
 Qui auscultat,  
 Bellica Carmina multa,  
 Et Vixis referat.

Equitemus in Equis,  
 Quoniam efferinus gladios strictos  
 Ex hęc loco.

In the argument of this Ode, printed at the bottom of the page in this edition, it is said that the battle was fought on Christmas-day; on which Mr. Gray, in his manuscript, remarks, that "the people of the Orkney islands were Christians, yet did not become so till after A. D. 966, probably it happened in 995; but though they, and the other Gothic nations, no longer worshipped their old divinities, yet they never doubted of their existence, or forgot their ancient mythology, as appears from the history of Olaus Tryggueson." See Bartholinus, lib. viii. c. i. p. 615.

3. Iron-sleet of arrowy shower.

L. 3.

IMITATION.

How quick they wheel'd; and flying, behind them  
 shot

Sharp sleet of arrowy shower.

*Mil. Par. Regained. G.*

4. Hurtles in the darken'd air.

L. 4.

IMITATION.

The noise of battle hurtled in the air.

*Shakes. Jul. Cæs. G.*

## ODE IX.

1. The Vegtams Kvitha, from Bartholinus, lib. iii.

ç. ii. p. 632.

**S**URGEBAT Odinus,  
Virorum summus  
Et \* Sleipnerum  
Ephippio stravit.  
Equitabat deorsum  
Nifhelam versus.  
Obviàm habuit Catellum  
Ab Helæ Habitaculis venientem;

Huic sanguine aspersa erant  
Pectus anterius,  
Rictus, mordendi avidus,  
Et maxillarum infima:  
Allatrabat ille,  
Et Rictum diduxit  
Magiæ Patri,  
Et diu latrabat.

---

\* Sleipner was the horse of Odin, which had eight legs. Vide Edda.

Equitavit Odinus  
 (Terra subtus tremuit)  
 Donec ad altum veniret  
 Helæ Habitaculum.  
 Tum equitavit Odinus  
 Ad orientale ostii Latus,  
 Ubi Fatidicæ  
 Tumulum esse novit.

Sapientia Carmina.  
 Mortuos excitantia cecinit,  
 Boream inspexit,  
 Literas (Tumulo) imposuit,  
 Sermones proferre cæpit,  
 Responsa poposcit,  
 Donec invita surgeret,  
 Et mortuorum sermonem proferret.

FATIDICA. Quisnam Hominum  
 Mihi ignotorum  
 Mihi facere præsumit  
 Tristem Animum?  
 Niye eram, &  
 Nimbo aspersa,  
 Pluviâque rorata:  
 Mortua diu jaçui.

ODINUS. Viator nominor,  
 Bellatoris Filius sum.  
 Enarra mihi, quæ apud Helam geruntur.  
 Ego tibi quæ in mundo.  
 Cuinam sedes Auro stratae sunt,  
 Lecti pulchri,  
 Auro ornati?

F. Hic Baldero Medo  
 Paratus extat,  
 Purus Potus,  
 Scuto superinjecto:  
 Divina verò soboles  
 Dolore afficietur.  
 Invita hæc dixi,  
 Jamque silebo.

O. Noli, Fatidica, tacere.  
 Te interrogare volo,  
 Donec omnia novero.  
 Adhuc scire volo,  
 Quisnam Baldero  
 Necem inferet,  
 Ac Odini Filium  
 Vitâ privabit?

F. Hodus excelsum fert

Honoratum Fratrem illuc.  
 Is Baldero  
 Necem inferet,  
 Et Odini Filium  
 Vitâ privabit.  
 Invita hæc dixi,  
 Jamque tacebo.

O. Noli tacere, Fatidica,  
 Adhuc te interrogare volo,  
 Donec omnia novero.  
 Adhuc scire volo,  
 Quisnam Hodo  
 Odium rependet,  
 Aut Balderi Interfectorem  
 Occidendo rogo adaptet?

F. Rinda Filium pariet  
 In Habitaculis occidentalibus.  
 Hic Odini Filius,  
 Unam noctem natus, armis utetur;  
 Manum non lavabit,  
 Nec Caput pectet,  
 Antequam Rogo imponet  
 Balderi inimicum.  
 Invita hæc dixi,  
 Jamque tacebo.



O. Noli tacere, Fatidica,  
 Adhuc te interrogare volo.  
 Quænam sint Virgines,  
 Quæ præ Cogitationibus lachrymantur,  
 Et in Cœlum jaciunt  
 Cervicum pepla?  
 Hoc solum mihi dicas,  
 Nam prius non dormies.

F. Non tu Viator es,  
 Ut antea credidi;  
 Sed potiùs Odinus,  
 Virorum summus.

O. Tu non es Fatidica,  
 Nec sapiens Fœmina,  
 Sed potius trium  
 Gigantum Mater.

F. Equita domum, Odine,  
 Ac in his gloriare:  
 Nemo tali modo veniet  
 Ad sciscitandum,  
 Usque dum Lokus  
 Vinculis solvatur,  
 Et Deorum Crepusculum  
 Dissolventes aderint.

2. Hela's drear abode. L. 4.

Hela, in the Edda, is described with a dreadful countenance, and her body half flesh-colour and half blue. G.

3. Him the Dog of Darkness spied. L. 5.

The Edda gives this dog the name of Managarmar; he fed upon the lives of those that were to die.

4. The thrilling verse that wakes the Dead. L. 24.

The original word is *Vallgaldr*; from *Volr* mortuus, & *Galdr* incantatio. G.

*Thrilling* is surely in this place a peculiarly-fine epithet.

5. Tell me what is done below. L. 40.

Odin, we find both from this Ode and the Edda, was solicitous about the fate of his son Balder, who had dreamed he was soon to die. The Edda mentions the manner of his death when killed by Odin's other son Hoder; and also that Hoder was himself slain afterwards by Vali the son of Odin and Rinda, consonant with this prophecy.

6. Once again my call obey.

Prophetess, &c. L. 51.

Women were looked upon by the Gothic nations as having a peculiar insight into futurity; and some there were that made profession of magic arts and divination. These travelled round the country, and were received in every house with great respect and honour. Such a woman bore the name of *Volva Seidkona* or *Spakona*. The dress of *Thorbiorga*, one of these prophetesses, is described at large in *Eirick's Rauda*

Sogu, (apud Bartholin. lib. i. cap. iv. p. 688). She had on a blue vest, spangled all over with stones, a necklace of glass beads, and a cap made of the skin of a black lamb lined with white cat-skin. She leaned on a staff adorned with brass, with a round head set with stones; and was girt with an Hunlandish belt, at which hung her pouch full of magical instruments. Her buskins were of rough calf-skin, bound on with thongs studded with knobs of brass, and her gloves of white cat-skin, the fur turned inwards, &c. G.

They were also called *Fiolkyngi*, or *Fiol-kunnug*; i. e. Multiscia: and *Visindakona*; i. e. Oraculorum Mulier, *Nornir*; i. e. *Parcæ*. G.

#### 7. What Virgins these.

L. 75.

These were probably the *Nornir* or *Parcæ*, just now mentioned; their names were *Urda*, *Verdandi*, and *Skulda*; they were the dispensers of good destinies. As their names signify Time past, present, and future, it is probable they were always invisible to mortals: therefore when *Odin* asks this question on seeing them, he betrays himself to be a God; which elucidates the next speech of the Prophetess.

#### 8. Mother of the giant-brood.

L. 86.

In the Latin "*Mater trium Gigantum.*" He means, therefore, probably, *Angerbode*, who, from her name, seems to be "no Prophetess of good," and who bore to *Loke*, as the *Edda* says, three children; the *Wolf Fenris*, the great *Serpent of Midgard*, and *Hela*, all of them called *Giants* in that wild but curious system of mythology; with which, if the reader wishes to be acquainted, he had better consult the translation of *M. Mallet's Introduction to the History of Denmark*, than the original itself, as some mistakes of consequence are corrected by the translator. The book is entitled, "*Northern Antiquities.*" Printed for *Carnan*, 1770, 2 vols. 8vo.

## ODE X.

Mr. Gray entitles this Ode, in his own edition, a FRAGMENT; but from the prose version of Mr. Evans, which I shall here insert, it will appear that nothing is omitted, except a single hyperbole at the end, which I print in italics.

Panegyric upon Owain Gwynedd, Prince of North-Wales, by Gwalchmai, the son of Melir, in the year 1157. \*.

1. I will extol the generous Hero, descended from the race of Roderic, the bulwark of his country; a prince eminent for his good qualities, the glory of Britain, Owen the brave and expert in arms, a Prince that neither hoardeth nor coveteth riches.
2. Three fleets arrived, vessels of the main; three powerful fleets of the first rate, furiously to attack him on the sudden: one from Jwerddon †, the other full of well-armed Lochlynians ‡, making a grand appearance on the floods, the third from the transmarine Normans, which was attended with an immense, though successless toil.
3. The Dragon of Mona's Sons was so brave in action, that there was a great tumult on their furious attack; and before the Prince himself there was vast confusion, havoc, conflict, honourable death, bloody battle, horrible consternation, and upon Tal Malvre a thousand banners; there was an outrageous carnage, and the rage of spears and hasty signs of

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\* See Evans's Specimen of Welch Poetry, p. 25, and for the original Welch, p. 127.

† Ireland.

‡ Danes and Normans.

violent indignation. Blood raised the tide of the Menüi, and the crimson of human gore stained the brine. There were glittering cuirasses, and the agony of gashing wounds, and the mangled warriors prostrate before the chief, distinguished by his crimson lance. Lloegria was put into confusion; the contest and confusion was great; *and the glory of our Prince's wide-wasting sword shall be celebrated in an hundred languages to give him his merited praise.*

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## ODE XI.

From the extract of the Gododin, which Mr. Evans has given us in his "Dissertatio de Bardis," in the forementioned book, I shall here transcribe those particular passages which Mr. Gray selected for imitation in this Ode.

1. Si mihi liceret vindictam in Déirorum populum ferre,  
Æquè ac diluvium omnes unâ strage prostrarem.

2. Amicum enim amisi incautus,  
Qui in resistendo firmus erat.  
Non petiit magnanimus dotem a socero  
Filius CIANI ex strenuo Gwyngwn ortus.

3. Viri ibant ad *Cattraeth*, & fuère insignes,  
Vinum & mulsum ex aureis poculis erat eorum potus.  
Trecenti & sexaginta tres aureis torquibus insigniti erant;  
Ex iis autèm, qui nimio potu madidi ad bellum properabant,  
Non evasère nisi tres, qui sibi gladiis viani muniebant;  
Scilicet bellator de Acron, & Conanus Dacarawd,  
Et egomet ipse (scilicet Bardus Aneurinus) sanguine rubens:  
Aliter ad hoc Carmen compingendum non superstes fuisset.

Whoever compares Mr. Gray's poetical versions of these four lyrical pieces with the literal translations which I have here in-

serted, will, I am persuaded, be convinced that nothing of the kind was ever executed with more fire, and at the same time, more judgment. He keeps up through them all the wild romantic spirit of his originals; elevates them by some well-chosen epithet or image where they flag, yet in such a manner as is perfectly congruous with the general idea of the poems; and if he either varies or omits any of the original thoughts, they are only of that kind which, according to our modern sentiments, would appear vulgar or ludicrous: two instances of this kind occur in the latter part of this last Ode. How well has he turned the idea of the fourth line: "Ex iis qui nimio potu madidi!" and the conclusion, "Aliter ad hoc Carmen compingendum, &c." The former of which is ridiculous; the latter insipid.

4. I find amongst Mr. Gray's papers, a few more lines taken from other parts of the *Gododin*, which I shall here add with their respective Latin versions. They may serve to shew succeeding Poets the manner in which the spirit of these their ancient predecessors in the Art may best be transfused into a modern imitation of them.

Have ye seen the tusky Boar,  
Or the Bull, with sullen roar,  
On surrounding Foes advance?  
So Caradoc bore his lance.

Quando ad Bellum properabat Caradocus,  
Filius aprī silvestris qui truncando mutilavit Hostes,  
Taurus aciei in pugnx conflictu,  
Is lignum (i. e. hastam) ex manu contorsit.

Conan's name, my lay, rehearse,  
Build to him the lofty verse,  
Sacred tribute of the Bard,  
Verse, the Hero's sole reward.  
As the flame's devouring force;  
As the whirlwind in its course;

As the thunder's fiery stroke,  
 Glancing on the shiver'd oak;  
 Did the sword of Conan mow  
 The crimson harvest of the foe.

Debitus est tibi cantus qui honorem assecutus es maximum,  
 Qui eras instar ignis, tonitru, et tempestatis,  
 Viribus eximie, eques bellicose, Rhudd Fedel, bellum meditaris.

## SONNET.

1. If what Boileau says be true in his "Art Poetique," that

Un Sonnet sans defauts vaut seul un long Poeme—the merit of this little Poem is decided. It is written in strict observance of those strict rules, which the Poet there lays down. Vide "Art Poetique, Chant. ii. l. 83." Milton, I believe, was the first of our English Poets, who exactly followed the Italian model: Our Author varies from him only in making the rhymes in the two first Quartetts alternate, which is more agreeable to the English ear, than the other method of arranging them.

## EPITAPH I.

VARIATION. MS.

1. After line 6, in the place of the four next—

To hide her carés her only art,  
 Her pleasure, pleasures to impart.

In ling'ring pain, in death resign'd,  
 Her latest agony of mind  
 Was felt for him, who could not save  
 His All from an untimely grave.

2. Whom what awaits, &c.

L. 11.

The construction here is a little hard, and creates obscurity, which is always least to be pardoned in an Epitaph.

## EPITAPH II.

This is as perfect, in its kind, as the foregoing Sonnet. Sir William Williams, in the expedition to Aix, was on board the *Magnanime* with Lord Howe; and was deputed to receive the capitulation.

## ELEGY,

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.

1. The most popular of all our Author's publications; it ran through eleven editions in a very short space of time; was finely translated into Latin by Messrs. Ansty and Roberts; and in the same year another, though I think inferior, version of it was published by Mr. Lloyd. The reader is informed, in the *Memoirs*, of the time and manner of its first publication. He originally gave it only the simple title of "Stanzas, written in a Country Church-yard." I persuaded him first to call it an *ELEGY*, because the subject authorised him so to do; and the



alternate measure, in which it was written, seemed peculiarly fit for that species of composition. I imagined too that so capital a Poem, written in this measure, would, as it were, appropriate it in future to writings of this sort; and the number of imitations which have since been made of it (even to satiety) seem to prove that my notion was well founded. In the first manuscript copy of this exquisite Poem, I find the conclusion different from that which he afterwards composed; and though his after-thought was unquestionably the best, yet there is a pathetic melancholy in the four rejected stanzas, which highly claims preservation. I shall therefore give them as a variation in their proper place,

2. The knell of parting day.

L. 1.

IMITATION.

———— squilla di lontano

Che paia 'l giorno pianger, che si muore.

*Dante Purg. l. 8. G.*

3. Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife.

L. 73.

VARIATION.

The thoughtless world to Majesty may bow,  
 Exalt the brave, and idolize success;  
 But more to innocence their safety owe,  
 Than Pow'r, or Genius, e'er conspir'd to bless.

And thou, who mindful of th' unhonour'd Dead,  
 Dost in these notes their artless tale relate,  
 By night and lonely contemplation led  
 To wander in the gloomy walks of fate;

Hark! how the sacred Calm, that breathes around,  
 Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease;  
 In still small accents whispering from the ground,  
 A grateful earnest of eternal peace.

No more, with reason and thyself at strife,  
 Give anxious cares and endless wishes room;  
 But through the cool sequester'd vale of life  
 Pursue the silent tenor of thy doom.

And here the Poem was originally intended to conclude, before the happy idea of the hoary-headed Swain, &c. suggested itself to him. I cannot help hinting to the reader, that I think the third of these rejected stanzas equal to any in the whole Elegy.

4. Ev'n in our Ashes live their wonted Fires. L. 92.

#### IMITATION.

Ch'i veggio nel pensier, dolce mio fuoco,  
 Fredda una lingua, & due begli occhi chiusi  
 Rimaner doppò noi pien di faville.

*Petrarch, Son. 169. G.*

#### VARIATION.

Awake and faithful to her wonted fires.

Thus it stood in the first and some following editions, and I think rather better; for the authority of Petrarch does not destroy the appearance of quaintness in the other: the thought, however, is rather obscurely expressed in both readings. He means to say, in plain prose, that we wish to be remembered by our friends after our death, in the same manner as when alive we wished

to be remembered by them in our absence; this would be expressed clearer, if the metaphorical term *fires* was rejected, and the line ran thus:

Awake and faithful to her first desires.

I do not put this alteration down for the idle vanity of aiming to amend the passage, but purely to explain it.

5. To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.      L. 100.

#### VARIATION.

On the high brow of yonder hanging lawn.

After which, in his first manuscript, followed this stanza:

Him have we seen the greenwood side along,  
While o'er the heath we hied, our labour done,  
Oft as the woodlark pip'd her farewell song,  
With wistful eyes pursue the setting sun.

I rather wonder that he rejected this stanza, as it not only has the same sort of Doric delicacy, which charms us peculiarly in this part of the Poem, but also compleats the account of his whole day: whereas, this Evening scene being omitted, we have only his Morning walk, and his Noon-tide repose.

6. Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.

L. 116.

Between this line and the Epitaph, Mr. Gray originally inserted a very beautiful stanza, which was printed in some of the first editions, but afterwards omitted; because he thought (and in my own opinion very justly) that it was too long a parenthesis in this place. The lines however are, in themselves, exquisitely fine, and demand preservation.

There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,  
 By hands unseen are show'rs of violets found;  
 The redbreast loves to build and warble there,  
 And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

7. There they alike in trembling hope repose.

L. 127.

IMITATION.

———— paventosa speme.

*Petrarch. Son. 114. G.*

END OF THE NOTES, &c.

**MEMOIRS**  
**OF THE**  
*LIFE AND WRITINGS*  
**OF**  
**MR. GRAY.**



# MEMOIRS,

&c.

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## SECTION I.

**T**HE lives of men of letters seldom abound with incidents; and perhaps no life ever afforded fewer than that which I have undertaken to write. But I am far from mentioning this by way of previous apology, as is the trite custom of biographers. The respect which I owe to my deceased friend, to the public, and (let me add) to myself, prompts me to wave so impertinent a ceremonial. A reader of sense and taste never expects to find in the memoirs of a Philosopher, or Poet, the same species of entertainment, or information, which he would receive from those of a Statesman or General: He expects, however, to be either informed or entertained: Nor would he be disappointed, did the writer take care to dwell principally on such topics as characterize the man, and distinguish that peculiar part which he acted in the varied Drama of Society.

But this rule, self-evidently right as it may seem, is seldom observed. It was said, with almost as much truth as wit, of one of these writers, that, when he composed the life of Lord Verulam, he forgot that he was a Philosopher; and therefore, it was to be feared, should he finish that of the Duke of Marlborough, he would forget that he was a General. I shall avoid a like fault. I will promise my reader that he shall, in the following pages, seldom behold Mr. Gray in any other light than that of a Scholar and a Poet: And though I am more solicitous to shew that he was a virtuous, a friendly, and an amiable man, than either; yet this solicitude becomes unnecessary from the very papers which he has bequeathed me, and which I here arrange for the purpose: Since in these the qualities of his head and heart so constantly appear together, and the fertility of his fancy so intimately unites with the sympathetic tenderness of his soul, that were it in my intention, I should find it impossible to disjoin them.

His parents were reputable citizens of London. His grandfather a considerable merchant; but his father, Mr. Philip Gray, though he also followed business, was of an indolent and reserved temper; and therefore rather diminished than increased his paternal fortune. He had many children, of whom Thomas, the subject



of these memoirs, was the fifth born. All of them, except him, died in their infancy; and I have been told that he narrowly escaped suffocation, (owing to too great a fullness of blood which destroyed the rest) and would certainly have been cut off as nearly, had not his mother, with a courage remarkable for one of her sex, and withal so very tender a parent, ventured to open a vein with her own hand, which instantly removed the paroxysm.

He was born in Cornhill, December the 26th, 1716; was educated at Eton school, under the care of Mr. Antrobus, his mother's brother, who was at that time one of the assistant masters, and also a Fellow of St. Peter's College, Cambridge, to which place Mr. Gray removed, and was there admitted a pensioner in the year 1734. While at school, he contracted a friendship with Mr. Horace Walpole and Mr. Richard West. The former of these appears, at present, with too much distinction in the literary, as well as fashionable world, to make it necessary I should enlarge upon his subject. But as the latter died before he could exert his uncommon abilities, it seems requisite to premise somewhat concerning him; especially as almost every anecdote which I have to produce, concerning the juvenile part of Mr. Gray's life, is included in his correspondence with this gentleman. A correspondence which con-

tinued, with very little interruption, for the space of about eight years, from the time of their leaving school to the death of the accomplished youth in question.

(1729-1730)

His father was Lord Chancellor of Ireland. His grandfather, by the mother, the famous Bishop Burnet. He removed from Eton to Oxford, about the same time that Mr. Gray left that place for Cambridge! Each of them carried with him the reputation of an excellent classic scholar; though I have been told that, at the time, Mr. West's genius was reckoned the more brilliant of the two: A judgment which, I conceive, was not well founded; for though Mr. West's part of that correspondence, which I shall speedily give the reader\*, will undoubtedly shew that he possess very

\* I am well aware that I am here going to do a thing which the cautious and courtly Dr. Sprat, (were he now alive) would highly censure. He had, it seems, a large collection of his friend Mr. Cowley's letters, "a way of writing in which he peculiarly excelled, as in these he always expressed the native tenderness and innocent gaiety of his heart; yet the Doctor was of opinion that nothing of this nature should be published, and that the letters that pass between particular friends (if they are written as they ought to be) can scarce ever be fit to see the light." What! not when they express the native tenderness and innocent gaiety of a heart like Mr. Cowley's? No, by no means, "for in such letters the souls of men appear undressed, and in that negligent habit they may be fit to be seen by one or two in a chamber, but not to go abroad in the street." See *Life of Cowley*, page 38, *Hurd's Edition*.

extraordinary talents, yet, on Mr. Gray's side, there seems superadded to these, such a manly precision of taste, and maturity of judgment, as would induce one to believe Mr. Walpole's phrase not very hyperbolical, who has often asserted to me that "Gray never was a Boy."

In April, 1738, Mr. West left Christ Church for the Inner Temple, and Mr. Gray removed from Peter-House to Town the latter end of that year; intending also to apply himself to the study of the Law in the same society: For which purpose his father had already either hired or bought him a set of chambers. But on an invitation which Mr. Walpole gave him to be his companion in his travels, this intention was laid aside for the present, and never after put in execution.

According to the plan which I have formed for arranging these papers, a part of the letters which I have

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Such readers as believe it incumbent on every well-bred soul never to appear but in full dress, will think that Dr. Sprat has reason on his side; but I suspect that the generality will, notwithstanding, wish he had been less scrupulously delicate, and lament that the letters in question are not now extant. Of one thing I am fully confident, that, had this been the case, the judicious Dr. Hurd would have found his critical labour much lessened, when, in pure charity to this amiable writer, he lately employed himself in separating

His pleasing moral from his pointed wit.

already mentioned will here find their proper place: They will give a much clearer idea both of Mr. Gray and his friend, at this early period, than any narrative of mine. They will include also several specimens of their juvenile compositions, and, at the same time, mark the progress they had made in literature. They will ascertain, not only the scope and turn of their genius, but of their temper. In a word, Mr. Gray will become his own biographer, both in this and the rest of the sections into which I divide this work. By which means, and by the assistance of a few notes which I shall occasionally add, it may be hoped that nothing will be omitted which may tend to give a regular and clear delineation of his life and character.

But as this is the earliest part of their correspondence, and includes only the time which passed between Mr. Gray's admission into the university and his going abroad, it may be reasonably expected that the manner rather than the matter of these letters must constitute their principal merit; they will therefore be chiefly acceptable to such ingenuous youths, who, being about the same age, have a relish for the same studies, and bosoms susceptible of the same warmth of friendship. To these I address them; in the pleasing hope that they may prompt them to emulate their elegant simplicity, and, of course, to study with more care the classic

models from which it was derived. If they do this, I shall not be much concerned if graver readers think them unimportant or even trifling.

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LETTER I.

MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

YOU use me very cruelly: You have sent me but one letter since I have been at Oxford, and that too agreeable not to make me sensible how great my loss is in not having more. Next to seeing you is the pleasure of seeing your hand-writing; next to hearing you is the pleasure of hearing from you. Really and sincerely I wonder at you, that you thought it not worth while to answer my last letter. I hope this will have better success in behalf of your quondam school-fellow; in behalf of one who has walked hand in hand with you, like the two children in the wood,

Thro' many a flowery path and shelly grot,  
Where learning lull'd us in her private \* maze.

The very thought, you see, tips my pen with poetry,

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\* This expression prettily distinguishes their studies when out of the public school, which would naturally, at their age, be vague and desultory.

and brings Eton to my view. Consider me very seriously here in a strange country, inhabited by things that call themselves Doctors and Masters of Arts; a country flowing with syllogisms and ale, where Horace and Virgil are equally unknown; consider me, I say, in this melancholy light, and then think if something be not due to

Yours.

*Christ Church, Nov. 14, 1735.*

P. S. I desire you will send me soon, and truly and positively, \* a history of your own time.

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## LETTER II.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

**P**ERMIT me again to write to you, though I have so long neglected my duty, and forgive my brevity, when I tell you, it is occasioned wholly by the hurry I am in to get to a place where I expect to meet with no other pleasure than the sight of you; for I am preparing for London in a few days at furthest. I do not wonder in the least at your frequent blaming my indolence, it ought rather to be called ingratitude, and

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\* \* \* Alluding to his grandfather's history.

I am obliged to your goodness for softening so harsh an appellation. When we meet, it will, however, be my greatest of pleasures to know what you do, what you read, and how you spend your time, &c. &c. and to tell you what I do not read, and how I do not, &c. for almost all the employment of my hours may be best explained by negatives; take my word and experience upon it, doing nothing is a most amusing business; and yet neither something nor nothing gives me any pleasure. When you have seen one of my days, you have seen a whole year of my life; they go round and round like the blind horse in the mill, only he has the satisfaction of fancying he makes a progress, and gets some ground; my eyes are open enough to see the same dull prospect, and to know that having made four-and-twenty steps more, I shall be just where I was; I may, better than most people, say my life is but a span, were I not afraid lest you should not believe that a person so short-lived could write even so long a letter as this; in short, I believe I must not send you the history of my own time, till I can send you that also of the reformation\*. However, as the most undeserving people in the world must sure have the vanity to wish somebody had a regard for them, so I need not wonder at my own, in being pleased that you care about me. You

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\* Carrying on the allusion to the other history written by Mr. West's grandfather.

need not doubt, therefore, of having a first row in the front box of my little heart, and I believe you are not in danger of being crowded there; it is asking you to an old play, indeed, but you will be candid enough to excuse the whole piece for the sake of a few tolerable lines. ↓

For this little while past I have been playing with Statius; we yesterday had a game at quoits together; you will easily forgive me for having broke his head, as you have a little pique to him. I send you my translation\*, which I did not engage in because I liked that part of the Poem, nor do I now send it to you because I think it deserves it, but merely to shew you how I mispend my days.

Third in the labours of the Disc came on,  
 With sturdy step and slow, Hippomedon;  
 Artful and strong he pois'd the well-known weight,  
 By Phlegyas warn'd, and fir'd by Mnestheus' fate, }  
 That to avoid, and this to emulate.

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\* This consisted of about 110 lines, which were sent separately, and as I believe it was Mr. Gray's first attempt in English verse, it is a curiosity not to be entirely withheld from the reader, although it is not my intention to fill these Memoirs with much either of his or his correspondent's productions in this way; yet as a few lines will shew how much Mr. Gray had imbibed of Dryden's spirited manner, at this early period, I insert at the end of the letter a specimen of the whole.



His vigorous arm he try'd before he flung,  
 Brac'd all his nerves, and every sinew strung;  
 Then with a tempést's whirl and wary eye,  
 Pursu'd his cast, and hurl'd the orb on high;  
 The orb on high tenacious of its course,  
 True to the mighty arm that gave it force,  
 Far overleaps all bound, and joys to see  
 Its ancient lord secure of victory.  
 The theatre's green height and woody wall  
 Tremble ere it precipitates its fall,  
 The ponderous mass sinks in the cleaving ground,  
 While vales and woods and echoing hills rebound.  
 As when from Ætna's smoking summit broke,  
 The eyeless Cyclops heav'd the craggy rock;  
 Where Ocean frets beneath the dashing oar,  
 And parting surges round the vessel roar;  
 'Twas there he aim'd the meditated harm,  
 And scarce Ulysses scap'd his giant arm,  
 A tyger's pride the victor bore away,  
 With native spots and artful labour gay,  
 A shining border round the margin roll'd,  
 And calm'd the terrors of his clays in gold.

*Cambridge, May 8, 1736.*

## LETTER III.

MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

I Agree with you that you have broke Statius's head, but it is in like manner as Apollo broke Hyacinth's, you have foiled him infinitely at his own weapon: I must insist on seeing the rest of your translation, and then I will examine it entire, and compare it with the Latin, and be very wise and severe, and put on an inflexible face, such as becomes the character of a true son of Aristarchus, of hyper-critical memory. In the mean while,

And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold,

Is exactly Statius---*Summos auro mansueverat unguis.*  
I never knew before that the golden fangs on hammer-cloths were so old a fashion. Your Hymenéal\* I was told was the best in the Cambridge Collection before I

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\* Published in the Cambridge collection of verses on the Prince of Wales's marriage. I have not thought it necessary to insert these hexameters, as adulatory verses of this kind, however well written, deserve not to be transmitted to posterity; and, indeed, are usually buried, as they ought to be, in the trash with which they are surrounded. Every person, who feels himself a poet, ought to be above prostituting his powers on such occasions; and extreme youth (as was the case with Mr. Gray) is the only thing that can apologize for his having done it.

saw it, and, indeed, it is no great compliment to tell you I thought it so when I had seen it, but sincerely it pleased me best. Methinks the college bards have run into a strange taste on this occasion. Such soft unmeaning stuff about Venus and Cupid, and Peleus and Thetis, and Zephyrs and Dryads, was never read. As for my poor little Eclogue it has been condemned and beheaded by our Westminster judges; an exordium of about sixteen lines absolutely cut off, and its other limbs quartered in a most barbarous manner. I will send it you in my next as my true and lawful heir, in exclusion of the pretender, who has the impudence to appear under my name.

As yet I have not looked into Sir Isaac. Public disputations I hate; mathematics I reverence; history, morality, and natural philosophy have the greatest charms in my eye; but who can forget poetry? they call it idleness, but it is surely the most enchanting thing in the world, “*ac dulce otium & pœne omni negotio pulchrius.*”

I am, dear Sir, yours while I am

R. W.

*Christ-Church, May 24, 1736.*

THE following letter seems to require some little preface, not so much as it expresses Mr. Gray's juvenile sentiments concerning the mode of our academical education, as that these sentiments prevailed with him through life, and that he often declared them, with so little reserve, as to create him many enemies. It is certain that at the time when he was admitted, and for some years after, Jacobitism, and its concomitant hard drinking, prevailed still at Cambridge, much to the prejudice, not only of good manners but of good letters; for, if this spirit was then on the decline, it was not extinguished till after the year 1745. But we see (as was natural enough in a young man) he laid the blame rather on the mode of education than the mode of the times; and to this error, the uncommon proficiency he had made at Eton in classical learning might contribute, as he found himself in a situation where that species of merit held not the first rank. However this be, it was necessary not to omit this feature of his mind, when employed in drawing a general likeness of it; and what colours could be found so forcible as his own, to express its true light and shadow? I would further observe, that whatever truth there might be in his satire at the time it was written, it can by no means affect the present state of the university. There is usually a much greater fluctuation of taste and manners in an academical, than a national body; occasioned (to use

a scholastic metaphor) by that very quick succession of its component parts, which often goes near to destroy its personal identity. Whatever therefore may be true of such a society at one time, may be, and generally is, ten years after, absolutely false.

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## LETTER IV.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

YOU must know that I do not take degrees, and, after this term, shall have nothing more of College impertinencies to undergo, which I trust will be some pleasure to you; as it is a great one to me. I have endured lectures daily and hourly since I came last, supported by the hopes of being shortly at full liberty to give myself up to my friends and classical companions, who, poor souls! though I see them fallen into great contempt with most people here, yet I cannot help sticking to them, and out of a spirit of obstinacy (I think) love them the better for it; and, indeed, what can I do else? Must I plunge into metaphysics? Alas! I cannot see in the dark; nature has not furnished me with the optics of a cat. Must I pore upon mathematics? Alas! I cannot see in too much light; I am no eagle. It is very possible that two and two make four,

but I would not give four farthings to demonstrate this ever so clearly; and if these be the profits of life, give me the amusements of it. The people I behold all around me, it seems, know all this and more, and yet I do not know one of them who inspires me with any ambition of being like him. Surely it was of this place, now Cambridge, but formerly known by the name of Babylon, that the prophet spoke when he said, "the wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall build there, and satyrs shall dance there; their forts and towers shall be a den for ever, a joy of wild asses; there shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch and gather under her shadow; it shall be a court of dragons; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest." You see here is a pretty collection of desolate animals, which is verified in this town to a tittle, and perhaps it may also allude to your habitation, for you know all types may be taken by abundance of handles; however, I defy your owls to match mine.

If the default of your spirits and nerves be nothing but the effect of the hyp; I have no more to say. We all must submit to that wayward Queen; I too in no small degree own her sway,

I feel her influence while I speak her power.

But if it be a real distemper, pray take more care of your health, if not for your own at least for our sakes, and do not be so soon weary of this little world: I do not know what \* refined friendships you may have contracted in the other, but pray do not be in a hurry to see your acquaintance above; among your terrestrial familiars, however, though I say it that should not say it, there positively is not one that has a greater esteem for you than

Yours most sincerely, &c.

*Peterhouse, Dec. 1736.*

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## LETTER V.

*MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.*

I Congratulate you on your being about to leave college †, and rejoice much you carry no degrees with you: For I would not have You dignified, and I not,

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\* This thought is very juvenile, but perhaps he meant to ridicule the affected manner of Mrs. Rowe's letters of the dead to the living; a book which was, I believe, published about this time.

† I suspect that Mr. West mistook his correspondent; who, in saying he did not take degrees, meant only to let his friend know that he should soon be released from lectures and disputations. It is certain that Mr. Gray continued at college near two years after the time he wrote the preceding letter.

for the world, you would have insulted me so. My eyes, such as they are, like yours, are neither metaphysical nor mathematical; I have, nevertheless, a great respect for your connoisseurs that way, but am always contented to be their humble admirer. Your collection of desolate animals pleased me much; but Oxford, I can assure you, has her owls that match yours, and the prophecy has certainly a squint that way. Well, you are leaving this dismal land of bondage, and which way are you turning your face? Your friends, indeed, may be happy in you, but what will you do with your classic companions? An inn of court is as horrid a place as a college, and a moot case is as dear to gentle dullness as a syllogism. But wherever you go, let me beg you not to throw poetry "like a nauseous weed away." Cherish its sweets in your bosom, they will serve you now and then to correct the disgusting sober follies of the common law, *misce stultitiam consiliis brevem, dulce est desipere in loco*; so said Horace to Virgil, those two sons of Anac in poetry, and so say I to you, in this degenerate land of pigmies,

Mix with your grave designs a little pleasure,  
Each day of business has its hour of leisure.

In one of these hours I hope, dear Sir, you will sometimes think of me, write to me, and know me yours,

*Ἐξάουδα, μὴ κίυθε νόμῳ, ἵνα εἶδομεν ἄμφω\**



that is, write freely to me and openly, as I do to you, and to give you a proof of it I have sent you an elegy\* of Tibullus translated. Tibullus, you must know, is my favourite elegiac poet; for his language is more elegant and his thoughts more natural than Ovid's. Ovid excels him only in wit, of which no poet had more in my opinion. The reason I choose so melancholy a kind of poesie, is because my low spirits and constant ill health (things in me not imaginary, as you surmise, but too real, alas! and, I fear, constitutional) "have tuned my heart to elegies of woe;" and this likewise is the reason why I am the most irregular thing alive at college, for you may depend upon it I value my health above what they call discipline. As for this poor unlicked thing of an elegy, pray criticise it unmercifully, for I send it with that intent. Indeed your late translation of Statius might have deterred me, but I know you are not more able to excel others, than you are apt to forgive the want of excellence, especially when it is found in the productions of

Your most sincere friend.

*Christ Church, Dec. 22, 1736.*

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\* This I omit for the reason given in a preceding note, and for another also, because it is not written in alternate but heroic rhyme; which I think is not the species of English measure adapted to elegiac poetry.

## LETTER VI.\*

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.*

YOU can never weary me with the repetition of any thing that makes me sensible of your kindness; since that has been the only idea of any social happiness that I have almost ever received, and which (begging your pardon for thinking so differently from you in such cases) I would by no means have parted with for an exemption from all the uneasinesses mixed with it. But it would be unjust to imagine my taste was any rule for yours; for which reason my letters are shorter and less frequent than they would be, had I any materials but myself to entertain you with. Love and brown sugar must be a poor regale for one of your

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\* Mr. Walpole, on my informing him that it was my intention to publish the principal part of Mr. Gray's correspondence with Mr. West, very obligingly communicated to me the letters which he had also received from Mr. Gray at the same period. From this collection I have selected such as I thought would be most likely to please the generality of readers; omitting, though with regret, many of the more sprightly and humorous sort, because either, from their personality, or some other local circumstance, they did not seem so well adapted to hit the public taste. I shall say more upon this subject in a subsequent section, when I give my idea of Mr. Gray's peculiar vein of humour.

gòut, and, alas! you know I am by trade a grocer\*. Scandal (if I had any) is a mercandise you do not profess dealing in; now and then, indeed, and to oblige a friend, you may perhaps slip a little out of your pocket, as a decayed gentlewoman would a piece of right mecklin, or a little quantity of run tea, but this only now and then, not to make a practice of it. Monsters appertaining to this climate you have seen already, both wet and dry. So you perceive within how narrow bounds my pen is circumscribed, and the whole contents of my share in our correspondence may be reduced under the two heads of 1st, You, 2dly, I; the first is, indeed, a subject to expatiate upon, but you might laugh at me for talking about what I do not understand; the second is so tiny, so tiresome, that you shall hear no more of it than that it is ever

Yours.

*Peterhouse, Dec. 23, 1736.*

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\* i. e. A man who deals only in coarse and ordinary wares: to these he compares the plain sincerity of his own friendship, undisguised by flattery; which, had he chosen to carry on the allusion, he might have termed the trade of a Confectioner.

## LETTER VII.

*MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.*

I Have been very ill, and am still hardly recovered. Do you remember Elegy 5th, Book the 3d, of Tibullus, Vos tenet, &c. and do you remember a letter of Mr. Pope's, in sickness, to Mr. Steele? This melancholy elegy and this melancholy letter I turned into a more melancholy epistle of my own, during my sickness, in the way of imitation; and this I send to you and my friends at Cambridge, not to divert them, for it cannot, but merely to shew them how sincere I was when sick: I hope my sending it to them now may convince them I am no less sincere, though perhaps more simple, when well.

## AD AMICOS.\*

Yes, happy youths, on Camus' sedgy side,  
 You feel each joy that friendship can divide;  
 Each realm of science and of art explore,  
 And with the ancient blend the modern lore.

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\* Almost all Tibullus's elegy is imitated in this little piece, from whence his transition to Mr. Pope's letter is very artfully contrived, and bespeaks a degree of judgment much beyond Mr. West's years.

Studious alone to learn whate'er may tend  
 To raise the genius or the heart to mend ;  
 Now pleas'd along the cloister'd walk you rove,  
 And trace the verdant mazes of the grove,  
 Where social oft, and oft alone, ye chuse  
 To catch the zephyr and to court the muse.  
 Mean time at me (while all devoid of art  
 These lines give back the image of my heart)  
 At me the pow'r that comes or soon or late,  
 Or aims, or seems to aim, the dart of fate ;  
 From you remote, methinks, alone I stand  
 Like some sad exile in a desert land ;  
 Around no friends their lenient care to join  
 In mutual warmth, and mix their heart with mine.  
 Or real pains, or those which fancy raise,  
 For ever blot the sunshine of my days ;  
 To sickness still, and still to grief a prey,  
 Health turns from me her rosy face away.

Just heav'n! what sin, ere life begins to bloom,  
 Devotes my head untimely to the tomb ;  
 Did e'er this hand against a brother's life  
 Drug the dire bowl or point the murd'rous knife?  
 Did e'er this tongue the slanderer's tale proclaim,  
 Or madly violate my Maker's name?  
 Did e'er this heart betray a friend or foe,  
 Or know a thought but all the world might know?

As yet just started from the lists of time,  
 My growing years have scarcely told their prime;  
 Useless, as yet, through life I've idly run,  
 No pleasures tasted, and few duties done.  
 \* Ah, who, ere autumn's mellowing suns appear,  
 Would pluck the promise of the vernal year;  
 Or, ere the grapes their purple hue betray,  
 Tear the crude cluster from the mourning spray.  
 Stern Power of Fate, whose ebon sceptre rules  
 The Stygian deserts and Cimmerian pools,  
 Forbear, nor rashly smite my youthful heart,  
 A victim yet unworthy of thy dart;  
 Ah, stay till age shall blast my withering face,  
 Shake in my head, and falter in my pace;  
 Then aim the shaft, then meditate the blow,  
 † And to the dead my willing shade shall go.

How weak is Man to Reason's judging eye!  
 Born in this moment; in the next we die;  
 Part mortal clay, and part ethereal fire,  
 Too proud to creep; too humble to aspire.

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\* Quid fraudare juvat vitem crescentibus uvis?  
 Et modo nata mala vellere poma manu?

So the original. The paraphrase seems to me infinitely more beautiful. There is a peculiar blemish in the second line, arising from the synonyms *mala* and *poma*.

† Here he quits Tibullus; the ten following verses have but a remote reference to Mr. Pope's letter.

In vain our plans of happiness we raise,  
 Pain is our lot, and patience is our praise;  
 Wealth, lineage, honours, conquest, or a throne,  
 Are what the wise would fear to call their own.  
 Health is at best a vain precarious thing,  
 And fair-fac'd youth is ever on the wing;  
 \* 'Tis like the stream, beside whose wat'ry bed  
 Some blooming plant exalts his flow'ry head,  
 Nurs'd by the wave the spreading branches rise,  
 Shade all the ground and flourish to the skies;  
 The waves the while beneath in secret flow,  
 And undermine the hollow bank below;  
 Wide and more wide the waters urge their way,  
 Bare all the roots and on their fibres prey.  
 Too late the plant bewails his foolish pride,  
 And sinks, untimely, in the whelming tide.

But why repine, does life deserve my sigh?

Few will lament my loss whene'er I die.

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\* "Youth, at the very best, is but the betrayer of human life in a gentler and smoother manner than age; 'tis like the stream that nourishes a plant upon a bank, and causes it to flourish and blossom to the sight, but at the same time is undermining it at the root in secret." *Pope's Works, vol. 7, page 254, 1st edit. Warburton.*—Mr. West, by prolonging his paraphrase of this simile, gives it additional beauty from that very circumstance, but he ought to have introduced it by Mr. Pope's own thought. "Youth is a betrayer;" his couplet preceding the simile conveys too general a reflection.

\* For those the wretches I despise or hate,  
 I neither envy nor regard their fate.  
 For me, whene'er all-conquering Death shall spread  
 His wings around my unrepining head,  
 † I care not; tho' this face be seen no more,  
 The world will pass as cheerful as before;  
 Bright as before the day-star will appear,  
 The fields as verdant, and the skies as clear;  
 Nor storms nor comets will my doom declare,  
 Nor signs on earth, nor portents in the air;  
 Unknown and silent will depart my breath,  
 Nor Nature e'er take notice of my death.  
 Yet some there are (ere spent my vital days)  
 Within whose breasts my tomb I wish to raise,  
 Lov'd in my life, lamented in my end,  
 Their praise would crown me as their precepts mend:

\* "I am not at all uneasy at the thought that many men, whom  
 "I never had any esteem for, are likely to enjoy this world after  
 "me." *Vide ibid.*

† "The morning after my exit the sun will rise as bright as  
 "ever, the flowers smell as sweet, the plants spring as green;" so  
 far Mr. West copies his original, but instead of the following part  
 of the sentence, "People will laugh as heartily and marry as fast  
 "as they used to do," he inserts a more solemn idea,

Nor storms nor comets, &c.

justly perceiving that the elegiac turn of his epistle would not  
 admit so ludicrous a thought, as was in its place in Mr. Pope's  
 familiar letter; so that we see, young as he was, he had obtained the  
 art of judiciously selecting, one of the first provinces of good taste.



To them may these fond lines my name endear,  
 Not from the Poet but the Friend sincere.

*Christ Church, July 4, 1737.*

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## LETTER VIII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

AFTER a month's expectation of you, and a fortnight's despair, at Cambridge, I am come to town, and to better hopes of seeing you. If what you sent me last be the product of your melancholy, what may I not expect from your more cheerful hours? For by this time the ill health that you complain of is (I hope) quite departed; though, if I were self-interested, I ought to wish for the continuance of any thing that could be the occasion of so much pleasure to me. Low spirits are my true and faithful companions; they get up with me; go to bed with me, make journeys and returns as I do; nay, and pay visits, and will even affect to be jocose, and force a feeble laugh with me; but most commonly we sit alone together, and are the prettiest insipid company in the world. However, when you come, I believe they must undergo the fate of all humble companions, and be discarded. Would

I could turn them to the same use that you have done, and make an Apollo of them. If they could write such verses with me, not hartshorn, nor spirit of amber, nor all that furnishes the closet of an apothecary's widow, should persuade me to part with them: But, while I write to you, I hear the bad news of Lady Walpole's death on Saturday night last. Forgive me if the thought of what my poor Horace must feel on that account, obliges me to have done in reminding you that I am

Yours, &c.

*London, Aug. 22, 1737.*

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## LETTER IX.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.*

I Was hindered in my last, and so could not give you all the trouble I would have done. The description of a road, which your coach wheels have so often honoured, it would be needless to give you; suffice it that I arrived safe \* at my Uncle's, who is a great hunter in imagination; his dogs take up every chair in the house, so I am forced to stand at this present writing; and

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\* At Burnham in Buckinghamshire.

though the gout forbids him galloping after them in the field, yet he continues still to regale his ears and nose with their comfortable noise and stink. He holds me mighty cheap, I perceive, for walking when I should ride, and reading when I should hunt. My comfort amidst all this is, that I have at the distance of half a mile, through a green lane, a forest (the vulgar call it a common) all my own, at least as good as so, for I spy no human thing in it but myself. It is a little chaos of mountains and precipices; mountains, it is true, that do not ascend much above the clouds, nor are the declivities quite so amazing as Dover cliff; but just such hills as people who love their necks as well as I do may venture to climb, and craggs that give the eye as much pleasure as if they were more dangerous: Both vale and hill are covered with most venerable beeches, and other very reverend vegetables, that, like most other ancient people, are always dreaming out their old stories to the winds,

And as they bow their hoary tops relate,  
 In murm'ring sounds, the dark decrees of fate;  
 While visions, as poetic eyes avow,  
 Cling to each leaf and swarm on every bough.

At the foot of one of these squats me I, (il penseroso) and there grow to the trunk for a whole morning. The timorous hare and sportive squirrel gambol around me

like Adam in Paradise, before he had an Eve; but I think he did not use to read Virgil, as I commonly do there. In this situation I often converse with my Horace, aloud too, that is talk to you, but I do not remember that I ever heard you answer me. I beg pardon for taking all the conversation to myself, but it is entirely your own fault. We have old Mr. Southern at a Gentleman's house a little way off, who often comes to see us; he is now seventy-seven years old\*, and has almost wholly lost his memory; but is as agreeable as an old man can be, at least I persuade myself so when I look at him; and think of Isabella and Oroonoko. I shall be in Town in about three weeks. Adieu.

*September, 1737.*

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\* He lived nine years longer, and died at the great age of eighty-six. Mr. Gray always thought highly of his pathetic powers, at the same time that he blamed his ill taste for mixing them so injudiciously with farce, in order to produce that monstrous species of composition called Tragi-comedy.

## LETTER X.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.\**

I Sympathize with you in the sufferings which you foresee are coming upon you. We are both at present, I imagine, in no very agreeable situation; for my part I am under the misfortune of having nothing to do, but it is a misfortune which, thank my stars, I can pretty well bear. You are in a confusion of wine, and roaring, and hunting, and tobacco, and, heaven be praised, you too can pretty well bear it; while our evils are no more, I believe we shall not much repine. I imagine, however, you will rather choose to converse with the living dead, that adorn the walls of your apartments, than with the dead living that deck the middles of them; and prefer a picture of still life to the realities of a noisy one, and, as I guess, will imitate what you prefer, and for an hour or two at noon will stick yourself up as formal as if you had been fixed in your frame for these hundred years, with a pink or rose in one hand, and a great seal ring on the other. Your name, I assure you, has been propagated in these countries by

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\* At this time with his father at Houghton. Mr. Gray writes from the same place he did before, from his Uncle's house in Buckinghamshire.

a convert of yours, one \*\*, he has brought over his whole family to you; they were before pretty good Whigs, but now they are absolute Walpolians. We have hardly any body in the parish but knows exactly the dimensions of the hall and saloon at Houghton, and begin to believe that the \* lanthorn is not so great a consumer of the fat of the land as disaffected persons have said: For your reputation, we keep to ourselves your not hunting nor drinking hogan, either of which here would be sufficient to lay your honour in the dust. To-morrow se'nnight I hope to be in Town, and not long after at Cambridge.

I am, &c.

*Burnham, Sept. 1737.*

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## LETTER XI.

*MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.*

**R**ECEIVING no answer to my last letter, which I writ above a month ago, I must own I am a little uneasy. The slight shadow of you which I had in Town, has only served to endear you to me the more. The moments I past with you made a strong impression

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\* A favourite object of Tory satire at the time.

upon me. I singled you out for a friend, and I would have you know me to be yours, if you deem me worthy. —Alas, Gray, you cannot imagine how miserably my time passes away. My health and nerves and spirits are, thank my stars, the very worst, I think, in Oxford. Four-and-twenty hours of pure unalloyed health together, are as unknown to me as the 400,000 characters in the Chinese vocabulary. One of my complaints has of late been so over-civil as to visit me regularly once a month—*jam certus conviva*. This is a painful nervous head-ach, which perhaps you have sometimes heard me speak of before. Give me leave to say, I find no physic comparable to your letters. If, as it is said in Ecclesiasticus, “Friendship be the physic of the mind,” prescribe to me, dear Gray, as often and as much as you think proper, I shall be a most obedient patient.

Non ego

*Fidis irascar medicis, offendar amicis.*

I venture here to write you down a Greek epigram\*, which I lately turned into Latin, and hope you will excuse it.

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\* Of Posidippus. *Vide Anthologia, H. Stephan. p. 220.* Mr. Gray in his MS. notes to this edition of the *Anthologia* (of which I shall give an account in a subsequent section) inserts this translation, and adds “*Descriptio pulcherrima & quæ tenuem illum “græcorum spiritum mirificè sapit;”* and in conclusion, “*Posi-*

Perspicui puerum ludentem in margine rivi

Immersit vitreae limpidus error aquae:

At gelido ut mater moribundum e flumine traxit

Credula, & amplexu funus inane fovet;

Paulatim puer in dilecto pectore, somno

Languidus, aeternum lumina composuit.

Adieu! I am going to my tutor's lectures on one Puffendorff, a very jurisprudent author as you shall read on a summer's day.

Believe me yours, &c.

*Christ Church, Dec. 2, 1738.*

## LETTER XII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

LITERAS mi Favoni! \* abs te demum, nudiustertius credo, accepi planè mellitas, nisi fortè quà de aegritudine quâdam tuâ dictum: atque hoc sane mihi-habitu est non paulò acerbius, quod te capitis morbo implicatum esse intellexi; oh morbum mihi quam odiosum!

"dippus inter principes Anthologiae poetas emicat; Ptolemæi Philadelphi seculo vixit."

\* Mr. Gray in all his Latin compositions, addressed to this Gentleman, calls him Favonius, in allusion to the name of West.



quī de industria id agit, ut ego in singulos menses, dii boni, quantis jucunditatibus orbarer! quā ex animo mihi dolendum est, quod

Medio de fonte leporum

Surgit amari aliquid.

Salutem mehercule, nolo, tam parvipendas, atq; amicis tam improbè consulās: quanquam tute fortassis æstuas angusto limite mundi, viamq; (ut dicitur) affectas Olympo, nos tamen non esse tam sublimes, utpote qui hisce in sordibus & fæce diutius paululum versari volumus, reminiscendum est: illæ tuæ Musæ, si te ament modo, derelinqui paulisper non nimis ægrè patientur: indulge, amabo te, plusquam soles, corporis exercitationibus: magis te campus habeat, aprico magis te dedas otio, ut ne id ingenium quod tam cultum curas, diligenter nimis dum foves, officiosarum matrum ritu, interimas. Vide quæso, quā *ιατρικῶς* tecum agimus,

ἢ ἐπιθήσω

Φάρμαχ' ἃ κεν πάυσησι μελαίνων ὀδονάων.

si de his pharmacis non satis liquet; sunt festivitates meræ, sunt facetiæ & risus; quos ego equidem si adhibere nequeo, tamen ad præcipiendum (ut medicorum fere mos est) certè satis sim; id, quod poeticè sub finem epistolæ lusisti, mihi gratissimum quidem accidit; admodum latinè coctum & conditum tetrasticon, græcam tamen illam ἀφελείαν mirificè sapit: tu quod restat, vide,

sodes, hujusce hominis ignorantiam; cum, unde hoc tibi sit depromptum, (ut fatear) prorsus nescio: sane ego equidem nihil in capsis reperio quo tibi minimæ partis solutio fiat. Vale, & me ut soles, ama.

*A. D. 11 Kalend. Februar.*

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### LETTER XIII\*.

*MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.*

**I** Ought to answer you in Latin, but I feel I dare not enter the lists with you—cupidum, pater optime, vires deficient. Seriously you write in that language with a grace and an Augustan urbanity that amazes me: Your Greek too is perfect in its kind. And here let me wonder that a man, longè græcorum doctissimus, should be at a loss for the verse and chapter whence my epigram is taken. I am sorry I have not my Aldus with me that I might satisfy your curiosity; but he with all my other literary folks are left at Oxford, and therefore you must still rest in suspense. I thank you again and again for your medical prescription. I know

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\* This was written in French, but as I doubted whether it would stand the test of polite criticism so well as the preceding would of learned, I chose to translate so much of it as I thought necessary in order to preserve the chain of correspondence.

very well that those "risus, festivitates & facetiæ" would contribute greatly to my cure, but then you must be my apothecary as well as physician, and make up the dose as well as direct it; send me, therefore, an electuary of these drugs, made up "secundùm artem, "et eris mihi magnus Apollo," in both his capacities as a god of poets and god of physicians. Wish me joy of leaving my college, and leave yours as fast as you can. I shall be settled at the Temple very soon.

*Dartmouth-Street, Feb. 21, 1737-8.*

## LETTER XIV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

\* **B**ARBARAS ædes aditure mecum  
 Quas Eris semper foveat inquieta,  
 Lis ubi latè sonat, et togatum  
 Æstuat agmen!

Dulcius quanto, patulis sub ulmi  
 Hospitæ ramis temerè jacentem  
 Sic libris horas, tenuiq; inertes  
 Fallere Musâ?

Sæpe enim curis vagor expeditâ  
 Mente; dum, blandam meditanis Camænam,  
 Vix malo rori, meminive seræ  
 Cedere nocti;

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\* I choose to call this delicate Sapphic Ode the first original production of Mr. Gray's Muse; for verses imposed either by school-masters or tutors ought not, I think, to be taken into the consideration. There is seldom a verse that flows well from the pen of a real Poet if it does not flow voluntarily.



Namque, seu, lætos hominum labores  
 Prataq; & montes recreante currū,  
 Purpurâ tractus oriens Eoos  
 Vestit, et auro;

Sedulū servo veneratus orbem  
 Prodigum splendoris: amœniori  
 Sive dilectam meditatatur igne  
 Pingere Calpen;

Usque dum, fulgore magis magis jam  
 Languido circum, variata nubes  
 Labitur furtim, viridisq; in umbras  
 Scena recessit.

O ego felix, vice si (nec unquam  
 Surgerem rursus) simili cadentem  
 Parca me lenis sineret quieto  
 Fallere Letho!

Multà flagranti radiisq; cincto  
 Integris ah! quam nihil inviderem,  
 Cum Dei ardentis mediis quadrigas  
 Sentit Olympus?

Ohe! amīcule noster, et unde, sodes tu *μεσοπάτακι* aded repente evasisti? jam te rogitaturum credo. Nescio hercle, sic planè hābet. Quicquid enim nugarum *ἐπὶ σχολῆς* inter ambulandum in palimpsesto scriptitavi, hisce te maxumè impertiri visum est, quippe quem probare, quod meum est, aut certè ignoscere solitum probè novi: bonâ tuâ veniâ sit si fortè videar in fine subtristior; nam risui jamdudum salutem dixi; etiam paulò mæstitiæ studiosiorem factum scias, promptumque, *Καινοῖς παλαιὰ δακρυῖς εἶναι κακὰ.*

O lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros  
 Ducentium ortus ex animo; quater  
 Felix! in imo qui scatentem  
 Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit.

Sed de me satis. Cura ut valeas.

Jun. 1738.

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## LETTER. XV.

MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

**I** Return you a thousand thanks for your elegant ode, and wish you every joy you wish yourself in it. But, take my word for it, you will never spend so agreeable

a day here as you describe; alas! the sun with us only rises to shew us the way to Westminster-Hall. Nor must I forget thanking you for your little Alcaic fragment. The optic Naiads are infinitely obliged to you,

I was last week at Richmond Lodge, with Mr. Walpole, for two days, and dined with \* Cardinal Fleury; as far as my short sight can go, the character of his great art and pénétration is very just, he is indeed

Nulli penetrabilis astro.

I go to-morrow to Epsom, where I shall be for about a month. Excuse me, I am in haste †, but believe me always, &c.

August 29, 1738.

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\* Sir Robert Walpole.

† Mr. West seems to have been, indeed, in haste when he writ this letter; else, surely, his fine taste would have led him to have been more profuse in his praise of the Alcaic fragment. He might (I think) have said, without paying too extravagant a compliment to Mr. Gray's genius, that no poet of the Augustan age ever produced four more perfect lines, or what would sooner impose upon the best critic, as being a genuine ancient composition.



## LETTER XVI.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.*

**M**Y dear Sir, I should say \* Mr. Inspector General of the Exports and Imports; but that appellation would make but an odd figure in conjunction with the three familiar monosyllables above written, for

Non benè conveniunt nec in unâ sede morantur  
Majestas & amor.

Which is, being interpreted, Love does not live at the Custom-house; however, by what style, title, or denomination soever you choose to be dignified or distinguished hereafter, these three words will stick by you like a burr, and you can no more get quit of these and your christian name than St. Anthony could of his pig. My motions at present (which you are pleased to ask after) are much like those of a pendulum or († Dr. Longically speaking) oscillatory. I swing from Chapel or Hall home, and from home to Chapel or Hall. All the strange incidents that happen in my journies and re-

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\* Mr. Walpole was just named to that post, which he exchanged soon after for that of Usher of the Exchequer.

† Dr. Long, the master of Pembroke-Hall, at this time read lectures in experimental philosophy.

turns I shall be sure to acquaint you with; the most wonderful is, that it now rains exceedingly, this has refreshed the \* prospect, as the way for the most part lies between green fields on either hand, terminated with buildings at some distance, castles, I presume, and of great antiquity. The roads are very good, being, as I suspect, the works of Julius Cæsar's army, for they still preserve, in many places, the appearance of a pavement in pretty good repair, and, if they were not so near home, might perhaps be as much admired as the Via Appia; there are at present several rivulets to be crossed, and which serve to enliven the view all around. The country is exceeding fruitful in ravens and such black cattle; but, not to tire you with my travels, I abruptly conclude

Yours, &c.

August 1738.

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\* All that follows is a humorously hyperbolic description of the quadrangle of Peter-House.

## LETTER XVII.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

I Am coming away all so fast, and leaving behind me, without the least remorse, all the beauties of Sturbridge Fair. Its white bears may roar, its apes may wring their hands, and crocodiles cry their eyes out, all's one for that; I shall not once visit them, nor so much as take my leave. The university has published a severe edict against schismatical congregations, and created half a dozen new little procterlings to see its orders executed, being under mighty apprehensions lest \* Henley and his gilt tub should come to the Fair and seduce their young ones: but their pains are to small purpose, for lo, after all, he is not coming.

I am at this instant in the very agonies of leaving college, and would not wish the worst of my enemies a worse situation. If you knew the dust, the old boxes, the bedsteads, and tutors that are about my ears, you would look upon this letter as a great effort of my re-

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\* Orator Henley.

solution and unconcernedness in the midst of evils. I fill up my paper with a loose sort of version of that scene in Pastor Fido that begins, Care selve beati\*.

Sept. 1738.

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\* This Latin version is extremely elegiac, but as it is only a version I do not insert it. Mr. Gray did not begin to learn Italian till about a year and a half before he translated this scene; and I find amongst his papers an English translation of part of the 4th Canto of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, done previously to this, which has great merit. In a letter to Mr. West, dated March, 1737, he says, "I learn Italian like any dragon, and in two months am got through the 16th book of Tasso, whom I hold in great admiration: I want you to learn too, that I may know your opinion of him; nothing can be easier than that language to any one who knows Latin and French already, and there are few so copious and expressive." In the same letter he tells him, "that his College has set him a versifying on a public occasion," (viz. those verses which are called *Tripus*) on the theme of *Luna est habitabilis*." The Poem, I believe, is to be found in the *Musæ Etonenses*. I would further observe, on this occasion, that though Mr. Gray had lately read and translated Statius, yet when he attempted composition, his judgment immediately directed him to the best model of versification; accordingly his hexameters are, as far as modern ones can be, after the manner of Virgil: They move in the succession of his pauses, and close with his elisions,

## LETTER XVIII.

*MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.*

**I** Thank you again and again for your two last most agreeable letters. They could not have come more a-propos; I was without any books to divert me, and they supplied the want of every thing: I made them my classics in the Country, they were my Horace and Tibullus---*Non ita loquor assentandi causà ut probè nosti si me noris, verum quia sic mea est sententia.* I am but just come to Town, and, to shew you my esteem of your favours, I venture to send you by the penny post, to your Father's, what you will find on the next page; I hope it will reach you soon after your arrival, your boxes out of the waggon, yourself out of the coach, and tutors out of your memory.

Adieu, we shall see one another, I hope, to-morrow.

## ELEGIA.

Quod mihi tam gratæ misisti dona Camænæ,  
 Quælia Mænalius Pan Déus ipse velit,  
 Amplector te, Graie, & toto corde reposco,  
 Oh desiderium jam nimis usque meum:  
 Et mihi rura placent, & me quoq; sæpe volentem  
 Duxerunt Dryades per sua prata Deæ;  
 Sicubi lymphæ fugit liquido pede, sive virentem,  
 Magna decus nemoris, quercus opacat humum:  
 Illuc mane novo vagor, illuc vespere sero,  
 Et, noto ut jacui gramine, nota cano.  
 Nec nostræ ignorant divinam Amaryllida sylvæ:  
 Ah, si desit amor, nil mihi rura placent,  
 Ille jugis habitat Deus, ille in vallibus imis,  
 Regnat & in Cœlis, regnat & Oceano;  
 Ille gregem taurosq; domat; sæviq; leonem  
 Seminis; ille ferós, ultus Adonin, apros:  
 Quin & fervet amore nemus, ramoq; sub omni  
 Contentu tremulo plurima gaudet avis.  
 Duræ etiam in sylvis agitant connubia plantæ,  
 Dura etiam & fertur saxa animasse Venus.  
 Durior & saxis, & robore durior ille est,  
 Sincero siquis pectore amare vetat:

Non illi in manibus sanctum deponere pignus:

Non illi arcanum cor aperire velim;

Nescit amicitias, teneros qui nescit amores:

Ah! si nulla Venus, nil mihi rura placent.

Me licet a patriâ longè in tellure juberent

Externâ positum ducere fata dies;

Si vultus modo amatus adesset, non ego contra

Plorarem magnos voce querente Deos.

At dulci in gremio curarum oblivia ducens

Nil cuperem præter posse placere meæ;

Nec bona fortunæ aspiciens, neq; munera regum,

Illa intrâ optarem brachia cara mori.

*Sept. 17, 1738.*

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Mr. Gray, on his return to Town, continued at his father's house in Cornhill till the March following, in which interval Mr. Walpole being disinclined to enter so early into the business of Parliament, prevailed on Sir Robert Walpole to permit him to go abroad, and on Mr. Gray (as was said before) to be the companion of his travels. Mr. West spent the greatest part of the winter with his mother and sister at Epsom, during which time a letter or two more passed between the two friends. But these I think it unnecessary to insert,

as I have already given sufficient specimens of the blossoms of their Genius. The Reader of taste and candour will, I trust, consider them only as such; yet will be led to think that, as the one produced afterwards "fruits worthy of paradise," the other would also have produced them, had he lived to a more mature age.

END OF THE FIRST SECTION.



## SECTION II.

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AS I allot this Section entirely to that part of Mr. Gray's life, which he spent in travelling through France and Italy, my province will be chiefly that of an Editor; and my only care to select from a large collection of letters written to his parents and to his friend Mr. West, those parts which, I imagine, will be most likely either to inform or amuse the reader. The multiplicity of accounts, published, both before and after the time when these letters were written, of those very places which Mr. Gray describes, will necessarily take from them much of their novelty; yet the elegant ease of his epistolary style has a charm in it for all readers of true taste, that will make every apology of this sort needless. They will perceive, that as these letters were written without even the most distant view of publication, they are essentially different in their manner of description from any others that have either preceded or followed them; add to this, that they are interspersed occasionally with some exquisitely finished

pieces of Latin poetry, which he composed on the spot for the entertainment of his friend. But not to anticipate any part of the reader's pleasure, I shall only further say, to forewarn him of a disappointment, that this correspondence is defective towards the end, and includes no description either of Venice or its territory; the last places which Mr. Gray visited. This defect was occasioned by an unfortunate disagreement between him and Mr. Walpole, arising from the difference of their tempers. The former being, from his earliest years, curious, pensive, and philosophical; the latter gay, lively, and, consequently, inconsiderate: \* this therefore occasioned their separation at Reggio. Mr. Gray went before him to Venice; and staying there only till he could find means of returning to England, he made the best of his way home, repassing the Alps, and following almost the same route through France by which he had before gone to Italy.

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\* In justice to the memory of so respectable a friend, Mr. Walpole enjoins me to charge himself with the chief blame in their quarrel; confessing that more attention and complaisance, more deference to a warm friendship, superior judgment and prudence, might have prevented a rupture that gave much uneasiness to them both, and a lasting concern to the survivor; though in the year 1744 a reconciliation was effected between them, by a Lady who wished well to both parties.

## LETTER I.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.*

Amiens, April 1, N. S. 1759.

AS we made but a very short journey to-day, and came to our inn early, I sit down to give you some account of our expedition. On the 29th (according to the style here) we left Dover at twelve at noon, and with a pretty brisk gale, which pleased every body mighty well, except myself, who was extremely sick the whole time; we reached Calais by five: The weather changed, and it began to snow hard the minute we got into the harbour, where we took the boat, and soon landed. Calais is an exceeding old, but very pretty town, and we hardly saw any thing there that was not so new and so different from England, that it surprised us agreeably. We went the next morning to the great Church, and were at high Mass (it being Easter Monday). We saw also the Convent of the Capuchins, and the Nuns of St. Dominic; with these last we held much conversation, especially with an English Nun, a Mrs. Davis, of whose work I sent you, by the return of the paquet, a letter-case to remember her by. In the afternoon we took a Post-chaise (it

still snowing very hard) for Boulogne, which was only eighteen miles further. This chaise is a strange sort of conveyance, of much greater use than beauty, resembling an ill-shaped chariot, only with the door opening before instead of the side; three horses draw it, one between the shafts, and the other two on each side, on one of which the postillion rides, and drives too\*: This vehicle will, upon occasion, go fourscore miles a-day, but Mr. Walpole, being in no hurry, chooses to make easy journies of it, and they are easy ones indeed; for the motion is much like that of a sedan, we go about six miles an hour, and commonly change horses at the end of it: It is true they are no very graceful steeds, but they go well, and through roads which they say are bad for France, but to me they seem gravel walks and bowling-greens; in short it would be the finest travelling in the world, were it not for the inns, which are mostly terrible places indeed. But to describe our progress somewhat more regularly, we came into Boulogne when it was almost dark, and went out pretty early on Tuesday morning; so that all I can say about it is, that it is a large, old, fortified town, with more English in it than French. On Tuesday we were to go to Abbéville, seventeen leagues, or fifty-one short English miles; but by the

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\* This was before the introduction of Post-chaises here, else it would not have appeared a circumstance worthy notice.

way we dined at Montreuil, much to our hearts' content, on stinking mutton cutlets, addled eggs, and ditch water. Madame the hostess made her appearance in long lappets of bone lace and a sack of linsey-woolsey. We supped and lodged pretty well at Abbéville, and had time to see a little of it before we came out this morning. There are seventeen convents in it, out of which we saw the chapels of the Minims and the Carmelite Nuns. We are now come further thirty miles to Amiens, the chief city of the province of Picardy. We have seen the cathedral, which is just what that of Canterbury must have been before the reformation. It is about the same size, a huge Gothic building, beset on the outside with thousands of small statues, and within adorned with beautiful painted windows, and a vast number of chapels dressed out in all their finery of altar-pieces, embroidery, gilding, and marble. Over the high altar are preserved, in a very large wrought shrine of massy gold, the relics of St. Firmin, their patron saint. We went also to the chapels of the Jesuits and Ursuline Nuns, the latter of which is very richly adorned. To-morrow we shall lie at Clermont, and next day reach Paris. The country we have passed through hitherto has been flat, open, but agreeably diversified with villages, fields well-cultivated, and little rivers. On every hillock is a wind-mill, a crucifix, or a Virgin Mary dressed in Flowers,

and a sarcenet robe; one sees not many people or carriages on the road; now and then indeed you meet a strolling friar, a countryman with his great muff, or a woman riding astride on a little ass, with short petticoats, and a great head-dress of blue wool. \* \* \*

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## LETTER II,

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

Paris, April 12, 1739.

**E**NFIN donc me voici à Paris. Mr. Walpole is gone out to supper at Lord Conway's, and here I remain alone, though invited too. Do not think I make a merit of writing to you preferably to a good supper; for these three days we have been here, have actually given me an aversion to eating in general. If hunger be the best sauce to meat, the French are certainly the worst cooks in the world; for what tables we have seen have been so delicately served, and so profusely, that, after rising from one of them, one imagines it impossible ever to eat again. And now, if I tell you all I have in my head, you will believe me mad, mais n'importe, courage, allons! for if I wait till my head grow

clear and settle a little, you may stay long enough for a letter. Six days have we been coming hither, which other people do in two; they have not been disagreeable ones; through a fine, open country, admirable roads, and in an easy conveyance; the inns not absolutely intolerable, and images quite unusual presenting themselves on all hands. At Amiens we saw the fine cathedral, and eat *paté de perdix*; passed through the park of Chantilly by the Duke of Bourbon's palace, which we only beheld as we passed; broke down at Lausarche; stopt at St. Denis, saw all the beautiful monuments of the Kings of France, and the vast treasures of the abbey, rubies, and emeralds as big as small eggs, crucifixes, and vows, crowns and reliquaries, of inestimable value; but of all their curiosities the thing the most to our tastes, and which they indeed do the justice to esteem the glory of their collection, was a vase of an entire onyx, measuring at least five inches over, three deep, and of great thickness. It is at least two thousand years old, the beauty of the stone and sculpture upon it (representing the mysteries of Bacchus) beyond expression admirable; we have dreamed of it ever since. The jolly old Benedictine, that showed us the treasures, had in his youth been ten years a soldier; he laughed at all the relics, was very full of stories, and mighty obliging. On Saturday Evening we got to Paris, and were driving through the streets a

long while before we knew where we were. The minute we came, voila Milôrs Holdernesse, Conway, and his brother; all stayed supper, and till two o'clock in the morning, for here nobody ever sleeps; it is not the way: Next day go to dine at my Lord Holdernesse's, there was the Abbé Prevôt, author of the Cleveland, and several other pieces much esteemed: The rest were English. At night we went to the Pandore; a spectacle literally, for it is nothing but a beautiful piece of machinery of three scenes. The first represents the chaos, and by degrees the separation of the elements. The second, the temple of Jupiter, and the giving of the box to Pandora. The third, the opening of the box, and all the mischiefs that ensued. An absurd design, but executed in the highest perfection, and that in one of the finest theatres in the world; it is the grande sale des machines in the Palais des Tuilleries. Next day dined at Lord Waldegrave's; then to the opera. Imagine to yourself for the drama four acts \* entirely unconnected with each other, each founded on some little history, skilfully taken out of an ancient author, e. g. Ovid's Metamorphoses, &c. and with great address converted into a French piece of gallantry. For instance, that which I saw, called the Ballet de la Paix,

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\* The French opera has only three acts, but often a prologue on a different subject, which (as Mr. Walpole informs me, who saw it at the same time) was the case in this very representation.



had its first act built upon the story of Nireus. Homer having said he was the handsomest man of his time, the poet, imagining such a one could not want a mistress, has given him one. These two come in and sing sentiment in lamentable strains, neither air nor recitative; only, to one's great joy, they are every now and then interrupted by a dance, or (to one's great sorrow) by a chorus that borders the stage from one end to the other, and screams, past all power of simile to represent. The second act was Baucis and Philemon. Baucis is a beautiful young shepherdess, and Philemon her swain. Jupiter falls in love with her, but nothing will prevail upon her; so it is all mighty well, and the chorus sing and dance the praises of Constancy. The two other acts were about Iphis and Ianthe, and the judgment of Paris. Imagine, I say, all this transacted by cracked voices, trilling divisions upon two notes and a half, accompanied by an orchestra of humstrums, and a whole house more attentive than if Farinelli sung, and you will almost have formed a just notion of the thing\*. Our astonishment at their absurdity you can never conceive; we had enough to

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\* Our author's sentiments here seem to correspond entirely with those which J. J. Rousseau afterwards published in his famous *Lettre sur la Musique Française*. In a French letter also, which Mr. Gray writ to his friend soon after this, he calls their music "des miaulemens & des heurlemens effroyables, mêlés avec un "tintamarre du diable: voilà la musique Française en abrégé."

do to express it by screaming an hour louder than the whole *dramatis personæ*. We have also seen twice the *Comédie Française*; first, the *Mahomet Second*, a tragedy that has had a great run of late; and the thing itself does not want its beauties, but the actors are beyond measure delightful. *Mademoiselle Gaussin* (*M. Voltaire's Zara*) has with a charming (though little) person the most pathetic tone of voice, the finest expression in her face, and most proper action imaginable. There is also a *Dufrêne*, who did the chief character, a handsome man and a prodigious fine actor. The second we saw was the *Philosophe marié*, and here they performed as well in comedy; there is a *Mademoiselle Quinault*, somewhat in *Mrs. Clive's* way, and a *Monsieur Grandval*, in the nature of *Wilks*, who is the genteel<sup>est</sup> thing in the world. There are several more would be much admired in England, and many (whom we have not seen) much celebrated here. Great part of our time is spent in seeing churches and palaces full of fine pictures, &c. the quarter of which is not yet exhausted. For my part, I could entertain myself this month merely with the common streets and the people in them. \* \* \*

## LETTER III.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST,*

Paris, May 22, 1739.

**A**FTER the little particulars aforesaid I should have proceeded to a journal of our transactions for this week past, should have carried you post from hence to Versailles, hurried you through the gardens to Trianon, back again to Paris, so away to Chantilly. But the fatigue is perhaps more than you can bear, and moreover I think I have reason to stomach your last piece of gravity. Supposing you were in your soberest mood, I am sorry you should think me capable of ever being so dissip , so evapor , as not to be in a condition of relishing any thing you could say to me. And now, if you have a mind to make your peace with me, arouse ye from your megrims and your melancholies, and (for exercise is good for you) throw away your night-cap, call for your jack-boots, and set out with me, last Saturday evening, for Versailles---and so at eight o'clock, passing through a road speckled with vines, and villas, and hares, and partridges, we arrive at the great avenue, flanked on either hand with a double row of trees about half a mile long, and with the palace itself to

terminate the view; facing which, on each side of you, is placed a semi-circle of very handsome buildings, which form the stables. These we will not enter into, because you know we are no jockies. Well! and is this the great front of Versailles? What a huge heap of littleness! it is composed, as it were, of three courts, all open to the eye at once, and gradually diminishing till you come to the royal apartments, which on this side present but half a dozen windows and a balcony. This last is all that can be called a front, for the rest is only great wings. The hue of all this mass is black, dirty red, and yellow; the first proceeding from stone changed by age; the second, from a mixture of brick; and the last, from a profusion of tarnished gilding. You cannot see a more disagreeable tout-ensemble; and, to finish the matter, it is all stuck over in many places with small busts of a tawny hue between every two windows. We pass through this to go into the garden, and here the case is indeed altered; nothing can be vaster and more magnificent than the back front; before it a very spacious terrace spreads itself, adorned with two large basons; these are bordered and lined (as most of the others) with white marble, with handsome statues of bronze reclined on their edges. From hence you descend a huge flight of steps into a semi-circle formed by woods, that are cut all round into niches, which are filled with beautiful copies of

all the famous antique statues in white marble. Just in the midst is the bason of Latona; she and her children are standing on the top of a rock in the middle, on the sides of which are the peasants, some half, some totally changed into frogs, all which throw out water at her in great plenty. From this place runs on the great alley, which brings you into a complete round, where is the bason of Apollo, the biggest in the gardens. He is rising in his car out of the water, surrounded by nymphs and tritons; all in bronze, and finely executed, and these, as they play, raise a perfect storm about him; beyond this is the great canal, a prodigious long piece of water, that terminates the whole: All this you have at one coup d'oeil in entering the garden, which is truly great. I cannot say as much of the general taste of the place; every thing you behold savours too much of art; all is forced, all is constrained about you; statues and vases sowed every where without distinction; sugar-loaves and minced-pies of yew; scrawl-work of box, and little squirting jets-d'eau, besides a great sameness in the walks, cannot help striking one at first sight, not to mention the silliest of labyrinths, and all Æsop's fables in water; since these were designed in usum Delphini only. Here then we walk by moonlight, and hear the ladies and the nightingales sing. Next morning, being Whitsunday, make ready to go to the Installation of nine Knights

du Saint Esprit, Cambis is one \*: high mass celebrated with music, great croud, much incense, King, Queen, Dauphin, Mesdames, Cardinals, and Court: Knights arrayed by his majesty; reverences before the altar, not bows, but curtsies; stiff hams; much tittering among the ladies; trumpets, kettle-drums, and fifes. My dear West, I am vastly delighted with Trianon, all of us with Chantilly; if you would know why, you must have patience, for I can hold my pen no longer, except to tell you that I saw Britannicus last night; all the characters, particularly Agrippina and Nero, done to perfection; to-morrow Phædra and Hippolitus. We are making you a little bundle of petites pieces; there is nothing in them, but they are acting at present; there are too Crebillon's Letters, and Amusemens sur le langage des Bêtes, said to be of one Bougeant, a Jesuit; they are both esteemed, and lately come out. This day se'nnight we go to Rheims.

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\* The Comte de Cambis was lately returned from his embassy in England.

## LETTER IV.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER*

Rheims, June 21, N. S. 1739.

WE have now been settled almost three weeks in this city, which is more considerable upon account of its size and antiquity, than from the number of its inhabitants, or any advantages of commerce. There is little in it worth a stranger's curiosity, besides the cathedral church, which is a vast Gothic building of a surprising beauty and lightness, all covered over with a profusion of little statues, and other ornaments. It is here the Kings of France are crowned by the Archbishop of Rheims, who is the first Peer, and the Primate of the kingdom: The holy vessel made use of on that occasion, which contains the oil, is kept in the church of St. Nicasius hard by, and is believed to have been brought by an angel from heaven at the coronation of Clovis, the first christian king. The streets in general have but a melancholy aspect, the houses all old; the public walks run along the side of a great moat under the ramparts, where one hears a continual croaking of frogs; the country round about is one great plain covered with vines, which at this time of the year afford

no very pleasing prospect, as being not above a foot high. What pleasures the place denies to the sight, it makes up to the palate; since you have nothing to drink but the best champagne in the world, and all sort of provisions equally good. As to other pleasures, there is not that freedom of conversation among the people of fashion here, that one sees in other parts of France; for though they are not very numerous in this place, and consequently must live a good deal together, yet they never come to any great familiarity with one another. As my Lord Conway had spent a good part of his time among them, his brother, and we with him, were soon introduced into all their assemblies: As soon as you enter, the lady of the house presents each of you a card, and offers you a party at quadrille; you sit down, and play forty deals without intermission, excepting one quarter of an hour, when every body rises to eat of what they call the gouter, which supplies the place of our tea, and is a service of wine, fruits, cream, sweetmeats, crawfish, and cheese. People take what they like, and sit down again to play; after that, they make little parties to go to the walks together, and then all the company retire to their separate habitations. Very seldom any suppers or dinners are given; and this is the manner they live among one another; not so much out of any aversion they have to pleasure, as out of a sort of formality.



they have contracted by not being much frequented by people who have lived at Paris. It is sure they do not hate gaiety any more than the rest of their country-people, and can enter into diversions, that are once proposed, with a good grace enough; for instance, the other evening we happened to be got together in a company of eighteen people, men and women of the best fashion here, at a garden in the town to walk; when one of the ladies bethought herself of asking, Why should not we sup here? Immediately the cloth was laid by the side of a fountain under the trees, and a very elegant supper served up; after which another said, Come, let us sing; and directly began herself: From singing we insensibly fell to dancing, and singing in a round; when somebody mentioned the violins, and immediately a company of them was ordered: Minuets were begun in the open air, and then came country-dances, which held till four-o'clock next morning; at which hour the gayest lady there proposed, that such as were weary should get into their coaches, and the rest of them should dance before them with the music in the van; and in this manner we paraded through all the principal streets of the city, and waked every body in it. Mr. Walpole had a mind to make a custom of the thing, and would have given a ball in the same manner next week, but the women

did not come into it; so I believe it will drop, and they will return to their dull cards, and usual formalities. We are not to stay above a month longer here, and shall then go to Dijon, the chief city of Burgundy, a very splendid and a very gay town; at least such is the present design.

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## LETTER V.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.*

Dijon, Friday, Sept. 11, N. S. 1739.

WE have made three short days journey of it from Rheims hither, where we arrived the night before last: The road we have passed through has been extremely agreeable: it runs through the most fertile part of Champaigne by the side of the river Marne, with a chain of hills on each hand at some distance, entirely covered with woods and vineyards, and every now and then the ruins of some old castle on their tops; we lay at St. Dizier the first night, and at Langres the second, and got hither the next evening time enough to have a full view of this city in entering it: It lies in a very extensive plain covered with vines and corn, and consequently is plentifully supplied with both. I need

not tell you that it is the chief city of Burgundy, nor that it is of great antiquity; considering which one should imagine it ought to be larger than one finds it. However, what it wants in extent, is made up in beauty and cleanliness, and in rich convents and churches, most of which we have seen. The palace of the States is a magnificent new building, where the Duke of Bourbon is lodged when he comes every three years to hold that Assembly, as governour of the Province. A quarter of a mile out of the town is a famous Abbey of Carthusians, which we are just returned from seeing. In their-chapel are the tombs of the ancient Dukes of Burgundy, that were so powerful, till at the death of Charles the Bold, the last of them, this part of his dominions was united by Lewis XI. to the crown of France. To-morrow we are to pay a visit to the Abböt of the Cistercians, who lives a few leagues off, and who uses to receive all strangers with great civility; his Abbey is one of the richest in the kingdom; he keeps open house always, and lives with great magnificence. We have seen enough of this town already, to make us regret the time we spent at Rheims; it is full of people of condition, who seem to form a much more agreeable society than we found in Champagne; but as we shall stay here but two or three days longer, it is not worth while to be introduced into their houses.

On Monday or Tuesday we are to set out for Lyons, which is two days journey distant, and from thence you shall hear again from me.

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## LETTER VI.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

Lyons, Sept. 18, N. S. 1739.

**S**CAVEZ vous bien, mon cher ami, que je vous hais, que je vous deteste? voila des termes un peu fortes; and that will save me, upon a just computation, a page of paper and six drops of ink; which, if I confined myself to reproaches of a more moderate nature, I should be obliged to employ in using you according to your deserts. What! to let any body reside three months at Rheims, and write but once to them? Please to consult Tully de Amicit. page 5, line 25, and you will find it said in express terms, "Ad amicum inter Remos relegatum mense uno quinquies scriptum esto;" nothing more plain, or less liable to false interpretations. Now because, I suppose, it will give you pain to know we are in being, I take this opportunity to tell you that we are at the ancient and celebrated Lugdunum, a city

situated upon the confluence of the Rhône and Saône (Arar, I should say) two people, who, though of tempers extremely unlike, think fit to join hands here, and make a little party to travel to the Mediterranean in company; the lady comes gliding along through the fruitful plains of Burgundy, *incredibili lenitate, ita ut oculis in utram partem fluit judicari non possit*; the gentleman runs all rough and roaring down from the mountains of Switzerland to meet her; and with all her soft airs she likes him never the worse; she goes through the middle of the city in state, and he passes incog. without the walls, but waits for her a little below. The houses here are so high, and the streets so narrow, as would be sufficient to render Lyons the dimmest place in the world, but the number of people, and the face of commerce diffused about it, are, at least, as sufficient to make it the liveliest: Between these two sufficiencies, you will be in doubt what to think of it; so we shall leave the city, and proceed to its environs, which are beautiful beyond expression; it is surrounded with mountains, and those mountains all bedroped and bespeckled with houses, gardens, and plantations of the rich Bourgeois, who have from thence a prospect of the city in the vale below on one hand, on the other the rich plains of the Lyonnais, with the rivers winding among them, and the Alps, with the mountains of Dauphiné, to bound the view. All yes-

terday morning we were busied in climbing up Mount Fourviere, where the ancient city stood perched at such a height, that nothing but the hopes of gain could certainly ever persuade their neighbours to pay them a visit: Here are the ruins of the Emperors' palaces, that resided here, that is to say, Augustus and Severus; they consist in nothing but great masses of old wall, that have only their quality to make them respected. In a vineyard of the Minims are remains of a theatre; the Fathers, whom they belong to, hold them in no esteem at all, and would have showed us their sacristy and chapel instead of them: The Ursuline Nuns have in their garden some Roman baths, but we having the misfortune to be men, and heretics, they did not think proper to admit us. Hard by are eight arches of a most magnificent aqueduct, said to be erected by Antony, when his legions were quartered here: There are many other parts of it dispersed up and down the country, for it brought the water from a river many leagues off in La Forez. Here are remains too of Agrippa's seven great roads which met at Lyons; in some places they lie twelve feet deep in the ground: In short, a thousand matters that you shall not know, till you give me a description of the Pais de Tombridge, and the effect its waters have upon you.

## LETTER VII.

MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

Temple, Sept. 23, 1739.

IF wishes could turn to realities, I would fling down my law books, and sup with you to-night. But, alas! here am I doomed to fix, while you are fluttering from city to city, and enjoying all the pleasures which a gay climate can afford. It is out of the power of my heart to envy your good fortune, yet I cannot help indulging a few natural desires; as for example, to take a walk with you on the banks of the Rhône, and to be climbing up mount Fourviere;

Jam mens prætrepidans avet vagari:

Jam læti studio pedes vigescunt.

However, so long as I am not deprived of your correspondence, so long shall I always find some pleasure in being at home. And, setting all vain curiosity aside, when the fit is over, and my reason begins to come to herself, I have several other powerful motives which might easily cure me of my restless inclinations: Amongst these, my Mother's ill state of health is not the least; which was the reason of our going to Tunbridge, so that you cannot expect much description or

amusement from thence. Nor indeed is there much room for either; for all diversions there may be reduced to two articles, gaming and going to church. They were pleased to publish certain Tunbrigiana this season; but such ana! I believe there were never so many vile little verses put together before. So much for Tunbridge: London affords me as little to say. What! so huge a town as London? Yes, consider only how I live in that town. I never go into the gay world or high world, and consequently receive nothing from thence to brighten my imagination. The busy world I leave to the busy; and am resolved never to talk politics till I can act at the same time. To tell old stories, or prate of old books, seems a little musty; and toujours Chapon bouilli, won't do. However, for want of better fare, take another little mouthful of my poetry.

O meæ jucunda comes quietis!

Quæ ferè ægrotum solita es levare

Pectus, et sensim ah! nimis ingruentes

Fallere curas:

Quid canes? quanto Lyra dic furore

Gesties, quando hâc reducem sodalem

Glauciam \* gaudere simul videbis

Méque sub umbrâ?

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\* He gives Mr. Gray the name of Glaucias frequently in his Latin verse, as Mr. Gray calls him Favonius.



## LETTER VIII.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.*

Lyons, Oct. 13, N. S. 1789.

IT is now almost five weeks since I left Dijon, one of the gayest and most agreeable little cities of France, for Lyons, its reverse in all these particulars. It is the second in the kingdom in bigness and rank, the streets excessively narrow and nasty; the houses immensely high and large; (that, for instance, where we are lodged, has twenty-five rooms on a floor, and that for five stories) it swarms with inhabitants like Paris itself, but chiefly a mercantile people, too much given up to commerce to think of their own, much less of a stranger's diversions. We have no acquaintance in the town, but such English as happen to be passing through here, in their way to Italy and the South, which at present happen to be near thirty in number. It is a fortnight since we set out from hence upon a little excursion to Geneva. We took the longest road, which lies through Savoy, on purpose to see a famous monastery, called the grand Chartreuse, and had no reason to think our time lost. After having travelled seven days very slow (for we did not change horses,

it being impossible for a chaise to go post in these roads) we arrived at a little village, among the mountains of Savoy, called Echelles; from thence we proceeded on horses, who are used to the way, to the mountain of the Chartreuse: It is six miles to the top; the road runs winding up it, commonly not six feet broad; on one hand is the rock, with woods of pine-trees hanging over head; on the other, a monstrous precipice, almost perpendicular, at the bottom of which rolls a torrent, that sometimes tumbling among the fragments of stone that have fallen from on high, and sometimes precipitating itself down vast descents with a noise like thunder, which is still made greater by the echo from the mountains on each side, concurs to form one of the most solemn, the most romantic, and the most astonishing scenes I ever beheld: Add to this the strange views made by the craggs and cliffs on the other hand; the cascades that in many places throw themselves from the very summit down into the vale, and the river below; and many other particulars impossible to describe; you will conclude we had no occasion to repent our pains. This place St. Bruno chose to retire to, and upon its very top founded the afore-said Convent, which is the superior of the whole order. When we came there, the two fathers, who are commissioned to entertain strangers, (for the rest must neither speak one to another, nor to any one else) re-

ceived us very kindly; and set before us a repast of dried fish, eggs, butter, and fruits, all excellent in their kind, and extremely neat. They pressed us to spend the night there, and to stay some days with them; but this we could not do, so they led us about their house, which is, you must think, like a little city; for there are 100 fathers, besides 500 servants, that make their clothes, grind their corn, press their wine, and do every thing among themselves: The whole is quite orderly and simple; nothing of finery, but the wonderful decency, and the strange situation, more than supply the place of it. In the evening we descended by the same way, passing through many clouds that were then forming themselves on the mountain's side. Next day we continued our journey by Chamberry, which, though the chief city of the Dutchy, and residence of the king of Sardinia, when he comes into this part of his dominions, makes but a very mean and insignificant appearance; we lay at Aix, once famous for its hot baths, and the next night at Annecy; the day after, by noon, we got to Geneva. I have not time to say any thing about it, nor of our solitary journey back again. \* \* \*

## LETTER IX.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.*

Lyons, Oct. 25, N. S. 1739.

IN my last I gave you the particulars of our little journey to Geneva: I have only to add, that we stayed about a week, in order to see Mr. Conway settled there: I do not wonder so many English choose it for their residence; the city is very small, neat, prettily built, and extremely populous; the Rhône runs through the middle of it, and it is surrounded with new fortifications, that give it a military compact air; which, joined to the happy, lively countenances of the inhabitants, and an exact discipline always as strictly observed as in time of war, makes the little republic appear a match for a much greater power; though perhaps Geneva, and all that belongs to it, are not of equal extent with Windsor and its two parks. To one that has passed through Savoy, as we did, nothing can be more striking than the contrast, as soon as he approaches the town. Near the gates of Geneva runs the torrent Arve, which separates it from the King of Sardinia's dominions; on the other side of it lies a country naturally, indeed, fine and fertile; but you meet with no-

thing in it but meager, ragged, bare-footed peasants, with their children, in extreme misery and nastiness; and even of these no great numbers: You no sooner have crossed the stream I have mentioned, but poverty is no more; not a beggar, hardly a discontented face to be seen; numerous, and well-dressed people swarming on the ramparts; drums beating, soldiers, well-clothed and armed, exercising; and folks, with business in their looks, hurrying to and fro; all contribute to make any person, who is not blind, sensible what a difference there is between the two governments, that are the causes of one view and the other. The beautiful lake, at one end of which the town is situated; its extent; the several states that border upon it; and all its pleasures, are too well known for me to mention them. We sailed upon it as far as the dominions of Geneva extend, that is, about two leagues and a half on each side; and landed at several of the little houses of pleasure, that the inhabitants have built all about it, who received us with much politeness. The same night we eat part of a trout, taken in the lake, that weighed thirty-seven pounds; as great a monster as it appeared to us, it was esteemed there nothing extraordinary, and they assured us, it was not uncommon to catch them of fifty pounds; they are dressed here, and sent post to Paris upon some great occasions; nay, even to Madrid, as we were told. The road we re-

turned through was not the same we came by: We crossed the Rhône at Seyssel, and passed for three days among the mountains of Bugey, without meeting with any thing new: At last we came out into the plains of La Bresse, and so to Lyons again. Sir Robert has written to Mr. Walpole, to desire he would go to Italy; which he has resolved to do; so that all the scheme of spending the winter in the South of France is laid aside, and we are to pass it in a much finer country. You may imagine I am not sorry to have this opportunity of seeing the place in the world that best deserves it: Besides as the Pope (who is eighty-eight, and has been lately at the point of death) cannot probably last a great while, perhaps we may have the fortune to be present at the election of a new one, when Rome will be in all its glory. Friday next we certainly begin our journey; in two days we shall come to the foot of the Alps, and six more we shall be in passing them. Even here the winter is begun; what then must it be among those vast snowy mountains where it is hardly ever summer? We are, however, as well armed as possible against the cold, with muffs, hoods, and masks of beaver, fur-boots, and bear skins. When we arrive at Turin, we shall rest after the fatigues of the journey. \* \* \*

## LETTER X.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.*

Turin, Nov. 7, N. S. 1739.

I AM this night arrived here, and have just set down to rest me after eight days tiresome journey: For the three first we had the same road we before passed through to go to Geneva; the fourth we turned out of it, and for that day and the next travelled rather among than upon the Alps; the way commonly running through a deep valley by the side of the river Arc, which works itself a passage, with great difficulty and a mighty noise, among vast quantities of rocks, that have rolled down from the mountain tops. The winter was so far advanced, as in great measure to spoil the beauty of the prospect; however, there was still somewhat fine remaining amidst the savageness and horreur of the place: The sixth we began to go up several of these mountains; and as we were passing one, met with an odd accident enough: Mr. Walpole had a little fat black spaniel, that he was very fond of, which he sometimes used to set down, and let it run by the chaise side. We were at that time in a very rough road, not two yards broad at most; on one side was a great wood

of pines, and on the other a vast precipice; it was noon-day, and the sun shone bright, when all of a sudden from the wood-side, (which was as steep upwards, as the other part was downwards) out rushed a great wolf, came close to the head of the horses, seized the dog by the throat, and rushed up the hill again with him in his mouth. This was done in less than a quarter of a minute; we all saw it, and yet the servants had not time to draw their pistols, or do any thing to save the dog\*. If he had not been there, and the creature had thought fit to lay hold of one of the horses; chaise, and we, and all must inevitably have tumbled above fifty fathoms perpendicular down the precipice. The seventh we came to Lanebourg, the last town in Savoy; it lies at the foot of the famous mount Cenis, which is so situated as to allow no room for any way but over the very top of it. Here the chaise was forced to be pulled to pieces, and the baggage and that to be carried by mules: We ourselves were wrapped up in our furs, and seated upon a sort of matted chair without legs, which is carried upon poles in the manner of a bier, and so begun to ascend by the help of eight men. It was six miles to the top, where a plain opens itself about as many more in breadth, covered perpe-

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\* This odd incident might have afforded Mr. Gray a subject for an ode, which would have been a good companion to that on the death of a favourite cat.



tually with very deep snow, and in the midst of that a great lake of unfathomable depth, from whence a river takes its rise, and tumbles over monstrous rocks quite down the other side of the mountain. The descent is six miles more, but infinitely more steep than the going up; and here the men perfectly fly down with you, stepping from stone to stone with incredible swiftness in places where none but they could go three paces without falling. The immensity of the precipices, the roaring of the river and torrents that run into it, the huge craggs covered with ice and snow, and the clouds below you and about you, are objects it is impossible to conceive without seeing them; and though we had heard many strange descriptions of the scene, none of them at all came up to it. We were but five hours in performing the whole, from which you may judge of the rapidity of the men's motion. We are now got into Piedmont, and stopped a little while at La Ferriere, a small village about three quarters of the way down, but still among the clouds, where we began to hear a new language spoken round about us; at last we got quite down, went through the Pas de Suse, a narrow road among the Alps, defended by two fortresses, and lay at Bossolens: Next evening through a fine avenue of nine miles in length, as straight as a line, we arrived at this city, which, as you know, is the capital of the Princi-

pality, and the residence of the King of Sardinia.\*\*\*  
 We shall stay here, I believe, a fortnight, and proceed  
 for Genoa, which is three or four days journey to go  
 post.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XI.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

Turin, Nov. 16, N. S. 1739.

**A**FTER eight days journey through Greenland, we arrived at Turin—you approach it by a handsome avenue of nine miles long, and quite strait.---The entrance is guarded by certain vigilant dragons, called Douäniers, who mumbled us for some time. The city is not large, as being a place of strength, and consequently confined within its fortifications; it has many beauties and some faults; among the first are streets all laid out by the line, regular uniform buildings, fine walks that surround the whole, and in general a good

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\*\*\* That part of the letter here omitted, contained only a description of the city; which, as Mr. Gray has given it to Mr. West in the following letter, and that' in a more lively manner, I thought it unnecessary to insert; a liberty I have taken in other parts of this correspondence, in order to avoid repetitions.

lively clean appearance: But the houses are of brick, plaistered, which is apt to want repairing; the windows of oiled paper, which is apt to be torn; and every thing very slight, which is apt to tumble down. There is an excellent Opera, but it is only in the Carnival: Balls every night, but only in the Carnival: Masquerades too, but only in the Carnival. This Carnival lasts only from Christmas to Lent; one half of the remaining part of the year is passed in remembering the last, the other in expecting the future Carnival. We cannot well subsist upon such slender diet, no more than upon an execrable Italian Comedy, and a Puppet-Show, called *Rappresentazione d'un' anima dannata*, which, I think, are all the present diversions of the place; except the Marquise de Cavailiac's *Conversazione*, where one goes to see people play at Ombre and Taroc, a game with 72 cards all painted with suns, and moons, and devils, and monks. Mr. Walpole has been at court; the family are at present at a country palace, called *La Venerie*. The palace here in town is the very quintessence of gilding and looking-glass; inlaid floors, carved pannels, and painting, wherever they could stick a brush. I own I have not, as yet, any where met with those grand and simple works of Art, that are to amaze one, and whose sight one is to be the better for: But those of Nature have astonished me beyond expression. In our little journey up to the

Grande Chartreuse, I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation, that there was no restraining: Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain scenes that would awe an atheist into belief, without the help of other argument. One need not have a very fantastic imagination to see spirits there at noon-day: You have Death perpetually before your eyes, only so far removed, as to compose the mind without frightening it. I am well persuaded St. Bruno was a man of no common genius, to choose such a situation for his retirement; and perhaps should have been a disciple of his, had I been born in his time. You may believe Abelard and Heloïse were not forgot upon this occasion: If I do not mistake, I saw you too every now and then at a distance among the trees; il me semble, que j'ai vu ce chien de visage là quelque part. You seemed to call to me from the other side of the precipice, but the noise of the river below was so great, that I really could not distinguish what you said; it seemed to have a cadence like verse. In your next you will be so good to let me know what it was. The week we have since passed among the Alps, has not equalled the single day upon that mountain, because the winter was rather too far advanced, and the weather a little foggy. However, it did not want its beauties; the savage rudeness of the view is inconceivable

without seeing it: I reckoned, in one day, thirteen cascades, the least of which was, I dare say, one hundred feet in height. I had Livy in the chaise with me, and beheld his “*Nives cœlo propè immistæ, tecta informia imposita rupibus, pecora jumentaque torrida frigore, homines intonsi & inculti, animalia inanimaque omnia rigentia gelu; omnia confragosa, præruptaque.*” The creatures that inhabit them are, in all respects, below humanity; and most of them, especially women, have the *tumidum guttur*, which they call *goscia*. Mont Cenis, I confess, carries the permission\* mountains have of being frightful rather too far; and its horrors were accompanied with too much danger to give one time to reflect upon their beauties. There is a family of the Alpine monsters I have mentioned, upon its very top, that in the middle of winter calmly lay in their stock of provisions and firing, and so are buried in their hut for a month or two under the snow. When we were down it, and got a little way into Piedmont, we began to find “*Apricos quosdam colles, rivosque prope sylvas, & jam humano cultu digniora loca.*” I read Silius Italicus too, for the first time; and wished for you, according to custom. We set out for Genoa in two days time.

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\* A phrase borrowed from Madame De Sevigné, who quotes a *bon mot* on Pelisson, qu'il abusoit de la permission qu'ont les hommes d'être laids.

## LETTER XII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Genoa, Nov. 21, 1734.

**H**ORRIDOS tractus, Boreæq; linquens  
 Regna Taurini fera, molliorem  
 Advēhor brumam, Genuæq; amantes

Litora soles.

At least if they do not, they have a very ill taste; for I never beheld any thing more amiable: Only figure to yourself a vast semicircular bason, full of fine blue sea, and vessels of all sorts and sizes, some sailing out, some coming in, and others at anchor; and all round it palaces and churches peeping over one another's heads, gardens, and marble terrases full of orangè and cypress trees, fountains, and trellis-works covered with vines, which altogether compose the grandest of theatres. This is the first coup d'oeil, and is almost all I am yet able to give you an account of, for we arrived late last night. To-day was, luckily, a great festival, and in the morning we resorted to the church of the Madonna delle Vigne, to put up our little orisons; (I believe I forgot to tell you, that we have been sometime converts to the holy Catholic church) we found our Lady richly dressed out, with a crown of diamonds on her

own head, another upon the child's, and a constellation of wax lights burning before them: Shortly after came the Doge, in his robes of crimson damask, and a cap of the same, followed by the Senate in black. Upon his approach began a fine concert of music, and among the rest two eunuchs' voices, that were a perfect feast to ears that had heard nothing but French operas for a year. We listened to this, and breathed nothing but incense for two hours. The Doge is a very tall, lean, stately, old figure, called Costantino Balbi; and the Senate seem to have been made upon the same model. They said their prayers, and heard an absurd white friar preach, with equal devotion. After this we went to the *Annunciata*, a church built by the family *Lomellini*, and belonging to it; which is, indeed, a most stately structure, the inside wholly marble of various kinds, except where gold and painting take its place. From hence to the *Palazzo Doria*. I should make you sick of marble, if I told you how it was lavished here upon the porticoes, the balustrades, and terrases, the lowest of which extends quite to the sea. The inside is by no means answerable to the outward magnificence; the furniture seems to be as old as the founder of the family\*. Their great imbossed silver tables tell you, in bas-relief, his victories at sea; how he enter-

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\* The famous *Andrea Doria*.

tained the Emperor Charles, and how he refused the sovereignty of the Commonwealth when it was offered him; the rest is old-fashioned velvet chairs, and gothic tapestry. The rest of the day has been spent, much to our hearts' content, in cursing French music and architecture, and in singing the praises of Italy. We find this place so very fine, that we are in fear of finding nothing finer. We are fallen in love with the Mediterranean sea, and hold your lakes and your rivers in vast contempt. This is

“The happy country where huge lemons grow,”  
as Waller says; and I am sorry to think of leaving it in  
a week for Parma, although it be

The happy country where huge cheeses grow.

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### LETTER XIII.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.*

Bologna, Dec. 9, N. S. 1739.

**O**UR journey hither has taken up much less time than I expected. We left Genoa (a charming place, and one that deserved a longer stay) the week before last; crossed the mountains, and lay that night at Tortona, the next at St. Giovanni, and the morning after came to Piacenza. That city, (though the capital of a



Dutchy) made so frippery an appearance, that instead of spending some days there, as had been intended, we only dined, and went on to Parma; stayed there all the following day, which was passed in visiting the famous works of Corregio in the Dome, and other churches. The fine gallery of pictures, that once belonged to the Dukes of Parma, is no more here; the King of Naples has carried it all thither, and the city had not merit enough to detain us any longer, so we proceeded through Reggio to Modena; this, though the residence of its Duke, is an ill-built melancholy place, all of brick, as are most of the towns in this part of Lombardy: He himself lives in a private manner, with very little appearance of a court about him; he has one of the noblest collections of paintings in the world, which entertained us extremely well the rest of that day and a part of the next; and in the afternoon we came to Bologna: So now you may wish us joy of being in the dominions of his Holiness. This is a populous city, and of great extent: All the streets have porticoes on both sides, such as surround a part of Covent-Garden, a great relief in summer-time in such a climate; and from one of the principal gates to a church of the Virgin, [where is a wonder-working picture, at three miles distance] runs a corridore of the same sort, lately finished, and, indeed, a most extraordinary performance. The churches here are more

remarkable for their paintings than architecture, being mostly old structures of brick; but the palaces are numerous, and fine enough to supply us with somewhat worth seeing from morning till night. The country of Lombardy, hitherto, is one of the most beautiful imaginable; the roads broad, and exactly straight, and on either hand vast plantations of trees, chiefly mulberries and olives, and not a tree without a vine twining about it and spreading among its branches. This scene, indeed, which must be the most lovely in the world during the proper season, is at present all deformed by the winter, which here is rigorous enough for the time it lasts; but one still sees the skeleton of a charming place, and reaps the benefit of its product, for the fruits and provisions are admirable; in short you find every thing, that luxury can desire, in perfection. We have now been here a week, and shall stay some little time longer. We are at the foot of the Apennine mountains; it will take up three days to cross them, and then we shall come to Florence, where we shall pass the Christmas. Till then we must remain in a state of ignorance as to what is doing in England, for our letters are to meet us there: If I do not find four or five from you alone, I shall wonder.

## LETTER XIV.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.*

Florence, Dec. 19, N. S. 1739.

WE spent twelve days at Bologna, chiefly (as most travellers do) in seeing sights; for as we knew no mortal there, and as it is no easy matter to get admission into any Italian house, without very particular recommendations, we could see no company but in public places; and there are none in that city but the churches. We saw, therefore, churches, palaces, and pictures from morning to night; and the 15th of this month set out for Florence, and began to cross the Apennine mountains; we travelled among and upon them all that day, and, as it was but indifferent weather, were commonly in the middle of thick clouds, that utterly deprived us of a sight of their beauties; For this vast chain of hills has its beauties, and all the vallies are cultivated; even the mountains themselves are many of them so within a little of their very tops. They are not so horrid as the Alps, though pretty near as high; and the whole road is admirably well kept, and paved throughout, which is a length of fourscore miles, and more. We left the Pope's dominions, and lay that night in those of the Grand Duke of Fiorenzuola, a

paltry little town, at the foot of Mount Giogo, which is the highest of them all. Next morning we went up it; the post-house is upon its very top, and usually involved in clouds, or half-buried in the snow. Indeed there was none of the last at the time we were there, but it was still a dismal habitation. The descent is most excessively steep, and the turnings very short and frequent; however, we performed it without any danger, and in coming down could dimly discover Florence, and the beautiful plain about it, through the mists; but enough to convince us, it must be one of the noblest prospects upon earth in summer. That afternoon we got thither; and Mr. Mann\*, the resident, had sent his servant to meet us at the gates, and conduct us to his house. He is the best and most obliging person in the world. The next night we were introduced at the Prince of Craon's assembly (he has the chief power here in the Grand Duke's absence). The Princess, and he, were extremely civil to the name of Walpole, so we were asked to stay supper, which is as much as to say, you may come and sup here whenever you please; for after the first invitation this is always understood. We have also been at the Countess Suarez's, a favourite of the late Duke, and one that gives the first movement to every thing gay that is

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\* Now Sir Horace Mann, and Envoy Extraordinary at the same court.

going forward here. The news is every day expected from Vienna of the Great Dutchess's delivery; if it be a boy, here will be all sorts of balls, masquerades, operas, and illuminations; if not, we must wait for the Carnival, when all those things come of course. In the mean time it is impossible to want entertainment; the famous gallery, alone, is an amusement for months; we commonly pass two or three hours every morning in it, and one has perfect leisure to consider all its beauties. You know it contains many hundred antique statues, such as the whole world cannot match, besides the vast collection of paintings, medals, and precious stones, such as no other prince was ever master of; in short, all that the rich and powerful house of Medicis has in so many years got together\*. And besides this city abounds with so many palaces and churches, that you can hardly place yourself any where without having some fine one in view, or at least some statue or fountain, magnificently adorned; these undoubtedly are far more numerous than Genoa can pretend to; yet, in its general appearance, I cannot think that Florence equals it in beauty. Mr. Walpole is just come from being presented to the Electress Palatine Dowager; she is a sister of the late Great Duke's; a

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\* He catalogued and made occasional short remarks on the pictures, &c. which he saw here, as well as at other places, many of which are in my possession, but it would have swelled this work too much if I had inserted them.

stately old lady, that never goes out but to church, and then she has guards, and eight horses to her coach. She received him with much ceremony, standing under a huge black canopy, and, after a few minutes talking, she assured him of her good will, and dismissed him: She never sees any body but thus in form; and so she passes her life, \* poor woman! \* \* \*

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## LETTER XV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Florence, Jan. 15, 1740.

I Think I have not yet told you how we left that charming place Genoa: How we crossed a mountain all of green marble, called Buchetto: How we came to Tortona, and waded through the mud to come to Castel St. Giovanni, and there eat mustard and sugar with a dish of crows' gizzards: Secondly, how we passed the famous plains

Quà Trebie glaucas salices intersecat undâ,

Arvaque Romanis nobilitata malis.

Visus adhuc annis veteri de clade rubere,

Et suspirantes ducere mœstus aquas;

Maurorumque ala, & nigræ increbrescere turmæ,

Et pulsa Ausonidum ripa sonare fugâ.

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\* Persons of very high rank, and withal very good sense, will only feel the pathos of this exclamation.

Nor, thirdly, how we passed through Piacenza, Parma, Modena, entered the territories of the Pope; stayed twelve days at Bologna; crossed the Apennines, and afterwards arrivèd at Florence. None of these things have I told you, nor do I intend to tell you, till you ask me some questions concerning them. No not even of Florence itself, except that it is as fine as possible, and has every thing in it that can bless the eyes. But, before I enter into particulars, you must make your peace both with me and the *Venus de Medicis*, who, let me tell you, is highly and justly offended at you for not inquiring, long before this, concerning her symmetry and proportions. \* \* \*

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## LETTER XVI.

*MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.*

ELEGIA. \*

**E**RGŌ desidiæ videor tibi crimine dignus;  
 Et meritò: victas do tibi sponte manus.  
 Arguor & veteres nimium contemnere Musas,  
 Irata et nobis est Medicæa Venus.

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\* The letter which accompanied this little elegy is not extant. Probably it was only inclosed in one to Mr. Walpole.

Mene igitur statuas & inania saxa vereri!

Stultule! marmoreâ quid mihi cum Venere?

Hic veræ, hinc vivæ Veneres, & mille per urbem,

Quarum nulla queat non placuisse Jovi.

Cedite Romanæ formosæ et cedite Graiæ,

Sintque oblita Helenæ nomen et Hermionæ!

Et, quascunque refert ætas vetus, Hæroinæ:

Unus hōnor nostris jam venit Angliasin.

Oh quales vultus, Oh quantum numen ocellis!

I nunc & Tuscas improbe confer opes.

Ne tamen hæc obtusa nimis præcordia credas,

Neu me adeo nullâ Pallade progenitum:

Testor Pieridumque umbras & flumina Pindi

Me quoque Calliopes semper amasse choros;

Et dudum Ausonias urbes, & visere Graias

Cura est, ingenio si licet ire meo:

Sive est Phidiacum marmor, seu Mentoris æra,

Seu paries Coo nobilis e calamo;

Nec minus artificum magna argumenta recentum

Romanique decus nominis & Veneti:

Quæ Furor & Mavōrs & sævo in Marmore vultus,

Quaque et formoso mollior ære Venus.

Quæquæ loquax spirat fucus, vivique labores,

Et quicquid calamo dulcius ausa manus:

Hic nemora, & solâ mœrens Melibœus in umbrâ,

Lymphaque muscōso prosiliens lapide;



Illic majus opus, faciesque in pariete major  
 Exurgens, Divûm & numina Cœlicolûm;  
 O vos fœlices, quibus hæc cognoscere fas est,  
 Et totâ Italiâ, qua patet usque, frui!  
 Nulla dies vobis eat injucunda, nec usquam  
 Norîtis quid sit tempora amara pati.

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## LETTER XVII.

MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Florence, March 19, 1740.

**T**HE Pope \* is at last dead, and we are to set out for Rome on Monday next. The Conclave is still sitting there, and likely to continue so some time longer, as the two French Cardinals are but just arrived, and the German ones are still expected. It agrees mighty ill with those that remain inclosed: Ottoboni is already dead of an apoplexy; Altieri and several others are said to be dying, or very bad: Yet it is not expected to break up till after Easter. We shall lie at Sienna the first night, spend a day there, and in two more get to Rome. One begins to see in this country the first promises of an Italian spring, clear unclouded skies;

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\* Clement the Twelfth.

and warm suns, such as are not often felt in England; yet, for your sake, I hope at present you have your proportion of them, and that all your frosts, and snows, and short-breaths are, by this time, utterly vanished. I have nothing new or particular to inform you of; and, if you see things at home go on much in their old course, you must not imagine them more various abroad. The diversions of a Florentine Lent are composed of a sermon in the morning, full of hell and the devil; a dinner at noon, full of fish and meager diet; and, in the evening, what is called a *Conversazione*, a sort of assembly at the principal people's houses, full of I cannot tell what: Besides this, there is twice a week a very grand concert. \* \* \*

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## LETTER XVIII.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.*

Rome, April 2, N. S. 1740.

**T**HIS is the third day since we came to Rome, but the first hour I have had to write to you in. The journey from Florence cost us four days, one of which was spent at Sienna, an agreeable, clean, old city, of no great magnificence or extent; but in a fine situation, and good air. What it has most considerable is its

cathedral, a huge pile of marble, black and white laid alternately, and laboured with a gothic niceness and delicacy in the old-fashioned way. Within too are some paintings and sculpture of considerable hands. The sight of this, and some collections that were shewed us in private houses, were a sufficient employment for the little time we were to pass there; and the next morning we set forward on our journey through a country very oddly composed; for some miles you have a continual scene of little mountains cultivated from top to bottom with rows of olive-trees, or else elms, each of which has its vine twining about it, and mixing with the branches; and corn sown between all the ranks. This, diversified with numerous small houses and convents, makes the most agreeable prospect in the world: But, all of a sudden, it alters to black barren hills, as far as the eye can reach, that seem never to have been capable of culture, and are as ugly as useless. Such is the country for some time before one comes to Mount Radicofani, a terrible black hill, on the top of which we were to lodge that night. It is very high, and difficult of ascent; and at the foot of it, we were much embarrassed by the fall of one of the poor horses that drew us. This accident obliged another chaise, which was coming down, to stop also; and out of it peeped a figure in a red cloak, with a handkerchief tied round its head, which, by its voice and

mien, seemed a fat old woman; but, upon its getting out, appeared to be Senesino, who was returning from Naples to Sienna, the place of his birth and residence! On the highest part of the mountain is an old fortress, and near it a house built by one of the Grand Dukes for a hunting-seat, but now converted into an inn: It is the shell of a large fabric, but such an inside, such chambers, and accommodations, that your cellar is a palace in comparison; and your cat sups and lies much better than we did; for, it being a saint's eve, there was nothing but eggs. We devoured our meager fare; and, after stopping up the windows with the quilts, were obliged to lie upon the straw beds in our clothes. Such are the conveniences in a road, that is, as it were, the great thoroughfare of all the world. Just on the other side of this mountain, at Ponte-Centino, one enters the patrimony of the church; a most delicious country, but thinly inhabited. That night brought us to Viterbo, a city of a more lively appearance than any we had lately met with; the houses have glass windows, which is not very usual here; and most of the streets are terminated by a handsome fountain. Here we had the pleasure of breaking our fast on the leg of an old hare and some broiled crows. Next morning, in descending Mount Viterbo, we first discovered (though at near thirty miles distance) the cupola of St. Peter's, and a little after began to enter on an old Roman pave-

ment, with now and then a ruined tower, or a sepulchre on each hand. We now had a clear view of the city, though not to the best advantage, as coming along a plain quite upon a level with it; however, it appeared very vast, and surrounded with magnificent villas and gardens. We soon after crossed the Tiber, a river that ancient Rome made more considerable than any merit of its own could have done: However, it is not contemptibly small, but a good handsome stream; very deep, yet somewhat of a muddy complexion. The first entrance of Rome is prodigiously striking. It is by a noble gate, designed by Michel Angelo, and adorned with statues; this brings you into a large square, in the midst of which is a vast obelisk of granite, and in front you have at one view two churches of a handsome architecture, and so much alike that they are called the twins; with three streets, the middlemost of which is one of the longest in Rome. As high as my expectation was raised, I confess, the magnificence of this city infinitely surpasses it. You cannot pass along a street but you have views of some palace, or church, or square, or fountain, the most picturesque and noble one can imagine. We have not yet set about considering its beauties, ancient and modern, with attention; but have already taken a slight transient view of some of the most remarkable. *St. Peter's* I saw the day after we arrived, and was struck dumb with won-

der. I there saw the Cardinal D'Auvergne, one of the French ones, who, upon coming off his journey, immediately repaired hither to offer up his vows at the high altar, and went directly into the Conclavé; the doors of which we saw opened to him, and all the other immured Cardinals came thither to receive him. Upon his entrance they were closed again directly. It is supposed they will not come to an agreement about a Pope till after Easter, though the confinement is very disagreeable. I have hardly philosophy enough to see the infinity of fine things, that are here daily in the power of any body that has money, without regretting the want of it; but custom has the power of making things easy to one. I have not yet seen his majesty of Great-Britain, &c. though I have the two boys in the gardens of the Villa Borgese, where they go a-shooting almost every day; it was at a distance, indeed, for we did not choose to meet them, as you may imagine. This letter (like all those the English send, or receive) will pass through the hands of that family, before it comes to those it was intended for. They do it more honour than it deserves; and all they will learn from thence will be, that I desire you to give my duty to my father, and wherever else it is due, and that I am, &c.

## LETTER XIX.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.*

Rome, April 15, 1740. Good-Friday.

**T**O-DAY I am just come from paying my adoration at St. Peter's to three extraordinary relics, which are exposed to public view only on these two days in the whole year, at which time all the confraternities in the city come in procession to see them. It was something extremely novel to see that vast church, and the most magnificent in the world, undoubtedly, illuminated (for it was night) by thousands of little crystal lamps, disposed in the figure of a huge cross at the high altar, and seeming to hang alone in the air. All the light proceeded from this, and had the most singular effect imaginable as one entered the great door. Soon after came one after another, I believe, thirty processions, all dressed in linen frocks, and girt with a cord, their heads covered with a cowl all over, only two holes to see through left. Some of them were all black, others red, others white, others party-coloured; these were continually coming and going with their tapers and crucifixes before them; and to each company, as they arrived and knelt before the great altar, were shewn from a balcony, at a great height, the three wonders,

which are, you must know, the head of the spear that wounded Christ; St. Veronica's handkerchief, with the miraculous impression of his face upon it; and a piece of the true cross, on the sight of which the people thump their breasts, and kiss the pavement with vast devotion. The tragical part of the ceremony is half a dozen wretched creatures, who, with their faces covered, but naked to the waist, are in a side-chapel disciplining themselves with scourges full of iron prickles; but really in earnest, as our eyes can testify, which saw their backs and arms so raw we should have taken it for a red satin doublet torn, and shewing the skin through, had we not been convinced of the contrary by the blood which was plentifully sprinkled about them. It is late; I give you joy of Porto-Bello, and many other things, which I hope are all true. \* \* \*

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LETTER XX.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

Tivoli, May 20, 1740.

**T**HIS day being in the palace of his Highness the Duke of Modena, he laid his most serene commands upon me to write to Mr. West, and said he thought it for his glory, that I should draw up an inventory of all his most serene possessions for the said West's peru-



sal.-----Imprimis, a house, being in circumference a quarter of a mile, two feet and an inch; the said house containing the following particulars, to wit, a great room. Item, another great room; item, a bigger room; item, another room; item, a vast room; item, a sixth of the same; a seventh ditto; an eighth as before; a ninth as abovesaid; a tenth (see No. 1.); item, ten more such, besides twenty besides, which, not to be too particular, we shall pass over. The said rooms contain nine chairs, two tables, five stools, and a cricket. From whence we shall proceed to the garden, containing two millions of superfine laurel hedges, a clump of cypress trees, and half the river Teverone, that pisses into two thousand several chamberpots. Finis.--Dame Nature desired me to put in a list of her little goods and chattels, and, as they were small, to be very minute about them. She has built here three or four little mountains, and laid them out in an irregular semi-circle; from certain others behind, at a greater distance, she has drawn a canal, into which she has put a little river of hers, called Anio; she has cut a huge clift between the two innermost of her four hills, and there she has left it to its own disposal; which she has no sooner done, but, like a heedless chit, it tumbles headlong down a declivity fifty feet perpendicular, breaks itself all to shatters, and is converted into a shower of rain, where the sun forms many a

flow, red, green, blue, and yellow. To get out of our metaphors without any further trouble, it is the most noble sight in the world. The weight of that quantity of waters, and the force they fall with, have worn the rocks they throw themselves among into a thousand irregular craggs, and to a vast depth. In this channel it goes boiling along with a mighty noise till it comes to another steep, where you see it a second time come roaring down (but first you must walk two miles farther) a greater height than before, but not with that quantity of waters; for by this time it has divided itself, being crossed and opposed by the rocks, into four several streams, each of which, in emulation of the great one, will tumble down too; and it does tumble down, but not from an equally elevated place; so that you have at one view all these cascades intermixed with groves of olive and little woods, the mountains rising behind them, and on the top of one (that which forms the extremity of one of the half-circle's horns) is seated the town itself. At the very extremity of that extremity, on the brink of the precipice, stands the Sybil's temple, the remains of a little rotunda, surrounded with its portico, above half of whose beautiful Corinthian pillars are still standing and entire; all this on one hand. On the other, the open Campagna of Rome, here and there a little castle on a hillock, and the city itself on the very brink of the horizon, indistinctly seen

(being 18 miles off) except the dome of St. Peter's; which, if you look out of your window, wherever you are, I suppose, you can see. I did not tell you that a little below the first fall, on the side of the rock, and hanging over that torrent, are little ruins which they shew you for Horace's house, a curious situation to observe the

“ Præceps Anio, & Tiburni lucus, & uda

“ Mobilibus pomaria rivis.”

Mæcenas did not care for such a noise, it seems, and built him a house (which they also carry one to see) so situated that it sees nothing at all of the matter, and for any thing he knew there might be no such river in the world. Horace had another house on the other side of the Teverone, opposite to Mæcenas's; and they told us there was a bridge of communication, by which “ andava il detto Signor per trastullarsi coll istesso Orazio.” In coming hither we crossed the Aquæ Albulæ, a vile little brook that stinks like a fury, and they say it has stunk so these thousand years. I forgot the Piscina of Quintilius Varus, where he used to keep certain little fishes. This is very entire, and there is a piece of the aqueduct that supplied it too; in the garden below is old Rome, built in little, just as it was, they say. There are seven temples in it, and no houses at all: They say there were none.

*May 21.*

We have had the pleasure of going twelve miles out of our way to Palestrina. It has rained all day as if heaven and us were coming together. See my honesty, I do not mention a syllable of the temple of Fortune, because I really did not see it; which, I think, is pretty well for an old traveller. So we returned along the Via Prænestina, saw the Lacus Gabinus and Regillus, where, you know, Castor and Pollux appeared upon a certain occasion. And many a good old tomb we left on each hand, and many an Aqueduct,

Dumb are whose fountains, and their channels dry. There are, indeed, two whole modern ones, works of Popes, that run about thirty miles a-piece in length; one of them conveys still the famous Aqua Virgo to Rome, and adds vast beauty to the prospect. So we came to Rome again, where waited for us a splendissimo regalo of letters; in one of which came You, with your huge characters and wide intervals, staring. I would have you to know, I expect you should take a handsome crow-quill when you write to me, and not leave room for a pin's point in four sides of a sheet royal. Do you but find matter, I will find spectacles.

I have more time than I thought, and I will employ it in telling you about a Ball that we were at the other

evening. Figure to yourself a Roman villa; all its little apartments thrown open, and lighted up to the best advantage. At the upper end of the gallery, a fine concert, in which La Diamantina, a famous virtuosa, played on the violin divinely, and sung angelically; Giovannino and Pasqualini (great names in musical story) also performed miraculously. On each side were ranged all the secular grand monde of Rome, the Ambassadors, Princesses, and all that. Among the rest Il Serenissimo Pretendente (as the Mantova gazette calls him) displayed his rueful length of person, with his two young ones, and all his ministry around him. "Poi nacque un grazioso ballo," where the world danced, and I sat in a corner regaling myself with iced fruits, and other pleasant rinfrescatives.

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LETTER XXI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Rome, May 1740.

**M**ATER rosarum, cui teneræ vigent  
 Auræ Favonî, cui Venus it comes  
 Lasciva, Nympharum choreis  
 Et volucrum celebrata cantu!

Dic, non inertem fallere quâ diem  
 Amat sub umbrâ, seu sinit aureum  
     Dormire plectrum, seu reténtat  
     Pierio \* Zephyrinus antro  
 Furore dulci plenus, & immemor  
 Réptantis inter frigora Tusculi  
     Umbrosa, vel colles Amici  
     Palladiæ superantis Albæ.  
 Dilecta Faunio, & capripedum choris  
 - Pineta, testor vos, Anio minax  
     Quæcunque per clivos volutus\*  
     Præcipiti tremefecit amne,  
 Illius altum Tibur, & Æsulæ  
 Audísse sylvas nomen amabiles,  
 .. Illius & gratas Latinis  
     Naiasin ingeminâsse rupes:  
 Nam me Latinæ Naiades uvidâ  
 Vidêre ripâ, quâ niveas levi  
     Tam sæpe lavit rore plumas  
     Dulcè canens Venusinus ales;  
 Mirum! canenti conticuit nemus,  
 Sacrique fontes, et retinent adhuc  
     (Sic Musa jussit) saxa molles  
     Docta modos, veteresque lauri.

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\* He intitled this charming ode, "Ad C. Favonium Zephyri-  
 num," and writ it immediately after his journey to Frascati and  
 the cascades of Tivoli, which he describes in the preceding letter.

Mirare neē tu me citharæ rudem  
 Claudis laborantem numeris: loca  
 Amæna, jucundumque ver in-  
 -compositum docuere carmen;  
 Hærent sub omni nam folio nigri  
 Phœbea lucî (credite) somnia,  
 Argutiusque & lymp̄a & auræ  
 Nescio quid solito loquuntur.

I am to-day just returned from Alba, a good deal fatigued; for you know the Appian is somewhat tiresome\*. We dined at Pompey's; he indeed was gone for a few days to his Tusculan, but, by the care of his Villicus, we made an admirable meal. We had the dugs of a pregnant sow, a peacock, a dish of thrushes, a noble scarus, just fresh from the Tyrrhene, and some conchyliæ of the Lake with garum sauce: For my part I never eat better at Lucullus's table. We drank half a dozen cyathi a-piece of ancient Alban to Pholoë's health; and, after bathing, and playing an hour at ball, we mounted our essedum again, and proceeded up the

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\* However whimsical this humour may appear to some readers, I chose to insert it, as it gives me an opportunity of remarking that Mr. Gray was extremely skilled in the customs of the ancient Romans; and has catalogued, in his common-place book, their various eatables, wines, perfumes, cloaths, medicines, &c. with great precision, referring under every article to passages in the Poets and Historians where their names are mentioned.

mount to the temple. The priests there entertained us with an account of a wonderful shower of birds' eggs, that had fallen two days before, which had no sooner touched the ground, but they were converted into gudgeons; as also that the night past a dreadful voice had been heard out of the Adytum, which spoke Greek during a full half hour, but no body understood it. But quitting my Romanities, to your great joy and mine, let me tell you, in plain English, that we come from Albano. The present town lies within the inclosure of Pompey's Villa in ruins. The Appian way runs through it, by the side of which, a little farther, is a large old tomb, with five pyramids upon it, which the learned suppose to be the burying-place of the family, because they do not know whose it can be else. But the vulgar assure you it is the sepulchre of the Curiatii, and by that name (such is their power) it goes. One drives to Castel Gondolfo, a house of the Pope's, situated on the top of one of the Collinette, that forms a brim to the bason, commonly called the Alban lake. It is seven miles round; and directly opposite to you, on the other side, rises the Mons Albanus, much taller than the rest, along whose side are still discoverable (not to common eyes) certain little ruins of the old Alba longa. They had need be very little, as having been nothing but ruins ever since the days of Tullus Hostilius. On its top is a house of the Constable Colonna's,



where stood the temple of Jupiter Latiælis. At the foot of the hill Gondolfo, are the famous outlets of the lake, built with hewn stone, a mile and a half underground. Livy, you know, amply informs us of the foolish occasion of this expense, and gives me this opportunity of displaying all my erudition, that I may appear considerable in your eyes. This is the prospect from one window of the palace. From another you have the whole Campagna, the City, Antium, and the Tyrrhene sea (twelve miles distant) so distinguishable, that you may see the vessels sailing upon it. All this is charming. Mr. Walpole says, our memory sees more than our eyes in this country. Which is extremely true; since, for realities, Windsor, or Richmond Hill, is infinitely preferable to Albano or Fiescati. I am now at home, and going to the window to tell you it is the most beautiful of Italian nights, which, in truth, are but just begun (so backward has the spring been here, and every where else, they say). There is a moon! there are stars for you! Do not you hear the fountain? Do not you smell the orange flowers? That building yonder is the convent of S. Isidore; and that eminence, with the cypress trees and pines upon it, the top of M. Quirinal. This is all true, and yet my prospect is not two hundred yards in length. We send you some Roman inscriptions to entertain you. The

first two are modern, transcribed from the Vatican library by Mr. Walpole.

Pontifices olim quem fundavere priores,  
 Præcipuâ Sixtus perficit arte tholum \*;  
 Et Sixti tantum se gloria tollit in altum,  
 Quantum se Sixti nobile tollit opus:  
 Magnus honos magni fundamina ponere templi,  
 Sed finem cæptis ponere major honos.

Saxa agit Amphion, Thebana ut mænia condat:  
 Sixtus & immensæ pondera molis agit †.  
 Saxa trahunt ambo longè diversa: sed arte  
 Hæc trahit Amphion; Sixtus & arte trahit.  
 At tantum exsuperat Dircaum Amphiona Sixtus,  
 Quantum hic exsuperat cætera saxa lapis.

Mine is ancient, and I think not less curious. It is exactly transcribed from a sepulchral marble at the villa Giustiniani. I put stops to it, when I understand it.

DIs Manibus  
 Claudiae, Pistes  
 Primus Conjugi

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\* Sixtus V. built the dome of St. Peter's.

† He raised the obelisk in the great area.

Optumae, Sanctae,  
Et Piae, Benemeritate.

Non æquos, Parcae, statuistis stamina vitae.  
 Tam bene compositos potuistis sede tenere.  
 Amissa est conjux. cur ego & ipse moror?  
 Si · bella · esse · mî · iste · mea · vivere · debuit ·  
 Tristia contigerunt qui amissâ conjuge vivo.  
 Nil est tam miserum, quam totam perdere vitam.  
 Nec vita enasci dura peregristis crudelia pensa, sorores,  
 Ruptaque deficiunt in primo munere fusi.  
 O nimis injustæ ter denos dare munus in annos,  
 Deceptus · grātus · fatum · sic · pressit · egestas ·  
 Dum vitam tulero, Primus Pistes lugea conjugium.

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## LETTER XXII.

MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Naples, June 27, 1740.

OUR journey hither was through the most beautiful part of the finest country in the world; and every spot of it, on some account or other, famous for these three thousand years past\*. The season has hitherto been

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\* Mr. Gray wrote a minute description of every thing he saw in this tour from Rome to Naples; as also of the environs of Rome,

just as warm as one would wish it; no unwholesome airs, or violent heats, yet heard of: The people call it a backward year, and are in pain about their corn, wine, and oil; but we, who are neither corn, wine, nor oil, find it very agreeable. Our road was through Velletri, Cisterna, Terracina, Capua, and Aversa, and so to Naples. The minute one leaves his Holiness's dominions, the face of things begins to change from wide uncultivated plains to olive groves and well-tilled fields of corn, intermixed with ranks of elms, every one of which has its vine twining about it, and hanging in festoons between the rows from one tree to another. The great old fig-trees, the oranges in full bloom, and myrtles in every hedge, make one of the delightfulest scenes you can conceive; besides that, the roads are wide, well-kept, and full of passengers, a sight I have not beheld this long time. My wonder still increased upon entering the city, which, I think, for number of people, outdoes both Paris and London. The streets are one continued market, and thronged with populace so much that a coach can hardly pass. The common

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Florence, &c. But as these papers are apparently only memorandums for his own use, I do not think it necessary to print them, although they abound with many uncommon remarks, and pertinent classical quotations. The reader will please to observe throughout this section, that it is not my intention to give Mr. Gray's Travels, but only extracts from the Letters which he writ during his travels.

sort are a jolly lively kind of animals, more industrious than Italians usually are; they work till evening; then take their lute or guitar (for they all play) and walk about the city, or upon the sea-shore with it, to enjoy the fresco. One sees their little brown children jumping about stark-naked, and the bigger ones dancing with castanets, while others play on the cymbal to them. Your maps will show you the situation of Naples; it is on the most lovely bay in the world, and one of the calmest seas: It has many other beauties besides those of nature. We have spent two days in visiting the remarkable places in the country round it, such as the bay of Baiæ, and its remains of antiquity; the lake Avernus, and the Solfatara, Charon's grotto, &c. We have been in the Sybil's cave and many other strange holes under-ground (I only name them, because you may consult Sandys's travels); but the strangest hole I ever was in, has been to-day, at a place called Portici, where his Sicilian Majesty has a country-seat. About a year ago, as they were digging, they discovered some parts of ancient buildings above thirty feet deep in the ground: Curiosity led them on, and they have been digging ever since; the passage they have made, with all its turnings and windings, is now more than a mile long. As you walk, you see parts of an amphitheatre, many houses adorned with marble columns, and incrustated with the same;

the front of a temple, several arched vaults of rooms painted in fresco. Some pieces of painting have been taken out from hence, finer than any thing of the kind before discovered, and with these the king has adorned his palace; also a number of statues, medals, and gems; and more are dug out every day. This is known to be a Roman town\*, that in the Emperor Titus's time was overwhelmed by a furious eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which is hard by. The wood and beams remain so perfect that you may see the grain; but burnt to a coal, and dropping into dust upon the least touch. We were to-day at the foot of that mountain, which at present only smokes a little, where we saw the materials that fed the stream of fire, which about four years since ran down its side. We have but a few days longer to stay here; too little in conscience for such a place. \* \* \*

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\* It should seem, by the omission of its name, that it was not then discovered to be Herculaneum.

## LETTER XXIII.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.*

Florence, July 16, 1740.

AT my return to this city, the day before yesterday, I had the pleasure of finding yours dated June the 9th. The period of our voyages, at least towards the South, is come, as you wish. We have been at Naples, spent nine or ten days there, and returned to Rome, where finding no likelihood of a Pope yet these three months, and quite wearied with the formal assemblies, and little society of that great city, Mr. Walpole determined to return hither to spend the summer, where he imagines he shall pass his time more agreeably than in the tedious expectation of what, when it happens, will only be a great show. For my own part, I give up the thoughts of all that with but little regret; but the city itself I do not part with so easily, which alone has amusements for whole years. However, I have passed through all that most people do, both ancient and modern; what that is you may see, better than I can tell you, in a thousand books. The Conclave we left in greater uncertainty than ever; the more than ordinary liberty they enjoy there, and the unusual cool-

ness of the season, makes the confinement less disagreeable to them than common, and, consequently, maintains them in their irresolution. There have been very high words, one or two (it is said) have come even to blows; two more are dead within this last month, Cenci and Portia; the latter died distracted; and we left another (Altieri) at the extremity: Yet nobody dreams of an election till the latter end of September. All this gives great scandal to all good catholics, and every body talks very freely on the subject. The Pretender (whom you desire an account of) I have had frequent opportunities of seeing at church, at the corso, and other places; but more particularly, and that for a whole night, at a great ball given by Count Patrizii to the Prince and Princess Craon, (who were come to Rome at that time, that he might receive from the hands of the Emperor's minister there the order of the golden fleece) at which he and his two sons were present. They are good fine boys, especially the younger, who has the more spirit of the two, and both danced incessantly all night long. For him, he is a thin ill-made man, extremely tall and awkward, of a most unpromising countenance, a good deal resembling King James the Second, and has extremely the air and look of an idiot, particularly when he laughs or prays. The first he does not often, the latter continually. He lives private enough with his little court



about him, consisting of Lord Dunbar, who manages every thing, and two or three of the Preston Scotch Lords, who would be very glad to make their peace at home.

We happened to be at Naples on Corpus Christi Day, the greatest feast in the year, so had an opportunity of seeing their Sicilian Majesties to advantage. The King walked in the grand procession, and the Queen (being big with child) sat in a balcony. He followed the Host to the church of St. Clara, where high mass was celebrated to a glorious concert of music. They are as ugly a little pair as one can see: She a pale girl, marked with the small-pox; and he a brown boy with a thin face, a huge nose, and as ungain as possible.

We are settled here with Mr. Mann, in a charming apartment; the river Arno runs under our windows, which we can fish out of. The sky is so serene, and the air so temperate, that one continues in the open air all night long in a slight nightgown without any danger; and the marble bridge is the resort of every body; where they hear music, eat iced fruits, and sup by moon-light; though as yet (the season being extremely backward every where) these amusements are not begun. You see we are now coming northward

again, though in no great haste; the Venetian and Milanese territories, and either Germany or the South of France, (according to the turn the war may take) are all that remain for us, that we have not yet seen; as to Loretto, and that part of Italy, we have given over all thoughts of it.

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## LETTER XXIV.

*MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.*

Bond-Street, June 5, 1740.

I Lived at the Temple till I was sick of it: I have just left it, and find myself as much a lawyer as I was when I was in it. It is certain, at least, I may study the law here as well as I could there. My being in chambers did not signify to me a pinch of snuff. They tell me my father was a lawyer, and, as you know, eminent in the profession; and such a circumstance must be of advantage to me. My uncle too makes some figure in Westminster hall; and there's another advantage: Then my grandfather's name would get me many friends. Is it not strange that a young fellow, that might enter the world with so many advantages, will not know his own interest? &c. &c.---What shall I say

in answer to all this? For money, I neither doat upon it nor despise it; it is a necessary stuff enough. For ambition, I do not want that neither; but it is not to sit upon a bench. In short, is it not a disagreeable thing to force one's inclination, especially when one's young? not to mention that one ought to have the strength of a Hercules to go through our common law; which, I am afraid, I have not. Well! but then, say they, if one profession does not suit you, you may choose another more to your inclination. Now I protest I do not yet know my own inclination, and I believe, if that was to be my direction, I should never fix at all: There is no going by a weather-cock.----I could say much more upon this subject; but there is no talking tête-à-tête cross the Alps. Oh, the folly of young men, that never know their own interest! they never grow wise till they are ruined! and then no body pities them, nor helps them.---Dear Gray! consider me in the condition of one that has lived these two years without any person that he can speak freely to. I know it is very seldom that people trouble themselves with the sentiments of those they converse with; so they can chat about trifles, they never care whether your heart aches or no. Are you one of these? I think not. But what right have I to ask you this question? Have we known one another enough, that I should expect or demand sincerity from you? Yes, Gray, I

hope we have; and I have not quite such a mean opinion of myself, as to think I do not deserve it.---But, Signor, is it not time for me to ask something about your further intentions abroad? Where do you propose going next? an in Apuliam? *nam illò si adveneris, tanquam Ulysses, cognosces tuorum neminem.* Vale. So Cicero prophesies in the end of one of his letters \* ---and there I end.

Yours, &c.

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## LETTER XXV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Florence, July 16, 1740.

YOU do yourself and me justice, in imagining that you merit, and that I am capable of sincerity. I have not a thought, or even a weakness, I desire to conceal from you; and consequently on my side deserve to be treated with the same openness of heart. My vanity

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\* This letter (written apparently in much agitation of mind, which Mr. West endeavours to conceal by an unusual carelessness of manner) is chiefly inserted to introduce the answer to it; which appears to me to be replete with delicate feeling, manly sense, and epistolary ease. If the reader should think as highly of it as I do, let me remind him that the writer was not now quite four and twenty years old.

perhaps might make me more reserved towards you, if you were one of the heroic race, superior to all human failings; but as mutual wants are the ties of general society, so are mutual weaknesses of private friendships, supposing them mixt with some proportion of good qualities; for where one may not sometimes blame, one does not much care ever to praise. All this has the air of an introduction designed to soften a very harsh reproof that is to follow; but it is no such matter: I only meant to ask, Why did you change your lodging? Was the air bad, or the situation melancholy? If so, you are quite in the right. Only, is it not putting yourself a little out of the way of a people, with whom it seems necessary to keep up some sort of intercourse and conversation, though but little for your pleasure or entertainment, (yet there are, I believe, such among them as might give you both) at least for your information in that study, which, when I left you, you thought of applying to? for that there is a certain study necessary to be followed, if we mean to be of any use in the world, I take for granted; disagreeable enough, (as most necessities are) but, I am afraid, unavoidable. Into how many branches these studies are divided in England, every body knows; and between that which you and I had pitched upon, and the other two, it was impossible to balance long. Examples shew one that it is not absolutely necessary to

be a blockhead to succeed in this profession. The labour is long, and the elements dry and unentertaining; nor was ever any body (especially those that afterwards made a figure in it) amused, or even not disgusted in the beginning; yet, upon a further acquaintance, there is surely matter for curiosity and reflection. It is strange if, among all that huge mass of words, there be not somewhat intermixed for thought. Laws have been the result of long deliberation, and that not of dull men, but the contrary; and have so close a connection with history, nay, with philosophy itself, that they must partake a little of what they are related to so nearly. Besides, tell me, have you ever made the attempt? Was not you frightened merely with the distant prospect? Had the Gothic character and bulkiness of those volumes (a tenth part of which perhaps it will be no further necessary to consult, than as one does a dictionary) no ill effect upon your eye? Are you sure, if Coke had been printed by Elzevir, and bound in twenty neat pocket volumes, instead of one folio, you should never have taken him up for an hour, as you would a Tully, or drank your tea over him? I know how great an obstacle ill spirits are to resolution. Do you really think, if you rid ten miles every morning, in a week's time you should not entertain much stronger hopes of the Chancellorship, and think it a much more probable thing than you do at present? The advan-

tages you mention are not nothing; our inclinations are more than we imagine in our own power; reason and resolution determine them, and support under many difficulties. To me there hardly appears to be any medium between a public life and a private one; he who prefers the first, must put himself in a way of being serviceable to the rest of mankind, if he has a mind to be of any consequence among them: Nay, he must not refuse being in a certain degree even dependent upon some men who already are so. If he has the good fortune to light on such as will make no ill use of his humility, there is no shame in this: If not, his ambition ought to give place to a reasonable pride, and he should apply to the cultivation of his own mind those abilities which he has not been permitted to use for others' service. Such a private happiness (supposing a small competence of fortune) is almost always in every one's power, and the proper enjoyment of age, as the other is the employment of youth. You are yet young, have some advantages and opportunities, and an undoubted capacity, which you have never yet put to the trial. Set apart a few hours, see how the first year will agree with you, at the end of it you are still the master; if you change your mind, you will only have got the knowledge of a little somewhat that can do no hurt, or give you cause of repentance. If your inclination be not fixed upon any thing else, it is a symptom that you

are not absolutely determined against this, and warns you not to mistake mere indolence for inability. I am sensible there is nothing stronger against what I would persuade you to, than my own practice; which may make you imagine I think not as I speak. Alas! it is not so; but I do not act what I think, and I had rather be the object of your pity, than that you should be that of mine; and, be assured, the advantage I may receive from it, does not diminish my concern in hearing you want some body to converse with freely, whose advice might be of more weight, and always at hand. We have some time since come to the southern period of our voyages; we spent about nine days at Naples. It is the largest and most populous city, as its environs are the most deliciously fertile country, of all Italy. We sailed in the bay of Baiæ, sweated in the Solfatara, and died in the grotto del Cane, as all strangers do; saw the Corpus Christi procession, and the King and the Queen, and the city underground, (which is a wonder I reserve to tell you of another time) and so returned to Rome for another fortnight; left it (left Rome!) and came hither for the summer. You have seen \* an Epistle to Mr. Ashton, that seems to me full of spirit and thought, and a good deal of poetic fire. I would know your opinion. Now I talk of verses, Mr.

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\* The reader will find this in Dodsley's Miscellany, and also amongst Mr. Walpole's Fugitive Pieces.



Walpole and I have frequently wondered you should never mention a certain imitation of Spenser, published last year by a \* namesake of yours, with which we are all enraptured and enmarvailed.

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## LETTER XXVI.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.*

Florence, Aug. 21, N. S. 1740.

**I**T is some time since I have had the pleasure of writing to you, having been upon a little excursion cross the mountains to Bologna. We set out from hence at sunset, passed the Apennines by moon-light, travelling incessantly till we came to Bologna at four in the afternoon next day. There we spent a week agreeably enough, and returned as we came. The day before yesterday arrived the news of a Pope; and I have the mortification of being within four days journey of Rome, and not seeing his coronation, the heats being violent, and the infectious air now at its height. We had an instance, the other day, that it is not only fancy. Two country fellows, strong men, and used to

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\* Gilbert West, Esq. This poem "On the Abuse of Travelling" is also in Dodsley's Miscellany.

the country about Rome, having occasion to come from thence hither, and travelling on foot, as common with them, one died suddenly on the road; the other got hither, but extremely weak, and in a manner stupid; he was carried to the hospital, but died in two days. So, between fear and laziness, we remain here, and must be satisfied with the accounts other people give us of the matter. The new Pope is called Benedict XIV. being created Cardinal by Benedict XIII. the last Pope but one. His name is Lambertini, a noble Bolognese, and Archbishop of that city. When I was first there, I remember to have seen him two or three times; he is a short, fat man, about sixty-five years of age, of a hearty, merry countenance, and likely to live some years. He bears a good character for generosity, affability, and other virtues; and, they say, wants neither knowledge nor capacity. The worst side of him is, that he has a nephew or two; besides a certain young favourite, called Melara, who is said to have had, for some time, the arbitrary disposal of his purse and family. He is reported to have made a little speech to the Cardinals in the Conclave, while they were undetermined about an election, as follows: "Most eminent Lords, here are three Bolognese of different characters, but all equally proper for the Popedom. If it be your pleasures, to pitch upon a Saint, there is Cardinal Gotti; if upon a Politician, there is Aldrovandi; if upon a Booby,

“ here am I.” The Italian is much more expressive, and, indeed, not to be translated; wherefore, if you meet with any body that understands it, you may shew them what he said in the language he spoke it. “ Emin<sup>ssimi</sup>. Sigr<sup>i</sup>. Ci siamo tré, diversi sì, mà tutti idonei al Papato. Se vi piace un Santo, c’ è l’Gotti; se völete una testa scaltra, e Politica, c’ è l’Aldrovandé; se un Coglione, ecco mi!” Cardinal Coscia is restored to his liberty, and, it is said, will be to all his benefices. Corsini (the late Pope’s nephew) as he has had no hand in this election, it is hoped, will be called to account for all his villanous practices. The Pretender, they say, has resigned all his pretensions to his eldest boy, and will accept of the Grand Chancellorship, which is thirty thousand crowns a-year; the pension he has at present is only twenty thousand. I do not affirm the truth of this last article; because, if he does, it is necessary he should take the ecclesiastical habit, and it will sound mighty odd to be called his Majesty the Chancellor.-----So ends my Gazette.

## LETTER XXVII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

Florence, Sept. 25, N. S. 1740.

WHAT I send you now, as long as it is, is but a piece of a poem. It has the advantage of all fragments, to need neither introduction nor conclusion: Besides, if you do not like it, it is but imagining that which went before, and came after, to be infinitely better. Look in Sandys's Travels for the history of Monte Barbaro, and Monte Nuovo. \*

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\* To save the reader trouble, I here insert the passage referred to:—"West of Cicero's Villa stands the eminent Gaurus, a stony and desolate mountain, in which there are diverse obscure caverns, choaked almost with earth, where many have consumed much fruitless industry in searching for treasure. The famous Lucrine Lake extended formerly from Avernus to the aforesaid Gaurus: But is now no other than a little sedgy splash, choaked up by the horrible and astonishing eruption of the new mountain; whereof, as oft as I think, I am easy to credit whatsoever is wonderful. For who here knows not, or who elsewhere will believe, that a mountain should arise, (partly out of a lake and partly out of the sea) in one day and a night, unto such a height as to contend in altitude with the high mountains adjoining? In the year of our Lord 1538, on the 29th of September, when for certain days foregoing the country hereabout was so vexed with perpetual earthquakes, as no one house was left so entire as not to expect an

Nec procul infelix se tollit in æthera Gaurus,  
 Prospiciens vitreum lugenti vertice pontum :  
 Tristior ille diu, & veteri desuetus olivâ  
 Gaurus, pampineæque eheu jam nescius umbræ ;  
 Horrendi tam sæva premit vicinia montis,  
 Attonitumque urget latus, exuritque ferentem.

Nam fama est olim, mediâ dum rura silebant  
 Nocte, Deo victa, & molli perfusa quiete,  
 Infremuisse æquor ponti, auditamque per omnes  
 Latè tellurem surdùm immugire cavernas :  
 Quo sonitu nemora alta tremunt; tremit excita tuto  
 Parthenopæa.sinu, flammantisque ora Vesevi.

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immediate ruin; after that the sea had retired two hundred paces from the shore, (leaving abundance of fish, and springs of fresh water rising in the bottom) this mountain visibly ascended about the second hour of the night, with an hideous roaring, horribly vomiting stones and such store of cinders as overwhelmed all the building thereabout, and the salubrious baths of Tripergula, for so many ages celebrated; consumed the vines to ashes, killing birds and beasts: the fearful inhabitants of Puzzol flying through the dark with their wives and children; naked, defiled, crying out, and detesting their calamities. Manifold mischiefs have they suffered by the barbarous, yet none like this which Nature inflicted.— This new mountain, when newly raised, had a number of issues; at some of them smoking and sometimes flaming; at others disgoring rivalets of hot waters; keeping within a terrible rumbling; and many miserably perished that ventured to descend into the hollowness above. But that hollow on the top is at present an orchard, and the mountain throughout is bereft of its terrors."

*Sandys's Travels, book iv. page 275, 277, and 278.*

At subitò se aperire solum, vastosque recessus  
 Pandere sub pedibus, nigrâque voragine fauces;  
 Tum piceas cinerum glomerare sub æthere nubes  
 Vorticibus rapidis, ardentique imbre procellam.  
 Præcipites fugere feræ, perque avia longè  
 Sylvarum fugit pastor, juga per deserta,  
 Ah, miser! increpitans sæpè altâ voce per umbram  
 Nequicquam natos, creditque audire sequentes.  
 Atque ille excelso rupis de vertice solus  
 Respectans notasque domos, & dulcia regna,  
 Nil usquàm videt infelix præter mare tristi  
 Lumine percussus, & pallentes sulphure campos,  
 Fumumque, flammisque, rotataque turbine saxa.

Quin ubi detonuit fragor, & lux reddita cœlo;  
 Mœstos confluere agricolas, passuque videres  
 Tandem iterum timido deserta requirere tecta:  
 Sperantes, si forte oculis, si forte darentur  
 Uxorum cineres, miserorumve ossa parentum,  
 (Tenuia, sed tanti saltem solatia luctus)  
 Unâ colligere & justâ componere in urnâ.  
 Uxorum nusquam cineres, nusquam ossa parentum  
 (Spem miseram!) assuetosve Lares, aut rura videbunt.  
 Quippe ubi planities campi diffusa jacebat;  
 Mons novus: ille supercilium, frontemque favillâ  
 Incanum ostentans, ambustis cautibus, æquor

Subjectum, stragemque suam, mœsta arva, minaci  
 Despicit imperio, soloque in littore regnat.

Hinc infame loci nomen, multosque per annos  
 Immemor antiquæ laudis, nescire labores  
 Vomeris, & nullo tellus revirescere cultu:  
 Non avium colles, non carmine matutino  
 Pastorum resonare; adcè undique dirus habebat  
 Informes latè horror agros saltusque vacantes.  
 Sæpius et longè detorquens navita proram  
 Monstrabat digito littus, sævæque revolvens  
 Funera narrabat noctis, veteremque ruinam.

Montis adhuc facies manet hirta atque aspera saxis:  
 Sed furor extinctus jamdudum, & flamma quievit,  
 Quæ nascenti aderat; seu fortè bituminis atrî  
 Defluxere olim rivi, atque effœta lacuna  
 Pabula sufficere ardori, viresque recusat;  
 Sive in visceribus meditans incendia jam nunc  
 (Horrendùm) arcanis glomerat genti esse futuræ  
 Exitio, sparsos tacitusque recolligit ignes.

Raro per clivos haud secius ordine vidi  
 Canescentem oleam: longum post tempus amicti  
 Vite virent tumuli; patriamque revisere gaudens  
 Bacchus in assuetis tenerum caput exerit arvis  
 Vix tandem, infidoque audet se credere cœlo.

There was a certain little ode \* set out from Rome, in a letter of recommendation to you, but possibly fell into the enemies' hands, for I never heard of its arrival. It is a little impertinent to inquire after its welfare; but you, that are a father, will excuse a parent's foolish fondness. Last post I received a very diminutive letter: It made excuses for its unentertainingness, very little to the purpose; since it assured me, very strongly, of your esteem; which is to me the thing; all the rest appear but as the *petits agréments*, the garnishing of the dish. P. Bougeant, in his *langage des Bêtes*, fancies that your birds, who continually repeat the same note, say only in plain terms, "Je vous aime, ma chere; ma chere, je vous aime;" and that those of greater genius indeed, with various trills, run divisions upon the subject; but that the *fond*, from whence it all proceeds, is "toujours je vous aime." Now you may, as you find yourself dull or in humour, either take me for a chaffinch or nightingale; sing your plain song, or show your skill in music, but in the bottom let there be, toujours, toujours de l'Amitié,

As to what you call my serious letter; be assured, that your future state is to me entirely indifferent. Do not be angry, but hear me; I mean with respect to my-

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\* The Alcaic Ode inserted in Letter XXI.



self. For whether you be at the top of Fame, or entirely unknown to mankind; at the Council-table, or at Dick's coffee-house; sick and simple, or well and wise; whatever alteration mere accident works in you, (supposing it utterly impossible for it to make any change in your sincerity and honesty, since these are conditions sine quâ non) I do not see any likelihood of my not being yours ever.

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## LETTER XXVIII.

MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.

Florence, Oct. 9, 1740.

**T**HE beginning of next spring is the time determined for our return at furthest; possibly it may be before that time. How the interim will be employed, or what route we shall take, is not so certain. If we remain friends with France, upon leaving this country we shall cross over to Venice, and so return through the cities north of the Po to Genoa; from thence take a felucca to Marseilles, and come back through Paris. If the contrary fall out, which seems not unlikely, we must take the Milanese, and those parts of Italy, in our way to Venicè; from thence pass through the Tyrol into Germany, and come home by the Low-Countries. As

for Florence, it has been gayer than ordinary for this last month, being one round of balls and entertainments, occasioned by the arrival of a great Milanese Lady; for the only thing the Italians shine in, is their reception of strangers. At such times every thing is magnificence: The more remarkable, as in their ordinary course of life they are parsimonious, even to a degree of nastiness. I saw in one of the vastest palaces in Rome (that of Prince Pamfilio) the apartment which he himself inhabited, a bed that most servants in England would disdain to lie in, and furniture much like that of a soph at Cambridge, for convenience and neatness. This man is worth 30,000l. sterling a year. As for eating, there are not two Cardinals in Rome that allow more than six paoli, which is three shillings a day, for the expense of their table: and you may imagine they are still less extravagant here than there. But when they receive a visit from any friend, their houses and persons are set out to the greatest advantage, and appear in all their splendour; it is, indeed, from a motive of vanity, and with the hopes of having it repaid them with interest, whenever they have occasion to return the visit. I call visits going from one city of Italy to another; for it is not so among acquaintance of the same place on common occasions. The new Pope has retrenched the charges of his own table to a sequin (ten shillings) a meal. The applause which all

he says and does meets with, is enough to encourage him really to deserve fame. They say he is an able and honest man; he is reckoned a wit too. The other day, when the Senator of Rome came to wait upon him, at the first compliments he made him the Pope pulled off his cap: His Master of the Ceremonies, who stood by his side, touched him softly, as to warn him that such a condescension was too great in him, and out of all manner of rule: Upon which he turned to him and said, "Oh! I cry you mercy, good Master, it is true, I am but a Novice of a Pope; I have not yet so much as learned ill manners." \* \* \*

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## LETTER XXIX.

*MR. GRAY TO HIS FATHER.*

Florence,\* Jan. 12, 1741.

**W**E still continue constant at Florence, at present one of the dullest cities in Italy. Though it is the middle of the Carnival there are no public diversions; nor

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\* Between the date of this and the foregoing letter, the reader will perceive an interval of full three months: as Mr. Gray saw no new places during this period, his letters were chiefly of news and common occurrences, and are therefore omitted.

is masquerading permitted as yet. The Emperor's obsequies are to be celebrated publicly the 16th of this month; and after that, it is imagined every thing will go on in its usual course. In the mean time, to employ the minds of the populace, the Government has thought fit to bring into the city in a solemn manner, and at a great expense; a famous statue of the Virgin called the Madonna dell'Impruneta, from the place of her residence, which is upon a mountain seven miles off. It never has been practised but at times of public calamity; and was done at present to avert the ill effects of a late great inundation, which it was feared might cause some epidemical distemper. It was introduced a fortnight ago in procession, attended by the Council of Regency, the Senate, the Nobility, and all the Religious Orders, on foot and bare-headed, and so carried to the great church, where it was frequented by an infinite concourse of people from all the country round. Among the rest I paid my devotions almost every day, and saw numbers of people possessed with the devil, who were brought to be exorcised. It was indeed in the evening, and the church-doors were always shut before the ceremonies were finished, so that I could not be eye-witness of the event; but that they were all cured is certain, for one never heard any more of them the next morning. I am to-night just returned from seeing our Lady make her exit with the same solemn-

nities she entered. The show had a finer effect than before; for it was dark; and every body (even those of the mob that could afford it) bore a white-wax flambeau. I believe there were at least five thousand of them, and the march was near three hours in passing before the window. The subject of all this devotion is supposed to be a large Tile with a rude figure in bas-relief upon it. I say supposed, because since the time it was found (for it was found in the earth by ploughing) only two people have seen it; the one was, by good-luck, a saint; the other was struck blind for his presumption; Ever since she has been covered with seven veils; nevertheless, those who approach her tabernacle cast their eyes down, for fear they should spy her through all her veils. Such is the history, as I had it from the Lady of the house where I stood to see her pass; with many other circumstances; all which she firmly believes, and ten thousand besides.

We shall go to Venice in about six weeks, or sooner. A number of German troops are upon their march into this State, in case the King of Naples thinks proper to attack it. It is certain he has asked the Pope's leave for his troops to pass through his country. The Tuscans in general are much discontented, and foolish enough to wish for a Spanish government, or any rather than this. \* \* \* \*

## LETTER XXX.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

Florence, April 21, 1741.

I Know not what degree of satisfaction it will give you to be told that we shall set out from hence the 24th of this month, and not stop above a fortnight at any place in our way. This I feel, that you are the principal pleasure I have to hope for in my own country. Try at least to make me imagine myself not indifferent to you; for I must own I have the vanity of desiring to be esteemed by somebody, and would choose that somebody should be one whom I esteem as much as I do you. As I am recommending myself to your love, methinks I ought to send you my picture (for I am no more what I was, some circumstances excepted, which I hope I need not particularize to you); you must add then, to your former idea, two years of age, a reasonable quantity of dullness, a great deal of silence, and something that rather resembles, than is, thinking; a confused notion of many strange and fine things that have swum before my eyes for some time, a want of love for general society, indeed an inability to it. On the good side you may add a sensibility for

what others feel, and indulgence for their faults or weaknesses, a love of truth, and detestation of every thing else. Then you are to deduct a little impertinence, a little laughter, a great deal of pride, and some spirits. These are all the alterations I know of, you perhaps may find more. Think not that I have been obliged for this reformation of manners to reason or reflection, but to a severer school-mistress, Experience. One has little merit in learning her lessons, for one cannot well help it; but they are more-useful than others, and imprint themselves in the very heart. I find I have been haranguing in the style of the Son of Sirach, so shall finish here, and tell you that our route is settled as follows: First to Bologna for a few days, to hear the Viscontina sing; next to Reggio, where is a Fair. Now, you must know, a Fair here is not a place where one eats gingerbread or rides upon hobby-horses; here are no musical clocks, nor tall Leicestershire women; one has nothing but masquing, gaming, and singing. If you love operas, there will be the most splendid in Italy, four tip-top voices, a new theatre, the Duke and Duchess in all their pomps and vanities. Does not this sound magnificent? Yet is the city of Reggio but one step above Old Brentford. Well; next to Venice by the 11th of May, there to see the old Doge wed the Adriatic Whore. Then to Verona, so to Milan, so to

Marseilles, so to Lyons, so to Paris, so to West, &c.  
in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Eleven months, at different times, have I passed at Florence; and yet (God help me) know not either people or language. Yet the place and the charming prospects demand a poetical farewell, and here it is.

\*\* Oh Fœsulæ amœna

Frigoribus juga, nec nimiùm spirantibus auris!  
Alma quibus Tusci Pallas decus Apennini  
Esse dedit, glaucâque suâ canescere sylvâ!  
Non ego vos posthàc Arni de valle videbo  
Porticibus circum, & candenti cincta coronâ  
Villarum longè nitido consurgere dorso,  
Antiquamve Ædem, et veteres præferre Cupressus  
Mirabor, tectisque super pendentia tecta.

I will send you, too, a pretty little Sonnet of a Sigr.  
Abbate Buondelmonte, with my imitation of it.

Spesso Amor sotto la forma  
D'amistà ride, e s'asconde:  
Poi si mischia, e si confonde  
Con lo sdegno, e col rancor.



In Pietade ei si trasforma;  
 Par trastullo, e par dispetto:  
 Mà nel suo diverso aspetto  
 Sempr'egli, è l'istesso Amor.

Lusit amicitiae interdum velatus amictu,  
 Et benè compositâ veste fefellit Amor.  
 Mox iræ assumpsit cultus, faciemque minantem,  
 Inque odium versus, versus & in lacrymas:  
 Ludentem fuge, nec lacrymanti, aut crede furenti;  
 Idem est dissimili semper in ore Deus.

Here comes a letter from you.—I must defer giving my opinion of \* Pausanias till I can see the whole, and only have said what I did in obedience to your commands. I have spoken with such freedom on this head, that it seems but just you should have your revenge; and therefore I send you the beginning not of an Epic Poem, but of † a Metaphysic one. Poems and Metaphysics (say you, with your spectacles on) are incon-

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\* Some part of a Tragedy under that title, which Mr. West had begun; but I do not find amongst Mr. Gray's papers either the sketch itself, or Mr. Gray's free critique upon it, which he here mentions.

† The beginning of the first book of a didactic Poem, "De Principiis Cogitandi." The fragment which he now sent contained the first 53 lines. The reader will find a further account of his design, and all that he finished of the Poem, in a subsequent section.

sistent things. A metaphysical poem is a contradiction in terms. It is true, but I will go on. It is Latin too to increase the absurdity. It will, I suppose, put you in mind of the man who wrote a treatise of Canon Law in Hexameters. Pray, help me to the description of a mixt mode, and a little Episode about Space.

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Mr. Walpole and Mr. Gray set out from Florence at the time specified in the foregoing Letter. When Mr. Gray left Venice, which he did the middle of July following, he returned home through Padua, Verona, Milan, Turin, and Lyons. From all which places he writ either to his Father or Mother with great punctuality: but merely to inform them of his health and safety; about which (as might be expected) they were now very anxious, as he travelled with only a 'Laquais de Voyage.' These letters do not even mention that he went out of his way to make a second visit to the Grande Chartreuse\*, and these wrote in the Album of the Fathers the following Alcacic † Ode, with which I conclude this Section.

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\* He was at Turin the 15th of August, and began to cross the Alps the next day. On the 25th he reached Lyons; therefore it must have been between these two dates that he made this visit.

† We saw in the 8th and 11th letters how much Mr. Gray was struck with the awful scenery which surrounds the Chartreuse, at a time his mind must have been in a far more tranquil state than when he wrote this excellent Ode. It is marked I think, with all

O D E.

Oh Tu, severi Religio loci,  
Quocunque gaudes nomine (non leve  
Nativa nam certè fluenta  
Numen habet, veteresque sylvas;  
Præsentiorem & conspicimus Deum  
Per invias rupes, fera per juga,  
Clivosque præruptos, sonantes  
Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem;  
Quàm si repòstus sub trabe citreâ  
Fulgeret auro, & Phidiacâ manu)  
Salve vocanti ritè, fesso et  
Da placidam juveni quietem.  
Quod si invidendis sedibus, & frui  
Fortuna sacrâ lege silentii  
Vetat volentem, me resorbens  
In medios violenta fluctus:  
Saltem remoto des, Pater, angulo  
Horas senectæ ducere liberas;  
Tutumque vulgari tumultu  
Surripias, hominumque curis.

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the finest touches of his melancholy Muse, and flows with such an originality of expression, that one can hardly lament he did not honour his own language by making it the vehicle of this noble imagery and pathetic sentiment.



### SECTION III.

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WHEN Mr. Gray returned from abroad, he found his Father's constitution almost entirely worn out by the very severe attacks of the gout, to which he had been for many years subject; and indeed the next return of that distemper was fatal to him. \* This happened about two months after his son reached London.

It has been before observed, that Mr. Philip Gray was of a reserved and indolent temper; he was also morose, unsocial, and obstinate; defects which, if not inherent in his disposition, might probably arise from his bodily complaints. His indolence had led him to neglect the business of † his profession; his obstinacy,

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\* He came to town about the 1st of September, 1741. His Father died the 6th of November following, at the age of sixty-five.

† His business was that which at the time was called a Money-Scrivener; and it may not be amiss to mention, for the singularity of the thing, that Milton's father was of the same profession: But he also had "Music in his soul," and was esteemed a considerable master in that science. Some of his compositions are extant in

to build a country-house at Wanstead, without acquainting either his wife or son with the design (to which he knew they would be very averse) till it was executed. This building, which he undertook late in life, was attended with very considerable expense; which might almost be called so much money thrown away: since, after his death, it was found necessary to sell the house for two thousand pounds less than its original cost. Mr. Gray, therefore, at this time found his patrimony so small, that it would by no means enable him to prosecute the study of the law, without his becoming burthensome to his Mother and Aunt. These two sisters had for many years carried on \* a trade separate from that of Mrs. Gray's husband; by which having acquired what would support them decently for the rest of their lives, they left off business soon after his death, and retired to Stoke, near Windsor, to the house of their other Sister, Mrs. Rogers, lately become the widow of a gentleman † of that name. Both of

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Old Wilby's Set of Airs, and in Ravenscroft's Psalms. The great Poet alludes finely both to the musical genius and the trade of his father in those beautiful hexameters. "Ad Patrem," which are inserted amongst his Latin Poems.

\* They kept a kind of India-warehouse on Cornhill, under the joint names of Gray and Antrobus.

† Mr. Rogers had in the earlier part of his life followed the profession of the law, but retired from business many years before his death. I suppose he was the uncle mentioned in Letter ix. Sect. 1.

them wished Mr. Gray to follow the profession for which he had been originally intended, and would undoubtedly have contributed all in their power to enable him to do it with ease and conveniency. He on his part, though he had taken his resolution of declining it, was too delicate to hurt two persons for whom he had so tender an affection, by peremptorily declaring his real intentions; and therefore changed, or pretended, to change, the line of that study; and, accordingly, the latter end of the subsequent year went to Cambridge to take his Bachelor's Degree in Civil Law.

But the narrowness of his circumstances was not the only thing that distressed him at this period. He had, as we have seen, lost the friendship of Mr. Walpole abroad. He had also lost much time in his travels; a loss which application could not easily retrieve, when so severe and laborious a study as that of the Common Law was to be the object of it; and he well knew that, whatever improvement he might have made in this interval, either in taste or science, such improvement would stand him in little stead with regard to his present situation and exigencies. This was not all: His other friend, Mr. West, he found, on his return, oppressed by sickness and a load of family misfortunes; which, were I fully acquainted with them, it would not be my inclination here to dwell upon. These the sym-

pathizing heart of Mr. Gray made his own. He did all in his power (for he was now with him in London) to soothe the sorrows of his friend, and to try to alleviate them by every office of the purest and most perfect affection: But his cares were vain. The distresses of Mr. West's mind had already too far affected a body, from the first, weak and delicate. His health declined daily, and, therefore, he left Town in March 1742, and, for the benefit of the air, went to David Mitchell's, Esq; at Popes, near Hatfield, Hertfordshire; at whose house he died the 1st of June following.

It is from this place, and from the former date, that this third series of letters commences.

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## LETTER I.\*

*MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.*

**I** Write to make you write, for I have not much to tell you. I have recovered no spirits as yet; but, as I am not displeas'd with my company, I sit purring by the fire-side in my arm-chair with no small satisfaction.

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\* This letter is inserted as introductory only to the answer which follows.



I read too sometimes, and have begun Tacitus, but have not yet read enough to judge of him; only his Pannonian sedition in the first book of his annals, which is just as far as I have got, seemed to me a little tedious. I have no more to say, but to desire you will write letters of a handsome length, and always answer me within a reasonable space of time, which I leave to your discretion.

*Popes, March 28, 1742.*

P. S. The new Dunciad! qu'en pensez vous?

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## LETTER II.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

I Trust to the country, and that easy indolence you say you enjoy there, to restore you your health and spirits; and doubt not but, when the sun grows warm enough to tempt you from your fire-side, you will (like all other things) be the better for his influence. He is my old friend, and an excellent nurse, I assure you. Had it not been for him, life had often been to me intolerable. Pray do not imagine that Tacitus, of all authors in the world, can be tedious. An annalist, you

know, is by no means master of his subject; and I think one may venture to say, that if those Pannonian affairs are tedious in his hands, in another's they would have been insupportable. However, fear not, they will soon be over, and he will make ample amends. A man, who could join the *brilliant* of wit and concise sententiousness peculiar to that age, with the truth and gravity of better times, and the deep reflection and good sense of the best moderns, cannot choose but have something to strike you. Yet what I admire in him above all this, is his detestation of tyranny, and the high spirit of liberty that every now and then breaks out, as it were, whether he would or no. I remember a sentence in his *Agricola* that (concise as it is) I always admired for saying much in a little compass. He speaks of Domitian, who upon seeing the last will of that General, where he had made him Coheir with his Wife and Daughter, "Satis constabat lætatum eum, velut honore, judicioque: tam cæca & corrupta mens assiduis adulationibus erat, ut nesciret a bono patre non scribi hæredem, nisi malum principem."

As to the *Dunciad*, it is greatly admired: The Genii of Operas and Schools, with their attendants, the pleasures of the Virtuosos and Florists, and the yawn of dullness in the end, are as fine as any thing he has written. The *Metaphysicians'* part is to me the worst; and here

and there a few ill-expressed lines, and some hardly intelligible.

I take the liberty of sending you a long speech of Agrippina; much too long, but I could be glad you would retrench it. Aeronia, you may remember, had been giving quiet counsels. I fancy, if it ever be finished, it will be in the nature of Nat. Lee's *Bedlam Tragedy*, which had twenty-five acts and some old scenes.

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The speech herewith sent to Mr. West was the concluding one of the first scene of a tragedy, which I believe was begun the preceding winter. The *Britannicus* of Mr. Racine, I know was one of Mr. Gray's most favourite plays; and the admirable manner in which I have heard him say that he saw it represented at Paris\*, seems to have led him to choose the death of Agrippina for this his first and only effort in the drama. The execution of it also, as far as it goes, is so very much in Racine's taste, that I suspect, if that great poet had been born an Englishman, he would have written precisely in the same style and manner. However, as there is at present in this nation a general prejudice against declamatory plays, I agree with a

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\* By Mademoiselle Dumesnil.

learned friend, who perused the manuscript, that this fragment will be little relished by the many; yet the admirable strokes of nature and character with which it abounds, and the majesty of its diction, prevent me from withholding from the few, who I expect will relish it, so great a curiosity (to call it nothing more) as part of a tragedy written by Mr. Gray. These persons well know, that till style and sentiment be a little more regarded, mere action and passion will never secure reputation to the Author, whatever they may do to the Actor. It is the business of the one "to strut and fret his hour upon the stage;" and if he frêts and struts enough, he is sure to find his reward in the plaudit of an upper gallery; but the other ought to have some regard to the cooler judgment of the closet: For I will be bold to say, that if Shakespeare himself had not written a multitude of passages which please there as much as they do on the stage, his reputation would not stand so universally high as it does at present. Many of these passages, to the shame of our theatrical taste, are omitted constantly in the representation: But I say not this from conviction that the mode of writing, which Mr. Gray pursued, is the best for dramatic purposes. I think myself, what I have asserted elsewhere\*, that a medium between the French and English taste.

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\* See Letters prefixt to Elfrida, particularly Letter II.

would be preferable to either; and yet this medium, if hit with the greatest nicety, would fail of success on our theatre, and that for a very obvious reason. Actors (I speak of the troop collectively) must all learn to speak as well as act, in order to do justice to such a drama.

But let me hasten to give the reader what little insight I can into Mr. Gray's plan, as I find, and select it from two detached papers. The Title and Dramatis Personæ are as follow :

### AGRIPPINA:

A TRAGEDY.

#### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AGRIPPINA, the Empress mother.

NERO, the Emperor.

POPPÆA, believed to be in love with OTHO.

OTHO, a young man of quality, in love with POPPÆA.

SENECA, the Emperor's preceptor.

ANICETUS, Captain of the guards.

DEMETRIUS, the Cynic, friend to SENECA.

ACERONIA, Confidant to AGRIPPINA.

SCENE.—*The Emperor's Villa at Baiæ.*

The argument drawn out by him, in these two papers, under the idea of a plot and under-plot, I shall

here unite; as it will tend to show that the action itself was possest of sufficient unity.

The drama opens with the indignation of Agrippina, at receiving her son's orders from Anicetus to remove from Baiæ, and to have her guard taken from her. At this time Otho having conveyed Poppæa from the house of her husband Rufus Crispinus, brings her to Baiæ, where he means to conceal her among the croud; or, if his fraud is discovered, to have recourse to the Emperor's authority; but, knowing the lawless temper of Nero, he determines not to have recourse to that expedient, but on the utmost necessity. In the mean time he commits her to the care of Anicetus, whom he takes to be his friend, and in whose age he thinks he may safely confide. Nero is not yet come to Baiæ; but Seneca, whom he sends before him, informs Agrippina of the accusation concerning Rubellius Plancus, and desires her to clear herself, which she does briefly; but demands to see her son, who, on his arrival, acquits her of all suspicion, and restores her to her honours. In the mean while Anicetus, to whose care Poppæa had been entrusted by Otho, contrives the following plot to ruin Agrippina: He betrays his trust to Otho, and brings Nero, as it were by chance, to the sight of the beautiful Poppæa; the Emperor is immediately struck with her charms, and she, by a feigned resistance, in-

creases his passion; tho', in reality, she is from the first dazzled with the prospect of empire, and forgets Otho: She therefore joins with Anicetus in his design of ruining Agrippina, soon perceiving that it will be for her interest. Otho hearing that the Emperor had seen Poppæa, is much enraged; but not knowing that this interview was obtained thro' the treachery of Anicetus, is readily persuaded by him to see Agrippina in secret, and acquaint her with his fears that her son Nero would marry Poppæa. Agrippina, to support her own power, and to wean the Emperor from the love of Poppæa, gives Otho encouragement, and promises to support him. Anicetus secretly introduces Nero to hear their discourse; who resolves immediately on his mother's death, and, by Anicetus's means, to destroy her by drowning. A solemn feast, in honour of their reconciliation, is to be made; after which she being to go by sea to Bauli, the ship is so contrived as to sink or crush her; she escapes by accident, and returns to Baiæ. In this interval, Otho has an interview with Poppæa; and being duped a second time by Anicetus and her, determines to fly with her into Greece, by means of a vessel which is to be furnished by Anicetus; but he, pretending to remove Poppæa on board in the night, conveys her to Nero's apartment: She there encourages and determines Nero to banish Otho, and finish the horrid deed he had attempted on his

mother. Anicetus undertakes to execute his resolves; and, under pretence of a plot upon the Emperor's life, is sent with a guard to murder Agrippina, who is still at Baïæ in imminent fear, and irresolute how to conduct herself. The account of her death, and the Emperor's horror and fruitless remorse, finishes the drama.

I refer the reader to the 13th and 14th books of the annals of Tacitus for the facts on which this story is founded: By turning to that author, he will easily see how far the poet thought it necessary to deviate from the truth of history. I shall only further observe, that as such a fable could not possibly admit of any good character, it is terror only and not pity that could be excited by this tragedy, had it been completed. Yet it was surely capable of exciting this passion in a supreme degree, if, what the critics tell us be true, that crimes, which illustrious persons commit, affect us from the very circumstance of their rank, because we unite with that our fears for the public weal.



## ACT I.--SCENE I.

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*AGRIPPINA, ACERONIA,*

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AGRIPPINA.

"TIS well, begone! your errand is perform'd:

*[Speaks as to Anicetus entering.]*

The message needs no comment. Tell your master,  
 His mother shall obey him. Say you saw her  
 Yielding due reverence to his high command:  
 Alone, unguarded, and without a Lictor,  
 As fits the daughter of Germanicus.  
 Say, she retired to Antium; there to tend  
 Her household cares, a woman's best employment.  
 What if you add, how she turn'd pale, and trembled;  
 You think, you spied a tear stand in her eye,  
 And would have drop'd, but that her pride restrain'd it?  
 (Go! you can paint it well) 'twill profit you,  
 And please the stripling. Yet 'twould dash his joy  
 To hear the spirit of Britannicus  
 Yet walks on earth; at least there are who know

Without a spell to raise, and bid it fire  
 A thousand haughty hearts, unus'd to shake  
 When a boy frowns, nor to be lur'd with smiles  
 To taste of hollow kindness, or partake  
 His hospitable board: They are aware  
 Of th' unpledg'd bowl, they love not Aconite.

## ACERONIA.

He's gone; and much I hope these walls alone,  
 And the mute air are privy to your passion.  
 Forgive your servant's fears, who sees the danger  
 Which fierce resentment cannot fail to raise  
 In haughty youth, and irritated power.

## AGRIPPINA.

And dost thou talk to me, to me, of danger,  
 Of haughty youth, and irritated power,  
 To her that gave it being, her that arm'd  
 This painted Jove, and taught his novice hand  
 To aim the forked bolt; while he stood trembling,  
 Scar'd at the sound, and dazzled with its brightness?

'Tis like, thou hast forgot, when yet a stranger  
 To adoration, to the grateful steam  
 Of flattery's incense, and obsequious vows  
 From voluntary realms, a puny boy,  
 Deck'd with no other lustre, than the blood  
 Of Agrippina's race, he liv'd unknown

To fame, or fortune; haply eyed at distance  
 Some edileship, ambitious of the power  
 To judge of weights, and measures; scarcely dar'd  
 On expectation's strongest wing to soar  
 High as the consulate, that empty shade  
 Of long-forgotten liberty: When I  
 Oped his young eye to bear the blaze of greatness;  
 Shew'd him, where empire tower'd, and bad him strike  
 The noble quarry. Gods! then was the time  
 To shrink from danger; fear might then have worn  
 The mask of prudence: but a heart like mine,  
 A heart that glows with the pure Julian fire,  
 If bright Ambition from her craggy seat  
 Display the radiant prize, will mount undaunted,  
 Gain the rough heights, and grasp the dangerous honour.

## ACERONIA.

Thro' various life I have pursued your steps,  
 Have seen your soul, and wonder'd at its daring:  
 Hence rise my fears. Nor am I yet to learn  
 How vast the debt of gratitude, which Nero  
 To such a mother owes; the world, you gave him,  
 Suffices not to pay the obligation.

I well remember too (for I was present)  
 When in a secret and dead hour of night,  
 Due sacrifice perform'd with barb'rous rites  
 Of mutter'd charms, and solemn invocation,

You bad the Magi call the dreadful powers,  
 That read futurity, to know the fate  
 Impending o'er your son: Their answer was,  
 If the son reign, the mother perishes.  
 Perish (you cry'd) the mother! reign the son!  
 He reigns, the rest is heav'n's; who oft has bad,  
 Ev'n when its will seem'd wrote in lines of blood,  
 Th' unthought event disclose a whiter meaning.  
 Think too how oft in weak and sickly minds  
 The sweets of kindness lavishly indulg'd  
 Rankle to gall; and benefits too great  
 To be repaid, sit heavy on the soul,  
 As unrequited wrongs. The willing homage  
 Of prostrate Rome, the senate's joint applause,  
 The riches of the earth, the train of pleasures,  
 That wait on youth, and arbitrary sway;  
 These were your gift, and with them you bestow'd  
 The very power he has to be ungrateful.

AGRIPPINA.

Thus ever grave, and undisturb'd reflection  
 Pours its cool dictates in the madding ear  
 Of rage, and thinks to quench the fire it feels not.  
 Say'st thou I must be cautious, must be silent,  
 And tremble at the phantom I have rais'd?  
 Carry to him thy timid counsels. He  
 Perchance may heed 'em: Tell him too, that one,

Who had such liberal power to give, may still  
 With equal power resume that gift, and raise  
 A tempest, that shall shake her own creation  
 To its original atoms---tell me! say  
 This mighty Emperor, this dreaded Hero,  
 Has he beheld the glittering front of war?  
 Knows his soft ear the Trumpet's thrilling voice,  
 And outcry of the battle? Have his limbs  
 Sweat under iron harness? Is he not  
 The silken son of dalliance, nurs'd in Ease  
 And Pleasure's flowery lap?---Rubellius lives,  
 And Sylla has his friends, tho' school'd by fear  
 To bow the supple knee, and court the times  
 With shows of fair obeisance; and a call,  
 Like mine, might serve belike to wake pretensions  
 Drowsier than theirs, who boast the genuine blood  
 Of our imperial house.

## ACERONIA.

Did I not wish to check this dangerous passion,  
 I might remind my mistress that her nod  
 Can rouse eight hardy legions, wont to stem  
 With stubborn nerves the tide, and face the rigour  
 Of bleak Germania's snows. Four, not less brave,  
 That in Armenia quell the Parthian force  
 Under the warlike Corbulo, by you  
 Mark'd for their leader: These, by ties confirm'd,

Of old respect and gratitude, are yours.  
 Surely the Masians too, and those of Egypt,  
 Have not forgot your sire: The eye of Rome  
 And the Prætorian camp have long rever'd,  
 With custom'd awe, the daughter, sister, wife,  
 And mother of their Cæsars.

## AGRIPPINA.

Ha! by Juno,  
 It bears a noble semblance. On this base  
 My great revenge shall rise; or say we sound  
 The trump of liberty; there will not want,  
 Even in the servile senate, ears to own  
 Her spirit-stirring voice; Soranus there,  
 And Cassius; Vetus too, and Thræsea, -  
 Minds of the antique cast, rough, stubborn souls,  
 That struggle with the yoke. How shall the spark  
 Unquenchable, that glows within their breasts,  
 Blaze into freedom, when the idle herd  
 (Slaves from the womb, created but to stare,  
 And bellow in the Circus) yet will start,  
 And shake 'em at the name of liberty,  
 Stung by a senseless word, a vain tradition,  
 As there were magic in it? wrinkled beldams  
 Teach it their grandchildren, as somewhat rare  
 That anciently appear'd, but when, extends  
 Beyond their chronicle--oh! 'tis a cause

To arm the hand of childhood, and retrace  
The slacken'd sinews of time-wearied age.

Yes, we may meet, ingrateful boy, we may!  
Again the buried genius of old Rome  
Shall from the dust uprear his reverend head,  
Rous'd by the shout of millions: There before  
His high tribunal thou and I appear.  
Let majesty sit on thy awful brow,  
And lighten from thy eye: Around thee call  
The gilded swarm that wantons in the sunshine  
Of thy full favour; Seneca be there  
In gorgeous phrase of labour'd eloquence  
To dress thy plea, and Burrhus strengthen it  
With his plain soldier's oath, and honest seeming.  
Against thee, liberty and Agrippina:  
The world, the prize; and fair befall the victors.

But soft! why do I waste the fruitless hours  
In threats unexecuted? Haste thee, fly  
These hated walls, that seem to mock my shame,  
And cast me forth in duty to their lord.

ACERONIA.

'Tis time we go, the sun is high advanc'd,  
And, ere mid-day, Nero will come to Baiæ.

AGRIPPINA.

My thought aches at him; not the basilisk

More deadly to the sight, than is to me  
 The cool injurious eye of frozen kindness.  
 I will not meet its poison. Let him feel  
 Before he sees me.

## ACERONIA.

Why then stays my sovereign,  
 Where he so soon may----

## AGRIPPINA.

Yes, I will be gone,  
 But not to Antium—all shall be confess'd,  
 Whate'er the frivolous tongue of giddy fame  
 Has spread among the crowd; things, that but whisper'd  
 Have arch'd the hearer's brow, and riveted  
 His eyes in fearful extasy: No matter  
 What; so't be strange, and dreadful.—Sorceries,  
 Assassinations, poisonings—the deeper  
 My guilt, the blacker his ingratitude.

And you, ye manes of ambition's victims,  
 Enshrined Claudius, with the pitied ghosts  
 Of the Syllani, doom'd to early death,  
 (Ye unavailing horrors, fruitless crimes!)  
 If from the realms of night my voice ye hear,  
 In lieu of penitence, and vain remorse,  
 Accept my vengeance. Tho' by me ye bled,  
 He was the cause. My love, my fears for him



Dried the soft springs of pity in my heart,  
 And froze them up with deadly cruelty.  
 Yet if your injur'd shades demand my fate,  
 If murder cries for murder, blood for blood,  
 Let me not fall alone: but crush his pride,  
 And sink the traitor in his mother's ruin.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*OTHO, POPPÆA.*

OTHO.

Thus far we're safe. Thanks to the rosy queen  
 Of amorous thefts: And had her wanton son  
 Lent us his wings, we could not have beguil'd  
 With more elusive speed the dazzled sight  
 Of wakeful jealousy. Be gay securely;  
 Dispell, my fair, with smiles, the tim'rous cloud  
 That hangs on thy clear brow. So Helen look'd,  
 So her white neck reclin'd, so was she borne  
 By the young Trojan to his gilded bark  
 With fond reluctance, yielding modesty,  
 And oft reverted eye, as if she knew not  
 Whether she fear'd, or wish'd to be pursued.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LETTER III.

*MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.*

Pope's, April 4, 1742.

I Own in general I think Aprippina's speech too long\*; but how to retrench it, I know not: But I have something else to say, and that is in relation to the style, which appears to me too antiquated. Racine was of another opinion; he no where gives you the phrases of Ronsard: His language is the language of the times; and that of the purest sort; so that his French is reckoned a standard. I will not decide what style is fit for our English stage; but I should rather choose one that bordered upon Cato, than upon Shakespeare. One may imitate (if one can) Shakespeare's manner, his surprising strokes of true nature, his expressive force in painting characters, and all his other beauties; preserving at the same time our own language. Were Shakespeare alive now, he would write a different style

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\* The Editor has obviated this objection, not by retrenching, but by putting part of it into the mouth of Aconia, and by breaking it in a few other places. Originally it was one continued speech from the line "Thus ever grave and undisturbed Reflection" to the end of the scene; which was undoubtedly too long for the lungs of any Actress.

from what he did. These are my sentiments upon these matters: Perhaps I am wrong, for I am neither a Tarpa, nor am I quite an Aristarchus. You see I write freely both of you and Shakespeare; but it is as good as writing not freely, where you know it is acceptable.

I have been tormented within this week with a most violent cough; for when once it sets up its note, it will go on, cough after cough, shaking and tearing me for half an hour together; and then it leaves me in a great sweat, as much fatigued as if I had been labouring at the plough. All this description of my cough in prose, is only to introduce another description of it in verse, perhaps not worth your perusal; but it is very short, and besides has this remarkable in it, that it was the production of four o'clock in the morning, while I lay in my bed tossing and coughing, and all unable to sleep.

*Ante omnes morbos importunissima tussis,  
 Quâ durare datur, traxitque sub ilia vires:  
 Dura etenim versans imo sub pectore regna,  
 Perpetuo exercet teneras luctamine costas,  
 Oraque distort, vocemque immutat anhelam:  
 Nec cessare locus: sed sævo concita motu*

Molle domat latus, & corpus labor omne fatigat;  
 Unde molesta dies, noctemque insomnia turbant.  
 Nec Tua, si mecum Comes hic jucundus adesses,  
 Verba juvare queant, aut hunc lenire dolorem  
 Sufficiant tua vox dulcis, nec vultus amatus.

Do not mistake me, I do not condemn Tacitus: I was then inclined to find him tedious: The German sedition sufficiently made up for it; and the speech of Germanicus, by which he reclaims his soldiers, is quite masterly. Your New Dunciad I have no conception of. I shall be too late for our dinner if I write any more.

Yours.

#### LETTER IV.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

London, April, Thursday.

**Y**OU are the first who ever made a Muse of a Cough; to me it seems a much more easy task to versify in one's sleep, (that indeed you were of old famous for\*) than for want of it. Not the wakeful nightingale

\* I suppose at Eton School.

(when she had a cough) ever sung so sweetly. I give you thanks for your warble, and wish you could sing yourself to rest. These wicked remains of your illness will sure give way to warm weather and gentle exercise; which I hope you will not omit as the season advances. Whatever low spirits and indolence, the effect of them, may advise to the contrary, I pray you add five steps to your walk daily for my sake; by the help of which, in a month's time, I propose to set you on horseback.

I talked of the *Dunciad* as concluding you had seen it; if you have not, do you choose I should get and send it to you? I have myself, upon your recommendation, been reading Joseph Andrews. The incidents are ill laid and without invention; but the characters have a great deal of nature, which always pleases even in her lowest shapes. Parson Adams is perfectly well; so is Mrs. Slipslop, and the story of Wilson; and throughout he shews himself well read in Stage-Coaches, Country Squires, Inns, and Inns of Court. His reflections upon high people and low people, and misses and masters, are very good. However the exaltedness of some minds (or rather as I shrewdly suspect their insipidity and want of feeling or observation) may make them insensible to these light things, (I mean

such as characterize and paint nature) yet surely they are as weighty and much more useful than your graye discourses upon the mind \*, the passions, and what not. Now as the paradisaical pleasures † of the Mahometans consist in playing upon the flute and lying with Houris, be mine to read eternal new romances of Marivaux and Crebillon.

You are very good in giving yourself the trouble to read and find fault with my long harangues. Your freedom (as you call it) has so little need of apologies, that I should scarce excuse your treating me any otherwise; which, whatever compliment it might be to my vanity, would be making a very ill one to my understanding. As to matter of style, I have this to say: The language of the age ‡ is never the language of poetry;

\* He seems here to glance at Hutchinson, the disciple of Shaftsbury: Of whom he had not a much better opinion, than of his master.

† Whimsically put.—But what shall we say of the present taste of the French, when a writer whom Mr. Gray so justly esteemed as M. Marivaux is now held in such contempt, that *Marivauder* is a fashionable phrase amongst them, and signifies neither more nor less, than our own fashionable phrase of *prosing*? As to Crebillon, 'twas his "*Egaremens du Cœur & de l'Esprit*" that our author chiefly esteemed; he had not, I believe, at this time published his more licentious pieces.

‡ Nothing can be more just than this observation; and nothing

except among the French, whose verse, where the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose. Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself; to which almost every one, that has written, has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives: Nay, sometimes words of their own composition or invention. Shakespeare and Milton have been great creators this way; and no one more licentious than Pope or Dryden, who perpetually borrow expressions from the former. Let me give you some instances from Dryden, whom every body reckons a great master of our poetical tongue.— Full of *museful mopeings*—unlike the *trim* of love—a pleasant *beverage*—a *roundelay* of love—stood silent in his *mood*—with knots and *knares* deformed—his *ireful mood*—in proud *array*—his *boon* was granted—and *disarray* and shameful rout—*wayward* but wise—*furbished* for the field—the *foiled dodderd* oaks—*disherited*—*smouldring* flames—*retchless* of laws—*crones* old and ugly—the *beldam* at his side—the *grandam-hag*—*villanize* his father's fame.—But they are infinite: And our language not being a settled thing (like the French) has an undoubted right to words of an hundred years

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more likely to preserve our poetry from falling into insipidity, than pursuing the rules here laid down for supporting the diction of it: Particularly with respect to the Drama.

old, provided antiquity have not rendered them unintelligible. In truth, Shakespeare's language is one of his principal beauties; and he has no less advantage over your Addison and Rowes in this, than in those other great excellencies you mention. Every word in him is a picture. Pray put me the following lines into the tongue of our modern Dramatics:

But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,  
 Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass:  
 I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty  
 To strut before a wanton ambling nymph:  
 I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,  
 Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,  
 Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time  
 Into this breathing world, scarce half made up---

And what follows. To me they appear untranslatable; and if this be the case, our language is greatly degenerated. However, the affectation of imitating Shakespeare may doubtless be carried too far; and is no sort of excuse for sentiments ill-suited, or speeches ill-timed, which I believe is a little the case with me. I guess the most faulty expressions may be these---*silken son of dalliance*---*drowsier* pretensions---*wrinkled bel-dams*---*arched* the hearer's brow and *riveted* his eyes in *fearful extasie*. These are easily altered or omitted: and indeed if the thoughts be wrong or superfluous, there



is nothing easier than to leave out the whole. The first ten or twelve lines are, I believe, the best\*; and as for the rest, I was betrayed into a good deal of it by Tacitus; only what he has said in five words, I imagine I have said in fifty lines: Such is the misfortune of imitating the inimitable. Now, if you are of my opinion, una litura may do the business, better than a dozen; and you need not fear unravelling my web. I am a sort of spider; and have little else to do but spin it over again, or creep to some other place and spin there. Alas! for one who has nothing to do but amuse himself, I believe my amusements are as little amusing as most folks. But no matter; it makes the hours pass; and is better than *ἡ ἀμαθία καὶ ἀμυσία καταβιώναι.*

Adieu.

## LETTER V.

MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

**T**O begin with the conclusion of your letter, which is Greek, I desire that you will quarrel no more with your manner of passing your time. In my opinion it is irreproachable, especially as it produces such excel-

\* The lines which he means here are from—*thus exer grate and undisturb'd reflection—to Rubellius livcs.* For the part of the scene, which he sent in his former letter, began there.

lent fruit; and if I, like a saucy bird, must be pecking at it, you ought to consider that it is because I like it. No una litura I beg you, no unravelling of your web, dear Sir! only pursue it a little further, and then one shall be able to judge of it a little better. You know the crisis of a play is in the first act; its damnation or salvation wholly rests there. But till that first act is over, every body suspends his vote; so how do you think I can form, as yet, any just idea of the speeches in regard to their length or shortness? The connection and symmetry of such little parts with one another, must naturally escape me, as not having the plan of the whole in my head; neither can I decide about the thoughts whether they are wrong or superfluous; they may have some future tendency which I perceive not. The style only was free to me, and there I find we are pretty much of the same sentiment: For you say the affectation of imitating Shakespeare may doubtless be carried too far; I say as much and no more. For old words we know are old gold, provided they are well chosen. Whatever Ennius was, I do not consider Shakespeare as a dunghill in the least: On the contrary, he is a mine of ancient ore, where all our great modern poets have found their advantage. I do not know how it is; but his old expressions\* have

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\* Shakespeare's energy does not arise so much from these old expressions, (most of which were not old in his time) but from his

more energy in them than ours, and are even more adapted to poetry; certainly, where they are judiciously and sparingly inserted, they add a certain grace to the composition; in the same manner as Poussin gave a beauty to his pictures by his knowledge in the ancient proportions: But should he, or any other painter, carry the imitation too far, and neglect that best of models Nature, I am afraid it would prove a very flat performance. To finish this long criticism: I have this further notion about old words revived, (is not this a pretty way of finishing?) I think them of excellent use in tales; they add a certain drollery to the comic, and a romantic gravity to the serious, which are both charming in their kind; and this way of charming Dryden understood very well. One need only read Milton to acknowledge the dignity they give the Epic. But now comes my opinion that they ought to be used in Tragedy more sparingly, than in most kinds of poetry. Tragedy is designed for public representation, and what is designed for that should be certainly most intelligible. I believe half the audience that come to

artificial management of them. This artifice in the great Poet is developed with much exactness by Dr. Hurd, in his excellent note on this passage in Horace's Ep. ad Pisones.

Dixeris egregiè, notum si callida verbum  
Reddiderit junctura novum.

*See Hurd's Horace, vol. 1st, Edit. 4th, p. 49.*

Shakespeare's plays do not understand the half of what they hear.---But finissons enfin.---Yet one word more.--- You think the ten or twelve first lines the best, now I am for the fourteen last \*; add, that they contain not one word of ancientry.

I rejoice you found amusement in Joseph Andrews. But then I think your conceptions of Paradise a little upon the Bergerac. Les Lettres du Seraphim R. a Madame la Cherubinesse de Q. What a piece of extravagance would there be!

And now you must know that my body continues weak and enervate. And for my animal spirits they are in perpetual fluctuation: Some whole days I have no relish, no attention for any thing; at other times I revive, and am capable of writing a long letter, as you see; and though I do not write speeches, yet I translate them. When you understand what speech, you will own that it is a bold and perhaps a dull attempt. In three words, it is prose, it is from Tacitus, it is of Germanicus. Peruse, perpend, pronounce †.

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\* He means the conclusion of the first scene.—But here and throughout his criticism on old words, he is not so consistent as his correspondent; for he here insists that *all* ancientry should be struck out, and in a former passage he admits it may be used sparingly.

† This speech I omit to print, as I have generally avoided to publish mere translations either of Mr. Gray or his friend.

## LETTER VI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

London, April 1742.

I Should not have failed to answer your Letter immediately, but I went out of town for a little while, which hinderéd me. Its length (besides the pleasure naturally accompanying a long letter from you) affords me a new one, when I think it is a symptom of the recovery of your health, and flatter myself that your bodily strength returns in proportion. Pray do not forget to mention the progress you make continually. As to Agrippina, I begin to be of your opinion; and find myself (as women are of their children) less enamoured of my productions the older they grow. \* She is laid up

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\* He never after awakened her; and I believe this was occasioned by the strictures which his friend had made on his dramatic style; which (though he did not think them well founded, as they certainly were not) had an effect which Mr. West, we may believe, did not intend them to have. I remember some years after I was also the innocent cause of his delaying to finish his fine ode on the progress of poetry. I told him, on reading the part he shewed me, that "tho' I admired it greatly, and thought that it breathed the very spirit of Pindar, yet I suspected it would by no means hit the public taste." Finding afterwards that he did not proceed in finishing it, I often expostulated with him on the subject; but he always replied, "No, you have thrown cold water upon it." I

to sleep till next summer; so 'bid her good night. I think you have translated Tacitus very justly, that is, freely; and accommodated his thoughts to the turn and genius of our language; which, though I commend your judgment, is no commendation of the English tongue, which is too diffuse, and daily grows more and more enervate. One shall never be more sensible of this, than in turning an Author like Tacitus. I have been trying it in some parts of Thucydides, (who has a little resemblance of him in his conciseness) and endeavoured to do it closely, but found it produced mere nonsense. If you have any inclination to see what figure Tacitus makes in Italian, I have a Tuscan translation of Davanzati, much esteemed in Italy; and will send you the same speech you sent me; that is, if you care for it. In the mean time accept of \* Propertius. \* \* \*

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mention this little anecdote, to shew how much the opinion of a friend, even when it did not convince his judgment, affected his inclination.

\* A translation of the 1st elegy of the 2d book in English rhyme; omitted for the reason given in the last note but one.

## LETTER VII.

MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

Pope, May 5, 1742.

WITHOUT any preface I come to your verses, which I read over and over with excessive pleasure, and which are at least as good as Propertius. I am only sorry you follow the blunders of Broukhusius, all whose insertions are nonsense. I have some objections to your antiquated words, and am also an enemy to Alexandrines; at least I do not like them in Elegy. But after all, I admire your translation so extremely, that I cannot help repeating I long to shew you some little errors you are fallen into by following Broukhusius\*. \*\* Were I with you now, and Propertius with your verses lay upon the table between us, I could discuss this point in a moment; but there is nothing so tiresome as spinning out a criticism in a letter; doubts arise, and explanations follow, till there swells out at least a volume of undigested observations; and all because you are not with him whom you want to convince. Read only the Letters between Pope and Crom-

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\* I have omitted here a paragraph or two, in which different lines of the Elegy were quoted, because I had previously omitted the translation of it.

well in proof of this; they dispute without end. Are you aware now that I have an interest all this while in banishing Criticism from our correspondence? Indeed I have; for I am going to write down a little Ode (if it deserves the name) for your perusal, which I am afraid will hardly stand that test. Nevertheless I leave you at your full liberty; so here it follows.

## O D E.

Dear Gray, that always in my heart  
 Possessest far the better part,  
 What mean these sudden blasts that rise  
 And drive the Zephyrs from the skies?  
 O join with mine thy tuneful lay,  
 And invoke the tardy May.

Come, fairest Nymph, resume thy reign!  
 Bring all the Graces in thy train!  
 With balmy breath, and flowery tread,  
 Rise from thy soft ambrosial bed;  
 Where, in elysian slumber bound,  
 Embow'ring myrtles veil thee round.

Awake, in all thy glories drest,  
 Recall the Zephyrs from the west;  
 Restore the sun, revive the skies,  
 At mine, and Nature's call, arise!



Great Nature's self upbraids thy stay,  
And misses her accustom'd May.

See! all her works demand thy aid;  
The labours of Pomona fade:  
A plaint is heard from ev'ry tree;  
Each budding flow'ret calls for thee;  
The birds forget to love and sing;  
With storms alone the forests ring.

Come then, with Pleasure at thy side,  
Diffuse thy vernal spirit wide;  
Create, where'er thou turn'st thy eye,  
Peace, Plenty, Love, and Harmony;  
Till ev'ry being share its part,  
And Heav'n and Earth be glad at heart.

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## LETTER VIII.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.*

London, May 8, 1742.

**I** Rejoice to see you putting up your prayers to the  
May: She cannot choose but come at such a call. It  
is as light and genteel as herself. You bid me find  
fault; I am afraid I cannot; however I will try. The

first stanza (if what you say to me in it did not make me think it the best) I should call the worst of the five (except the fourth line). The two next are very picturesque, Miltonic, and musical; her bed is so soft and so snug that I long to lie with her. But those two lines; "Great Nature" are my favourites. The exclamation of the flowers is a little step too far. The last stanza is full as good as the second and third; the last line bold, but I think not too bold. Now, as to myself and my translation, pray do not call names. I never saw Broukhusius in my life. It is Scaliger who attempted to range Propertius in order; who was, and still is, in sad condition † \* \* \*. You see, by what I sent you, that I converse, as usual, with none but the dead: They are my old friends, and almost make me long to be with them. You will not wonder therefore, that I, who live only in times past, am able to tell you no news of the present. I have finished the Peloponnesian war much to my honour, and a tight conflict it was, I promise you. I have drank and sung with Anacreon for the last fortnight, and am now feeding sheep with Theocritus. Besides, to quit my figure, (because it is foolish) I have run over Pliny's Epistles and Martial *in παρέρυς*; not to mention Petrarch, who, by the way, is sometimes very tender and natural. I must needs

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† Here some criticism on the Elegy is omitted for a former reason.

tell you three lines in Anacreon, where the expression seems to me inevitable. He is describing hair as he would have it painted.

Ἑλικας δ' ἐλευθέρως μιν  
Πλοκάμην ἀτακτὰ συνυίς  
Ἄφ' ἧς ὡς βλάσει κίθαι.

Guess, too, where this is about a dimple.

Sigilla in mento impressa Amoris digitulo  
Vestigio demonstrat mollitudinem.

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## LETTER IX.

MR. WEST TO MR. GRAY.

Ms. B. 1. 9, May 11, 1717

**Y**OUR fragment is in Aulus Gellius; and both it and your Greek delicious. But why are you thus melancholly? I am so sorry for it, that you see I cannot forbear writing again the very first opportunity: though I have little to say, except to expostulate with you about it. I find you converse much with the dead, and I do not blame you for that; I converse with them too, though not indeed with the Greek. But I must condemn you for your longing to be with them. What,

are there no joys among the living? I could almost cry out with Catullus, "Alphene immemor, atque unanimis false sodalibus!" But to turn an accusation thus upon another, is ungenerous; so I will take my leave of you for the present with a "Vale, et vive paulisper cum vivis."



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