

Classic Poetry Series

**Mark Akenside**  
**- poems -**

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## Mark Akenside(1721-1770)

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

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

Whether, when he resolved not to be a dissenting minister, he ceased to be a dissenter, I know not. He certainly retained an unnecessary and outrageous zeal for what he called and thought liberty; a zeal which sometimes disguises from the world, and not rarely from the mind which it possesses, an envious desire of plundering wealth or degrading greatness; and of which the immediate tendency is innovation and anarchy, an impetuous eagerness to subvert and confound, with very little care what shall be established.

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

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

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

his dedication to the freethinkers.

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

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

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

Being now to live by his profession, he first commenced physician at Northampton, where Dr. Stonhouse then practised, with such reputation and success, that a stranger was not likely to gain ground upon him. Akenside tried the contest a while; and, having deafened the place with clamours for liberty, removed to Hampstead, where he resided more than two years, and then fixed himself in London, the proper place for a man of accomplishments like his.

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

Akenside appears not to have been wanting to his own success: he placed himself in view by all the common methods; he became a Fellow of the Royal Society; he obtained a degree at Cambridge, and was admitted into the college of physicians; he wrote little poetry, but published, from time to time, medical essays and observations; he became physician to St. Thomas's Hospital; he read the Gulstonian Lectures in Anatomy; but began to give, for the Crounian Lecture, a history of the revival of learning, from which he soon desisted; and, in

conversation, he very eagerly forced himself into notice by an ambitious ostentation of elegance and literature.

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

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

With the philosophical or religious tenets of the author I have nothing to do; my business is with his poetry. The subject is well chosen, as it includes all images that can strike or please, and thus comprises every species of poetical delight. The only difficulty is in the choice of examples and illustrations; and it is not easy in such exuberance of matter to find the middle point between penury and satiety. The parts seem artificially disposed, with sufficient coherence, so as that they cannot change their places without injury to the general design.

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

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

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

His diction is certainly poetical as it is not prosaic, and elegant as it is not vulgar. He is to be commended as having fewer artifices of disgust than most of his brethren of the blank song. He rarely either recalls old phrases, or twists his

metre into harsh inversions. The sense however of his words is strained; when 'he views the Ganges from Alpine heights,' that is, from mountains like the Alps. And the pedant surely intrudes but when was blank verse without pedantry? when he tells how 'planets absolve the stated round of Time.'

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

One great defect of his poem is very properly censured by Mr. Walker, unless it may be said, in his defence, that what he has omitted was not properly in his plan. 'His picture of man is grand and beautiful, but unfinished. The immortality of the soul, which is the natural consequence of the appetites and powers she is invested with, is scarcely once hinted throughout the poem. This deficiency is amply supplied by the masterly pencil of Dr. Young; who, like a good philosopher, has invincibly proved the immortality of man, from the grandeur of his conceptions, and the meanness and misery of his state; for this reason, a few passages are selected from the *Night Thoughts*, which, with those from *Akenside*, seem to form a complete view of the powers, situation, and end of man.'

Exercises for Improvement in Elocution.

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

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

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

# A British Philippic

Occasioned by the insults of the Spaniards, and the present preparations for war.  
1738.

Whence this unwonted transport in my breast?  
Why glow my thoughts, and whither would the Muse  
Aspire with rapid wing? Her country's cause  
Demands her efforts: at that sacred call  
She summons all her ardour, throws aside  
The trembling lyre, and with the warrior's trump  
She means to thunder in each British ear;  
And if one spark of honour or of fame,  
Disdain of insult, dread of infamy,  
One thought of public virtue yet survive, 10  
She means to wake it, rouse the generous flame,  
With patriot zeal inspirit every breast,  
And fire each British heart with British wrongs.  
Alas, the vain attempt! what influence now  
Can the Muse boast! or what attention now  
Is paid to fame or virtue? Where is now  
The British spirit, generous, warm, and brave,  
So frequent wont from tyranny and woe  
To free the suppliant nations? Where, indeed!  
If that protection, once to strangers given, 20  
Be now withheld from sons? Each nobler thought,  
That warn'd our sires, is lost and buried now  
In luxury and avarice. Baneful vice!  
How it unmans a nation! yet I'll try,  
I'll aim to shake this vile degenerate sloth;  
I'll dare to rouse Britannia's dreaming sons  
To fame, to virtue, and impart around  
A generous feeling of compatriot woes.

Mark Akenside

# A Song

The Shape alone let others prize,  
The Features of the Fair;  
I look for Spirit in her Eyes,  
And Meaning in her Air.  
A Damask Cheek, an Iv'ry Arm,  
Shall ne'er my Wishes win,  
Give me an animated Form,  
That speaks a Mind within.  
A Face where awful Honour shines,  
Where Sense and Sweetness move,  
And Angel Innocence refines,  
The Tenderness of Love.

These are the Soul of Beauty's frame,  
Without whose vital Aid,  
Unfinish'd all her Features seem,  
And all her Roses dead.  
But ah! where both their Charms unite,  
How perfect is the View,  
With ev'ry Image of Delight,  
With Graces ever new.  
Of Pow'r to charm the greatest Woe,  
The wildest Rage controul,  
Diffusing Mildness o'er the Brow,  
And Rapture thro' the Soul.  
Their Pow'r but faintly to express,  
All Language must despair,  
But go behold  
Arpasia's  
Face,  
And read it perfect there.

Mark Akenside

# Ambition And Content: A Fable

“

Optat quietem.” —Hor

.

While yet the world was young, and men were few,  
Nor lurking fraud, nor tyrant rapine knew,  
In virtue rude, the gaudy arts they scorn'd,  
Which, virtue lost, degenerate times adorn'd:  
No sumptuous fabrics yet were seen to rise,  
Nor gushing fountains taught to invade the skies;  
With nature, art had not begun the strife,  
Nor swelling marble rose to mimic life;  
No pencil yet had learn'd to express the fair;  
The bounteous earth was all their homely care.

Then did Content exert her genial sway,  
And taught the peaceful world her power to obey;  
Content, a female of celestial race,  
Bright and complete in each celestial grace.  
Serenely fair she was, as rising day,  
And brighter than the sun's meridian ray;  
Joy of all hearts, delight of every eye,  
Nor grief, nor pain appear'd when she was by;  
Her presence from the wretched banish'd care,  
Dispers'd the swelling sigh, and stopt the falling tear.

Long did the nymph her regal state maintain,  
As long mankind were blest beneath her reign;  
Till dire Ambition, hellish fiend, arose,  
To plague the world, and banish man's repose:  
A monster sprung from that rebellious crew,  
Which mighty Jove's Phlegræan thunder slew.  
Resolv'd to dispossess the royal fair,  
On all her friends he threaten'd open war:  
Fond of the novelty, vain, fickle man,  
In crowds to his infernal standard ran;  
And the weak maid, defenceless left alone,  
To avoid his rage, was forc'd to quit the throne.



It chanc'd as wandering through the fields she stray'd,  
Forsook of all, and destitute of aid,  
Upon a rising mountain's flowery side  
A pleasant cottage, roof'd with turf, she spied:  
Fast by a gloomy, venerable wood  
Of shady planes, and ancient oaks, it stood.  
Around a various prospect charm'd the sight;  
Here waving harvests clad the fields with white;  
Here a rough shaggy rock the clouds did pierce,  
From which a torrent rush'd with rapid force;  
Here mountain-woods diffus'd a dusky shade;  
Here flocks and herds in flowery valleys play'd,  
While o'er the matted grass the liquid crystal stray'd.  
In this sweet place there dwelt a cheerful pair,  
Though bent beneath the weight of many a year;  
Who wisely flying public noise and strife,  
In this obscure retreat had pass'd their life;  
The husband Industry was call'd, Frugality the wife.  
With tenderest Friendship mutually blest,  
No household jars had e'er disturb'd their rest.  
A numerous offspring grac'd their homely board,  
That still with Nature's simple gifts was stor'd.  
The father rural business only knew;  
The sons the same delightful art pursue:  
An only daughter, as a goddess fair,  
Above the rest was the fond mother's care;  
Plenty; the brightest nymph of all the plain,  
Each heart's delight, ador'd by every swain.  
Soon as Content this charming scene espied,  
Joyful within herself the goddess cried;  
"This happy sight my drooping heart doth raise;  
The gods, I hope, will grant me gentler days:  
When with prosperity my life was blest,  
In yonder house I've been a welcome guest:  
There now, perhaps, I may protection find;  
For royalty is banish'd from my mind;  
I'll thither haste: how happy should I be,  
If such a refuge were reserv'd for me!"

Thus spoke the fair; and straight she bent her way  
To the tall mountain, where the cottage lay:  
Arriv'd she makes her chang'd condition known;

Tells how the rebels drove her from the throne;  
What painful, dreary wilds she'd wander'd o'er;  
And shelter from the tyrant doth implore.

The faithful, aged pair at once were seiz'd  
With joy and grief, at once were pain'd and pleas'd;  
Grief for their banish'd queen their hearts possest,  
And joy succeeded for their future guest;  
"And if you'll deign, bright goddess, here to dwell,  
And with your presence grace our humble cell,  
Whate'er the gods have given with bounteous hand,  
Our harvests, fields and flocks, our all command."

Meantime, Ambition, on his rival's flight,  
Sole lord of man, attain'd his wish's height;  
Of all dependence on his subjects eas'd,  
He rag'd without a curb, and did whate'er he pleas'd:  
As some wild flame, driven on by furious winds,  
Wide spreads destruction, nor resistance finds;  
So rush'd the fiend destructive o'er the plain,  
Defac'd the labours of the industrious swain;  
Polluted every stream with human gore,  
And scatter'd plagues and death from shore to shore.

Great Jove beheld it from the Olympian towers,  
Where sate assembled all the heavenly powers;  
Then with a nod that shook the empyrean throne,  
Thus the Saturnian thunderer begun:  
"You see, immortal inmates of the skies,  
How this vile wretch almighty power defies;  
His daring crimes, the blood which he has spilt,  
Demand a torment equal to his guilt.  
Then, Cyprian goddess, let thy mighty boy  
Swift to the tyrant's guilty palace fly;  
There let him choose his sharpest, hottest dart,  
And with his former rival wound his heart.  
And thou, my son, (the god to Hermes said)  
Snatch up thy wand, and plume thy heels and head;  
Dart through the yielding air with all thy force,  
And down to Pluto's realms direct thy course;  
There rouse Oblivion from her sable cave,  
Where dull she sits by Lethe's sluggish wave;

Command her to secure the sacred bound,  
Where lives Content retir'd, and all around  
Diffuse the deepest glooms of Stygian night,  
And screen the virgin from the tyrant's sight;  
That the vain purpose of his life may try  
Still to explore, what still eludes his eye."  
He spoke; loud praises shake the bright abode,  
And all applaud the justice of the god.

Mark Akenside

# Amoret

If rightly tuneful bards decide,  
If it be fix'd in Love's decrees,  
That Beauty ought not to be tried  
But by its native power to please,  
Then tell me, youths and lovers, tell—  
What fair can Amoret excel?

Behold that bright unsullied smile,  
And wisdom speaking in her mien:  
Yet—she so artless all the while,  
So little studious to be seen—  
We naught but instant gladness know,  
Nor think to whom the gift we owe.

But neither music, nor the powers  
Of youth and mirth and frolic cheer,  
Add half the sunshine to the hours,  
Or make life's prospect half so clear,  
As memory brings it to the eye  
From scenes where Amoret was by.

This, sure, is Beauty's happiest part;  
This gives the most unbounded sway;  
This shall enchant the subject heart  
When rose and lily fade away;  
And she be still, in spite of Time,  
Sweet Amoret in all her prime.

Mark Akenside

# Complaint, The

Away! away!

Tempt me no more, insidious Love:

Thy soothing sway

Long did my youthful bosom prove:

At length thy treason is discern'd,

At length some dear-bought caution earn'd:

Away! nor hope my riper age to move.

I know, I see

Her merit. Needs it now be shown,

Alas! to me?

How often, to myself unknown,

The graceful, gentle, virtuous maid

Have I admired! How often said—

What joy to call a heart like hers one's own!

But, flattering god,

O squanderer of content and ease

In thy abode

Will care's rude lesson learn to please?

O say, deceiver, hast thou won

Proud Fortune to attend thy throne,

Or placed thy friends above her stern decrees?

Mark Akenside

# Female Beauty

Felices ter et amplius  
Quos irrupta tenet Copula, nec malis  
Divulsus querimoniis,  
Suprema citius solvet amor die.

What's Female Beauty, but an Art divine,  
Through which the Mind's all gentle Graces shine?  
They like the Sun irradiate all between;  
The Body charms, because the Mind is seen.

Mark Akenside

## For A Column At Runnymede

Thou, who the verdant plain dost traverse here  
While Thames among his willows from thy view  
Retires; O stranger, stay thee, and the scene  
Around contemplate well. This is the place  
Where England's ancient barons, clad in arms  
And stern with conquest, from their tyrant king  
(Then rendered tame) did challenge and secure  
The charter of thy freedom. Pass not on  
Till thou hast blest their memory, and paid  
Those thanks which God appointed the reward  
Of public virtue. And if chance thy home  
Salute thee with a father's honour'd name,  
Go, call thy sons: instruct them what a debt  
They owe their ancestors; and make them swear  
To pay it, by transmitting down entire  
Those sacred rights to which themselves were born.

Mark Akenside

# Friendship And Love

A DIALOGUE: Addressed to a young Lady.

Friendship:

In vain thy lawless Fires contend with mine,  
Tho' Clouds unnumber'd fall before thy Shrine;  
Let Youths, who ne'er aspir'd to noble Fame,  
And the soft Virgin, kindle at thy Flame,  
Thee, Son of Indolence and Vice, I scorn,  
By Reason nourish'd, and of Virtue born.

Love:

Vain is that boasted Reason 'gainst my Dart,  
I pierce the Sage's, as the vulgar Heart,  
All Ages, Sexes, the soft Torment share,  
The hoary Patriot, and the blooming Fair.  
To narrow Limits is thy Sway confin'd,  
To some few Breasts, I triumph o'er Mankind.

Friendship:

From grov'ling Sources, ever springs thy Pow'r,  
Still varying Fancy, and frail Beauty's Flow'r:  
Then with its Cause the short liv'd Ardour flies,  
A flash of Passion that but gleams and dies.  
Mine upon Virtue rais'd, still lives the same,  
In gen'rous Hearts a constant equal Flame.

Love:

Love is not always that degen'rate thing,  
I too from Virtue, as from Beauty spring.  
Thou to the same dull Circle ever true,  
Know'st but one Form all Tempers to subdue  
Wide is my Empire, manyfold my Arts,  
And various are the Plumes that wing my Darts.  
Here a Fair face allures desiring Eyes,  
There Modesty and Sense enslave the Wise.



Thus whilst each Pow'r with equal Warmth contends,  
The Clouds divide, an heavenly Form descends,  
Wings o'er his Shoulders mantling wav'd, behind  
His snowy Garments floated in the wind;  
A Wreath of mingled Flow'rs adorned his Head,  
Immortal Flow'rs by Mold Ætherial fed,  
Graceful he mov'd in Youth and Beauty's pride,  
His Cheeks Aurora's op'ning Blushes dy'd,  
A flaming Torch he bore, approaching now,  
Fair Hymen Guardian of the nuptial Vow,  
They knew and paus'd, He first the Silence broke,  
Celestial Musick warbled as he spoke.

Cease, rival Pow'rs, with Rage unjust to glow,  
Ye both to Men the noblest Gifts bestow.  
Howe'er by Folly or by Vice abus'd,  
Blessings are turn'd to Curses when misus'd.

Mine be the Praise the Gifts of both to blend.  
And to the virtuous Lover join the Friend.  
Thus shall Life glide away in mutual Joys,  
Sweets that ne'er tire, and Rapture that ne'er cloy.

So blest an Union, Anna mayst thou prove,  
A constant Friendship, in a tender Love.

Mark Akenside

# Hymn To Science

Science! thou fair effusive ray  
From the great source of mental day,  
Free, generous, and refin'd!  
Descend with all thy treasures fraught,  
Illumine each bewilder'd thought,  
And bless my lab'ring mind.

But first with thy resistless light,  
Disperse those phantoms from my sight,  
Those mimic shades of thee;  
The scholiast's learning, sophist's cant,  
The visionary bigot's rant,  
The monk's philosophy.

O! let thy powerful charms impart  
The patient head, the candid heart,  
Devoted to thy sway;  
Which no weak passions e'er mislead,  
Which still with dauntless steps proceed  
Where Reason points the way.

Give me to learn each secret cause;  
Let number's, figure's, motion's laws  
Reveal'd before me stand;  
These to great Nature's scenes apply,  
And round the globe, and thro' the sky,  
Disclose her working hand.

Next, to thy nobler search resign'd,  
The busy, restless, human mind  
Thro' ev'ry maze pursue;  
Detect Perception where it lies,  
Catch the ideas as they rise,  
And all their changes view.

Say from what simple springs began  
The vast, ambitious thoughts of man,  
Which range beyond control;  
Which seek Eternity to trace,

Dive thro' th' infinity of space,  
And strain to grasp the whole.

Her secret stores let Memory tell,  
Bid Fancy quit her fairy cell,  
In all her colours drest;  
While prompt her sallies to control,  
Reason, the judge, recalls the soul  
To Truth's severest test.

Then launch thro' Being's wide extent;  
Let the fair scale, with just ascent,  
And cautious steps, be trod;  
And from the dead, corporeal mass,  
Thro' each progressive order pass  
To Instinct, Reason, God.

There, Science! veil thy daring eye;  
Nor dive too deep, nor soar too high,  
In that divine abyss;  
To Faith content thy beams to lend,  
Her hopes t' assure, her steps befriend,  
And light her way to bliss.

Then downwards take thy flight agen;  
Mix with the policies of men,  
And social nature's ties:  
The plan, the genius of each state,  
Its interest and its pow'rs relate,  
Its fortunes and its rise.

Thro' private life pursue thy course,  
Trace every action to its source,  
And means and motives weigh:  
Put tempers, passions in the scale,  
Mark what degrees in each prevail,  
And fix the doubtful sway.

That last, best effort of thy skill,  
To form the life, and rule the will,  
Propitious pow'r! impart:  
Teach me to cool my passion's fires,

Make me the judge of my desires,  
The master of my heart.

Raise me above the vulgar's breath,  
Pursuit of fortune, fear of death,  
And all in life that's mean.  
Still true to reason be my plan,  
Still let my action speak the man,  
Thro' every various scene.

Hail! queen of manners, light of truth;  
Hail! charm of age, and guide of youth;  
Sweet refuge of distress:  
In business, thou! exact, polite;  
Thou giv'st Retirement its delight,  
Prosperity its grace.

Of wealth, pow'r, freedom, thou! the cause;  
Foundress of order, cities, laws,  
Of arts inventress, thou!  
Without thee what were human kind?  
How vast their wants, their thoughts how blind!  
Their joys how mean! how few!

Sun of the soul! thy beams unveil!  
Let others spread the daring sail,  
On Fortune's faithless sea;  
While undeluded, happier I  
From the vain tumult timely fly,  
And sit in peace with thee.

Mark Akenside

## Inscriptions: I: For A Grotto

To me, whom in their lays the shepherds call  
Actæa, daughter of the neighbouring stream,  
This cave belongs. The fig-tree and the vine,  
Which o'er the rocky entrance downward shoot,  
Were plac'd by Glycon. He with cowslips pale,  
Primrose, and purple lychnis, deck'd the green  
Before my threshold, and my shelving walls  
With honeysuckle cover'd. Here at noon,  
Lull'd by the murmur of my rising fount,  
I slumber: here my clustering fruits I tend;  
Or from the humid flowers, at break of day,  
Fresh garlands weave, and chace from all my bounds  
Each thing impure or noxious. Enter-in,  
O stranger, undismay'd. nor bat, nor toad  
Here lurks: and if thy breast of blameless thoughts  
Approve thee, not unwelcome shalt thou tread  
My quiet mansion: chiefly, if thy name  
Wise Pallas and the immortal muses own.

Mark Akenside

## Inscriptions: Ii: For A Statue Of Chaucer At Woodstock

Such was old Chaucer. such the placid mien  
Of him who first with harmony inform'd  
The language of our fathers. Here he dwelt  
For many a cheerful day. these ancient walls  
Have often heard him, while his legends blithe  
He sang; of love, or knighthood, or the wiles  
Of homely life: through each estate and age,  
The fashions and the follies of the world  
With cunning hand portraying. Though perchance  
From Blenheim's towers, o stranger, thou art come  
Glowing with Churchill's trophies; yet in vain  
Dost thou applaud them, if thy breast be cold  
To him, this other hero; who, in times  
Dark and untaught, began with charming verse  
To tame the rudeness of his native land.

Mark Akenside

## Inscriptions: Iii: Whoe'Er Thou Art Whose Pat In Summer Lies

Whoe'er thou art whose path in summer lies  
Through yonder village, turn thee where the grove  
Of branching oaks a rural palace old  
Imbosoms. there dwells Albert, generous lord  
Of all the harvest round. and onward thence  
A low plain chapel fronts the morning light  
Fast by a silent riv'let. Humbly walk,  
O stranger, o'er the consecrated ground;  
And on that verdant hillock, which thou see'st  
Beset with osiers, let thy pious hand  
Sprinkle fresh water from the brook and strew  
Sweet-smelling flowers. for there doth Edmund rest,  
The learned shepherd; for each rural art  
Fam'd, and for songs harmonious, and the woes  
Of ill-requited love. The faithless pride  
Of fair Matilda sank him to the grave  
In manhood's prime. But soon did righteous heaven  
With tears, with sharp remorse, and pining care,  
Avenge her falshood. nor could all the gold  
And nuptial pomp, which lur'd her plighted faith  
From Edmund to a loftier husband's home,  
Relieve her breaking heart, or turn aside  
The strokes of death. Go, traveller; relate  
The mournful story. haply some fair maid  
May hold it in remembrance, and be taught  
That riches cannot pay for truth or love.

Mark Akenside

## Inscriptions: Iv: O Youths And Virgins

O youths and virgins: o declining eld:  
O pale misfortune's slaves: o ye who dwell  
Unknown with humble quiet; ye who wait  
In courts, or fill the golden seat of kings:  
O sons of sport and pleasure: o thou wretch  
That weep'st for jealous love, or the sore wounds  
Of conscious guilt, or death's rapacious hand  
Which left thee void of hope: o ye who roam  
In exile; ye who through the embattled field  
Seek bright renown; or who for nobler palms  
Contend, the leaders of a public cause;  
Approach: behold this marble. Know ye not  
The features? Hath not oft his faithful tongue  
Told you the fashion of your own estate,  
The secrets of your bosom? Here then, round  
His monument with reverence while ye stand,  
Say to each other: "This was Shakespear's form;  
"Who walk'd in every path of human life,  
"Felt every passion; and to all mankind  
"Doth now, will ever, that experience yield  
"Which his own genius only could acquire."

Mark Akenside



## Inscriptions: Ix: Me Tho' In Life's Sequester'D Vale

Me tho' in life's sequester'd vale  
The Almighty sire ordain'd to dwell,  
Remote from glory's toilsome ways,  
And the great scenes of public praise;  
Yet let me still with grateful pride  
Remember how my infant frame  
He temper'd with prophetic flame,  
And early music to my tongue supply'd.  
'Twas then my future fate he weigh'd,  
And, This be thy concern, he said,  
At once with Passion's keen alarms,  
And Beauty's pleasurable charms,  
And sacred Truth's eternal light,  
To move the various mind of Man;  
Till under one unblemish'd plan,  
His Reason, Fancy, and his Heart unite.

Mark Akenside

## Inscriptions: Vi: For A Column At Runnymede

Thou, who the verdant plain dost traverse here,  
While Thames among his willows from thy view  
Retires; o stranger, stay thee, and the scene  
Around contemplate well. This is the place  
Where England's ancient barons, clad in arms  
And stern with conquest, from their tyrant king  
(Then render'd tame) did challenge and secure  
The charter of thy freedom. Pass not on  
Till thou hast bless'd their memory, and paid  
Those thanks which God appointed the reward  
Of public virtue. and if chance thy home  
Salute thee with a father's honour'd name,  
Go, call thy sons: instruct them what a debt  
They owe their ancestors; and make them swear  
To pay it, by transmitting down intire  
Those sacred rights to which themselves were born.

Mark Akenside

## Inscriptions: Vii: The Wood Nymph

Approach in silence. 'tis no vulgar tale  
Which I, the Dryad of this hoary oak,  
Pronounce to mortal ears. The second age  
Now hasteneth to its period, since i rose  
On this fair lawn. The groves of yonder vale  
Are, all, my offspring: and each Nymph, who guards  
The copses and the furrow'd fields beyond,  
Obeys me. Many changes have i seen  
In human things, and many awful deeds  
Of justice, when the ruling hand of Jove  
Against the tyrants of the land, against  
The unhallow'd sons of luxury and guile,  
Was arm'd for retribution. Thus at length  
Expert in laws divine, i know the paths  
Of wisdom, and erroneous folly's end  
Have oft presag'd: and now well-pleas'd i wait  
Each evening till a noble youth, who loves  
My shade, awhile releas'd from public cares,  
Yon peaceful gate shall enter, and sit down  
Beneath my branches. Then his musing mind  
I prompt, unseen; and place before his view  
Sincerest forms of good; and move his heart  
With the dread bounties of the sire supreme  
Of gods and men, with freedom's generous deeds,  
The lofty voice of glory and the faith  
Of sacred friendship. Stranger, i have told  
My function. If within thy bosom dwell  
Aught which may challenge praise, thou wilt not leave  
Unhonor'd my abode, nor shall i hear  
A sparing benediction from thy tongue.

Mark Akenside

## Inscriptions: Viii: Ye Powers Unseen

Ye powers unseen, to whom, the bards of Greece  
Erected altars; ye who to the mind  
More lofty views unfold, and prompt the heart  
With more divine emotions; if erewhile  
Not quite displeasing have my votive rites  
Of you been deem'd when oft this lonely seat  
To you i consecrated; then vouchsafe  
Here with your instant energy to crown  
My happy solitude. It is the hour  
When most i love to invoke you, and have felt  
Most frequent your glad ministry divine.  
The air is calm: the sun's unveiled orb  
Shines in the middle heaven. the harvest round  
Stands quiet, and among the golden sheaves  
The reapers lie reclin'd. the neighbouring groves  
Are mute; nor even a linnet's random strain  
Echoeth amid the silence. Let me feel  
Your influence, ye kind powers. Aloft in heaven,  
Abide ye? or on those transparent clouds  
Pass, ye from hill to hill? or on the shades  
Which yonder elms cast o'er the lake below  
Do you converse retir'd? From what lov'd haunt  
Shall i expect you? Let me once more feel  
Your influence, o ye kind inspiring powers:  
And i will guard it well, nor shall a thought  
Rise in my mind, nor shall a passion move  
Across my bosom unobserv'd, unstor'd  
By faithful memory. and then at some  
More active moment, will i call them forth  
Anew; and join them in majestic forms,  
And give them utterance in harmonious strains;  
That all mankind shall wonder at your sway.

Mark Akenside

## Love: An Elegy

Too much my heart of Beauty's power hath known,  
Too long to Love hath reason left her throne;  
Too long my genius mourn'd his myrtle chain,  
And three rich years of youth consum'd in vain.  
My wishes, lull'd with soft inglorious dreams,  
Forgot the patriot's and the sage's themes:  
Through each Elysian vale and fairy grove,  
Through all the enchanted paradise of love,  
Misled by sickly hope's deceitful flame,  
Averse to action, and renouncing fame.

At last the visionary scenes decay,  
My eyes, exulting, bless the new-born day,  
Whose faithful beams detect the dangerous road  
In which my heedless feet securely trod,  
And strip the phantoms of their lying charms  
That lur'd my soul from Wisdom's peaceful arms.

For silver streams and banks bespread with flowers,  
For mossy couches and harmonious bowers,  
Lo! barren heaths appear, and pathless woods,  
And rocks hung dreadful o'er unfathom'd floods:  
For openness of heart, for tender smiles,  
Looks fraught with love, and wrath-disarming wiles;  
Lo! sullen Spite, and perjur'd Lust of Gain,  
And cruel Pride, and crueller Disdain;  
Lo! cordial Faith to idiot airs refin'd,  
Now coolly civil, now transporting kind.  
For graceful Ease, lo! Affectation walks;  
And dull Half-sense, for Wit and Wisdom talks.  
New to each hour what low delight succeeds,  
What precious furniture of hearts and heads!  
By nought their prudence, but by getting, known,  
And all their courage in deceiving shown.

See next what plagues attend the lover's state,  
What frightful forms of Terror, Scorn, and Hate!  
See burning Fury heaven and earth defy!  
See Dumb Despair in icy fetters lie!

See black Suspicion bend his gloomy brow,  
The hideous image of himself to view!  
And fond Belief, with all a lover's flame,  
Sink in those arms that point his head with shame!  
There wan Dejection, faltering as he goes,  
In shades and silence vainly seeks repose;  
Musing through pathless wilds, consumes the day,  
Then lost in darkness weeps the hours away.  
Here the gay crowd of Luxury advance,  
Some touch the lyre, and others urge the dance;  
On every head the rosy garland glows,  
In every hand the golden goblet flows  
The Syren views them with exulting eyes,  
And laughs at bashful Virtue as she flies.  
But see behind, where Scorn and Want appear,  
The grave remonstrance and the witty sneer;  
See fell Remorse in action, prompt to dart  
Her snaky poison through the conscious heart;  
And Sloth to cancel, with oblivious shame,  
The fair memorial of recording Fame.

Are these delights that one would wish to gain?  
Is this the Elysium of a sober brain?  
To wait for happiness in female smiles,  
Bear all her scorn, be caught with all her wiles,  
With prayers, with bribes, with lies, her pity crave,  
Bless her hard bonds, and boast to be her slave;  
To feel, for trifles, a distracting train  
Of hopes and terrors equally in vain;  
This hour to tremble, and the next to glow,  
Can Pride, can Sense, can Reason, stoop so low?  
When Virtue, at an easier price, displays  
The sacred wreaths of honourable praise;  
When Wisdom utters her divine decree,  
To laugh at pompous Folly, and be free.

I bid adieu, then, to these woful scenes;  
I bid adieu to all the sex of queens;  
Adieu to every suffering, simple soul,  
That lets a woman's will his ease control.  
There laugh, ye witty; and rebuke, ye grave!  
For me, I scorn to boast that I'm a slave.

I bid the whining brotherhood be gone:  
Joy to my heart! my wishes are my own!  
Farewell the female heaven, the female hell;  
To the great God of Love a glad farewell.  
Is this the triumph of thy awful name?  
Are these the splendid hopes that urg'd thy aim,  
When first my bosom own'd thy haughty sway?  
When thus Minerva heard thee boasting, say,  
"Go, martial maid, elsewhere thy arts employ,  
Nor hope to shelter that devoted boy,  
Go teach the solemn sons of Care and Age,  
The pensive statesman, and the midnight sage:  
The young with me must other lessons prove,  
Youth calls for Pleasure, Pleasure calls for Love.  
Behold, his heart thy grave advice disdains;  
Behold, I bind him in eternal chains."  
Alas! great Love, how idle was the boast!  
Thy chains are broken, and thy lessons lost;  
Thy wilful rage has tir'd my suffering heart,  
And passion, reason, forc'd thee to depart.  
But wherefore dost thou linger on thy way?  
Why vainly search for some pretence to stay,  
When crowds of vassals court thy pleasing yoke,  
And countless victims bow them to the stroke?  
Lo! round thy shrine a thousand youths advance,  
Warm with the gentle ardours of romance;  
Each longs to assert thy cause with feats of arms,  
And make the world confess Dulcinea's charms.

Ten thousand girls with flowery chaplets crown'd,  
To groves and streams thy tender triumph sound:  
Each bids the stream in murmurs speak her flame,  
Each calls the grove to sigh her shepherd's name.  
But, if thy pride such easy honour scorn,  
If nobler trophies must thy toil adorn,  
Behold yon flowery antiquated maid  
Bright in the bloom of threescore years display'd;  
Her shalt thou bind in thy delightful chains,  
And thrill with gentle pangs her wither'd veins,  
Her frosty cheek with crimson blushes dye,  
With dreams of rapture melt her maudlin eye.

Turn then thy labours to the servile crowd,  
Entice the wary, and control the proud;  
Make the sad miser his best gains forego,  
The solemn statesman sigh to be a beau,  
The bold coquette with fondest passions burn,  
The Bacchanalian o'er his bottle mourn;  
And that chief glory of thy power maintain,  
"To poise ambition in a female brain."  
Be these thy triumphs; but no more presume  
That my rebellious heart will yield thee room:  
I know thy puny force, thy simple wiles;  
I break triumphant through thy flimsy toils;  
I see thy dying lamp's last languid glow,  
Thy arrows blunted and unbrac'd thy bow.  
I feel diviner fires my breast inflame,  
To active science, and ingenuous fame;  
Resume the paths my earliest choice began,  
And lose, with pride, the lover in the man.

Mark Akenside



# Nightingale, The

To-night retired, the queen of heaven  
With young Endymion stays;  
And now to Hesper it is given  
Awhile to rule the vacant sky,  
Till she shall to her lamp supply  
A stream of brighter rays.

Propitious send thy golden ray,  
Thou purest light above!  
Let no false flame seduce to stray  
Where gulf or steep lie hid for harm;  
But lead where music's healing charm  
May soothe afflicted love.

To them, by many a grateful song  
In happier seasons vow'd,  
These lawns, Olympia's haunts, belong:  
Oft by yon silver stream we walk'd,  
Or fix'd, while Philomela talk'd,  
Beneath yon copses stood.

Nor seldom, where the beechen boughs  
That roofless tower invade,  
We came, while her enchanting Muse  
The radiant moon above us held:  
Till, by a clamorous owl compell'd,  
She fled the solemn shade.

But hark! I hear her liquid tone!  
Now Hesper guide my feet!  
Down the red marl with moss o'ergrown,  
Through yon wild thicket next the plain,  
Whose hawthorns choke the winding lane  
Which leads to her retreat.

See the green space: on either hand  
Enlarged it spreads around:  
See, in the midst she takes her stand,  
Where one old oak his awful shade

Extends o'er half the level mead,  
Enclosed in woods profound.

Hark! how through many a melting note  
She now prolongs her lays:  
How sweetly down the void they float!  
The breeze their magic path attends;  
The stars shine out; the forest bends;  
The wakeful heifers graze.

Whoe'er thou art whom chance may bring  
To this sequester'd spot,  
If then the plaintive Siren sing,  
O softly tread beneath her bower  
And think of Heaven's disposing power,  
Of man's uncertain lot.

O think, o'er all this mortal stage  
What mournful scenes arise:  
What ruin waits on kingly rage;  
How often virtue dwells with woe;  
How many griefs from knowledge flow;  
How swiftly pleasure flies!

O sacred bird! let me at eve,  
Thus wandering all alone,  
Thy tender counsel oft receive,  
Bear witness to thy pensive airs,  
And pity Nature's common cares,  
Till I forget my own.

Mark Akenside

# Ode I: The Preface

I.

On yonder verdant hillock laid,  
Where oaks and elms, a friendly shade,  
O'erlook the falling stream,  
O master of the Latin lyre,  
Awhile with thee will I retire  
From summer's noontide beam.

II.

And, lo, within my lonely bower,  
The industrious bee from many a flower  
Collects her balmy dews:  
"For me," she sings, "the gems are born,  
"For me their silken robe adorn,  
"Their fragrant breath diffuse."

III.

Sweet murmurer! may no rude storm  
This hospitable scene deform,  
Nor check thy gladsome toils;  
Still may the buds unsullied spring,  
Still showers and sunshine court thy wing  
To these ambrosial spoils.

IV.

Nor shall my Muse hereafter fail  
Her fellow-labourer thee to hail;  
And lucky be the strains!  
For long ago did nature frame  
Your seasons and your arts the same,  
Your pleasures and your pains.

V.

Like thee, in lowly, sylvan scenes,  
On river-banks and flowery greens  
My Muse delighted plays;  
Nor through the desert of the air,  
Though swans or eagles triumph there,  
With fond ambition strays.

VI.

Nor where the boding raven chaunts,  
Nor near the owl's unhallow'd haunts  
Will she her cares imploy;  
But flies from ruins and from tombs,  
From superstition's horrid glooms,  
To day-light and to joy.

VII.

Nor will she tempt the barren waste;  
Nor deigns the lurking strength to taste  
Of any noxious thing;  
But leaves with scorn to envy's use  
The insipid nightshade's baneful juice,  
The nettle's sordid sting.

VIII.

From all which nature fairest knows,  
The vernal blooms, the summer rose,  
She draws her blameless wealth;  
And, when the generous task is done,  
She consecrates a double boon,  
To pleasure and to health.

Mark Akenside

# Ode I: The Remonstrance Of Shakespeare

If, yet regardful of your native land,  
Old Shakespeare's tongue you deign to understand,  
Lo, from the blissful bowers where heaven rewards  
Instructive sages and unblemish'd bards,  
I come, the ancient founder of the stage,  
Intent to learn, in this discerning age,  
What form of wit your fancies have imbrac'd,  
And whither tends your elegance of taste,  
That thus at length our homely toils you spurn,  
That thus to foreign scenes you proudly turn,  
That from my brow the laurel wreath you claim  
To crown the rivals of your country's fame.

What, though the footsteps of my devious Muse  
The measur'd walks of Grecian art refuse?  
Or though the frankness of my hardy style  
Mock the nice touches of the critic's file?  
Yet, what my age and climate held to view,  
Impartial i survey'd and fearless drew.  
And say, ye skillful in the human heart,  
Who know to prize a poet's noblest part,  
What age, what clime, could e'er an ampler field  
For lofty thought, for daring fancy, yield?  
I saw this England break the shameful bands  
Forg'd for the souls of men by sacred hands:  
I saw each groaning realm her aid implore;  
Her sons the heroes of each warlike shore;  
Her naval standard (the dire Spaniard's bane)  
Obey'd through all the circuit of the main.  
Then too great commerce, for a late-found world,  
Around your coast her eager sails unfurl'd:  
New hopes, new passions, thence the bosom fir'd;  
New plans, new arts, the genius thence inspir'd;  
Thence every scene, which private fortune knows,  
In stronger life, with bolder spirit, rose.

Disgrac'd i this full prospect which i drew?  
My colours languid, or my strokes untrue?  
Have not your sages, warriors, swains, and kings,

Confess'd the living draught of men and things?  
What other bard in any clime appears  
Alike the master of your smiles and tears?  
Yet have i deign'd your audience to intice  
With wretched bribes to luxury and vice?  
Or have my various scenes a purpose known  
Which freedom, virtue, glory, might not own?

Such from the first was my dramatic plan;  
It should be your's to crown what i began:  
And now that England spurns her Gothic chain,  
And equal laws and social science reign,  
I thought, Now surely shall my zealous eyes  
View nobler bards and juster critics rise,  
Intent with learned labour to refine  
The copious ore of Albion's native mine,  
Our stately Muse more graceful airs to teach,  
And form her tongue to more attractive speech,  
Till rival nations listen at her feet,  
And own her polish'd as they own'd her great.

But do you thus my favorite hopes fullfil?  
Is France at last the standard of your skill?  
Alas for you! that so betray a mind  
Of art unconscious and to beauty blind.  
Say; does her language your ambition raise,  
Her barren, trivial, unharmonious phrase,  
Which fetters eloquence to scantiest bounds,  
And maims the cadence of poetic sounds?  
Say; does your humble admiration chuse  
The gentle prattle of her Comic Muse,  
While wits, plain-dealers, fops, and fools appear,  
Charg'd to say nought but what the king may hear?  
Or rather melt your sympathizing hearts  
Won by her tragic scene's romantic arts,  
Where old and young declaim on soft desire,  
And heroes never, but for love, expire?

No. Though the charms of novelty, awhile,  
Perhaps too fondly win your thoughtless smile,  
Yet not for you design'd indulgent fate  
The modes or manners of the Bourbon state.

And ill your minds my partial judgment reads,  
And many an augury my hope misleads,  
If the fair maids of yonder blooming train  
To their light courtship would an audience deign,  
Or those chaste matrons a Parisian wife  
Chuse for the model of domestic life;  
Or if one youth of all that generous band,  
The strength and splendor of their native land,  
Would yield his portion of his country's fame,  
And quit old freedom's patrimonial claim,  
With lying smiles oppression's pomp to see,  
And judge of glory by a king's decree.

O blest at home with justly-envied laws,  
O long the chiefs of Europe's general cause,  
Whom heaven hath chosen at each dangerous hour  
To check the inroads of barbaric power,  
The rights of trampled nations to reclaim,  
And guard the social world from bonds and shame;  
Oh let not luxury's fantastic charms  
Thus give the lye to your heroic arms:  
Nor for the ornaments of life imbrace  
Dishonest lessons from that vaunting race,  
Whom fate's dread laws (for, in eternal fate  
Despotic rule was heir to freedom's hate)  
Whom in each warlike, each commercial part,  
In civil counsel, and in pleasing art,  
The judge of earth predestin'd for your foes,  
And made it fame and virtue to oppose.

Mark Akenside

## Ode II: On The Winter-Solstice

I

The radiant ruler of the year  
At length his wintry goal attains;  
Soon to reverse the long career,  
And northward bend his steady reins.  
Now, piercing half Potosi's height,  
Prone rush the fiery floods of light  
Ripening the mountain's silver stores:  
While, in some cavern's horrid shade,  
The panting Indian hides his head,  
And oft the approach of eve implores.

II

But lo, on this deserted coast  
How pale the sun! how thick the air!  
Mustering his storms, a sordid host,  
Lo, winter desolates the year,  
The fields resign their latest bloom;  
No more the breezes waft perfume,  
No more the streams in music roll:  
But snows fall dark, or rains resound;  
And, while great nature mourns around,  
Her griefs infect the human soul.

III

Hence the loud city's busy throngs  
Urge the warm bowl and splendid fire:  
Harmonious dances, festive songs  
Against the spiteful heaven conspire.  
Meantime perhaps with tender fears  
Some village-dame the curfew hears,  
While round the hearth her children play:  
At morn their father went abroad;  
The moon is sunk and deep the road;  
She sighs, and wonders at his stay.

IV

But thou, my lyre, awake, arise,  
And hail the sun's returning force:



Even now he climbs the northern skies,  
And health and hope attend his course.  
Then louder howl the aërial waste,  
Be earth with keener cold imbrac'd,  
Yet gentle hours advance their wing;  
And fancy, mocking winter's might,  
With flowers and dews and streaming light  
Already decks the newborn spring.

V

O fountain of the golden day,  
Could mortal vows promote thy speed,  
How soon before thy vernal ray  
Should each unkindly damp recede!  
How soon each hovering tempest fly,  
Whose stores for mischief arm the sky,  
Prompt on our heads to burst amain,  
To rend the forest from the steep,  
Or, thundering o'er the Baltic deep,  
To whelm the merchant's hopes of gain!

VI

But let not man's unequal views  
Presume o'er nature and her laws:  
'Tis his with grateful joy to use  
The indulgence of the sovran cause;  
Secure that health and beauty springs  
Through this majestic frame of things,  
Beyond what he can reach to know;  
And that heaven's all-subduing will,  
With good the progeny of ill,  
Attempereth every state below.

VII

How pleasing wears the wintry night,  
Spent with the old illustrious dead!  
While, by the taper's trembling light,  
I seem those awful scenes to tread  
Where chiefs or legislators lie,  
Whose triumphs move before my eye  
In arms and antique pomp array'd;  
While now i taste the Ionian song,

Now bend to Plato's godlike tongue  
Resounding through the olive shade.

VIII

But should some cheerful, equal friend  
Bid leave the studious page awhile,  
Let mirth on wisdom then attend,  
And social ease on learned toil.  
Then while, at love's uncareful shrine,  
Each dictates to the god of wine  
Her name whom all his hopes obey,  
What flattering dreams each bosom warm,  
While absence, heightening every charm,  
Invokes the slow-returning May!

IX

May, thou delight of heaven and earth,  
When will thy genial star arise?  
The auspicious morn, which gives thee birth,  
Shall bring Eudora to my eyes.  
Within her sylvan haunt behold,  
As in the happy garden old,  
She moves like that primeval fair:  
Thither, ye silver-sounding lyres,  
Ye tender smiles, ye chaste desires,  
Fond hope and mutual faith, repair.

X

And if believing love can read  
His better omens in her eye,  
Then shall my fears, o charming maid,  
And every pain of absence die:  
Then shall my jocund harp, attun'd  
To thy true ear, with sweeter sound  
Pursue the free Horatian song:  
Old Tyne shall listen to my tale,  
And echo, down the bordering vale,  
The liquid melody prolong.

Mark Akenside

## Ode II: To Sleep

I.

Thou silent power, whose welcome sway  
Charms every anxious thought away;  
In whose divine oblivion drown'd,  
Sore pain and weary toil grow mild,  
Love is with kinder looks beguil'd,  
And grief forgets her fondly-cherish'd wound;  
Oh whither hast thou flown, indulgent god?  
God of kind shadows and of healing dews,  
Whom dost thou touch with thy Lethæan rod?  
Around whose temples now thy opiate airs diffuse?

II.

Lo, midnight from her starry reign  
Looks awful down on earth and main.  
The tuneful birds lie hush'd in sleep,  
With all that crop the verdant food,  
With all that skim the crystal flood,  
Or haunt the caverns of the rocky steep.  
No rushing winds disturb the tufted bowers;  
No wakeful sound the moon-light valley knows,  
Save where the brook its liquid murmur pours,  
And lulls the waving scene to more profound repose.

III.

Oh let not me alone complain,  
Alone invoke thy power in vain!  
Descend, propitious, on my eyes;  
Not from the couch that bears a crown,  
Not from the courtly statesman's down,  
Nor where the miser and his treasure lies:  
Bring not the shapes that break the murderer's rest,  
Nor those the hireling soldier loves to see,  
Nor those which haunt the bigot's gloomy breast:  
Far be their guilty nights, and far their dreams from me!

IV.

Nor yet those awful forms present,  
For chiefs and heroes only meant:

The figur'd brass, the choral song,  
The rescued people's glad applause,  
The listening senate, and the laws  
Fix'd by the counsels of Timoleon's tongue,  
Are scenes too grand for fortune's private ways;  
And though they shine in youth's ingenuous view,  
The sober gainful arts of modern days  
To such romantic thoughts have bid a long adieu.

V.

I ask not, god of dreams, thy care  
To banish Love's presentments fair:  
Nor rosy cheek nor radiant eye  
Can arm him with such strong command  
That the young sorcerer's fatal hand  
Should round my soul his pleasing fetters tie.  
Nor yet the courtier's hope, the giving smile  
(A lighter phantom, and a baser chain)  
Did e'er in slumber my proud lyre beguile  
To lend the pomp of thrones her ill-according strain.

VI.

But, Morpheus, on thy balmy wing  
Such honorable visions bring,  
As sooth'd great Milton's injur'd age,  
When in prophetic dreams he saw  
The race unborn with pious awe  
Imbibe each virtue from his heavenly page:  
Or such as Mead's benignant fancy knows  
When health's deep treasures, by his art explor'd,  
Have sav'd the infant from an orphan's woes,  
Or to the trembling sire his age's hope restor'd.

Mark Akenside

## Ode Iii: To A Friend, Unsuccessful In Love

I.

Indeed, my Phædria, if to find  
That wealth can female wishes gain  
Had e'er disturb'd your thoughtful mind,  
Or cost one serious moment's pain,  
I should have said that all the rules,  
You learn'd of moralists and schools,  
Were very useless, very vain.

II.

Yet I perhaps mistake the case—  
Say, though with this heroic air,  
Like one that holds a nobler chace,  
You try the tender loss to bear,  
Does not your heart renounce your tongue?  
Seems not my censure strangely wrong  
To count it such a slight affair?

III.

When Hesper gilds the shaded sky,  
Oft as you seek the well-known grove,  
Methinks I see you cast your eye  
Back to the morning scenes of love:  
Each pleasing word you heard her say,  
Her gentle look, her graceful way,  
Again your struggling fancy move.

IV.

Then tell me, is your soul intire?  
Does wisdom calmly hold her throne?  
Then can you question each desire,  
Bid this remain, and that begone?  
No tear half-starting from your eye?  
No kindling blush you know not why?  
No stealing sigh, nor stifled groan?  
Away with this unmanly mood!

V.

See where the hoary churl appears,

Whose hand hath seiz'd the favorite good  
Which you reserv'd for happier years:  
While, side by side, the blushing maid  
Shrinks from his visage, half-afraid,  
Spite of the sickly joy she wears.

VI.

Ye guardian powers of love and fame,  
This chaste, harmonious pair behold;  
And thus reward the generous flame  
Of all who barter vows for gold.  
O bloom of youth, o tender charms  
Well-buried in a dotard's arms!  
O equal price of beauty sold!

VII.

Cease then to gaze with looks of love:  
Bid her adieu, the venal fair:  
Unworthy she your bliss to prove;  
Then wherefore should she prove your care?  
No: lay your myrtle garland down;  
And let awhile the willow's crown  
With luckier omens bind your hair.

VIII.

O just escap'd the faithless main,  
Though driven unwilling on the land;  
To guide your favor'd steps again,  
Behold your better genius stand:  
Where truth revolves her page divine,  
Where virtue leads to honor's shrine,  
Behold, he lifts his awful hand.

IX.

Fix but on these your ruling aim,  
And time, the sire of manly care,  
Will fancy's dazzling colors tame  
A soberer dress will beauty wear:  
Then shall esteem by knowledge led  
Inthroned within your heart and head  
Some happier love, some truer fair.



## Ode Iii: To The Cuckow

I.

O rustic herald of the spring,  
At length in yonder woody vale  
Fast by the brook I hear thee sing;  
And, studious of thy homely tale,  
Amid the vespers of the grove,  
Amid the chaunting choir of love,  
Thy sage responses hail.

II.

The time has been when I have frown'd  
To hear thy voice the woods invade;  
And while thy solemn accent drown'd  
Some sweeter poet of the shade,  
Thus, thought I, thus the sons of care  
Some constant youth or generous fair  
With dull advice upbraid.

III.

I said, 'While Philomela's song  
'Proclaims the passion of the grove,  
'It ill beseems a cuckow's tongue  
'Her charming language to reprove'—  
Alas, how much a lover's ear  
Hates all the sober truth to hear,  
The sober truth of love!

IV.

When hearts are in each other bless'd,  
When nought but lofty faith can rule  
The nymph's and swain's consenting breast,  
How cuckow-like in Cupid's school,  
With store of grave prudential saws  
On fortune's power and custom's laws,  
Appears each friendly fool!

V.

Yet think betimes, ye gentle train  
Whom love and hope and fancy sway,



Who every harsher care disdain,  
Who by the morning judge the day,  
Think that, in April's fairest hours,  
To warbling shades and painted flowers  
The cuckow joins his lay.

Mark Akenside

## Ode Iv: Affected Indifference. To The Same

I.

Yes: you contemn the perjurd maid  
Who all your favorite hopes betray'd:  
Nor, though her heart should home return,  
Her tuneful tongue it's falsehood mourn,  
Her winning eyes your faith implore,  
Would you her hand receive again,  
Or once dissemble your disdain,  
Or listen to the syren's theme,  
Or stoop to love: since now esteem  
And confidence, and friendship, is no more.

II.

Yet tell me, Phædria, tell me why,  
When summoning your pride you try  
To meet her looks with cool neglect,  
Or cross her walk with slight respect,  
(For so is falsehood best repaid)  
Whence do your cheeks indignant glow?  
Why is your struggling tongue so slow?  
What means that darkness on your brow?  
As if with all her broken vow  
You meant the fair apostate to upbraid?

Mark Akenside

# Ode Iv: To The Honourable Charles Townshend In The Country

I. 1.

How oft shall i survey  
This humble roof, the lawn, the greenwood shade,  
The vale with sheaves o'erspread,  
The glassy brook, the flocks which round thee stray?  
When will thy cheerful mind  
Of these have utter'd all her dear esteem?  
Or, tell me, dost thou deem  
No more to join in glory's toilsome race,  
But here content imbrace  
That happy leisure which thou had'st resign'd?

I. 2.

Alas, ye happy hours,  
When books and youthful sport the soul could share,  
Ere one ambitious care  
Of civil life had aw'd her simpler powers;  
Oft as your winged train  
Revisit here my friend in white array,  
Oh fail not to display  
Each fairer scene where I perchance had part,  
That so his generous heart  
The abode of even friendship may remain.

I. 3.

For not imprudent of my loss to come,  
I saw from contemplation's quiet cell  
His feet ascending to another home  
Where public praise and envied greatness dwell.  
But shall we therefore, o my lyre  
Reprove ambition's best desire?  
Extinguish glory's flame?  
Far other was the task injoin'd  
When to my hand thy strings were first assign'd:  
Far other faith belongs to friendship's honor'd name.

II. 1.

Thee, Townshend, not the arms  
Of slumbering ease, nor pleasure's rosy chain,  
Were destin'd to detain:  
No, nor bright science, nor the Muse's charms.  
For them high heaven prepares  
Their proper votaries, an humbler band:  
And ne'er would Spenser's hand  
Have deign'd to strike the warbling Tuscan shell,  
Nor Harrington to tell  
What habit an immortal city wears,

II. 2.

Had this been born to shield  
The cause which Cromwell's impious hand betray'd,  
Or that, like Vere, display'd  
His redcross banner o'er the Belgian field.  
Yet where the will divine  
Hath shut those loftiest paths, it next remains,  
With reason clad in strains  
Of harmony, selected minds to inspire,  
And virtue's living fire  
To feed and eternize in hearts like thine.

II. 3.

For never shall the herd, whom envy sways,  
So quell my purpose or my tongue controul,  
That I should fear illustrious worth to praise,  
Because it's master's friendship mov'd my soul.  
Yet, if this undissembling strain  
Should now perhaps thine ear detain  
With any pleasing sound,  
Remember thou that righteous fame  
From hoary age a strict account will claim  
Of each auspicious palm with which thy youth was crown'd.

III. 1.

Nor obvious is the way  
Where heaven expects thee, nor the traveller leads,  
Through flowers or fragrant meads,  
Or groves that hark to Philomela's lay.  
The impartial laws of fate  
To nobler virtues wed severer cares.

Is there a man who shares  
The summit next where heavenly natures dwell?  
Ask him (for he can tell)  
What storms beat round that rough laborious height.

III. 2.

Ye heroes, who of old  
Did generous England freedom's throne ordain;  
From Alfred's parent reign  
To Nassau, great deliverer, wise and bold;  
I know your perils hard,  
Your wounds, your painful marches, wintry seas,  
The night estrang'd from ease,  
The day by cowardice and falsehood vex'd,  
The head with doubt perplex'd,  
The indignant heart disdainng the reward

III. 3.

Which envy hardly grants. But, o renown,  
O praise from judging heaven and virtuous men,  
If thus they purchas'd thy divinest crown,  
Say, who shall hesitate? or who complain?  
And now they sit on thrones above:  
And when among the gods they move  
Before the sovran mind,  
'Lo, these,' he saith, 'lo, these are they  
'Who to the laws of mine eternal sway  
'From violence and fear asserted human kind.'

IV. 1.

Thus honor'd while the train  
Of legislators in his presence dwell;  
If I may aught foretell,  
The statesman shall the second palm obtain.  
For dreadful deeds of arms  
Let vulgar bards, with undiscerning praise,  
More glittering trophies raise:  
But wisest heaven what deeds may chiefly move  
To favor and to love?  
What, save wide blessings, or averted harms?

IV. 2.

Nor to the imbattled field  
Shall these achievements of the peaceful gown  
The green immortal crown  
Of valor, or the songs of conquest, yield.  
Not Fairfax wildly bold,  
While bare of crest he hew'd his fatal way,  
Through Nasesby's firm array,  
To heavier dangers did his breast oppose  
Than Pym's free virtue chose,  
When the proud force of Strafford he controul'd.

IV. 3.

But what is man at enmity with truth?  
What were the fruits of Wentworth's copious mind  
When (blighted all the promise of his youth)  
The patriot in a tyrant's league had join'd?  
Let Ireland's loud-lamenting plains,  
Let Tyne's and Humber's trampled swain  
Let menac'd London tell  
How impious guile made wisdom base;  
How generous zeal to cruel rage gave place;  
And how unblest'd he liv'd and how dishonor'd fell.

V. 1.

Thence never hath the Muse  
Around his tomb Pierian roses flung:  
Nor shall one poet's tongue  
His name for music's pleasing labor chuse.  
And sure, when nature kind  
Hath deck'd some favor'd breast above the throng,  
That man with grievous wrong  
Affronts and wounds his genius, if he bends  
To guilt's ignoble ends  
The functions of his ill-submitting mind.

V. 2.

For worthy of the wise  
Nothing can seem but virtue; nor earth yield  
Their fame an equal field,  
Save where impartial freedom gives the prize.  
There Somers fix'd his name,  
Inroll'd the next to William. there shall Time

To every wondering clime  
Point out that Somers, who from faction's croud,  
The slanderous and the loud,  
Could fair assent and modest reverence claim.

V. 3.

Nor aught did laws or social arts acquire,  
Nor this majestic weal of Albion's land  
Did aught accomplish, or to aught aspire,  
Without his guidance, his superior hand.  
And rightly shall the Muse's care  
Wreaths like her own for him prepare,  
Whose mind's inamor'd aim  
Could forms of civil beauty draw  
Sublime as ever sage or poet saw,  
Yet still to life's rude scene the proud ideas tame.

VI. 1.

Let none profane be near!  
The Muse was never foreign to his breast:  
On power's grave seat confess'd,  
Still to her voice he bent a lover's ear.  
And if the blessed know  
Their ancient cares, even now the unfading groves,  
Where haply Milton roves  
With Spenser, hear the enchanted echos round  
Through farthest heaven resound  
Wise Somers, guardian of their fame below.

VI. 2.

He knew, the patriot knew,  
That letters and the Muses powerful art  
Exalt the ingenuous heart,  
And brighten every form of just and true.  
They lend a nobler sway  
To civil wisdom, than corruption's lure  
Could ever yet procure:  
They too from envy's pale malignant light  
Conduct her forth to sight  
Cloath'd in the fairest colors of the day.

VI. 3.

O Townshend, thus may Time, the judge severe,  
Instruct my happy tongue of thee to tell:  
And when i speak of one to freedom dear  
For planning wisely and for acting well,  
Of one whom glory loves to own,  
Who still by liberal means alone  
Hath liberal ends pursu'd;  
Then, for the guerdon of my lay,  
'This man with faithful friendship,' will i say,  
'From youth to honor'd age my arts and me hath view'd.'

Mark Akenside



## Ode IX. To Curio

Thrice hath the spring beheld thy faded fame  
    Since I exulting grasp'd the tuneful shell:  
Eager through endless years to sound thy name,  
    Proud that my memory with thine should dwell.  
How hast thou stain'd the splendor of my choice!  
Those godlike forms which hover'd round thy voice,  
Laws, freedom, glory, whither are they flown?  
What can I now of thee to time report,  
Save thy fond country made thy impious sport,  
Her fortune and her hope the victims of thy own?  
    There are with eyes unmov'd and reckless heart  
    Who saw thee from thy summit fall thus low,  
Who deem'd thy arm extended but to dart  
    The public vengeance on thy private foe.  
But, spite of every gloss of envious minds,  
The owl-ey'd race whom Virtue's lustre blinds,  
Who sagely prove that each man hath his price,  
I still believ'd thy aim from blemish free,  
I yet, even yet, believe it, spite of thee  
And all thy painted pleas to greatness and to vice.  
    ` ` Thou didst not dream of Liberty decay'd,  
    Nor wish to make her guardian laws more strong:  
But the rash many, first by thee misled,  
    Bore thee at length unwillingly along."  
Rise from your sad abodes, ye curst of old,  
For faith deserted or for cities sold,  
Own here one untry'd, unexampled, deed;  
One mystery of shame from Curio, learn,  
To beg the infamy he did not earn,  
And scape in Guilt's disguise from Virtue's offer'd meed.  
    For saw we not that dangerous power avow'd  
    Whom freedom oft hath found her mortal bane,  
Whom public Wisdom ever strove to exclude,  
    And but with blushes suffereth in her train?  
Corruption vaunted her bewitching spoils,  
O'er court, o'er senate, spread in pomp her toils,  
And call'd herself the states directing soul:  
Till Curio, like a good magician, try'd  
With Eloquence and Reason at his side,

By strength of holier spells the inchantress to control.

Soon with thy country's hope thy fame extends;

The rescued merchant oft thy words resounds:

Thee and thy cause the rural hearth defends;

His bowl to thee the grateful sailor crowns:

The learn'd recluse, with awful zeal who read

Of Grecian heroes, Roman patriots dead,

Now with like awe doth living merit scan:

While he, whom virtue in his blest retreat

Bade social ease and public passions meet,

Ascends the civil scene, and knows to be a man.

At length in view the glorious end appear'd:

We saw thy spirit through the senate reign;

And Freedom's friends thy instant omen heard

Of laws for which their fathers bled in vain.

Wak'd in the strife the public Genius rose

More keen, more ardent from his long repose:

Deep through her bounds the city felt his call:

Each crowded haunt was stirr'd beneath his power,

And murmuring challeng'd the deciding hour

Of that too vast event, the hope and dread of all.

O, ye good powers! who look on human kind,

Instruct the mighty moments as they roll;

And watch the fleeting shapes in Curio's mind,

And steer his passions steady to the goal.

O Alfred, father of the English name,

O valiant Edward, first in civil fame,

O William, height of public virtue pure,

Bend from your radiant seats a joyful eye

Behold the sum of all your labours nigh,

Your plans of law complete, your ends of rule secure.

'Twas then -- O shame! O soul from faith estrang'd!

O Albion, oft to flattering vows a prey!

'Twas then -- Thy thought what sudden frenzy chang'd?

What rushing palsy took thy strength away?

Is this the man in Freedom's cause approv'd?

The man so great, so honour'd, so belov'd?

Whom the dead envy'd, and the living bless'd?

This patient slave by tinsel bonds allur'd?

This wretched suitor for a boon abjur'd?

Whom those that fear'd him, scorn; that trusted him, detest?

O lost alike to action and repose!

With all that habit of familiar fame,  
Sold to the mockery of relentless foes,  
And doom'd to exhaust the dregs of life in shame,  
To act with burning brow and throbbing heart  
A poor deserter's dull exploded part,  
To slight the favour thou canst hope no more,  
Renounce the giddy crowd, the vulgar wind,  
Charge thy own lightness on thy country's mind,  
And from her voice appeal to each tame foreign shore.

But England's sons, to purchase thence applause,  
Shall ne'er the loyalty of slaves pretend,  
By courtly passions try the public cause;  
Nor to the forms of rule betray the end.  
O race erect! by manliest passions mov'd,  
The labours which to virtue stand approv'd,  
Prompt with a lover's fondness to survey;  
Yet, where Injustice works her wilful claim,  
Fierce as the flight of Jove's destroying flame,  
Impatient to confront, and dreadful to repay.

These thy heart owns no longer. In their room  
See the grave queen of pageants, Honour, dwell  
Couch'd in thy bosom's deep tempestuous gloom  
Like some grim idol in a sorcerer's cell.  
Before her rites thy sickening reason flew,  
Divine Persuasion from thy tongue withdrew,  
While Laughter mock'd, or Pity stole a sigh:  
Can Wit her tender movements rightly frame  
Where the prime function of the soul is lame?  
Can Fancy's feeble springs the force of Truth supply?

But come: 'tis time: strong Destiny impends  
To shut thee from the joys thou hast betray'd:  
With princes fill'd, the solemn fane ascends,  
By Infamy, the mindful demon sway'd.  
There vengeful vows for guardian laws effac'd,  
From nations fetter'd, and from towns laid waste,  
For ever through the spacious courts resound:  
There long posterity's united groan,  
And the sad charge of horrors not their own,  
Assail the giant chiefs, and press them to the ground.

In sight old Time, imperious judge, awaits:  
Above revenge, or fear, or pity, just,  
He urgeth onward to those guilty gates

The great, the sage, the happy, and august.  
 And still he asks them of the hidden plan  
 Whence every treaty, every war began,  
 Evolves their secrets, and their guilt proclaims:  
 And still his hands despoil them on the road  
 Of each vain wreath by lying bards bestow'd,  
 And crush their trophies huge, and rase their sculptur'd names.  
 Ye mighty shades, arise, give place, attend:  
 Here his eternal mansion Curio seeks:  
 -- Low doth proud Wentworth to the stranger bend,  
 And his dire welcome hardy Clifford speaks:  
 `` He comes, whom Fate with surer arts prepar'd  
 To accomplish all which we but vainly dar'd;  
 Whom o'er the stubborn herd she taught to reign:  
 Who sooth'd with gaudy dreams their raging power,  
 Even to it's last irrevocable hour;  
 Then baffled their rude strength, and broke them to the chain."  
 But ye, whom yet wise Liberty inspires,  
 Whom for her champions o'er the world she claims,  
 (That household godhead whom of old your sires  
 Sought in the woods of Elbe, and bore to Thames)  
 Drive ye this hostile omen far away;  
 Their own fell efforts on her foes repay;  
 Your wealth, your arts, your fame, be her's alone:  
 Still gird your swords to combat on her side;  
 Still frame your laws her generous test to abide;  
 And win to her defence the altar and the throne.  
 Protect her from yourselves, ere yet the flood  
 Of golden luxury, which Commerce pours,  
 Hath spread that selfish fierceness through your blood,  
 Which not her lightest discipline endures:  
 Snatch from fantastic demagogues her cause:  
 Dream not of Numa's manners, Plato's laws:  
 A wiser founder, and a nobler plan,  
 O sons of Alfred, were for you assign'd:  
 Bring to that birthright but an equal mind,  
 And no sublimer lot will Fate reserve for man.

Mark Akenside

## Ode IX: At Study

I.

Whither did my fancy stray?  
By what magic drawn away  
Have I left my studious theme?  
From this philosophic page,  
From the problems of the sage,  
Wandering thro' a pleasing dream?

II.

'Tis in vain alas! i find,  
Much in vain, my zealous mind  
Would to learned wisdom's throne  
Dedicate each thoughtful hour:  
Nature bids a softer power  
Claim some minutes for his own.

III.

Let the busy or the wise  
View him with contemptuous eyes;  
Love is native to the heart:  
Guide its wishes as you will;  
Without Love you'll find it still  
Void in one essential part.

IV.

Me though no peculiar fair  
Touches with a lover's care;  
Though the pride of my desire  
Asks immortal friendship's name,  
Asks the palm of honest fame,  
And the old heroic lyre;

V.

Though the day have smoothly gone,  
Or to letter'd leisure known,  
Or in social duty spent;  
Yet at eve my lonely breast  
Seeks in vain for perfect rest;  
Languishes for true content.

Mark Akenside

# Ode IX: To Curio

I.

Thrice hath the spring beheld thy faded fame  
Since I exulting grasp'd the tuneful shell:  
Eager through endless years to sound thy name,  
Proud that my memory with thine should dwell.  
How hast thou stain'd the splendor of my choice!  
Those godlike forms which hover'd round thy voice,  
Laws, freedom, glory, whither are they flown?  
What can I now of thee to time report,  
Save thy fond country made thy impious sport,  
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Who deem'd thy arm extended but to dart  
The public vengeance on thy private foe.  
But, spite of every gloss of envious minds,  
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Who sagely prove that each man hath his price,  
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And all thy painted pleas to greatness and to vice.

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Nor wish to make her guardian laws more strong:  
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And call'd herself the states directing soul:  
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By strength of holier spells the inchantress to control.

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Soon with thy country's hope thy fame extends;  
The rescued merchant oft thy words resounds:  
Thee and thy cause the rural hearth defends;  
His bowl to thee the grateful sailor crowns:  
The learn'd recluse, with awful zeal who read  
Of Grecian heroes, Roman patriots dead,  
Now with like awe doth living merit scan:  
While he, whom virtue in his blest retreat  
Bade social ease and public passions meet,  
Ascends the civil scene, and knows to be a man.

VI.

At length in view the glorious end appear'd:  
We saw thy spirit through the senate reign;  
And Freedom's friends thy instant omen heard  
Of laws for which their fathers bled in vain.  
Wak'd in the strife the public Genius rose  
More keen, more ardent from his long repose:  
Deep through her bounds the city felt his call:  
Each crowded haunt was stirr'd beneath his power,  
And murmuring challeng'd the deciding hour  
Of that too vast event, the hope and dread of all.

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O, ye good powers! who look on human kind,  
Instruct the mighty moments as they roll;  
And watch the fleeting shapes in Curio's mind,  
And steer his passions steady to the goal.  
O Alfred, father of the English name,  
O valiant Edward, first in civil fame,  
O William, height of public virtue pure,  
Bend from your radiant seats a joyful eye



Behold the sum of all your labours nigh,  
Your plans of law complete, your ends of rule secure.

VIII.

'Twas then - O shame! O soul from faith estrang'd!  
O Albion, oft to flattering vows a prey!  
'Twas then - Thy thought what sudden frenzy chang'd?  
What rushing palsy took thy strength away?  
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The man so great, so honour'd, so belov'd?  
Whom the dead envy'd, and the living bless'd?  
This patient slave by tinsel bonds allur'd?  
This wretched suitor for a boon abjur'd?  
Whom those that fear'd him, scorn; that trusted him, detest?

IX.

O lost alike to action and repose!  
With all that habit of familiar fame,  
Sold to the mockery of relentless foes,  
And doom'd to exhaust the dregs of life in shame,  
To act with burning brow and throbbing heart  
A poor deserter's dull exploded part,  
To slight the favour thou canst hope no more,  
Renounce the giddy crowd, the vulgar wind,  
Charge thy own lightness on thy country's mind,  
And from her voice appeal to each tame foreign shore.

X.

But England's sons, to purchase thence applause,  
Shall ne'er the loyalty of slaves pretend,  
By courtly passions try the public cause;  
Nor to the forms of rule betray the end.  
O race erect! by manliest passions mov'd,  
The labours which to virtue stand approv'd,  
Prompt with a lover's fondness to survey;  
Yet, where Injustice works her wilful claim,  
Fierce as the flight of Jove's destroying flame,  
Impatient to confront, and dreadful to repay.

XI.

These thy heart owns no longer. In their room  
See the grave queen of pageants, Honour, dwell

Couch'd in thy bosom's deep tempestuous gloom  
Like some grim idol in a sorcerer's cell.  
Before her rites thy sickening reason flew,  
Divine Persuasion from thy tongue withdrew,  
While Laughter mock'd, or Pity stole a sigh:  
Can Wit her tender movements rightly frame  
Where the prime function of the soul is lame?  
Can Fancy's feeble springs the force of Truth supply?

XII.

But come: 'tis time: strong Destiny impends  
To shut thee from the joys thou hast betray'd:  
With princes fill'd, the solemn fane ascends,  
By Infamy, the mindful demon sway'd.  
There vengeful vows for guardian laws effac'd,  
From nations fetter'd, and from towns laid waste,  
For ever through the spacious courts resound:  
There long posterity's united groan,  
And the sad charge of horrors not their own,  
Assail the giant chiefs, and press them to the ground.

XIII.

In sight old Time, imperious judge, awaits:  
Above revenge, or fear, or pity, just,  
He urgeth onward to those guilty gates  
The great, the sage, the happy, and august.  
And still he asks them of the hidden plan  
Whence every treaty, every war began,  
Evolves their secrets, and their guilt proclaims:  
And still his hands despoil them on the road  
Of each vain wreath by lying bards bestow'd,  
And crush their trophies huge, and rase their sculptur'd names.

XIV.

Ye mighty shades, arise, give place, attend:  
Here his eternal mansion Curio seeks:  
- Low doth proud Wentworth to the stranger bend,  
And his dire welcome hardy Clifford speaks:  
'He comes, whom Fate with surer arts prepar'd  
To accomplish all which we but vainly dar'd;  
Whom o'er the stubborn herd she taught to reign:  
Who sooth'd with gaudy dreams their raging power,

Even to it's last irrevocable hour;  
Then baffled their rude strength, and broke them to the chain.'

XV.

But ye, whom yet wise Liberty inspires,  
Whom for her champions o'er the world she claims,  
(That household godhead whom of old your sires  
Sought in the woods of Elbe, and bore to Thames)  
Drive ye this hostile omen far away;  
Their own fell efforts on her foes repay;  
Your wealth, your arts, your fame, be her's alone:  
Still gird your swords to combat on her side;  
Still frame your laws her generous test to abide;  
And win to her defence the altar and the throne.

XVI.

Protect her from yourselves, ere yet the flood  
Of golden luxury, which Commerce pours,  
Hath spread that selfish fierceness through your blood,  
Which not her lightest discipline endures:  
Snatch from fantastic demagogues her cause:  
Dream not of Numa's manners, Plato's laws:  
A wiser founder, and a nobler plan,  
O sons of Alfred, were for you assign'd:  
Bring to that birthright but an equal mind,  
And no sublimer lot will Fate reserve for man.

Mark Akenside

# Ode On A Sermon Against Glory

Come then, tell me, sage divine,  
Is it an offence to own  
That our bosoms e'er incline  
Toward immortal glory's throne?  
For with me nor pomp, nor pleasure,  
Bourbon's might, Braganza's treasure,  
So can fancy's dream rejoice,  
So conciliate reason's choice,  
As one approving word of her impartial voice.

If to spurn at noble praise  
Be the pass-port to thy heaven,  
Follow thou those gloomy ways;  
No such law to me was given,  
Nor, I trust, shall I deplore me  
Faring like my friends before me;  
Nor an holier place desire  
Than Timolean's arms acquire,  
And Tully's curule chair, and Milton's golden lyre.

Mark Akenside

# Ode To The Country Gentlemen Of England

Thou, heedless Albion, what, alas, the while  
Dost thou presume? O inexpert in arms,  
Yet vain of freedom, how dost thou beguile,  
With dreams of hope, these near and loud alarms?  
Thy splendid home, thy plan of laws renown'd,  
The praise and envy of the nations round,  
What care hast thou to guard from fortune's sway?  
Amid the storms of war, how soon may all  
The lofty pile from its foundations fall,  
Of ages the proud toil, the ruin of a day!

No: thou art rich, thy streams and fertile vales  
Add industry's wise gifts to nature's store:  
And every port is crowded with thy sails,  
And every wave throws treasure on thy shore.  
What boots it? If luxurious plenty charm  
Thy selfish heart from glory, if thy arm  
Shrink at the frowns of danger and of pain,  
Those gifts, that treasure is no longer thine.  
Oh rather far be poor. Thy gold will shine  
Tempting the eye of force, and deck thee to thy bane.

But what hath force or war to do with thee?  
Girt by the azure tide and thron'd sublime  
Amid thy floating bulwarks, thou canst see,  
With scorn, the fury of each hostile clime  
Dash'd ere it reach thee. Sacred from the foe  
Art thy fair fields: athwart thy guardian prow  
No bold invader's foot shall tempt the strand--  
Yet say my country, will the waves and wind  
Obey thee? Hast thou all thy hopes resign'd  
To the sky's fickle faith? the pilot's wavering hand?

Nor yet be aw'd, nor yet your task disown,  
Though war's proud votaries look on severe;  
Though secrets, taught erewhile to them alone,  
They deem profan'd by your intruding ear.  
Let them in vain, your martial hope to quell,  
Of new refinements, fiercer weapons tell,

And mock the old simplicity, in vain:  
To the time's warfare, simple or refin'd,  
The time itself adapts the warrior's mind;  
And equal prowess still shall equal palms obtain.

Mark Akenside

## Ode V: Against Suspicion

I.

Oh fly! 'tis dire Suspicion's mien;  
And, meditating plagues unseen,  
The sorceress hither bends:  
Behold her torch in gall imbrued:  
Behold — her garment drops with blood  
Of lovers and of friends.

II.

Fly far! Already in your eyes  
I see a pale suffusion rise;  
And soon through every vein,  
Soon will her secret venom spread,  
And all your heart and all your head  
Imbibe the potent stain.

III.

Then many a demon will she raise  
To vex your sleep, to haunt your ways;  
While gleams of lost delight  
Raise the dark tempest of the brain,  
As lightning shines across the main  
Through whirlwinds and through night.

IV.

No more can faith or candor move;  
But each ingenuous deed of love,  
Which reason would applaud,  
Now, smiling o'er her dark distress,  
Fancy malignant strives to dress  
Like injury and fraud.

V.

Farewell to virtue's peaceful times:  
Soon will you stoop to act the crimes  
Which thus you stoop to fear:  
Guilt follows guilt: and where the train  
Begins with wrongs of such a stain,  
What horrors form the rear!

VI.

'Tis thus to work her baleful power,  
Suspicion waits the sullen hour  
Of fretfulness and strife,  
When care the infirmer bosom wrings,  
Or Eurus waves his murky wings  
To damp the seats of life.

VII.

But come, forsake the scene unblest'd  
Which first beheld your faithful breast  
To groundless fears a prey:  
Come, where with my prevailing lyre  
The skies, the streams, the groves conspire  
To charm your doubts away.

VIII.

Thron'd in the sun's descending car,  
What power unseen diffuseth far  
This tenderness of mind?  
What genius smiles on yonder flood?  
What god, in whispers from the wood,  
Bids every thought be kind?

IX.

O thou, whate'er thy awful name,  
Whose wisdom our untoward frame  
With social love restrains;  
Thou, who by fair affection's ties  
Giv'st us to double all our joys  
And half disarm our pains;

X.

Let universal candor still,  
Clear as yon heaven-reflecting rill,  
Preserve my open mind;  
Nor this nor that man's crooked ways  
One sordid doubt within me raise  
To injure human kind.





# Ode V: On Love Of Praise

I.

Of all the springs within the mind  
Which prompt her steps in fortune's maze,  
From none more pleasing aid we find  
Than from the genuine love of praise.

II.

Nor any partial, private end  
Such reverence to the public bears;  
Nor any passion, virtue's friend,  
So like to virtue's self appears.

III.

For who in glory can delight  
Without delight in glorious deeds?  
What man a charming voice can slight,  
Who courts the echo that succeeds?

IV.

But not the echo on the voice  
More, than on virtue praise, depends;  
To which, of course, it's real price  
The judgment of the praiser lends.

V.

If praise then with religious awe  
From the sole perfect judge be sought,  
A nobler aim, a purer law  
Nor priest, nor bard, nor sage hath taught.

VI.

With which in character the same  
Tho' in an humbler sphere it lies,  
I count that soul of human fame,  
The suffrage of the good and wise.

Mark Akenside

## Ode Vi: Hymn To Cheerfulness

How thick the shades of evening close!  
How pale the sky with weight of snows!  
Haste, light the tapers, urge the fire,  
And bid the joyless day retire.  
—Alas, in vain i try within  
To brighten the dejected scene,  
While rous'd by grief these fiery pains  
Tear the frail texture of my veins;  
While winter's voice, that storms around,  
And yon deep death-bell's groaning sound  
Renew my mind's oppressive gloom,  
Till starting horror shakes the room.

Is there in nature no kind power  
To sooth affliction's lonely hour?  
To blunt the edge of dire disease,  
And teach these wintry shades to please?  
Come, Cheerfulness, triumphant fair,  
Shine through the hovering cloud of care:  
O sweet of language, mild of mien,  
O virtue's friend and pleasure's queen,  
Asswage the flames that burn my breast,  
Compose my jarring thoughts to rest;  
And while thy gracious gifts i feel,  
My song shall all thy praise reveal.

As once ('twas in Astræa's reign)  
The vernal powers renew'd their train,  
It happen'd that immortal Love  
Was ranging through the spheres above,  
And downward hither cast his eye  
The year's returning pomp to spy.  
He saw the radiant god of day,  
Waft in his car the rosy May;  
The fragrant Airs and genial Hours  
Were shedding round him dews and flowers;  
Before his wheels Aurora pass'd,  
And Hesper's golden lamp was last.  
But, fairest of the blooming throng,

When Health majestic mov'd along,  
Delighted to survey below  
The joys which from her presence flow,  
While earth enliven'd hears her voice,  
And swains, and flocks, and fields rejoice;  
Then mighty Love her charms confess'd,  
And soon his vows inclin'd her breast,  
And, known from that auspicious morn,  
The pleasing Cheerfulness was born.

Thou, Cheerfulness, by heaven design'd  
To sway the movements of the mind,  
Whatever fretful passion springs,  
Whatever wayward fortune brings  
To disarrange the power within,  
And strain the musical machine;  
Thou, Goddess, thy attempering hand  
Doth each discordant string command,  
Refines the soft, and swells the strong;  
And, joining nature's general song,  
Through many a varying tone unfolds  
The harmony of human souls.

Fair guardian of domestic life,  
Kind banisher of homebred strife,  
Nor sullen lip, nor taunting eye  
Deforms the scene where thou art by:  
No sickening husband damns the hour  
Which bound his joys to female power;  
No pining mother weeps the cares  
Which parents waste on thankless heirs:  
The officious daughters pleas'd attend;  
The brother adds the name of friend:  
By thee with flowers their board is crown'd,  
With songs from thee their walks resound;  
And morn with welcome lustre shines,  
And evening unperceiv'd declines.

Is there a youth, whose anxious heart  
Labors with love's unpitied smart?  
Though now he stray by rills and bowers,  
And weeping waste the lonely hours,

Or if the nymph her audience deign,  
Debase the story of his pain  
With slavish looks, discolor'd eyes,  
And accents faltering into sighs;  
Yet thou, auspicious power, with ease  
Can'st yield him happier arts to please,  
Inform his mien with manlier charms,  
Instruct his tongue with nobler arms,  
With more commanding passion move,  
And teach the dignity of love.

Friend to the Muse and all her train,  
For thee i court the Muse again:  
The Muse for thee may well exert  
Her pomp, her charms, her fondest art,  
Who owes to thee that pleasing sway  
Which earth and peopled heaven obey.

Let melancholy's plaintive tongue  
Repeat what later bards have sung;  
But thine was Homer's ancient might,  
And thine victorious Pindar's flight:  
Thy hand each Lesbian wreath attir'd:  
Thy lip Sicilian reeds inspir'd:  
Thy spirit lent the glad perfume  
Whence yet the flowers of Teos bloom;  
Whence yet from Tibur's Sabine vale  
Delicious blows the invivifying gale,  
While Horace calls thy sportive choir,  
Heroes and nymphs, around his lyre.

But see where yonder pensive sage  
(A prey perhaps to fortune's rage,  
Perhaps by tender griefs oppress'd,  
Or glooms congenial to his breast)  
Retires in desert scenes to dwell,  
And bids the joyless world farewell.  
Alone he treads the autumnal shade,  
Alone beneath the mountain laid  
He sees the nightly damps ascend,  
And gathering storms aloft impend;  
He hears the neighbouring surges roll,

And raging thunders shake the pole:  
Then, struck by every object round,  
And stunn'd by every horrid sound,  
He asks a clue for nature's ways;  
But evil haunts him through the maze:  
He sees ten thousand demons rise  
To wield the empire of the skies,  
And chance and fate assume the rod,  
And malice blot the throne of God.  
—O thou, whose pleasing power i sing,  
Thy lenient influence hither bring;  
Compose the storm, dispell the gloom,  
Till nature wear her wonted bloom,  
Till fields and shades their sweets exhale,  
And music swell each opening gale:  
Then o'er his breast thy softness pour,  
And let him learn the timely hour  
To trace the world's benignant laws,  
And judge of that presiding cause  
Who founds on discord beauty's reign,  
Converts to pleasure every pain,  
Subdues each hostile form to rest,  
And bids the universe be bless'd.

O thou, whose pleasing power i sing,  
If right i touch the votive string,  
If equal praise i yield thy name,  
Still govern thou thy poet's flame;  
Still with the Muse my bosom share,  
And sooth to peace intruding care.

But most exert thy pleasing power  
On friendship's consecrated hour;  
And while my Sophron points the road  
To godlike wisdom's calm abode,  
Or warm in freedom's ancient cause  
Traceth the source of Albion's laws,  
Add thou o'er all the generous toil  
The light of thy unclouded smile.  
But, if by fortune's stubborn sway  
From him and friendship torn away,  
I court the Muse's healing spell

For griefs that still with absence dwell,  
Do thou conduct my fancy's dreams  
To such indulgent placid themes,  
As just the struggling breast may cheer  
And just suspend the starting tear,  
Yet leave that sacred sense of woe  
Which none but friends and lovers know.

Mark Akenside

# Ode Vi: To William Hall, Esquire: With The Works Of Chaulieu

I.

Attend to Chaulieu's wanton lyre;  
While, fluent as the sky-lark sings  
When first the morn allures it's wings,  
The epicure his theme pursues:  
And tell me if, among the choir  
Whose music charms the banks of Seine,  
So full, so free, so rich a strain  
E'er dictated the warbling Muse?

II.

Yet, Hall, while thy judicious ear  
Admires the well-dissembled art  
That can such harmony impart  
To the lame pace of Gallic rhymes;  
While wit from affectation clear,  
Bright images, and passions true,  
Recall to thy assenting view  
The envied bards of nobler times;

III.

Say, is not oft his doctrine wrong?  
This priest of pleasure, who aspires  
To lead us to her sacred fires,  
Knows he the ritual of her shrine?  
Say (her sweet influence to thy song  
So may the goddess still afford)  
Doth she consent to be ador'd  
With shameless love and frantic wine?

IV.

Nor Cato, nor Chrysippus here  
Need we in high indignant phrase  
From their Elysian quiet raise;  
But pleasure's oracle alone  
Consult; attentive, not severe.  
O pleasure, we blaspheme not thee;



Nor emulate the rigid knee  
Which bends but at the Stoic throne.

V.

We own had fate to man assign'd  
Nor sense, nor wish but what obey  
Or Venus soft or Bacchus gay,  
Then might our bard's voluptuous creed  
Most aptly govern human kind:  
Unless perchance what he hath sung  
Of tortur'd joints and nerves unstrung,  
Some wrangling heretic should plead.

VI.

But now with all these proud desires  
For dauntless truth and honest fame;  
With that strong master of our frame,  
The inexorable judge within,  
What can be done? Alas, ye fires  
Of love; alas, ye rosy smiles,  
Ye nectar'd cups from happier soils,  
—Ye have no bribe his grace to win.

Mark Akenside

## Ode VII: On The Use Of Poetry

I.

Not for themselves did human kind  
Contrive the parts by heaven assign'd  
On life's wide scene to play:  
Not Scipio's force, nor Cæsar's skill  
Can conquer glory's arduous hill,  
If fortune close the way.

II.

Yet still the self-depending soul,  
Though last and least in fortune's roll,  
His proper sphere commands;  
And knows what nature's seal bestow'd,  
And sees, before the throne of God,  
The rank in which he stands.

III.

Who train'd by laws the future age,  
Who rescu'd nations from the rage  
Of partial, factious power,  
My heart with distant homage views;  
Content if thou, celestial Muse,  
Did'st rule my natal hour.

IV.

Nor far beneath the hero's feet,  
Nor from the legislator's seat  
Stands far remote the bard.  
Though not with public terrors crown'd,  
Yet wider shall his rule be found,  
More lasting his award.

V.

Lycurgus fashion'd Sparta's fame,  
And Pompey to the Roman name  
Gave universal sway:  
Where are they?—Homer's reverend page  
Holds empire to the thirtieth age,  
And tongues and climes obey.

VI.

And thus when William's acts divine  
No longer shall from Bourbon's line  
Draw one vindictive vow;  
When Sidney shall with Cato rest,  
And Russel move the patriot's breast  
No more than Brutus now;

VII.

Yet then shall Shakespeare's powerful art  
O'er every passion, every heart,  
Confirm his awful throne:  
Tyrants shall bow before his laws;  
And freedom's, glory's, virtue's cause,  
Their dread assertor own.

Mark Akenside

# Ode Vii: To The Right Reverend Benjamin Lord Bishop Of Winchester

## I. 1.

For toils which patriots have endur'd,  
For treason quell'd and laws secur'd,  
In every nation Time displays  
The palm of honourable praise.  
Envy may rail; and faction fierce  
May strive: but what, alas, can those  
(Though bold, yet blind and sordid foes)  
To gratitude and love oppose,  
To faithful story and persuasive verse?

## I. 2.

O nurse of freedom, Albion, say,  
Thou tamer of despotic sway,  
What man, among thy sons around,  
Thus heir to glory hast thou found?  
What page, in all thy annals bright,  
Hast thou with purer joy survey'd  
Than that where truth, by Hoadly's aid,  
Shines through imposture's solemn shade,  
Through kingly and through sacerdotal night?

## I. 3.

To him the Teacher bless'd,  
Who sent religion, from the palmy field  
By Jordan, like the morn to cheer the west,  
And lifted up the veil which heaven from earth conceal'd,  
To Hoadly thus his mandate he address'd:  
'Go thou, and rescue my dishonor'd law  
From hands rapacious and from tongues impure:  
Let not my peaceful name be made a lure  
Fell persecution's mortal snares to aid:  
Let not my words be impious chains to draw  
The freeborn soul in more than brutal awe,  
To faith without assent, allegiance unrepaid.'

## II. 1.

No cold or unperforming hand  
Was arm'd by heaven with this command.  
The world soon felt it: and, on high,  
To William's ear with welcome joy  
Did Locke among the blest unfold  
The rising hope of Hoadly's name,  
Godolphin then confirm'd the fame;  
And Somers, when from earth he came,  
And generous Stanhope the fair sequel told.

II. 2.

Then drew the lawgivers around,  
(Sires of the Grecian name renown'd)  
And listening ask'd, and wondering knew,  
What private force could thus subdue  
The vulgar and the great combin'd;  
Could war with sacred folly wage;  
Could a whole nation disengage  
From the dread bonds of many an age,  
And to new habits mould the public mind.

II. 3.

For not a conqueror's sword,  
Nor the strong powers to civil founders known,  
Were his: but truth by faithful search explor'd,  
And social sense, like seed, in genial plenty sown.  
Wherever it took root, the soul (restor'd  
To freedom) freedom too for others sought.  
Not monkish craft the tyrant's claim divine,  
Not regal zeal the bigot's cruel shrine  
Could longer guard from reason's warfare sage;  
Not the wild rabble to sedition wrought,  
Nor synods by the papal Genius taught,  
Nor St. John's spirit loose, nor Atterbury's rage.

III. 1.

But where shall recompence be found?  
Or how such arduous merit crown'd?  
For look on life's laborious scene:  
What rugged spaces lie between  
Adventurous virtue's early toils  
And her triumphal throne! The shade

Of death, mean time, does oft invade  
Her progress; nor, to us display'd,  
Wears the bright heroine her expected spoils.

III. 2.

Yet born to conquer is her power:  
—O Hoadly, if that favourite hour  
On earth arrive, with thankful awe  
We own just heaven's indulgent law,  
And proudly thy success behold;  
We attend thy reverend length of days  
With benediction and with praise,  
And hail Thee in our public ways  
Like some great spirit fam'd in ages old.

III. 3.

While thus our vows prolong  
Thy steps on earth, and when by us resign'd  
Thou join'st thy seniors, that heroic throng  
Who rescu'd or preserv'd the rights of human kind,  
O! not unworthy may thy Albion's tongue  
Thee still, her friend and benefactor, name:  
O! never, Hoadly, in thy country's eyes,  
May impious gold, or pleasure's gaudy prize,  
Make public virtue, public freedom, vile;  
Nor our own manners tempt us to disclaim  
That heritage, our noblest wealth and fame,  
Which Thou hast kept intire from force and factious guile.

Mark Akenside

## Ode VIII: If Rightly Tuneful Bards Decide

I.

If rightly tuneful bards decide,  
If it be fix'd in love's decrees,  
That beauty ought not to be tried  
But by its native power to please,  
Then tell me, youths and lovers, tell,  
What fair can Amoret excell?

II.

Behold that bright unsullied smile,  
And wisdom speaking in her mien:  
Yet (she so artless all the while,  
So little studious to be seen)  
We nought but instant gladness know,  
Nor think to whom the gift we owe.

III.

But neither music, nor the powers  
Of youth and mirth and frolick cheer,  
Add half that sunshine to the hours,  
Or make life's prospect half so clear,  
As memory brings it to the eye  
From scenes where Amoret was by.

IV.

Yet not a satirist could there  
Or fault or indiscretion find;  
Nor any prouder sage declare  
One virtue, pictur'd in his mind,  
Whose form with lovelier colours glows  
Than Amoret's demeanor shows.

V.

This sure is beauty's happiest part:  
This gives the most unbounded sway:  
This shall inchant the subject heart  
When rose and lily fade away;  
And she be still, in spite of time,  
Sweet Amoret in all her prime.

Mark Akenside



# Ode VIII: On Leaving Holland

I 1.

Farewell to Leyden's lonely bound,  
The Belgian Muse's sober seat;  
Where dealing frugal gifts around  
To all the favorites at her feet,  
She trains the body's bulky frame  
For passive, persevering toils;  
And lest, from any prouder aim,  
The daring mind should scorn her homely spoils,  
She breathes maternal fogs to damp its restless flame.

I. 2.

Farewell the grave, pacific air,  
Where never mountain zephyr blew:  
The marshy levels lank and bare,  
Which Pan, which Ceres never knew:  
The Naiads, with obscene attire,  
Urging in vain their urns to flow;  
While round them chaunt the croaking choir,  
And haply sooth some lover's prudent woe,  
Or prompt some restive bard and modulate his lyre.

I. 3.

Farewell, ye nymphs, whom sober care of gain  
Snatch'd in your cradles from the god of love:  
She render'd all his boasted arrows vain;  
And all his gifts did he in spite remove.  
Ye too, the slow-ey'd fathers of the land,  
With whom dominion steals from hand to hand,  
Unown'd, undignify'd by public choice,  
I go where liberty to all is known,  
And tells a monarch on his throne,  
He reigns not but by her preserving voice.

II. 1.

O my lov'd England, when with thee  
Shall i sit down, to part no more?  
Far from this pale, discolor'd sea,  
That sleeps upon the reedy shore,

When shall i plough thy azure tide?  
When on thy hills the flocks admire,  
Like mountain snows; till down their side  
I trace the village and the sacred spire,  
While bowers and copses green the golden slope divide?

II. 2.

Ye nymphs who guard the pathless grove,  
Ye blue-ey'd sisters of the streams,  
With whom i wont at morn to rove,  
With whom at noon i talk'd in dreams;  
O! take me to your haunts again,  
The rocky spring, the greenwood glade;  
To guide my lonely footsteps deign,  
To prompt my slumbers in the murmuring shade,  
And sooth my vacant ear with many an airy strain.

II. 3.

And thou, my faithful harp, no longer mourn  
Thy drooping master's inauspicious hand:  
Now brighter skies and fresher gales return,  
Now fairer maids thy melody demand.  
Daughters of Albion, listen to my lyre!  
O Phœbus, guardian of the Aonian choir,  
Why sounds not mine harmonious as thy own,  
When all the virgin deities above  
With Venus and with Juno move  
In concert round the Olympian father's throne?

III. 1.

Thee too, protectress of my lays,  
Elate with whose majestic call  
Above degenerate Latium's praise,  
Above the slavish boast of Gaul,  
I dare from impious thrones reclaim,  
And wanton sloth's ignoble charms,  
The honors of a poet's name  
To Somers' counsels, or to Hamden's arms,  
Thee, freedom, I rejoin, and bless thy genuine flame,

III. 2.

Great citizen of Albion. Thee

Heroic valour still attends,  
And useful science pleas'd to see  
How art her studious toil extends.  
While truth, diffusing from on high  
A lustre unconfin'd as day,  
Fills and commands the public eye;  
Till, pierc'd and sinking by her powerful ray,  
Tame faith and monkish awe, like nightly demons, fly.

III. 3.

Hence the whole land the patriot's ardour shares:  
Hence dread religion dwells with social joy;  
And holy passions and unsullied cares,  
In youth, in age, domestic life employ.  
O fair Britannia, hail!—With partial love  
The tribes of men their native seats approve,  
Unjust and hostile to each foreign fame:  
But when for generous minds and manly laws  
A nation holds her prime applause,  
There public zeal shall all reproof disclaim.

Mark Akenside

# Ode X: To The Muse

I.

Queen of my songs, harmonious maid,  
Ah why hast thou withdrawn thy aid?  
Ah why forsaken thus my breast  
With inauspicious damps oppress'd?  
Where is the dread prophetic heat,  
With which my bosom wont to beat?  
Where all the bright mysterious dreams  
Of haunted groves and tuneful streams,  
That woo'd my genius to divinest themes?

II.

Say, goddess, can the festal board,  
Or young Olympia's form ador'd;  
Say, can the pomp of promis'd fame  
Relume thy faint, thy dying flame?  
Or have melodious airs the power  
To give one free, poetic hour?  
Or, from amid the Elysian train,  
The soul of Milton shall i gain,  
To win thee back with some celestial strain?

III.

O powerful strain! o sacred soul!  
His numbers every sense controul:  
And now again my bosom burns;  
The Muse, the Muse herself returns.  
Such on the banks of Tyne, confess'd,  
I hail'd the fair immortal guest,  
When first she seal'd me for her own,  
Made all her blissful treasures known,  
And bade me swear to follow Her alone.

Mark Akenside

# Ode X: To Thomas Edwards, Esquire: On The Late Edition Of Mr. Pope's Work

I.

Believe me, Edwards, to restrain  
The licence of a railer's tongue  
Is what but seldom men obtain  
By sense or wit, by prose or song:  
A task for more Herculean powers,  
Nor suited to the sacred hours  
Of leisure in the Muse's bowers.

II.

In bowers where laurel weds with palm,  
The Muse, the blameless queen, resides:  
Fair fame attends, and wisdom calm  
Her eloquence harmonious guides:  
While, shut for ever from her gate,  
Oft trying, still repining, wait  
Fierce envy and calumnious hate.

III.

Who then from her delightful bounds  
Would step one moment forth to heed  
What impotent and savage sounds  
From their unhappy mouths proceed?  
No: rather Spenser's lyre again  
Prepare, and let thy pious strain  
For Pope's dishonor'd shade complain.

IV.

Tell how displeas'd was every bard,  
When lately in the Elysian grove  
They of his Muse's guardian heard,  
His delegate to fame above;  
And what with one accord they said  
Of wit in drooping age misled,  
And Warburton's officious aid:

V.

How Virgil mourn'd the sordid fate  
To that melodious lyre assign'd  
Beneath a tutor who so late  
With Midas and his rout combin'd  
By spiteful clamor to confound  
That very lyre's enchanting sound,  
Though listening realms admir'd around:

VI.

How Horace own'd he thought the fire  
Of his friend Pope's satiric line  
Did farther fuel scarce require  
From such a militant divine:  
How Milton scorn'd the sophist vain  
Who durst approach his hallow'd strain  
With unwash'd hands and lips profane.

VII.

Then Shakespear debonnair and mild  
Brought that strange comment forth to view;  
Conceits more deep, he said and smil'd,  
Than his own fools or madmen knew:  
But thank'd a generous friend above,  
Who did with free adventurous love  
Such pageants from his tomb remove.

VIII.

And if to Pope, in equal need,  
The same kind office thou would'st pay,  
Then, Edwards, all the band decreed  
That future bards with frequent lay  
Should call on thy auspicious name,  
From each absurd intruder's claim  
To keep inviolate their fame.

Mark Akenside

# Ode Xi: On Love, To A Friend

I.

No, foolish youth—To virtuous fame  
If now thy early hopes be vow'd,  
If true ambition's nobler flame  
Command thy footsteps from the croud,  
Lean not to love's enchanting snare;  
His songs, his words, his looks beware,  
Nor join his votaries, the young and fair.

II.

By thought, by dangers, and by toils,  
The wreath of just renown is worn;  
Nor will ambition's awful spoils  
The flowery pomp of ease adorn:  
But love unbends the force of thought;  
By love unmanly fears are taught;  
And love's reward with gaudy sloth is bought.

III.

Yet thou hast read in tuneful lays,  
And heard from many a zealous breast,  
The pleasing tale of beauty's praise  
In wisdom's lofty language dress'd;  
Of beauty powerful to impart  
Each finer sense, each comelier art,  
And sooth and polish man's ungentle heart.

IV.

If then, from love's deceit secure,  
Thus far alone thy wishes tend,  
Go; see the white-wing'd evening hour  
On Delia's vernal walk descend:  
Go, while the golden light serene,  
The grove, the lawn, the soften'd scene  
Becomes the presence of the rural queen.

V.

Attend, while that harmonious tongue  
Each bosom, each desire commands:

Apollo's lute by Hermes strung  
And touch'd by chaste Minerva's hands,  
Attend. I feel a force divine,  
O Delia, win my thoughts to thine;  
That half the color of thy life is mine.

VI.

Yet conscious of the dangerous charm,  
Soon would i turn my steps away;  
Nor oft provoke the lovely harm,  
Nor lull my reason's watchful sway.  
But thou, my friend—i hear thy sighs:  
Alass, i read thy downcast eyes;  
And thy tongue falters; and thy color flies.

VII.

So soon again to meet the fair?  
So pensive all this absent hour?  
—O yet, unlucky youth, beware,  
While yet to think is in thy power.  
In vain with friendship's flattering name  
Thy passion veils its inward shame;  
Friendship, the treacherous fuel of thy flame!

VIII.

Once, I remember, new to love,  
And dreading his tyrannic chain,  
I sought a gentle maid to prove  
What peaceful joys in friendship reign:  
Whence we forsooth might safely stand,  
And pitying view the lovesick band,  
And mock the winged boy's malicious hand.

IX.

Thus frequent pass'd the cloudless day,  
To smiles and sweet discourse resign'd;  
While i exulted to survey  
One generous woman's real mind:  
Till friendship soon my languid breast  
Each night with unknown cares possess'd,  
Dash'd my coy slumbers, or my dreams distress'd.



X.

Fool that i was—And now, even now  
While thus i preach the Stoic strain,  
Unless i shun Olympia's view,  
An hour unsays it all again.  
O friend!—when love directs her eyes  
To pierce where every passion lies,  
Where is the firm, the cautious, or the wise?

Mark Akenside

# Ode Xi: To The Country Gentlemen Of England

I.

Whither is Europe's ancient spirit fled?  
Where are those valiant tenants of her shore,  
Who from the warrior bow the strong dart sped,  
Or with firm hand the rapid pole-ax bore?  
Freeman and soldier was their common name.  
Who late with reapers to the furrow came,  
Now in the front of battle charg'd the foe:  
Who taught the steer the wintry plough to indure,  
Now in full councils check'd incroaching power,  
And gave the guardian laws their majesty to know.

II.

But who are ye? from Ebro's loitering sons  
To Tiber's pageants, to the sports of Seine;  
From Rhine's frail palaces to Danube's thrones  
And cities looking on the Cimbric main,  
Ye lost, ye self-deserted? whose proud lords  
Have baffled your tame hands, and given your swords  
To slavish ruffians, hir'd for their command:  
These, at some greedy monk's or harlot's nod,  
See rifled nations crouch beneath their rod:  
These are the public will, the reason of the land.

III.

Thou, heedless Albion, what, alas, the while  
Dost thou presume? O inexpert in arms,  
Yet vain of freedom, how dost thou beguile,  
With dreams of hope, these near and loud alarms?  
Thy splendid home, thy plan of laws renown'd,  
The praise and envy of the nations round,  
What care hast thou to guard from fortune's sway?  
Amid the storms of war, how soon may all  
The lofty pile from its foundations fall,  
Of ages the proud toil, the ruin of a day!

IV.

No: thou art rich, thy streams and fertile vales  
Add industry's wise gifts to nature's store:

And every port is crouded with thy sails,  
And every wave throws treasure on thy shore.  
What boots it? If luxurious plenty charm  
Thy selfish heart from glory, if thy arm  
Shrink at the frowns of danger and of pain,  
Those gifts, that treasure is no longer thine.  
Oh rather far be poor. Thy gold will shine  
Tempting the eye of force, and deck thee to thy bane.

V.

But what hath force or war to do with thee?  
Girt by the azure tide and thron'd sublime  
Amid thy floating bulwarks, thou canst see,  
With scorn, the fury of each hostile clime  
Dash'd ere it reach thee. Sacred from the foe  
Are thy fair fields. athwart thy guardian prow  
No bold invader's foot shall tempt the strand—  
Yet say, my country, will the waves and wind  
Obey thee? Hast thou all thy hopes resign'd  
To the sky's fickle faith? the pilot's wavering hand?

VI.

For oh may neither fear nor stronger love  
(Love, by thy virtuous princes nobly won)  
Thee, last of many wretched nations, move,  
With mighty armies station'd round the throne  
To trust thy safety. Then, farewell the claims  
Of freedom! Her proud records to the flames  
Then bear, an offering at ambition's shrine;  
Whate'er thy ancient patriots dar'd demand  
From furious John's, or faithless Charles's hand,  
Or what great William seal'd for his adopted line.

VII.

But if thy sons be worthy of their name,  
If liberal laws with liberal hearts they prize,  
Let them from conquest, and from servile shame  
In war's glad school their own protectors rise.  
Ye chiefly, heirs of Albion's cultur'd plains,  
Ye leaders of her bold and faithful swains,  
Now not unequal to your birth be found:  
The public voice bids arm your rural state,

Paternal hamlets for your ensigns wait,  
And grange and fold prepare to pour their youth around.

VIII.

Why are ye tardy? what inglorious care  
Detains you from their head, your native post?  
Who most their country's fame and fortune share,  
'Tis theirs to share her toils, her perils most.  
Each man his task in social life sustains.  
With partial labours, with domestic gains  
Let others dwell: to you indulgent heaven  
By counsel and by arms the public cause  
To serve for public love and love's applause,  
The first employment far, the noblest hire, hath given.

IX.

Have ye not heard of Lacedæmon's fame?  
Of Attic chiefs in freedom's war divine?  
Of Rome's dread generals? the Valerian name?  
The Fabian sons? the Scipios, matchless line?  
Your lot was theirs. the farmer and the swain  
Met his lov'd patron's summons from the plain;  
The legions gather'd; the bright eagles flew:  
Barbarian monarchs in the triumph mourn'd;  
The conquerors to their household gods return'd,  
And fed Calabrian flocks, and steer'd the Sabine plough.

X.

Shall then this glory of the antique age,  
This pride of men, be lost among mankind?  
Shall war's heroic arts no more engage  
The unbought hand, the unsubjected mind?  
Doth valour to the race no more belong?  
No more with scorn of violence and wrong  
Doth forming nature now her sons inspire,  
That, like some mystery to few reveal'd,  
The skill of arms abash'd and aw'd they yield,  
And from their own defence with hopeless hearts retire?

XI.

O shame to human life, to human laws!  
The loose adventurer, hireling of a day,

Who his fell sword without affection draws,  
Whose God, whose country, is a tyrant's pay,  
This man the lessons of the field can learn;  
Can every palm, which decks a warrior, earn,  
And every pledge of conquest: while in vain,  
To guard your altars, your paternal lands,  
Are social arms held out to your free hands:  
Too arduous is the lore; too irksome were the pain.

XII.

Meantime by pleasure's lying tales allur'd,  
From the bright sun and living breeze ye stray;  
And deep in London's gloomy haunts immur'd,  
Brood o'er your fortune's, freedom's, health's decay.  
O blind of choice and to yourselves untrue!  
The young grove shoots, their bloom the fields renew,  
The mansion asks its lord, the swains their friend;  
While he doth riot's orgies haply share,  
Or tempt the gamester's dark, destroying snare,  
Or at some courtly shrine with slavish incense bend.

XIII.

And yet full oft your anxious tongues complain  
That lawless tumult prompts the rustic throng;  
That the rude village-inmates now disdain  
Those homely ties which rul'd their fathers long.  
Alas, your fathers did by other arts  
Draw those kind ties around their simple hearts,  
And led in other paths their ductile will;  
By succour, faithful counsel, courteous cheer,  
Won them the ancient manners to revere,  
To prize their country's peace and heaven's due rites fulfill.

XIV.

But mark the judgement of experienc'd Time,  
Tutor of nations. Doth light discord tear  
A state? and impotent sedition's crime?  
The powers of warlike prudence dwell not there;  
The powers who to command and to obey,  
Instruct the valiant. There would civil sway  
The rising race to manly concord tame?  
Oft let the marshal'd field their steps unite,

And in glad splendor bring before their sight  
One common cause and one hereditary fame.

XV.

Nor yet be aw'd, nor yet your task disown,  
Though war's proud votaries look on severe;  
Though secrets, taught erewhile to them alone,  
They deem profan'd by your intruding ear.  
Let them in vain, your martial hope to quell,  
Of new refinements, fiercer weapons tell,  
And mock the old simplicity, in vain:  
To the time's warfare, simple or refin'd,  
The time itself adapts the warrior's mind;  
And equal prowess still shall equal palms obtain.

XVI.

Say then; if England's youth, in earlier days,  
On glory's field with well-train'd armies vy'd,  
Why shall they now renounce that generous praise?  
Why dread the foreign mercenary's pride?  
Though Valois brav'd young Edward's gentle hand,  
And Albret rush'd on Henry's way-worn band,  
With Europe's chosen sons in arms renown'd,  
Yet not on Vere's bold archers long they look'd,  
Nor Audley's squires nor Mowbray's yeomen brook'd:  
They saw their standard fall, and left their monarch bound.

XVII.

Such were the laurels which your fathers won;  
Such glory's dictates in their dauntless breast:  
—Is there no voice that speaks to every son?  
No nobler, holier call to You address'd?  
O! by majestic freedom, righteous laws,  
By heavenly truth's, by manly reason's cause,  
Awake; attend; be indolent no more:  
By friendship, social peace, domestic love,  
Rise; arm; your country's living safety prove;  
And train her valiant youth, and watch around her shore.

Mark Akenside

# Ode Xii: On Recovering From A Fit Of Sickness, In The Country

I.

Thy verdant scenes, O Goulder's hill,  
Once more i seek, a languid guest:  
With throbbing temples and with burden'd breast  
Once more i climb thy steep aerial way.  
O faithful cure of oft-returning ill,  
Now call thy sprightly breezes round,  
Dissolve this rigid cough profound,  
And bid the springs of life with gentler movement play.

II.

How gladly 'mid the dews of dawn  
My weary lungs thy healing gale,  
The balmy west or the fresh north, inhale!  
How gladly, while my musing footsteps rove  
Round the cool orchard or the sunny lawn,  
Awak'd i stop, and look to find  
What shrub perfumes the pleasant wind,  
Or what wild songster charms the Dryads of the grove.

III.

Now, ere the morning walk is done,  
The distant voice of health i hear  
Welcome as beauty's to the lover's ear.  
"Droop not, nor doubt of my return," she cries;  
"Here will i, 'mid the radiant calm of noon,  
"Meet thee beneath yon chesnut bower,  
"And lenient on thy bosom pour  
"That indolence divine which lulls the earth and skies."

IV.

The goddess promis'd not in vain.  
I found her at my favorite time.  
Nor wish'd to breathe in any softer clime,  
While (half-reclin'd, half-slumbering as i lay)  
She hover'd o'er me. Then, among her train  
Of nymphs and zephyrs, to my view

Thy gracious form appear'd anew,  
Then first, o heavenly Muse, unseen for many a day.

V.

In that soft pomp the tuneful maid  
Shone like the golden star of love.  
I saw her hand in careless measures move;  
I heard sweet preludes dancing on her lyre,  
While my whole frame the sacred sound obey'd.  
New sunshine o'er my fancy springs,  
New colours clothe external things,  
And the last glooms of pain and sickly plaint retire.

VI.

O Goulder's hill, by thee restor'd  
Once more to this inliven'd hand,  
My harp, which late resounded o'er the land  
The voice of glory, solemn and severe,  
My Dorian harp shall now with mild accord  
To thee her joyful tribute pay,  
And send a less-ambitious lay  
Of friendship and of love to greet thy master's ear.

VII.

For when within thy shady seat  
First from the sultry town he chose,  
And the tir'd senate's cares, his wish'd repose,  
Then wast thou mine; to me a happier home  
For social leisure: where my welcome feet,  
Estrang'd from all the intangling ways  
In which the restless vulgar strays,  
Through nature's simple paths with ancient faith might roam.

VIII.

And while around his sylvan scene  
My Dyson led the white-wing'd hours,  
Oft from the Athenian Academic bowers  
Their sages came: oft heard our lingering walk  
The Mantuan music warbling o'er the green:  
And oft did Tully's reverend shade,  
Though much for liberty afraid,  
With us of letter'd ease or virtuous glory talk.



IX.

But other guests were on their way,  
And reach'd ere long this favor'd grove;  
Even the celestial progeny of Jove,  
Bright Venus, with her all-subduing son,  
Whose golden shaft most willingly obey  
The best and wisest. As they came,  
Glad Hymen wav'd his genial flame,  
And sang their happy gifts, and prais'd their spotless throne.

X.

I saw when through yon festive gate  
He led along his chosen maid,  
And to my friend with smiles presenting said;  
"Receive that fairest wealth which heaven assign'd  
"To human fortune. Did thy lonely state  
"One wish, one utmost hope confess?  
"Behold, she comes, to adorn and bless:  
"Comes, worthy of thy heart, and equal to thy mind."

Mark Akenside

# Ode Xii: To Sir Francis Henry Drake, Baronet

I.

Behold; the Balance in the sky  
Swift on the wintry scale inclines:  
To earthy caves the Dryads fly,  
And the bare pastures Pan resigns.  
Late did the farmer's fork o'erspread  
With recent soil the twice-mown mead,  
Tainting the bloom which autumn knows:  
He whets the rusty coulter now,  
He binds his oxen to the plough,  
And wide his future harvest throws.

II.

Now, London's busy confines round,  
By Kensington's imperial towers,  
From Highgate's rough descent profound,  
Essexian heaths, or Kentish bowers,  
Where'er i pass, i see approach  
Some rural statesman's eager coach  
Hurried by senatorial cares:  
While rural nymphs (alike, within,  
Aspiring courtly praise to win)  
Debate their dress, reform their airs.

III.

Say, what can now the country boast,  
O Drake, thy footsteps to detain,  
When peevish winds and gloomy frost  
The sunshine of the temper stain?  
Say, are the priests of Devon grown  
Friends to this tolerating throne,  
Champions for George's legal right?  
Have general freedom, equal law,  
Won to the glory of Nassau  
Each bold Wessexian squire and knight?

IV.

I doubt it much; and guess at least  
That when the day, which made us free,

Shall next return, that sacred feast  
Thou better may'st observe with me.  
With me the sulphurous treason old  
A far inferior part shall hold  
In that glad day's triumphal strain;  
And generous William be rever'd,  
Nor one untimely accent heard  
Of James or his ignoble reign.

V.

Then, while the Gascon's fragrant wine  
With modest cups our joy supplies,  
We'll truly thank the power divine  
Who bade the chief, the patriot rise;  
Rise from heroic ease (the spoil  
Due, for his youth's Herculean toil,  
From Belgium to her savior son)  
Rise with the same unconquer'd zeal  
For our Britannia's injur'd weal,  
Her laws defac'd, her shrines o'erthrown.

VI.

He came. The tyrant from our shore,  
Like a forbidden demon, fled;  
And to eternal exile bore  
Pontific rage and vassal dread.  
There sunk the mouldering Gothic reign:  
New years came forth, a liberal train,  
Call'd by the people's great decree.  
That day, my friend, let blessings crown:  
—Fill, to the demigod's renown  
From whom thou hast that thou art free.

VII.

Then, Drake, (for wherefore should we part  
The public and the private weal?)  
In vows to her who sways thy heart,  
Fair health, glad fortune, will we deal.  
Whether Aglaia's blooming cheek,  
Or the soft ornaments that speak  
So eloquent in Daphne's smile,  
Whether the piercing lights that fly

From the dark heaven of Myrto's eye,  
Haply thy fancy then beguile.

VIII.

For so it is. thy stubborn breast,  
Though touch'd by many a slighter wound,  
Hath no full conquest yet confess'd,  
Nor the one fatal charmer found.  
While I, a true and loyal swain,  
My fair Olympia's gentle reign  
Through all the varying seasons own.  
Her genius still my bosom warms:  
No other maid for me hath charms,  
Or I have eyes for her alone.

Mark Akenside

## Ode Xiii: On Lyric Poetry

### I. 1.

Once more I join the Thespian choir,  
And taste the inspiring fount again:  
O parent of the Grecian lyre,  
Admit me to thy powerful strain—  
And lo, with ease my step invades  
The pathless vale and opening shades,  
Till now I spy her verdant seat;  
And now at large I drink the sound,  
While these her offspring, listening round,  
By turns her melody repeat.

### I. 2.

I see Anacreon smile and sing,  
His silver tresses breathe perfume;  
His cheek displays a second spring  
Of roses taught by wine to bloom.  
Away, deceitful cares, away,  
And let me listen to his lay;  
Let me the wanton pomp enjoy,  
While in smooth dance the light-wing'd Hours  
Lead round his lyre its patron powers,  
Kind laughter and convivial joy.

### I. 3.

Broke from the fetters of his native land,  
Devoting shame and vengeance to her lords,  
With louder impulse and a threatening hand  
The Lesbian patriot smites the sounding chords:  
Ye wretches, ye perfidious train,  
Ye curs'd of gods and freeborn men,  
Ye murderers of the laws,  
Though now ye glory in your lust,  
Though now ye tread the feeble neck in dust,  
Yet Time and righteous Jove will judge your dreadful cause.

### II. 1.

But lo, to Sappho's melting airs  
Descends the radiant queen of love:

She smiles, and asks what fonder cares  
Her suppliant's plaintive measures move:  
Why is my faithful maid distress'd?  
Who, Sappho, wounds thy tender breast?  
Say, flies he?—Soon he shall pursue:  
Shuns he thy gifts—He soon shall give:  
Slights he thy sorrows?—He shall grieve,  
And soon to all thy wishes bow.

II. 2.

But, o Melpomene, for whom  
Awakes thy golden shell again?  
What mortal breath shall e'er presume  
To echo that unbounded strain?  
Majestic in the frown of years,  
Behold, the man of Thebes appears:  
For some there are, whose mighty frame  
The hand of Jove at birth indow'd  
With hopes that mock the gazing crowd;  
As eagles drink the noontide flame,

II. 3.

While the dim raven beats her weary wings,  
And clamours far below.—Propitious Muse,  
While I so late unlock thy purer springs,  
And breathe whate'er thy ancient airs infuse,  
Wilt thou for Albion's sons around  
(Ne'er had'st thou audience more renown'd)  
Thy charming arts imploy,  
As when the winds from shore to shore  
Through Greece thy lyre's persuasive language bore,  
Till towns and isles and seas return'd the vocal joy?

III. 1.

Yet then did pleasure's lawless throng,  
Oft rushing forth in loose attire,  
Thy virgin dance, thy graceful song  
Pollute with impious revels dire.  
O fair, o chaste, thy echoing shade  
May no soul discord here invade:  
Nor let thy strings one accent move,  
Except what earth's untroubled ear

'Mid all her social tribes may hear,  
And heaven's unerring throne approve.

III. 2.

Queen of the lyre, in thy retreat  
The fairest flowers of Pindus glow;  
The vine aspires to crown thy seat,  
And myrtles round thy laurel grow.  
Thy strings adapt their varied strain  
To every pleasure, every pain,  
Which mortal tribes were born to prove;  
And strait our passions rise or fall,  
As at the wind's imperious call  
The ocean swells, the billows move.

III. 3.

When midnight listens o'er the slumbering earth,  
Let me, o Muse, thy solemn whispers hear:  
When morning sends her fragrant breezes forth,  
With airy murmurs touch my opening ear.  
And ever watchful at thy side,  
Let wisdom's awful suffrage guide  
The tenor of thy lay:  
To her of old by Jove was given  
To judge the various deeds of earth and heaven;  
'Twas thine by gentle arts to win us to her sway.

IV. 1.

Oft as, to well-earn'd ease resign'd,  
I quit the maze where science toils,  
Do thou refresh my yielding mind  
With all thy gay, delusive spoils.  
But, o indulgent, come not nigh  
The busy steps, the jealous eye  
Of wealthy care or gainful age;  
Whose barren souls thy joys disdain,  
And hold as foes to reason's reign  
Whome'er thy lovely works engage.

IV. 2.

When friendship and when letter'd mirth  
Haply partake my simple board,

Then let thy blameless hand call forth  
The music of the Teian chord.  
Or if invok'd at softer hours,  
O! seek with me the happy bowers  
That hear Olympia's gentle tongue;  
To beauty link'd with virtue's train,  
To love devoid of jealous pain,  
There let the Sapphic lute be strung.

IV. 3.

But when from envy and from death to claim  
A hero bleeding for his native land;  
When to throw incense on the vestal flame  
Of liberty my genius gives command,  
Nor Theban voice nor Lesbian lyre  
From thee, o Muse, do I require;  
While my presaging mind,  
Conscious of powers she never knew,  
Astonish'd grasps at things beyond her view,  
Nor by another's fate submits to be confin'd.

Mark Akenside



# Ode Xiii: To The Author Of Memoirs Of The House Of Brandenburg

I.

The men renown'd as chiefs of human race,  
And born to lead in counsels or in arms,  
Have seldom turn'd their feet from glory's chace  
To dwell with books or court the Muse's charms.  
Yet, to our eyes if haply time hath brought  
Some genuine transcript of their calmer thought,  
There still we own the wise, the great, or good;  
And Cæsar there and Xenophon are seen,  
As clear in spirit and sublime of mien,  
As on Pharsalian plains, or by the Assyrian flood.

II.

Say thou too, Frederic, was not this thy aim?  
Thy vigils could the student's lamp engage,  
Except for this? except that future fame  
Might read thy genius in the faithful page?  
That if hereafter envy shall presume  
With words irreverent to inscribe thy tomb,  
And baser weeds upon thy palms to fling,  
That hence posterity may try thy reign,  
Assert thy treaties, and thy wars explain,  
And view in native lights the hero and the king.

III.

O evil foresight and pernicious care!  
Wilt thou indeed abide by this appeal?  
Shall we the lessons of thy pen compare  
With private honor or with public zeal?  
Whence then at things divine those darts of scorn?  
Why are the woes, which virtuous men have borne  
For sacred truth, a prey to laughter given?  
What fiend, what foe of nature urg'd thy arm  
The Almighty of his scepter to disarm?  
To push this earth adrift and leave it loose from heaven?

IV.

Ye godlike shades of legislators old,  
Ye who made Rome victorious, Athens wise,  
Ye first of mortals with the bless'd inroll'd,  
Say did not horror in your bosoms rise,  
When thus by impious vanity impell'd  
A magistrate, a monarch, ye beheld  
Affronting civil order's holiest bands?  
Those bands which ye so labor'd to improve?  
Those hopes and fears of justice from above,  
Which tam'd the savage world to your divine commands?

Mark Akenside

# Ode Xiv: To The Honourable Charles Townshend: From The Country

I.

Say, Townshend, what can London boast  
To pay thee for the pleasures lost,  
The health to-day resign'd,  
When spring from this her favorite seat  
Bade winter hasten his retreat,  
And met the western wind?

II.

Oh knew'st thou how the balmy air,  
The sun, the azure heavens prepare  
To heal thy languid frame,  
No more would noisy courts engage;  
In vain would lying faction's rage  
Thy sacred leisure claim.

III.

Oft I look'd forth, and oft admir'd;  
Till with the studious volume tir'd  
I sought the open day;  
And, sure, I cry'd, the rural gods  
Expect me in their green abodes,  
And chide my tardy lay.

IV.

But ah in vain my restless feet  
Trac'd every silent shady seat  
Which knew their forms of old:  
Nor Naiad by her fountain laid,  
Nor Wood-nymph tripping through her glade,  
Did now their rites unfold:

V.

Whether to nurse some infant oak  
They turn the slowly-tinkling brook  
And catch the pearly showers,  
Or brush the mildew from the woods,

Or paint with noontide beams the buds,  
Or breathe on opening flowers.

VI.

Such rites, which they with spring renew,  
The eyes of care can never view;  
And care hath long been mine:  
And hence offended with their guest,  
Since grief of love my soul oppress'd,  
They hide their toils divine.

VII.

But soon shall thy invivifying tongue  
This heart, by dear affliction wrung,  
With noble hope inspire:  
Then will the sylvan powers again  
Receive me in their genial train,  
And listen to my lyre.

VIII.

Beneath yon Dryad's lonely shade  
A rustic altar shall be paid,  
Of turf with laurel fram'd:  
And thou the inscription wilt approve;  
'This for the peace which, lost by love,  
By friendship was reclaim'd.'

Mark Akenside

## Ode Xv: On Domestic Manners (Unfinished)

I.

Meek honor, female shame,  
O! whither, sweetest offspring of the sky,  
From Albion dost thou fly;  
Of Albion's daughters once the favorite fame?  
O beauty's only friend,  
Who giv'st her pleasing reverence to inspire;  
Who selfish, bold desire  
Dost to esteem and dear affection turn;  
Alas, of thee forlorn  
What joy, what praise, what hope can life pretend?

II.

Behold; our youths in vain  
Concerning nuptial happiness inquire:  
Our maids no more aspire  
The arts of bashful Hymen to attain;  
But with triumphant eyes  
And cheeks impassive, as they move along,  
Ask homage of the throng.  
The lover swears that in a harlot's arms  
Are found the self-same charms,  
And worthless and deserted lives and dies.

III.

Behold; unblest at home,  
The father of the cheerless household mourns:  
The night in vain returns,  
For love and glad content at distance roam;  
While she, in whom his mind  
Seeks refuge from the day's dull task of cares,  
To meet him she prepares,  
Through noise and spleen and all the gamester's art,  
A listless, harrass'd heart,  
Where not one tender thought can welcome find.

IV.

'Twas thus, along the shore  
Of Thames, Britannia's guardian Genius heard,

From many a tongue preferr'd,  
Of strife and grief the fond invective lore:  
At which the queen divine  
Indignant, with her adamant spear  
Like thunder sounding near,  
Smote the red cross upon her silver shield,  
And thus her wrath reveal'd.  
(I watch'd her awful words and made them mine.)  
\* \* \* \* \*

Mark Akenside

# Ode Xv: To The Evening-Star

I.

To-night retir'd the queen of heaven  
With young Endymion stays:  
And now to Hesper is it given  
Awhile to rule the vacant sky,  
Till she shall to her lamp supply  
A stream of brighter rays.

II.

O Hesper, while the starry throng  
With awe thy path surrounds,  
Oh listen to my suppliant song,  
If haply now the vocal sphere  
Can suffer thy delighted ear  
To stoop to mortal sounds.

III.

So may the bridegroom's genial strain  
Thee still invoke to shine:  
So may the bride's unmarried train  
To Hymen chaunt their flattering vow,  
Still that his lucky torch may glow  
With lustre pure as thine.

IV.

Far other vows must i prefer  
To thy indulgent power.  
Alass, but now i paid my tear  
On fair Olympia's virgin tomb:  
And lo, from thence, in quest i roam  
Of Philomela's bower.

V.

Propitious send thy golden ray,  
Thou purest light above:  
Let no false flame seduce to stray  
Where gulph or steep lie hid for harm:  
But lead where music's healing charm  
May sooth afflicted love.

VI.

To them, by many a grateful song  
In happier seasons vow'd,  
These lawns, Olympia's haunt, belong:  
Oft by yon silver stream we walk'd,  
Or fix'd, while Philomela talk'd,  
Beneath yon copses stood.

VII.

Nor seldom, where the beachen boughs  
That roofless tower invade,  
We came while her enchanting Muse  
The radiant moon above us held:  
Till by a clamorous owl compell'd  
She fled the solemn shade.

VIII.

But hark; I hear her liquid tone.  
Now, Hesper, guide my feet  
Down the red marle with moss o'ergrown,  
Through yon wild thicket next the plain,  
Whose hawthorns choke the winding lane  
Which leads to her retreat.

IX.

See the green space: on either hand  
Inlarg'd it spreads around:  
See, in the midst she takes her stand,  
Where one old oak his awful shade  
Extends o'er half the level mead  
Inclos'd in woods profound.

X.

Hark, how through many a melting note  
She now prolongs her lays:  
How sweetly down the void they float!  
The breeze their magic path attends:  
The stars shine out: the forest bends:  
The wakeful heifers gaze.

XI.



Whoe'er thou art whom chance may bring  
To this sequester'd spot,  
If then the plaintive Syren sing,  
Oh softly tread beneath her bower,  
And think of heaven's disposing power,  
Of man's uncertain lot.

XII.

Oh think, o'er all this mortal stage,  
What mournful scenes arise:  
What ruin waits on kingly rage:  
How often virtue dwells with woe:  
How many griefs from knowledge flow:  
How swiftly pleasure flies.

XIII.

O sacred bird, let me at eve,  
Thus wandering all alone,  
Thy tender counsel oft receive,  
Bear witness to thy pensive airs,  
And pity nature's common cares  
Till i forget my own.

Mark Akenside

# Ode Xvi: To Caleb Hardinge, M.D.

I.

With sordid floods the wintry Urn  
Hath stain'd fair Richmond's level green:  
Her naked hill the Dryads mourn,  
No longer a poetic scene.  
No longer there thy raptur'd eye  
The beauteous forms of earth or sky  
Surveys as in their Author's mind:  
And London shelters from the year  
Those whom thy social hours to share  
The Attic Muse design'd.

II.

From Hampstead's airy summit me  
Her guest the city shall behold,  
What day the people's stern decree  
To unbelieving kings is told,  
When common men (the dread of fame)  
Adjudg'd as one of evil name,  
Before the sun, the anointed head.  
Then seek thou too the pious town,  
With no unworthy cares to crown  
That evening's awful shade.

III.

Deem not i call thee to deplore  
The sacred martyr of the day,  
By fast and penitential lore  
To purge our ancient guilt away.  
For this, on humble faith i rest  
That still our advocate, the priest,  
From heavenly wrath will save the land;  
Nor ask what rites our pardon gain,  
Nor how his potent sounds restrain  
The thunderer's lifted hand.

IV.

No, Hardinge: peace to church and state!  
That evening, let the Muse give law:

While i anew the theme relate  
Which my first youth inamor'd saw.  
Then will i oft explore thy thought,  
What to reject which Locke hath taught,  
What to pursue in Virgil's lay:  
Till hope ascends to loftiest things,  
Nor envies demagogues or kings  
Their frail and vulgar sway.

V.

O vers'd in all the human frame,  
Lead thou where'er my labor lies,  
And English fancy's eager flame  
To Grecian purity chastize:  
While hand in hand, at wisdom's shrine,  
Beauty with truth i strive to join,  
And grave assent with glad applause;  
To paint the story of the soul,  
And Plato's visions to controul  
By Verulamian laws.

Mark Akenside

# Ode Xvii: On A Sermon Against Glory

I.

Come then, tell me, sage divine,  
Is it an offence to own  
That our bosoms e'er incline  
Toward immortal glory's throne?  
For with me nor pomp, nor pleasure,  
Bourbon's might, Braganza's treasure,  
So can fancy's dream rejoice,  
So conciliate reason's choice,  
As one approving word of her impartial voice.

II.

If to spurn at noble praise  
Be the pass-port to thy heaven,  
Follow thou those gloomy ways;  
No such law to me was given,  
Nor, I trust, shall I deplore me  
Faring like my friends before me;  
Nor an holier place desire  
Than Timolean's arms acquire,  
And Tully's curule chair, and Milton's golden lyre.

Mark Akenside

# Ode XVIII: To The Right Honourable Francis Earl Of Huntingdon

I. 1.

The wise and great of every clime,  
Through all the spacious walks of Time,  
Where'er the Muse her power display'd,  
With joy have listen'd and obey'd.  
For taught of heaven, the sacred Nine  
Persuasive numbers, forms divine,  
To mortal sense impart:  
They best the soul with glory fire;  
They noblest counsels, boldest deeds inspire;  
And high o'er Fortune's rage inthroned the fixed heart.

I. 2.

Nor less prevailing is their charm  
The vengeful bosom to disarm;  
To melt the proud with human woe,  
And prompt unwilling tears to flow.

Can wealth a power like this afford?  
Can Cromwell's arts, or Marlborough's sword,  
An equal empire claim?  
No, Hastings. Thou my words wilt own:  
Thy breast the gifts of every Muse hath known;  
Nor shall the giver's love disgrace thy noble name.

I. 3.

The Muse's awful art,  
And the blest function of the poet's tongue,  
Ne'er shalt thou blush to honour; to assert  
From all that scorned vice or slavish fear hath sung.  
Nor shall the blandishment of Tuscan strings  
Warbling at will in pleasure's myrtle bower;  
Nor shall the servile notes to Celtic kings  
By flattering minstrels paid in evil hour,  
Move thee to spurn the heavenly Muse's reign.  
A different strain,  
And other themes

From her prophetic shades and hallow'd streams  
(Thou well can'st witness) meet the purged ear:  
Such, as when Greece to her immortal shell  
Rejoicing listen'd, godlike sounds to hear;  
To hear the sweet instructress tell  
(While men and heroes throng'd around)  
How life its noblest use may find,  
How well for freedom be resign'd;  
And how, by glory, virtue shall be crown'd.

II. 1.

Such was the Chian father's strain  
To many a kind domestic train,  
Whose pious hearth and genial bowl  
Had cheer'd the reverend pilgrim's soul:  
When, every hospitable rite  
With equal bounty to requite,  
He struck his magic strings;  
And pour'd spontaneous numbers forth,  
And seiz'd their ears with tales of ancient worth,  
And fill'd their musing hearts with vast heroic things.

II. 2.

Now oft, where happy spirits dwell,  
Where yet he tunes his charming shell,  
Oft near him, with applauding hands,  
The genius of his country stands.  
To listening gods he makes him known,  
That man divine, by whom were sown  
The seeds of Grecian fame:  
Who first the race with freedom fir'd;  
From whom Lycurgus Sparta's sons inspir'd;  
From whom Plataean palms and Cyprian trophies came.

II. 3.

O noblest, happiest age!  
When Aristides rul'd, and Cimon fought;  
When all the generous fruits of Homer's page  
Exulting Pindar saw to full perfection bought.  
O Pindar, oft shalt thou be hail'd of me:  
Not that Apollo fed thee from his shrine;  
Not that thy lips drank sweetness from the bee;

Nor yet that, studious of thy notes divine,  
Pan danc'd their measure with the sylvan throng:  
But that thy song  
Was proud to unfold  
What thy base rulers trembled to behold;  
Amid corrupted Thebes was proud to tell  
The deeds of Athens and the Persian shame:  
Hence on thy head their impious vengeance fell.  
But thou, o faithful to thy fame,  
The Muse's law did'st rightly know;  
That who would animate his lays,  
And other minds to virtue raise,  
Must feel his own with all her spirit glow.

III. 1.

Are there, approv'd of later times,  
Whose verse adorn'd a tyrant's crimes?  
Who saw majestic Rome betray'd,  
And lent the imperial ruffian aid?  
Alas! not one polluted bard,  
No, not the strains that Mincius heard,  
Or Tibur's hills reply'd,  
Dare to the Muse's ear aspire;  
Save that, instructed by the Grecian lyre,  
With freedom's ancient notes their shameful task they hide.

III. 2.

Mark, how the dread Pantheon stands,  
Amid the domes of modern hands:  
Amid the toys of idle state,  
How simply, how severely great!  
Then turn, and, while each western clime  
Presents her tuneful sons to Time,  
So mark thou Milton's name;  
And add, "Thus differs from the throng  
'The spirit which inform'd thy awful song,  
Which bade thy potent voice protect thy country's fame.'

III. 3.

Yet hence barbaric zeal  
His memory with unholy rage pursues;  
While from these arduous cares of public weal

She bids each bard begone, and rest him with his Muse.  
O fool! to think the man, whose ample mind  
Must grasp at all that yonder stars survey;  
Must join the noblest forms of every kind,  
The world's most perfect image to display,  
Can e'er his country's majesty behold,  
Unmov'd or cold!  
O fool! to deem  
That he, whose thought must visit every theme,  
Whose heart must every strong emotion know  
Inspir'd by nature, or by fortune taught;  
That he, if haply some presumptuous foe,  
With false ignoble science fraught,  
Shall spurn at freedom's faithful band;  
That he their dear defence will shun,  
Or hide their glories from the sun,  
Or deal their vengeance with a woman's hand!

IV. 1.

I care not that in Arno's plain,  
Or on the sportive banks of Seine,  
From public themes the Muse's quire  
Content with polish'd ease retire.  
Where priests the studious head command,  
Where tyrants bow the warlike hand  
To vile ambition's aim,  
Say, what can public themes afford,  
Save venal honors to an hateful lord,  
Reserv'd for angry heaven and scorn'd of honest fame?

IV. 2.

But here, where freedom's equal throne  
To all her valiant sons is known;  
Where all are conscious of her cares,  
And each the power, that rules him, shares;  
Here let the bard, whose dastard tongue  
Leaves public arguments unsung,  
Bid public praise farewell:  
Let him to fitter climes remove,  
Far from the hero's and the patriot's love,  
And lull mysterious monks to slumber in their cell.



IV. 3.

O Hastings, not to all  
Can ruling heaven the same endowments lend:  
Yet still doth nature to her offspring call,  
That to one general weal their different powers they bend,  
Unenvious. Thus alone, though strains divine  
Inform the bosom of the Muse's son;  
Though with new honors the patrician's line  
Advance from age to age; yet thus alone  
They win the suffrage of impartial fame.  
The poet's name  
He best shall prove,  
Whose lays the soul with noblest passions move.  
But thee, o progeny of heroes old,  
Thee to severer toils thy fate requires:  
The fate which form'd thee in a chosen mould,  
The grateful country of thy sires,  
Thee to sublimer paths demand;  
Sublimer than thy sires could trace,  
Or thy own Edward teach his race,  
Though Gaul's proud genius sank beneath his hand.

V. 1.

From rich domains and subject farms,  
They led the rustic youth to arms;  
And kings their stern achievements fear'd;  
While private strife their banners rear'd.  
But loftier scenes to thee are shown,  
Where empire's wide-establish'd throne  
No private master fills:  
Where, long foretold, the People reigns:  
Where each a vassal's humble heart disdains;  
And judgeth what he sees; and, as he judgeth, wills.

V. 2.

Here be it thine to calm and guide  
The swelling democratic tide;  
To watch the state's uncertain frame,  
And baffle faction's partial aim:  
But chiefly, with determin'd zeal,  
To quell that servile band, who kneel  
To freedom's banish'd foes;

That monster, which is daily found  
Expert and bold thy country's peace to wound;  
Yet dreads to handle arms, nor manly counsel knows.

V. 3.

'Tis highest heaven's command,  
That guilty aims should sordid paths pursue;  
That what ensnares the heart should maim the hand,  
And virtue's worthless foes be false to glory too.  
But look on freedom. see, through every age,  
What labours, perils, griefs, hath she disdain'd!  
What arms, what regal pride, what priestly rage,  
Have her dread offspring conquer'd or sustain'd!  
For Albion well have conquer'd. Let the strains  
Of happy swains,  
Which now resound  
Where Scarsdale's cliffs the swelling pastures bound,  
Bear witness. there, oft let the farmer hail  
The sacred orchard which imbowers his gate,  
And shew to strangers passing down the vale,  
Where Candish, Booth, and Osborne sate;  
When bursting from their country's chain,  
Even in the midst of deadly harms,  
Of papal snares and lawless arms,  
They plann'd for freedom this her noblest reign.

VI. 1.

This reign, these laws, this public care,  
Which Nassau gave us all to share,  
Had ne'er adorn'd the English name,  
Could fear have silenc'd freedom's claim.  
But fear in vain attempts to bind  
Those lofty efforts of the mind  
Which social good inspires;  
Where men, for this, assault a throne,  
Each adds the common welfare to his own;  
And each unconquer'd heart the strength of all acquires.

VI. 2.

Say, was it thus, when late we view'd  
Our fields in civil blood imbru'd?  
When fortune crown'd the barbarous host,

And half the astonish'd isle was lost?  
Did one of all that vaunting train,  
Who dare affront a peaceful reign,  
Durst one in arms appear?  
Durst one in counsels pledge his life?  
Stake his luxurious fortunes in the strife?  
Or lend his boasted name his vagrant friends to chear?

VI. 3.

Yet, Hastings, these are they  
Who challenge to themselves thy country's love;  
The true; the constant: who alone can weigh,  
What glory should demand, or liberty approve!  
But let their works declare them. Thy free powers,  
The generous powers of thy prevailing mind,  
Not for the tasks of their confederate hours,  
Lewd brawls and lurking slander, were design'd.  
Be thou thy own approver. Honest praise  
Oft nobly sways  
Ingenuous youth:  
But, sought from cowards and the lying mouth,  
Praise is reproach. Eternal God alone  
For mortals fixeth that sublime award.  
He, from the faithful records of his throne,  
Bids the historian and the bard  
Dispose of honor and of scorn;  
Discern the patriot from the slave;  
And write the good, the wise, the brave,  
For lessons to the multitude unborn.

Mark Akenside

# Pleasures Of Imagination, The

## BOOK I

With what attractive charms this goodly frame  
Of Nature touches the consenting hearts  
Of mortal men; and what the pleasing stores  
Which beauteous imitation thence derives  
To deck the poet's, or the painter's toil;  
My verse unfolds. Attend, ye gentle pow'rs  
Of musical delight! and while I sing  
Your gifts, your honours, dance around my strain.  
Thou, smiling queen of every tuneful breast,  
Indulgent Fancy! from the fruitful banks  
Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull  
Fresh flowers and dews to sprinkle on the turf  
Where Shakspeare lies, be present: and with thee  
Let Fiction come, upon her vagrant wings  
Wafting ten thousand colours through the air,  
Which, by the glances of her magic eye,  
She blends and shifts at will, through countless forms,  
Her wild creation. Goddess of the lyre,  
Which rules the accents of the moving sphere,  
Wilt thou, eternal Harmony! descend  
And join this festive train? for with thee comes  
The guide, the guardian of their lovely sports,  
Majestic Truth; and where Truth deigns to come,  
Her sister Liberty will not be far.  
Be present all ye genii, who conduct  
The wandering footsteps of the youthful bard,  
New to your springs and shades: who touch his ear  
With finer sounds: who heighten to his eye  
The bloom of Nature, and before him turn  
The gayest, happiest attitude of things.

...

Or shall I mention, where celestial Truth  
Her awful light discloses, to bestow  
A more majestic pomp on Beauty's frame?  
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of Truth  
More welcome touch his understanding's eye,

Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,  
Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet  
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctur'd hues  
To me have shone so pleasing, as when first  
The hand of Science pointed out the path  
In which the sun-beams gleaming from the west  
Fall on the watery cloud, whose darksome veil  
Involves the orient; and that trickling shower  
Piercing through every crystalline convex  
Of clustering dew-drops to their flight oppos'd,  
Recoil at length where concave all behind  
The internal surface on each glassy orb  
Repeals their forward passage into air;  
That thence direct they seek the radiant goal  
From which their course began; and, as they strike  
In different lines the gazer's obvious eye,  
Assume a different lustre, through the brede  
Of colours changing from the splendid rose  
To the pale violet's dejected hue.

Mark Akenside

# Taste

What, then, is taste but those internal powers,  
Active and strong, and feeling alive  
To each fine impulse? a discerning sense  
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust  
From things deformed, or disarranged and gross  
In species. This nor gems nor stores of gold,  
Nor purple state nor culture can bestow;  
But God alone, when first His active hand  
Imprints the secret bias of the soul.

Mark Akenside

# The Complaint

AWAY! away!  
Tempt me no more, insidious Love:  
Thy soothing sway  
Long did my youthful bosom prove:  
At length thy treason is discern'd,  
At length some dear-bought caution earn'd:  
Away! nor hope my riper age to move.

I know, I see  
Her merit. Needs it now be shown,  
Alas! to me?  
How often, to myself unknown,  
The graceful, gentle, virtuous maid  
Have I admired! How often said--  
What joy to call a heart like hers one's own!

But, flattering god,  
O squanderer of content and ease  
In thy abode  
Will care's rude lesson learn to please?  
O say, deceiver, hast thou won  
Proud Fortune to attend thy throne,  
Or placed thy friends above her stern decrees?

Mark Akenside

# The Nightingale

To-night retired, the queen of heaven  
With young Endymion stays;  
And now to Hesper it is given  
Awhile to rule the vacant sky,  
Till she shall to her lamp supply  
A stream of brighter rays.

Propitious send thy golden ray,  
Thou purest light above!  
Let no false flame seduce to stray  
Where gulf or steep lie hid for harm;  
But lead where music's healing charm  
May soothe afflicted love.

To them, by many a grateful song  
In happier seasons vow'd,  
These lawns, Olympia's haunts, belong:  
Oft by yon silver stream we walk'd,  
Or fix'd, while Philomela talk'd,  
Beneath yon copses stood.

Nor seldom, where the beechen boughs  
That roofless tower invade,  
We came, while her enchanting Muse  
The radiant moon above us held:  
Till, by a clamorous owl compell'd,  
She fled the solemn shade.

But hark! I hear her liquid tone!  
Now Hesper guide my feet!  
Down the red marl with moss o'ergrown,  
Through yon wild thicket next the plain,  
Whose hawthorns choke the winding lane  
Which leads to her retreat.

See the green space: on either hand  
Enlarged it spreads around:  
See, in the midst she takes her stand,  
Where one old oak his awful shade



Extends o'er half the level mead,  
Enclosed in woods profound.

Hark! how through many a melting note  
She now prolongs her lays:  
How sweetly down the void they float!  
The breeze their magic path attends;  
The stars shine out; the forest bends;  
The wakeful heifers graze.

Whoe'er thou art whom chance may bring  
To this sequester'd spot,  
If then the plaintive Siren sing,  
O softly tread beneath her bower  
And think of Heaven's disposing power,  
Of man's uncertain lot.

O think, o'er all this mortal stage  
What mournful scenes arise:  
What ruin waits on kingly rage;  
How often virtue dwells with woe;  
How many griefs from knowledge flow;  
How swiftly pleasure flies!

O sacred bird! let me at eve,  
Thus wandering all alone,  
Thy tender counsel oft receive,  
Bear witness to thy pensive airs,  
And pity Nature's common cares,  
Till I forget my own.

Mark Akenside

# The Pleasures Of Imagination

## BOOK I

With what attractive charms this goodly frame  
Of Nature touches the consenting hearts  
Of mortal men; and what the pleasing stores  
Which beauteous imitation thence derives  
To deck the poet's, or the painter's toil;  
My verse unfolds. Attend, ye gentle pow'rs  
Of musical delight! and while I sing  
Your gifts, your honours, dance around my strain.  
Thou, smiling queen of every tuneful breast,  
Indulgent Fancy! from the fruitful banks  
Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull  
Fresh flowers and dews to sprinkle on the turf  
Where Shakspeare lies, be present: and with thee  
Let Fiction come, upon her vagrant wings  
Wafting ten thousand colours through the air,  
Which, by the glances of her magic eye,  
She blends and shifts at will, through countless forms,  
Her wild creation. Goddess of the lyre,  
Which rules the accents of the moving sphere,  
Wilt thou, eternal Harmony! descend  
And join this festive train? for with thee comes  
The guide, the guardian of their lovely sports,  
Majestic Truth; and where Truth deigns to come,  
Her sister Liberty will not be far.  
Be present all ye genii, who conduct  
The wandering footsteps of the youthful bard,  
New to your springs and shades: who touch his ear  
With finer sounds: who heighten to his eye  
The bloom of Nature, and before him turn  
The gayest, happiest attitude of things.

...

Or shall I mention, where celestial Truth  
Her awful light discloses, to bestow  
A more majestic pomp on Beauty's frame?  
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of Truth  
More welcome touch his understanding's eye,

Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,  
Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet  
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctur'd hues  
To me have shone so pleasing, as when first  
The hand of Science pointed out the path  
In which the sun-beams gleaming from the west  
Fall on the watery cloud, whose darksome veil  
Involves the orient; and that trickling shower  
Piercing through every crystalline convex  
Of clustering dew-drops to their flight oppos'd,  
Recoil at length where concave all behind  
The internal surface on each glassy orb  
Repeals their forward passage into air;  
That thence direct they seek the radiant goal  
From which their course began; and, as they strike  
In different lines the gazer's obvious eye,  
Assume a different lustre, through the brede  
Of colours changing from the splendid rose  
To the pale violet's dejected hue.

Mark Akenside

# The Pleasures Of Imagination: Book The First

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The bloom of nature, and before him turn  
The gayest, happiest attitude of things.

Oft have the laws of each poetic strain  
The critic-verse employ'd; yet still unsung  
Lay this prime subject, though importing most  
A poet's name: for fruitless is the attempt,  
By dull obedience and by creeping toil  
Obscure to conquer the severe ascent  
Of high Parnassus. Nature's kindling breath  
Must fire the chosen genius; nature's hand

Must string his nerves, and imp his eagle-wings  
Impatient of the painful steep, to soar  
High as the summit; there to breathe at large  
Æthereal air: with bards and sages old,  
Immortal sons of praise. These flattering scenes  
To this neglected labour court my song;  
Yet not unconscious what a doubtful task  
To paint the finest features of the mind,  
And to most subtle and mysterious things  
Give colour, strength, and motion. But the love  
Of nature and the muses bids explore,  
Through secret paths erewhile untrod by man,  
The fair poetic region, to detect  
Untasted springs, to drink inspiring draughts,  
And shade my temples with unfading flowers  
Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound recess,  
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before.

From heaven my strains begin; from heaven descends  
The flame of genius to the human breast,  
And love and beauty, and poetic joy  
And inspiration. Ere the radiant sun  
Sprang from the east, or 'mid the vault of night  
The moon suspended her serener lamp;  
Ere mountains, woods, or streams adorn'd the globe,  
Or wisdom taught the sons of men her lore;  
Then liv'd the almighty One: then, deep-retir'd  
In his unfathom'd essence, view'd the forms,  
The forms eternal of created things;  
The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,  
The mountains, woods and streams, the rowling globe,  
And wisdom's mien celestial. From the first  
Of days, on them his love divine he fix'd,  
His admiration: till in time compleat,  
What he admir'd and lov'd, his vital smile  
Unfolded into being. Hence the breath  
Of life informing each organic frame,  
Hence the green earth, and wild resounding waves;  
Hence light and shade alternate; warmth and cold;  
And clear autumnal skies and vernal showers,  
And all the fair variety of things.

But not alike to every mortal eye  
Is this great scene unveil'd. For since the claims  
Of social life, to different labours urge  
The active powers of man; with wise intent  
The hand of nature on peculiar minds  
Imprints a different byass, and to each  
Decrees its province in the common toil.  
To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,  
The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,  
The golden zones of heaven: to some she gave  
To weigh the moment of eternal things,  
Of time, and space, and fate's unbroken chain,  
And will's quick impulse: others by the hand  
She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore  
What healing virtue swells the tender veins  
Of herbs and flowers; or what the beams of morn  
Draw forth, distilling from the clefted rind  
In balmy tears. . But some, to higher hopes  
Were destin'd; some within a finer mould  
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame.  
To these the sire omnipotent unfolds  
The world's harmonious volume, there to read  
The transcript of himself. On every part  
They trace the bright impressions of his hand:  
In earth or air, the meadow's purple stores,  
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form  
Blooming with rosy smiles, they see portray'd  
That uncreated beauty, which delights  
The mind supreme. They also feel her charms,  
Enamour'd; they partake the eternal joy.

For as old Memnon's image, long renown'd  
By fabling Nilus, to the quivering touch  
Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string  
Consenting, sounded through the warbling air  
Unbidden strains; even so did nature's hand  
To certain species of external things,  
Attune the finer organs of the mind:  
So the glad impulse of congenial powers,  
Or of sweet sound, or fair proportion'd form,  
The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,  
Thrills through imagination's tender frame,

From nerve to nerve: all naked and alive  
They catch the spreading rays: till now the soul  
At length discloses every tuneful spring,  
To that harmonious movement from without  
Responsive. Then the inexpressive strain  
Diffuses its enchantment: fancy dreams  
Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,  
And vales of bliss: the intellectual power  
Bends from his awful throne a wondering ear,  
And smiles: the passions, gently sooth'd away,  
Sink to divine repose, and love and joy  
Alone are waking; love and joy, serene  
As airs that fan the summer. O! attend,  
Whoe'er thou art, whom these delights can touch,  
Whose candid bosom the refining love  
Of nature warms, o! listen to my song;  
And i will guide thee to her favourite walks,  
And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,  
And point her loveliest features to thy view.

Know then, whate'er of nature's pregnant stores,  
Whate'er of mimic art's reflected forms  
With love and admiration thus inflame  
The powers of fancy, her delighted sons  
To three illustrious orders have referr'd;  
Three sister-graces, whom the painter's hand,  
The poet's tongue confesses; the sublime,  
The wonderful, the fair. I see them dawn!  
I see the radiant visions, where they rise,  
More lovely than when Lucifer displays  
His beaming forehead through the gates of morn,  
To lead the train of Phœbus and the spring.

Say, why was man so eminently rais'd  
Amid the vast creation; why ordain'd  
Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,  
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;  
But that the omnipotent might send him forth  
In sight of mortal and immortal powers,  
As on a boundless theatre, to run  
The great career of justice; to exalt  
His generous aim to all diviner deeds;

To chase each partial purpose from his breast;  
And through the mists of passion and of sense,  
And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,  
To hold his course unflinching, while the voice  
Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent  
Of nature, calls him to his high reward,  
The applauding smile of heaven? Else wherefore burns  
In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope,  
That breathes from day to day sublimer things,  
And mocks possession? wherefore darts the mind,  
With such resistless ardour to embrace  
Majestic forms; impatient to be free,  
Spurning the gross controul of wilful might;  
Proud of the strong contention of her toils;  
Proud to be daring? Who but rather turns  
To heaven's broad fire his unconstrained view,  
Than to the glimmering of a waxen flame?  
Who that, from Alpine heights, his labouring eye  
Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey  
Nilus or Ganges rowling his bright wave  
Through mountains, plains, through empires black with shade  
And continents of sand; will turn his gaze  
To mark the windings of a scanty rill  
That murmurs at his feet? The high-born soul  
Disdains to rest her heaven-aspiring wing  
Beneath its native quarry. Tir'd of earth  
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft  
Through fields of air; pursues the flying storm;  
Rides on the vollied lightning through the heavens;  
Or, yok'd with whirlwinds and the northern blast,  
Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars  
The blue profound, and hovering round the sun  
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream  
Of light; beholds his unrelenting sway  
Bend the reluctant planets to absolve  
The fated rounds of time. Thence far effus'd  
She darts her swiftness up the long career  
Of devious comets; through its burning signs  
Exulting measures the perennial wheel  
Of nature, and looks back on all the stars,  
Whose blended light, as with a milky zone,  
Invests the orient. Now amaz'd she views



The empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold,  
Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode;  
And fields of radiance, whose unfading light  
Has travell'd the profound six thousand years,  
Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.  
Even on the barriers of the world untir'd  
She meditates the eternal depth below;  
Till half recoiling, down the headlong steep  
She plunges; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up  
In that immense of being. There her hopes  
Rest at the sated goal. For from the birth  
Of mortal man, the sovran maker said,  
That not in humble nor in brief delight,  
Not in the fading echoes of renown,  
Power's purple robes, nor pleasure's flowery lap,  
The soul should find enjoyment: but from these  
Turning disdainful to an equal good,  
Through all the ascent of things inlarge her view,  
Till every bound at length should disappear,  
And infinite perfection close the scene.

Call now to mind what high capacious powers  
Lie folded up in man; how far beyond  
The praise of mortals, may the eternal growth  
Of nature to perfection half divine,  
Expand the blooming soul? What pity then  
Should sloth's unkindly fogs depress to earth  
Her tender blossom; choak the streams of life,  
And blast her spring! Far otherwise design'd  
Almighty wisdom; nature's happy cares  
The obedient heart far otherwise incline.  
Witness the sprightly joy when aught unknown  
Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active power  
To brisker measures: witness the neglect  
Of all familiar prospects, though beheld  
With transport once; the fond attentive gaze  
Of young astonishment; the sober zeal  
Of age, commenting on prodigious things.  
For such the bounteous providence of heaven,  
In every breast implanting this desire  
Of objects new and strange, to urge us on  
With unremitted labour to pursue

Those sacred stores that wait the ripening soul,  
In Truth's exhaustless bosom. What need words  
To paint its power? For this the daring youth  
Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,  
In foreign climes to rove: the pensive sage,  
Heedless of sleep, or midnight's harmful damp,  
Hangs o'er the sickly taper; and untir'd  
The virgin follows, with enchanted step,  
The mazes of some wild and wondrous tale,  
From morn to eve; unmindful of her form,  
Unmindful of the happy dress that stole  
The wishes of the youth, when every maid  
With envy pin'd. Hence, finally, by night  
The village-matron, round the blazing hearth,  
Suspends the infant-audience with her tales,  
Breathing astonishment! of witching rhimes,  
And evil spirits; of the death-bed call  
Of him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd  
The orphan's portion; of unquiet souls  
Risen from the grave to ease the heavy guilt  
Of deeds in life conceal'd; of shapes that walk  
At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave  
The torch of hell around the murderer's bed.  
At every solemn pause the croud recoil  
Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd  
With shivering sighs: till eager for the event,  
Around the beldame all arrect they hang,  
Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.

But lo! disclos'd in all her smiling pomp,  
Where Beauty onward moving claims the verse  
Her charms inspire: the freely-flowing verse  
In thy immortal praise, o form divine,  
Smooths her mellifluent stream. Thee, Beauty, thee  
The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray  
The mossy roofs adore: thou, better sun!  
For ever beamest on the enchanted heart  
Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight  
Poetic. Brightest progeny of heaven!  
How shall i trace thy features? where select  
The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom?  
Haste then, my song, through nature's wide expanse,

Haste then, and gather all her comeliest wealth,  
Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains,  
Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,  
To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly  
With laughing Autumn to the Atlantic isles,  
And range with him the Hesperian field, and see  
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,  
The branches shoot with gold; where'er his step  
Marks the glad soil, the tender clusters grow  
With purple ripeness, and invest each hill  
As with the blushes of an evening sky?  
Or wilt thou rather stoop thy vagrant plume,  
Where gliding through his daughter's honour'd shades,  
The smooth Penéus from his glassy flood  
Reflects purpureal Tempe's pleasant scene?  
Fair Tempe! haunt belov'd of sylvan powers,  
Of Nymphs and Fauns; where in the golden age  
They play'd in secret on the shady brink  
With ancient Pan: while round their choral steps  
Young Hours and genial Gales with constant hand  
Shower'd blossoms, odours, shower'd ambrosial dews,  
And spring's Elysian bloom. Her flowery store  
To thee nor Tempe shall refuse; nor watch  
Of winged Hydra guard Hesperian fruits  
From thy free spoil. O bear then, unprov'd,  
Thy smiling treasures to the green recess  
Where young Dione stays. With sweetest airs  
Intice her sorth to lend her angel-form  
For Beauty's honour'd image. Hither turn  
Thy graceful footsteps; hither, gentle maid,  
Incline thy polish'd forehead: let thy eyes  
Effuse the mildness of their azure dawn;  
And may the fanning breezes waft aside  
Thy radiant locks: disclosing, as it bends  
With airy softness from the marble neck,  
The cheek fair-blooming, and the rosy lip,  
Where winning smiles and pleasures sweet as love,  
With sanctity and wisdom, tempering blend  
Their soft allurements. Then the pleasing force  
Of nature, and her kind parental care  
Worthier i'd sing: then all the enamour'd youth,  
With each admiring virgin, to my lyre

Should throng attentive, while i point on high  
Where Beauty's living image, like the morn  
That wakes in Zephyr's arms the blushing May,  
Moves onward; or as Venus, when she stood  
Effulgent on the pearly car, and smil'd,  
Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,  
To see the Tritons tune their vocal shells,  
And each cœrulean sister of the flood  
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves,  
To seek the Idalian bower. Ye smiling band  
Of youths and virgins, who through all the maze  
Of young desire with rival-steps pursue  
This charm of beauty; if the pleasing toil  
Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn  
Your favourable ear, and trust my words.  
I do not mean to wake the gloomy form  
Of Superstition dress'd in Wisdom's garb,  
To damp your tender hopes; i do not mean  
To bid the jealous thunderer fire the heavens,  
Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth  
To fright you from your joys, my cheerful song  
With better omens calls you to the field,  
Pleas'd with your generous ardour in the chace,  
And warm like you. Then tell me, for ye know,  
Does beauty ever deign to dwell where health  
And active use are strangers? Is her charm  
Confess'd in aught, whose most peculiar ends  
Are lame and fruitless? Or did nature mean  
This pleasing call the herald of a lye;  
To hide the shame of discord and disease,  
And catch with fair hypocrisy the heart  
Of idle faith? O no! with better cares  
The indulgent mother, conscious how infirm  
Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,  
By this illustrious image, in each kind  
Still most illustrious where the object holds  
Its native powers most perfect, she by this  
Illumes the headstrong impulse of desire,  
And sanctifies his choice. The generous glebe  
Whose bosom smiles with verdure, the clear tract  
Of streams delicious to the thirsty soul,  
The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to sense,

And every charm of animated things,  
Are only pledges of a state sincere,  
The integrity and order of their frame,  
When all is well within, and every end  
Accomplish'd. Thus was beauty sent from heaven,  
The lovely mistress of truth and good  
In this dark world: for truth and good are one,  
And beauty dwells in them, and they in her,  
With like participation. Wherefore then,  
O sons of earth! would ye dissolve the tie?  
O wherefore, with a rash impetuous aim,  
Seek ye those flowery joys with which the hand  
Of lavish fancy paints each flattering scene  
Where beauty seems to dwell, nor once inquire  
Where is the sanction of eternal truth,  
Or where the seal of undeceitful good,  
To save your search from folly! Wanting these,  
Lo! beauty withers in your void embrace,  
And with the glittering of an idiot's toy  
Did fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam  
Of youthful hope that shines upon your hearts,  
Be chill'd or clouded at this awful task,  
To learn the lore of undeceitful good,  
And truth eternal. Though the poisonous charms  
Of baleful superstition guide the feet  
Of servile numbers, through a dreary way  
To their abode, through deserts, thorns and mire;  
And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn  
To muse at last, amid the ghostly gloom  
Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloister'd cells;  
To walk with spectres through the midnight shade,  
And to the screaming owl's accursed song  
Attune the dreadful workings of his heart;  
Yet be not ye dismay'd. A gentler star  
Your lovely search illumines. From the grove  
Where wisdom talk'd with her Athenian sons,  
Could my ambitious hand intertwine a wreath  
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay,  
Then should my powerful verse at once dispell  
Those monkish horrors: then in light divine  
Disclose the Elysian prospect, where the steps  
Of those whom nature charms, through blooming walks,

Through fragrant mountains and poetic streams,  
Amid the train of sages, heroes, bards,  
Led by their winged Genius and the choir  
Of laurell'd science and harmonious art,  
Proceed exulting to the eternal shrine,  
Where truth conspicuous with her sister-twins,  
The undivided partners of her sway,  
With good and beauty reigns. O let not us,  
Lull'd by luxurious pleasure's languid strain,  
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot-rage,  
O let us not a moment pause to join  
That godlike band. And if the gracious power  
Who first awaken'd my untutor'd song,  
Will to my invocation breathe anew  
The tuneful spirit; then through all our paths,  
Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre  
Be wanting; whether on the rosy mead,  
When summer smiles, to warn the melting heart  
Of luxury's allurements; whether firm  
Against the torrent and the stubborn hill  
To urge bold virtue's unremitted nerve,  
And wake the strong divinity of soul  
That conquers chance and fate; or whether struck  
For sounds of triumph, to proclaim her toils  
Upon the lofty summit, round her brow  
To twine the wreath of incorruptive praise;  
To trace her hallow'd light through future worlds,  
And bless heaven's image in the heart of man.

Thus with a faithful aim have we presum'd,  
Adventurous, to delineate nature's form;  
Whether in vast, majestic pomp array'd,  
Or drest for pleasing wonder, or serene  
In beauty's rosy smile. It now remains,  
Through various being's fair-proportion'd scale,  
To trace the rising lustre of her charms,  
From their first twilight, shining forth at length  
To full meridian splendour. Of degree  
The least and lowliest, in the effusive warmth  
Of colours mingling with a random blaze,  
Doth beauty dwell. Then higher in the line  
And variation of determin'd shape,

Where truth's eternal measures mark the bound  
Of circle, cube, or sphere. The third ascent  
Unites this varied symmetry of parts  
With colour's bland allurements; as the pearl  
Shines in the concave of its azure bed,  
And painted shells indent their speckled wreath.  
Then more attractive rise the blooming forms  
Through which the breath of nature has infus'd  
Her genial power to draw with pregnant veins  
Nutritious moisture from the bounteous earth,  
In fruit and seed prolific: thus the flowers  
Their purple honours with the spring resume;  
And such the stately tree which autumn bends  
With blushing treasures. But more lovely still  
Is nature's charm, where to the full consent  
Of complicated members, to the bloom  
Of colour, and the vital change of growth,  
Life's holy flame and piercing sense are given,  
And active motion speaks the temper'd soul:  
So moves the bird of Juno; so the steed  
With rival ardour beats the dusty plain,  
And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy  
Salute their fellows. Thus doth beauty dwell  
There most conspicuous, even in outward shape,  
Where dawns the high expression of a mind:  
By steps conducting our inraptur'd search  
To that eternal origin, whose power,  
Through all the unbounded symmetry of things,  
Like rays effulging from the parent sun,  
This endless mixture of her charms diffus'd.  
Mind, mind alone, (bear witness, earth and heaven!)  
The living fountains in itself contains  
Of beauteous and sublime: here hand in hand,  
Sit paramount the Graces; here inthron'd,  
Cœlestial Venus, with divinest airs,  
Invites the soul to never-fading joy.  
Look then abroad through nature, to the range  
Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres  
Wheeling unshaken through the void immense;  
And speak, o man! does this capacious scene  
With half that kindling majesty dilate  
Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose

Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,  
Amid the croud of patriots; and his arm  
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove  
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud  
On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,  
And bade the father of his country, hail!  
For lo! the tyrant prostrate on the dust,  
And Rome again is free! Is aught so fair  
In all the dewy landscapes of the spring,  
In the bright eye of Hesper or the morn,  
In nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair  
As virtuous friendship? as the candid blush  
Of him who strives with fortune to be just?  
The graceful tear that streams for others woes?  
Or the mild majesty of private life,  
Where peace with ever-blooming olive crowns  
The gate; where honour's liberal hands effuse  
Unenvied treasures, and the snowy wings  
Of innocence and love protect the scene?  
Once more search, undismay'd, the dark profound  
Where nature works in secret; view the beds  
Of mineral treasure, and the eternal vault  
That bounds the hoary ocean; trace the forms  
Of atoms moving with incessant change  
Their elemental round; behold the seeds  
Of being, and the energy of life  
Kindling the mass with ever-active flame:  
Then to the secrets of the working mind  
Attentive turn; from dim oblivion call  
Her fleet, ideal band; and bid them, go!  
Break through time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour  
That saw the heavens created: then declare  
If aught were found in those external scenes  
To move thy wonder now. For what are all  
The forms which brute, unconscious matter wears,  
Greatness of bulk, or symmetry of parts?  
Not reaching to the heart, soon feeble grows  
The superficial impulse; dull their charms,  
And satiate soon, and pall the languid eye.  
Not so the moral species, nor the powers  
Of genius and design; the ambitious mind  
There sees herself: by these congenial forms



Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenser act  
She bends each nerve, and meditates well-pleas'd  
Her features in the mirror. For of all  
The inhabitants of earth, to man alone  
Creative wisdom gave to lift his eye  
To truth's eternal measures; thence to frame  
The sacred laws of action and of will,  
Discerning justice from unequal deeds,  
And temperance from folly. But beyond  
This energy of truth, whose dictates bind  
Assenting reason, the benignant sire,  
To deck the honour'd paths of just and good,  
Has added bright imagination's rays:  
Where virtue, rising from the awful depth  
Of truth's mysterious bosom, doth forsake  
The unadorn'd condition of her birth;  
And dress'd by fancy in ten thousand hues,  
Assumes a various feature, to attract,  
With charms responsive to each gazer's eye,  
The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk,  
The ingenuous youth, whom solitude inspires  
With purest wishes, from the pensive shade  
Beholds her moving, like a virgin-muse  
That wakes her lyre to some indulgent theme  
Of harmony and wonder: while among  
The herd of servile minds, her strenuous form  
Indignant flashes on the patriot's eye,  
And through the rolls of memory appeals  
To ancient honour, or in act serene,  
Yet watchful, raises the majestic sword  
Of public power, from dark ambition's reach  
To guard the sacred volume of the laws.

Genius of ancient Greece! whose faithful steps  
Well-pleas'd I follow through the sacred paths  
Of nature and of science; nurse divine  
Of all heroic deeds and fair desires!  
O! let the breath of thy extended praise  
Inspire my kindling bosom to the height  
Of this untempted theme. Nor be my thoughts  
Presumptuous counted, if amid the calm  
That soothes this vernal evening into smiles,

I steal impatient from the sordid haunts  
Of strife and low ambition, to attend  
Thy sacred presence in the sylvan shade,  
By their malignant footsteps ne'er profan'd.  
Descend, propitious! to my favour'd eye;  
Such in thy mien, thy warm, exalted air,  
As when the Persian tyrant, foil'd and stung  
With shame and desperation, gnash'd his teeth  
To see thee rend the pageants of his throne;  
And at the lightning of thy lifted spear  
Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils,  
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,  
Thy smiling band of arts, thy godlike sires  
Of civil wisdom, thy heroic youth  
Warm from the schools of glory. Guide my way  
walk, the green retreats  
Of Academus, and the thymy vale,  
Where oft enchanted with Socratic sounds,  
Ilissus pure devolv'd his tuneful stream  
In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store  
Of these auspicious fields, may i unblam'd  
Transplant some living blossoms to adorn  
My native clime: while far above the flight  
Of fancy's plume aspiring, i unlock  
The springs of ancient wisdom; while i join  
Thy name, thrice honour'd! with the immortal praise  
Of nature, while to my compatriot youth  
I point the high example of thy sons,  
And tune to Attic themes the British lyre.

Mark Akenside

# The Pleasures Of Imagination: Book The Fourth

One effort more, one cheerful sally more,  
Our destin'd course will finish. and in peace  
Then, for an offering sacred to the powers  
Who lent us gracious guidance, we will then  
Inscribe a monument of deathless praise,  
O my adventurous song. With steady speed  
Long hast thou, on an untried voyage bound,  
Sail'd between earth and heaven: hast now survey'd,  
Stretch'd out beneath thee, all the mazy tracts  
Of passion and opinion; like a waste  
Of sands and flowery lawns and tangling woods,  
Where mortals roam bewilder'd: and hast now  
Exulting soar'd among the worlds above,  
Or hover'd near the eternal gates of heaven,  
If haply the discourses of the Gods,  
A curious, but an unpresuming guest,  
Thou might'st partake, and carry back some strain  
Of divine wisdom, lawful to repeat,  
And apt to be conceiv'd of man below.  
A different task remains; the secret paths  
Of early genius to explore: to trace  
Those haunts where Fancy her predestin'd sons,  
Like to the Demigods of old, doth nurse  
Remote from eyes profane. Ye happy souls  
Who now her tender discipline obey,  
Where dwell ye? What wild river's brink at eve  
Imprint your steps? What solemn groves at noon  
Use ye to visit, often breaking forth  
In rapture 'mid your dilatory walk,  
Or musing, as in slumber, on the green?  
—Would i again were with you!—O ye dales  
Of Tyne, and ye most ancient woodlands; where  
Oft as the giant flood obliquely strides,  
And his banks open, and his lawns extend,  
Stops short the pleased traveller to view  
Presiding o'er the scene some rustic tower  
Founded by Norman or by Saxon hands:  
O ye Northumbrian shades, which overlook  
The rocky pavement and the mossy falls

Of solitary Wensbeck's limpid stream;  
How gladly i recall your well-known seats  
Belov'd of old, and that delightful time  
When all alone, for many a summer's day,  
I wander'd through your calm recesses, led  
In silence by some powerful hand unseen.

Nor will i e'er forget you. nor shall e'er  
The graver tasks of manhood, or the advice  
Of vulgar wisdom, move me to disclaim  
Those studies which possess'd me in the dawn  
Of life, and fix'd the color of my mind  
For every future year: whence even now  
From sleep i rescue the clear hours of morn,  
And, while the world around lies overwhelm'd  
In idle darkness, am alive to thoughts  
Of honourable fame, of truth divine  
Or moral, and of minds to virtue won  
By the sweet magic of harmonious verse;  
The themes which now expect us. For thus far  
On general habits, and on arts which grow  
Spontaneous in the minds of all mankind,  
Hath dwelt our argument; and how self-taught,  
Though seldom conscious of their own employ,  
In nature's or in fortune's changeful scene  
Men learn to judge of beauty, and acquire  
Those forms set up, as idols in the soul  
For love and zealous praise. Yet indistinct,  
In vulgar bosoms, and unnotic'd lie  
These pleasing stores, unless the casual force  
Of things external prompt the heedless mind  
To recognize her wealth. But some there are  
Conscious of nature, and the rule which man  
O'er nature holds: some who, within themselves  
Retiring from the trivial scenes of chance  
And momentary passion, can at will  
Call up these fair exemplars of the mind;  
Review their features; scan the secret laws  
Which bind them to each other: and display  
By forms, or sounds, or colours, to the sense  
Of all the world their latent charms display:  
Even as in nature's frame (if such a word,

If such a word, so bold, may from the lips  
Of man proceed) as in this outward frame  
Of things, the great artificer portrays  
His own immense idea. Various names  
These among mortals bear, as various signs  
They use, and by peculiar organs speak  
To human sense. These are who by the flight  
Of air through tubes with moving stops distinct,  
Or by extended chords in measure taught  
To vibrate, can assemble powerful sounds  
Expressing every temper of the mind  
From every cause, and charming all the soul  
With passion void of care. Others mean time  
The rugged mass of metal, wood, or stone  
Patiently taming; or with easier hand  
Describing lines, and with more ample scope  
Uniting colors; can to general sight  
Produce those permanent and perfect forms,  
Those characters of heroes and of gods,  
Which from the crude materials of the world  
Their own high minds created. But the chief  
Are poets; eloquent men, who dwell on earth  
To clothe whate'er the soul admires or loves  
With language and with numbers. Hence to these  
A field is open'd wide as nature's sphere;  
Nay, wider: various as the sudden acts  
Of human wit, and vast as the demands  
Of human will. The bard nor length, nor depth,  
Nor place, nor form controuls. To eyes, to ears,  
To every organ of the copious mind,  
He offereth all its treasures. Him the hours,  
The seasons him obey: and changeful Time  
Sees him at will keep measure with his flight,  
At will outstrip it. To enhance his toil,  
He summoneth from the uttermost extent  
Of things which God hath taught him, every form  
Auxiliar, every power; and all beside  
Excludes imperious. His prevailing hand  
Gives, to corporeal essence, life and sense  
And every stately function of the soul.  
The soul itself to him obsequious lies,  
Like matter's passive heap; and as he wills,

To reason and affection he assigns  
Their just alliances, their just degrees:  
Whence his peculiar honors; whence the race  
Of men who people his delightful world,  
Men genuine and according to themselves,  
Transcend as far the uncertain sons of earth,  
As earth itself to his delightful world  
The palm of spotless beauty doth resign.

Mark Akenside

# The Pleasures Of Imagination: Book The Second

When shall the laurel and the vocal string  
Resume their honours? When shall we behold  
The tuneful tongue, the Promethéan hand  
Aspire to ancient praise? Alas! how faint,  
How slow the dawn of beauty and of truth  
Breaks the reluctant shades of Gothic night  
Which yet involve the nations! Long they groan'd  
Beneath the furies of rapacious force;  
Oft as the gloomy north, with iron-swarms  
Tempestuous pouring from her frozen caves,  
Blasted the Italian shore, and swept the works  
Of liberty and wisdom down the gulph  
Of all-devouring night. As long immur'd  
In noon-tide darkness by the glimmering lamp,  
Each muse and each fair science pin'd away  
The sordid hours: while foul, barbarian hands  
Their mysteries profan'd, unstrung the lyre,  
And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.  
At last the muses rose, and spurn'd their bonds,  
And wildly warbling, scatter'd, as they flew,  
Their blooming wreaths from fair Valclusa's bowers  
Arno's myrtle border and the shore of soft Parthenope.

But still the rage of dire ambition and gigantic power,  
From public aims and from the busy walk  
Of civil commerce, drove the bolder train  
Of penetrating science to the cells,  
Where studious ease consumes the silent hour  
In shadowy searches and unfruitful care.  
Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts  
Of mimic fancy and harmonious joy,  
To priestly domination and the lust  
Of lawless courts, their amiable toil  
For three inglorious ages have resign'd,  
In vain reluctant: and Torquato's tongue  
Was tun'd for slavish pæans at the throne  
Of tinsel pomp: and Raphael's magic hand  
Effus'd its fair creation to enchant  
The fond adoring herd in Latian fanes

To blind belief; while on their prostrate necks  
The sable tyrant plants his heel secure.

But now behold! the radiant æra dawns,  
When freedom's ample fabric, fix'd at length  
For endless years on Albion's happy shore  
In full proportion, once more shall extend  
To all the kindred powers of social bliss  
A common mansion, a parental roof.  
There shall the virtues, there shall wisdom's train,  
Their long-lost friends rejoining, as of old,  
Embrace the smiling family of arts,  
The muses and the graces. Then no more  
Shall vice, distracting their delicious gifts  
To aims abhorr'd, with high distaste and scorn  
Turn from their charms the philosophic eye,  
The patriot-bosom; then no more the paths  
Of public care or intellectual toil,  
Alone by footsteps haughty and severe  
In gloomy state be trod: the harmonious Muse  
And her persuasive sisters then shall plant  
Their sheltering laurels o'er the bleak ascent,  
And scatter flowers along the rugged way.  
Arm'd with the lyre, already have we dar'd  
To pierce divine philosophy's retreats,  
And teach the Muse her lore; already strove  
Their long-divided honours to unite,  
While tempering this deep argument we sang  
Of truth and beauty. Now the same glad task  
Impends; now urging our ambitious toil,  
We hasten to recount the various springs  
Of adventitious pleasure, which adjoin  
Their grateful influence to the prime effect  
Of objects grand or beauteous, and inlarge  
The complicated joy. The sweets of sense,  
Do they not oft with kind accession flow,  
To raise harmonious fancy's native charm?  
So while we taste the fragrance of the rose,  
Glow not her blush the fairer? While we view  
Amid the noontide walk a limpid rill  
Gush through the trickling herbage, to the thirst  
Of summer yielding the delicious draught



Of cool refreshment; o'er the mossy brink  
Shines not the surface clearer, and the waves  
With sweeter music murmur as they flow?

Nor this alone; the various lot of life  
Oft from external circumstance assumes  
A moment's disposition to rejoice  
In those delights which at a different hour  
Would pass unheeded. Fair the face of spring,  
When rural songs and odours wake the morn,  
To every eye; but how much more to his  
Round whom the bed of sickness long diffus'd  
Its melancholy gloom! how doubly fair,  
When first with fresh-born vigour he inhales  
The balmy breeze, and feels the blessed sun  
Warm at his bosom, from the springs of life  
Chasing oppressive damps and languid pain!

Or shall i mention, where cœlestial truth  
Her awful light discloses, to bestow  
A more majestic pomp on beauty's frame?  
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of truth  
More welcome touch his understanding's eye,  
Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,  
Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet  
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctur'd hues  
To me have shone so pleasing, as when first  
The hand of science pointed out the path  
In which the sun-beams gleaming from the west  
Fall on the watry cloud, whose darksome veil  
Involves the orient; and that trickling shower  
Piercing through every crystalline convex  
Of clustering dew-drops to their flight oppos'd,  
Recoil at length where concave all behind  
The internal surface of each glassy orb  
Repells their forward passage into air;  
That thence direct they seek the radiant goal  
From which their course began; and, as they strike  
In different lines the gazer's obvious eye,  
Assume a different lustre, through the brede  
Of colours changing from the splendid rose  
To the pale violet's dejected hue.

Or shall we touch that kind access of joy,  
That springs to each fair object, while we trace  
Through all its fabric, wisdom's artful aim  
Disposing every part, and gaining still  
By means proportion'd her benignant end?  
Speak, ye, the pure delight, whose favour'd steps  
The lamp of science through the jealous maze  
Of nature guides, when haply you reveal  
Her secret honours: whether in the sky,  
The beauteous laws of light, the central powers  
That wheel the pensile planets round the year;  
Whether in wonders of the rowling deep,  
Or the rich fruits of all-sustaining earth,  
Or fine-adjusted springs of life and sense,  
Ye scan the counsels of their author's hand.

What, when to raise the meditated scene,  
The flame of passion, through the struggling soul  
Deep-kindled, shows across that sudden blaze  
The object of its rapture, vast of size,  
With fiercer colours and a night of shade?  
What? like a storm from their capacious bed  
The sounding seas o'erwhelming, when the might  
Of these eruptions, working from the depth  
Of man's strong apprehension, shakes his frame  
Even to the base; from every naked sense  
Of pain or pleasure dissipating all  
Opinion's feeble coverings, and the veil  
Spun from the cobweb fashion of the times  
To hide the feeling heart? Then nature speaks  
Her genuine language, and the words of men,  
Big with the very motion of their souls,  
Declare with what accumulated force,  
The impetuous nerve of passion urges on  
The native weight and energy of things.

Yet more: her honours where nor beauty claims,  
Nor shews of good the thirsty sense allure,  
From passion's power alone our nature holds  
Essential pleasure. Passion's fierce illapse  
Rouzes the mind's whole fabric; with supplies

Of daily impulse keeps the elastic powers  
Intensely poiz'd, and polishes anew  
By that collision all the fine machine:  
Else rust would rise, and foulness, by degrees  
Incumbering, choak at last what heaven design'd  
For ceaseless motion and a round of toil.  
—But say, does every passion thus to man  
Administer delight? That name indeed  
Becomes the rosy breath of love; becomes  
The radiant smiles of joy, the applauding hand  
Of admiration: but the bitter shower  
That sorrow sheds upon a brother's grave,  
But the dumb palsy of nocturnal fear,  
Or those consuming fires that gnaw the heart  
Of panting indignation, find we there  
To move delight?—Then listen while my tongue  
The unalter'd will of heaven with faithful awe  
Reveals; what old Harmodius wont to teach  
My early age; Harmodius, who had weigh'd  
Within his learned mind whate'er the schools  
Of wisdom, or thy lonely-whispering voice,  
O faithful nature! dictate of the laws  
Which govern and support this mighty frame  
Of universal being. Oft the hours  
From morn to eve have stolen unmark'd away,  
While mute attention hung upon his lips,  
As thus the sage his awful tale began.

'Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,  
When spotless youth with solitude resigns  
To sweet philosophy the studious day,  
What time pale autumn shades the silent eve,  
Musing i rov'd. Of good and evil much,  
And much of mortal man my thought revolv'd;  
When starting full on fancy's gushing eye  
The mournful image of Parthenia's fate,  
That hour, o long belov'd and long deplor'd!  
When blooming youth, nor gentlest wisdom's arts,  
Nor Hymen's honours gather'd for thy brow,  
Nor all thy lover's, all thy father's tears  
Avail'd to snatch thee from the cruel grave;  
Thy agonizing looks, thy last farewell

Struck to the inmost feeling of my soul  
As with the hand of death. At once the shade  
More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds  
With hoarser murmuring shook the branches. Dark  
As midnight storms, the scene of human things  
Appear'd before me; deserts, burning sands,  
Where the parch'd adder dies; the frozen south,  
And desolation blasting all the west  
With rapine and with murder: tyrant power  
Here sits enthron'd with blood; the baleful charms  
Of superstition there infect the skies,  
And turn the sun to horror. Gracious heaven!  
What is the life of man? Or cannot these,  
Not these portents thy awful will suffice?  
That, propagated thus beyond their scope,  
They rise to act their cruelties anew  
In my afflicted bosom, thus decreed  
The universal sensitive of pain,  
The wretched heir of evils not its own!

Thus I impatient; when, at once effus'd,  
A flashing torrent of cœlestial day  
Burst through the shadowy void. With slow descent  
A purple cloud came floating through the sky,  
And pois'd at length within the circling trees,  
Hung obvious to my view; till opening wide  
Its lucid orb, a more than human form  
Emerging lean'd majestic o'er my head,  
And instant thunder shook the conscious grove.  
Then melted into air the liquid cloud,  
And all the shining vision stood reveal'd.  
A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,  
And o'er his shoulder, mantling to his knee,  
Flow'd the transparent robe, around his waist  
Collected with a radiant zone of gold  
Æthereal: there in mystic signs ingrav'd,  
I read his office high and sacred name,  
Genius of human kind. Appall'd i gaz'd  
The godlike presence; for athwart his brow  
Displeasure, temper'd with a mild concern,  
Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words  
Like distant thunders broke the murmuring air.

Vain are thy thoughts, o child of mortal birth!  
And impotent thy tongue. Is thy short span  
Capacious of this universal frame?  
Thy wisdom all-sufficient? Thou, alas!  
Dost thou aspire to judge between the Lord  
Of nature and his works? to lift thy voice  
Against the sovran order he decreed,  
All good and lovely? to blaspheme the bands  
Of tenderness innate and social love,  
Holiest of things! by which the general orb  
Of being, as by adamant links,  
Was drawn to perfect union and sustain'd  
From everlasting? Hast thou felt the pangs  
Of softening sorrow, of indignant zeal  
So grievous to the soul, as thence to wish  
The ties of nature broken from thy frame;  
That so thy selfish, unrelenting heart  
Might cease to mourn its lot, no longer then  
The wretched heir of evils not its own?  
O fair benevolence of generous minds!  
O man by nature form'd for all mankind!

He spoke; abash'd and silent i remain'd,  
As conscious of my tongue's offence, and aw'd  
Before his presence, though my secret soul  
Disdain'd the imputation. On the ground  
I fix'd my eyes; till from his airy couch  
He stoop'd sublime, and touching with his hand  
My dazzling forehead, Raise thy sight, he cry'd  
And let thy sense convince thy erring tongue.

I look'd, and lo! the former scene was chang'd;  
For verdant alleys and surrounding trees,  
A solitary prospect, wide and wild,  
Rush'd on my senses. 'Twas an horrid pile  
Of hills with many a shaggy forest mix'd,  
With many a sable cliff and glittering stream.  
Aloft recumbent o'er the hanging ridge,  
The brown woods wav'd; while ever-trickling springs  
Wash'd from the naked roots of oak and pine  
The crumbling soil; and still at every fall

Down the steep windings of the channel'd rock,  
Remurmuring rush'd the congregated floods  
With hoarser inundation; till at last  
They reach'd a grassy plain, which from the skirts  
Of that high desert spread her verdant lap,  
And drank the gushing moisture, where confin'd  
In one smooth current, o'er the liliated vale  
Clearer than glass it flow'd. Autumnal spoils  
Luxuriant spreading to the rays of morn,  
Blush'd o'er the cliffs, whose half-incircling mound  
As in a sylvan theatre inclos'd  
That flowery level. On the river's brink  
I spy'd a fair pavilion, which diffus'd  
Its floating umbrage 'mid the silver shade  
Of osiers. Now the western sun reveal'd  
Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,  
And pour'd across the shadow of the hills,  
On rocks and floods, a yellow stream of light  
That cheer'd the solemn scene. My listening powers  
Were aw'd, and every thought in silence hung,  
And wondering expectation. Then the voice  
Of that cœlestial power, the mystic show  
Declaring, thus my deep attention call'd.

Inhabitant of earth, to whom is given  
The gracious ways of providence to learn,  
Receive my sayings with a stedfast ear—  
Know then, the sovran spirit of the world,  
Though self-collected from eternal time,  
Within his own deep essence he beheld  
The bounds of true felicity complete;  
Yet by immense benignity inclin'd  
To spread around him that primæval joy  
Which fill'd himself, he rais'd his plastic arm,  
And sounded through the hollow depth of space  
The strong, creative mandate. Strait arose  
These heavenly orbs, the glad abodes of life  
Effusive kindled by his breath divine  
Through endless forms of being. Each inhal'd  
From him its portion of the vital flame,  
In measure such, that, from the wide complex  
Of coexistent orders, one might rise,

One order, all-involving and intire.  
He too beholding in the sacred light  
Of his essential reason, all the shapes  
Of swift contingence, all successive ties  
Of action propagatd through the sum  
Of possible existence, he at once,  
Down the long series of eventful time,  
So fix'd the dates of being, so dispos'd,  
To every living soul of every kind  
The field of motion and the hour of rest,  
That all conspir'd to his supreme design,  
To universal good: with full accord  
Answering the mighty model he had chosen,  
The best and fairest of unnumber'd worlds  
That lay from everlasting in the store  
Of his divine conceptions. Nor content,  
By one exertion of creative power  
His goodness to reveal; through every age,  
Through every moment up the tract of time  
His parent-hand with ever-new increase  
Of happiness and virtue has adorn'd  
The vast harmonious frame: his parent-hand,  
From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore,  
To men, to angels, to cœlestial minds  
For ever leads the generations on  
To higher scenes of being; while supply'd  
From day to day with his enlivening breath,  
Inferior orders in succession rise  
To fill the void below. As flame ascends,  
As bodies to their proper center move,  
As the pois'd ocean to the attracting moon  
Obedient swells, and every headlong stream  
Devolves its winding waters to the main;  
So all things which have life aspire to God,  
The sun of being, boundless, unimpair'd,  
Center of souls! Nor does the faithful voice  
Of nature cease to prompt their eager steps  
Aright; nor is the care of heaven withheld  
From granting to the task proportion'd aid;  
That in their stations all may persevere  
To climb the ascent of being, and approach  
For ever nearer to the life divine.

That rocky pile thou seest, that verdant lawn  
Fresh-water'd from the mountains. Let the scene  
Paint in thy fancy the primæval seat  
Of man, and where the will supreme ordain'd  
His mansion, that pavilion fair-diffus'd  
Along the shady brink; in this recess  
To wear the appointed season of his youth,  
Till riper hours should open to his toil  
The high communion of superior minds,  
Of consecrated heroes and of gods.  
Nor did the sire omnipotent forget  
His tender bloom to cherish; nor withheld  
Cœlestial footsteps from his green abode.  
Oft from the radiant honours of his throne,  
He sent whom most he lov'd, the sovran fair,  
The effluence of his glory, whom he plac'd  
Before his eyes for ever to behold;  
The goddess from whose inspiration flows  
The toil of patriots, the delight of friends;  
Without whose work divine, in heaven or earth,  
Nought lovely, nought propitious comes to pass,  
Nor hope, nor praise, nor honour. Her the sire  
Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind,  
The folded powers to open, to direct  
The growth luxuriant of his young desires,  
And from the laws of this majestic world  
To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph  
Her daily care attended, by her side  
With constant steps her gay companion stay'd,  
The fair Euphrosyné, the gentle queen  
Of smiles, and graceful gladness, and delights  
That cheer alike the hearts of mortal men  
And powers immortal. See the shining pair!  
Behold, where from his dwelling now disclos'd  
They quit their youthful charge and seek the skies.

I look'd, and on the flowery turf there stood  
Between two radiant forms a smiling youth  
Whose tender cheeks display'd the vernal flower  
Of beauty; sweetest innocence illum'd  
His bashful eyes, and on his polish'd brow



Sate young simplicity. With fond regard  
He view'd the associates, as their steps they mov'd;  
The younger chief his ardent eyes detain'd,  
With mild regret invoking her return.  
Bright as the star of evening she appear'd  
Amid the dusky scene. Eternal youth  
O'er all her form its glowing honours breath'd;  
And smiles eternal from her candid eyes  
Flow'd, like the dewy lustre of the morn  
Effusive trembling on the placid waves.  
The spring of heaven had shed its blushing spoils  
To bind her sable tresses: full diffus'd  
Her yellow mantle floated in the breeze;  
And in her hand she wav'd a living branch  
Rich with immortal fruits, of power to calm  
The wrathful heart, and from the brightening eyes,  
To chase the cloud of sadness. More sublime  
The heavenly partner mov'd. The prime of age  
Compos'd her steps. The presence of a god,  
High on the circle of her brow inthron'd,  
From each majestic motion darted awe,  
Devoted awe! till, cherish'd by her looks  
Benevolent and meek, confiding love  
To filial rapture soften'd all the soul.  
Free in her graceful hand she pois'd the sword  
Of chaste dominion. An heroic crown  
Display'd the old simplicity of pomp  
Around her honour'd head. A matron's robe,  
White as the sunshine streams through vernal clouds,  
Her stately form invested. Hand in hand  
The immortal pair forsook the enamel'd green,  
Ascending slowly. Rays of limpid light  
Gleam'd round their path; cœlestial sounds were heard,  
And through the fragrant air æthereal dews  
Distill'd around them; till at once the clouds  
Disparting wide in midway sky, withdrew  
Their airy veil, and left a bright expanse  
Of empyréan flame, where spent and drown'd,  
Afflicted vision plung'd in vain to scan  
What object it involv'd. My feeble eyes  
Indur'd not. Bending down to earth i stood,  
With dumb attention. Soon a female voice,

As watry murmurs sweet, or warbling shades,  
With sacred invocation thus began.

Father of gods and mortals! whose right arm  
With reins eternal guides the moving heavens,  
Bend thy propitious ear. Behold well-pleas'd  
I seek to finish thy divine decree.  
With frequent steps I visit yonder seat  
Of man, thy offspring; from the tender seeds  
Of justice and of wisdom, to evolve  
The latent honours of his generous frame;  
Till thy conducting hand shall raise his lot  
From earth's dim scene to these æthereal walks,  
The temple of thy glory. But not me,  
Not my directing voice he oft requires,  
Or hears delighted: this enchanting maid,  
The associate thou hast given me, her alone  
He loves, o Father! absent, her he craves;  
And but for her glad presence ever join'd,  
Rejoices not in mine: that all my hopes  
This thy benignant purpose to fulfil,  
I deem uncertain; and my daily cares  
Unfruitful all and vain, unless by thee  
Still farther aided in the work divine.

She ceas'd; a voice more awful thus reply'd.  
O thou! in whom for ever i delight,  
Fairer than all the inhabitants of heaven,  
Best image of thy author! far from thee  
Be disappointment, or distaste, or blame;  
Who soon or late shalt every work fulfil,  
And no resistance find. If man refuse  
To hearken to thy dictates; or allur'd  
By meaner joys, to any other power  
Transfer the honours due to thee alone;  
That joy which he pursues he ne'er shall taste,  
That power in whom delighteth ne'er behold.  
Go then, once more, and happy be thy toil;  
Go then! but let not this thy smiling friend  
Partake thy footsteps. In her stead, behold!  
With thee the son of Nemesis i send;  
The fiend abhorr'd! whose vengeance takes account

Of sacred order's violated laws.  
See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,  
Fierce to exhaust the tempest of his wrath  
On yon devoted head. But thou, my child,  
Controul his cruel phrenzy, and protect  
Thy tender charge; that when despair shall grasp  
His agonizing bosom, he may learn,  
Then he may learn to love the gracious hand  
Alone sufficient in the hour of ill,  
To save his feeble spirit; then confess  
Thy genuine honours, o excelling fair!  
When all the plagues that wait the deadly will.  
Of this avenging dæmon, all the storms  
Of night infernal, serve but to display  
The energy of thy superior charms  
With mildest awe triumphant o'er his rage,  
And shining clearer in the horrid gloom.

Here ceas'd that awful voice, and soon i felt  
The cloudy curtain of refreshing eve  
Was clos'd once more, from that immortal fire  
Sheltering my eye-lids. Looking up, i view'd  
A vast gigantic spectre striding on  
Through murmuring thunders and a waste of clouds,  
With dreadful action. Black as night his brow  
Relentless frowns involv'd. His savage limbs  
With sharp impatience violent he writh'd,  
As through convulsive anguish; and his hand,  
Arm'd with a scorpion-lash, full oft he rais'd  
In madness to his bosom; while his eyes  
Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud he shook  
The void with horror. Silent by his side  
The virgin came. No discomposure stirr'd  
Her features. From the glooms which hung around  
No stain of darkness mingled with the beam  
Of her divine effulgence. Now they stoop  
Upon the river-bank; and now to hail  
His wonted guests, with eager steps advanc'd  
The unsuspecting inmate of the shade.

As when a famish'd wolf, that all night long  
Had rang'd the Alpine snows, by chance at morn

Sees from a cliff incumbent o'er the smoke  
Of some lone village, a neglected kid  
That strays along the wild for herb or spring;  
Down from the winding ridge he sweeps amain,  
And thinks he tears him: so with tenfold rage,  
The monster sprung remorseless on his prey.  
Amaz'd the stripling stood: with panting breast  
Feebly he pour'd the lamentable wail  
Of helpless consternation, struck at once,  
And rooted to the ground. The queen beheld  
His terror, and with looks of tenderest care  
Advanc'd to save him. Soon the tyrant felt  
Her awful power. His keen, tempestuous arm  
Hung nerveless, nor descended where his rage  
Had aim'd the deadly blow: then dumb retir'd  
With sullen rancour. Lo! the sovran maid  
Folds with a mother's arms the fainting boy,  
Till life rekindles in his rosy cheek;  
Then grasps his hands, and cheers him with her tongue.

O wake thee, rouze thy spirit! Shall the spite  
Of yon tormentor thus appall thy heart,  
While i, thy friend and guardian, am at hand  
To rescue and to heal? O let thy soul  
Remember, what the will of heaven ordains  
Is ever good for all; and if for all,  
Then good for thee. Nor only by the warmth  
And soothing sunshine of delightful things,  
Do minds grow up and flourish. Oft misled  
By that bland light, the young unpractis'd views  
Of reason wander through a fatal road,  
Far from their native aim: as if to lye  
Inglorious in the fragrant shade, and wait  
The soft access of ever-circling joys,  
Were all the end of being. Ask thyself,  
This pleasing error did it never lull  
Thy wishes? Has thy constant heart refus'd  
The silken fetters of delicious ease?  
Or when divine Euphrosyné appear'd  
Within this dwelling, did not thy desires  
Hang far below the measure of thy fate,  
Which i reveal'd before thee? and thy eyes,

Impatient of my counsels, turn away  
To drink the soft effusion of her smiles?  
Know then, for this the everlasting sire  
Deprives thee of her presence, and instead,  
O wise and still benevolent! ordains  
This horrid visage hither to pursue  
My steps; that so thy nature may discern  
Its real good, and what alone can save  
Thy feeble spirit in this hour of ill  
From folly and despair. O yet belov'd!  
Let not this headlong terror quite o'erwhelm  
Thy scatter'd powers; nor fatal deem the rage  
Of this tormentor, nor his proud assault,  
While i am here to vindicate thy toil,  
Above the generous question of thy arm.  
Brave by thy fears and in thy weakness strong,  
This hour he triumphs: but confront his might,  
And dare him to the combat, then with ease  
Disarm'd and quell'd, his fierceness he resigns  
To bondage and to scorn: while thus inur'd  
By watchful danger, by unceasing toil,  
The immortal mind, superior to his fate,  
Amid the outrage of external things,  
Firm as the solid base of this great world,  
Rests on his own foundations. Blow, ye winds!  
Ye waves! ye thunders! rowl your tempest on;  
Shake, ye old pillars of the marble sky!

Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire  
Be loosen'd from their seats; yet still serene,  
The unconquer'd mind looks down upon the wreck;  
And ever stronger as the storms advance,  
Firm through the closing ruin holds his way,  
Where nature calls him to the destin'd goal.

So spake the goddess; while through all her frame  
Cœlestial raptures flow'd, in every word,  
In every motion kindling warmth divine  
To seize who listen'd. Vehement and swift  
As lightening fires the aromatic shade  
In Æthiopian fields, the stripling felt  
Her inspiration catch his fervid soul,

And starting from his languor thus exclaim'd.

Then let the trial come! and witness thou,  
If terror be upon me; if i shrink  
To meet the storm, or falter in my strength  
When hardest it besets me. Do not think  
That i am fearful and infirm of soul,  
As late thy eyes beheld: for thou hast chang'd  
My nature; thy commanding voice has wak'd  
My languid powers to bear me boldly on,  
Where'er the will divine my path ordains  
Through toil or peril: only do not thou  
Forsake me; o be thou for ever near,  
That i may listen to thy sacred voice,  
And guide by thy decrees my constant feet.  
But say, for ever are my eyes bereft?  
Say, shall the fair Euphrosyné not once  
Appear again to charm me? Thou, in heaven!  
O thou eternal arbiter of things!  
Be thy great bidding done: for who am i,  
To question thy appointment? Let the frowns  
Of this avenger every morn o'ercast  
The cheerful dawn, and every evening damp  
With double night my dwelling; i will learn  
To hail them both, and unrepining bear  
His hateful presence: but permit my tongue  
One glad request, and if my deeds may find  
Thy awful eye propitious, o restore  
The rosy-featur'd maid; again to cheer  
This lonely seat, and bless me with her smiles.

He spoke; when instant through the sable glooms  
With which that furious presence had involv'd  
The ambient air, a flood of radiance came  
Swift as the lightening flash; the melting clouds  
Flew diverse, and amid the blue serene  
Euphrosyné appear'd. With sprightly step  
The nymph alighted on the irriguous lawn,  
And to her wondering audience thus began.

Lo! i am here to answer to your vows,  
And be the meeting fortunate! i come

With joyful tidings; we shall part no more—  
Hark! how the gentle echo from her cell  
Talks through the cliffs, and murmuring o'er the stream  
Repeats the accents; we shall part no more.  
O my delightful friends! well-pleas'd on high  
The father has beheld you, while the might  
Of that stern foe with bitter trial prov'd  
Your equal doings; then for ever spake  
The high decree: that thou, cœlestial maid!  
Howe'er that griesly phantom on thy steps  
May sometimes dare intrude, yet never more  
Shalt thou, descending to the abode of man,  
Alone endure the rancour of his arm,  
Or leave thy lov'd Euphrosyné behind.

She ended; and the whole romantic scene  
Immediate vanish'd; rocks, and woods, and rills,  
The mantling tent, and each mysterious form  
Flew like the pictures of a morning dream,  
When sun-shine fills the bed. A while i stood  
Perplex'd and giddy; till the radiant power  
Who bade the visionary landscape rise,  
As up to him i turn'd, with gentlest looks  
Preventing my enquiry, thus began.

There let thy soul acknowledge its complaint  
How blind, how impious! There behold the ways  
Of heaven's eternal destiny to man,  
For ever just, benevolent and wise:  
That virtue's awful steps, howe'er pursu'd  
By vexing fortune and intrusive pain,  
Should never be divided from her chaste,  
Her fair attendant, pleasure. Need i urge  
Thy tardy thought through all the various round  
Of this existence, that thy softening soul  
At length may learn what energy the hand  
Of virtue mingles in the bitter tide  
Of passion swelling with distress and pain,  
To mitigate the sharp with gracious drops  
Of cordial pleasure? Ask the faithful youth,  
Why the cold urn of her whom long he lov'd  
So often fills his arms; so often draws

His lonely footsteps at the silent hour,  
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?  
O! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds  
Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego  
That sacred hour, when, stealing from the noise  
Of care and envy, sweet remembrance sooths  
With virtue's kindest looks his aking breast,  
And turns his tears to rapture.—Ask the croud  
Which flies impatient from the village-walk  
To climb the neighbouring cliffs, when far below  
The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coast  
Some helpless bark; while sacred pity melts  
The general eye, or terror's icy hand  
Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair;  
While every mother closer to her breast  
Catches her child, and pointing where the waves  
Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud  
As one poor wretch that spreads his piteous arms  
For succour, swallow'd by the roaring surge,  
As now another, dash'd against the rock,  
Drops lifeless down: o! deemest thou indeed  
No kind endearment here by nature given  
To mutual terror and compassion's tears?  
No sweetly-melting softness which attracts,  
O'er all that edge of pain, the social powers  
To this their proper action and their end?  
—Ask thy own heart; when at the midnight hour,  
Slow through that studious gloom thy pausing eye  
Led by the glimmering taper moves around  
The sacred volumes of the dead, the songs  
Of Grecian bards, and records writ by fame  
For Grecian heroes, where the present power  
Of heaven and earth surveys the immortal page,  
Even as a father blessing, while he reads  
The praises of his son. If then thy soul,  
Spurning the yoke of these inglorious days,  
Mix in their deeds and kindle with their flame;  
Say, when the prospect blackens on thy view,  
When rooted from the base, heroic states  
Mourn in the dust and tremble at the frown  
Of curst ambition; when the pious band  
Of youths who fought for freedom and their sires,



Lie side by side in gore; when ruffian pride  
Usurps the throne of justice, turns the pomp  
Of public power, the majesty of rule,  
The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,  
To slavish empty pageants, to adorn  
A tyrant's walk, and glitter in the eyes  
Of such as bow the knee; when honour'd urns  
Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful bust  
And storied arch, to glut the coward-rage  
Of regal envy, strew the public way  
With hallow'd ruins; when the Muse's haunt,  
The marble porch where wisdom wont to talk  
With Socrates or Tully, hears no more,  
Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,  
Or female superstition's midnight prayer;  
When ruthless rapine from the hand of time  
Tears the destroying scythe, with surer blow  
To sweep the works of glory from their base;  
Till desolation o'er the grass-grown street  
Expands his raven-wings, and up the wall,  
Where senates once the price of monarchs doom'd,  
Hisses the gliding snake through hoary weeds  
That clasp the mouldering column; thus defac'd,  
Thus widely mournful when the prospect thrills  
Thy beating bosom, when the patriot's tear  
Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm  
In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove  
To fire the impious wreath on Philip's  
Or dash Octavius from the trophied car;  
Say, does thy secret soul repine to taste  
The big distress? Or would'st thou then exchange  
Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot  
Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd  
Of mute barbarians bending to his nod,  
And bears aloft his gold-invested front,  
And says within himself, "i am a king,  
"And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe  
"Intrude upon mine ear?—" The baleful dregs  
Of these late ages, this inglorious draught  
Of servitude and folly, have not yet,  
Blest be the eternal ruler of the world!  
Defil'd to such a depth of sordid shame

The native honours of the human soul,  
Nor so effac'd the image of its sire.

Mark Akenside

# The Pleasures Of Imagination: Book The Third

What wonder therefore, since the indearing ties  
Of passion link the universal kind  
Of man so close, what wonder if to search  
This common nature through the various change  
Of sex, and age, and fortune, and the frame  
Of each peculiar, draw the busy mind  
With unresisted charms? The spacious west,  
And all the teeming regions of the south  
Hold not a quarry, to the curious flight  
Of knowledge, half so tempting or so fair,  
As man to man. Nor only where the smiles  
Of love invite; nor only where the applause  
Of cordial honour turns the attentive eye  
On virtue's graceful deeds. For since the course  
Of things external acts in different ways  
On human apprehensions, as the hand  
Of nature temper'd to a different frame.  
Peculiar minds; so haply where the powers  
Of fancy neither lessen nor enlarge  
The images of things, but paint in all  
Their genuine hues, the features which they wore  
In nature; there opinion will be true,  
And action right. For action treads the path  
In which opinion says he follows good,  
Or flies from evil; and opinion gives  
Report of good or evil, as the scene  
Was drawn by fancy, lovely or deform'd:  
Thus her report can never there be true  
Where fancy cheats the intellectual eye,  
With glaring colours and distorted lines.  
Is there a man, who at the sound of death  
Sees ghastly shapes of terror conjur'd up,  
And black before him; nought but death-bed groans  
And fearful prayers, and plunging from the brink  
Of light and being, down the gloomy air,  
An unknown depth? Alas! in such a mind,  
If no bright forms of excellence attend  
The image of his country; nor the pomp  
Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice

Of justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes  
The conscious bosom with a patriot's flame;  
Will not opinion tell him, that to die,  
Or stand the hazard, is a greater ill  
Than to betray his country? And in act  
Will he not chuse to be a wretch and live?  
Here vice begins then. From the enchanting cup  
Which fancy holds to all, the unwary thirst  
Of youth oft swallows a Circæan draught,  
That sheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye  
Of reason, till no longer he discerns,  
And only guides to err. Then revel forth  
A furious band that spurn him from the throne;  
And all is uproar. Thus ambition grasps  
The empire of the soul: thus pale revenge  
Unsheaths her murderous dagger; and the hands  
Of lust and rapine, with unholy arts,  
Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws  
That keeps them from their prey: thus all the plagues  
The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling scene  
The tragic muse discloses, under shapes  
Of honour, safety, pleasure, ease or pomp,  
Stole first into the mind. Yet not by all  
Those lying forms which fancy in the brain  
Engenders, are the kindling passions driven,  
To guilty deeds; nor reason bound in chains,  
That vice alone may lord it: oft adorn'd  
With solemn pageants, folly mounts the throne,  
And plays her idiot-antics, like a queen.  
A thousand garbs she wears; a thousand ways  
She wheels her giddy empire.—Lo! thus far  
With bold adventure, to the Mantuan lyre  
I sing of nature's charms, and touch well-pleas'd  
A stricter note: now haply must my song  
Unbend her serious measure, and reveal  
In lighter strains, how folly's aukward arts  
Excite impetuous laughter's gay rebuke;  
The sportive province of the comic muse.

See! in what crouds the uncouth forms advance:  
Each would outstrip the other, each prevent  
Our careful search, and offer to your gaze,

Unask'd, his motley features. Wait awhile,  
My curious friends! and let us first arrange  
In proper order your promiscuous throng.

Behold the foremost band; of slender thought,  
And easy faith; whom flattering fancy sooths  
With lying spectres, in themselves to view  
Illustrious forms of excellence and good,  
That scorn the mansion. With exulting hearts  
They spread their spurious treasures to the sun,  
And bid the world admire! but chief the glance  
Of wishful envy draws their joy-bright eyes,  
And lists with self-applause each lordly brow.  
In number boundless as the blooms of spring,  
Behold their glaring idols, empty shades  
By fancy gilded o'er, and then set up  
For adoration. Some in learning's garb,  
With formal band, and sable-cinctur'd gown,  
And rags of mouldy volumes. Some elate  
With martial splendor, steely pikes and swords  
Of costly frame, and gay Phœnician robes  
Inwrought with flowery gold, assume the port  
Of stately valour: listening by his side  
There stands a female form; to her, with looks  
Of earnest import, pregnant with amaze,  
He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, storms,  
And sulphurous mines, and ambush: then at once  
Breaks off, and smiles to see her look so pale,  
And asks some wondering question of her fears.  
Others of graver mien; behold, adorn'd  
With holy ensigns, how sublime they move,  
And bending oft their sanctimonious eyes  
Take homage of the simple-minded throng;  
Ambassadors of heaven! Nor much unlike  
Is he whose visage, in the lazy mist  
That mantles every feature, hides a brood  
Of politic conceits; of whispers, nods,  
And hints deep omen'd with unwieldy schemes,  
And dark portents of state. Ten thousand more,  
Prodigious habits and tumultuous tongues,  
Pour dauntless in and swell the boastful band.

Then comes the second order; all who seek  
The debt of praise, where watchful unbelief  
Darts through the thin pretence her squinting eye  
On some retir'd appearance which belies  
The boasted virtue, or annuls the applause  
That justice else would pay. Here side by side  
I see two leaders of the solemn train  
Approaching: one a female old and grey,  
With eyes demure, and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,  
Pale as the cheeks of death; yet still she stuns  
The sickening audience with a nauseous tale;  
How many youths her myrtle-chains have worn,  
How many virgins at her triumphs pin'd!  
Yet how resolv'd she guards her cautious heart;  
Such is her terror at the risques of love,  
And man's seducing tongue! The other seems  
A bearded sage, ungentle in his mien,  
And sordid all his habit; peevish want  
Grins at his heels, while down the gazing throng  
He stalks, resounding in magnificent phrase  
The vanity of riches, the contempt  
Of pomp and power. Be prudent in your zeal,  
Ye grave associates! let the silent grace  
Of her who blushes at the fond regard  
Her charms inspire, more eloquent unfold  
The praise of spotless honour: let the man  
Whose eye regards not his illustrious pomp  
And ample store, but as indulgent streams  
To cheer the barren soil and spread the fruits  
Of joy, let him by juster measures fix  
The price of riches and the end of power.

Another tribe succeeds; deluded long  
By fancy's dazzling optics, these behold  
The images of some peculiar things  
With brighter hues resplendent, and portray'd  
With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd  
Their genuine objects. Hence the fever'd heart  
Pants with delirious hope for tinsel charms;  
Hence oft obtrusive on the eye of scorn,  
Untimely zeal her witless pride betrays!  
And serious manhood from the towering aim

Of wisdom, stoops to emulate the boast  
Of childish toil. Behold yon mystic form,  
Bedeck'd with feathers, insects, weeds and shells!  
Not with intenser view the Samian sage  
Bent his fixt eye on heaven's intenser fires,  
When first the order of that radiant scene  
Swell'd his exulting thought, than this surveys  
A muckworm's entrails or a spider's sang.  
Next him a youth, with flowers and myrtles crown'd,  
Attends that virgin form, and blushing kneels,  
With fondest gesture and a suppliant's tongue,  
To win her coy regard: adieu, for him,  
The dull engagements of the bustling world!  
Adieu the sick impertinence of praise!  
And hope, and action! for with her alone,  
By streams and shades, to steal these sighing hours,  
Is all he asks, and all that fate can give!  
Thee too, facetious Momion, wandering here,  
Thee, dreaded censor, oft have i beheld  
Bewilder'd unawares: alas! too long  
Flush'd with thy comic triumphs and the spoils  
Of sly derision! till on every side  
Hurling thy random bolts, offended truth  
Assign'd thee here thy station with the slaves  
Of folly. Thy once formidable name  
Shall grace her humble records, and be heard  
In scoffs and mockery bandied from the lips  
Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,  
So oft the patient victims of thy scorn.

But now, ye gay! to whom indulgent fate,  
Of all the muse's empire hath assign'd  
The fields of folly, hither each advance  
Your sickles; here the teeming soil affords  
Its richest growth. A favourite brood appears;  
In whom the dæmon, with a mother's joy,  
Views all her charms reflected, all her cares  
At full repay'd. Ye most illustrious band!  
Who, scorning reason's tame, pedantic rules,  
And order's vulgar bondage, never meant  
For souls sublime as yours, with generous zeal  
Pay vice the reverence virtue long usurp'd,

And yield deformity the fond applause  
Which beauty wont to claim; forgive my song,  
That for the blushing diffidence of youth,  
It shuns the unequal province of your praise.

Thus far triumphant in the pleasing guile  
Of bland imagination, folly's train  
Have dar'd our search: but now a dastard-kind  
Advance reluctant, and with faltering feet  
Shrink from the gazer's eye: infeebl'd hearts  
Whom fancy chills with visionary fears,  
Or bends to servile tameness with conceits  
Of shame, of evil, or of base defect,  
Fantastic and delusive. Here the slave  
Who droops abash'd when sullen pomp surveys  
His humbler habit; here the trembling wretch  
Unnerv'd and struck with terror's icy bolts,  
Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in shameful tears,  
At every dream of danger: here subdued  
By frontless laughter and the hardy scorn  
Of old, unfeeling vice, the abject soul,  
Who blushing half resigns the candid praise  
Of temperance and honour; half disowns  
A freeman's hatred of tyrannic pride;  
And hears with sickly smiles the venal mouth  
With foulest licence mock the patriot's name.

Last of the motley bands on whom the power  
Of gay derision bends her hostile aim,  
Is that where shameful ignorance presides.  
Beneath her sordid banners, lo! they march,  
Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful hands  
Attempt, confusion straight appears behind,  
And troubles all the work. Through many a maze,  
Perplex'd they struggle, changing every path,  
O'erturning every purpose; then at last  
Sit down dismay'd, and leave the entangled scene  
For scorn to sport with. Such then is the abode  
Of folly in the mind; and such the shapes  
In which she governs her obsequious train.

Through every scene of ridicule in things



To lead the tenour of my devious lay;  
Through every swift occasion, which the hand  
Of laughter points at, when the mirthful sting  
Distends her sallying nerves and choaks her tongue;  
What were it but to count each crystal drop  
Which morning's dewy fingers on the blooms  
Of May distill? Suffice it to have said,  
Where'er the power of ridicule displays  
Her quaint-ey'd visage, some incongruous form,  
Some stubborn dissonance of things combin'd,  
Strikes on the quick observer: whether pomp,  
Or praise, or beauty, mix their partial claim  
Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,  
Where foul deformity are wont to dwell;  
Or whether these with violation loath'd,  
Invade resplendent pomp's imperious mien,  
The charms of beauty, or the boast of praise.

Ask we for what fair end, the almighty sire  
In mortal bosoms wakes this gay contempt,  
These grateful stings of laughter, from disgust  
Educing pleasure? Wherefore, but to aid  
The tardy steps of reason, and at once  
By this prompt impulse urge us to depress  
The giddy aims of folly? Though the light  
Of truth slow-dawning on the inquiring mind,  
At length unfolds, through many a subtile tie,  
How these uncouth disorders end at last  
In public evil! yet benignant heaven,  
Conscious how dim the dawn of truth appears  
To thousands; conscious what a scanty pause  
From labours and from care, the wider lot  
Of humble life affords for studious thought  
To scan the maze of nature; therefore stamp'd  
The glaring scenes with characters of scorn,  
As broad, as obvious, to the passing clown,  
As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

Such are the various aspects of the mind—  
Some heavenly genius, whose unclouded thoughts  
Attain that secret harmony which blends  
The æthereal spirit with its mold of clay;

O! teach me to reveal the grateful charm  
That searchless nature o'er the sense of man  
Diffuses, to behold, in lifeless things,  
The inexpressive semblance of himself,  
Of thought and passion. Mark the sable woods  
That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow;  
With what religious awe the solemn scene  
Commands your steps! as if the reverend form  
Of Minos or of Numa should forsake  
The Elysian seats, and down the embowering glade  
Move to your pausing eye! Behold the expanse  
Of yon gay landscape, where the silver clouds  
Flit o'er the heavens before the sprightly breeze:  
Now their grey cincture skirts the doubtful sun;  
Now streams of splendor, through their opening veil  
Effulgent, sweep from off the gilded lawn  
The aërial shadows; on the curling brook,  
And on the shady margin's quivering leaves  
With quickest lustre glancing; while you view  
The prospect, say, within your cheerful breast  
Plays not the lively sense of winning mirth  
With clouds and sun-shine chequer'd, while the round  
Of social converse, to the inspiring tongue  
Of some gay nymph amid her subject train,  
Moves all obsequious? Whence is this effect,  
This kindred power of such discordant things?  
Or flows their semblance from that mystic tone  
To which the new-born mind's harmonious powers  
At first were strung? Or rather from the links  
Which artful custom twines around her frame?

For when the different images of things  
By chance combin'd, have struck the attentive soul  
With deeper impulse, or connected long,  
Have drawn her frequent eye; howe'er distinct  
The external scenes, yet oft the ideas gain  
From that conjunction an eternal tie,  
And sympathy unbroken. Let the mind  
Recall one partner of the various league,  
Immediate, lo! the firm confederates rise,  
And each his former station strait resumes:  
One movement governs the consenting throng,

And all at once with rosy pleasure shine,  
Or all are sadden'd with the glooms of care.  
'Twas thus, if ancient fame the truth unfold,  
Two faithful needles, from the informing touch  
Of the same parent-stone, together drew  
Its mystic virtue, and at first conspir'd  
With fatal impulse quivering to the pole:  
Then, though disjoin'd by kingdoms, though the main  
Rowl'd its broad surge betwixt, and different stars  
Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preserv'd  
The former friendship, and remember'd still  
The alliance of their birth: whate'er the line  
Which one possess'd, nor pause, nor quiet knew  
The sure associate, ere with trembling speed  
He found its path and fix'd unnerring there.  
Such is the secret union, when we feel  
A song, a flower, a name, at once restore  
Those long connected scenes where first they mov'd  
The attention: backward through her mazy walks  
Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,  
To temples, courts or fields; with all the band  
Of painted forms, of passions and designs  
Attendant: whence, if pleasing in itself,  
The prospect from that sweet accession gains  
Redoubled influence o'er the listening mind.

By these mysterious ties the busy power  
Of memory her ideal train preserves  
Intire; or when they would elude her watch,  
Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste  
Of dark oblivion; thus collecting all  
The various forms of being to present,  
Before the curious aim of mimic art,  
Their largest choice: like spring's unfolded blooms  
Exhaling sweetness, that the skillful bee  
May taste at will, from their selected spoils  
To work her dulcet food. For not the expanse  
Of living lakes in summer's noontide calm,  
Reflects the bordering shade, and sun-bright heavens  
With fairer semblance; not the sculptur'd gold  
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,  
Than he whose birth the sister powers of art

Propitious view'd, and from his genial star  
Shed influence to the seeds of fancy kind;  
Than his attemper'd bosom must preserve  
The seal of nature. There alone unchang'd,  
Her form remains. The balmy walks of May  
There breathe perennial sweets: the trembling chord  
Resounds for ever in the abstracted ear,  
Melodious: and the virgin's radiant eye,  
Superior to disease, to grief, and time,  
Shines with unbating lustre. Thus at length  
Indow'd with all that nature can bestow,  
The child of fancy oft in silence bends  
O'er these mixt treasures of his pregnant breast,  
With conscious pride. From them he oft resolves  
To frame he knows not what excelling things;  
And win he knows not what sublime reward  
Of praise and wonder. By degrees, the mind  
Feels her young nerves dilate: the plastic powers  
Labour for action: blind emotions heave  
His bosom; and with loveliest frenzy caught,  
From earth to heaven he rolls his daring eye,  
From heaven to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes,  
Like spectres trooping to the wisard's call,  
Flit swift before him. From the womb of earth,  
From ocean's bed they come: the eternal heavens  
Disclose their splendors, and the dark abyss  
Pours out her births unknown: With fixed gaze  
He marks the rising phantoms. Now compares  
Their different forms; now blends them, now divides,  
Inlarges and extenuates by turns;  
Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,  
And infinitely varies. Hither now,  
Now thither fluctuates his inconstant aim,  
With endless choice perplex'd. At length his plan  
Begins to open. Lucid order dawns;  
And as from Chaos old the jarring seeds  
Of nature at the voice divine repair'd  
Each to its place, till rosy earth unveil'd  
Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun  
Sprung up the blue serene; by swift degrees  
Thus disentangled, his entire design  
Emerges. Colours mingle, features join,

And lines converge: the fainter parts retire;  
The fairer eminent in light advance;  
And every image on its neighbour smiles.  
A while he stands, and with a father's joy  
Contemplates. Then with Promethéan art,  
Into its proper vehicle he breathes  
The fair conception; which, imbodied thus,  
And permanent, becomes to eyes or ears  
An object ascertain'd: while thus inform'd,  
The various organs of his mimic skill,  
The consonance of sounds, the featur'd rock,  
The shadowy picture and impassion'd verse,  
Beyond their proper powers attract the soul  
By that expressive semblance, while in sight  
Of nature's great original we scan  
The lively child of art; while line by line,  
And feature after feature we refer  
To that sublime exemplar whence it stole  
Those animating charms. Thus beauty's palm  
Betwixt them wavering hangs: applauding love  
Doubts where to chuse; and mortal man aspires  
To tempt creative praise. As when a cloud  
Of gathering hail with limpid crusts of ice  
Inclos'd and obvious to the beaming sun,  
Collects his large effulgence; strait the heavens  
With equal flames present on either hand  
The radiant visage: Persia stands at gaze,  
Appall'd; and on the brink of Ganges doubts  
The snowy-vested seer, in Mithra's name,  
To which the fragrance of the south shall burn,  
To which his warbled orisons ascend.

Such various bliss the well-tun'd heart enjoys,  
Favour'd of heaven! while plung'd in sordid cares,  
The unfeeling vulgar mocks the boon divine:  
And harsh austerity, from whose rebuke  
Young love and smiling wonder shrink away  
Abash'd and chill of heart, with sager frowns  
Condemns the fair enchantment. On my strain,  
Perhaps even now, some cold, fastidious judge  
Casts a disdainful eye; and calls my toil,  
And calls the love and beauty which i sing,

The dream of folly. Thou, grave censor! say,  
Is beauty then a dream, because the glooms  
Of dulness hang too heavy on thy sense,  
To let her shine upon thee? So the man  
Whose eye ne'er open'd on the light of heaven,  
Might smile with scorn while raptur'd vision tells  
Of the gay-colour'd radiance flushing bright  
O'er all creation. From the wise be far  
Such gross unhallow'd pride; nor needs my song  
Descend so low; but rather now unfold,  
If human thought could reach, or words unfold,  
By what mysterious fabric of the mind,  
The deep-felt joys and harmony of sound  
Result from airy motion; and from shape  
The lovely phantoms of sublime and fair.  
By what fine ties hath God connected things  
When present in the mind, which in themselves  
Have no connection? Sure the rising sun  
O'er the cærulean convex of the sea,  
With equal brightness and with equal warmth  
Might rowl his fiery orb; nor yet the soul  
Thus feel her frame expanded, and her powers  
Exulting in the splendor she beholds;  
Like a young conqueror moving through the pomp  
Of some triumphal day. When join'd at eve,  
Soft-murmuring streams and gales of gentlest breath  
Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain  
Attemper, could not man's discerning ear  
Through all its tones the sympathy pursue;  
Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy  
Steal through his veins and fan the awaken'd heart,  
Mild as the breeze, yet rapturous as the song.

But were not nature still endow'd at large  
With all which life requires, though unadorn'd  
With such enchantment? Wherefore then her form  
So exquisitely fair? her breath perfum'd  
With such æthereal sweetness? whence her voice  
Inform'd at will to raise or to depress  
The impassion'd soul? and whence the robes of light  
Which thus invest her with more lovely pomp  
Than fancy can describe? Whence but from thee,

O source divine of ever-flowing love,  
And thy unmeasur'd goodness? Not content  
With every food of life to nourish man,  
By kind illusions of the wondering sense  
Thou mak'st all nature beauty to his eye,  
Or music to his ear: well-pleas'd he scans  
The goodly prospect; and with inward smiles  
Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain;  
Beholds the azure canopy of heaven,  
And living lamps that over-arch his head  
With more than regal splendor; bends his ears  
To the full choir of water, air, and earth;  
Nor heeds the pleasing error of his thought,  
Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,  
Nor questions more the music's mingling sounds  
Than space, or motion, or eternal time;  
So sweet he feels their influence to attract  
The fixed soul; to brighten the dull glooms  
Of care, and make the destin'd road of life  
Delightful to his feet. So fables tell,  
The adventurous heroe, bound on hard exploits,  
Beholds with glad surprise, by secret spells  
Of some kind sage, the patron of his toils,  
A visionary paradise disclos'd  
Amid the dubious wild: with streams, and shades,  
And airy songs, the enchanted landscape smiles,  
Cheers his long labours and renews his frame.

What then is taste, but these internal powers  
Active, and strong, and feelingly alive  
To each fine impulse? a discerning sense  
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust  
From things deform'd, or disarrang'd, or gross  
In species? This, nor gems, nor stores of gold,  
Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow;  
But God alone, when first his active hand  
Imprints the secret byass of the soul.  
He, mighty parent! wise and just in all,  
Free as the vital breeze or light of heaven,  
Reveals the charms of nature. Ask the swain  
Who journeys homeward from a summer day's  
Long labour, why, forgetful of his toils

And due repose, he loiters to behold  
The sunshine gleaming as through amber clouds,  
O'er all the western sky; full soon, I ween,  
His rude expression and untutor'd airs,  
Beyond the power of language, will unfold  
The form of beauty smiling at his heart,  
How lovely! how commanding! But though heaven  
In every breast hath sown these early seeds  
Of love and admiration, yet in vain,  
Without fair culture's kind parental aid,  
Without invivifying suns, and genial showers,  
And shelter from the blast, in vain we hope  
The tender plant should rear its blooming head,  
Or yield the harvest promis'd in its spring.  
Nor yet will every soil with equal stores  
Repay the tiller's labour; or attend  
His will, obsequious, whether to produce  
The olive or the laurel. Different minds  
Incline to different objects: one pursues  
The vast alone, the wonderful, the wild;  
Another sighs for harmony, and grace,  
And gentlest beauty. Hence when lightening fires  
The arch of heaven, and thunders rock the ground,  
When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,  
And ocean, groaning from his lowest bed,  
Heaves his tempestuous billows to the sky;  
Amid the mighty uproar, while below  
The nations tremble, Shakespeare looks abroad  
From some high cliff, superior, and enjoys  
The elemental war. But Waller longs,  
All on the margin of some flowery stream  
To spread his careless limbs amid the cool  
Of plantane shades, and to the listening deer  
The tale of slighted vows and love's disdain  
Resound soft-warbling all the live-long day:  
Consenting Zephyr sighs; the weeping rill  
Joins in his plaint, melodious; mute the groves;  
And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.  
Such and so various are the tastes of men.

Oh! blest of heaven, whom not the languid songs  
Of luxury, the Siren! not the bribes



Of sordid wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils  
Of pageant honour can seduce to leave  
Those ever blooming sweets, which from the store  
Of nature fair imagination culls  
To charm the inliven'd soul! What though not all  
Of mortal offspring can attain the heights  
Of envied life; though only few possess  
Patrician treasures or imperial state;  
Yet nature's care, to all her children just,  
With richer treasures and an ampler state,  
Indows at large whatever happy man  
Will deign to use them. His the city's pomp,  
The rural honors his. Whate'er adorns  
The princely dome, the column and the arch,  
The breathing marbles and the sculptur'd gold,  
Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim,  
His tuneful breast enjoys. For him, the spring  
Distills her dews, and from the silken gem  
Its lucid leaves unfolds: for him, the hand  
Of autumn tinges every fertile branch  
With blooming gold and blushes like the morn.  
Each passing hour sheds tribute from her wings;  
And still new beauties meet his lonely walk,  
And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze  
Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes  
The setting sun's effulgence, not a strain  
From all the tenants of the warbling shade  
Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake  
Fresh pleasure, unprov'd. Nor thence partakes  
Fresh pleasure only: for the attentive mind,  
By this harmonious action on her powers  
Becomes herself harmonious: wont so oft  
In outward things to meditate the charm  
Of sacred order, soon she seeks at home  
To find a kindred order, to exert  
Within herself this elegance of love,  
This fair-inspir'd delight: her temper'd powers  
Refine at length, and every passion wears  
A chaster, milder, more attractive mien.  
But if to ampler prospects, if to gaze  
On nature's form, where, negligent of all  
These lesser graces, she assumes the port

Of that eternal majesty that weigh'd  
The world's foundations, if to these the mind  
Exalts her daring eye; then mightier far  
Will be the change, and nobler. Would the forms  
Of servile custom cramp her generous powers?  
Would sordid policies, the barbarous growth  
Of ignorance and rapine, bow her down  
To tame pursuits, to indolence and fear?  
Lo! she appeals to nature, to the winds  
And rowling waves, the sun's unwearied course,  
The elements and seasons: all declare  
For what the eternal maker has ordain'd  
The powers of man: we feel within ourselves  
His energy divine: he tells the heart,  
He meant, he made us to behold and love  
What he beholds and loves, the general orb  
Of life and being; to be great like him,  
Beneficent and active. Thus the men  
Whom nature's works can charm, with God himself  
Hold converse; grow familiar, day by day,  
With his conceptions, act upon his plan;  
And form to his, the relish of their souls.

Mark Akenside

# The Poet

—A Rhapsody

Of all the various lots around the ball,  
Which fate to man distributes, absolute;  
Avert, ye gods! that of the Muse's son,  
Curs'd with dire poverty! poor hungry wretch!  
What shall he do for life? he cannot work  
With manual labour: shall those sacred hands,  
That brought the counsels of the gods to light;  
Shall that inspired tongue, which every Muse  
Has touch'd divine, to charm the sons of men:  
These hallow'd organs! these! be prostitute  
To the vile service of some fool in power,  
All his behests submissive to perform,  
Howe'er to him ingrateful? Oh! he scorns  
The ignoble thought; with generous disdain,  
More eligible deeming it to starve,  
Like his fam'd ancestors renown'd in verse,  
Than poorly bend to be another's slave,—  
Than feed and fatten in obscurity.  
—These are his firm resolves, which fate, nor time,  
Nor poverty can shake. Exalted high  
In garret vile he lives; with remnants hung  
Of tapestry. But oh! precarious state  
Of this vain transient world! all powerful time,  
What dost thou not subdue? See what a chasm  
Gapes wide, tremendous! see where Saul, enrag'd,  
High on his throne, encompass'd by his guards,  
With levell'd spear, and arm extended, sits,  
Ready to pierce old Jesse's valiant son,  
Spoil'd of his nose!—around in tottering ranks,  
On shelves pulverulent, majestic stands  
His library; in ragged plight, and old;  
Replete with many a load of criticism,  
Elaborate products of the midnight toil  
Of Belgian brains; snatch'd from the deadly hands  
Of murderous grocer, or the careful wight,  
Who vends the plant, that clads the happy shore

Of Indian Patomack; which citizens  
In balmy fumes exhale, when, o'er a pot  
Of sage-inspiring coffee, they dispose  
Of kings and crowns, and settle Europe's fate.

Elsewhere the dome is fill'd with various heaps  
Of old domestic lumber: that huge chair  
Has seen six monarchs fill the British throne:  
Here a broad massy table stands, o'erspread  
With ink and pens, and scrolls replete with rhyme:  
Chests, stools, old razors, fractur'd jars, half full  
Of muddy Zythum, sour and spiritless:  
Fragments of verse, hose, sandals, utensils  
Of various fashion, and of various use,  
With friendly influence hide the sable floor.

This is the bard's museum, this the fane  
To Phœbus sacred, and the Aonian maids:  
But oh! it stabs his heart, that niggard fate  
To him in such small measure should dispense  
Her better gifts: to him! whose generous soul  
Could relish, with as fine an elegance,  
The golden joys of grandeur, and of wealth;  
He who could tyrannize o'er menial slaves,  
Or swell beneath a coronet of state,  
Or grace a gilded chariot with a mien,  
Grand as the haughtiest Timon of them all.

But 'tis in vain to rave at destiny,  
Here he must rest, and brook the best he can,  
To live remote from grandeur, learning, wit:  
Immur'd amongst th' 'ignoble, vulgar herd,  
Of lowest intellect; whose stupid souls  
But half inform their bodies; brains of lead  
And tongues of thunder; whose insensate breasts  
Ne'er felt the rapturous, soul-entrancing fire  
Of the celestial Muse; whose savage ears  
Ne'er heard the sacred rules, nor even the names  
Of the Venusian bard, or critic sage  
Full-fam'd of Stagyra: whose clamorous tongues  
Stun the tormented ear with colloquy,  
Vociferate, trivial, or impertinent;

Replete with boorish scandal; yet, alas!  
This, this! he must endure, or muse alone,  
Pensive and moping o'er the stubborn rhyme,  
Or line imperfect—No! the door is free,  
And calls him to evade their deafening clang,  
By private ambulation;—'tis resolved:  
Off from his waist he throws the tatter'd gown,  
Beheld with indignation; and unloads  
His pericranium of the weighty cap,  
With sweat and grease discolour'd: then explores  
The spacious chest, and from its hollow womb  
Draws his best robe, yet not from tincture free  
Of age's reverend russet, scant and bare;  
Then down his meagre visage waving flows  
The shadowy peruke; crown'd with gummy hat,  
Clean brush'd; a cane supports him. Thus equipp'd  
He sallies forth; swift traverses the streets,  
And seeks the lonely walk. "Hail sylvan scenes!  
Ye groves, ye valleys, ye meand'ring brooks,  
Admit me to your joys," in rapturous phrase,  
Loud he exclaims; while with the inspiring Muse  
His bosom labours; and all other thoughts,  
Pleasure and wealth, and poverty itself,  
Before her influence vanish. Rapt in thought,  
Fancy presents before his ravished eyes  
Distant posterity, upon his page  
With transport dwelling; while bright Learning's sons,  
That ages hence must tread this earthly ball,  
Indignant, seem to curse the thankless age,  
That starv'd such merit. Meantime, swallow'd up  
In meditation deep, he wanders on,  
Unweeting of his way.—But ah! he starts!  
With sudden fright! his glaring eye-balls roll,  
Pale turn his cheeks, and shake his loosen'd joints;  
His cogitations vanish into air,  
Like painted bubbles, or a morning dream.  
Behold the cause! see! through the opening glade,  
With rosy visage, and abdomen grand,  
A cit, a dun!—As in Apulia's wilds,  
Or where the Thracian Hebrus rolls his wave,  
A heedless kid, disportive, roves around,  
Unheeding, till upon the hideous cave

Of the dire wolf she treads; half-dead she views  
His bloodshot eye-balls, and his dreadful fangs,  
And swift as Eurus from the monster flies:  
So fares the trembling bard; amaz'd he turns,  
Scarce by his legs upborne; yet fear supplies  
The place of strength; straight home he bends his course,  
Nor looks behind him till he safe regain  
His faithful citadel; there spent, fatigu'd,  
He lays him down to ease his heaving lungs,  
Quaking, and of his safety scarce convinc'd.  
Soon as the panic leaves his panting breast,  
Down to the Muse's sacred rites he sits,  
Volumes pil'd round him; see! upon his brow  
Perplex'd anxiety; and struggling thought,  
Painful as female throes: whether the bard  
Display the deeds of heroes; or the fall  
Of vice, in lay dramatic; or expand  
The lyric wing; or in elegiac strains  
Lament the fair; or lash the stubborn age  
With laughing satire; or in rural scenes  
With shepherds sport; or rack his hard-bound brains  
For the unexpected turn. Arachne so,  
In dusty kitchen corner, from her bowels  
Spins the fine web; but spins with better fate,  
Than the poor bard: she! caitiff! spreads her snares,  
And with their aid enjoys luxurious life,  
Bloated with fat of insects, flesh'd in blood:  
He! hard, hard lot! for all his toil and care,  
And painful watchings, scarce protracts awhile  
His meagre, hungry days! ungrateful world!  
If with his drama he adorn the stage,  
No worth-discerning concourse pays the charge,  
Or of the orchestra, or the enlightening torch.  
He who supports the luxury and pride  
Of craving Lais; he! whose carnage fills  
Dogs, eagles, lions; has not yet enough,  
Wherewith to satisfy the greedier maw  
Of that most ravenous, that devouring beast,  
Yclep'd a Poet. What new Halifax,  
What Somers, or what Dorset canst thou find,  
Thou hungry mortal? break, wretch, break thy quill,  
Blot out the studied image: to the flames

Commit the Stagyrite: leave this thankless trade;  
Erect some pedling stall, with trinkets stock'd,  
There earn thy daily halfpence, nor again  
Trust the false Muse: so shall the cleanly meal  
Repel intruding hunger.—Oh! 'tis vain,  
The friendly admonition's all in vain:  
The scribbling itch has seiz'd him; he is lost  
To all advice, and starves for starving's sake.

Thus sung the sportful Muse, in mirthful mood,  
Indulging gay the frolic vein of youth;  
But, oh! ye gods, avert th' impending stroke  
This luckless omen threatens! Hark! methinks  
I hear my better angel cry, "Retreat,  
Rash youth! in time retreat! let those poor bards,  
Who slighted all, all! for the flattering Muse,  
Yet curs'd with pining want, as landmarks stand,  
To warn thee from the service of the ingrate."

Mark Akenside

# The Virtuoso: In Imitation Of Spenser's Style And Stanza

“--- Videmus  
Nugari solitos.”  
-Persius

Whilom by silver Thames's gentle stream,  
In London town there dwelt a subtile wight;  
A wight of mickle wealth, and mickle fame,  
Book-learn'd and quaint: a Virtuoso hight.  
Uncommon things, and rare, were his delight;  
From musings deep his brain ne'er gotten ease,  
Nor ceased he from study, day or night;  
Until (advancing onward by degrees)  
He knew whatever breeds on earth, or air, or seas.  
He many a creature did anatomize,  
Almost unpeopling water, air, and land;  
Beasts, fishes, birds, snails, caterpillars, flies,  
Were laid full low by his relentless hand,  
That oft with gory crimson was distain'd:  
He many a dog destroy'd, and many a cat;  
Of fleas his bed, of frogs the marshes drain'd,  
Could tellen if a mite were lean or fat,  
And read a lecture o'er the entrails of a gnat.  
He knew the various modes of ancient times,  
Their arts and fashions of each different guise,  
Their weddings, funerals, punishments for crimes,  
Their strength, their learning eke, and rarities;  
Of old habiliments, each sort and size,  
Male, female, high and low, to him were known;  
Each gladiator-dress, and stage disguise;  
With learned, clerkly phrase he could have shown  
How the Greek tunic differ'd from the Roman gown.  
A curious medallist, I wot, he was,  
And boasted many a course of ancient coin;  
Well as his wife's he knewen every face,  
From Julius Cæsar down to Constantine:  
For some rare sculpture he would oft ypine,  
(As green-sick damosels for husbands do



And when obtained, with enraptur'd eyne,  
He'd run it o'er and o'er with greedy view,  
And look, and look again, as he would look it thro'.  
His rich museum, of dimensions fair,  
With goods that spoke the owner's mind was fraught:  
Things ancient, curious, value-worth, and rare,  
From sea and land, from Greece and Rome were brought  
Which he with mighty sums of gold had bought:  
On these all tides with joyous eyes he por'd;  
And, sooth to say, himself he greater thought,  
When he beheld his cabinets thus stor'd,  
Than if he'd been of Albion's wealthy cities lord.  
Here in a corner stood a rich 'scrutoire,  
With many a curiosity replete;  
In seemly order furnished every drawer,  
Products of art or nature as was meet;  
Air-pumps and prisms were plac'd beneath his feet,  
A Memphian mummy-king hung o'er his head;  
Here phials with live insects small and great,  
There stood a tripod of the Pythian maid;  
Above, a crocodile diffus'd a grateful shade.

Fast by the window did a table stand,  
Where hodiern and antique rarities,  
From Egypt, Greece, and Rome, from sea and land,  
Were thick-besprent of every sort and size:  
Here a Bahaman-spider's carcass lies,  
There a dire serpent's golden skin doth shine:  
Here Indian feathers, fruits, and glittering flies;  
There gums and amber found beneath the line,  
The beak of Ibis here, and there an Antonine.  
Close at his back, or whispering in his ear,  
There stood a spright ycleped Phantasy;  
Which, wheresoe'er he went, was always near:  
Her look was wild, and roving was her eye;  
Her hair was clad with flowers of every dye;  
Her glistening robes were of more various hue,  
Than the fair bow that paints the clouded sky,  
Or all the spangled drops of morning dew;  
Their colour changing still at every different view.  
Yet in this shape all tydes she did not stay,  
Various as the chameleon that she bore:

Now a grand monarch with a crown of hay,  
Now mendicant in silks and golden ore:  
A statesman now, equipp'd to chase the boar,  
Or cowed monk, lean, feeble, and unfed;  
A clown-like lord, or swain of courtly lore;  
Now scribbling dunce in sacred laurel clad,  
Or papal father now, in homely weeds array'd.  
The wight whose brain this phantom's power doth fill,  
On whom she doth with constant care attend,  
Will for a dreadful giant take a mill,  
Or a grand palace in a hogsty find:  
(From her dire influence me may Heaven defend!)

All things with vitiated sight he spies:  
Neglects his family, forgets his friend,  
Seeks painted trifles and fantastic toys,  
And eagerly pursues imaginary joys.

Mark Akenside

# To Cordelia

JULY, 1740.

From pompous life's dull masquerade,  
From Pride's pursuits, and Passion's war,  
Far, my Cordelia, very far,  
To thee and me may Heaven assign  
The silent pleasures of the shade,  
The joys of peace, unenvied, though divine!  
Safe in the calm embowering grove,  
As thy own lovely brow serene;  
Behold the world's fantastic scene!  
What low pursuits employ the great,  
What tinsel things their wishes move,  
The forms of Fashion, and the toys of State.  
In vain are all Contentment's charms,  
Her placid mien, her cheerful eye;  
For look, Cordelia, how they fly!  
Allur'd by Power, Applause, or Gain,  
They fly her kind protecting arms;  
Ah, blind to pleasure, and in love with pain!  
Turn and indulge a fairer view,  
Smile on the joys which here conspire;  
O joys harmonious as my lyre!  
O prospect of enchanting things,  
As ever slumbering poet knew,  
When Love and Fancy wrapt him in their wings!  
Here, no rude storm of Passion blows,  
But Sports, and Smiles, and Virtues play,  
Cheer'd by Affection's purest ray;  
The air still breathes Contentment's balm,  
And the clear stream of Pleasure flows  
For ever active, yet for ever calm.

Mark Akenside