

Classic Poetry Series

Edward Young
- poems -

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Edward Young(June 1683 - 5 April 1765)

Early Life

He was the son of Edward Young, later Dean of Salisbury, and was born at his father's rectory at Upham, near Winchester, where he was baptized on 3 July 1683. He was educated at Winchester College, and matriculated in 1702 at New College, Oxford. He later moved to Corpus Christi, and in 1708 was nominated by Archbishop Tenison to a law fellowship at All Souls. He took his degree of D.C.L. in 1719

Literary Career

His first publication was an Epistle to ... Lord Lansdoune (1713). It was followed by a Poem on the Last Day (1713), dedicated to Queen Anne; The Force of Religion: or Vanquished Love (1714), a poem on the execution of Lady Jane Grey and her husband, dedicated to the Countess of Salisbury; and an epistle to Joseph Addison, On the late Queen's Death and His Majesty's Accession to the Throne (1714), in which he rushed to praise the new king. The fulsome style of the dedications jars with the pious tone of the poems, and they are omitted from his own edition of his works.

About this time he came into contact with Philip, Duke of Wharton, whom he accompanied to Dublin in 1717. In 1719 his play, Busiris was produced at Drury Lane, and in 1721 his Revenge. The latter play was dedicated to Wharton, to whom it owed, said Young, its "most beautiful incident." Wharton promised him two annuities of £100 each and a sum of £600 in consideration of his expenses as a candidate for parliamentary election at Cirencester. In view of these promises Young refused two livings in the gift of All Souls' College, Oxford, and sacrificed a life annuity offered by the Marquess of Exeter if he would act as tutor to his son. Wharton failed to discharge his obligations, and Young, who pleaded his case before Lord Chancellor Hardwicke in 1740, gained the annuity but not the £600. Between 1725 and 1728 Young published a series of seven satires on The Universal Passion. They were dedicated to the Duke of Dorset, George Bubb Dodington, Sir Spencer Compton, Lady Elizabeth Germain and Sir Robert Walpole, and were collected in 1728 as Love of Fame, the Universal Passion. This is qualified by Samuel Johnson as a "very great performance," and abounds in striking and pithy couplets. Herbert Croft asserted that Young made £3000 by his satires, which compensated losses he had suffered in the South Sea Bubble. In 1726 he received, through Walpole, a pension of £200 a year. To the end of his life he continued to seek preferment, but the king regarded his pension as an

adequate settlement.

Young, living in a time when patronage was slowly fading out, was notable for urgently seeking patronage for his poetry, his theatrical works, and his career in the church: he failed in each area. He never received the degree of patronage that he felt his work had earned, largely because he picked patrons whose fortunes were about to turn downward.

Though his praise was often unearned, often fulsome, he could write, "False praises are the whoredoms of the pen / And prostitute fair fame to worthless men."

In 1728 Young became a royal chaplain, and in 1730 he obtained the college living of Welwyn, Hertfordshire. In 1731 he married Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the 1st Earl of Lichfield. Her daughter, by a former marriage with her cousin Francis Lee, married Henry Temple, son of the 1st Viscount Palmerston. Mrs Temple died at Lyons in 1736 on her way to Nice. Her husband and Lady Elizabeth Young died in 1740. These successive deaths are supposed to be the events referred to in the Night Thoughts as taking place "ere thrice yon moon had filled her horn."

Night Thoughts

In the preface to the poem Young states that the occasion of the poem was real, and Philander and Narcissa have been rather rashly identified with Mr and Mrs Temple. It has also been suggested that Philander represents Thomas Tickell, an old friend of Young's, who died three months after Lady Elizabeth Young. The infidel Lorenzo was thought by some to be a sketch of Young's own son, but he was only eight years old at the time of publication. The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality, was published in 1742, and was followed by other "Nights," the eighth and ninth appearing in 1745. In 1753 his tragedy of The Brothers, written many years before, but suppressed because he was about to enter the Church, was produced at Drury Lane. Night Thoughts had made him famous, but he lived in almost uninterrupted retirement. He was made clerk of the closet to the Princess Dowager, Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, in 1761. He never recovered from his wife's death. He fell out with his son, who had apparently criticised the excessive influence exerted by his housekeeper Mrs Hallows. The old man refused to see his son until shortly before he died, but left him everything. A description of him is to be found in the letters of his curate and executor, John Jones, to Dr Thomas Birch (in Brit. Lib. Addit. M/s 4311). He died at Welwyn, reconciled with his spendthrift son: "he expired a little before 11 of the clock at the night of Good Friday last, the 5th instant, and was decently

buried yesterday about 6 in the afternoon" (Jones to Birch).

Young is said to have been a brilliant talker. Although *Night Thoughts* is long and disconnected, it abounds in brilliant isolated passages. Its success was enormous. It was translated into French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish and Magyar. In France it became a classic of the romantic school. Questions as to the "sincerity" of the poet did arise in the 100 years after his death. The publication of fawning letters from Young seeking preferment led many readers to question the poet's sincerity. In a famous essay, *Worldliness and Other-Worldliness*, George Eliot discussed his "radical insincerity as a poetic artist." If Young did not invent "melancholy and moonlight" in literature, he did much to spread the fashionable taste for them. Madame Klopstock thought the king ought to make him Archbishop of Canterbury, and some German critics preferred him to John Milton. Young's essay, *Conjectures on Original Composition*," was popular and influential on the continent, especially among Germans, as a testament advocating originality over neoclassical imitation. Young wrote good blank verse, and Samuel Johnson pronounced *Night Thoughts* to be one of "the few poems" in which blank verse could not be changed for rhyme but with disadvantage. The poem was a poetic treatment of sublimity and had a profound influence on the young Edmund Burke, whose philosophic investigations and writings on the Sublime and the Beautiful were a pivotal turn in 18th-century aesthetic theory.

Young's masterpiece *Night Thoughts* emerged from obscurity by being mentioned in Edmund Blunden's World War One memoir, *Undertones of War* (1928), as a source of comfort during time in the trenches. This latter work emerged from the darkness of the more recent past thanks to its mention and discussion in Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975), which discussed Blunden's reliance on *Night Thoughts*." Blunden's mention of Young's poem reintroduced an interesting, sometimes bombastic precursor to the early Romantics to students of English literature.

William Hutchinson included a gloss on *Night Thoughts* in his series of lectures *The Spirit of Masonry* (1775), underlining the masonic symbolism of the text.

German Connections

The young Goethe told his sister in 1766 that he was learning English from Young and Milton, and in his autobiography he confessed that the Young's influence had created the atmosphere in which there was such a universal response to his seminal work *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. Young's name soon became a battle-cry for the young men of the Sturm und Drang movement. Young himself

reinforced his reputation as a pioneer of romanticism by precept as well as by example; in 1759, at the age of 76, he published a piece of critical prose under the title of *Conjectures on Original Composition* which put forward the vital doctrine of the superiority of "genius," of innate originality being more valuable than classic indoctrination or imitation, and suggested that modern writers might dare to rival or even surpass the "ancients" of Greece and Rome ... The *Conjectures* was a declaration of independence against the tyranny of classicism and was at once acclaimed as such becoming a milestone in the history of English, and European, literary criticism. It was immediately translated into German at Leipzig and at Hamburg and was widely and favourably reviewed. The cult of genius exactly suited the ideas of the Sturm und Drang movement and gave a new impetus to the cult of Young' (Harold Forster, 'Some uncollected authors XLV: Edward Young in translation I').

Clerical Career

Young was nearly fifty when he decided to take holy orders. It was reported that the author of *Night Thoughts* was not, in his earlier days, "the ornament to religion and morality which he afterwards became," and his friendships with the Duke of Wharton and with Dodington did not improve his reputation. A statement attributed to Alexander Pope probably gives the correct view. "He had much of a sublime genius, though without common sense; so that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombast. This made him pass a foolish youth, the sport of peers and poets; but his having a very good heart enabled him to support the clerical character when he assumed it, first with decency and afterwards with honour "

A Poem On The Last Day - Book I

While others sing the fortune of the great,
Empire and arms, and all the pomp of state;
With Britain's hero
set their souls on fire,
And grow immortal as his deeds inspire;
I draw a deeper scene; a scene that yields
A louder trumpet and more dreadful fields:-
The world alarm'd, both earth and heaven o'erthrown,
And gasping Nature's last tremendous groan;
Death's ancient sceptre broke, the teeming tomb,
The righteous Judge, and man's eternal doom.

'Twixt joy and pain I view the bold design,
And ask my anxious heart if it be mine.
Whatever great or dreadful has been done
Within the sight of conscious stars or sun,
Is far beneath my daring: I look down
On all the splendours of the British crown.
This globe is for my verse a narrow bound;
Attend me, all ye glorious worlds around!
O! all ye angels, howsoe'er disjoin'd,
Of every various order, place, and kind,
Hear and assist a feeble mortal's lays;
'Tis your eternal King I strive to praise.

But chiefly Thou, great Ruler, Lord of all!
Before whose throne archangels prostrate fall;
If at Thy nod, from discord and from night,
Sprang beauty, and yon sparkling worlds of light,
Exalt e'en me: all inward tumults quell;
The clouds and darkness of my mind dispel;
To my great subject Thou my breast inspire,
And raise my labouring soul with equal fire.

Man, bear thy brow aloft; view every grace
In God's great offspring, beauteous Nature's face:
See Spring's gay bloom; see golden Autumn's store;
See how Earth smiles, and hear old Ocean roar.
Leviathans but heave their cumbrous mail,

It makes a tide, and wind-bound navies sail.
Here, forests rise, the mountain's awful pride;
Here, rivers measure climes, and worlds divide;
There, valleys fraught with gold's resplendent seeds,
Hold kings and kingdoms' fortunes in their beds:
There, to the skies aspiring hills ascend,
And into distant lands their shades extend.
View cities, armies, fleets; of fleets the pride,
See Europe's law in Albion's Channel ride.
View the whole earth's vast landscape unconfined,
Or view in Britain all her glories join'd.

Then let the firmament thy wonder raise;
'T will raise thy wonder, but transcend thy praise.
How far from east to west? The labouring eye
Can scarce the distant azure bounds descry:
Wide theatre! where tempests play at large,
And God's right hand can all its wrath discharge.
Mark how those radiant lamps inflame the pole,
Call forth the seasons, and the year control:
They shine through time, with an unalter'd ray,
See this grand period rise, and that decay:
So vast, this world's a grain; yet myriads grace,
With golden pomp, the throng'd ethereal space;
So bright, with such a wealth of glory stored,
'T were sin in Heathens not to have adored.

How great, how firm, how sacred all appears!
How worthy an immortal round of years!
Yet all must drop, as autumn's sickliest grain,
And earth and firmament be sought in vain;
The tract forgot where constellations shone,
Or where the Stuarts fill'd an awful throne:
Time shall be slain, all Nature be destroy'd,
Nor leave an atom in the mighty void.

Sooner or later, in some future date,
(A dreadful secret in the book of fate!)
This hour, for aught all human wisdom knows,
Or when ten thousand harvests more have rose;
When scenes are changed on this revolving earth,
Old empires fall, and give new empires birth;

While other Bourbons rule in other lands,
And (if man's sin forbids not) other Annes;
While the still busy world is treading o'er
The paths they trod five thousand years before,
Thoughtless, as those who now life's mazes run,
Of earth dissolved, or an extinguish'd sun;
(Ye sublunary worlds, awake, awake!
Ye rulers of the nations, hear, and shake!)
Thick clouds of darkness shall arise on day,
In sudden night all earth's dominions lay;
Impetuous winds the scatter'd forests rend;
Eternal mountains, like their cedars, bend;
The valleys yawn, the troubled ocean roar,
And break the bondage of his wonted shore;
A sanguine stain the silver moon o'erspread;
Darkness the circle of the sun invade;
From inmost heaven incessant thunders roll,
And the strong echo bound from pole to pole.

When, lo, a mighty trump, one half conceal'd
In clouds, one half to mortal eye reveal'd,
Shall pour a dreadful note; the piercing call
Shall rattle in the centre of the ball;
The' extended circuit of creation shake,
The living die with fear, the dead awake.

O powerful blast! to which no equal sound
Did e'er the frighted ear of Nature wound,
Though rival clarions have been strain'd on high,
And kindled wars immortal through the sky;
Though God's whole enginery discharged, and all
The rebel angels bellow'd in their fall.

Have angels sinn'd? And shall not man beware?
How shall a son of earth decline the snare?
Not folded arms, and slackness of the mind,
Can promise for the safety of mankind:
None are supinely good; through care and pain,
And various arts, the steep ascent we gain.
This is the scene of combat, not of rest;
Man's is laborious happiness at best;
On this side death his dangers never cease;

His joys are joys of conquest, not of peace.

If then, obsequious to the will of fate,
And bending to the terms of human state,
When guilty joys invite us to their arms,
When beauty smiles, or grandeur spreads her charms,
The conscious soul would this great scene display,
Call down the' immortal hosts in dread array,
The trumpet sound, the Christian banner spread,
And raise from silent graves the trembling dead;
Such deep impression would the picture make,
No power on earth her firm resolve could shake;
Engaged with angels she would greatly stand,
And look regardless down on sea and land;
Not proffer'd worlds her ardour could restrain,
And Death might shake his threatening lance in vain!
Her certain conquest would endear the fight,
And danger serve but to exalt delight.

Instructed thus to shun the fatal spring
Whence flow the terrors of that day I sing,
More boldly we our labours may pursue,
And all the dreadful image set to view.

The sparkling eye, the sleek and painted breast,
The burnish'd scale, curl'd train, and rising crest,
All that is lovely in the noxious snake,
Provokes our fear, and bids us flee the brake:
The sting once drawn, his guiltless beauties rise
In pleasing lustre, and detain our eyes;
We view with joy what once did horror move,
And strong aversion softens into love.

Say, then, my Muse, whom dismal scenes delight,
Frequent at tombs, and in the realms of Night;
Say, melancholy maid, if bold to dare
The last extremes of terror and despair;
O say, what change on earth, what heart in man,
This blackest moment since the world began!

Ah mournful turn! The blissful Earth, who late
At leisure on her axle roll'd in state;

While thousand golden planets knew no rest,
Still onward in their circling journey press'd;
A grateful change of seasons some to bring,
And sweet vicissitude of fall and spring;
Some through vast oceans to conduct the keel,
And some those watery worlds to sink or swell;
Around her some, their splendours to display,
And gild her globe with tributary day:-
This world so great, of joy the bright abode,
Heaven's darling child, and favourite of her God,
Now looks an exile from her Father's care,
Deliver'd o'er to darkness and despair.
No sun in radiant glory shines on high;
No light, but from the terrors of the sky:
Fallen are her mountains, her famed rivers lost,
And all into a second chaos toss'd:
One universal ruin spreads abroad;
Nothing is safe beneath the throne of God.

Such, Earth, thy fate: what then canst thou afford
To comfort and support thy guilty lord?
Man, haughty lord of all beneath the moon,
How must he bend his soul's ambition down;
Prostrate, the reptile own, and disavow
His boasted stature and assuming brow;
Claim kindred with the clay, and curse his form,
That speaks distinction from his sister worm!
What dreadful pangs the trembling heart invade!
Lord, why dost Thou forsake whom Thou hast made?
Who can sustain Thy anger? who can stand
Beneath the terrors of Thy lifted hand?
It flies the reach of thought; O save me, Power
Of powers supreme, in that tremendous hour!
Thou who beneath the frown of Fate hast stood,
And in Thy dreadful agony sweat blood;
Thou, who for me, through every throbbing vein,
Hast felt the keenest edge of mortal pain;
Whom Death led captive through the realms below,
And taught those horrid mysteries of woe;
Defend me, O my God! O save me, Power
Of powers supreme, in that tremendous hour!

From east to west they fly, from pole to line,
Imploring shelter from the wrath Divine;
Beg flames to wrap, or whelming seas to sweep,
Or rocks to yawn, compassionately deep:
Seas cast the monster forth to meet his doom,
And rocks but prison up for wrath to come.

So fares a traitor to an earthly crown:
While death sits threatening in his prince's frown,
His heart's dismay'd; and now his fears command
To change his native for a distant land:
Swift orders fly, the king's severe decree
Stands in the channel, and locks up the sea;
The port he seeks, obedient to her lord,
Hurls back the rebel to his lifted sword.

But why this idle toil to paint that day,
This time elaborately thrown away?
Words all in vain pant after the distress,
The height of eloquence would make it less:
Heavens! how the good man trembles!-

And is there a Last Day? and must there come
A sure, a fix'd, inexorable doom?
Ambition, swell, and, thy proud sails to show,
Take all the winds that Vanity can blow;
Wealth, on a golden mountain blazing stand,
And reach an India forth in either hand;
Spread all thy purple clusters, tempting Vine,
And thou, more dreaded foe, bright Beauty, shine:
Shine all; in all your charms together rise;
That all, in all your charms, I may despise,
While I mount upward on a strong desire,
Borne, like Elijah, in a car of fire.

In hopes of glory to be quite involved!
To smile at death, to long to be dissolved!
From our decays a pleasure to receive,
And kindle into transport at a grave!
What equals this? And shall the victor now
Boast the proud laurels on his loaded brow?
Religion! O thou cherub, heavenly bright!

O joys unmix'd, and fathomless delight!
Thou, thou art all; nor find I in the whole
Creation aught but God and my own soul.

For ever then, my soul, thy God adore,
Nor let the brute creation praise Him more.
Shall things inanimate my conduct blame,
And flush my conscious cheek with spreading shame?
They all for Him pursue or quit their end;
The mounting flames their burning power suspend;
In solid heaps the' unfrozen billows stand,
To rest and silence awed by His command:
Nay, the dire monsters that infest the flood,
By nature dreadful, and athirst for blood,
His will can calm, their savage tempers bind,
And turn to mild protectors of mankind.
Did not the prophet this great truth maintain
In the deep chambers of the gloomy main,
When darkness round him all her horrors spread,
And the loud ocean bellow'd o'er his head?

When now the thunder roars, the lightning flies,
And all the warring winds tumultuous rise;
When now the foaming surges, toss'd on high,
Disclose the sands beneath, and touch the sky;
When death draws near, the mariners, aghast,
Look back with terror on their actions past;
Their courage sickens into deep dismay,
Their hearts, through fear and anguish, melt away;
Nor tears, nor prayers, the tempest can appease.
Now they devote their treasure to the seas;
Unload their shatter'd bark, though richly fraught,
And think the hopes of life are cheaply bought
With gems and gold: but O, the storm so high,
Nor gems nor gold the hopes of life can buy!

The trembling prophet then, themselves to save,
They headlong plunge into the briny wave.
Down he descends, and, booming o'er his head,
The billows close; he's number'd with the dead.
(Hear, O ye just! attend, ye virtuous few!
And the bright paths of piety pursue!)

Lo! the great Ruler of the world, from high,
Looks smiling down with a propitious eye,
Covers His servant with His gracious hand,
And bids tempestuous nature silent stand;
Commands the peaceful waters to give place,
Or kindly fold him in a soft embrace:
He bridles-in the monsters of the deep,
The bridled monsters awful distance keep;
Forget their hunger, while they view their prey,
And guiltless gaze, and round the stranger play.

But still arise new wonders. Nature's Lord
Sends forth into the deep His powerful word,
And calls the great leviathan: the great
Leviathan attends in all his state;
Exults for joy, and, with a mighty bound,
Makes the sea shake, and heaven and earth resound;
Blackens the waters with the rising sand,
And drives vast billows to the distant land.

As yawns an earthquake, when imprison'd air
Struggles for vent, and lays the centre bare,
The whale expands his jaws' enormous size:
The prophet views the cavern with surprise;
Measures his monstrous teeth, afar descried,
And rolls his wondering eyes from side to side;
Then takes possession of the spacious seat,
And sails secure within the dark retreat.

Now is he pleas'd the northern blast to hear,
And hangs on liquid mountains, void of fear;
Or falls immersed into the depths below,
Where the dead silent waters never flow;
To the foundations of the hills convey'd,
Dwells in the shelving mountain's dreadful shade:
Where plummet never reach'd, he draws his breath,
And glides serenely through the paths of death.

Two wondrous days and nights, through coral groves,
Through labyrinths of rocks and sands, he roves:
When the third morning with its level rays
The mountains gilds, and on the billows plays,

It sees the king of waters rise and pour
His sacred guest uninjured on the shore:
A type of that great blessing, which the Muse
In her next labour ardently pursues.

Edward Young

A Poem On The Last Day - Book II

Now man awakes, and from his silent bed,
Where he has slept for ages, lifts his head;
Shakes off the slumber of ten thousand years,
And on the borders of new worlds appears.
Whate'er the bold, the rash adventure cost,
In wide Eternity I dare be lost.

The Muse is wont in narrow bounds to sing,
To teach the swain, or celebrate the king.
I grasp the whole, no more to parts confined,
I lift my voice, and sing to human kind:
I sing to men and angels; angels join,
While such the theme, their sacred songs with mine.

Again the trumpet's intermitted sound
Rolls the wide circuit of creation round,
An universal concourse to prepare
Of all that ever breathed the vital air;
In some wide field, which active whirlwinds sweep,
Drive cities, forests, mountains to the deep,
To smooth and lengthen out the' unbounded space,
And spread an area for all human race.

Now monuments prove faithful to their trust,
And render back their long committed dust.
Now charnels rattle; scatter'd limbs, and all
The various bones, obsequious to the call,
Self-moved, advance; the neck perhaps to meet
The distant head; the distant legs, the feet.
Dreadful to view, see through the dusky sky
Fragments of bodies in confusion fly,
To distant regions journeying, there to claim
Deserted members, and complete the frame.

When the world bow'd to Rome's almighty sword,
Rome bow'd to Pompey, and confess'd her lord.
Yet, one day lost, this deity below
Became the scorn and pity of his foe.
His blood a traitor's sacrifice was made,

And smoked indignant on a ruffian's blade.
No trumpet's sound, no gasping army's yell,
Bid, with due horror, his great soul farewell.
Obscure his fall: all weltering in his gore,
His trunk was cast to perish on the shore!
While Julius frown'd the bloody monster dead,
Who brought the world in his great rival's head.
This sever'd head and trunk shall join once more,
Though realms now rise between, and oceans roar.
The trumpet's sound each vagrant-mote shall hear,
Or fix'd in earth, or if afloat in air,
Obey the signal wafted in the wind,
And not one sleeping atom lag behind.

So swarming bees, that, on a summer's day,
In airy rings and wild meanders play,
Charm'd with the brasen sound, their wanderings end,
And, gently circling, on a bough descend.

The body thus renew'd, the conscious soul,
Which has perhaps been fluttering near the pole,
Or midst the burning planets wondering stray'd,
Or hover'd o'er where her pale corpse was laid;
Or rather coasted on her final state,
And fear'd or wish'd for her appointed fate:
This soul, returning with a constant flame,
Now weds for ever her immortal frame.
Life, which ran down before, so high is wound,
The springs maintain an everlasting round.

Thus a frail model of the work design'd
First takes a copy of the builder's mind,
Before the structure firm with lasting oak,
And marble bowels of the solid rock,
Turns the strong arch, and bids the columns rise,
And bear the lofty palace to the skies;
The wrongs of Time enabled to surpass,
With bars of adamant, and ribs of brass.

That ancient, sacred, and illustrious dome,
Where soon or late fair Albion's heroes come,
From camps and courts, though great, or wise, or just,

To feed the worm, and moulder into dust;
That solemn mansion of the royal dead,
Where passing slaves o'er sleeping monarchs tread,
Now populous o'erflows: a numerous race
Of rising kings fill all the' extended space.
A life well-spent, not the victorious sword,
Awards the crown, and styles the greater lord.

Nor monuments alone, and burial earth,
Labour with man to this his second birth;
But where gay palaces in pomp arise,
And gilded theatres invade the skies,
Nations shall wake, whose unrespected bones
Support the pride of their luxurious sons.
The most magnificent and costly dome
Is but an upper chamber to a tomb.
No spot on earth but has supplied a grave,
And human skulls the spacious ocean pave.
All's full of man; and at this dreadful turn,
The swarm shall issue, and the hive shall burn.

Not all at once, nor in like manner, rise:
Some lift with pain their slow unwilling eyes;
Shrink backward from the terror of the light,
And bless the grave, and call for lasting night.
Others, whose long-attempted virtue stood
Fix'd as a rock, and broke the rushing flood;
Whose firm resolve nor beauty could melt down,
Nor raging tyrants from their posture frown:-
Such, in this day of horrors, shall be seen
To face the thunders with a godlike mien:
The planets drop, their thoughts are fix'd above;
The centre shakes, their hearts disdain to move:
An earth dissolving, and a heaven thrown wide,
A yawning gulf, and fiends on every side,
Serene they view, impatient of delay,
And bless the dawn of everlasting day.

Here greatness prostrate falls; there strength gives place:
Here lazars smile; there beauty hides her face.
Christians, and Jews, and Turks, and Pagans stand,
A blended throng, one undistinguish'd band.

Some who, perhaps, by mutual wounds expired,
With zeal for their distinct persuasions fired,
In mutual friendship their long slumber break,
And hand in hand their Saviour's love partake.

But none are flush'd with brighter joy, or, warm
With juster confidence, enjoy the storm,
Than those whose pious bounties, unconfined,
Have made them public fathers of mankind.
In that illustrious rank, what shining light
With such distinguish'd glory fills my sight?
Bend down, my grateful Muse, that homage show
Which to such worthies thou art proud to owe.
Wykeham, Fox, Chicheley! hail, illustrious names,

Who to far-distant times dispense your beams!
Beneath your shades, and near your crystal springs,
I first presumed to touch the trembling strings.
All hail, thrice-honour'd! 'Twas your great renown
To bless a people, and oblige a crown.
And now you rise, eternally to shine,
Eternally to drink the rays Divine.

Indulgent God! O how shall mortal raise
His soul to due returns of grateful praise,
For bounty so profuse to human kind,
Thy wondrous gift of an eternal mind?
Shall I, who, some few years ago, was less
Than worm, or mite, or shadow can express,-
Was nothing; shall I live, when every fire
And every star shall languish and expire?
When earth's no more, shall I survive above,
And through the radiant files of angels move?
Or, as before the throne of God I stand,
See new worlds rolling from His spacious hand,
Where our adventures shall perhaps be taught,
As we now tell how Michael sung or fought?
All that has being in full concert join,
And celebrate the depths of Love Divine!

But O! before this blissful state, before
The' aspiring soul this wondrous height can soar,

The Judge, descending, thunders from afar,
And all mankind is summon'd to the bar.

This mighty scene I next presume to draw:
Attend, great Anna, with religious awe.
Expect not here the known successful arts
To win attention, and command our hearts:
Fiction, be far away; let no machine
Descending here, no fabled God, be seen:
Behold the God of gods indeed descend,
And worlds unnumber'd His approach attend!

Lo! the wide theatre, whose ample space
Must entertain the whole of human race,
At Heaven's all-powerful edict is prepared,
And fenced around with an immortal guard.
Tribes, provinces, dominions, worlds o'erflow
The mighty plain, and deluge all below:
And every age and nation pours along;
Nimrod and Bourbon mingle in the throng;
Adam salutes his youngest son; no sign
Of all those ages which their births disjoin.

How empty learning, and how vain is art,
But as it mends the life, and guides the heart!
What volumes have been swell'd, what time been spent,
To fix a hero's birth-day or descent!
What joy must it now yield, what rapture raise,
To see the glorious race of ancient days!
To greet those worthies who perhaps have stood
Illustrious on record before the flood!
Alas! a nearer care your soul demands,
Caesar unnoted in your presence stands.

How vast the concourse! not in number more
The waves that break on the resounding shore,
The leaves that tremble in the shady grove,
The lamps that gild the spangled vault above.
Those overwhelming armies, whose command
Said to one empire, ``Fall;" another, ``Stand;"
Whose rear lay wrapp'd in night, while breaking dawn
Roused the broad front, and call'd the battle on:

Great Xerxes' world in arms, proud Cannae's field,
Where Carthage taught victorious Rome to yield;
(Another blow had broke the Fates' decree,
And earth had wanted her fourth monarchy
Immortal Blenheim, famed Ramillia's host:-
They all are here, and here they all are lost:
Their millions swell to be discern'd in vain,
Lost as a billow in the' unbounded main.

This echoing voice now rends the yielding air,
For judgment, judgment, sons of men, prepare!
Earth shakes anew; I hear her groans profound;
And hell through all her trembling realms resound.

Whoe'er thou art, thou greatest power of earth,
Bless'd with most equal planets at thy birth:
Whose valour drew the most successful sword,
Most realms united in one common lord;
Who, on the day of triumph, saidst, ``Be Thine
The skies, Jehovah: all this world is mine:"
Dare not to lift thine eye.-Alas! my Muse,
How art thou lost! what numbers canst thou choose?

A sudden blush inflames the waving sky,
And now the crimson curtains open fly;
Lo! far within, and far above all height,
Where heaven's great Sovereign reigns in worlds of light;
Whence Nature He informs, and, with one ray
Shot from His eye, does all her works survey,
Creates, supports, confounds! where time, and place,
Matter, and form, and fortune, life, and grace,
Wait humbly at the footstool of their God,
And move obedient at His awful nod;
Whence He beholds us vagrant emmets crawl
At random on this air-suspended ball:
(Speck of creation!) if He pour one breath,
The bubble breaks, and 'tis eternal death.

Thence issuing I behold, (but mortal sight
Sustains not such a rushing sea of light!)
I see, on an empyreal flying throne
Sublimely raised, Heaven's everlasting Son;

Crown'd with that majesty which form'd the world,
And the grand rebel flaming downward hurl'd
Virtue, Dominion, Praise, Omnipotence,
Support the train of their triumphant Prince.
A zone, beyond the thought of angels bright,
Around Him, like the zodiac, winds its light.
Night shades the solemn arches of His brows,
And in His cheek the purple morning glows.
Where'er serene He turns propitious eyes,
Or we expect, or find, a Paradise:
But if resentment reddens their mild beams,
The Eden kindles, and the world's in flames.
On one hand, Knowledge shines in purest light;
On one, the sword of Justice, fiercely bright.
Now bend the knee in sport, present the reed;
Now tell the scourged impostor He shall bleed!

Thus glorious through the courts of heaven the Source
Of life and death eternal bends His course;
Loud thunders round Him roll, and lightnings play;
The' angelic host is ranged in bright array:
Some touch the string, some strike the sounding shell,
And mingling voices in rich concert swell;
Voices seraphic! bless'd with such a strain,
Could Satan hear, he were a god again.

Triumphant King of Glory! Soul of Bliss!
What a stupendous turn of fate is this!
O whither art thou raised above the scorn
And indigence of Him in Bethlem born!
A needless, helpless, unaccounted guest,
And but a second to the fodder'd beast!
How changed from Him who, meekly prostrate laid,
Vouchsafed to wash the feet Himself had made!
From Him who was betray'd, forsook, denied,
Wept, languish'd, pray'd, bled, thirsted, groan'd, and died;
Hung pierced and bare, insulted by the foe,
All heaven in tears above, earth unconcern'd below!

And was't enough to bid the sun retire?
Why did not Nature at Thy groan expire?
I see, I hear, I feel, the pangs Divine;

The world is vanish'd,-I am wholly Thine.

Mistaken Caiaphas! Ah! which blasphemed,-
Thou, or thy Prisoner? which shall be condemn'd?
Well mightst thou rend thy garments, well exclaim;
Deep are the horrors of eternal flame!
But God is good! 'Tis wondrous all! E'en He
Thou gavest to death, shame, torture, died for thee.

Now the descending triumph stops its flight
From earth full twice a planetary height.
There all the clouds, condensed, two columns raise
Distinct with orient veins, and golden blaze:
One fix'd on earth, and one in sea, and round
Its ample foot the swelling billows sound.
These an immeasurable arch support,
The grand tribunal of this awful court.
Sheets of bright azure, from the purest sky,
Stream from the crystal arch, and round the columns fly.
Death, wrapp'd in chains, low at the basis lies,
And on the point of his own arrow dies.

Here high-enthroned the' eternal Judge is placed,
With all the grandeur of His Godhead graced;
Stars on His robes in beauteous order meet,
And the sun burns beneath His awful feet.

Now an archangel eminently bright,
From off his silver staff of wondrous height,
Unfurls the Christian flag, which waving flies,
And shuts and opens more than half the skies:
The cross so strong a red, it sheds a stain,
Where'er it floats, on earth, and air, and main;
Flushes the hill, and sets on fire the wood,
And turns the deep-dyed ocean into blood.

O formidable Glory! dreadful bright!
Refulgent torture to the guilty sight.
Ah, turn, unwary Muse, nor dare reveal
What horrid thoughts with the polluted dwell.
Say not, (to make the Sun shrink in his beam,)
Dare not affirm, they wish it all a dream;

Wish, or their souls may with their limbs decay,
Or God be spoil'd of His eternal sway.
But rather, if thou know'st the means, unfold
How they with transport might the scene behold.

Ah how, but by repentance, by a mind
Quick and severe its own offence to find;
By tears, and groans, and never-ceasing care,
And all the pious violence of prayer?
Thus then, with fervency till now unknown,
I cast my heart before the' eternal throne,
In this great temple, which the skies surround,
For homage to its Lord a narrow bound:-

`` O Thou! whose balance does the mountains weigh,
Whose will the wild tumultuous seas obey,
Whose breath can turn those watery worlds to flame,
That flame to tempest, and that tempest tame;
Earth's meanest son, all trembling, prostrate falls,
And on the Boundless of Thy goodness calls.

`` O give the winds all past offence to sweep,
To scatter wide, or bury in the deep!
Thy power, my weakness, may I ever see,
And wholly dedicate my soul to Thee.
Reign o'er my will; my passions ebb and flow
At Thy command, nor human motive know.
If anger boil, let anger be my praise,
And sin the graceful indignation raise.
My love be warm to succour the distress'd,
And lift the burden from the soul oppress'd.
O may my understanding ever read
This glorious volume, which Thy wisdom made!
Who decks the maiden Spring with flowery pride?
Who calls forth Summer, like a sparkling bride?
Who joys the mother Autumn's bed to crown,
And bids old Winter lay her honours down?
Not the great Ottoman, or greater Czar,
Not Europe's arbitress of peace and war.
May sea and land, and earth and heaven, be join'd,
To bring the' eternal Author to my mind!
When oceans roar, or awful thunders roll,

May thoughts of Thy dread vengeance shake my soul!
When earth's in bloom, or planets proudly shine,
Adore, my heart, the Majesty Divine!

` ` Through every scene of life, or peace or war,
Plenty or want, Thy glory be my care!
Shine we in arms? or sing beneath our vine?
Thine is the vintage, and the conquest Thine:
Thy pleasure points the shaft, and bends the bow;
The cluster blasts, or bids it brightly glow:
'Tis Thou that lead'st our powerful armies forth,
And giv'st great Anne Thy sceptre o'er the north.

` ` Grant I may ever, at the morning ray,
Open with prayer the consecrated day;
Tune Thy great praise, and bid my soul arise,
And with the mounting sun ascend the skies:
As that advances, let my zeal improve,
And glow with ardour of consummate love;
Nor cease at eve, but with the setting sun
My endless worship shall be still begun.

` ` And O! permit the gloom of solemn night
To sacred thought may forcibly invite.
When this world's shut, and awful planets rise,
Call on our minds, and raise them to the skies;
Compose our souls with a less dazzling sight,
And show all nature in a milder light;
How every boisterous thought in calms subsides!
How the smooth'd spirit into goodness glides!
O how Divine! to tread the Milky Way,
To the bright palace of the Lord of Day;
His court admire, or for His favour sue,
Or leagues of friendship with His saints renew;
Pleased to look down, and see the world asleep,
While I long vigils to its Founder keep!

` ` Canst Thou not shake the centre? O control,
Subdue by force, the rebel in my soul!
Thou, who canst still the raging of the flood,
Restrain the various tumults of my blood;
Teach me, with equal firmness, to sustain

Alluring pleasure, and assaulting pain.
O may I pant for Thee in each desire!
And with strong faith foment the holy fire!
Stretch out my soul in hope, and grasp the prize
Which in Eternity's deep bosom lies!
At the great day of recompence behold,
Devoid of fear, the fatal book unfold!
Then, wafted upward to the blissful seat,
From age to age my grateful song repeat;
My Light, my Life, my God, my Saviour see,
And rival angels in the praise of Thee!"

Edward Young

A Poem On The Last Day - Book Iii

The book unfolding, the resplendent seat
Of saints and angels, the tremendous fate
Of guilty souls, the gloomy realms of woe,
And all the horrors of the world below,
I next presume to sing. What yet remains
Demands my last, but most exalted, strains.
And let the Muse or now affect the sky,
Or in inglorious shades for ever lie.
She kindles, she's inflamed so near the goal;
She mounts, she gains upon the starry pole;
The world grows less as she pursues her flight,
And the sun darkens to her distant sight.
Heaven, opening, all its sacred pomp displays,
And overwhelms her with the rushing blaze!
The triumph rings! archangels shout around!
And echoing Nature lengthens out the sound!

Ten thousand trumpets now at once advance;
Now deepest silence lulls the vast expanse;
So deep the silence, and so strong the blast,
As Nature died when she had groan'd her last.
Nor man nor angel moves: the Judge on high
Looks round, and with His glory fills the sky:
Then on the fatal book His hand He lays,
Which high to view supporting seraphs raise;
In solemn form the rituals are prepared,
The seal is broken, and a groan is heard.
And thou, my soul, (O fall to sudden prayer,
And let the thought sink deep!) shalt thou be there?

See on the left, (for by the great command
The throng divided falls on either hand,)
How weak, how pale, how haggard, how obscene!
What more than death in every face and mien!
With what distress, and glarings of affright,
They shock the heart, and turn away the sight!
In gloomy orbs their trembling eye-balls roll,
And tell the horrid secrets of the soul.

Each gesture mourns, each look is black with care,
And every groan is loaden with despair.
Reader, if guilty, spare the Muse, and find
A truer image pictured in thy mind.

Shouldst thou behold thy brother, father, wife,
And all the soft companions of thy life,
Whose blended interests levell'd at one aim,
Whose mix'd desires sent up one common flame,
Divided far; thy wretched self alone
Cast on the left, of all whom thou hast known;
How would it wound! What millions wouldst thou give
For one more trial, one day more to live!
Flung back in time an hour, a moment's space,
To grasp with eagerness the means of grace;
Contend for mercy with a pious rage,
And in that moment to redeem an age!
Drive back the tide, suspend a storm in air,
Arrest the sun; but still of this despair.

Mark, on the right, how amiable a grace!
Their Maker's image fresh in every face!
What purple bloom my ravish'd soul admires,
And their eyes sparkling with immortal fires!
Triumphant beauty! charms that rise above
This world, and in bless'd angels kindle love!
To the great Judge with holy pride they turn,
And dare behold the' Almighty's anger burn;
Its flash sustain, against its terror rise,
And on the dread tribunal fix their eyes.
Are these the forms that moulder'd in the dust?
O the transcendent glory of the just!
Yet still some thin remains of fear and doubt
The' infected brightness of their joy pollute.

Thus the chaste bridegroom, when the priest draws nigh,
Beholds his blessing with a trembling eye,
Feels doubtful passions throb in every vein,
And in his cheeks are mingled joy and pain,
Lest still some intervening chance should rise,
Leap forth at once, and snatch the golden prize;

Inflame his woe by bringing it so late,
And stab him in the crisis of his fate.

Since Adam's family, from first to last,
Now into one distinct survey is cast;
Look round, vain-glorious Muse, and you whoe'er
Devote yourselves to Fame, and think her fair;

Look round, and seek the lights of human race,
Whose shining acts Time's brightest annals grace;
Who founded sects; crowns conquer'd, or resign'd;
Gave names to nations, or famed empires join'd;
Who raised the vale, and laid the mountain low,
And taught obedient rivers where to flow;
Who with vast fleets, as with a mighty chain,
Could bind the madness of the roaring main:
All lost! all undistinguish'd! nowhere found!
How will this truth in Bourbon's palace sound?

That hour, on which the' Almighty King on high
From all eternity has fix'd His eye,
Whether His right hand favour'd, or annoy'd,
Continued, alter'd, threaten'd, or destroy'd;
Southern or eastern sceptre downward hurl'd,
Gave north or west dominion o'er the world;
The point of time, for which the world was built,
For which the blood of God Himself was spilt,
That dreadful moment is arrived.

Aloft, the seats of bliss their pomp display,
Brighter than brightness this distinguish'd day;
Less glorious, when of old the' eternal Son
From realms of night return'd with trophies won;
Through heaven's high gates when He triumphant rode,
And shouting angels hail'd the victor God.
Horrors, beneath, darkness in darkness, hell
Of hell, where torments behind torments dwell;
A furnace formidable, deep, and wide,
O'er-boiling with a mad sulphureous tide,
Expands its jaws, most dreadful to survey,
And roars outrageous for the destined prey.
The sons of light scarce unappall'd look down,

And nearer press Heaven's everlasting throne.

Such is the scene; and one short moment's space
Concludes the hopes and fears of human race.
Proceed who dares!-I tremble as I write;
The whole creation swims before my sight:
I see, I see, the Judge's frowning brow:
Say not, 'tis distant; I behold it now.
I faint, my tardy blood forgets to flow,
My soul recoils at the stupendous woe;
That woe, those pangs, which from the guilty breast,
In these, or words like these, shall be express'd:-

` ` Who burst the barriers of my peaceful grave?
Ah, cruel Death! that would no longer save,
But grudged me e'en that narrow dark abode,
And cast me out into the wrath of God;
Where shrieks, the roaring flame, the rattling chain,
And all the dreadful eloquence of pain,
Our only song; black fire's malignant light,
The sole refreshment of the blasted sight.

` ` Must all those powers Heaven gave me to supply
My soul with pleasure, and bring-in my joy,
Rise up in arms against me, join the foe,
Sense, Reason, Memory, increase my woe?
And shall my voice, ordain'd on hymns to dwell,
Corrupt to groans, and blow the fires of hell?
O! must I look with terror on my gain,
And with existence only measure pain?
What! no reprieve, no least indulgence given,
No beam of hope from any point of heaven?
Ah, Mercy! Mercy! art thou dead above?
Is love extinguish'd in the Source of Love?

` ` Bold that I am! did Heaven stoop down to hell?
The' expiring Lord of Life my ransom seal?
Have not I been industrious to provoke?
From His embraces obstinately broke?
Pursued, and panted for His mortal hate,
Earn'd my destruction, labour'd out my fate?
And dare I on extinguish'd love exclaim?

Take, take full vengeance, rouse the slackening flame;
Just is my lot-but O! must it transcend
The reach of time, despair a distant end?
With dreadful growth shoot forward, and arise,
Where Thought can't follow, and bold Fancy dies?

`` NEVER! Where falls the soul at that dread sound?
Down an abyss how dark, and how profound!
Down, down, (I still am falling,-horrid pain!)
Ten thousand thousand fathoms still remain;
My plunge but still begun.-And this for sin?
Could I offend, if I had never been,
But still increased the senseless happy mass,
Flow'd in the stream, or shiver'd in the grass?

`` Father of Mercies! why from silent earth
Didst Thou awake, and curse me into birth?
Tear me from quiet, ravish me from night,
And make a thankless present of Thy light?
Push into being a reverse of Thee,
And animate a clod with misery?

`` The beasts are happy; they come forth, and keep
Short watch on earth, and then lie down to sleep.
Pain is for man; and O! how vast a pain,
For crimes which made the Godhead bleed in vain,
Annull'd His groans, as far as in them lay,
And flung His agonies and death away!
As our dire punishment for ever strong,
Our constitution too for ever young;
Cursed with returns of vigour, still the same,
Powerful to bear and satisfy the flame;
Still to be caught, and still to be pursued;
To perish still, and still to be renew'd!

`` And this, my Help! my God! at Thy decree?
Nature is changed, and hell should succour me.
And canst Thou, then, look down from perfect bliss,
And see me plunging in the dark abyss?
Calling Thee Father in a sea of fire?
Or pouring blasphemies at Thy desire?
With mortals' anguish wilt Thou raise Thy name,

And by my pangs Omnipotence proclaim?

``Thou, who canst toss the planets to and fro,
Contract not Thy great vengeance to my woe;
Crush worlds; in hotter flames fallen angels lay:
On me Almighty wrath is cast away.
Call back Thy thunders, Lord, hold-in Thy rage,
Nor with a speck of wretchedness engage:
Forget me quite, nor stoop a worm to blame;
But lose me in the greatness of Thy name.
Thou art all love, all mercy, all Divine;
And shall I make those glories cease to shine?
Shall sinful man grow great by his offence,
And from its course turn back Omnipotence?

``Forbid it! and O! grant, great God, at least
This one, this slender, almost no request:
When I have wept a thousand lives away,
When torment is grown weary of its prey,
When I have raved ten thousand years in fire,
Ten thousand thousand, let me then expire."

Deep anguish, but too late! The hopeless soul,
Bound to the bottom of the burning pool,
Though loath, and ever loud blaspheming, owns,
He's justly doom'd to pour eternal groans;

Enclosed with horrors, and transfix'd with pain,
Rolling in vengeance, struggling with his chain;
To talk to fiery tempests; to implore
The raging flame to give its burnings o'er;
To toss, to writhe, to pant beneath his load,
And bear the weight of an offended God.

The favour'd of their Judge in triumph move
To take possession of their thrones above;
Satan's accursed desertion to supply,
And fill the vacant stations of the sky;
Again to kindle long-extinguish'd rays,
And with new lights dilate the heavenly blaze;
To crop the roses of immortal youth,
And drink the fountain-head of sacred truth;

To swim in seas of bliss, to strike the string,
And lift the voice to their Almighty King;
To lose eternity in grateful lays,
And fill heaven's wide circumference with praise.

But I attempt the wondrous height in vain,
And leave unfinish'd the too lofty strain;
What boldly I begin, let others end;
My strength exhausted, fainting I descend,
And choose a less, but no ignoble, theme,-
Dissolving elements, and worlds in flame.

The fatal period, the great hour, is come,
And Nature shrinks at her approaching doom;
Loud peals of thunder give the sign, and all
Heaven's terrors in array surround the ball;
Sharp lightnings with the meteors' blaze conspire,
And, darted downward, set the world on fire;
Black rising clouds the thicken'd ether choke,
And spiry flames dart through the rolling smoke,
With keen vibrations cut the sullen night,
And strike the darken'd sky with dreadful light;
From heaven's four regions, with immortal force,
Angels drive-on the wind's impetuous course
To' enrage the flame: it spreads, it soars on high,
Swells in the storm, and billows through the sky:
Here winding pyramids of fire ascend,
Cities and deserts in one ruin blend;
Here blazing volumes, wafted, overwhelm
The spacious face of a far-distant realm;
There, undermined, down rush eternal hills,
The neighbouring vales the vast destruction fills.

Hear'st thou that dreadful crack? that sound which broke
Like peals of thunder, and the centre shook?
What wonders must that groan of Nature tell!
Olympus there, and mightier Atlas, fell;
Which seem'd above the reach of fate to stand,
A towering monument of God's right hand;
Now dust and smoke, whose brow so lately spread
O'er shelter'd countries its diffusive shade.

Show me that celebrated spot, where all
The various rulers of the sever'd ball
Have humbly sought wealth, honour, and redress,
That land which Heaven seem'd diligent to bless,
Once call'd Britannia: can her glories end?
And can't surrounding seas her realms defend?
Alas! in flames behold surrounding seas!
Like oil, their waters but augment the blaze.

Some angel say, Where ran proud Asia's bound?
Or where with fruits was fair Europa crown'd?
Where stretch'd waste Libya? Where did India's store
Sparkle in diamonds, and her golden ore?
Each lost in each, their mingling kingdoms glow,
And all, dissolved, one fiery deluge flow:
Thus earth's contending monarchies are join'd,
And a full period of ambition find.

And now whate'er or swims, or walks, or flies,
Inhabitants of sea, or earth, or skies;
All on whom Adam's wisdom fix'd a name;
All plunge and perish in the conquering flame.

This globe alone would but defraud the fire,
Starve its devouring rage: the flakes aspire,
And catch the clouds, and make the heavens their prey;
The sun, the moon, the stars, all melt away;
All, all is lost; no monument, no sign,
Where once so proudly blazed the gay machine.
So bubbles on the foaming stream expire,
So sparks that scatter from the kindling fire.
The devastations of one dreadful hour
The great Creator's six days' work devour.
A mighty, mighty ruin! yet one soul
Has more to boast, and far outweighs the whole;
Exalted in superior excellence,
Casts down to nothing such a vast expense.
Have you not seen the' eternal mountains nod,
An earth dissolving, a descending God?

What strange surprises through all nature ran!
For whom these revolutions, but for man?

For him, Omnipotence new measures takes,
For him, through all eternity awakes;
Pours on him gifts sufficient to supply
Heaven's loss, and with fresh glories fill the sky.

Think deeply then, O man, how great thou art;
Pay thyself homage with a trembling heart.
What angels guard, no longer dare neglect;
Slighting thyself, affront not God's respect.
Enter the sacred temple of thy breast,
And gaze, and wander there, a ravish'd guest;
Gaze on those hidden treasures thou shalt find,
Wander through all the glories of thy mind.
Of perfect knowledge, see, the dawning light
Foretells a noon most exquisitely bright!
Here springs of endless joy are breaking forth!
There buds the promise of celestial worth!
Worth, which must ripen in a happier clime,
And brighter sun, beyond the bounds of time.
Thou, minor, canst not guess thy vast estate,
What stores, on foreign coasts, thy landing wait:
Lose not thy claim: let virtue's path be trod;
Thus glad all heaven, and please that bounteous God,
Who, to light thee to pleasures, hung on high
Yon radiant orb, proud regent of the sky;
That service done, its beams shall fade away,
And God shine forth in one eternal day.

Edward Young

Love Of Fame, The Universal Passion (Excerpt)

Man's rich with little, were his judgment true;
Nature is frugal, and her wants are few;
Those few wants answer'd, bring sincere delights;
But fools create themselves new appetites:
Fancy and pride seek things at vast expense,
Which relish not to reason, nor to sense.
When surfeit, or unthankfulness, destroys,
In nature's narrow sphere, our solid joys,
In fancy's airy land of noise and show,
Where nought but dreams, no real pleasures grow;
Like cats in air-pumps, to subsist we strive
On joys too thin to keep the soul alive.
Lemira's sick; make haste; the doctor call:
He comes; but where's his patient? At the ball.
The doctor stares; her woman curt'sies low,
And cries, "My lady, sir, is always so:
Diversions put her maladies to flight;
True, she can't stand, but she can dance all night:
I've known my lady (for she loves a tune)
For fevers take an opera in June:
And, though perhaps you'll think the practice bold,
A midnight park is sovereign for a cold:
With colics, breakfasts of green fruit agree;
With indigestions, supper just at three."
A strange alternative, replied Sir Hans,
Must women have a doctor, or a dance?
Though sick to death, abroad they safely roam,
But droop and die, in perfect health, at home:
For want--but not of health, are ladies ill;
And tickets cure beyond the doctor's bill.

Edward Young

Ocean: An Ode. Concluding With A Wish.

What do we see! Cato then become
A greater name in Britain than in Rome?
Does mankind now admire his virtues more,
Though Lucan, Horace, Virgil, wrote before?
How will posterity this truth explain?
"Cato begins to live in Anna's reign."
The world's great chiefs, in council or in arms,
Rise in your lines with more exalted charms;
Illustrious deeds in distant nations wrought,
And virtues by departed heroes taught,
Raise in your soul a pure immortal flame,
Adorn your life, and consecrate your fame;
To your renown all ages you subdue,
And Caesar fought, and Cato bled for you.

Edward Young

Ocean: An Ode. Concluding With A Wish.*

I.

Sweet rural scene!
Of flocks and green!

At careless ease my limbs are spread;

All nature still
But yonder rill;

And listening pines not o'er my head:

II

In prospect wide,
The boundless tide!

Waves cease to foam, and winds to roar;

Without a breeze,
The curling seas

Dance on, in measure, to the shore.

III

Who sings the source
Of wealth and force?

Vast field of commerce and big war:

Where wonders dwell!
Where terrors swell!

And Neptune thunders from his car?

IV

Where? where are they,
Whom Pean's ray

Has touch'd, and bid divinely rave?

What, none aspire?
I snatch the lyre,

And plunge into the foaming wave.

V

The wave resounds!
The rock rebounds!

The Nereids to my song reply!

I lead the choir,
And they conspire

With voice and shell to lift it high;

VI

They spread in air
Their bosoms fair;

Their verdant tresses pour behind.

The billows beat
With nimble feet,
With notes triumphant swell the wind.

VII

Who love the shore,
And they conspire
With voice and shell to lift it high;
Let those adore
The God Apollo, and his Nine,
Parnassus' hill,
And Orpheus' skill;
But let Arion's harp be mine.

VIII

The main! the main!
Is Britain's reign;
Her strength, her glory, is her fleet;
The main! the main!
Be Briton's strain;
As Triton's strong, as Syren's sweet.

IX

Through nature wide,
Is nought descry'd
So rich in pleasure, or surprize;
When all-serene
How sweet the scene!
How dreadful, when the billows rise.

X

And storms deface
The fluid glass
In which ere-while Britannia fair
Look'd down with pride,
Like Ocean's bride,
Adjusting her majestic air.

XI

When tempests cease,
And hush'd in peace
The flatten'd surges smoothly spread
Deep silence keep,
And seem to sleep
Recumbent on their oozy bed;

XII

With what a trance

The level glance,
Unbroken, shoots along the seas!
Which tempt from shore
the painted oar;
And every canvas courts the breeze!

XIII

When rushes forth
The frowning North
On blackening billows, with what dread
My shuddering soul
Beholds them roll,
And hears their roarings o'er my head!

XIV

With terror mark
Yon flying bark!
Now, center-deep descend the brave;
Now, toss'd on high
It takes the sky,
A feather on the towering wave!

XV

Now, spins around
In whirls profound;
Now, whelm'd; now, pendant near the clouds;
Now, stunn'd, it reels
Midst thunder's peals;
And, now, fierce lightening fires the shrouds.

XVI

All aether burns!
Chaos returns!
And blends once more the seas and skies;
No space between
Thy bosom green,
O Deep! and the blue concave, lies.

XVII

The northern blast,
The shatter'd mast,
The fyr, the whirlpool, and the rock,
The breaking spout,
the stars gone out,
The boiling sreight, the monsters shock.

XVIII

Let others fear;

To Britain dear
What'er promotes her daring claim;
Those terrors charm,
Which keep her warm
In chace of honest gain or fame.

XIX

The stars are bright
To cheer the night,
And shed, through shadows, temper'd fire;
And Phoebus flames
With burnish'd beams,
Which some adore, and all admire.

XX

Are then the seas
Outshone by these?
Bright Thetys! thou art not outshone;
With kinder beams
And softer gleams,
Thy bosom wears them as thy own

XXI

There, set in green,
Gold-stars are seen,
A mantle rich! thy charms to wrap;
And when the sun
His race has run
He falls enamour'd in thy lap.

XXII

Those clouds, whose dyes
Adorn the skies,
That silver snow, that pearly rain;
Has Phoebus stole
To grace the pole,
The plunder of th' invaded main!

XXIII

The gaudy bow,
Whose colours glow,
Whose arch with so much skill is bent,
To Phoebus' ray
Which paints so gay,
By thee the watery woof was lent.

XXIV

In chambers deep,

Where waters sleep,
What unknown treasures pave the floor!
The pearl in rows
Pale lustre throws;
The wealth immense, which storms devour.
XXV

From Indian mines,
With proud designs,
the merchant, swain, digs golden ore.
The tempests rise,
And seize the prize,
And toss him breathless on the shore.
XXVI

His son complains
In pious strains
"Ah! cruel thirst of gold!" he cries;
Then ploughs the main,
In zeal for gain,
The tears yet swelling in his eyes.
XXVII

Thou watery vast!
What mounds are cast
To bar thy dreadful flowings-o'er?
Thy proudest foam
Must know its home;
But rage of gold disdains a shore.
XXVIII

Gold Pleasure buys;
But Pleasure dies,
Too soon the tross fruition cloy:
Though raptures court,
The sense is short;
But Virtue kindles living joys;
XXIX

Joys felt alone!
Joys ask'd of none!
Which Time's and Fortune's arrows miss;
Joys that subsist,
Though Fates resist,
And unprecarious endless bliss!
XXX

The soul refin'd

Is most inclin'd
To every moral excellence;
All Vice is dull,
A knave's a fool;
And Virtue is the child of Sense
XXXI

The virtuous mind
Nor wave, nor wind,
Nor civil rage, nor tyrant's frown,
The shaken ball
Nor planets fall,
From its firm basis can dethrone.
XXXII

This Britain knows,
And therefore glows
With generous passions, and expends
Her wealth and zeal
On public weal,
And brightens both by godlike ends.
XXXIII

What end so great,
As that which late
Awoke the Genius of the main,
Which towering rose
With George to close,
And rival great Eliza's reign?
XXXIV

A voice has flown
From Britain's throne
To reinflame a grand design;
That voice shall rear
Yon fabrick fair,¹
As Nature's rose at the divine.
XXXV

When nature sprung,
Blest angels sung,
And shouted o'er the rising ball;
For strains as high
As main's can fly,
These sea-devoted honours call.
XXXVI

From boisterous seas,

The lap of ease
Receives our wounded and our old;
High domes ascend!
Stretc'd arches bend!
Proud columns swell! wide gates unfold!

XXXVII

So sleeps the grain,
In fostering rain,
And vital beams, till Jove descend;
Then bursts the root!
the verdures shoot!
And earth enrich, adorn, defend!

XXXVIII

Here, soft-reclin'd
From wave, from wind,
And Fortune's tempest safe ashore,
To cheat their care,
Of former war
They talk the pleasing shadows o'er.

XXXIX

In lengthen'd tales,
Our fleet prevails;
In tales the lenitives of age!
And, o'er the bowl,
They fire the soul
Of listening youth, to martial rage.

XL

The story done,
Their setting sun,
Serenely smiling down the West,
In soft decay,
They drop away;
And Honour leads them to their rest.

XLI

Unhappy they!
And falsely gay!
Who bask for ever in success;
A constant feast
Quite palls the taste,
And long enjoyment is distress.

XLII

What charms us most,

Our joy, our boast,
Familiar, loses all its bliss;
And gold refin'd
The fated mind
Fastidious turns to perfect dross.

XLIII

When, after toil,
His native soil
The panting mariner regains
What transport flows
From bare repose!
We reap our pleasure from our pains.

XLIV

Ye warlike slain!
Beneath the main,
Wrapt in a watery winding sheet;
Who bought with blood
Your country's good,
Your country's full-blown glory's greet.

XLV

What powerful charm
Can death disarm?
Your long, your iron slumbers break?
By Jove, by Fame,
By George's name,
Awake! awake! awake!

XLVI

Our joy so proud,
Our shout so loud,
Without a charm the dead might hear:
And see, they rouse!
Their awful brows,
Deep-scar'd, from oozy pillows rear!

XLVII

With spiral shell,
Full-blasted, tell
That all your watery realms should sing;
Your pearl-alcoves,
Your coral-groves,
Should echo theirs, and Britain's king.

XLVIII

As long as stars

Guide mariners,
As Carolina's virtues please,
Or suns invite
The ravish'd sight,
The British flag shall sweep the seas.

XLIX

Peculiar both!
Our soil's strong growth,
And our bold natives hardy mind;
Sure Heaven bespoke
Our hearts, and oak,
To give a master to mankind.

L

That noblest birth
Of teaming earth,
Of forests fair that daughter proud,
To foreign coasts
Our grandeur boasts
And Britain's pleasure speaks aloud.

LI

Now big with war
Sends Fate from far,
If rebel realms their Fate demand;
Now, sumptuous spoils
Of foreign soils
Pours in the bottom of our land.

LII

Hence, Britain lays
In scales, and weighs
The fates of kingdoms and of kings;
And as she frowns
Or smiles, on crown
A night or day of glory springs.

LIII

Thus Ocean swells
The streams and rills,
And to their borders lifts them high;
Or else withdraws
The mighty cause,
And leaves their famish'd channels dry.

LIV

How mixt, how frail,

How sure to fail,
Is every pleasure of mankind!
A damp destroys
My blooming joys,
While Britain's glory fires my mind.

LV

For who can gaze
On restless seas,
Unstruck with life's more restless state?
Where all are toss'd,
And most are lost
By tides of passion, blasts of fate?

LVI

The world's the main,
How vext! how vain!
Ambition swells, and Anger foams;
May good men find,
Beneath the wind,
A noiseless shore, unruffled homes!

LVII

The public scene
Of harden'd men
Teach me, O teach me to despise!
The world few know
But to their woe,
Our crimes with our experience rise;

LVIII

All tender sense
Is banish'd thence,
All maiden nature's first alarms;
What shock'd before
Disgusts no more,
And what disgusted has its charms

LIX

In landskips green
True Bliss is seen,
With Innocence, in shades, the sports;
In wealthy towns
Proud labour frowns,
And painted Sorrow smiles in courts.

LX

These scenes untry'd

Seduc'd my pride,
To Fortune's arrows bar'd my breast;
Till Wisdom came,
A hoary dame!
And told me pleasure was in rest.

LXI

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

Edward Young

Penitence

Great God!
Greater than greatest! better than the best!
Kinder than kindest! with soft pity's eye
Look down -
On a poor breathing particle of dust!
Or, lower, - an immortal in his crimes.
His crimes forgive, forgive his virtues too!
Those smaller faults, half converts to the right.

Edward Young

Resignation Pt 1

The days how few, how short the years
Of man's too rapid race!
Each leaving, as it swiftly flies,
A shorter in its place.

They who the longest lease enjoy,
Have told us with a sigh,
That to be born seems little more
Than to begin to die.

Numbers there are who feel this truth
With fears alarm'd; and yet,
In life's delusions lull'd asleep,
This weighty truth forget:

And am not I to these akin?
Age slumbers o'er the quill;
Its honour blots, whate'er it writes,
And am I writing still?

Conscious of nature in decline,
And languor in my thoughts;
To soften censure, and abate
Its rigour on my faults

Permit me, madam! ere to you
The promis'd verse I pay,
To touch on felt infirmity,
Sad sister of decay.

One world deceas'd, another born,
Like Noah they behold,
O'er whose white hairs, and furrow'd brows,
Too many suns have roll'd:

Happy the patriarch! he rejoic'd
His second world to see:
My second world, though gay the scene,
Can boast no charms for me.

To me this brilliant age appears
With desolation spread;
Near all with whom I liv'd, and smil'd,
Whilst life was life, are dead;

And with them died my joys; the grave
Has broken nature's laws;
And clos'd, against this feeble frame,
Its partial cruel jaws;

Cruel to spare! condemn'd to life!
A cloud impairs my sight;
My weak hand disobeys my will,
And trembles as I write.

What shall I write? Thalia, tell;
Say, long abandon'd muse!
What field of fancy shall I range?
What subject shall I choose?

A choice of moment high inspire,
And rescue me from shame,
For doting on thy charms so late,
By grandeur in my theme.

Beyond the themes, which most admire,
Which dazzle, or amaze,
Beyond renown'd exploits of war,
Bright charms, or empire's blaze,

Are themes, which, in a world of woe
Can best appease our pain;
And, in an age of gaudy guilt,
Gay folly's flood restrain;

Amidst the storms of life support
A calm, unshaken mind;
And with unfading laurels crown
The brow of the resign'd.

O resignation! yet unsung,

Untouch'd by former strains;
Though claiming every muse's smile,
And every poet's pains,

Beneath life's evening, solemn shade,
I dedicate my page
To thee, thou safest guard of youth!
Thou sole support of age!

All other duties crescents are
Of virtue faintly bright,
The glorious consummation, thou!
Which fills her orb with light:

How rarely fill'd! the love divine
In evils to discern,
This the first lesson which we want,
The latest, which we learn;

A melancholy truth! for know,
Could our proud hearts resign,
The distance greatly would decrease
'Twixt human and divine.

But though full noble is my theme,
Full urgent is my call
To soften sorrow, and forbid
The bursting tear to fall:

The task I dread; dare I to leave
Of humble prose the shore,
And put to sea? a dangerous sea?
What throngs have sunk before!

How proud the poet's billow swells!
The God! the God! his boast:
A boast how vain! What wrecks abound!
Dead bards stench every coast.

What then am I? Shall I presume,
On such a moulten wing,
Above the general wreck to rise,

And in my winter, sing;

When nightingales, when sweetest bards
Confine their charming song
To summer's animating heats,
Content to warble young?

Yet write I must; a lady(49) sues;
How shameful her request!
My brain in labour for dull rhyme!
Hers teeming with the best!

But you a stranger will excuse,
Nor scorn his feeble strain;
To you a stranger, but, through fate,
No stranger to your pain.

The ghost of grief decess'd ascends,
His old wound bleeds anew;
His sorrows are recall'd to life
By those he sees in you;

Too well he knows the twisting strings
Of ardent hearts combin'd
When rent asunder, how they bleed,
How hard to be resign'd:

Those tears you pour, his eyes have shed;
The pang you feel, he felt;
Thus nature, loud as virtue, bids
His heart at yours to melt.

But what can heart, or head, suggest?
What sad experience say?
Through truths austere, to peace we work
Our rugged, gloomy way:

What are we? whence? for what? and whither?
Who know not, needs must mourn;
But thought, bright daughter of the skies!
Can tears to triumph turn.

Thought is our armour, 'tis the mind's
Impenetrable shield,
When, sent by fate, we meet our foes,
In sore affliction's field;

It plucks the frightful mask from ills,
Forbids pale fear to hide,
Beneath that dark disguise, a friend,
Which turns affection's tide.

Affection frail! train'd up by sense,
From reason's channel strays:
And whilst it blindly points at peace,
Our peace to pain betrays.

Thought winds its fond, erroneous stream
From daily dying flowers,
To nourish rich immortal blooms,
In amaranthine bowers;

Whence throngs, in ecstasy, look down
On what once shock'd their sight;
And thank the terrors of the past
For ages of delight.

All withers here; who most possess
Are losers by their gain,
Stung by full proof, that, bad at best,
Life's idle all is vain:

Vain, in its course, life's murmuring stream;
Did not its course offend,
But murmur cease; life, then, would seem
Still vainer, from its end.

How wretched! who, through cruel fate,
Have nothing to lament!
With the poor alms this world affords
Deplorably content!

Had not the Greek his world mistook,
His wish had been most wise;

To be content with but one world,
Like him, we should despise.

Of earth's revenue would you state
A full account and fair?
We hope; and hope; and hope; then cast
The total up---
 Despair.

Since vain all here, all future, vast,
Embrace the lot assign'd;
Heaven wounds to heal; its frowns are friends;
Its stroke severe, most kind.

But in laps'd nature rooted deep,
Blind error domineers;
And on fools' errands, in the dark,
Sends out our hopes and fears;

Bids us for ever pains deplore,
Our pleasures overprize;
These oft persuade us to be weak;
Those urge us to be wise.

From virtue's rugged path to right
By pleasure are we brought,
To flowery fields of wrong, and there
Pain chides us for our fault:

Yet whilst it chides, it speaks of peace
If folly is withstood;
And says, time pays an easy price,
For our eternal good.

In earth's dark cot, and in an hour,
And in delusion great,
What an economist is man
To spend his whole estate,

And beggar an eternity!
For which as he was born,
More worlds than one against it weigh'd,

As feathers he should scorn.

Say not, your loss in triumph leads
Religion's feeble strife;
Joys future amply reimburse
Joys bankrupts of this life.

But not deferr'd your joy so long,
It bears an early date;
Affliction's ready pay in hand,
Befriends our present state;

What are the tears, which trickle down
Her melancholy face,
Like liquid pearl? Like pearls of price,
They purchase lasting peace.

Grief softens hearts, and curbs the will,
Impetuous passion tames,
And keeps insatiate, keen desire
From launching in extremes.

Through time's dark womb, our judgment right,
If our dim eye was thrown,
Clear should we see, the will divine
Has but forestall'd our own;

At variance with our future wish,
Self-sever'd we complain;
If so, the wounded, not the wound,
Must answer for the pain:

The day shall come, and swift of wing,
Though you may think it slow,
When, in the list of fortune's smiles,
You'll enter frowns of woe.

For mark the path of Providence;
This course it has pursued-
'Pain is the parent, woe the womb,
Of sound, important good:'

Our hearts are fasten'd to this world
By strong and endless ties:
And every sorrow cuts a string,
And urges us to rise:

'Twill sound severe-Yet rest assur'd
I'm studious of your peace;
Though I should dare to give you joy-
Yes, joy of his decease:

An hour shall come, (you question this,)
An hour, when you shall bless,
Beyond the brightest beams of life,
Dark days of your distress.

Hear then without surprise a truth,
A daughter truth to this,
Swift turns of fortune often tie
A bleeding heart to bliss:

Esteem you this a paradox?
My sacred motto read;
A glorious truth! divinely sung
By one, whose heart had bled;

To resignation swift he flew,
In her a friend he found,
A friend, which bless'd him with a smile
When gasping with his wound.

On earth nought precious is obtain'd
But what is painful too;
By travel, and to travel born,
Our sabbaths are but few:

To real joy we work our way,
Encountering many a shock,
Ere found what truly charms; as found
A Venus in the block.

In some disaster, some severe
Appointment for our sins,

That mother blessing, (not so call'd,)
True happiness, begins.

No martyr e'er defied the flames,
By stings of life unvext;
First rose some quarrel with this world,
Then passion for the next.

You see, then, pangs are parent pangs,
The pangs of happy birth;
Pangs, by which only can be born
True happiness on earth.

The peopled earth look all around,
Or through time's records run!
And say, what is a man unstruck?
It is a man undone.

This moment, am I deeply stung-
My bold pretence is tried;
When vain man boasts, heaven puts to proof
The vauntings of his pride;

Now need I, madam! your support.-
How exquisite the smart;
How critically tim'd the news(50)
Which strikes me to the heart!

The pangs of which I spoke, I feel:
If worth like thine is born,
O long-belov'd! I bless the blow,
And triumph, whilst I mourn.

Nor mourn I long; by grief subdued,
By reason's empire shown;
Deep anguish comes by heaven's decree,
Continues by our own;

And when continued past its point,
Indulg'd in length of time,
Grief is disgrac'd, and, what was fate,
Corrupts into a crime:

And shall I, criminally mean,
Myself and subject wrong?
No; my example shall support
The subject of my song.

Madam! I grant your loss is great;
Nor little is your gain?
Let that be weigh'd; when weigh'd aright,
It richly pays your pain:

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

But such a friend! and sigh no more?
'Tis prudent; but severe:
Heaven aid my weakness, and I drop
All sorrow-with this tear.

Perhaps your settled grief to soothe,
I should not vainly strive,
But with soft balm your pain assuage,
Had he been still alive;

Whose frequent aid brought kind relief,
In my distress of thought,
Ting'd with his beams my cloudy page,
And beautified a fault:

To touch our passions' secret springs
Was his peculiar care;
And deep his happy genius div'd
In bosoms of the fair;

Nature, which favours to the few,
All art beyond, imparts,
To him presented, at his birth,
The key of human hearts.

But not to me by him bequeath'd

His gentle, smooth address;
His tender hand to touch the wound
In throbbing of distress;

Howe'er, proceed I must, unblest
With Esculapian art:
Know, love sometimes, mistaken love!
Plays disaffection's part:

Nor lands, nor seas, nor suns, nor stars,
Can soul from soul divide;
They correspond from distant worlds,
Though transports are denied:

Are you not, then, unkindly kind?
Is not your love severe?
O! stop that crystal source of woe;
Nor wound him with a tear.

As those above from human bliss
Receive increase of joy;
May not a stroke from human woe,
In part, their peace destroy?

He lives in those he left;-to what?
Your, now, paternal care,
Clear from its cloud your brighten'd eye,
It will discern him there;

In features, not of form alone,
But those, I trust, of mind;
Auspicious to the public weal,
And to their fate resign'd.

Think on the tempests he sustain'd;
Revolve his battles won;
And let those prophesy your joy
From such a father's son:

Is consolation what you seek?
Fan, then, his martial fire:
And animate to flame the sparks

Bequeath'd him by his sire:

As nothing great is born in haste,
Wise nature's time allow;
His father's laurels may descend,
And flourish on his brow.

Nor, madam! be surpris'd to hear
That laurels may be due
Not more to heroes of the field,
(Proud boasters!) than to you:

Tender as is the female frame,
Like that brave man you mourn,
You are a soldier, and to fight
Superior battles born;

Beneath a banner nobler far
Than ever was unfurl'd
In fields of blood; a banner bright!
High wav'd o'er all the world.

It, like a streaming meteor, casts
A universal light;
Sheds day, sheds more, eternal day
On nations whelm'd in night.

Beneath that banner, what exploit
Can mount our glory higher,
Than to sustain the dreadful blow,
When those we love expire?

Go forth a moral Amazon;
Arm'd with undaunted thought;
The battle won, though costing dear,
You'll think it cheaply bought:

The passive hero, who sits down
Unactive, and can smile
Beneath affliction's galling load,
Out-acts a Caesar's toil:

The billows stain'd by slaughter'd foes
Inferior praise afford;
Reason's a bloodless conqueror,
More glorious than the sword.

Nor can the thunders of huzzas,
From shouting nations, cause
Such sweet delight, as from your heart
Soft whispers of applause:

The dear deceas'd so fam'd in arms,
With what delight he'll view
His triumphs on the main outdone,
Thus conquer'd, twice, by you.

Share his delight; take heed to shun
Of bosoms most diseas'd
That odd distemper, an absurd
Reluctance to be pleas'd:

Some seem in love with sorrow's charms,
And that foul fiend embrace:
This temper let me justly brand,
And stamp it with disgrace:

Sorrow! of horrid parentage!
Thou second-born of hell!
Against heaven's endless mercies pour'd
How dar'st thou to rebel?

From black and noxious vapours bred,
And nurs'd by want of thought,
And to the door of phrensy's self
By perseverance brought,

Thy most inglorious, coward tears
From brutal eyes have ran:
Smiles, incommunicable smiles!
Are radiant marks of man;

They cast a sudden glory round
Th' illumin'd human face;

And light in sons of honest joy
Some beams of Moses' face:

Is resignation's lesson hard?
Examine, we shall find
That duty gives up little more
Than anguish of the mind;

Resign; and all the load of life
That moment you remove,
Its heavy tax, ten thousand cares
Devolve on one above;

Who bids us lay our burthen down
On his almighty hand,
Softens our duty to relief,
To blessing a command.

For joy what cause! how every sense
Is courted from above
The year around, with presents rich,
The growth of endless love!

But most o'erlook the blessings pour'd,
Forget the wonders done,
And terminate, wrapp'd up in sense,
Their prospect at the sun;

From that, their final point of view,
From that their radiant goal,
On travel infinite of thought,
Sets out the nobler soul,

Broke loose from time's tenacious ties,
And earth's involving gloom,
To range at last its vast domain,
And talk with worlds to come:

They let unmark'd, and unemploy'd,
Life's idle moments run;
And doing nothing for themselves,
Imagine nothing done;

Fatal mistake! their fate goes on,
Their dread account proceeds,
And their not doing is set down
Amongst their darkest deeds;

Though man sits still, and takes his ease;
God is at work on man;
No means, no moment unemployed,
To bless him, if he can.

But man consents not, boldly bent
To fashion his own fate;
Man, a mere bungler in the trade,
Repents his crime too late;

Hence loud laments: let me thy cause,
Indulgent father! plead;
Of all the wretches we deplore,
Not one by thee was made.

What is thy whole creation fair?
Of love divine the child;
Love brought it forth; and, from its birth,
Has o'er it fondly smil'd:

Now, and through periods distant far,
Long ere the world began,
Heaven is, and has in travail been,
Its birth the good of man;

Man holds in constant service bound
The blustering winds and seas;
Nor suns disdain to travel hard
Their master, man, to please:

To final good the worst events
Through secret channels run;
Finish for man their destin'd course,
As 'twas for man begun.

One point (observ'd, perhaps, by few)

Has often smote, and smites
My mind, as demonstration strong;
That heaven in man delights:

What's known to man of things unseen,
Of future worlds, or fates?
So much, nor more, than what to man's
Sublime affairs relates;

What's revelation then? a list,
An inventory just
Of that poor insect's goods, so late
Call'd out of night and dust.

What various motives to rejoice!
To render joy sincere,
Has this no weight? our joy is felt
Beyond this narrow sphere:

Would we in heaven new heaven create,
And double its delight?
A smiling world, when heaven looks down,
How pleasing in its sight!

Angels stoop forward from their thrones
To hear its joyful lays;
As incense sweet enjoy, and join,
Its aromatic praise:

Have we no cause to fear the stroke
Of heaven's avenging rod,
When we presume to counteract
A sympathetic God?

If we resign, our patience makes
His rod an armless wand;
If not, it darts a serpent's sting,
Like that in Moses' hand;

Like that, it swallows up whate'er
Earth's vain magicians bring,
Whose baffled arts would boast below

Of joys a rival spring.

Consummate love! the list how large
Of blessings from thy hand!
To banish sorrow, and be blest,
Is thy supreme command.

Are such commands but ill obey'd?
Of bliss, shall we complain?
The man, who dares to be a wretch,
Deserves still greater pain.

Joy is our duty, glory, health;
The sunshine of the soul;
Our best encomium on the power
Who sweetly plans the whole:

Joy is our Eden still possess'd:
Begone, ignoble grief!
'Tis joy makes gods, and men exalts,
Their nature, our relief;

Relief, for man to that must stoop,
And his due distance know;
Transport's the language of the sides,
Content the style below.

Content is joy, and joy in pain
Is joy and virtue too;
Thus, whilst good present we possess,
More precious we pursue:

Of joy the more we have in hand,
The more have we to come;
Joy, like our money, interest bears,
Which daily swells the sum.

'But how to smile; to stem the tide
Of nature in our veins;
Is it not hard to weep in joy?
What then to smile in pains?'

Victorious joy! which breaks the clouds,
And struggles through a storm;
Proclaims the mind as great, as good
And bids it doubly charm:

If doubly charming in our sex,
A sex, by nature, bold;
What then in yours? 'tis diamond there
Triumphant o'er our gold.

And should not this complaint repress,
And check the rising sigh?
Yet farther opiate to your pain
I labour to supply.

Since spirits greatly damp'd distort
Ideas of delight,
Look through the medium of a friend,
To set your notions right:

As tears the sight, grief dims the soul;
Its object dark appears;
True friendship, like a rising sun,
The soul's horizon clears.

A friend's an optic to the mind
With sorrow clouded o'er;
And gives it strength of sight to see
Redress unseen before.

Reason is somewhat rough in man;
Extremely smooth and fair,
When she, to grace her manly strength,
Assumes a female air:

A friend(51) you have, and I the same,
Whose prudent, soft address
Will bring to life those healing thoughts
Which died in your distress;

That friend, the spirit of my theme
Extracting for your ease,

Will leave to me the dreg, in thoughts
Too common; such as these:

Let those lament to whom full bowls
Of sparkling joys are given;
That triple bane inebriates life,
Imbitters death, and hazards heaven:

Woe to the soul at perfect ease!
'Tis brewing perfect pains;
Lull'd reason sleeps, the pulse is king;
Despotic body reigns;

Have you(52) ne'er pitied joy's gay scenes,
And deem'd their glory dark?
Alas! poor envy! she's stone-blind,
And quite mistakes her mark:

Her mark lies hid in sorrow's shades,
But sorrow well subdu'd;
And in proud fortune's frown defied
By meek, unborrow'd good.

By resignation; all in that
A double friend may find,
A wing to heaven, and, while on earth,
The pillow of mankind:

On pillows void of down, for rest
Our restless hopes we place;
When hopes of heaven lie warm at heart,
Our hearts repose in peace:

The peace, which resignation yields,
Who feel alone can guess;
'Tis disbeliev'd by murmuring minds,
They must conclude it less:

The loss, or gain, of that alone
Have we to hope or fear;
That fate controls, and can invert
The seasons of the year:

O! the dark days, the year around,
Of an impatient mind!
Thro' clouds, and storms, a summer breaks,
To shine on the resign'd:

While man by that of every grace,
And virtue, is possess'd;
Foul vice her pandaemonium builds
In the rebellious breast;

By resignation we defeat
The worst that can annoy;
And suffer, with far more repose,
Than worldlings can enjoy.

From small experience this I speak;
O! grant to those I love
Experience fuller far, ye powers,
Who form our fates above!

My love were due, if not to those
Who, leaving grandeur, came
To shine on age in mean recess,
And light me to my theme!

A theme themselves! A theme, how rare!
The charms, which they display,
To triumph over captive heads,
Are set in bright array:

With his own arms proud man's o'ercome,
His boasted laurels die:
Learning and genius, wiser grown,
To female bosoms fly.

This revolution, fix'd by fate,
In fable was foretold;
The dark prediction puzzled wits,
Nor could the learn'd unfold:

But as those ladies'(53) works I read,

They darted such a ray,
The latent sense burst out at once,
And shone in open day:

So burst, full ripe, distended fruits,
When strongly strikes the sun;
And from the purple grape unpress'd
Spontaneous nectars run.

Pallas, ('tis said,) when Jove grew dull,
Forsook his drowsy brain;
And sprightly leap'd into the throne
Of wisdom's brighter reign;

Her helmet took; that is, shot rays
Of formidable wit;
And lance,-or, genius most acute,
Which lines immortal writ;

And gorgon shield,-or, power to fright
Man's folly, dreadful shone,
And many a blockhead (easy change!)
Turn'd, instantly, to stone.

Our authors male, as, then, did Jove,
Now scratch a damag'd head,
And call for what once quarter'd there,
But find the goddess fled.

The fruit of knowledge, golden fruit!
That once forbidden tree,
Hedg'd-in by surly man, is now
To Britain's daughters free:

In Eve (we know) of fruit so fair
The noble thirst began;
And they, like her, have caus'd a fall,
A fall of fame in man:

And since of genius in our sex,
O Addison! with thee
The sun is set; how I rejoice

This sister lamp to see!

It sheds, like Cynthia, silver beams
On man's nocturnal state;
His lessen'd light, and languid powers,
I show, whilst I relate.

Edward Young

Resignation Pt 2

But what in either sex, beyond
All parts, our glory crowns?
'In ruffling seasons to be calm,
And smile, when fortune frowns.'

Heaven's choice is safer than our own;
Of ages past inquire,
What the most formidable fate?
'To have our own desire.'

If, in your wrath, the worst of foes
You wish extremely ill;
Expose him to the thunder's stroke,
Or that of his own will.

What numbers, rushing down the steep
Of inclination strong,
Have perish'd in their ardent wish!
Wish ardent, ever wrong!

'Tis resignation's full reverse,
Most wrong, as it implies
Error most fatal in our choice,
Detachment from the skies.

By closing with the skies, we make
Omnipotence our own;
That done, how formidable ill's
Whole army is o'erthrown!

No longer impotent, and frail,
Ourselves above we rise:
We scarce believe ourselves below!
We trespass on the skies!

The Lord, the soul, and source of all,
Whilst man enjoys his ease,
Is executing human will,
In earth, and air, and seas;

Beyond us, what can angels boast?
Archangels what require?
Whate'er below, above, is done,
Is done as-we desire.

What glory this for man so mean,
Whose life is but a span!
This is meridian majesty!
This, the sublime of man!

Beyond the boast of pagan song
My sacred subject shines!
And for a foil the lustre takes
Of Rome's exalted lines.

'All, that the sun surveys, subdued,
But Cato's mighty mind.'
How grand! most true; yet far beneath
The soul of the resign'd:

To more than kingdoms, more than worlds,
To passion that gives law;
Its matchless empire could have kept
Great Cato's pride in awe;

That fatal pride, whose cruel point
Transfix'd his noble breast;
Far nobler! if his fate sustain'd
And left to heaven the rest;

Then he the palm had borne away,
At distance Caesar thrown;
Put him off cheaply with the world,
And made the skies his own.

What cannot resignation do?
It wonders can perform;
That powerful charm, 'Thy will be done,'
Can lay the loudest storm.

Come, resignation! then, from fields,

Where, mounted on the wing,
A wing of flame, blest martyrs' souls
Ascended to their king.

Who is it calls thee? one whose need
Transcends the common size;
Who stands in front against a foe
To which no equal rise:

In front he stands, the brink he treads
Of an eternal state;
How dreadful his appointed post!
How strongly arm'd by fate:

His threatening foe! what shadows deep
O'erwhelm his gloomy brow!
His dart tremendous! -at fourscore
My sole asylum, thou!

Haste, then, O resignation! haste,
'Tis thine to reconcile
My foe, and me; at thy approach
My foe begins to smile:

O! for that summit of my wish,
Whilst here I draw my breath,
That promise of eternal life,
A glorious smile in death:

What sight, heaven's azure arch beneath,
Has most of heaven to boast?
The man resign'd; at once serene,
And giving up the ghost.

At death's arrival they shall smile,
Who, not in life o'er gay,
Serious and frequent thought send out
To meet him on his way:

My gay coevals! (such there are)
If happiness is dear;
Approaching death's alarming day

Discreetly let us fear:

The fear of death is truly wise,
Till wisdom can rise higher;
And, arm'd with pious fortitude,
Death dreaded once, desire:

Grand climacteric vanities
The vainest will despise;
Shock'd, when beneath the snow of age
Man immaturely dies:

But am not I myself the man?
No need abroad to roam
In quest of faults to be chastis'd;
What cause to blush at home?

In life's decline, when men relapse
Into the sports of youth,
The second child out-fools the first,
And tempts the lash of truth;

Shall a mere truant from the grave
With rival boys engage?
His trembling voice attempt to sing,
And ape the poet's rage?

Here, madam! let me visit one,
My fault who, partly, shares,
And tell myself, by telling him,
What more becomes our years;

And if your breast with prudent zeal
For resignation glows,
You will not disapprove a just
Resentment at its foes.

In youth, Voltaire! our foibles plead
For some indulgence due;
When heads are white, their thoughts and aims
Should change their colour too:

How are you cheated by your wit!
Old age is bound to pay,
By nature's law, a mind discreet,
For joys it takes away;

A mighty change is wrought by years,
Reversing human lot;
In age 'tis honour to lie hid,
'Tis praise to be forgot;

The wise, as flowers, which spread at noon,
And all their charms expose,
When evening damps and shades descend,
Their evolutions close.

What though your muse has nobly soar'd,
Is that our truth sublime?
Ours, hoary friend! is to prefer
Eternity to time:

Why close a life so justly fam'd
With such bold trash as this? (54)
This for renown? yes, such as makes
Obscurity a bliss:

Your trash, with mine, at open war,
Is obstinately bent,(55)
Like wits below, to sow your tares
Of gloom and discontent:

With so much sunshine at command,
Why light with darkness mix?
Why dash with pain our pleasure?
Your Helicon with Styx?

Your works in our divided minds
Repugnant passions raise,
Confound us with a double stroke,
We shudder whilst we praise;

A curious web, as finely wrought
As genius can inspire,

From a black bag of poison spun,
With horror we admire.

Mean as it is, if this is read
With a disdainful air,
I can't forgive so great a foe
To my dear friend Voltaire:

Early I knew him, early prais'd,
And long to praise him late;
His genius greatly I admire,
Nor would deplore his fate;

A fate how much to be deplor'd!
At which our nature starts;
Forbear to fall on your own sword.
To perish by your parts:

'But great your name'-To feed on air,
Were then immortals born?
Nothing is great, of which more great,
More glorious is the scorn.

Can fame your carcass from the worm
Which gnaws us in the grave,
Or soul from that which never dies,
Applauding Europe save?

But fame you lose; good sense alone
Your idol, praise, can claim;
When wild wit murders happiness,
It puts to death our fame!

Nor boast your genius, talents bright;
E'en dunces will despise,
If in your western beams is miss'd
A genius for the skies;

Your taste too fails; what most excels
True taste must relish most!
And what, to rival palms above,
Can proudest laurels boast?

Sound heads salvation's helmet seek,(56)
Resplendent are its rays,
Let that suffice; it needs no plume,
Of sublunary praise.

May this enable couch'd Voltaire
To see that-'All is right,'(57)
His eye, by flash of wit struck blind,
Restoring to its sight;

If so, all's well: who much have err'd,
That much have been forgiven;
I speak with joy, with joy he'll hear,
'Voltaires are, now, in heaven.'

Nay, such philanthropy divine,
So boundless in degree,
Its marvellous of love extends
(Stoops most profound!) to me:

Let others cruel stars arraign,
Or dwell on their distress;
But let my page, for mercies pour'd,
A grateful heart express:

Walking, the present God was seen,
Of old, in Eden fair;
The God as present, by plain steps
Of providential care,

I behold passing through my life;
His awful voice I hear;
And, conscious of my nakedness,
Would hide myself for fear:

But where the trees, or where the clouds,
Can cover from his sight?
Naked the centre to that eye,
To which the sun is night.

As yonder glittering lamps on high

Through night illumin'd roll;
My thoughts of him, by whom they shine,
Chase darkness from my soul;

My soul, which reads his hand as clear
In my minute affairs,
As in his ample manuscript
Of sun, and moon, and stars;

And knows him not more bent aright
To wield that vast machine,
Than to correct one erring thought
In my small world within;

A world, that shall survive the fall
Of all his wonders here;
Survive, when suns ten thousand drop,
And leave a darken'd sphere.

Yon matter gross, how bright it shines!
For time how great his care!
Sure spirit and eternity
Far richer glories share;

Let those our hearts impress, on those
Our contemplation dwell;
On those my thoughts how justly thrown,
By what I now shall tell:

When backward with attentive mind
Life's labyrinth I trace,
I find him far myself beyond
Propitious to my peace:

Through all the crooked paths I trod,
My folly he pursued;
My heart astray to quick return
Importunately woo'd;

Due resignation home to press
On my capricious will,
How many rescues did I meet,

Beneath the mask of ill!

How many foes in ambush laid
Beneath my soul's desire!
The deepest penitents are made
By what we most admire.

Have I not sometimes (real good
So little mortals know!)
Mounting the summit of my wish,
Profoundly plung'd in woe?

I rarely plann'd, but cause I found
My plan's defeat to bless:
Oft I lamented an event;
It turn'd to my success.

By sharpen'd appetite to give
To good intense delight,
Through dark and deep perplexities
He led me to the right.

And is not this the gloomy path,
Which you are treading now?
The path most gloomy leads to light,
When our proud passions bow:

When labouring under fancied ill,
My spirits to sustain,
He kindly cur'd with sovereign draughts
Of unimagin'd pain.

Pain'd sense from fancied tyranny
Alone can set us free;
A thousand miseries we feel,
Till sunk in misery.

Cloy'd with a glut of all we wish,
Our wish we relish less;
Success, a sort of suicide,
Is ruin'd by success:

Sometimes he led me near to death,
And, pointing to the grave,
Bid terror whisper kind advice;
And taught the tomb to save:

To raise my thoughts beyond where worlds
As spangles o'er us shine,
One day he gave, and bid the next
My soul's delight resign.

We to ourselves, but through the means
Of mirrors, are unknown;
In this my fate can you descry
No features of your own?

And if you can, let that excuse
These self-recording lines;
A record, modesty forbids,
Or to small bound confines:

In grief why deep ingulf'd? You see
You suffer nothing rare;
Uncommon grief for common fate!
That wisdom cannot bear.

When streams flow backward to their source,
And humbled flames descend,
And mountains wing'd shall fly aloft,
Then human sorrows end;

But human prudence too must cease,
When sorrows domineer,
When fortitude has lost its fire,
And freezes into fear:

The pang most poignant of my life
Now heightens my delight;
I see a fair creation rise
From chaos, and old night:

From what seem'd horror, and despair,
The richest harvest rose;

And gave me in the nod divine
An absolute repose.

Of all the plunders of mankind,
More gross, or frequent, none,
Than in their grief and joy misplac'd,
Eternally are shown.

But whither points all this parade?
It says, that near you lies
A book, perhaps yet unperus'd,
Which you should greatly prize:

Of self-perusal, science rare!
Few know the mighty gain;
Learn'd prelates, self-unread, may read
Their Bibles o'er in vain:

Self-knowledge, which from heaven itself
(So sages tell us) came,
What is it, but a daughter fair
Of my maternal theme?

Unletter'd and untravel'd men
An oracle might find,
Would they consult their own contents,
The Delphos of the mind.

Enter your bosom; there you'll meet
A revelation new,
A revelation personal;
Which none can read but you.

There will you clearly read reveal'd
In your enlighten'd thought,
By mercies manifold, through life,
To fresh remembrance brought,

A mighty Being! and in him
A complicated friend,
A father, brother, spouse; no dread
Of death, divorce, or end:

Who such a matchless friend embrace,
And lodge him in their heart,
Full well, from agonies exempt,
With other friends may part:

As when o'erloaded branches bear
Large clusters big with wine,
We scarce regret one falling leaf
From the luxuriant vine.

My short advice to you may sound
Obscure or somewhat odd,
Though 'tis the best that man can give,-
'E'en be content with God.'

Through love he gave you the deceas'd,
Through greater took him hence;
This reason fully could evince,
Though murmur'd at by sense.

This friend, far past the kindest kind,
Is past the greatest great;
His greatness let me touch in points
Not foreign to your state;

His eye, this instant, reads your heart;
A truth less obvious hear;
This instant its most secret thoughts
Are sounding in his ear:

Dispute you this? O! stand in awe,
And cease your sorrow; know,
That tears now trickling down, he saw
Ten thousand years ago;

And twice ten thousand hence, if you
Your temper reconcile
To reason's bound, will he behold
Your prudence with a smile;

A smile, which through eternity

Diffuses so bright rays,
The dimmest deifies e'en guilt,
If guilt, at last, obeys:

Your guilt (for guilt it is to mourn
When such a sovereign reigns) ,
Your guilt diminish; peace pursue;
How glorious peace in pains!

Here, then, your sorrows cease; if not,
Think how unhappy they,
Who guilt increase by streaming tears,
Which guilt should wash away;

Of tears that gush profuse restrain;
Whence burst those dismal sighs?
They from the throbbing breast of one
(Strange truth!) most happy rise;

Not angels (hear it, and exult!)
Enjoy a larger share
Than is indulg'd to you, and yours,
Of God's impartial care;

Anxious for each, as if on each
His care for all was thrown;
For all his care as absolute,
As all had been but one.

And is he then so near! so kind! -
How little then, and great,
That riddle, man! O! let me gaze
At wonders in his fate;

His fate, who yesterday did crawl
A worm from darkness deep,
And shall, with brother worms, beneath
A turf, to-morrow sleep;

How mean! -And yet, if well obey'd
His mighty Master's call,
The whole creation for mean man

Is deem'd a boon too small:

Too small the whole creation deem'd
For emmets in the dust!
Account amazing! yet most true;
My song is bold, yet just:

Man born for infinite, in whom
Nor period can destroy
The power, in exquisite extremes,
To suffer, or enjoy;

Give him earth's empire (if no more)
He's beggar'd, and undone!
Imprison'd in unbounded space!
Benighted by the sun!

For what the sun's meridian blaze
To the most feeble ray
Which glimmers from the distant dawn
Of uncreated day?

'Tis not the poet's rapture feign'd
Swells here the vain to please;
The mind most sober kindles most
At truths sublime as these;

They warm e'en me.-I dare not say,
Divine ambition strove
Not to bless only, but confound,
Nay, fright us with its love;

And yet so frightful what, or kind,
As that the rending rock,
The darken'd sun, and rising dead,
So formidable spoke?

And are we darker than that sun?
Than rocks more hard, and blind?
We are; -if not to such a God
In agonies resigned.

Yes, e'en in agonies forbear
To doubt almighty love;
Whate'er endears eternity,
Is mercy from above;

What most imbitters time, that most
Eternity endears,
And thus, by plunging in distress,
Exalts us to the spheres;

Joy's fountain head! where bliss o'er bliss,
O'er wonders wonders rise,
And an Omnipotence prepares
Its banquet for the wise:

Ambrosial banquet! rich in wines
Nectareous to the soul!
What transports sparkle from the stream,
As angels fill the bowl!

Fountain profuse of every bliss!
Good-will immense prevails;
Man's line can't fathom its profound
An angel's plummet fails.

Thy love and might, by what they know,
Who judge, nor dream of more;
They ask a drop, how deep the sea!
One sand, how wide the shore!

Of thy exuberant good-will,
Offended Deity!
The thousandth part who comprehends,
A deity is he.

How yonder ample azure field
With radiant worlds is sown!
How tubes astonish us with those
More deep in ether thrown!

And those beyond of brighter worlds
Why not a million more? -

In lieu of answer, let us all
Fall prostrate, and adore.

Since thou art infinite in power,
Nor thy indulgence less;
Since man, quite impotent and blind,
Oft drops into distress;

Say, what is resignation? 'T is
Man's weakness understood;
And wisdom grasping, with a hand
Far stronger, every good.

Let rash repiners stand appall'd,
In thee who dare not trust;
Whose abject souls, like demons dark,
Are murmuring in the dust;

For man to murmur, or repine
At what by thee is done,
No less absurd, than to complain
Of darkness in the sun.

Who would not, with a heart at ease,
Bright eye, unclouded brow,
Wisdom and goodness at the helm,
The roughest ocean plough?

What, though I'm swallow'd in the deep?
Though mountains o'er me roar?
Jehovah reigns! as Jonah safe,
I'm landed, and adore:

Thy will is welcome, let it wear
Its most tremendous form;
Roar, waves; rage, winds! I know that thou
Canst save me by a storm.

From the immortal spirits born,
To thee, their fountain, flow,
If wise; as curl'd around to theirs
Meandering streams below:

Not less compell'd by reason's call,
To thee our souls aspire,
Than to thy skies, by nature's law,
High mounts material fire;

To thee aspiring they exult,
I feel my spirits rise,
I feel myself thy son, and pant
For patrimonial skies;

Since ardent thirst of future good,
And generous sense of past,
To thee man's prudence strongly ties,
And binds affection fast;

Since great thy love, and great our want,
And men the wisest blind,
And bliss our aim; pronounce us all
Distracted, or resigned;

Resign'd through duty, interest, shame;
Deep shame! dare I complain,
When (wondrous truth!) in heaven itself
Joy ow'd its birth to pain?

And pain for me! for me was drain'd
Gall's overflowing bowl;
And shall one dropp to murmur bold
Provoke my guilty soul?

If pardon'd this, what cause, what crime
Can indignation raise?
The sun was lighted up to shine,
And man was born to praise;

And when to praise the man shall cease,
Or sun to strike the view;
A cloud dishonors both; but man's
The blacker of the two:

For oh! ingratitude how black!

With most profound amaze
At love, which man belov'd o'erlooks,
Astonish'd angels gaze.

Praise cheers, and warms, like generous wine;
Praise, more divine than prayer;
Prayer points our ready path to heaven;
Praise is already there.

Let plausible resignation rise,
And banish all complaint;
All virtues thronging into one,
It finishes the saint;

Makes the man bless'd, as man can be;
Life's labours renders light;
Darts beams through fate's incumbent gloom,
And lights our sun by night;

'T is nature's brightest ornament,
The richest gift of grace,
Rival of angels, and supreme
Proprietor of peace;

Nay, peace beyond, no small degree
Of rapture 't will impart;
Know, madam! when your heart's in heaven,
'All heaven is in your heart.'

But who to heaven their hearts can raise?
Denied divine support,
All virtue dies; support divine
The wise with ardour court:

When prayer partakes the seraph's fire,
'T is mounted on his wing,
Bursts thro' heaven's crystal gates, and
Sure audience of its king:

The labouring soul from sore distress
That bless'd expedient frees;
I see you far advanc'd in peace;

I see you on your knees:

How on that posture has the beam

Divine for ever shone!

An humble heart, God's other seat! (58)

The rival of his throne:

And stoops Omnipotence so low!

And condescends to dwell,

Eternity's inhabitant,

Well pleas'd, in such a cell?

Such honour how shall we repay?

How treat our guest divine?

The sacrifice supreme be slain!

Let self-will die: resign.

Thus far, at large, on our disease;

Now let the cause be shown,

Whence rises, and will ever rise,

The dismal human groan:

What our sole fountain of distress?

Strong passion for this scene;

That trifles make important, things

Of mighty moment mean:

When earth's dark maxims poison shed

On our polluted souls,

Our hearts and interests fly as far

Asunder, as the poles.

Like princes in a cottage nurs'd,

Unknown their royal race,

With abject aims, and sordid joys,

Our grandeur we disgrace;

O! for an Archimedes new,

Of moral powers possess'd,

The world to move, and quite expel

That traitor from the breast.

No small advantage may be reap'd
From thought whence we descend;
From weighing well, and prizing weigh'd
Our origin, and end:

From far above the glorious sun
To this dim scene we came:
And may, if wise, for ever bask
In great Jehovah's beam:

Let that bright beam on reason rous'd
In awful lustre rise,
Earth's giant ills are dwarf'd at once,
And all disquiet dies.

Earth's glories too their splendour lose,
Those phantoms charm no more;
Empire's a feather for a fool,
And Indian mines are poor:

Then levell'd quite, whilst yet alive,
The monarch and his slave;
Not wait enlighten'd minds to learn
That lesson from the grave:

A George the Third would then be low
As Lewis in renown,
Could he not boast of glory more
Than sparkles from a crown.

When human glory rises high
As human glory can;
When, though the king is truly great,
Still greater is the man;

The man is dead, where virtue fails;
And though the monarch proud
In grandeur shines, his gorgeous robe
Is but a gaudy shroud.

Wisdom! where art thou? None on earth,
Though grasping wealth, fame, power,

But what, O death! through thy approach,
Is wiser every hour;

Approach how swift, how unconfi'd!
Worms feast on viands rare,
Those little epicures have kings
To grace their bill of fare:

From kings what resignation due
To that almighty will,
Which thrones bestows, and, when they fail,
Can throne them higher still!

Who truly great? The good and brave,
The masters of a mind
The will divine to do resolv'd,
To suffer it resign'd.

Madam! if that may give it weight,
The trifle you receive
Is dated from a solemn scene,
The border of the grave;

Where strongly strikes the trembling soul
Eternity's dread power,
As bursting on it through the thin
Partition of an hour;

Hear this, Voltaire! but this, from me,
Runs hazard of your frown;
However, spare it; ere you die,
Such thoughts will be your own.

In mercy to yourself forbear
My notions to chastise,
Lest unawares the gay Voltaire
Should blame Voltaire the wise:

Fame's trumpet rattling in your ear,
Now, makes us disagree;
When a far louder trumpet sounds,
Voltaire will close with me:

How shocking is that modesty,
Which keeps some honest men
From urging what their hearts suggest,
When brav'd by folly's pen.

Assaulting truths, of which in all
Is sown the sacred seed!
Our constitution's orthodox,
And closes with our creed:

What then are they, whose proud conceits
Superior wisdom boast?
Wretches, who fight their own belief,
And labour to be lost!

Though vice by no superior joys
Her heroes keeps in pay;
Through pure disinterested love
Of ruin they obey!

Strict their devotion to the wrong,
Though tempted by no prize;
Hard their commandments, and their creed
A magazine of lies

From fancy's forge: gay fancy smiles
At reason plain, and cool;
Fancy, whose curious trade it is
To make the finest fool.

Voltaire! long life's the greatest curse
That mortals can receive,
When they imagine the chief end
Of living is to live;

Quite thoughtless of their day of death,
That birthday of their sorrow!
Knowing, it may be distant far,
Nor crush them till-to-morrow.

These are cold, northern thoughts, conceiv'd

Beneath an humble cot;
Not mine, your genius, or your state,
No castle is my lot:(59)

But soon, quite level shall we lie;
And, what pride most bemoans,
Our parts, in rank so distant now,
As level as our bones;

Hear you that sound? Alarming sound!
Prepare to meet your fate!
One, who writes finis to our works,
Is knocking at the gate;

Far other works will soon be weigh'd;
Far other judges sit;
Far other crowns be lost or won,
Than fire ambitious wit:

Their wit far brightest will be prov'd,
Who sunk it in good sense;
And veneration most profound
Of dread omnipotence.

'Tis that alone unlocks the gate
Of blest eternity;
O! mayst thou never, never lose
That more than golden key! (60)

Whate'er may seem too rough excuse,
Your good I have at heart:
Since from my soul I wish you well;
As yet we must not part:

Shall you, and I, in love with life,
Life's future schemes contrive,
The world in wonder not unjust,
That we are still alive?

What have we left? How mean in man
A shadow's shade to crave!
When life, so vain! is vainer still,

'Tis time to take your leave:

Happier, than happiest life, is death,
Who, falling in the field
Of conflict with his rebel will,
Writes vici, on his shield;

So falling man, immortal heir
Of an eternal prize;
Undaunted at the gloomy grave,
Descends into the skies.

O! how disorder'd our machine,
When contradictions mix!
When nature strikes no less than twelve,
And folly points at six!

To mend the moments of your heart,
How great is my delight
Gently to wind your morals up,
And set your hand aright!

That hand, which spread your wisdom wide
To poison distant lands:
Repent, recant; the tainted age
Your antidote demands;

To Satan dreadfully resign'd,
Whole herds rush down the steep
Of folly, by lewd wits possess'd,
And perish in the deep.

Men's praise your vanity pursues;
'Tis well, pursue it still;
But let it be of men deceas'd,
And you'll resign the will;

And how superior they to those
At whose applause you aim;
How very far superior they
In number, and in name!

Sleep

Tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep, -
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where fortune smiles: the wretched he forsakes,
And lights on lids unsullied by a tear.

Edward Young

Socrates

Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend.
The conscious moon through every distant age
Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall
On Contemplation's eye her purging ray.
The famed Athenian, he who wooed from heaven
Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,
And form their manners, not inflame their pride;
While o'er his head, as fearful to molest
His laboring mind, the stars in silence slide,
And seem all gazing on their future guest,
See him soliciting his ardent suit,
In private audience; all the livelong night
Rigid in thought and motionless he stands,
Nor quits his theme or posture, till the sun
Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,
And gives him to the tumult of the world.

Edward Young

The Complaint: Or Night Thoughts (Excerpt)

By Nature's law, what may be, may be now;
There's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise,
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?
Where is to-morrow? In another world.
For numbers this is certain; the reverse
Is sure to none; and yet on this perhaps,
This peradventure, infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant we build
Our mountain hopes, spin out eternal schemes
As we the Fatal Sisters could out-spin,
And big with life's futurities, expire.
Not ev'n Philander had bespoke his shroud,
Nor had he cause; a warning was deny'd:
How many fall as sudden, not as safe!
As sudden, though for years admonish'd home.
Of human ills the last extreme beware;
Beware, Lorenzo, a slow-sudden death.
How dreadful that deliberate surprise!
Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer;
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.
Of man's miraculous mistakes this bears
The palm, "That all men are about to live,"
For ever on the brink of being born,
All pay themselves the compliment to think
They, one day, shall not drivel: and their pride
On this reversion takes up ready praise;
At least, their own; their future selves applauds;
How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!
Time lodg'd in their own hands is Folly's vails;
That lodg'd in Fate's to Wisdom they consign.
The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone.

'Tis not in folly not to scorn a fool,
And scarce in human wisdom to do more.
All promise is poor dilatory man,
And that through every stage; when young, indeed,
In full content we sometimes nobly rest,
Unanxious for ourselves; and only wish,
As duteous sons our fathers were more wise.
At thirty man suspects himself a fool,
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;
At fifty chides his infamous delay,
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;
In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves, and re-resolves, then dies the same.

Edward Young

The Last Day (Excerpt)

Sooner or later, in some future date,
(A dreadful secret in the book of Fate)
This hour, for aught all human wisdom knows,
Or when ten thousand harvests more have rose;
When scenes are chang'd on this revolving Earth,
Old empires fall, and give new empires birth;
While other Bourbons rule in other lands,
And, (if man's sin forbids not) other Annes;
While the still busy world is treading o'er
The paths they trod five thousand years before,
Thoughtless as those who now life's mazes run,
Of earth dissolv'd, or an extinguish'd sun;
(Ye sublunary worlds, awake, awake!
Ye rulers of the nation, hear and shake)
Thick clouds of darkness shall arise on day;
In sudden night all Earth's dominions lay;
Impetuous winds the scatter'd forests rend;
Eternal mountains, like their cedars, bend;
The valleys yawn, the troubled ocean roar
And break the bondage of his wonted shore;
A sanguine stain the silver moon o'erspread;
Darkness the circle of the sun invade;
From inmost Heaven incessant thunders roll
And the strong echo bound from pole to pole.

Edward Young

To The Right Hon. Mr. Dodington

Long, Dodington, in debt, I long have sought
To ease the burden of my graceful thought:
And now a poet's gratitude you see:
Grant him two favours, and he'll ask for three:
For whose the present glory, or the gain?
You give protection, I a worthless strain.
You love and feel the poet's sacred flame,
And know the basis of a solid fame;
Though prone to like, yet cautious to commend,
You read with all the malice of a friend;
Nor favour my attempts that way alone,
But, more to raise my verse, conceal your own.
An ill-tim'd modesty! turn ages o'er,
When wanted Britain bright examples more?
Her learning, and her genius too, decays;
And dark and cold are her declining days;
As if men now were of another cast,
They meanly live on alms of ages past,
Men still are men; and they who boldly dare,
Shall triumph o'er the sons of cold despair;
Or, if they fail, they justly still take place
Of such who run in debt for their disgrace;
Who borrow much, then fairly make it known,
And damn it with improvements of their own.
We bring some new materials, and what's old
New cast with care, and in no borrow'd mould;
Late times the verse may read, if these refuse;
And from sour critics vindicate the Muse.
'Your work is long', the critics cry. 'Tis true,
And lengthens still, to take in fools like you:
Shorten my labour, if its length you blame:
For, grow but wise, you rob me of my game;
As haunted hags, who, while the dogs pursue,
Renounce their four legs, and start up on two.

Like the bold bird upon the banks of Nile
That picks the teeth of the dire crocodile,
Will I enjoy (dread feast!) the critic's rage,
And with the fell destroyer feed my page.

For what ambitious fools are more to blame,
Than those who thunder in the critic's name?
Good authors damn'd, have their revenge in this,
To see what wretches gain the praise they miss.

Balbutius, muffled in his sable cloak,
Like an old Druid from his hollow oak,
As ravens solemn, and as boding, cries,
'Ten thousand worlds for the three unities!'
Ye doctors sage, who through Parnassus teach,
Or quit the tub, or practise what you preach.

One judges as the weather dictates; right
The poem is at noon, and wrong at night:
Another judges by a surer gage,
An author's principles, or parentage;
Since his great ancestors in Flanders fell,
The poem doubtless must be written well.
Another judges by the writer's look;
Another judges, for he bought the book:
Some judge, their knack of judging wrong to keep;
Some judge, because it is too soon to sleep.
Thus all will judge, and with one single aim,
To gain themselves, not give the writer, fame.
The very best ambitiously advise,
Half to serve you, and half to pass for wise.

Critics on verse, as squibs on triumphs wait,
Proclaim the glory, and augment the state;
Hot, envious, noisy, proud, the scribbling fry
Burn, hiss, and bounce, waste paper, stink, and die.
Rail on, my friends! what more my verse can crown
Than Compton's smile, and your obliging frown?

Not all on books their criticism waste:
The genius of a dish some justly taste,
And eat their way to fame; with anxious thought
The salmon is refus'd, the turbot bought.
Impatient art rebukes the sun's delay
And bids December yield the fruits of May;
Their various cares in one great point combine
The business of their lives, that is--to dine.

Half of their precious day they give the feast;
And to a kind digestion spare the rest.
Apicius, here, the taster of the town,
Feeds twice a week, to settle their renown.

These worthies of the palate guard with care
The sacred annals of their bills of fare;
In those choice books their panegyrics read,
And scorn the creatures that for hunger feed.
If man by feeding well commences great,
Much more the worm to whom that man is meat.

To glory some advance a lying claim,
Thieves of renown, and pilferers of fame:
Their front supplies what their ambition lacks;
They know a thousand lords, behind their backs.
Cottil is apt to wink upon a peer,
When turn'd away, with a familiar leer;
And Harvey's eyes, unmercifully keen,
Have murdered fops, by whom she ne'er was seen.
Niger adopts stray libels; wisely prone,
To cover shame still greater than his own.
Bathyllus, in the winter of threescore,
Belies his innocence, and keeps a ----.
Absence of mind Brabantio turns to fame,
Learns to mistake, nor knows his brother's name;
Has words and thoughts in nice disorder set,
And takes a memorandum to forget.
Thus vain, not knowing what adorns or blots
Men forge the patents that create them sots.

As love of pleasure into pain betrays,
So most grow infamous through love of praise.
But whence for praise can such an ardour rise,
When those, who bring that incense, we despise?
For such the vanity of great and small,
Contempt goes round, and all men laugh at all.
Nor can even satire blame them; for 'tis true,
They have most ample cause for what they do
O fruitful Britain! doubtless thou wast meant
A nurse of fools, to stock the continent.
Though Phoebus and the Nine for ever mow,

Rank folly underneath the scythe will grow
The plenteous harvest calls me forward still,
Till I surpass in length my lawyer's bill;
A Welsh descent, which well-paid heralds damn;
Or, longer still, a Dutchman's epigram.
When, cloy'd, in fury I throw down my pen,
In comes a coxcomb, and I write again.

See Tityrus, with merriment possest,
Is burst with laughter, ere he hears the jest:
What need he stay? for when the jest is o'er,
His teeth will be no whiter than before.
Is there of thee, ye fair! so great a dearth,
That you need purchase monkeys for your mirth!

Some, vain of paintings, bid the world admire;
Of houses some; nay, houses that they hire:
Some (perfect wisdom!) of a beauteous wife;
And boast, like Cordeliers, a scourge for life.

Sometimes, through pride, the sexes change their airs;
My lord has vapours, and my lady swears;
Then, stranger still! on turning of the wind,
My lord wears breeches, and my lady's kind.

To show the strength, and infamy of pride,
By all 'tis follow'd, and by all denied.
What numbers are there, which at once pursue,
Praise, and the glory to contemn it, too?
Vincenna knows self-praise betrays to shame,
And therefore lays a stratagem for fame;
Makes his approach in modesty's disguise,
To win applause; and takes it by surprise.
'To err,' says he, 'in small things, is my fate.'
You know your answer, 'he's exact in great'.
'My style', says he, 'is rude and full of faults.'
'But oh! what sense! what energy of thoughts!'
That he wants algebra, he must confess;
'But not a soul to give our arms success'.
'Ah! that's an hit indeed,' Vincenna cries;
'But who in heat of blood was ever wise?
I own 'twas wrong, when thousands called me back

To make that hopeless, ill-advised attack;
All say, 'twas madness; nor dare I deny;
Sure never fool so well deserved to die.'
Could this deceive in others to be free,
It ne'er, Vincenna, could deceive in thee!
Whose conduct is a comment to thy tongue,
So clear, the dullest cannot take thee wrong.
Thou on one sleeve wilt thy revenues wear;
And haunt the court, without a prospect there.
Are these expedients for renown? Confess
Thy little self, that I may scorn thee less.

Be wise, Vincenna, and the court forsake;
Our fortunes there, nor thou, nor I, shall make.
Even men of merit, ere their point they gain,
In hardy service make a long campaign;
Most manfully besiege the patron's gate,
And oft repulsed, as oft attack the great
With painful art, and application warm.
And take, at last, some little place by storm;
Enough to keep two shoes on Sunday clean,
And starve upon discreetly, in Sheer-Lane.
Already this thy fortune can afford;
Then starve without the favour of my lord.
'Tis true, great fortunes some great men confer,
But often, even in doing right, they err:
From caprice, not from choice, their favours come:
They give, but think it toil to know to whom:
The man that's nearest, yawning, they advance:
'Tis inhumanity to bless by chance.
If merit sues, and greatness is so loth
To break its downy trance, I pity both.

Behold the masquerade's fantastic scene!
The Legislature join'd with Drury-Lane!
When Britain calls, th' embroider'd patriots run,
And serve their country--if the dance is done.
'Are we not then allow'd to be polite?'
Yes, doubtless; but first set your notions right.
Worth, of politeness is the needful ground;
Where that is wanting, this can ne'er be found.
Triflers not even in trifles can excel;

'Tis solid bodies only polish well.

Great, chosen prophet! for these latter days,
To turn a willing world from righteous ways!
Well, Heydegger, dost thou thy master serve;
Well has he seen his servant should not starve,
Thou to his name hast splendid temples raised
In various forms of worship seen him prais'd,
Gaudy devotion, like a Roman, shown,
And sung sweet anthems in a tongue unknown.
Inferior offerings to thy god of vice
Are duly paid, in fiddles, cards, and dice;
Thy sacrifice supreme, an hundred maids!
That solemn rite of midnight masquerades!

Though bold these truths, thou, Muse, with truths like these,
Wilt none offend, whom 'tis a praise to please;
Let others flatter to be flatter'd, thou
Like just tribunals, bend an awful brow.
How terrible it were to common-sense,
To write a satire, which gave none offence!
And, since from life I take the draughts you see.
If men dislike them, do they censure me?
The fool, and knave, 'tis glorious to offend,
And Godlike an attempt the world to mend,
The world, where lucky throws to blockheads fall,
Knives know the game, and honest men pay all.
How hard for real worth to gain its price!
A man shall make his fortune in a trice,
If blest with pliant, though but slender, sense,
Feign'd modesty, and real impudence:
A supple knee, smooth tongue, an easy grace.
A curse within, a smile upon his face;
A beauteous sister, or convenient wife,
Are prizes in the lottery of life;
Genius and Virtue they will soon defeat,
And lodge you in the bosom of the great.
To merit, is but to provide a pain
For men's refusing what you ought to gain.

May, Dodington, this maxim fail in you,
Whom my presaging thoughts already view

By Walpole's conduct fired, and friendship grac'd,
Still higher in your Prince's favour plac'd:
And lending, here, those awful councils aid,
Which you, abroad, with such success obey'd!
Bear this from one, who holds your friendship dear;
What most we wish, with ease we fancy near.

Edward Young