

Classic Poetry Series

**William Shenstone**  
**- poems -**

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## William Shenstone(1714 - 1763)

Born in 1714 in Halesowen (now Worcestershire) England living at the family home 'The Leasowes'. Halesowen, which, up to the early years of the 18th century was in part of Shropshire. He was educated at Solihull Grammar School, where he met and became firm friends with the future poet Richard Jago, before going on to study at Pembroke College, Oxford, but without taking a degree. On inheriting 'The Leasowes' he spent much time and money on landscaping the estate.

He was a poet of diverse taste, his father recognising his talent when a young boy, had strived to send his son to Oxford to study theology but William showed no real interest, preferring poetry, odes, elegies, ballads and correspondence of which he was particularly proud.

Shenstone's work is somewhat self-conscious and pretty and is scarcely remembered today, with the possible exception of the pastoral poem *The Schoolmistress* (1742), written in the style of Edmund Spenser. This was praised by Dr. Johnson and Thomas Gray, the latter's *Elegy* written in a country churchyard (1751) being in a similar style.

William Shenstone died in 1763.

## A Parody

When first, Philander, first I came  
Where Avon rolls his winding stream,  
The nymphs, how brisk, the swains, how gay,  
To see Asteria, queen of May!  
The parsons round her praises sung!  
The steeples with her praises rung!-  
I thought no sight that e'er was seen  
Could match the sight of Barel's Green!

But now, since old Eugenio died-  
The chief of poets, and the pride-  
Now, meaner bards in vain aspire  
To raise their voice, to tune their lyre!  
Their lovely season now is o'er;  
Thy notes, Florelia, please no more!  
Nor more Asteria's smiles are seen-  
Adieu!-the sweets of Barel's Green!

William Shenstone

# A Pastoral Ballad

Ye shepherds so cheerful and gay,  
Whose flocks never carelessly roam;  
Should Corydon's happen to stray,  
Oh! call the poor wanderers home.  
Allow me to muse and to sigh,  
Nor talk of the change that ye find;  
None once was so watchful as I;  
I have left my dear Phillis behind.  
Now I know what it is, to have strove  
With the torture of doubt and desire;  
What it is to admire and to love,  
And to leave her we love and admire,  
Ah, lead forth my flock in the morn,  
And the damps of each evening repel;  
Alas! I am faint and forlorn:  
-I have bade my dear Phillis farewell.

Since Phillis vouchsaf'd me a look,  
I never once dreamed of my vine;  
May I lose both my pipe and my crook,  
If I knew of a kid that was mine!  
I priz'd every hour that went by,  
Beyond all that had pleas'd me before;  
But now they are past, and I sigh;  
And I grieve that I priz'd them no more.

But why do I languish in vain;  
Why wander thus pensively here?  
Oh! why did I come from the plain,  
Where I fed on the smiles of my dear?  
They tell me, my favourite maid,  
The pride of that valley, is flown;  
Alas! where with her I have stray'd,  
I could wander with pleasure, alone.

When forc'd the fair nymph to forgo,  
What anguish I felt at my heart!  
Yet I thought-but it might not be so-  
'Twas with pain that she saw me depart.

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

The pilgrim that journeys all day  
To visit some far distant shrine,  
If he bear but a relique away,  
Is happy, nor heard to repine.  
Thus widely remov'd from the fair,  
Where my vows, my devotion, I owe,  
Soft hope is the relique I bear,  
And my solace wherever I go.

William Shenstone

# A Pastoral Ballad I: Absence

Arbusta humilesque myricæ. Virg.

Ye shepherds so chearful and gay,  
Whose flocks never carelessly roam;  
Should Corydon's happen to stray,  
Oh! call the poor wanderers home.  
Allow me to muse and to sigh,  
Nor talk of the change that ye find;  
None once was so watchful as I;  
-- I have left my dear Phyllis behind.  
Now I know what it is, to have strove  
With the torture of doubt and desire;

What it is, to admire and to love,  
And to leave her we love and admire.  
Ah lead forth my flock in the morn,  
And the damps of each ev'ning repel;  
Alas! I am faint and forlorn:  
-- I have bade my dear Phyllis farewell.  
Since Phyllis vouchsaf'd me a look,  
I never once dreamt of my vine;  
May I lose both my pipe and my crook,  
If I knew of a kid that was mine.

I priz'd every hour that went by,  
Beyond all that had pleas'd me before;  
But now they are past, and I sigh;  
And I grieve that I priz'd them no more.  
But why do I languish in vain;  
Why wander thus pensively here?  
Oh! why did I come from the plain,  
Where I fed on the smiles of my dear?  
They tell me, my favourite maid,  
The pride of that valley, is flown;

Alas! where with her I have stray'd,  
I could wander with pleasure, alone.

When forc'd the fair nymph to forego,  
What anguish I felt at my heart!  
Yet I thought -- but it might not be so --  
'Twas with pain that she saw me depart.  
She gaz'd, as I slowly withdrew;  
My path I could hardly discern;  
So sweetly she bade me adieu,  
I thought that she bade me return.

The pilgrim that journeys all day  
To visit some far-distant shrine,  
If he bear but a relique away,  
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William Shenstone

## A Pastoral Ballad II: Hope

My banks they are furnish'd with bees,  
Whose murmur invites one to sleep;  
My grottos are shaded with trees,  
And my hills are white-over with sheep.  
I seldom have met with a loss,  
Such health do my fountains bestow;  
My fountains all border'd with moss,  
Where the hare-bells and violets grow.  
Not a pine in my grove is there seen,  
But with tendrils of woodbine is bound:

Not a beech's more beautiful green,  
But a sweet-briar entwines it around.  
Not my fields, in the prime of the year,  
More charms than my cattle unfold;  
Not a brook that is limpid and clear,  
But it glitters with fishes of gold.  
One would think she might like to retire  
To the bow'r I have labour'd to rear;  
Not a shrub that I heard her admire,  
But I hasted and planted it there.

O how sudden the jessamine strove  
With the lilac to render it gay!  
Already it calls for my love,  
To prune the wild branches away.  
From the plains, from the woodlands and groves,  
What strains of wild melody flow!  
How the nightingales warble their loves  
From thickets of roses that blow!  
And when her bright form shall appear,  
Each bird shall harmoniously join

In a concert so soft and so clear,  
As -- she may not be fond to resign.  
I have found out a gift for my fair;  
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed:  
But let me that plunder forbear,  
She will say 'twas a barbarous deed.



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

I have heard her with sweetness unfold  
How that pity was due to -- a dove:  
That it ever attended the bold;  
And she call'd it the sister of love.  
But her words such a pleasure convey,  
So much I her accents adore,  
Let her speak, and whatever she say,  
Methinks I should love her the more.  
Can a bosom so gentle remain  
Unmov'd, when her Corydon sighs!

Will a nymph that is fond of the plain,  
These plains and this valley despise?  
Dear regions of silence and shade!  
Soft scenes of contentment and ease!  
Where I could have pleasingly stray'd,  
If aught, in her absence, could please.  
But where does my Phyllida stray?  
And where are her grots and her bow'rs?  
Are the groves and the valleys as gay,  
And the shepherds as gentle as ours?

The groves may perhaps be as fair,  
And the face of the valleys as fine;  
The swains may in manners compare,  
But their love is not equal to mine.

William Shenstone

## A Pastoral Ballad Iii: Solitude

Why will you my passion reprove?  
Why term it a folly to grieve?  
Ere I shew you the charms of my love,  
She is fairer than you can believe.  
With her mien she enamours the brave;  
With her wit she engages the free;  
With her modesty pleases the grave;  
She is ev'ry way pleasing to me.

O you that have been of her train,  
Come and join in my amorous lays;

I could lay down my life for the swain,  
That will sing but a song in her praise.  
When he sings, may the nymphs of the town  
Come trooping, and listen the while;  
Nay on him let not Phyllida frown;  
-- But I cannot allow her to smile.  
For when Paridel tries in the dance  
Any favour with Phyllis to find,  
O how, with one trivial glance,  
Might she ruin the peace of my mind!

In ringlets he dresses his hair,  
And his crook is be-studded around;  
And his pipe -- oh may Phyllis beware  
Of a magic there is in the sound.  
'Tis his with mock passion to glow;  
'Tis his in smooth tales to unfold,  
'` How her face is as bright as the snow,  
And her bosom, be sure, is as cold?  
How the nightingales labour the strain,  
With the notes of his charmer to vie;

How they vary their accents in vain,  
Repine at her triumphs, and die."  
To the grove or the garden he strays,  
And pillages every sweet;  
Then, suiting the wreath to his lays

He throws it at Phyllis's feet.

``O Phyllis, he whispers, more fair,  
More sweet than the jessamine's flow'r!  
What are pinks, in a morn, to compare?  
What is eglantine, after a show'r?

Then the lily no longer is white;  
Then the rose is depriv'd of its bloom;  
Then the violets die with despight,  
And the wood-bines give up their perfume."  
Thus glide the soft numbers along,  
And he fancies no shepherd his peer;  
-- Yet I never should envy the song,  
Were not Phyllis to lend it an ear.  
Let his crook be with hyacinths bound,  
So Phyllis the trophy despise:

Let his forehead with laurels be crown'd,  
So they shine not in Phyllis's eyes.  
The language that flows from the heart  
Is a stranger to Paridel's tongue;  
-- Yet may she beware of his art,  
Or sure I must envy the song.

William Shenstone

## A Pastoral Ballad Iv: Disappointment

Ye shepherds give ear to my lay,  
And take no more heed of my sheep:  
They have nothing to do but to stray;  
I have nothing to do but to weep.  
Yet do not my folly reprove;  
She was fair -- and my passion begun;  
She smil'd -- and I could not but love;  
She is faithless -- and I am undone.  
Perhaps I was void of all thought:  
Perhaps it was plain to foresee,  
That a nymph so compleat would be sought  
By a swain more engaging than me.  
Ah! love ev'ry hope can inspire;  
It banishes wisdom the while;  
And the lip of the nymph we admire  
Seems for ever adorn'd with a smile.  
She is faithless, and I am undone;  
Ye that witness the woes I endure;  
Let reason instruct you to shun  
What it cannot instruct you to cure.  
Beware how you loiter in vain  
Amid nymphs of an higher degree:  
It is not for me to explain  
How fair, and how fickle they be.  
Alas! from the day that we met,  
What hope of an end to my woes?  
When I cannot endure to forget  
The glance that undid my repose.  
Yet time may diminish the pain:  
The flow'r, and the shrub, and the tree,

Which I rear'd for her pleasure in vain,  
In time may have comfort for me.  
The sweets of a dew-sprinkled rose,  
The sound of a murmuring stream,  
The peace which from solitude flows,  
Henceforth shall be Corydon's theme.  
High transports are shewn to the sight,  
But we are not to find them our own;

Fate never bestow'd such delight,  
As I with my Phyllis had known.  
O ye woods, spread your branches apace;  
To your deepest recesses I fly;  
I would hide with the beasts of the chase;  
I would vanish from every eye.  
Yet my reed shall resound thro' the grove  
With the same sad complaint it begun;  
How she smil'd, and I could not but love;  
Was faithless, and I am undone!

William Shenstone

# A Pastoral Ode. To The Hon. Sir Richard Lyttleton

The morn dispensed a dubious light,  
A sudden mist had stolen from sight  
Each pleasing vale and hill;  
When Damon left his humble bowers,  
To guard his flocks, to fence his flowers,  
Or check his wandering rill.

Though school'd from Fortune's paths to fly,  
The swain beneath each lowering sky  
Would oft his fate bemoan,  
That he, in sylvan shades forlorn,  
Must waste his cheerless even and morn,  
Nor praised, nor loved, nor known.

No friend to Fame's obstreperous noise,  
Yet to the whispers of her voice,  
Soft murmuring, not a foe:  
The pleasures he through choice declined,  
When gloomy fogs depress'd his mind,  
It grieved him to forego.

Grieved him to lurk the lakes beside,  
Where coots in rushy dingles hide,  
And moorcocks shun the day;  
While caitiff bitterns, undismay'd,  
Remark the swain's familiar shade,  
And scorn to quit their prey.

But see the radiant sun once more,  
The brightening face of heaven restore,  
And raise the doubtful dawn;  
And, more to gild his rural sphere,  
At once the brightest train appear  
That ever trod the lawn.

Amazement chill'd the shepherd's frame,  
To think Bridgewater's honour'd name  
Should grace his rustic cell;  
That she, on all whose motions wait

Distinction, titles, rank, and state,  
Should rove where shepherds dwell.

But true it is, the generous mind,  
By candour sway'd, by taste refined,  
Will nought but vice disdain;  
Nor will the breast where fancy glows,  
Deem every flower a weed that blows  
Amid the desert plain.

Beseems it such, with honour crown'd,  
To deal its lucid beams around,  
Nor equal meed receive;  
At most such garlands from the field,  
As cowslips, pinks, and pansies, yield,  
And rural hands can weave.

Yet strive, ye shepherds! strive to find,  
And weave the fairest of the kind,  
The prime of all the spring;  
If haply thus you lovely fair  
May, round her temples, deign to wear  
The trivial wreaths you bring.

O how the peaceful halcyons play'd,  
Where'er the conscious lake betray'd  
Athena's placid mien!  
How did the sprightlier linnets throng,  
Where Paphia's charms required the song,  
'Mid hazel cosses green!

Lo, Dartmouth on those banks reclined,  
While busy Fancy calls to mind  
The glories of his line!  
Methinks my cottage rears its head,  
The ruin'd walls of yonder shed,  
As through enchantment, shine.

But who the nymph that guides their way?  
Could ever nymph descend to stray  
From Hagley's famed retreat?  
Else, by the blooming features fair,

The faultless make, the matchless air,  
'Twere Cynthia's form complete.

So would some tuberose delight,  
That struck the pilgrim's wondering sight  
'Mid lonely deserts drear;  
All as at eve, the sovereign flower  
Dispenses round its balmy power,  
And crowns the fragrant year.

Ah! now no more, the shepherd cried,  
Must I Ambition's charms deride,  
Her subtle force disown;  
No more of Fauns or Fairies dream,  
While Fancy, near each crystal stream,  
Shall paint these forms alone.

By low-brow'd rock or pathless mead,  
I deem'd that splendour ne'er should lead  
My dazzled eyes astray;  
But who, alas! will dare contend,  
If beauty add, or merit blend,  
Its more illustrious ray?

Nor is it long, O plaintive swain!  
Since Guernsey saw, without disdain,  
Where, hid in woodlands green,  
The partner of his early days,  
And once the rival of his praise,  
Had stolen through life unseen.

Scarce faded is the vernal flower,  
Since Stamford left his honour'd bower  
To smile familiar here:  
O form'd by Nature to disclose,  
How fair that courtesy which flows  
From social warmth sincere!

Nor yet have many moons decay'd,  
Since Pollio sought this lonely shade,  
Admired this rural maze:  
The noblest breast that Virtue fires,



The Graces love, the Muse inspires,  
Might pant for Pollio's praise.

Say, Thomson here was known to rest;  
For him you vernal seat I drest,  
Ah, never to return!  
In place of wit and melting strains,  
And social mirth, it now remains  
To weep beside his urn.

Come then, my Lelius! come once more,  
And fringe the melancholy shore  
With roses and with bays,  
While I each wayward Fate accuse,  
That envied his impartial Muse,  
To sing your early praise.

While Philo, to whose favour'd sight  
Antiquity, with full delight,  
Her inmost wealth displays;  
Beneath yon ruin's moulder'd wall  
Shall muse, and with his friends recall  
The pomp of ancient days.

Here, too, shall Conway's name appear;  
He praised the stream so lovely clear,  
That shone the reeds among;  
Yet clearness could it not disclose,  
To match the rhetoric that flows  
From Conway's polish'd tongue.

Even Pitt, whose fervent periods roll  
Resistless through the kindling soul  
Of senates, councils, kings-  
Though form'd for courts, vouchsafed to rove,  
Inglorious, through the shepherd's grove,  
And ope his bashful springs.

But what can courts discover more  
Than these rude haunts have seen before,  
Each fount and shady tree?  
Have not these trees and fountains seen

The pride of courts, the winning mien  
Of peerless Aylesbury?

And Grenville, she whose radiant eyes  
Have mark'd by slow gradation rise  
The princely piles of Stowe;  
Yet praised these unembellish'd woods,  
And smiled to see the babbling floods  
Through self-worn mazes flow.

Say, Dartmouth, who your banks admired,  
Again beneath your caves retired,  
Shall grace the pensive shade;  
With all the bloom, with all the truth,  
With all the sprightliness of youth,  
By cool reflection sway'd?

Brave, yet humane, shall Smith appear;  
Ye sailors! though his name be dear,  
Think him not yours alone:  
Grant him in other spheres to charm;  
The shepherds' breasts though mild are warm,  
And ours are all his own.

O Lyttleton! my honour'd guest,  
Could I describe thy generous breast,  
Thy firm yet polish'd mind;  
How public love adorns thy name,  
How Fortune, too, conspires with Fame;  
The song should please mankind.

William Shenstone

## A Simile

What village but has sometimes seen  
The clumsy shape, the frightful mien,  
Tremendous claws, and shagged hair  
Of that grim brute yclept a bear?  
He from his dam the learn'd agree,  
Received the curious form you see;  
Who with her plastic tongue alone,  
Produced a visage-like her own-  
And thus they hint, in mystic fashion,  
The powerful force of education.  
Perhaps yon crowd of swains is viewing,  
Even now, the strange exploits of Bruin,  
Who plays his antics, roars aloud,  
The wonder of a gaping crowd!  
So have I known an awkward lad,  
Whose birth has made a parish glad,  
Forbid, for fear of sense, to roam,  
And taught by kind mamma at home,  
Who gives him many a well-tried rule,  
With ways and means-to play the fool.  
In sense the same, in stature higher,  
He shines, ere long, a rural squire,  
Pours forth unwitty jokes, and swears,  
And bawls, and drinks, but chiefly stares:  
His tenants of superior sense  
Carouse, and laugh, at his expense,  
And deem the pastime I'm relating  
To be as pleasant as bear-baiting.

William Shenstone

# An Irregular Ode, After Sicknes

-Melius, bunny venerit ipsa, canemus.

-Virg.

Imitation.

His wish'd-for presence will improve the song.

Too long a stranger to repose,  
At length from Pain's abhorred couch I rose,  
And wander'd forth alone,  
To court once more the balmy breeze,  
And catch the verdure of the trees,  
Ere yet their charms were flown.

'Twas from a bank with pansies gay,  
I hail'd once more the cheerful day,  
The sun's forgotten beams  
O Sun! how pleasing were thy rays,  
Reflected from the polish'd face  
Of yon refulgent streams!

Raised by the scene, my feeble tongue  
Essay'd again the sweets of song:  
And thus, in feeble strains and slow,  
The loitering numbers 'gan to flow.

'Come, gentle Air! my languid limbs restore,  
And bid me welcome from the Stygian shore;  
For sure I heard the tender sighs,  
I seem'd to join the plaintive cries,  
Of hapless youths who through the myrtle grove  
Bewail for ever their unfinish'd love;  
To that unjoyous clime,  
Torn from the sight of these ethereal skies;  
Debarr'd the lustre of their Delia's eyes,  
And banish'd in their prime.

'Come, gentle Air! and, while the thickets bloom,  
Convey the jasmine's breath divine;

Convey the woodbine's rich perfume,  
Nor spare the sweet-leaf'd eglantine  
And mayst thou shun the rugged storm,  
Till Health her wonted charms explain,  
With Rural Pleasure in her train,  
To greet me in her fairest form  
While from this lofty mount I view  
The Sons of earth, the vulgar crew,  
Anxious for futile gains, beneath me stray,  
And seek with erring step Contentment's obvious way.

'Come, gentle Air! and thou, celestial Muse!  
Thy genial flame infuse,  
Enough to lend a pensive bosom aid,  
And gild Retirement's gloomy shade;  
Enough to rear such rustic lays  
As foes may slight, but partial friends will praise.'

The gentle Air allow'd my claim,  
And, more to cheer my drooping frame,  
She mixt the balm of opening flowers,  
Such as the bee, with chemic powers,  
From Hybla's fragrant hills inhales,  
Or scents Sabea's blooming vales:  
But, ah! the nymphs that heal the pensive mind,  
By prescripts more refined,  
Neglect their votary's anxious moan:  
Oh! how should they relieve?-the Muses all were flown.

By flowery plain or woodland shades  
I fondly sought the charming maids;  
By woodland shades or flowery plain  
I sought them, faithless maids! in vain;  
When, lo! in happier hour,  
I leave behind my native mead,  
To range where Zeal and Friendship lead,  
To visit Luxborough's honour'd bower.

Ah! foolish man! to seek the tuneful maids  
On other plains, or near less verdant shades;  
Scarce have my footsteps press'd the favour'd ground,  
When sounds ethereal strike my ear;

At once celestial forms appear;  
My fugitives are found!  
The Muses here attune their lyres,  
Ah! partial, with unwonted fires;  
Here, hand in hand, with careless mien,  
The sportive graces trip the green.

But whilst I wander'd o'er a scene so fair,  
Too well at one survey I trace  
How every Muse and every Grace  
Had long employ'd their care.  
Lurks not a stone enrich'd with lively stain,  
Blooms not a flower amid the vernal store,  
Falls not a plume on India's distant plain,  
Glow's not a shell on Adria's rocky shore,  
But torn, methought, from native lands or seas,  
From their arrangement gain fresh power to please.

And some had bent the wildering maze,  
Bedeck'd with every shrub that blows,  
And some entwined the willing sprays,  
To shield th' illustrious dame's repose;  
Others had graced the sprightly dome,  
And taught the portrait where to glow;  
Others arranged the curious tome,  
Or, 'mid the decorated space,  
Assign'd the laurell'd bust a place,  
And given to learning all the pomp of show.  
And now from every task withdrawn,  
They met and frisk'd it o'er the lawn.

Ah! woe is me, said I,  
And - -'s hilly circuit heard my cry:  
Have I for this with labour strove,  
And lavish'd all my little store,  
To fence for you my shady grove,  
And scollop every winding shore,  
And fringe with every purple rose,  
The sapphire stream that down my valley flows?

Ah! lovely treacherous maids!  
To quit unseen my votive shades,

When pale Disease, and torturing Pain,  
Had torn me from the breezy plain,  
And to a restless couch confined,  
Who ne'er your wonted tasks declined.

She needs not your officious aid  
To swell the song, or plan the shade;  
By genuine Fancy fired,  
Her native genius guides her hand,  
And while she marks the sage command,  
More lovely scenes her skill shall raise,  
Her lyre resound with nobler lays  
Than ever you inspired.

Thus I my rage and grief display,  
But vainly blame, and vainly mourn,  
Nor will a Grace, or Muse, return  
Till Luxborough lead the way.

William Shenstone

# Anacreontic

'Twas in a cool Aonian glade,  
The wanton Cupid, spent with toil,  
Had sought refreshment from the shade,  
And stretch'd him on the mossy soil.

A vagrant Muse drew nigh, and found  
The subtle traitor fast asleep;  
And is it thine to snore profound,  
She said, yet leave the world to weep?

But hush!-from this auspicious hour  
The world, I ween, may rest in peace,  
And, robb'd of darts, and stript of power,  
Thy peevish petulance decrease.

Sleep on, poor Child! whilst I withdraw,  
And this thy vile artillery hide-  
When the Castalian fount she saw,  
And plunged his arrows in the tide.

That magic fount, ill-judging maid,  
Shall cause you soon to curse the day  
You dared the shafts of Love invade,  
And gave his arms redoubled sway.

For in a stream so wondrous clear,  
When angry Cupid searches round,  
Will not the radiant points appear?  
Will not the furtive spoils be found?

Too soon they were; and every dart.  
Dipt in the Muse's mystic spring,  
Acquired new force to wound the heart,  
And taught at once to love and sing.

Then farewell, ye Pierian quire!  
For who will now your altars throng?  
From Love we learn to swell the lyre,  
And Echo asks no sweeter song.



William Shenstone

# Charms Of Precedence - A Tale

'Sir, will you please to walk before?'-  
'No, pray, Sir-you are next the door.'-  
'Upon mine honour, I'll not stir.'-  
'Sir, I'm at home; consider, Sir'-  
'Excuse me, Sir; I'll not go first.'-  
'Well, if I must be rude, I must-  
But yet I wish I could evade it-  
'Tis strangely clownish, be persuaded.'  
Go forward, Cits! go forward, Squires!  
Nor scruple each, what each admires.  
Life squares not, Friends! with your proceeding,  
It flies while you display your breeding;  
Such breeding as one's grannum preaches,  
Or some old dancing-master teaches.  
Oh! for some rude tumultuous fellow,  
Half crazy, or, at least, half mellow,  
To come behind you unawares,  
And fairly push you both down stairs!  
But Death's at hand-let me advise ye  
Go forward, Friends! or he'll surprise ye.  
Besides, how insincere you are!  
Do ye not flatter, lie, forswear,  
And daily cheat, and weekly pray,  
And all for this-to lead the way?  
Such is my theme, which means to prove,  
That though we drink, or game, or love,  
As that, or this, is most in fashion,  
Precedence is our ruling passion.  
When college-students take degrees,  
And pay the beadle's endless fees,  
What moves that scientific body,  
But the first cutting at a gaudy?  
And whence such shoals, in bare conditions,  
That starve and languish as physicians,  
Content to trudge the streets, and stare at  
The fat apothecary's chariot?  
But that in Charlotte's chamber (see  
Molière's Médecin malgré lui),  
The leech, howe'er his fortunes vary,

Still walks before the apothecary.  
Flavia in vain has wit and charms,  
And all that shines, and all that warms;  
In vain all human race adore her,  
For-Lady Mary ranks before her.  
O Celia! gentle Celia! tell us,  
You, who are neither vain nor jealous!  
The softest breast, the mildest mien!  
Would you not feel some little spleen,  
Nor bite your lip, nor furl your brow,  
If Florimel, your equal now,  
Should, one day, gain precedence of ye?  
First served-though in a dish of coffee?  
Placed first, although where you are found  
You gain the eyes of all around?  
Named first, though not with half the fame  
That waits my charming Celia's name?  
Hard fortune! barely to inspire  
Our fix'd esteem, and fond desire!  
Barely, where'er you go, to prove  
The source of universal love!  
Yet be content, observing this,  
Honour's the offspring of caprice;  
And worth, howe'er you have pursued it,  
Has now no power-but to exclude it:  
You'll find your general reputation  
A kind of supplemental station.  
Poor Swift, with all his worth, could ne'er,  
He tells us, hope to rise a peer;  
So, to supply it, wrote for fame,  
And well the wit secured his aim.  
A common patriot has a drift  
Not quite so innocent as Swift:  
In Britain's cause he rants, he labours;  
'He's honest, faith,'-have patience, Neighbours,  
For patriots may sometimes deceive,  
May beg their friends' reluctant leave,  
To serve them in a higher sphere,  
And drop their virtue to get there.-  
As Lucian tells us, in his fashion,  
How souls put off each earthly passion,  
Ere on Elysium's flowery strand

Old Charon suffer'd them to land;  
So, ere we meet a court's caresses,  
No doubt our souls must change their dresses;  
And souls there be, who, bound that way,  
Attire themselves ten times a-day.  
If then 'tis rank which all men covet,  
And saints alike and sinners love it;  
If place, for which our courtiers throng  
So thick, that few can get along,  
For which such servile toils are seen,  
Who's happier than a king?-a queen!  
Howe'er men aim at elevation,  
'Tis properly a female passion:  
Women and beaus, beyond all measure,  
Are charm'd with rank's ecstatic pleasure.  
Sir, if your drift I rightly scan,  
You'd hint a beau was not a man:  
Say, women then are fond of places;  
I waive all disputable cases.  
A man, perhaps, would something linger,  
Were his loved rank to cost-a finger;  
Or were an ear, or toe, the price on 't,  
He might deliberate once or twice on 't;  
Perhaps ask Gataker's advice on 't;  
And many, as their frames grow old,  
Would hardly purchase it with gold.  
But women wish precedence ever;  
'Tis their whole life's supreme endeavour;  
It fires their youth with jealous rage,  
And strongly animates their age:  
Perhaps they would not sell outright,  
Or maim a limb-that was in sight;  
Yet on worse terms they sometimes choose it,  
Nor even in punishment refuse it,  
Pre-eminence in pain! you cry,  
All fierce and pregnant with reply:  
But lend your patience and your ear,  
An argument shall make it clear.  
But hold, an argument may fail,  
Beside, my title says, A Tale.  
Where Avon rolls her winding stream,  
Avon! the Muses' favourite theme;

Avon! that fills the farmers' purses,  
And decks with flowers both farms and verses,  
She visits many a fertile vale-  
Such was the scene of this my Tale;  
For 'tis in Evesham's Yale, or near it,  
That folks with laughter tell and hear it.  
The soil with annual plenty bless'd  
Was by young Corydon possess'd.  
His youth alone I lay before ye,  
As most material to my story:  
For strength and vigour too, he had them,  
And 'twere not much amiss to add them.  
Thrice happy lout! whose wide domain,  
Now green with grass, now gilt with grain,  
In russet robes of clover deep,  
Or thinly veil'd, and white with sheep;  
Now fragrant with the bean's perfume,  
Now purpled with the pulse's bloom,  
Might well with bright allusion store me,-  
But happier bards have been before me!  
Amongst the various year's increase  
The stripling own'd a field of pease,  
Which, when at night he ceased his labours,  
Were haunted by some female neighbours.  
Each morn discover'd to his sight  
The shameful havoc of the night:  
Traces of this they left behind them,  
But no instructions where to find them.  
The devil's works are plain and evil,  
But few or none have seen the devil.  
Old Noll, indeed, if we may credit  
The words of Echard, who has said it,  
Contrived with Satan how to fool us,  
And bargain'd face to face to rule us;  
But then Old Noll was one in ten,  
And sought him more than other men.  
Our shepherd, too, with like attention,  
May meet the female fiends we mention.  
He rose one morn at break of day,  
And near the field in ambush lay;  
When, lo! a brace of girls appears,  
The third, a matron much in years.

Smiling, amidst the pease, the sinners  
Sat down to cull their future dinners  
And caring little who might own them,  
Made free as though themselves had sown them.  
'Tis worth a sage's observation,  
How love can make a jest of passion  
Anger had forced the swain from bed,  
His early dues to love unpaid!  
And Love a god that keeps a pother,  
And will be paid one time or other,  
Now banish'd Anger out of door,  
And claim'd the debt withheld before.  
If Anger bid our youth revile,  
Love form'd his features to a smile  
And knowing well 'twas all grimace  
To threaten with a smiling face,  
He in few words express'd his mind-  
And none would deem them much unkind.  
The amorous youth, for their offence,  
Demanded instant recompence;  
That recompence from each, which shame  
Forbids a bashful Muse to name:  
Yet, more this sentence to discover,  
'Tis what Bet -- grants her lover,  
When he, to make the strumpet willing,  
Has spent his fortune-to a shilling.  
Each stood awhile, as 'twere, suspended,  
And loth to do, what-each intended.  
At length, with soft pathetic sighs,  
The matron, bent with age, replies:  
"Tis vain to strive-justice, I know,  
And our ill stars, will have it so-  
But let my tears your wrath assuage,  
And show some deference for age:  
I from a distant village came,  
Am old, God knows, and something lame;  
And if we yield, as yield we must,  
Despatch my crazy body first.'  
Our shepherd, like the Phrygian swain,  
When circled round on Ida's plain  
With goddesses, he stood suspended,  
And Pallas's grave speech was ended,

Own'd what she ask'd might be his duty,  
But paid the compliment to beauty.

William Shenstone

# Colemira : A Culinary Eclogue

Insensible of soft desire,  
Behold Colemira prove  
More partial to the kitchen fire  
Than to the fire of Love.

Night's sable clouds had half the globe o'erspread,  
And silence reign'd, and folks were gone to bed;  
When love, which gentle sleep can ne'er inspire,  
Had seated Damon by the kitchen fire.

Pensive he lay, extended on the ground,  
The little Lares kept their vigils round  
The fawning cats compassionate his case,  
And purr around, and gently lick his face:

To all his complaints the sleeping curs reply,  
And with hoarse snorings imitate a sigh:  
Such gloomy scenes with lovers' minds agree,  
And solitude to them is best society.

'Could I,' he cried, 'express how bright a grace  
Adorns thy morning hands, and well-wash'd face,  
Thou wouldst, Colemira, grant what I implore,  
And yield me love, or wash thy face no more.

'Ah! who can see, and seeing not admire,  
Whene'er she sets the pot upon the fire?  
Her hands outshine the fire and redder things;  
Her eyes are blacker than the pot she brings.

'But sure no chamber-damsel can compare,  
When in meridian lustre shines my fair,  
When warm'd with dinner's toil, in pearly rills,  
Adown her goodly cheeks the sweat distils.

'Oh! how I long, how ardently desire,  
To view those rosy fingers strike the lyre!  
For late, when bees to change their climes began,  
How did I see them thrum the frying-pan!



'With her I should not envy George his queen,  
Though she in royal grandeur deck'd be seen;  
Whilst rags, just sever'd from my fair one's gown,  
In russet pomp and greasy pride hang down.

'Ah! how it does my drooping heart rejoice,  
When in the hall I hear thy mellow voice!  
How would that voice exceed the village bell,  
Wouldst thou but sing, 'I like thee passing well!'

'When from the hearth she bade the pointers go,  
How soft, how easy, did her accents flow!  
'Get out,' she cried: 'when strangers come to sup,  
One ne'er can raise those snoring devils up.'

'Then, full of wrath, she kick'd each lazy brute;  
Alas! I envied even that salute:  
'Twas sure misplaced-Shock said, or seem'd to say,  
He had as lief I had the kick, as they.

'If she the mystic bellows take in hand,  
Who like the fair can that machine command?  
O mayst thou ne'er by Æolus be seen,  
For he would sure demand thee for his queen!

'But should the flame this rougher aid refuse,  
And only gentler medicines be of use,  
With full-blown cheeks she ends the doubtful strife,  
Foments the infant flame, and puffs it into life.

'Such arts as these exalt the drooping fire,  
But in my breast a fiercer flame inspire:  
I burn! I burn! O give thy puffing o'er,  
And swell thy cheeks, and pout thy lips, no more!

With all her haughty looks, the time I've seen  
When this proud damsel has more humble been,  
When with nice airs she hoist the pancake round,  
And dropt it, hapless fair! upon the ground.

'Look, with what charming grace, what winning tricks,

The artful charmer rubs the candlesticks:  
So bright she makes the candlesticks she handles,  
Oft have I said-there were no need of candles.

But thou, my fair! who never wouldst approve,  
Or hear the tender story of my love,  
Or mind how burns my raging breast - a button -  
Perhaps art dreaming of - a breast of mutton.'

Thus said, and wept, the sad desponding swain,  
Revealing to the sable walls his pain:  
But nymphs are free with those they should deny;  
To those they love, more exquisitely coy.

Now chirping crickets raise their tinkling voice,  
The lambent flames in languid streams arise,  
And smoke, in azure folds, evaporates and dies.

William Shenstone

# Colemira. A Culinary Eclogue

Nec tantum Veneris, quantum studiosa culinae.

Imitation.

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William Shenstone

# Comparison

'Tis by comparison we know  
On every object to bestow  
Its proper share of praise  
Did each alike perfection bear,  
What beauty, though divinely fair,  
Could admiration raise?

Amidst the lucid bands of night,  
See! Hesperus, serenely bright,  
Adorns the distant skies:  
But languishes amidst the blaze  
Of sprightly Sol's meridian rays,-  
Or Silvia's brighter eyes.

Whene'er the nightingale complains,  
I like the melancholy strains,  
And praise the tuneful bird:  
But vainly might she strain her throat,  
Vainly exalt each swelling note,  
Should Silvia's voice be heard.

When, on the violet's purple bed,  
Supine I rest my weary head,  
The fragrant pillow charms:  
Yet soon such languid bliss I'd fly,  
Would Silvia but the loss supply,  
And take me to her arms.

The alabaster's wondrous white,  
The marble's polish strikes my sight,  
When Silvia is not seen:  
But ah! how faint that white is grown,  
How rough appears the polish'd stone,  
Compared with Silvia's mien!

The rose, that o'er the Cyprian plains,  
With flowers enamell'd, blooming reigns,  
With undisputed power,  
Placed near her cheek's celestial red

(Its purple lost, its lustre fled),  
Delights the sense no more.

William Shenstone

# Cupid And Plutus

When Celia, love's eternal foe,  
To rich old Gomez first was married;  
And angry Cupid came to know  
His shafts had err'd, his bow miscarried;

He sigh'd, he wept, he hung his head,  
On the cold ground, full sad, he laid him;  
When Plutus, there by fortune led,  
In this desponding plight survey'd him.

'And sure,' he cried, 'you'll own at last  
Your boasted power by mine exceeded:  
Say, wretched boy, now all is past,  
How little she your efforts heeded.

'If with success you would assail,  
Gild, youngster, doubly gild your arrows:  
Little the feather'd shafts avail,  
Though wing'd from mamma's doves and sparrows.

'What though each reed, each arrow grew,  
Where Venus bathed herself; depend on't,  
'Twere more for use, for beauty too,  
A diamond sparkled at the end on't.'

'Peace, Plutus, peace!'-the boy replied;  
'Were not my arts by yours infested,  
I could each other power deride,  
And rule this circle unmolested.

'See yonder pair! no worldly views  
In Chloe's generous breast resided:  
Love bade her the spruce valet choose,  
And she by potent love was guided.

'For this, she quits her golden dreams,  
In her gilt coach no more she ranges:  
And her rich crimson, bright with gems,  
For cheeks impearl'd with tears, she changes.



'Though sordid Celia own'd your power,  
Think not so monstrous my disgrace is:  
You gain'd this nymph-that very hour  
I gain'd a score in different places.'

William Shenstone

# Daphne's Visit

Ye birds! for whom I rear'd the grove,  
With melting lay salute my love;  
My Daphne with your notes detain,  
Or I have rear'd my grove in vain.

Ye flowers! before her footsteps rise:  
Display at once your brightest dyes;  
That she your opening charms may see,  
Or what are all your charms to me?

Kind Zephyr! brush each fragrant flower,  
And shed its odours round my bower;  
Or never more, O gentle Wind!  
Shall I from thee refreshment find.

Ye Streams! if e'er your banks I loved,  
If e'er your native sounds improved,  
May each soft murmur soothe my fair,  
Or oh! 'twill deepen my despair.

And thou, my Grot! whose lonely bounds  
The melancholy pine surrounds,  
May Daphne praise thy peaceful gloom,  
Or thou shalt prove her Damon's tomb.

William Shenstone

# Economy, A Rhapsody, Addressed To Young Poets

Insanis; omnes gelidis quaecunqne lacernis  
Sunt tibi, Nasones Virgiliosque vides.

~Mart.

Imitation.

--Thou know'st not what thou say'st;  
In garments that scarce fence them from the cold  
Our Ovids and our Virgils you behold.

Part first.

To you, ye Bards! whose lavish breast requires  
This monitory lay, the strains belong;  
Nor think some miser vents his sapient saw,  
Or some dull cit, unfeeling of the charms  
That tempt profusion, sings; while friendly Zeal,  
To guard from fatal ills the tribe he loves,  
Inspires the meanest of the Muse's train!  
Like you I loathe the grovelling progeny,  
Whose wily arts, by creeping time matured,  
Advance them high on Power's tyrannic throne,  
To lord it there in gorgeous uselessness,  
And spurn successful Worth that pines below!  
See the rich churl, amid the social sons  
Of wine and wit, regaling! hark, he joins  
In the free jest delighted! seems to show  
A meliorated heart! he laughs, he sings!  
Songs of gay import, madrigals of glee,  
And drunken anthems, set agape the board,  
Like Demea, in the play, benign and mild,  
And pouring forth benevolence of soul,  
Till Micio wonder; or, in Shakspeare's line,  
Obstreperous Silence, drowning Shallow's voice,  
And startling Falstaff, and his mad compeers.  
He owns 'tis prudence, ever and anon  
To smooth his careful brow, to let his purse  
Ope to a sixpence's diameter!  
He likes our ways; he owns the ways of wit  
Are ways of pleasance, and deserve regard.

True, we are dainty good society,  
But what art thou? Alas! consider well,  
Thou bane of social pleasure, know thyself:  
Thy fell approach, like some invasive damp  
Breathed through the pores of earth from Stygian caves  
Destroys the lamp of mirth; the lamp which we,  
Its flammens, boast to guard: we know not how,  
But at thy sight the fading flame assumes  
A ghastly blue, and in a stench expires.  
True, thou seem'st changed; all sainted, all enskied:  
The trembling tears that charge thy melting eyes  
Say thou art honest and of gentle kind:  
But all is false! an intermitting sigh  
Condemns each hour, each moment given to smiles,  
And deems those only lost thou dost not lose.  
Even for a demi-groat this open'd soul,  
This boon companion, this elastic breast,  
Reverberates quick; and sends the tuneful tongue  
To lavish music on the rugged walls  
Of some dark dungeon. Hence, thou Caitiff! fly;  
Touch not my glass, nor drain my sacred bowl,  
Monster, ingrate! beneath one common sky  
Why shouldst thou breathe? beneath one common roof  
Thou ne'er shalt harbour, nor my little boat  
Receive a soul with crimes to press it down.  
Go to thy bags, thou Recreant! hourly go,  
And, gazing there, bid them be wit, be mirth,  
Be conversation. Not a face that smiles  
Admits thy presence! not a soul that glows  
With social purport, bid, or even or morn,  
Invest thee happy! but when life declines,  
May thy sure heirs stand tittering round thy bed,  
And, ushering in their favourites, burst thy locks,  
And fill their laps with gold, till Want and Care  
With joy depart, and cry, 'We ask no more.'  
Ah! never, never may the harmonious mind  
Endure the worldly! Poets, ever void  
Of guile, distrustless, scorn the treasured gold,  
And spurn the miser, spurn his deity.  
Balanced with friendship, in the poet's eye  
The rival scale of interest kicks the beam,  
Than lightning swifter. From his cavern'd store

The sordid soul, with self-applause, remarks  
The kind propensity; remarks and smiles,  
And hies with impious haste to spread the snare.  
Him we deride, and in our comic scenes  
Contemn the niggard form Moliere has drawn:  
We loathe with justice; but, alas! the pain  
To bow the knee before this calf of gold;  
Implore his envious aid, and meet his frown!  
But 'tis not Gomez, 'tis not he whose heart  
Is crusted o'er with dross, whose callous mind  
Is senseless as his gold, the slighted Muse  
Intensely loathes. 'Tis sure no equal task  
To pardon him who lavishes his wealth  
On racer, foxhound, hawk, or spaniel, all  
But human merit; who with gold essays  
All, but the noblest pleasure, to remove  
The wants of Genius, and its smiles enjoy.  
But you, ye titled youths! whose nobler zeal  
Would burnish o'er your coronets with fame;  
Who listen pleased when poet tunes his lay;  
Permit him not, in distant solitudes,  
To pine, to languish out the fleeting hours  
Of active youth; then Virtue pants for praise.  
That season unadorn'd, the careless bard  
Quits your worn threshold, and, like honest Gay,  
Contemns the niggard boon ye time so ill.  
Your favours then, like trophies given the tomb,  
The enfranchised spirit soaring, not perceives,  
Or scorns perceived, and execrates the smile  
Which bade his vigorous bloom, to treacherous hopes  
And servile cares a prey, expire in vain!  
Two lawless powers, engaged by mutual hate  
In endless war, beneath their flags enrol  
The vassal world: this, Avarice is named;  
That, Luxury: 'tis true their partial friends  
Assign them softer names; usurpers both!  
That share by dint of arms the legal throne  
Of just Economy; yet both betray'd  
By fraudulent ministers. The niggard chief,  
Listening to want, all faithless, and prepared  
To join each moment in his rival's train,  
His conduct models by the needless fears

The slave inspires, while Luxury, a chief  
Of amplest faith, to Plenty's rule resigns  
His whole campaign. 'Tis Plenty's flattering sounds  
Engross his ear; 'tis Plenty's smiling form  
Moves still before his eye. Discretion strives,  
But strives in vain, to banish from the throne  
The perjured minion: he, secure of trust,  
With latent malice to the hostile camp;  
Day, night, and hour, his monarch's wealth conveys.  
Ye towering minds! ye sublimated souls!  
Who, careless of your fortunes, seal and sign,  
Set, let, contract, acquit, with easier mien  
Than fops take snuff! whose economic care  
Your green silk purse engrosses! easy, pleased,  
To see gold sparkle through the subtle folds;  
Lovely, as when the Hesperian fruitage smiled  
Amid the verdurous grove! who fondly hope  
Spontaneous harvests! harvests all the year!  
Who scatter wealth, as though the radiant crop  
Glitter'd on every bough; and every bough,  
Like that the Trojan gather'd, once avulsed,  
Were by a splendid successor supplied  
Instant, spontaneous listen to my lays;  
For 'tis not fools, whate'er proverbial phrase  
Have long decreed, that quit with greatest ease  
The treasured gold. Of words indeed profuse,  
Of gold tenacious, their torpescent soul  
Clenches their coin; and what electral fire  
Shall solve the frosty gripe, and bid it flow?  
'Tis Genius, Fancy, that to wild expense  
Of health, of treasure, stimulates the soul;  
These, with officious care, and fatal art,  
Improve the vinous flavour; these the smile  
Of Cloe soften: these the glare of dress  
Illume; the glittering chariot gild anew,  
And add strange wisdom to the furs of Power.  
Alas! that he, amid the race of men,  
That he who thinks of purest gold with scorn,  
Should with unsated appetite demand,  
And vainly court the pleasure it procures!  
When Fancy's vivid spark impels the soul  
To scorn quotidian scenes, to spurn the bliss

Of vulgar minds, what nostrum shall compose  
Its fatal tension? in what lonely vale  
Of balmy Medicine's various field, aspires  
The blest refrigerant? Vain, ah! vain the hope  
Of future peace, this orgasm uncontroll'd!  
Impatient, hence, of all the frugal mind  
Requires; to eat, to drink, to sleep, to fill  
A chest with gold, the sprightly breast demands  
Incessant rapture; life, a tedious load  
Denied its continuity of joy.  
But whence obtain? philosophy requires  
No lavish cost; to crown its utmost prayer  
Suffice the root-built cell, the simple fleece,  
The juicy viand, and the crystal stream.  
Even mild Stupidity rewards her train  
With cheap contentment. Taste alone requires  
Entire profusion! Days, and nights, and hours,  
Thy voice, hydropic Fancy! calls aloud  
For costly draughts, inundant bowls of joy,  
Rivers of rich regalement, seas of bliss-  
Seas without shore, infinity of sweets!  
And yet, unless sage Reason join her hand  
In Pleasure's purchase, Pleasure is unsure!  
And yet, unless Economy's consent  
Legitimate expense, some graceless mark,  
Some symptom ill conceal'd, shall, soon or late,  
Burst like a pimple from the vicious tide  
Of acid blood, proclaiming Want's disease,  
Amidst the bloom of show. The scanty stream,  
Slow-loitering in its channel, seems to vie  
With Vaga's depth; but should the sedgy power,  
Vain-glorious, empty his penurious urn  
O'er the rough rock, how must his fellow streams  
Deride the tinklings of the boastive rill!  
I not aspire to mark the dubious path  
That leads to wealth, to poets mark'd in vain!  
But, ere self-flattery soothe the vivid breast  
With dreams of fortune near allied to fame,  
Reflect how few, who charm'd the listening ear  
Of satrap or of king, her smiles enjoyed!  
Consider well, what meagre alms repaid  
The great Maeonian! fire of tuneful song,

And prototype of all that soar'd sublime,  
And left dull cares below; what griefs impell'd  
The modest bard of learn'd Eliza's reign  
To swell with tears his Mulla's parent stream,  
And mourn aloud the pang, 'to ride, to run,  
To spend, to give, to want, to be undone.'  
Why should I tell of Cowley's pensive Muse,  
Beloved in vain? too copious is my theme!  
Which of your boasted race might hope reward  
Like loyal Butler, when the liberal Charles,  
The judge of wit, perused the sprightly page,  
Triumphant o'er his foes? Believe not Hope,  
The poet's parasite; but learn alone  
To spare the scanty boon the Fates decree.  
Poet and rich! 'tis solecism extreme!  
'Tis heighten'd contradiction! in his frame,  
In every nerve and fibre of his soul,  
The latent seeds and principles of want  
Has Nature wove, and Fate confirm'd the clue.  
Nor yet despair to shun the ruder gripe  
Of Penury: with nice precision learn  
A dollar's value. Foremost in the page  
That marks the expense of each revolving year,  
Place inattention. When the lust of praise,  
Or honour's false idea, tempts thy soul  
To slight frugality, assure thine heart  
That danger's near. This perishable coin  
Is no vain ore. It is thy liberty;  
It fetters misers, but it must alone  
Enfranchise thee. The world, the cit-like world,  
Bids thee beware; thy little craft essay;  
Nor, piddling with a tea-spoon's slender form,  
See with soup-ladles devils gormandize.  
Economy! thou good old aunt, whose mien,  
Furrow'd with age and care, the wise adore,  
The wits contemn! reserving still thy stores  
To cheer thy friends at last! why with the cit  
Or bookless churl, with each ignoble name,  
Each earthly nature, deign'st thou to reside?  
And shunning all, who by thy favours crown'd  
Might glad the world, to seek some vulgar mind,  
Inspiring pride, and selfish shapes of ill?



Why with the old, infirm, and impotent,  
And childless, love to dwell; yet leave the breast  
Of youth unwarn'd, unguided, uninform'd?  
Of youth, to whom thy monitory voice  
Were doubly kind? for, sure, to youthful eyes,  
(How short soe'er it prove), the road of life  
Appears protracted; fair on either side  
The Loves, the Graces play, on Fortune's child  
Profusely smiling: well might youth essay  
The frugal plan, the lucrative employ,  
Source of their favour all the livelong day;  
But Fate assents not. Age alone contracts  
His meagre palm, to clench the tempting bane  
Of all his peace, the glittering seeds of care!  
O that the Muse's voice might pierce the ear  
Of generous youth! for youth deserves her song.  
Youth is fair virtue's season, virtue then  
Requires the pruner's hand; the sequent stage,  
It barely vegetates; nor long the space  
Ere, robb'd of warmth, its arid trunk displays  
Fell Winter's total reign. O lovely source  
Of generous foibles, youth! when opening minds  
Are honest as the light, lucid as air,  
As fostering breezes kind, as linnets gay,  
Tender as buds, and lavish as the spring!  
Yet, hapless state of man! his earliest youth  
Cozens itself; his age defrauds mankind.  
Nor deem it strange that rolling years abrade  
The social bias. Life's extensive page,  
What does it but unfold repeated proofs  
Of gold's omnipotence? With patriots, friends,  
Sickening beneath its ray, enervate some,  
And others dead, whose putrid name exhales  
A noisome scent, the bulky volume teems:  
With kinsmen, brothers, sons, moistening the shroud,  
Or honouring the grave, with specious grief  
Of short duration; soon in fortune's beams  
Alert, and wondering at the tears they shed.  
But who shall save, by tame prosaic strain,  
That glowing breast where wit with youth conspires  
To sweeten luxury? The fearful Muse  
Shall yet proceed, though by the faintest gleam

Of hope inspired, to warn the train she loves.

Part second.

In some dark season, when the misty shower  
Obscures the sun, and saddens all the sky,  
When linnets drop the wing, nor grove nor stream  
Invites thee forth, to sport thy drooping muse;  
Seize the dull hour, nor with regret assign  
To worldly Prudence. She, nor nice nor coy,  
Accepts the tribute of a joyless day;  
She smiles well pleased when wit and mirth recede,  
And not a Grace, and not a Muse will hear.  
Then, from majestic Maro's awful strain,  
Or towering Homer, let thine eye descend  
To trace, with patient industry, the page  
Of income and expense: and, oh! beware  
Thy breast, self-flattering; place no courtly smile,  
No golden promise of your faithless Muse,  
Nor latent mine which Fortune's hand may show,  
Amid thy solid store: the Siren's song  
Wrecks not the listening sailor, half so sure.  
See by what avenues, what devious paths,  
The foot of Want, detested, steals along,  
And bars each fatal pass! Some few short hours  
Of punctual care, the refuse of thy year,  
On frugal schemes employ'd, shall give the Muse  
To sing intrepid many a cheerful day.  
But if too soon before the tepid gales  
Thy resolution melt; and ardent vows,  
In wary hours preferr'd, or die forgot,  
Or seem the forced effect of hazy skies;  
Then, ere surprise, by whose impetuous rage  
The massy fort, with which thy gentler breast  
I not compare, is won, the song proceeds.  
Know, too, by Nature's undiminish'd law,  
Throughout her realms obey'd, the various parts  
Of deep creation, atoms, systems, all,  
Attract, and are attracted; nor prevails the law  
Alone in matter; soul alike with soul  
Aspires to join; nor yet in souls alone;

In each idea it imbibes, is found  
The kind propensity; and when they meet  
And grow familiar, various though their tribe,  
Their tempers various, vow perpetual faith;  
That, should the world's disjointed frame once more  
To chaos yield the sway, amid the wreck  
Their union should survive; with Roman warmth,  
By sacred hospitable laws endear'd,  
Should each idea recollect its friend.  
Here then we fix; on this perennial base  
Erect thy safety, and defy the storm.  
Let soft Profusion's fair idea join  
Her hand with Poverty; nor here desist,  
Till o'er the group that forms their various train  
Thou sing loud hymeneals. Let the pride  
Of outward show in lasting leagues combine  
With shame threadbare; the gay vermilion face  
Of rash Intemperance be discreetly pair'd  
With sallow Hunger: the licentious joy  
With mean dependence; even the dear delight  
Of sculpture, paint, intaglios, books, and coins,  
Thy breast, sagacious Prudence! shall connect  
With filth and beggary; nor disdain to link  
With black Insolvency. Thy soul, alarm'd,  
Shall shun the Siren's voice; nor boldly dare  
To bid the soft enchantress share thy breast,  
With such a train of horrid fiends conjoin'd.  
Nor think, ye sordid race! ye grovelling minds!  
I frame the song for you; for you the Muse  
Could other rules impart. The friendly strain,  
For gentler bosoms plann'd, to yours would prove  
The juice of lurid aconite, exceed  
Whatever Colchos bore; and in your breast  
Compassion, love, and friendship, all destroy!  
It greatly shall avail, if e'er thy stores.  
Increase apace, by periodic days  
Of annual payment, or thy patron's boon,  
The lean reward of gross unbounded praise!  
It much avails, to seize the present hour,  
And, undeliberating, call around  
Thy hungry creditors; their horrid rage,  
When once appeas'd, the small remaining store

Shall rise in weight tenfold, in lustre rise,  
As gold improved by many a fierce assay.  
'Tis thus the frugal husbandman directs  
His narrow stream, if o'er its wonted banks,  
By sudden rains impell'd, it proudly swell;  
His timely hand through better tracts conveys  
The quick decreasing tide: ere borne along,  
Or through the wild morass, or cultured fields,  
Or bladed grass mature, or barren sands,  
It flow destructive, or it flow in vain.  
But happiest he who sanctifies expense  
By present pay; who subjects not his fame  
To tradesmen's varlets, nor bequeaths his name,  
His honour'd name, to deck the vulgar page  
Of base mechanic, sordid, unsincere!  
There haply, while thy Muse sublimely soars  
Beyond this earthly sphere, in heaven's abodes,  
And dreams of nectar and ambrosial sweets,  
Thy growing debt steals unregarded o'er  
The punctual record; till nor Phoebus self,  
Nor sage Minerva's art, can aught avail  
To soothe the ruthless dun's detested rage:  
Frantic and fell, with many a curse profane  
He loads the gentle Muse, then hurls thee down  
To want, remorse, captivity, and shame.  
Each public place, the glittering haunts of men,  
With horror fly. Why loiter near thy bane?-  
Why fondly linger on a hostile shore,  
Disarm'd, defenceless? why require to tread  
The precipice? or why, alas! to breathe  
A moment's space, where every breeze is death,  
Death to thy future peace? Away, collect  
Thy dissipated mind; contract thy train  
Of wild ideas, o'er the flowery fields  
Of show diffused, and speed to safer climes.  
Economy presents her glass, accept  
The faithful mirror, powerful to disclose  
A thousand forms, unseen by careless eyes,  
That plot thy fate. Temptation in a robe  
Of Tyrian dye, with every sweet perfumed,  
Besets thy sense; Extortion follows close  
Her wanton step, and Ruin brings the rear.

These and the rest shall her mysterious glass  
Embody to thy view; like Venus kind,  
When to her labouring son, the vengeful powers  
That urged the fall of Ilium, she displayed:  
He, not imprudent, at the sight declined  
The unequal conflict, and decreed to raise  
The Trojan welfare on some happier shore.  
For here to drain thy swelling purse await  
A thousand arts, a thousand frauds attend:  
'The cloud-wrought canes, the gorgeous snuff-boxes,  
The twinkling jewels, and the gold etui,  
With all its bright inhabitants, shall waste  
Its melting stores, and in the dreary void  
Leave not a doit behind.' Ere yet, exhaust,  
Its flimsy folds offend thy pensive eye,  
Away! embosom'd deep in distant shades,  
Nor seen nor seeing, thou mayst vent thy scorn  
Of lace, embroidery, purple, gems, and gold!  
There of the faded fop and essenced beau,  
Ferocious, with a Stoic's frown disclose  
Thy manly scorn, averse to tinsel pomp;  
And fluent thine harangue. But can thy soul  
Deny thy limbs the radiant grace of dress,  
Where dress is merit? where thy graver friend  
Shall wish thee burnish'd? where the sprightly fair  
Demand embellishment? even Delia's eye,  
As in a garden, roves, of hues alone  
Inquirent, curious? Fly the cursed domain;  
These are the realms of luxury and show,  
No classic soil; away! the bloomy spring  
Attracts thee hence; the warning autumn warns;  
Fly to thy native shades, and dread, even there,  
Lest busy fancy tempt thy narrow state  
Beyond its bounds. Observe Florelia's mien:  
Why treads my friend with melancholy step  
That beauteous lawn? why, pensive, strays his eye  
O'er statues, grottos, urns, by critic art  
Proportion'd fair? or from his lofty dome,  
Bright glittering through the grove, returns his eye  
Unpleas'd, disconsolate? And is it love,  
Disastrous love, that robs the finish'd scenes  
Of all their beauty, centering all in her

His soul adores? or from a blacker cause  
Springs this remorseful gloom? Is conscious guilt  
The latent source of more than love's despair?  
It cannot be within that polish'd breast,  
Where science dwells, that guilt should harbour there.  
No; 'tis the sad survey of present want  
And past profusion! lost to him the sweets  
Of yon pavilion, fraught with every charm  
For other eyes; or if remaining, proofs  
Of criminal expense! Sweet interchange  
Of river, valley, mountain, woods, and plains!  
How gladsome once he ranged your native turf,  
Your simple scenes, how raptur'd! ere Expense  
Had lavish'd thousand ornaments, and taught  
Convenience to perplex him, Art to pall,  
Pomp to deject, and Beauty to displease!  
Oh! for a soul to all the glare of wealth,  
To Fortune's wide exhaustless treasury,  
Nobly superior! but let Caution guide  
The coy disposal of the wealth we scorn,  
And Prudence be our Almoner. Alas!  
The pilgrim wandering o'er some distant clime,  
Sworn foe of avarice! nor disdains to learn  
Its coin's imputed worth, the destined means  
To smooth his passage to the favour'd shrine.  
Ah! let not us, who tread this stranger world,  
Let none who sojourn on the realms of life,  
Forget the land is mercenary, nor waste  
His fare, ere landed on no venal shore.  
Let never bard consult Palladio's rules;  
Let never bard, O Burlington! survey  
Thy learned art, in Chiswick's dome display'd;  
Dangerous incentive! nor with lingering eye  
Survey the window Venice calls her own.  
Better for him, with no ingrateful Muse,  
To sing a requiem to that gentle soul  
Who plann'd the skylight, which to lavish bards  
Conveys alone the pure ethereal ray;  
For garrets him, and squalid walls, await,  
Unless, presageful, from this friendly strain  
He glean advice, and shun the scribbler's doom.

Part third.

Yet once again, and to thy doubtful fate  
The trembling Muse consigns thee. Ere contempt,  
Or Want's empoison'd arrow, ridicule,  
Transfix thy weak unguarded breast, behold!  
The poet's roofs, the careless poet's, his  
Who scorns advice, shall close my serious lay.  
When Gulliver, now great, now little deem'd,  
The plaything of Comparison, arrived  
Where learned bosoms their aerial schemes  
Projected, studious of the public weal;  
'Mid these, one subtler artist he descried,  
Who cherish'd in his dusty tenement  
The spider's web, injurious, to supplant  
Fair Albion's fleeces! Never, never may  
Our monarchs on such fatal purpose smile,  
And irritate Minerva's beggar'd sons,  
The Melksham weavers! Here in every nook  
Their wefts they spun; here revell'd uncontroll'd,  
And, like the flags from Westminster's high roof  
Dependent, here their fluttering textures waved.  
Such, so adorn'd the cell I mean to sing!  
Cell ever squalid! where the sneerful maid  
Will not fatigue her hand! broom never comes,  
That comes to all! o'er whose quiescent walls  
Arachne's unmolested care has drawn  
Curtains subsusk, and save the expense of art.  
Survey those walls, in fady texture clad,  
Where wandering snails in many a slimy path,  
Free, unrestrain'd, their various journeys crawl;  
Peregrinations strange, and labyrinths  
Confused, inextricable! such the clue  
Of Cretan Ariadne ne'er explain'd!  
Hooks! angles! crooks! and involutions wild!  
Meantime, thus silver'd with meanders gay,  
In mimic pride the snail-wrought tissue shines,  
Perchance of tabby, or of aretine,  
Not ill expressive; such the power of snails!  
Behold his chair, whose fractured seat infirm  
An aged cushion hides! replete with dust

The foliaged velvet; pleasing to the eye  
Of great Eliza's reign, but now the snare  
Of weary guest that on the specious bed  
Sits down confiding. Ah! disastrous wight!  
In evil hour and rashly dost thou trust  
The fraudulent couch! for though in velvet cased,  
Thy fated thigh shall kiss the dusty floor.  
The traveller thus, that o'er Hibernian plains  
Hath shaped his way, on beds profuse of flowers,  
Cowslip, or primrose, or the circular eye  
Of daisy fair, decrees to bask supine.  
And see! delighted, down he drops, secure  
Of sweet refreshment, ease without annoy,  
Or luscious noonday nap. Ah! much deceived,  
Much suffering pilgrim! thou nor noonday nap  
Nor sweet repose shalt find; the false morass  
In quivering undulations yields beneath  
Thy burden, in the miry gulf enclosed!  
And who would trust appearance? cast thine eye  
Where 'mid machines of heterogeneous form  
His coat depends; alas! his only coat,  
Eldest of things! and napless as an heath  
Of small extent by fleecy myriads grazed.  
Not different have I seen in dreary vault  
Display'd a coffin; on each sable side  
The texture unmolested seems entire;  
Fraudful, when touch'd it glides to dust away,  
And leaves the wondering swain to gape, to stare,  
And with expressive shrug and piteous sigh,  
Declare the fatal force of rolling years,  
Or dire extent of frail mortality.  
This aged vesture, scorn of gazing beaux,  
And formal cits (themselves too haply scorn'd),  
Both on its sleeve, and on its skirt, retains  
Full many a pin wide-sparkling: for, if e'er  
Their well-known crest met his delighted eye,  
Though wrapt in thought, commercing with the sky,  
He, gently stooping, scorn'd not to upraise,  
And on each sleeve, as conscious of their use,  
Indenting fix them; nor, when arm'd with these,  
The cure of rents and separations dire,  
And chasms enormous, did he view, dismay'd,



Hedge, bramble, thicket, bush, portending fate  
To breeches, coat, and hose! had any wight  
Of vulgar skill the tender texture own'd;  
But gave his mind to form a sonnet quaint  
Of Silvia's shoe-string, or of Chloe's fan,  
Or sweetly-fashion'd tip of Celia's ear.  
Alas! by frequent use decays the force  
Of mortal art! the refractory robe  
Eludes the tailor's art, eludes his own;  
How potent once, in union quaint conjoin'd!  
See, near his bed (his bed, too falsely call'd  
The place of rest, while it a bard sustains;  
Pale, meagre, muse-rid wight! who reads in vain  
Narcotic volumes o'er) his candlestick,  
Radiant machine! when from the plastic hand  
Of Mulciber, the Mayor of Birmingham,  
The engine issued; now, alas! disguised  
By many an unctuous tide, that wandering down  
Its sides congeal; what he, perhaps, essays,  
With humour forced, and ill-dissembled smile,  
Idly to liken to the poplar's trunk,  
When o'er its bark the lucid amber, wound  
In many a pleasing fold, incrusts the tree;  
Or suits him more the winter's candied thorn,  
When from each branch, annealed, the works of frost  
Pervasive, radiant icicles depend?  
How shall I sing the various ills that wait  
The careful sonneteer? or who can paint  
The shifts enormous, that in vain he forms  
To patch his paneless window; to cement  
His batter'd tea-pot, ill-retentive vase,  
To war with ruin? anxious to conceal  
Want's fell appearance, of the real ill  
Nor foe, nor fearful. Ruin unforeseen  
Invades his chattels; Ruin will invade,  
Will claim his whole invention to repair,  
Nor of the gift, for tuneful ends design'd,  
Allow one part to decorate his song;  
While Ridicule, with ever-pointing hand,  
Conscious of every shift, of every shift  
Indicative, his inmost plot betrays,  
Points to the nook, which he his Study calls,

Pompous and vain! for thus he might esteem  
His chest a wardrobe; purse, a treasury;  
And shows, to crown her full display, himself;  
One whom the powers above, in place of health  
And wonted vigour, of paternal cot,  
Or little farm; of bag, or scrip, or staff,  
Cup, dish, spoon, plate, or worldly utensil,  
A poet framed, yet framed not to repine,  
And wish the cobbler's loftiest site his own;  
Nor, partial as they seem, upbraid the Fates,  
Who to the humbler mechanism join'd  
Goods so superior, such exalted bliss!  
See with what seeming ease, what labour'd peace,  
He, hapless hypocrite! refines his nail,  
His chief amusement! then how feign'd, how forced,  
That care-defying sonnet, which implies  
His debts discharged, and he of half-a-crown  
In full possession, uncontested right  
And property! Yet, ah! whoe'er this wight  
Admiring view, if such there be, distrust  
The vain pretence, the smiles that harbour grief,  
As lurks the serpent deep in flowers enwreath'd.  
Forewarn'd, be frugal, or with prudent rage  
Thy pen demolish; choose the trustier flail,  
And bless those labours which the choice inspired.  
But if thou view'st a vulgar mind, a wight  
Of common sense, who seeks no brighter name,  
Him envy, him admire; him, from thy breast,  
Prescient of future dignities, salute  
Sheriff, or mayor, in comfortable furs  
Enwrapt, secure; nor yet the laureat's crown  
In thought exclude him! he perchance shall rise  
To nobler heights than foresight can decree.  
When fired with wrath for his intrigues display'd  
In many an idle song, Saturnian Jove  
Vow'd sure destruction to the tuneful race;  
Appeased by suppliant Phoebus; 'Bards,' he said,  
'Henceforth of plenty, wealth and pomp debarr'd,  
But fed by frugal cares, might wear the bay  
Secure of thunder.'-Low the Delian bow'd,  
Nor at the invidious favour dared repine.



# Elegy I. He Arrives At His Retirement In The Country

He Arrives at His Retirement in the Country, and Takes Occasion To Expatiate in Praise of Simplicity.

To a Friend

For rural virtues, and for native skies,  
I bade Augusta's venal sons farewell;  
Now 'mid the trees I see my smoke arise,  
Now hear the fountains bubbling round my cell.

O may that Genius, which secures my rest,  
Preserve this villa for a friend that's dear!  
Ne'er may my vintage glad the sordid breast,  
Ne'er tinge the lip that dares be insincere!

Far from these paths, ye faithless Friends, depart!  
Fly my plain board, abhor my hostile name!  
Hence the faint verse that flows not from the heart,  
But mourns, in labour'd strains, the price of fame!

O loved Simplicity! be thine the prize!  
Assiduous Art correct her page in vain!  
His be the palm, who, guiltless of disguise,  
Contemns the power the dull resource to feign!

Still may the mourner, lavish of his tears  
For lucre's venal need, invite my scorn!  
Still may the bard, dissembling doubts and fears,  
For praise, for flattery sighing, sigh forlorn!

Soft as the line of lovesick Hammond flows,  
'Twas his fond heart effused the melting theme;  
Ah! never could Aonia's hill disclose  
So fair a fountain, or so loved a stream.

Ye loveless Bards! intent with artful pains  
To form a sigh, or to contrive a tear!  
Forego your Pindus, and on - plains

Survey Camilla's charms, and grow sincere.

But thou, my Friend! while in thy youthful soul  
Love's gentle tyrant seats his awful throne,  
Write from thy bosom-let not art control  
The ready pen, that makes his edicts known.

Pleasing, when youth is long expired, to trace  
The forms our pencil or our pen design'd!  
'Such was our youthful air, and shape, and face!  
Such the soft image of our youthful mind!'

Soft, whilst we sleep beneath the rural bowers,  
The Loves and Graces steal unseen away;  
And where the turf diffused its pomp of flowers,  
We wake to wintry scenes of chill decay!

Curse the sad fortune that detains thy fair;  
Praise the soft hours that gave thee to her arms;  
Paint thy proud scorn of every vulgar care,  
When hope exalts thee, or when doubt alarms.

Where with Oenone thou hast worn the day,  
Near fount or stream, in meditation, rove;  
If in the grove Oenone loved to stray,  
The faithful Muse shall meet thee in the grove.

William Shenstone

## Elegy Ii. On Posthumous Reputation - To A Friend

O grief of griefs! that Envy's frantic ire  
Should rob the living virtue of its praise;  
O foolish Muses! that with zeal aspire  
To deck the cold insensate shrine with bays.

When the free spirit quits her humble frame,  
To tread the skies with radiant garlands crown'd;  
Say, will she hear the distant voice of Fame?  
Or, hearing, fancy sweetness in the sound?

Perhaps even Genius pours a slighted lay;  
Perhaps even Friendship sheds a fruitless tear;  
Even Lyttleton but vainly trims the bay,  
And fondly graces Hammond's mournful bier.

Though weeping virgins haunt his favour'd urn,  
Renew their chaplets, and repeat their sighs;  
Though near his tomb Sabã|an odours burn,  
The loit'ring fragrance will it reach the skies?

No; should his Delia votive wreaths prepare,  
Delia might place the votive wreaths in vain:  
Yet the dear hope of Delia's future care  
Once crown'd his pleasures, and dispell'd his pain.

Yes-the fair prospect of surviving praise  
Can every sense of present joys excel;  
For this, great Hadrian chose laborious days;  
Through this, expiring, bade a gay farewell.

Shall then our youths, who Fame's bright fabric raise,  
To life's precarious date confine their care?  
O teach them you to spread the sacred base,  
To plan a work through latest ages fair!

Is it small transport, as with curious eye  
You trace the story of each Attic sage,  
To think your blooming praise shall time defy?  
Shall waft, like odours, through the pleasing page?

To mark the day when, through the bulky tome,  
Around your name the varying style refines?  
And readers call their lost attention home,  
Led by that index where true genius shines?

Ah! let not Britons doubt their social aim,  
Whose ardent bosoms catch this ancient fire;  
Cold interest melts before the vivid flame,  
And patriot ardours but with life expire.

William Shenstone

# Elegy Iii. On The Untimely Death Of A Certain Learned Acquaintance

If proud Pygmalion quit his cumbrous frame,  
Funereal pomp the scanty tear supplies;  
Whilst heralds loud, with venal voice, proclaim,  
Lo! here the brave and the puissant lies.

When humbler Alcon leaves his drooping friends,  
Pageant nor plume distinguish Alcon's bier;  
The faithful Muse with votive song attends,  
And blots the mournful numbers with a tear.

He little knew the sly penurious art;  
That odious art which Fortune's favourites know:  
Form'd to bestow, he felt the warmest heart,  
But envious Fate forbade him to bestow.

He little knew to ward the secret wound;  
He little knew that mortals could ensnare:  
Virtue he knew; the noblest joy he found  
To sing her glories, and to paint her fair.

Ill was he skill'd to guide his wandering sheep;  
And unforeseen disaster thinn'd his fold;  
Yet at another's loss the swain would weep;  
And, for his friend, his very crook was sold.

Ye sons of Wealth! protect the Muses' train;  
From winds protect them, and with food supply:  
Ah! helpless they, to ward the threaten'd pain,  
The meagre famine, and the wintry sky!

He loved a nymph; amidst his slender store  
He dared to love, and Cynthia was his theme:  
He breathed his plaints along the rocky shore;  
They only echo'd o'er the winding stream!

His nymph was fair! the sweetest bud that blows  
Revives less lovely from the recent shower;



So Philomel enamour'd eyes the rose  
Sweet bird! enamour'd of the sweetest flower.

He loved the Muse; she taught him to complain;  
He saw his timorous loves on her depend:  
He loved the Muse, although she taught in vain;  
He loved the Muse, for she was Virtue's friend.

She guides the foot that treads on Parian floors;  
She wins the ear when formal pleas are vain;  
She tempts Patricians from the fatal doors  
Of Vice's brothel, forth to Virtue's fane.

He wish'd for wealth, for much he wish'd to give;  
He grieved that virtue might not wealth obtain:  
Piteous of woes, and hopeless to relieve,  
The pensive prospect sadden'd all his strain.

I saw him faint! I saw him sink to rest!  
Like one ordain'd to swell the vulgar throng;  
As though the Virtues had not warm'd his breast,  
As though the Muses not inspired his tongue.

I saw his bier ignobly cross the plain;  
Saw peasant hands the pious rite supply:  
The generous rustics mourn'd the friendly swain,  
But Power and Wealth's unvarying cheek was dry!

Such Alcon fell; in meagre want forlorn!  
Where were ye then, ye powerful Patrons, where?  
Would ye the purple should your limbs adorn?  
Go wash the conscious blemish with a tear.

William Shenstone

## Elegy Iv. Ophelia's Urn. To Mr. Graves

Through the dim veil of evening's dusky shade,  
Near some lone fane, or yew's funereal green,  
What dreary forms has magic Fear survey'd!  
What shrouded spectres Superstition seen!

But you, secure, shall pour your sad complaint,  
Nor dread the meagre phantom's wan array;  
What none but Fear's officious hand can paint,  
What none, but Superstition's eye, survey.

The glimmering twilight and the doubtful dawn  
Shall see your step to these sad scenes return:  
Constant, as crystal dew's impearl the lawn,  
Shall Strephon's tear bedew Ophelia's urn.

Sure nought unhallow'd shall presume to stray  
Where sleep the relics of that virtuous maid;  
Nor aught unlovely bend its devious way,  
Where soft Ophelia's dear remains are laid.

Haply thy Muse, as with unceasing sighs  
She keeps late vigils, on her urn reclined,  
May see light groups of pleasing visions rise,  
And phantoms glide, but of celestial kind.

Then Fame, her clarion pendent at her side,  
Shall seek forgiveness of Ophelia's shade;  
'Why has such worth, without distinction, died?  
Why, like the desert's lily, bloom'd to fade?'

Then young Simplicity, averse to feign,  
Shall, unmolested, breathe her softest sigh,  
And Candour with unwonted warmth complain,  
And Innocence indulge a wailful cry.

Then Elegance, with coy judicious hand,  
Shall cull fresh flowerets for Ophelia's tomb;  
And Beauty chide the Fate's severe command,  
That show'd the frailty of so fair a bloom!

And Fancy then, with wild ungovern'd woe,  
Shall her loved pupil's native taste explain;  
For mournful sable all her hues forego,  
And ask sweet solace of the Muse in vain!

Ah! gentle Forms! expect no fond relief;  
Too much the sacred Nine their loss deplore:  
Well may ye grieve, nor find an end of grief-  
Your best, your brightest favourite is no more.

William Shenstone

## Elegy Ix. He Describes His Disinterestedness To A Friend

I ne'er must tinge my lip with Celtic wines;  
The pomp of India must I ne'er display;  
Nor boast the produce of Peruvian mines;  
Nor with Italian sounds deceive the day.

Down yonder brook my crystal beverage flows;  
My grateful sheep their annual fleeces bring;  
Fair in my garden buds the damask rose,  
And from my grove I hear the throstle sing.

My fellow swains! avert your dazzled eyes;  
In vain allured by glittering spoils they rove;  
The Fates ne'er meant them for the shepherd's prize,  
Yet gave them ample recompence in love.

They gave you vigour from your parents' veins;  
They gave you toils, but toils your sinews brace;  
They gave you nymphs, that own their amorous pains;  
And shades, the refuge of the gentle race.

To carve your loves, to paint your mutual flames,  
See, polish'd fair, the beech's friendly rind!  
To sing soft carols to your lovely dames,  
See vocal grots and echoing vales assign'd!

Wouldst thou, my Strephon, Love's delighted slave!  
Though sure the wreaths of chivalry to share,  
Forego the riband thy Matilda gave,  
And, giving, bade thee in remembrance wear?

Ill fare my peace, but every idle toy,  
If to my mind my Delia's form it brings,  
Has truer worth, imparts sincerer joy,  
Than all that bears the radiant stamp of kings.

O my soul weeps, my breast with anguish bleeds,  
When Love deplores the tyrant power of Gain!

Disdaining riches as the futile weeds,  
I rise superior, and the rich disdain.

Oft from the stream, slow-wandering down the glade,  
Pensive I hear the nuptial peal rebound:  
'Some miser weds,' I cry, 'the captive maid,  
And some fond lover sickens at the sound.'

Not Somerville, the Muse's friend of old,  
Though now exalted to yon ambient sky,  
So shunn'd a soul distain'd with earth and gold,  
So loved the pure, the generous breast, as I.

Scorn'd be the wretch that quits his genial bowl,  
His loves, his friendships, even his self resigns;  
Perverts the sacred instinct of his soul,  
And to a ducat's dirty sphere confines.

But come, my Friend! with taste, with science blest,  
Ere age impair me, and ere gold allure:  
Restore thy dear idea to my breast,  
The rich deposit shall the shrine secure.

Let others toil to gain the sordid ore,  
The charms of independence let us sing:  
Bless'd with thy friendship, can I wish for more?  
I'll spurn the boasted wealth of Lydia's king.

William Shenstone

# Elegy V. He Compares The Turbulence Of Love With The Tranquillity Of Friendship

From Love, from angry Love's inclement reign  
I pass awhile to Friendship's equal skies;  
Thou, generous Maid! reliev'st my partial pain,  
And cheer'st the victim of another's eyes.

'Tis thou, Melissa, thou deserv'st my care;  
How can my will and reason disagree?  
How can my passion live beneath despair?  
How can my bosom sigh for aught but thee?

Ah! dear Melissa! pleased with thee to rove,  
My soul has yet survived its dreariest time  
Ill can I bear the various clime of Love!  
Love is a pleasing, but a various clime.

So smiles immortal Maro's favourite shore,  
Parthenope, with every verdure crown'd;  
When straight Vesuvio's horrid cauldrons roar,  
And the dry vapour blasts the regions round.

Oh, blissful regions, oh, unrivall'd plains,  
When Maro to these fragrant haunts retired!  
Oh, fatal realms, and oh, accursed domains,  
When Pliny, 'mid sulphureous clouds, expired!

So smiles the surface of the treacherous main,  
As o'er its waves the peaceful halcyons play;  
When soon rude winds their wonted rule regain,  
And sky and ocean mingle in the fray.

But let or air contend, or ocean rave,  
Even Hope subside, amid the billows tost;  
Hope, still emergent, still contemns the wave,  
And not a feature's wonted smile is lost.

William Shenstone

## Elegy Vi. To A Lady, On The Language Of Birds

Come then, Dione, let us range the grove,  
The science of the feather'd choirs explore  
Hear linnets argue, larks descant of love,  
And blame the gloom of solitude, no more.

My doubt subsides-'tis no Italian song,  
Nor senseless ditty, cheers the vernal tree:  
Ah! who that hears Dione's tuneful tongue,  
Shall doubt that music may with sense agree?

And come, my Muse! that lov'st the sylvan shade,  
Evolve the mazes, and the mist dispel;  
Translate the song; convince my doubting maid  
No solemn dervise can explain so well-

Pensive beneath the twilight shades I sate,  
The slave of hopeless vows and cold disdain!  
When Philomel address'd his mournful mate,  
And thus I construed the mellifluent strain.

'Sing on, my bird!-the liquid notes prolong;  
At every note a lover sheds his tear;  
Sing on, my bird!-'tis Damon hears thy song,  
Nor doubt to gain applause, when lovers hear.

'He the sad source of our complaining knows!  
A foe to Tereus, and to lawless love!  
He mourns the story of our ancient woes;  
Ah! could our music his complaints remove!

'Yon plains are govern'd by a peerless maid;  
And see! pale Cynthia mounts the vaulted sky;  
A train of lovers court the chequer'd shade:  
Sing on, my bird! and hear thy mate's reply.

'Erewhile no shepherd to these woods retired,  
No lover bless'd the glow-worm's pallid ray;  
But ill-starr'd birds, that, listening, not admired;  
Or, listening, envied our superior lay.

'Cheer'd by the sun, the vassals of his power,  
Let such by day unite their jarring strains!  
But let us choose the calm; the silent hour,  
Nor want fit audience while Dione reigns.'

William Shenstone



## Elegy VII. He Describes His Vision To An Acquaintance

Caetera per terras omnes animalia, &c. ~ Virg.

Imitation.

All animals beside, o'er all the earth, &c.

On distant heaths, beneath autumnal skies,  
Pensive I saw the circling shade descend;  
Weary and faint I heard the storm arise,  
While the sun vanish'd, like a faithless friend.

No kind companion led my steps aright;  
No friendly planet lent its glimmering ray;  
Even the lone cot refused its wonted light,  
Where Toil in peaceful slumber closed the day.

Then the dull bell had given a pleasing sound;  
The village cur 'twere transport then to hear;  
In dreadful silence all was hush'd around,  
While the rude storm alone distress'd mine ear.

As led by Orwell's winding banks I stray'd,  
Where towering Wolsey breathed his native air,  
A sudden lustre chased the flitting shade,  
The sounding winds were hush'd, and all was fair.

Instant a grateful form appear'd confest;  
White were his locks, with awful scarlet crown'd,  
And livelier far than Tyrian seem'd his vest,  
That with the glowing purple tinged the ground.

'Stranger,' he said, 'amid this pealing rain,  
Benighted, lonesome, whither wouldst thou stray?  
Does wealth, or power, thy weary step constrain?  
Reveal thy wish, and let me point the way.

'For know, I trod the trophied paths of power,  
Felt every joy that fair Ambition brings,

And left the lonely roof of yonder bower  
To stand beneath the canopies of kings.

'I bade low hinds the towering ardour share,  
Nor meanly rose to bless myself alone;  
I snatch'd the shepherd from his fleecy care,  
And bade his wholesome dictate guard the throne.

'Low at my feet the suppliant peer I saw;  
I saw proud empires my decision wait;  
My will was duty, and my word was law,  
My smile was transport, and my frown was fate.'

Ah me! said I, nor power I seek, nor gain;  
Nor urged by hope of fame these toils endure;  
A simple youth, that feels a lover's pain,  
And from his friend's condolence hopes a cure.

He, the dear youth! to whose abodes I roam,  
Nor can mine honours nor my fields extend;  
Yet for his sake I leave my distant home,  
Which oaks embosom, and which hills defend.

Beneath that home I scorn the wintry wind;  
The Spring, to shade me, robes her fairest tree!  
And if a friend my grass-grown threshold find,  
O how my lonely cot resounds with glee!

Yet though averse to gold in heaps amass'd,  
I wish to bless, I languish to bestow;  
And though no friend to Fame's obstreperous blast,  
Still to her dulcet murmurs not a foe.

Too proud with servile tone to deign address;  
Too mean to think that honours are my due;  
Yet should some patron yield my stores to bless,  
I sure should deem my boundless thanks were few.

But tell me, thou! that like a meteor's fire  
Shott'st blazing forth, disdainful dull degrees,  
Should I to wealth, to fame, to power aspire,  
Must I not pass more rugged paths than these?

Must I not groan beneath a guilty load-  
Praise him I scorn, and him I love betray?  
Does not felonious Envy bar the road?  
Or Falsehood's treacherous foot beset the way?

Say, should I pass through Favour's crowded gate,  
Must not fair Truth inglorious wait behind?  
Whilst I approach the glittering scenes of state,  
My best companion no admittance find?

Nursed in the shades by Freedom's lenient care,  
Shall I the rigid sway of Fortune own?  
Taught by the voice of pious Truth, prepare  
To spurn an altar, and adore a throne?

And when proud Fortune's ebbing tide recedes,  
And when it leaves me no unshaken friend,  
Shall I not weep that e'er I left the meads,  
Which oaks embosom, and which hills defend?

Oh! if these ills the price of power advance,  
Check not my speed where social joys invite!  
The troubled vision cast a mournful glance,  
And, sighing, vanish'd in the shades of night.

William Shenstone

## Elegy VIII. He Describes His Early Love Of Poetry, And Its Consequences

To Mr. Graves, 1745.

Ah me! what envious magic thins my fold?  
What mutter'd spell retards their late increase?  
Such lessening fleeces must the swain behold,  
That e'er with Doric pipe essays to please.

I saw my friends in evening circles meet;  
I took my vocal reed, and tuned my lay;  
I heard them say my vocal reed was sweet:  
Ah, fool! to credit what I heard them say.

Ill-fated Bard! that seeks his skill to show,  
Then courts the judgment of a friendly ear;  
Not the poor veteran, that permits his foe  
To guide his doubtful step, has more to fear.

Nor could my Graves mistake the critic's laws,  
Till pious Friendship mark'd the pleasing way:  
Welcome such error! ever bless'd the cause!  
E'en though it led me boundless leagues astray.

Couldst thou reprove me, when I nursed the flame,  
On listening Cherwell's osier banks reclined?  
While, foe to Fortune, unseduced by Fame,  
I soothed the bias of a careless mind?

Youth's gentle kindred, Health and Love, were met;  
What though in Alma's guardian arms I play'd?  
How shall the Muse those vacant hours forget?  
Or deem that bliss by solid cares repaid?

Thou know'st how transport thrills the tender breast  
Where Love and Fancy fix their opening reign;  
How Nature shines, in livelier colours drest,  
To bless their union, and to grace their train.

So first when Phœbus met the Cyprian queen,  
And favour'd Rhodes beheld their passion crown'd,  
Unusual flowers enrich'd the painted green,  
And swift spontaneous roses blush'd around.

Now sadly lorn, from Twitnam's widow'd bower  
The drooping Muses take their casual way,  
And where they stop, a flood of tears they pour;  
And where they weep, no more the fields are gay.

Where is the dappled pink, the sprightly rose?  
The cowslip's golden cup no more I see:  
Dark and discolour'd every flower that blows,  
To form the garland, Elegy! for thee.

Enough of tears has wept the virtuous dead;  
Ah! might we now the pious rage control!  
Hush'd be my grief ere every smile be fled,  
Ere the deep-swelling sigh subvert the soul!

If near some trophy spring a stripling bay,  
Pleased we behold the graceful umbrage rise;  
But soon too deep it works its baneful way,  
And low on earth the prostrate ruin lies.

William Shenstone

## Elegy X. To Fortune, Suggesting His Motive For Repining At Her Dispensations

Ask not the cause why this rebellious tongue  
Loads with fresh curses thy detested sway!  
Ask not, thus branded in my softest song,  
Why stands the flatter'd name, which all obey!

'Tis not, that in my shed I lurk forlorn,  
Nor see my roof on Parian columns rise;  
That, on this breast, no mimic star is borne,  
Revered, ah! more than those that light the skies.

'Tis not, that on the turf supinely laid,  
I sing or pipe but to the flocks that graze;  
And, all inglorious, in the lonesome shade  
My finger stiffens, and my voice decays.

Not, that my fancy mourns thy stern command,  
When many an embryo dome is lost in air;  
While guardian Prudence checks my eager hand,  
And, ere the turf is broken, cries, 'Forbear:

'Forbear, vain Youth! be cautious, weigh thy gold,  
Nor let yon rising column more aspire:  
Ah! better dwell in ruins, than behold  
Thy fortunes mouldering, and thy domes entire.

'Honorio built, but dared my laws defy;  
He planted, scornful of my sage commands;  
The peach's vernal bud regaled his eye,  
The fruitage ripen'd for more frugal hands.'

See the small stream, that pours its murmuring tide  
O'er some rough rock, that would its wealth display;  
Displays it aught but penury and pride?  
Ah! construe wisely what such murmurs say.

How would some flood, with ampler treasures blest,  
Disdainful view the scantling drops distil!

How must Velino shake his reedy crest!  
How every cygnet mock the boastive rill!

Fortune! I yield; and see, I give the sign;  
At noon the poor mechanic wanders home,  
Collects the square, the level, and the line,  
And, with retorted eye, forsakes the dome.

Yes, I can patient view the shadeless plains;  
Can unrepining leave the rising wall;  
Check the fond love of art that fired my veins,  
And my warm hopes, in full pursuit, recall.

Descend, ye Storms! destroy my rising pile;  
Loosed be the Whirlwind's unremitting sway;  
Contented I, although the gazer smile  
To see it scarce survive a winter's day.

Let some dull dotard bask in thy gay shrine,  
As in the sun regales his wanton herd;  
Guiltless of envy, why should I repine  
That his rude voice, his grating reed's, preferr'd?

Let him exult, with boundless wealth supplied,  
Mine and the swain's reluctant homage share;  
But, ah! his tawdry shepherdess's pride,  
Gods! must my Delia, must my Delia, bear?

Must Delia's softness, elegance, and ease,  
Submit to Marian's dress? to Marian's gold?  
Must Marian's robe from distant India please?  
The simple fleece my Delia's limbs enfold?

'Yet sure on Delia seems the russet fair;  
Ye glittering daughters of Disguise, adieu!  
So talk the wise, who judge of shape and air,  
But will the rural thane decide so true?

Ah! what is native worth esteem'd of clowns?  
'Tis thy false glare, O Fortune! thine they see:  
'Tis for my Delia's sake I dread thy frowns,  
And my last gasp shall curses breathe on thee.

William Shenstone



# Elegy Xi. He Complains How Soon The Pleasing Novelty Of Life Is Over

To Mr. Jago.

Ah me, my Friend! it will not, will not last,  
This fairy scene, that cheats our youthful eyes;  
The charm dissolves; th' aerial music's past;  
The banquet ceases, and the vision flies.

Where are the splendid forms, the rich perfumes?  
Where the gay tapers, where the spacious dome?  
Vanish'd the costly pearls, the crimson plumes,  
And we, delightless, left to wander home!

Vain now are books, the sage's wisdom vain!  
What has the world to bribe our steps astray?  
Ere Reason learns by studied laws to reign,  
The weaken'd passions, self-subdued, obey.

Scarce has the sun seven annual courses roll'd,  
Scarce shown the whole that Fortune can supply,  
Since, not the miser so caress'd his gold,  
As I, for what it gave, was heard to sigh.

On the world's stage I wish'd some sprightly part,  
To deck my native fleece with tawdry lace!  
'Twas life, 'twas taste, and-oh! my foolish heart!  
Substantial joy was fix'd in power and place.

And you, ye works of Art! allured mine eye,  
The breathing picture, and the living stone:  
'Though gold, though splendour, Heaven and Fate deny,  
Yet might I call one Titian stroke my own!'

Smit with the charms of Fame, whose lovely spoil,  
The wreath, the garland, fire the poet's pride,  
I trimm'd my lamp, consumed the midnight oil-  
But soon the paths of health and fame divide!

Oft, too, I pray'd; 'twas Nature form'd the prayer,  
To grace my native scenes, my rural home;  
To see my trees express their planter's care,  
And gay, on Attic models, raise my dome.

But now 'tis o'er, the dear delusion's o'er!  
A stagnant breezeless air becalms my soul;  
A fond aspiring candidate no more,  
I scorn the palm before I reach the goal.

O Youth! enchanting stage, profusely bless'd!  
Bliss even obtrusive courts the frolic mind;  
Of health neglectful, yet by health caress'd,  
Careless of favour, yet secure to find.

Then glows the breast, as opening roses fair;  
More free, more vivid, than the linnet's wing;  
Honest as light, transparent e'en as air,  
Tender as buds, and lavish as the Spring.

Not all the force of manhood's active might,  
Not all the craft to subtle age assign'd,  
Not Science shall extort that dear delight,  
Which gay Delusion gave the tender mind.

Adieu, soft raptures! transports void of care!  
Parent of raptures, dear Deceit, adieu!  
And you, her daughters, pining with despair,  
Why, why so soon her fleeting steps pursue?

Tedious again to curse the drizzling day!  
Again to trace the wintry tracks of snow!  
Or, soothed by vernal airs, again survey  
The self-same hawthorns bud, and cowslips blow!

O Life! how soon of every bliss forlorn!  
We start false joys, and urge the devious race;  
A tender prey; that cheers our youthful morn,  
Then sinks untimely, and defrauds the chase.



## Elegy Xii. His Recantation

No more the Muse obtrudes her thin disguise,  
No more with awkward fallacy complains  
How every fervour from my bosom flies,  
And Reason in her lonesome palace reigns.

Ere the chill winter of our days arrive,  
No more she paints the breast from passion free;  
I feel, I feel one loitering wish survive-  
Ah! need I, Florio, name that wish to thee?

The star of Venus ushers in the day,  
The first, the loveliest of the train that shine!  
The star of Venus lends her brightest ray,  
When other stars their friendly beams resign.

Still in my breast one soft desire remains,  
Pure as that star, from guilt, from interest, free  
Has gentle Delia tripp'd across the plains,  
And need I, Florio, name that wish to thee?

While, cloy'd to find the scenes of life the same,  
I tune with careless hand my languid lays,  
Some secret impulse wakes my former flame,  
And fires my strain with hopes of brighter days.

I slept not long beneath yon rural bowers,  
And, lo! my crook with flowers adorn'd I see:  
Has gentle Delia bound my crook with flowers,  
And need I, Florio, name my hopes to thee?

William Shenstone

## Elegy Xiii. To A Friend, On Some Slight Occasion Estranged From Him

Health to my friend, and many a cheerful day!  
Around his seat may peaceful shades abide!  
Smooth flow the minutes, fraught with smiles, away,  
And, till they crown our union, gently glide!

Ah me! too swiftly fleets our vernal bloom!  
Lost to our wonted friendship, lost to joy!  
Soon may thy breast the cordial wish resume,  
Ere wintry doubt its tender warmth destroy!

Say, were it ours, by Fortune's wild command,  
By chance to meet beneath the Torrid Zone,  
Wouldst thou reject thy Damon's plighted hand?  
Wouldst thou with scorn thy once loved friend disown?

Life is that stranger land, that alien clime;  
Shall kindred souls forego their social claim?  
Launch'd in the vast abyss of space and time,  
Shall dark suspicion quench the generous flame?

Myriads of souls, that knew one parent mould,  
See sadly sever'd by the laws of Chance!  
Myriads, in Time's perennial list enroll'd,  
Forbid by Fate to change one transient glance!

But we have met-where ills of every form,  
Where passions rage, and hurricanes descend;  
Say, shall we nurse the rage, assist the storm,  
And guide them to the bosom-of a friend?

Yes, we have met-through rapine, fraud, and wrong:  
Might our joint aid the paths of peace explore!  
Why leave thy friend amid the boisterous throng,  
Ere death divide us, and we part no more?

For, oh! pale Sickness warns thy friend away;  
For me no more the vernal roses bloom!

I see stern Fate his ebon wand display,  
And point the wither'd regions of the tomb.

Then the keen anguish from thine eye shall start,  
Sad as thou followest my untimely bier;  
'Fool that I was-if friends so soon must part,  
To let suspicion intermix a fear.'

William Shenstone

## Elegy Xiv. Declining An Invitation To Visit Foreign Countries

DECLINING AN INVITATION TO VISIT FOREIGN COUNTRIES, HE TAKES OCCASION TO INTIMATE THE ADVANTAGES OF HIS OWN. TO LORD TEMPLE.

While others, lost to friendship, lost to love,  
Waste their best minutes on a foreign strand,  
Be mine, with British nymph or swain to rove,  
And court the Genius of my native land.

Deluded Youth! that quits these verdant plains,  
To catch the follies of an alien soil!  
To win the vice his genuine soul disdains,  
Return exultant, and import the spoil!

In vain he boasts of his detested prize;  
No more it blooms, to British climes convey'd;  
Cramp'd by the impulse of ungenial skies,  
See its fresh vigour in a moment fade;

Th' exotic folly knows its native clime;  
An awkward stranger, if we waft it o'er;  
Why then these toils, this costly waste of time,  
To spread soft poison on our happy shore?

I covet not the pride of foreign looms;  
In search of foreign modes I scorn to rove;  
Nor, for the worthless bird of brighter plumes,  
Would change the meanest warbler of my grove.

No distant clime shall servile airs impart,  
Or form these limbs with pliant ease to play;  
Trembling I view the Gaul's illusive art,  
That steals my loved rusticity away.

'Tis long since Freedom fled th' Hesperian clime,  
Her citron groves, her flower-embroider'd shore;  
She saw the British oak aspire sublime,

And soft Campania's olive charms no more.

Let partial suns mature the western mine,  
To shed its lustre o'er th' Iberian maid;  
Mien, beauty, shape, O native soil! are thine;  
Thy peerless daughters ask no foreign aid.

Let Ceylon's envied plant perfume the seas,  
Till torn to season the Batavian bowl;  
Ours is the breast whose genuine ardours please,  
Nor need a drug to meliorate the soul.

Let the proud Soldan wound th' Arcadian groves,  
Or with rude lips th' Aonian fount profane;  
The Muse no more by flowery Ladon roves,  
She seeks her Thomson on the British plain.

Tell not of realms by ruthless war dismay'd;  
Ah, hapless realms! that war's oppression feel;  
In vain may Austria boast her Noric blade,  
If Austria bleed beneath her boasted steel.

Beneath her palm Idume vents her moan;  
Raptured, she once beheld its friendly shade;  
And hoary Memphis boasts her tombs alone,  
The mournful types of mighty power decay'd!

No Crescent here displays its baneful horns;  
No turban'd host the voice of Truth reproves;  
Learning's free source the sage's breast adorns,  
And poets, not inglorious, chant their loves.

Boast, favour'd Media! boast thy flowery stores;  
Thy thousand hues by chemic suns refined;  
'Tis not the dress or mien my soul adores,  
'Tis the rich beauties of Britannia's mind.

While Grenville's breast could virtue's stores afford,  
What envied flota bore so fair a freight?  
The mine compared in vain its latent hoard,  
The gem its lustre, and the gold its weight.



Thee, Grenville! thee, with calmest courage fraught!  
Thee, the loved image of thy native shore!  
Thee, by the Virtues arm'd, the Graces taught!  
When shall we cease to boast or to deplore?

Presumptuous War, which could thy life destroy,  
What shall it now in recompence decree?  
While friends that merit every earthly joy,  
Feel every anguish; feel-the loss of thee!

Bid me no more a servile realm compare,  
No more the Muse of partial praise arraign;  
Britannia sees no foreign breast so fair,  
And, if she glory, glories not in vain.

William Shenstone

## Elegy Xix. - Written In Spring, 1743

Again the labouring hind inverts the soil;  
Again the merchant ploughs the tumid wave;  
Another spring renews the soldier's toil,  
And finds me vacant in the rural cave.

As the soft lyre display'd my wonted loves,  
The pensive pleasure and the tender pain,  
The sordid Alpheus hurried through my groves,  
Yet stopp'd to vent the dictates of disdain.

He glanced contemptuous o'er my ruin'd fold;  
He blamed the graces of my favourite bower;  
My breast, unsullied by the lust of gold;  
My time, unlavish'd in pursuit of power.

Yes, Alpheus! fly the purer paths of Fate;  
Abjure these scenes, from venal passions free;  
Know, in this grove, I vow'd perpetual hate,  
War, endless war, with lucre and with thee.

Here, nobly zealous, in my youthful hours,  
I dress'd an altar to Thalia's name:  
Here, as I crown'd the verdant shrine with flowers,  
Soft on my labours stole the smiling dame.

'Damon,' she cried, 'if, pleas'd with honest praise,  
Thou court success by virtue or by song,  
Fly the false dictates of the venal race;  
Fly the gross accents of the venal tongue.

'Swear that no lucre shall thy zeal betray;  
Swerve not thy foot with fortune's votaries more;  
Brand thou their lives, and brand their lifeless day-'  
The winning phantom urg'd me, and I swore.

Forth from the rustic altar swift I stray'd;  
'Aid my firm purpose, ye celestial Powers!  
Aid me to quell the sordid breast,' I said;  
And threw my javelin towards their hostile towers.

Think not regretful I survey the deed,  
Or added years no more the zeal allow;  
Still, still observant, to the grove I speed,  
The shrine embellish, and repeat the vow.

Sworn from his cradle Rome's relentless foe,  
Such generous hate the Punic champion bore;  
Thy lake, O Thrasimene! beheld it glow,  
And Cannae's walls and Trebia's crimson shore.

But let grave annals paint the warrior's fame;  
Fair shine his arms in history enroll'd;  
Whilst humbler lyres his civil worth proclaim,  
His nobler hate of avarice and gold.

Now Punic pride its final eve survey'd;  
Its hosts exhausted, and its fleets on fire:  
Patient the victor's lucid frown obey'd,  
And saw th' unwilling elephants retire.

But when their gold depress'd the yielding scale,  
Their gold in pyramidal plenty piled,  
He saw the unutterable grief prevail;  
He saw their tears, and in his fury smiled.

'Think not,' he cried, 'ye view the smiles of ease,  
Or this firm breast disclaims a patriot's pain;  
I smile, but from a soul estranged to peace,  
Frantic with grief, delirious with disdain.

'But were it cordial, this detested smile,  
Seems it less timely than the grief ye show?  
O Sons of Carthage! grant me to revile  
The sordid source of your indecent woe.

'Why weep ye now? ye saw with tearless eye  
When your fleet perish'd on the Punic wave:  
Where lurk'd the coward tear, the lazy sigh,  
When Tyre's imperial state commenced a slave?

"Tis past-O Carthage! vanquish'd, honour'd shade!

Go, the mean sorrows of thy sons deplore;  
Had freedom shared the vow to Fortune paid,  
She ne'er, like Fortune, had forsook thy shore.'

He ceased-abash'd the conscious audience hear,  
Their pallid cheeks a crimson blush unfold,  
Yet o'er that virtuous blush distreams a tear,  
And falling, moistens their abandon'd gold.

William Shenstone

# Elegy Xv. In Memory Of A Private Family In Worcestershire

From a lone tower, with reverend ivy crown'd,  
The pealing bell awaked a tender sigh;  
Still, as the village caught the waving sound,  
A swelling tear distream'd from every eye.

So droop'd, I ween, each Briton's breast of old,  
When the dull curfew spoke their freedom fled;  
For, sighing as the mournful accent roll'd,  
'Our hope,' they cried, 'our kind support, is dead!'

'Twas good Palemon-Near a shaded pool,  
A group of ancient elms umbrageous rose;  
The flocking rooks, by Instinct's native rule,  
This peaceful scene for their asylum chose.

A few small spires, to Gothic fancy fair,  
Amid the shades emerging, struck the view;  
'Twas here his youth respired its earliest air;  
'Twas here his age breathed out its last adieu.

One favour'd son engaged his tenderest care;  
One pious youth his whole affection crown'd;  
In his young breast the virtues sprung so fair,  
Such charms display'd, such sweets diffused around.

But whilst gay transport in his face appears,  
A noxious vapour clogs the poison'd sky,  
Blasts the fair crop-the sire is drown'd in tears,  
And, scarce surviving, sees his Cynthia die!

O'er the pale corse we saw him gently bend:  
Heart-chill'd with grief-'My thread,' he cried, 'is spun!  
If Heaven had meant I should my life extend,  
Heaven had preserved my life's support, my son.

'Snatch'd in thy prime! alas! the stroke were mild,  
Had my frail form obey'd the Fates' decree!

Bless'd were my lot, O Cynthio! O my child!  
Had Heaven so pleased, and had I died for thee.'

Five sleepless nights he stemm'd this tide of woes  
Five irksome suns he saw, through tears, forlorn!  
On his pale corse the sixth sad morning rose  
From yonder dome the mournful bier was borne.

'Twas on those Downs, by Roman hosts annoy'd,  
Fought our bold fathers, rustic, unrefined!  
Freedom's plain sons, in martial cares employ'd!  
They tinged their bodies, but unmask'd their mind.

'Twas there, in happier times, this virtuous race,  
Of milder merit, fix'd their calm retreat:  
War's deadly crimson had forsook the place,  
And freedom fondly loved the chosen seat.

No wild ambition fired their tranquil breast,  
To swell with empty sounds a spotless name;  
If fostering skies, the sun, the shower, were blest,  
Their bounty spread; their fields' extent the same.

Those fields, profuse of raiment, food, and fire,  
They scorn'd to lessen, careless to extend;  
Bade Luxury to lavish courts aspire,  
And Avarice to city breasts descend.

None to a virgin's mind preferr'd her dower,  
To sire with vicious hopes a modest heir:  
The sire, in place of titles, wealth, or power,  
Assign'd him virtue; and his lot was fair.

They spoke of Fortune, as some doubtful dame,  
That sway'd the natives of a distant sphere;  
From Lucre's vagrant sons had learn'd her fame,  
But never wish'd to place her banners here.

Here youth's free spirit, innocently gay,  
Enjoy'd the most that Innocence can give;  
Those wholesome sweets that border Virtue's way;  
Those cooling fruits that we may taste, and live.

Their board no strange ambiguous viand bore  
From their own streams their choicer fare they drew;  
To lure the scaly glutton to the shore,  
The sole deceit their artless bosom knew!

Sincere themselves, ah! too secure to find  
The common bosom, like their own, sincere!  
'Tis its own guilt alarms the jealous mind;  
'Tis her own poison bids the viper fear.

Sketch'd on the lattice of th' adjacent fane,  
Their suppliant busts implore the reader's prayer  
Ah, gentle souls! enjoy your blissful reign,  
And let frail mortals claim your guardian care.

For sure, to blissful realms the souls are flown,  
That never flatter'd, injured, censured, strove;  
The friends of science-music, all their own;  
Music, the voice of Virtue and of Love!

The journeying peasant, through the secret shade,  
Heard their soft lyres engage his listening ear,  
And haply deem'd some courteous angel play'd:  
No angel play'd-but might with transport hear.

For these the sounds that chase unholy strife!  
Solve Envy's charm, Ambition's wretch release!  
Raise him to spurn the radiant ills of life,  
To pity pomp, to be content with peace.

Farewell, pure Spirits! vain the praise we give,  
The praise you sought from lips angelic flows;  
Farewell! the virtues which deserve to live  
Deserve an ampler bliss than life bestows.

Last of his race, Palemon, now no more,  
The modest merit of his line display'd;  
Then pious Hough, Vigornia's mitre wore-  
Soft sleep the dust of each deserving shade!





## Elegy Xvi. He Suggests The Advantage Of Birth To A Person Of Merit

When genius, graced with lineal splendour, glows,  
When title shines, with ambient virtues crown'd,  
Like some fair almond's flowery pomp it shows,  
The pride, the perfume, of the regions round.

Then learn, ye Fair! to soften splendour's ray;  
Endure the swain, the youth of low degree;  
Let meekness join'd its temperate beam display;  
'Tis the mild verdure that endears the tree.

Pity the sandall'd swain, the shepherd's boy;  
He sighs to brighten a neglected name;  
Foe to the dull applause of vulgar joy,  
He mourns his lot; he wishes, merits fame.

In vain to groves and pathless vales we fly;  
Ambition there the bowery haunt invades;  
Fame's awful rays fatigue the courtier's eye,  
But gleam still lovely through the chequer'd shades.

Vainly, to guard from Love's unequal chain,  
Has Fortune rear'd us in the rural grove;  
Should --'s eyes illumine the desert plain,  
Even I may wonder, and even I must love.

Not unregarded sighs the lowly hind;  
Though you contemn, the gods respect his vow;  
Vindictive rage awaits the scornful mind,  
And vengeance, too severe! the gods allow.

On Sarum's plain I met a wandering fair;  
The look of sorrow, lovely still, she bore;  
Loose flow'd the soft redundance of her hair,  
And on her brow a flowery wreath she wore.

Oft stooping as she stray'd, she cull'd the pride  
Of every plain; she pillaged every grove!

The fading chaplet daily she supplied,  
And still her hand some various garland wove.

Erroneous Fancy shaped her wild attire:  
From Bethlem's walls the poor lymphatic stray'd;  
Seem'd with her air, her accent, to conspire,  
When, as wild Fancy taught her, thus she said:

'Hear me, dear Youth! oh, bear an hapless maid,  
Sprung from the scepter'd line of ancient kings!  
Scorn'd by the world, I ask thy tender aid;  
Thy gentle voice shall whisper kinder things.

'The world is frantic-fly the race profane-.  
Nor I, nor you, shall its compassion move:  
Come, friendly let us wander and complain;  
And tell me, Shepherd! hast thou seen my love?

'My love is young-but other loves are young;  
And other loves are fair, and so is mine;  
An air divine discloses whence he sprung;  
He is my love, who boasts that air divine.

'No vulgar Damon robs me of my rest;  
Ianthe listens to no vulgar vow;  
A prince, from gods descended, fires her breast;  
A brilliant crown distinguishes his brow.

'What! shall I stain the glories of my race,  
More clear, more lovely bright, than Hesper's beam?  
The porcelain pure with vulgar dirt debase?  
Or mix with puddle the pellucid stream?

'See through these veins the sapphire current shine!  
'Twas Jove's own nectar gave th' ethereal hue:  
Can base plebeian forms contend with mine,  
Display the lovely white, or match the blue?

'The painter strove to trace its azure ray;  
He changed his colours, and in vain he strove:  
He frown'd-I, smiling, view'd the faint essay:  
Poor youth! he little knew it flow'd from Jove.

'Pitying his toil, the wondrous truth I told,  
How amorous Jove trepann'd a mortal fair;  
How through the race the generous current roll'd,  
And mocks the poet's art and painter's care.

'Yes, from the gods, from earliest Saturn, sprung  
Our sacred race, through demi-gods convey'd,  
And he, allied to Phœbus, ever young,  
My godlike boy! must wed their duteous maid.

'Oft, when a mortal vow profanes my ear,  
My sire's dread fury murmurs through the sky;  
And should I yield-his instant rage appears;  
He darts th' uplifted vengeance-and I die.

'Have you not heard unwonted thunders roll?  
Have you not seen more horrid lightnings glare?  
'Twas then a vulgar love ensnared my soul;  
'Twas then-I hardly 'scaped the fatal snare.

'Twas then a peasant pour'd his amorous vow,  
All as I listen'd to his vulgar strain;-  
Yet such his beauty-would my birth allow,  
Dear were the youth, and blissful were the plain.

'But, oh, I faint! why wastes my vernal bloom,  
In fruitless searches ever doom'd to rove?  
My nightly dreams the toilsome path resume,  
And I shall die-before I find my love.

'When last I slept, methought my ravish'd eye  
On distant heaths his radiant form survey'd;  
Though night's thick clouds encompass'd all the sky,  
The gems that bound his brow dispell'd the shade.

'O how this bosom kindled at the sight!  
Led by their beams I urged the pleasing chase,  
Till, on a sudden, these withheld their light-  
All, all things envy the sublime embrace.

'But now no more-Behind the distant grove

Wanders my destined youth, and chides my stay:  
See, see! he grasps the steel-Forbear, my Love-  
Ianthe comes; thy princess hastes away.'

Scornful she spoke, and, heedless of reply,  
The lovely maniac bounded o'er the plain,  
The piteous victim of an angry sky!  
Ah me! the victim of her proud disdain.

William Shenstone

# Elegy Xvii. He Indulges The Suggestions Of Spleen.-- An Elegy To The Winds

AEole! namque tibi divi Pater atque hominum rex,  
Et mulcere dedit mentes et tollere vento.

Imitation.

O AEolus! to thee the Sire supreme  
Of gods and men the mighty power bequeath'd  
To rouse or to assuage the human mind.

Stern Monarch of the winds! admit my prayer;  
Awhile thy fury check, thy storms confine;  
No trivial blast impels the passive air,  
But brews a tempest in a breast like mine.

What bands of black ideas spread their wings!  
The peaceful regions of Content invade!  
With deadly poison taint the crystal springs!  
With noisome vapour blast the verdant shade!

I know their leader, Spleen, and the dread sway  
Of rigid Eurus, his detested sire;  
Through one my blossoms and my fruits decay;  
Through one my pleasures and my hopes expire.

Like some pale stripling, when his icy way  
Relenting, yields beneath the noontide beam,  
I stand aghast; and, chill'd with fear, survey  
How far I've tempted life's deceitful stream.

Where, by remorse impell'd, repulsed by fears,  
Shall wretched Fancy a retreat explore?  
She flies the sad presage of coming years,  
And sorrowing dwells on pleasures now no more.

Again with patrons and with friends she roves;  
But friends and patrons never to return;

She sees the Nymphs, the Graces, and the Loves,  
But sees them weeping o'er Lucinda's urn.

She visits, Isis! thy forsaken stream,  
Oh! ill forsaken for Bœotian air;  
She deems no flood reflects so bright a beam,  
No reed so verdant, and no flower so fair.

She dreams beneath thy sacred shades were peace,  
Thy bays might even the civil storm repel;  
Reviews thy social bliss, thy learned ease,  
And with no cheerful accent cries, Farewell!

Farewell, with whom to these retreats I stray'd,  
By youthful sports, by youthful toils, allied;  
Joyous we sojourn'd in thy circling shade,  
And wept to find the paths of life divide.

She paints the progress of my rival's vows.  
Sees every muse a partial ear incline,  
Binds with luxuriant bays his favour'd brow,  
Nor yields the refuse of his wrath to mine.

She bids the flattering mirror, form'd to please,  
Now blast my hope, now vindicate despair;  
Bids my fond verse the lovesick parley cease,  
Accuse my rigid fate, acquit my fair.

Where circling rocks defend some pathless vale,  
Superfluous mortal! let me ever rove;  
Alas! there Echo will repeat the tale-  
Where shall I find the silent scenes I love?

Fain would I mourn my luckless fate alone,  
Forbid to please, yet fated to admire;  
Away, my friends! my sorrows are my own!  
Why should I breathe around my sick desire?

Bear me, ye winds, indulgent to my pains,  
Near some sad ruin's ghastly shade to dwell!  
There let me fondly eye the rude remains,  
And from the mouldering refuse build my cell!

Genius of Rome! thy prostrate pomp display!  
Trace every dismal proof of Fortune's power;  
Let me the wreck of theatres survey,  
Or pensive sit beneath some nodding tower.

Or where some duct, by rolling seasons worn,  
Convey'd pure streams to Rome's imperial wall,  
Near the wide breach in silence let me mourn,  
Or tune my dirges to the water's fall.

Genius of Carthage! paint thy ruin'd pride;  
Towers, arches, fanes, in wild confusion strewn;  
Let banish'd Marius, lowering by thy side,  
Compare thy fickle fortunes with his own.

Ah no! thou monarch of the storms! forbear;  
My trembling nerves abhor thy rude control,  
And scarce a pleasing twilight soothes my care,  
Ere one vast death, like darkness, shocks my soul

Forbear thy rage-on no perennial base  
Is built frail Fear, or Hope's deceitful pile;  
My pains are fled-my joy resumes its places  
Should the sky brighten, or Melissa smile.

William Shenstone

## Elegy XVIII. He Repeats The Song Of Colin, A Discerning Shepherd

Near Avon's bank, on Arden's flowery plain,  
A tuneful shepherd charm'd the listening wave,  
And sunny Cotsol' fondly loved the strain;  
Yet not a garland crowns the shepherd's grave!

Oh! lost Ophelia! smoothly flow'd the day,  
To feel his music with my flames agree,  
To taste the beauties of his melting lay,  
To taste, and fancy it was dear to thee.

When, for his tomb, with each revolving year,  
I steal the musk-rose from the scented brake,  
I strew my cowslips, and I pay my tear,  
I'll add the myrtle for Ophelia's sake.

Shivering beneath a leafless thorn he lay,  
When Death's chill rigour seized his flowing tongue;  
The more I found his faltering notes decay,  
The more prophetic truth sublimed the song.

'Adieu, my Flocks!' he said, 'my wonted care,  
By sunny mountain, or by verdant shore;  
May some more happy hand your fold prepare,  
And may you need your Colin's crook no more!

'And you, ye Shepherds! lead my gentle sheep,  
To breezy hills, or leafy shelters lead;  
But if the sky with showers incessant weep,  
Avoid the putrid moisture of the mead.

'Where the wild thyme perfumes the purpled heath,  
Long loitering, there your fleecy tribes extend-  
But what avail the maxims I bequeath?  
The fruitless gift of an officious friend!

'Ah! what avails the timorous lambs to guard,  
Though nightly cares with daily labours join,



If foreign sloth obtain the rich reward,  
If Gallia's craft the ponderous fleece purloin?

Was it for this, by constant vigils worn,  
I met the terrors of an early grave?  
For this I led them from the pointed thorn?  
For this I bathed them in the lucid wave?

'Ah! heedless Albion! too benignly prone  
Thy blood to lavish, and thy wealth resign!  
Shall every other virtue grace thy throne,  
But quick-eyed Prudence never yet be thine?

From the fair natives of this peerless hill  
Thou gav'st the sheep that browse Iberian plains;  
Their plaintive cries the faithless region fill,  
Their fleece adorns an haughty foe's domains.

'Ill-fated flocks! from cliff to cliff they stray;  
Far from their dams, their native guardians, far!  
Where the soft shepherd, all the livelong day,  
Chaunts his proud mistress to his hoarse guitar.

'But Albion's youth her native fleece despise;  
Unmoved they hear the pining shepherd's moan;  
In silky folds each nervous limb disguise,  
Allured by every treasure but their own.

'Oft have I hurried down the rocky steep,  
Anxious to see the wintry tempest drive;  
Preserve, said I, preserve your fleece, my Sheep!  
Ere long will Phillis, will my love, arrive.

'Ere long she came: ah! woe is me! she came,  
Robed in the Gallic loom's extraneous twine;  
For gifts like these they give their spotless fame,  
Resign their bloom, their innocence resign.

'Will no bright maid, by worth, by titles known,  
Give the rich growth of British hills to Fame?  
And let her charms, and her example, own  
That Virtue's dress and Beauty's are the same?

'Will no famed chief support this generous maid?  
Once more the patriot's arduous path resume?  
And, comely from his native plains array'd,  
Speak future glory to the British loom?

'What power unseen my ravish'd fancy fires?  
I pierce the dreary shade of future days;  
Sure 'tis the genius of the land inspires,  
To breathe my latest breath in -- praise.

'O might my breath for -- praise suffice,  
How gently should my dying limbs repose!  
O might his future glory bless mine eyes,  
My ravish'd eyes! how calmly would they close!

' -- was born to spread the general joy;  
By virtue rapt, by party uncontroll'd;  
Britons for Britain shall the crook employ;  
Britons for Britain's glory shear the fold.'

William Shenstone

## Elegy Xx. He Compares His Humble Fortune With The Distress Of Others

Why droops this heart with fancied woes forlorn?  
Why sinks my soul beneath this wintry sky?  
What pensive crowds, by ceaseless labours worn,  
What myriads, wish to be as blessed as I!

What though my roofs, devoid of pomp, arise,  
Nor tempt the proud to quit his destined way?  
Nor costly art my flowery dales disguise,  
Where only simple friendship deigns to stray?

See the wild sons of Lapland's chill domain,  
That scoop their couch beneath the drifted snows!  
How void of hope they ken the frozen plain,  
Where the sharp east for ever, ever blows!

Slave though I be, to Delia's eyes a slave,  
My Delia's eyes endear the bands I wear;  
The sigh she causes well becomes the brave,  
The pang she causes 'tis even bliss to bear.

See the poor native quit the Libyan shores,  
Ah! not in Love's delightful fetters bound!  
No radiant smile his dying peace restores,  
Nor love, nor fame, nor friendship, heals his wound.

Let vacant bards display their boasted woes;  
Shall I the mockery of grief display?  
No; let the Muse his piercing pangs disclose,  
Who bleeds and weeps his sum of life away!

On the wild beach in mournful guise he stood,  
Ere the shrill boatswain gave the hated sign;  
He dropp'd a tear unseen into the flood;  
He stole one secret moment, to repine.

Yet the Muse listen'd to the plaints he made,  
Such moving plaints as Nature could inspire;

To me the Muse his tender plea convey'd,  
But smooth'd and suited to the sounding lyre.

'Why am I ravish'd from my native strand?  
What savage race protects this impious gain?  
Shall foreign plagues infest this teeming land,  
And more than seaborne monsters plough the main?

'Here the dire locusts' horrid swarms prevail;  
Here the blue asps with livid poison swell;  
Here the dry dipsa writhes his sinuous mail;  
Can we not here secure from envy dwell?

'When the grim Lion urged his cruel chase,  
When the stern Panther sought his midnight prey,  
What fate reserved me for this Christian race?  
A race more polish'd, more severe than they!

'Ye prowling Wolves! pursue my latest cries;  
Thou hungry Tiger! leave thy reeking den;  
Ye sandy Wastes! in rapid eddies rise;  
Tear me from the whips and scorns of men!

'Yet in their face superior beauty glows;  
Are smiles the mien of Rapine and of Wrong?  
Yet from their lip the voice of mercy flows,  
And even religion dwells upon their tongue.

'Of blissful haunts they tell, and brighter climes,  
Where gentle maids, convey'd by Death, repair,  
But stain'd with blood, and crimson'd o'er with crimes,  
Say, shall they merit what they paint so fair?

'No; careless, hopeless of those fertile plains,  
Rich by our toils, and by our sorrows gay,  
They ply our labours, and enhance our pains,  
And feign these distant regions to repay.

'For them our tusky elephant expires;  
For them we drain the mine's embowell'd gold;  
Where rove the brutal nation's wild desires?-  
Our limbs are purchased, and our life is sold!

'Yet shores there are, bless'd shores for us remain,  
And favour'd isles, with golden fruitage crown'd,  
Where tufted flowerets paint the verdant plain,  
Where every breeze shall med'cine every wound.

'There the stern tyrant that embitters life,  
Shall, vainly suppliant, spread his asking hand;  
There shall we view the billows' raging strife,  
Aid the kind breast, and waft his boat to land.'

William Shenstone

## Elegy Xxi. Taking A View Of The Country From His Retirement

Thus Damon sung-What though unknown to praise,  
Umbrageous coverts hide my Muse and me,  
Or mid the rural shepherds flow my days?  
Amid the rural shepherds, I am free.

To view sleek vassals crowd a stately hall,  
Say, should I grow myself a solemn slave?  
To find thy tints, O Titian! grace my wall,  
Forego the flowery fields my fortune gave?

Lord of my time, my devious path I bend  
Through fringy woodland, or smooth-shaven lawn,  
Or pensile grove, or airy cliff ascend,  
And hail the scene by Nature's pencil drawn.

Thanks be to Fate-though nor the racy vine,  
Nor fattening olive, clothe the fields I rove,  
Sequester'd shades and gurgling founts are mine,  
And every sylvan grot the Muses love.

Here if my vista point the mouldering pile,  
Where hood and cowl Devotion's aspect wore,  
I trace the tottering relics with a smile,  
To think the mental bondage is no more.

Pleased if the glowing landscape wave with corn,  
Or the tall oaks, my country's bulwark, rise;  
Pleased if mine eye, o'er thousand valleys borne,  
Discern the Cambrian hills support the skies.

And see Plinlimmon! even the youthful sight  
Scales the proud hill's ethereal cliffs with pain!  
Such, Caer-Caradoc! thy stupendous height,  
Whose ample shade obscures th' Iernian main.

Bleak, joyless regions! where, by Science fired,  
Some prying sage his lonely step may bend;

There, by the love of novel plants inspired,  
Invidious view the clambering goats ascend.

Yet for those mountains, clad with lasting snow,  
The freeborn Briton left his greenest mead,  
Receding sullen from his mightier foe,  
For here he saw fair Liberty recede.

Then if a chief perform'd a patriot's part,  
Sustain'd her drooping sons, repell'd her foes,  
Above all Persian luxe or Attic art  
The rude majestic monument arose.

Progressive ages caroll'd forth his fame,  
Sires, to his praise, attuned their children's tongue;  
The hoary Druid fed the generous flame,  
While in such strains the reverend wizard sung:

'Go forth, my Sons!-for what is vital breath,  
Your gods expell'd, your liberty resign'd?  
Go forth, my Sons!-for what is instant death  
To souls secure perennial joys to find?

'For scenes there are, unknown to war or pain,  
Where drops the balm that heals a tyrant's wound;  
Where patriots, bless'd with boundless freedom, reign,  
With misletoe's mysterious garlands crown'd.

'Such are the names that grace your mystic songs;  
Your solemn woods resound their martial fire;  
To you, my Sons, the ritual meed belongs,  
If in the cause you vanquish or expire.

'Hark! from the sacred oak, that crowns the groves,  
What awful voice my raptured bosom warms!  
This is the favour'd moment Heaven approves,  
Sound the shrill trump; this instant sound, to arms.'

Theirs was the science of a martial race,  
To shape the lance, or decorate the shield  
Even the fair virgin stain'd her native grace  
To give new horrors to the tented field.

Now, for some cheek where guilty blushes glow,  
For some false Florimel's impure disguise,  
The listed youth nor War's loud signal know,  
Nor Virtue's call, nor Fame's imperial prize.

Then, if soft concord lull'd their fears to sleep,  
Inert and silent slept the manly car,  
But rush'd horrific o'er the fearful steep,  
If Freedom's awful clarion breathed to war.

Now the sleek courtier, indolent and vain,  
Throned in the splendid carriage, glides supine,  
To taint his virtue with a foreign stain,  
Or at a favourite board his faith resign.

Leave then, O Luxury! this happy soil;  
Chase her, Britannia! to some hostile shore  
Or fleece the baneful pest with annual spoil,  
And let thy virtuous offspring weep no more.

William Shenstone



## Elegy Xxii. Written In The Year ----, When The Rights Of Sepulture Were So Frequently Violated

Say, gentle Sleep! that lov'st the gloom of night,  
Parent of dreams! thou great Magician! say,  
Whence my late vision thus endures the light,  
Thus haunts my fancy through the glare of day?

The silent moon had scaled the vaulted skies,  
And anxious Care resign'd my limbs to rest;  
A sudden lustre struck my wondering eyes,  
And Silvia stood before my couch confest.

Ah! not the nymph so blooming and so gay,  
That led the dance beneath the festive shade,  
But she that, in the morning of her day,  
Entomb'd beneath the grass-green sod was laid.

No more her eyes their wonted radiance cast,  
No more her breast inspired the lover's flame;  
No more her cheek the PÃ¡stan rose surpass'd,  
Yet seem'd her lip's ethereal smile the same.

Nor such her hair as deck'd the living face,  
Nor such her voice as charm'd the listening crowd;  
Nor such her dress as heighten'd every grace;  
Alas! all vanish'd for the mournful shroud!

Yet seem'd her lip's ethereal charm the same;  
That dear distinction every doubt removed;  
Perish the lover, whose imperfect flame  
Forgets one feature of the nymph he loved!

'Damon,' she said, 'mine hour allotted flies;  
Oh! do not waste it with a fruitless tear!  
Though grieved to see thy Sylvia's pale disguise,  
Suspend thy sorrow, and attentive hear.

'So may thy Muse with virtuous fame be blest!  
So be thy love with mutual love repaid!

So may thy bones in sacred silence rest!  
Fast by the relics of some happier maid!

'Thou know'st how, lingering on a distant shore,  
Disease invidious nipt my flowery prime;  
And, oh, what pangs my tender bosom tore,  
To think I ne'er must view my native clime!

'No friend was near to raise my drooping head;  
No dear companion wept to see me die;  
Lodge me within my native soil, I said,  
There my fond parents' honour'd relics lie.

'Though now debarr'd of each domestic tear,  
Unknown, forgot, I meet the fatal blow;  
There many a friend shall grace my woful bier,  
And many a sigh shall rise, and tear shall flow.

'I spoke, nor Fate forbore his trembling spoil;  
Some venal mourner lent his careless aid,  
And soon they bore me to my native soil,  
Where my fond parents' dear remains were laid.

"'Twas then the youths, from every plain and grove,  
Adorn'd with mournful verse thy Sylvia's bier;  
'Twas then the nymphs their votive garlands wove,  
And strew'd the fragrance of the youthful year.

But why, alas! the tender scene display?  
Could Damon's foot the pious path decline?  
Ah, no! 'twas Damon first attuned his lay,  
And sure no sonnet was so dear as thine.

'Thus was I bosom'd in the peaceful grave;  
My placid ghost no longer wept its doom;  
When savage robbers every sanction brave,  
And with outrageous guilt defraud the tomb!

'Shall my poor corse, from hostile realms convey'd,  
Lose the cheap portion of my native sands?  
Or, in my kindred's dear embraces laid,  
Mourn the vile ravage of barbarian hands?

'Say, would thy breast no deathlike torture feel,  
To see my limbs the felon's gripe obey?  
To see them gash'd beneath the daring steel?  
To crowds a spectre, and to dogs a prey?

'If Pagan's Sons these horrid rites require,  
If Health's fair science be by these refined,  
Let guilty convicts, for their use, expire,  
And let their breathless corse avail mankind.

'Yet hard it seems, when Guilt's last fine is paid,  
To see the victim's corse denied repose;  
Now, more severe, the poor offenceless maid  
Dreads the dire outrage of inhuman foes.

'Where is the faith of ancient Pagans fled?  
Where the fond care the wand'ring Manes claim?  
Nature, instinctive, cries, Protect the dead,  
And sacred be their ashes, and their fame!

'Arise, dear Youth! even now the danger calls;  
Even now the villain snuffs his wonted prey;  
See! see! I lead thee to yon sacred walls-  
Oh! fly to chase these human wolves away.'

William Shenstone

## Elegy Xxiii. Reflections Suggested By His Situation

Born near the scene for Kenelm's fate renown'd,  
I take my plaintive reed, and range the grove,  
And raise my lay, and bid the rocks resound  
The savage force of empire, and of love.

Fast by the centre of yon various wild,  
Where spreading oaks embower a Gothic fane,  
Kendria's arts a brother's youth beguiled;  
There nature urged her tenderest pleas in vain.

Soft o'er his birth, and o'er his infant hours,  
The ambitious maid could every care employ;  
Then with assiduous fondness cropt the flowers,  
To deck the cradle of the princely boy.

But soon the bosom's pleasing calm is flown;  
Love fires her breast; the sultry passions rise;  
A favour'd lover seeks the Mercian throne,  
And views her Kenelm with a rival's eyes.

How kind were Fortune! ah, how just were Fate!  
Would Fate or Fortune Mercia's heir remove!  
How sweet to revel on the couch of state!  
To crown at once her lover and her love!

See, garnish'd for the chase, the fraudulent maid  
To these lone hills direct his devious way;  
The youth, all prone, the sister-guide obey'd;  
Ill-fated youth! himself the destined prey!

But now, nor shaggy hill, nor pathless plain,  
Forms the lone refuge of the sylvan game,  
Since Lyttleton has crown'd the sweet domain  
With softer pleasures, and with fairer fame.

Where the rough bowman urged his headlong steed,  
Immortal bards, a polish'd race, retire;  
And where hoarse scream'd the strepent horn, succeed  
The melting graces of no vulgar lyre.

See Thomson, loitering near some limpid well,  
For Britain's friend the verdant wreath prepare!  
Or, studious of revolving seasons, tell  
How peerless Lucia made all seasons fair!

See -- from civic garlands fly,  
And in those groves indulge his tuneful vein!  
Or from yon summit, with a guardian's eye,  
Observe how Freedom's hand attires the plain!

Here Pope!-ah! never must that towering mind  
To his loved haunts, or dearer friend return!  
What art, what friendships! oh, what fame resign'd  
-In yonder glade I trace his mournful urn.

Where is the breast can rage or hate retain,  
And these glad streams and smiling lawns behold?  
Where is the breast can hear the woodland strain,  
And think fair Freedom well exchanged for gold?

Through these soft shades delighted let me stray,  
While o'er my head forgotten suns descend!  
Through these dear valleys bend my casual way,  
Till setting life a total shade extend!

Here, far from courts, and void of pompous cares,  
I'll muse how much I owe mine humbler fate,  
Or shrink to find how much Ambition dares,  
To shine in anguish, and to grieve in state!

Canst thou, O Sun! that spotless throne disclose,  
Where her bold arm has left no sanguine stain?  
Where, show me where, the lineal sceptre glows,  
Pure as the simple crook that rules the plain!

Tremendous pomp! where hate, distrust, and fear,  
In kindred bosoms solve the social tie;  
There not the parent's smile is half sincere,  
Nor void of art the consort's melting eye.

There, with the friendly wish, the kindly flame,

No face is brighten'd, and no bosoms beat;  
Youth, manhood, age, avow one sordid aim,  
And even the beardless lip essays deceit.

There coward Rumours walk their murderous round;  
The glance, that more than rural blame instils;  
Whispers that, tinged with friendship, doubly wound;  
Pity that injures, and concern that kills.

There anger whets, but love can ne'er engage;  
Caressing brothers part but to revile;  
There all men smile, and Prudence warns the wise  
To dread the fatal stroke of all that smile.

There all are rivals! sister, son, and sire,  
With horrid purpose hug destructive arms;  
There soft-eyed maids in murderous plots conspire,  
And scorn the gentler mischief of their charms.

Let servile minds one endless watch endure;  
Day, night, nor hour, their anxious guard resign;  
But lay me, Fate! on flowery banks secure,  
Though my whole soul be, like my limbs, supine.

Yes; may my tongue disdain a vassal's care;  
My lyre resound no prostituted lay;  
More warm to merit, more elate to wear  
The cap of Freedom than the crown of bay.

Soothed by the murmurs of my pebbled flood,  
I wish it not o'er golden sands to flow;  
Cheer'd by the verdure of my spiral wood,  
I scorn the quarry, where no shrub can grow.

No midnight pangs the shepherd's peace pursue;  
His tongue, his hand, attempts no secret wound;  
He sings his Delia, and, if she be true,  
His love at once, and his ambition's crown'd.

William Shenstone

# Elegy Xxiv. He Takes Occasion, From The Fate Of Eleanor Of Bretagne

He Takes Occasion, From the Fate of Eleanor of Bretagne, To Suggest the Imperfect Pleasures of a Solitary Life.

When Beauty mourns, by Fate's injurious doom,  
Hid from the cheerful glance of human eye,  
When Nature's pride inglorious waits the tomb,  
Hard is that heart which checks the rising sigh.

Fair Eleonora! would no gallant mind,  
The cause of Love, the cause of Justice, own?  
Matchless thy charms, and was no life resign'd  
To see them sparkle from their native throne?

Or had fair Freedom's hand unveil'd thy charms,  
Well might such brows the regal gem resign;  
Thy radiant mien might scorn the guilt of arms,  
Yet Albion's awful empire yield to thine.

O shame of Britons! in one sullen tower  
She wet with royal tears her daily cell;  
She found keen anguish every rose devour;  
They sprung, they shone, they faded, and they fell.

Through one dim lattice, fringed with ivy round,  
Successive suns a languid radiance threw,  
To paint how fierce her angry guardian frown'd,  
To mark how fast her waning beauty flew.

This, age might bear; then sated Fancy palls,  
Nor warmly hopes what splendour can supply;  
Fond Youth incessant mourns if rigid walls  
Restrain its listening ear, its curious eye.

Believe me -- the pretence is vain!  
This boasted calm that smooths our early day;  
For never yet could youthful mind restrain

The alternate pant for pleasure and for praise.

Even me, by shady oak or limpid spring,  
Even me, the scenes of polish'd life allure!  
Some genius whispers, 'Life is on the wing,  
And hard his lot that languishes obscure.

'What though thy ripper mind admire no more-  
The shining cincture, and the broider'd fold,  
Can pierce like lightning thorough the figured ore,  
And melt to dross the radiant forms of gold.

'Furs, ermines, rods, may well attract thy scorn,  
The futile presents of capricious Power!  
But wit, but worth, the public sphere adorn,  
And who but envies then the social hour?

'Can Virtue, careless of her pupil's meed,  
Forget how -- sustains the shepherd's cause?  
Content in shades to tune a lonely reed,  
Nor join the sounding pÃ¡an of applause?

For public haunts, impell'd by Britain's weal,  
See Grenville quit the Muse's favourite ease;  
And shall not swains admire his noble zeal?  
Admiring praise, admiring strive to please?

'Life,' says the sage, 'affords no bliss sincere,  
And courts and cells in vain our hopes renew:  
But, ah! where Grenville charms the listening ear,  
'Tis hard to think the cheerless maxim true.

'The groves may smile; the rivers gently glide;  
Soft through the vale resound the lonesome lay;  
Even thickets yield delight, if taste preside,  
But can they please, when Lyttleton's away?

'Pure as the swain's the breast of -- glows;  
Ah! were the shepherd's phrase, like his, refined!  
But, how improved the generous dictate flows  
Through the clear medium of a polish'd mind!



'Happy the youths who, warm with Britain's love,  
Her inmost wish in -- periods hear!  
Happy that in the radiant circle move,  
Attendant orbs, where Lonsdale gilds the sphere!

'While rural faith, and every polish'd art,  
Each friendly charm, in -- conspire,  
From public scenes all pensive must you part;  
All joyless to the greenest fields retire!

'Go, plaintive Youth! no more by fount or stream,  
Like some lone halcyon, social pleasures shun;  
Go, dare the light, enjoy its cheerful beam,  
And hail the bright procession of the sun.

'Then, cover'd by thy ripen'd shades, resume  
The silent walk, no more by passion tost;  
Then seek thy rustic haunts, the dreary gloom,  
Where every art, that colours life, is lost.'

In vain! the listening Muse attends in vain!  
Restraints in hostile bands her motions wait-  
Yet will I grieve, and sadden all my strain,  
When injured Beauty mourns the Muse's fate.

William Shenstone

## Elegy Xxv. To Delia, With Some Flowers

Whate'er could Sculpture's curious art employ,  
Whate'er the lavish hand of Wealth can shower,  
These would I give-and every gift enjoy,  
That pleased my fair-but Fate denies the power.

Bless'd were my lot to feed the social fires!  
To learn the latent wishes of a friend!  
To give the boon his native taste admires,  
And, for my transport, on his smile depend!

Bless'd, too, is he whose evening ramble strays  
Where droop the sons of Indigence and Care!  
His little gifts their gladden'd eyes amaze,  
And win, at small expence, their fondest prayer!

And, oh! the joy, to shun the conscious light;  
To spare the modest blush; to give unseen!  
Like showers that fall behind the veil of night,  
Yet deeply tinge the smiling vales with green.

But happiest they who drooping realms relieve!  
Whose virtues in our cultured vales appear!  
For whose sad fate a thousand shepherds grieve,  
And fading fields allow the grief sincere.

To call lost Worth from its oppressive shade  
To fix its equal sphere, and see it shine,  
To hear it grateful own the generous aid:  
This, this is transport-but must ne'er be mine.

Faint is my bounded bliss; nor I refuse  
To range where daisies open, rivers roll,  
While prose or song the languid hours amuse,  
And sooth the fond impatience of my soul.

Awhile I'll weave the roofs of jasmine bowers,  
And urge with trivial cares the loitering year;  
Awhile I'll prune my grove, protect my flowers,  
Then, unlamented, press an early bier!

Of those loved flowers the lifeless corse may share,  
Some hireling hand a fading wreath bestow;  
The rest will breathe as sweet, will glow as fair,  
As when their master smiled to see them glow.

The sequent morn shall wake the sylvan quire;  
The kid again shall wanton ere 'tis noon;  
Nature will smile, will wear her best attire;  
O let not gentle Delia smile so soon!

While the rude hearse conveys me slow away,  
And careless eyes my vulgar fate proclaim,  
Let thy kind tear my utmost worth o'erpay,  
And, softly sighing, vindicate my fame.-

O Delia! cheer'd by thy superior praise,  
I bless the silent path the Fates decree;  
Pleased, from the list of my inglorious days,  
To raise the moments crown'd with bliss and thee.

William Shenstone

## Elegy Xxvi. Describing The Sorrow Of An Ingenuous Mind

Why mourns my friend? why weeps his downcast eye,  
That eye where mirth, where fancy, used to shine?  
Thy cheerful meads reprove that swelling sigh;  
Spring ne'er enamell'd fairer meads than thine.

Art thou not lodged in Fortune's warm embrace?  
Wert thou not form'd by Nature's partial care?  
Bless'd in thy song, and bless'd in every grace  
That wins the friend, or that enchants the fair?

'Damon,' said he, 'thy partial praise restrain;  
Not Damon's friendship can my peace restore:  
Alas! his very praise awakes my pain,  
And my poor wounded bosom bleeds the more.

'For, O that Nature on my birth had frown'd,  
Or Fortune fix'd me to some lowly cell!  
Then had my bosom 'scaped this fatal wound,  
Nor had I bid these vernal sweets farewell.

'But, led by Fortune's hand, her darling child,  
My youth her vain licentious bliss admired;  
In Fortune's train the syren Flattery smiled,  
And rashly hallow'd all her queen inspired.

'Of folly studious, even of vices vain,  
Ah, vices gilded by the rich and gay!  
I chased the guileless daughters of the plain,  
Nor dropp'd the chase till Jessy was my prey.

'Poor artless maid! to stain thy spotless name,  
Expense, and Art, and Toil united strove;  
To lure a breast that felt the purest flame,  
Sustain'd by Virtue, but betray'd by Love.

'School'd in the science of Love's mazy wiles,  
I clothed each feature with affected scorn;

I spoke of jealous doubts, and fickle smiles,  
And, feigning, left her anxious and forlorn.

'Then while the fancied rage alarm'd her care,  
Warm to deny, and zealous to disprove,  
I bade my words the wonted softness wear,  
And seized the minute of returning love.

'To thee, my Damon, dare I paint the rest?  
Will yet thy love a candid ear incline?  
Assured that virtue, by misfortune press'd,  
Feels not the sharpness of a pang like mine.

'Nine envious moons matured her growing shame,  
Erewhile to flaunt it in the face of day,  
When scorn'd of Virtue, stigmatized by Fame,  
Low at my feet desponding Jessy lay.

'Henry,' she said, 'by thy dear form subdued,  
See the sad relics of a nymph undone!  
I find, I find this rising sob renew'd;  
I sigh in shades, and sicken at the sun.

'Amid the dreary gloom of night, I cry,  
When will the morn's once pleasing scenes return?  
Yet what can morn's returning ray supply,  
But foes that triumph, or but friends that mourn?

'Alas! no more that joyous morn appears  
That led the tranquil hours of spotless fame,  
For I have steep'd a father's couch in tears,  
And tinged a mother's glowing cheek with shame.

'The vocal birds that raise their matin strain,  
The sportive lambs, increase my pensive moan;  
All seem to chase me from the cheerful plain,  
And talk of truth and innocence alone.

'If through the garden's flowery tribes I stray,  
Where bloom the jasmines that could once allure,  
'Hope not to find delight in us,' they say,  
'For we are spotless, Jessy; we are pure.'

"Ye flowers! that well reproach a nymph so frail,  
Say, could you with my virgin fame compare?  
The brightest bud that scents the vernal gale  
Was not so fragrant; and was not so fair.

"Now the grave old alarm the gentler young,  
And all my fame's abhorr'd contagion flee;  
Trembles each lip, and falters every tongue,  
That bids the morn propitious smile on me.

"Thus for your sake I shun each human eye,  
I bid the sweets of blooming youth adieu:  
To die I languish, but I dread to die,  
Lest my sad fate should nourish pangs for you.

"Raise me from earth; the pains of want remove,  
And let me, silent, seek some friendly shore;  
There only, banish'd from the form I love,  
My weeping virtue shall relapse no more.

"Be but my friend; I ask no dearer name;  
Be such the meed of some more artful fair;  
Nor could it heal my peace, or chase my shame,  
That Pity gave what Love refused to share.

"Force not my tongue to ask its scanty bread,  
Nor hurl thy Jessy to the vulgar crew;  
Not such the parent's board at which I fed!  
Not such the precepts from his lips I drew!

"Haply, when age has silver'd o'er my hair,  
Malice may learn to scorn so mean a spoil;  
Envy may slight a face no longer fair,  
And Pity welcome to my native soil.'

'She spoke-nor was I born of savage race,  
Nor could these hands a niggard boon assign;  
Grateful she clasp'd me in a last embrace,  
And vow'd to waste her life in prayers for mine.

'I saw her foot the lofty bark ascend,

I saw her breast with every passion heave;  
I left her-torn from every earthly friend;  
Oh, my hard bosom! which could bear to leave!

'Brief let me be: the fatal storm arose;  
The billows raged, the pilot's art was vain;  
O'er the tall mast the circling surges close;  
My Jessy-floats upon the watery plain!

'And-see my youth's impetuous fires decay:  
Seek not to stop Reflection's bitter tear;  
But warn the frolic, and instruct the gay,  
From Jessy floating on her watery bier.'

William Shenstone

## Epilogue - To The Tragedy Of Cleone

Well, Ladies-so much for the tragic style-  
And now the custom is to make you smile.  
To make us smile!-methinks I hear you say-  
Why, who can help it, at so strange a play?  
The captain gone three years!-and then to blame  
The faultless conduct of his virtuous dame!  
My stars! what gentle belle would think it treason,  
When thus provoked, to give the brute some reason?  
Out of my house!-this night, forsooth, depart!  
A modern wife had said-'With all my heart-  
But think not, haughty Sir, I'll go alone;  
Order your coach-conduct me safe to Town-  
Give me my jewels, wardrobe, and my maid-  
And pray take care my pin-money be paid.'  
Such is the language of each modish fair;  
Yet memoirs, not of modern growth, declare  
The time has been, when modesty and truth  
Were deem'd additions to the charms of youth;  
When women hid their necks, and veil'd their faces,  
Nor romp'd, nor raked, nor stared at public places,  
Nor took the airs of Amazons for graces:  
Then plain domestic virtues were the mode,  
And wives ne'er dreamt of happiness abroad;  
They loved their children, learnt no flaunting airs,  
But with the joys of wedlock mix'd the cares.  
Those times are past-yet sure they merit praise,  
For marriage triumph'd in those golden days;  
By chaste decorum they affection gain'd;  
By faith and fondness, what they won, maintain'd.  
'Tis yours, Ye Fair! to bring those days again,  
And form anew the hearts of thoughtless men;  
Make beauty's lustre amiable as bright,  
And give the soul, as well as sense, delight;  
Reclaim from folly a fantastic age,  
That scorns the press, the pulpit, and the stage.  
Let truth and tenderness your breasts adorn,  
The marriage chain with transport shall be worn;  
Each blooming virgin, raised into a bride,  
Shall double all their joys, their cares divide;



Alleviate grief, compose the jars of strife,  
And pour the balm that sweetens human life.

William Shenstone

# Extent Of Cookery

Aliusque et idem.

(Another and the same).

When Tom to Cambridge first was sent,  
A plain brown bob he wore;  
Read much, and look'd as though he meant  
To be a fop no more.

See him to Lincoln's-Inn repair,  
His resolution flag;  
He cherishes a length of hair,  
And tucks it in a bag.

Nor Coke nor Salkeld he regards,  
But gets into the House,  
And soon a judge's rank rewards  
His pliant votes and bows.

Adieu, ye bobs! ye bags! give place;  
Full bottoms come instead;  
Good L-d! to see the various ways  
Of dressing-a calf's head!

William Shenstone

## Flirt And Phil

A wit, by learning well refined,  
A beau, but of the rural kind,  
To Sylvia made pretences;  
They both profess'd an equal love,  
Yet hoped by different means to move  
Her judgement of her senses.

Young sprightly Flirt, of blooming mien,  
Watch'd the best minutes to be seen,  
Went - when his glass advised him;  
While meagre Phil of brooks inquired,  
A wight for wit and and parts admired  
And witty ladies prized him.

Sylvia had wit, had spirits too;  
To hear the one, the other view,  
Suspended held the scales;  
Her wit, her youth too, claim'd its share:  
Let none the preference declare,  
But turn up - heads or tails.

William Shenstone

## Hint From Voiture

Let Sol his annual journeys run,  
And when the radiant task is done,  
Confess, through all the globe, 'twou'd pose him,  
To match the charms that Celia shows him.

And should he boast he once had seen  
As just a form, as bright a mien,  
Yet must it still for ever pose him  
To match - what Celia never shows him.

William Shenstone

# Impromptu To Miss Utrecia Smith

Whilst round in wild rotations hurl'd,  
These glittering forms I view,  
Methinks the busy restless world  
Is pictured in a few.

So may the busy world advance,  
Since thus the Fates decree  
It still may have its busy dance,  
Whilst I retire with thee.

William Shenstone

# Inscription For A Medicinal Fountain At The Leasowes

Thou sacred nymph! whose pious care  
Pours from thine urn this mineral rill,  
Whose healing draughts, like crystal fair,  
In pleasing murmurs here distil.

Who guid'st the stream, and joy'st to dwell,  
Where murmurs soft with use agree;  
May Phoebus haunt this hallow'd well,  
And all his Sisters learn of thee.

William Shenstone

# Jemmy Dawson

A ballad. Written about the time of his execution, in the year 1745.

Come listen to my mournful tale,  
Ye tender hearts and lovers dear!  
Nor will you scorn to heave a sigh,  
Nor need you blush to shed a tear.

And thou dear Kitty! peerless maid!  
Do thou a pensive ear incline;  
For thou canst weep at every woe,  
And pity every plaint-but mine.

Young Dawson was a gallant boy,  
A brighter never trod the plain;  
And well he loved one charming maid,  
And dearly was he loved again.

One tender maid, she loved him dear;  
Of gentle blood the damsel came;  
And faultless was her beauteous form,  
And spotless was her virgin fame.

But curse on party's hateful strife,  
That led the favour'd youth astray;  
The day the rebel clans appear'd-  
O had he never seen that day!

Their colours and their sash he wore,  
And in the fatal dress was found;  
And now he must that death endure  
Which gives the brave the keenest wound.

How pale was then his true love's cheek,  
When Jemmy's sentence reach'd her ear!  
For never yet did Alpine snows  
So pale, or yet so chill appear.

With faltering voice she, weeping, said,  
'O Dawson! monarch of my heart!

Think not thy death shall end our loves,  
For thou and I will never part.

'Yet might sweet mercy find a place,  
And bring relief to Jemmy's woes,  
O George! without a prayer for thee,  
My orisons should never close.

'The gracious prince that gave him life,  
Would crown a never-dying flame;  
And every tender babe I bore  
Should learn to lisp the giver's name.

'But though he should be dragg'd in scorn  
To yonder ignominious tree;  
He shall not want one constant friend  
To share the cruel Fates' decree.'

Oh! then her mourning coach was call'd;  
The sledge moved slowly on before;  
Though borne in a triumphal car,  
She had not loved her favourite more.

She follow'd him, prepared to view  
The terrible behests of law;  
And the last scene of Jemmy's woes,  
With calm and steadfast eye she saw.

Distorted was that blooming face,  
Which she had fondly loved so long;  
And stifled was that tuneful breath,  
Which in her praise had sweetly sung:

And sever'd was that beauteous neck,  
Round which her arms had fondly closed;  
And mangled was that beauteous breast,  
On which her lovesick head reposed:

And ravish'd was that constant heart,  
She did to every heart prefer;  
For though it could its king forget,  
'Twas true and loyal still to her.



Amid those unrelenting flames  
She bore this constant heart to see;  
But when 'twas moulder'd into dust,  
'Yet, yet,' she cried, 'I follow thee.

'My death, my death alone can show  
The pure, the lasting love I bore  
Accept, O Heaven! of woes like ours,  
And let us, let us weep no more.'

The dismal scene was o'er and past,  
The lover's mournful hearse retired;  
The maid drew back her languid head,  
And, sighing forth his name, expired.

Though justice ever must prevail,  
The tear my Kitty sheds is due;  
For seldom shall she hear a tale  
So sad, so tender, yet so true.

William Shenstone

# Love And Honor

Sed neque Medorum silvae, ditissima terra  
Nec pulcher Ganges, atque auro turbidus Haemus,  
Laudibus Angligenum certent; non Bactra, nec Indi,  
Totaque thuriferis Panchaia pinguis arenis.

Imitation.

Yet let not Median woods, (abundant track!)  
Nor Ganges fair, nor Haemus, miser-like,  
Proud of his hoarded gold, presume to vie  
With Britain's boast and praise; nor Persian Bactra,  
Nor India's coasts, nor all Panchaia's sands,  
Rich, and exulting in their lofty towers.

---

Let the green olive glad Hesperian shores;  
Her tawny citron, and her orange groves,  
These let Iberia boast; but if in vain,  
To win the stranger plant's diffusive smile,  
The Briton labours, yet our native minds,  
Our constant bosoms, these the dazzled world  
May view with envy; these Iberian dames  
Survey with fix'd esteem and fond desire.  
Hapless Elvira! thy disastrous fate  
May well this truth explain, nor ill adorn  
The British lyre; then chiefly, if the Muse,  
Nor vain, nor partial, from the simple guise  
Of ancient record catch the pensive lay,  
And in less grovelling accents give to Fame.  
Elvira! loveliest maid! the Iberian realm  
Could boast no purer breast, no sprightlier mind,  
No race more splendent, and no form so fair.  
Such was the chance of war, this peerless maid,  
In life's luxuriant bloom, enrich'd the spoil  
Of British victors, victory's noblest pride!  
She, she alone, amid the wailful train  
Of captive maids, assign'd to Henry's care,  
Lord of her life, her fortune, and her fame!

He, generous youth! with no penurious hand,  
The tedious moments, that unjoyous roll  
Where Freedom's cheerful radiance shines no more,  
Essay'd to soften; conscious of the pang  
That Beauty feels, to waste its fleeting hours  
In some dim fort, by foreign rule restrain'd,  
Far from the haunts of men, or eye of day!  
Sometimes, to cheat her bosom of its cares,  
Her kind protector number'd o'er the toils  
Himself had worn; the frowns of angry seas,  
Or hostile rage, or faithless friend, more fell  
Than storm or foe; if haply she might find  
Her cares diminish'd; fruitless, fond essay!  
Now to her lovely hand, with modest awe  
The tender lute he gave; she, not averse,  
Nor destitute of skill, with willing hand  
Call'd forth angelic strains; the sacred debt  
Of gratitude, she said, whose just commands  
Still might her hand with equal pride obey!  
Nor to the melting sounds the nymph refused  
Her vocal art; harmonious as the strain  
Of some imprison'd lark, who, daily cheer'd  
By guardian cares, repays them with a song;  
Nor droops, nor deems sweet liberty resign'd.  
The song, not artless had she framed to paint  
Disastrous passion; how, by tyrant laws  
Of idiot custom sway'd, some soft-eyed fair  
Loved only one, nor dared that love reveal!  
How the soft anguish banish'd from her cheek  
The damask rose full-blown; a fever came,  
And from her bosom forced the plaintive tale;  
Then, swift as light, he sought the love-lorn maid,  
But vainly sought her; torn by swifter fate  
To join the tenants of the myrtle shade,  
Love's mournful victims on the plains below.  
Sometimes, as Fancy spoke the pleasing task,  
She taught her artful needle to display  
The various pride of spring; then swift upsprung  
Thickets of myrtle, eglantine, and rose:  
There might you see, on gentle toils intent,  
A train of busy Loves; some pluck the flower,  
Some twine the garland, some with grave grimace

Around a vacant warrior cast the wreath.  
'Twas paint, 'twas life! and sure to piercing eyes  
The warrior's face depicted Henry's mien.  
Now had the generous chief with joy perused  
The royal scroll, which to their native home,  
Their ancient rights, uninjured, unredeem'd,  
Restored the captives. Forth with rapid haste  
To glad his fair Elvira's ear, he sprung,  
Fired by the bliss he panted to convey;  
But fired in vain! Ah! what was his amaze,  
His fond distress, when o'er her pallid face  
Dejection reign'd, and from her lifeless hand  
Down dropt the myrtle's fair unfinish'd flower!  
Speechless she stood; at length, with accents faint,  
'Well may my native shore,' she said, 'resound  
Thy monarch's praise; and here Elvira prove  
Of thine forgetful; flowers shall cease to feel  
The fostering breeze, and Nature change her laws!'  
And now the grateful edict wide alarm'd  
The British host. Around the smiling youths,  
Call'd to their native scenes, with willing haste  
Their fleet unmoor; impatient of the love  
That weds each bosom to its native soil.  
The patriot passion! strong in every clime,  
How justly theirs who find no foreign sweets  
To dissipate their loves, or match their own.  
Not so Elvira! she, disastrous maid!  
Was doubly captive; power nor chance could loose  
The subtle bands; she loved her generous foe;  
She, where her Henry dwelt, her Henry smiled,  
Could term her native shore; her native shore,  
By him deserted, some unfriendly strand,  
Strange, bleak, forlorn! a desert waste and wild.  
The fleet careen'd, the wind propitious fill'd  
The swelling sails, the glittering transports waved  
Their pennants gay, and halcyons' azure wing,  
With flight auspicious, skimm'd the placid main.  
On her lone couch in tears Elvira lay,  
And chid the officious wind, the tempting sea,  
And wish'd a storm as merciless as tore  
Her labouring bosom. Fondly now she strove  
To banish passion; now the vassal days,

The captive moments, that so smoothly past,  
 By many an art recall'd; now from her lute  
 With trembling fingers call'd the favourite sounds  
 Which Henry deign'd to praise; and now essay'd,  
 With mimic chains of silken fillets wove,  
 To paint her captive state; if any fraud  
 Might to her love the pleasing scenes prolong,  
 And with the dear idea feast the soul.  
 But now the chief return'd, prepared to launch  
 On Ocean's willing breast, and bid adieu  
 To his fair prisoner. She, soon as she heard  
 His hated errand, now no more conceal'd  
 The raging flame; but with a spreading blush  
 And rising sigh, the latent pang disclosed.  
 'Yes, generous youth! I see thy bosom glow  
 With virtuous transport, that the task is thine  
 To solve my chains, and to my weeping friends,  
 And every longing relative, restore  
 A soft-eyed maid, a mild offenceless prey!  
 But know, my Soldier! never youthful mind,  
 Torn from the lavish joys of wild expense  
 By him he loathed, and in a dungeon bound  
 To languish out his bloom, could match the pains  
 This ill-starr'd freedom gives my tortured mind.  
 'What call I freedom? is it that these limbs,  
 From rigid bolts secure, may wander far  
 From him I love? Alas! ere I may boast  
 That sacred blessing, some superior power  
 To mortal kings, to sublunary thrones,  
 Must loose my passion, must unchain my soul:  
 Even that I loathe: all liberty I loathe!  
 But most the joyless privilege to gaze  
 With cold indifference, where desert is love.  
 'True, I was born an alien to those eyes  
 I ask alone to please; my fortune's crime!  
 And ah! this flatter'd form, by dress endear'd  
 To Spanish eyes, by dress may thine offend,  
 Whilst I, ill-fated maid! ordain'd to strive  
 With custom's load, beneath its weight expire.  
 'Yet Henry's beauties knew in foreign garb  
 To vanquish me; his form, howe'er disguised,  
 To me were fatal! no fantastic robe

That e'er Caprice invented, Custom wore,  
 Or Folly smiled on, could eclipse thy charms.  
 'Perhaps by birth decreed, by Fortune placed  
 Thy country's foe, Elvira's warmest plea  
 Seems but the subtler accent fraud inspires;  
 My tenderest glances but the specious flowers,  
 That shade the viper while she plots her wound.  
 And can the trembling candidate of love  
 Awake thy fears? and can a female breast,  
 By ties of grateful duty bound, ensnare?  
 Is there no brighter mien, no softer smile  
 For love to wear, to dark Deceit unknown?  
 Heaven search my soul! and if through all its cells  
 Lurk the pernicious drop of poisonous guile,  
 Full on my fenceless head its viall'd wrath  
 May Fate exhaust, and for my happiest hour  
 Exalt the vengeance I prepare for thee!  
 'Ah me! nor Henry's nor his country's foe,  
 On thee I gazed, and Reason soon dispell'd  
 Dim Error's gloom, and to thy favour'd isle  
 Assign'd its total merit, unrestrain'd.  
 Oh! lovely region to the candid eye!  
 'Twas there my fancy saw the Virtues dwell,  
 The Loves, the Graces, play, and bless'd the soil  
 That nurtured thee! for sure the Virtues form'd  
 Thy generous breast; the Loves, the Graces plann'd  
 Thy shapely limbs. Relation, birth, essay'd  
 Their partial power in vain; again I gazed,  
 And Albion's isle appear'd, amidst a tract  
 Of savage wastes, the darling of the skies!  
 And thou, by Nature form'd, by Fate assign'd,  
 To paint the genius of thy native shore.  
 'Tis true, with flowers, with many a dazzling scene  
 Of burnish'd plants, to lure a female eye,  
 Iberia glows; but, ah! the genial sun,  
 That gilds the lemon's fruit, or scents the flower,  
 On Spanish minds, a nation's nobler boast,  
 Beams forth ungentle influences. There  
 Sits Jealousy enthroned, and at each ray  
 Exultant lights his slow consuming fires.  
 Not such thy charming region; long before  
 My sweet experience taught me to decide

Of English worth, the sound had pleased mine ear.  
Is there that savage coast, that rude sojourn,  
Stranger to British worth? the worth which forms  
The kindest friends, the most tremendous foes;  
First, best supports of liberty and love!  
No, let subjected India, while she throws  
O'er Spanish deeds the veil, your praise resound.  
Long as I heard, or ere in story read  
Of English fame, my bias'd partial breast  
Wish'd them success: and happiest she, I cried,  
Of women happiest she, who shares the love,  
The fame, the virtues, of an English lord.  
And now, what shall I say? Blest be the hour  
Your fair-built vessels touch'd the Iberian shores:  
Blest, did I say, the time? if I may bless  
That loved event, let Henry's smiles declare.  
Our hearts and cities won, will Henry's youth  
Forego its nobler conquest? will he slight  
The soft endearments of the lovelier spoil?  
And yet Iberia's sons, with every vow  
Of lasting faith, have sworn these humble charms  
Were not excell'd; the source of all their pains,  
And love her just desert, who sues for love,  
But sues to thee, while natives sigh in vain.  
'Perhaps in Henry's eye (for vulgar minds  
Dissent from his) it spreads a hateful stain  
On honest Fame, amid his train to bear  
A female friend. Then learn, my gentle youth!  
Not Love himself, with all the pointed pains  
That store his quiver, shall seduce my soul  
From honour's laws. Elvira once denied  
A consort's name, more swift than lightning flies  
When elements discordant vex the sky,  
Shall, blushing, from the form she loves retire.  
Yet if the specious wish the vulgar voice  
Has titled Prudence, sways a soul like thine,  
In gems or gold what proud Iberian dame  
Eclipses me? Nor paint the dreary storms  
Or hair-breadth 'scapes that haunt the boundless deep,  
And force from tender eyes the silent tear;  
When Memory to the pensive maid suggests,  
In full contrast, the safe domestic scene

For these resign'd. Beyond the frantic rage  
Of conquering heroes brave, the female mind,  
When steel'd by love, in Love's most horrid way  
Beholds not danger, or, beholding, scorns.  
Heaven take my life, but let it crown my love!  
She ceased; and ere his words her fate decreed,  
Impatient, watch'd the language of his eye:  
There Pity dwelt, and from its tender sphere  
Sent looks of love, and faithless hopes inspired.  
'Forgive me, generous maid!' the youth return'd,  
'If by thy accents charm'd, thus long I bore  
To let such sweetness plead, alas! in vain.  
Thy virtue merits more than crowns can yield  
Of solid bliss, or happiest love bestow  
But ere from native shores I plough'd the main,  
To one dear maid, by virtue, and by charms  
Alone endear'd, my plighted vows I gave;  
To guard my faith, whatever chance should wait  
My warring sword: if conquest, fame, and spoil,  
Graced my return, before her feet to pour  
The glittering treasure, and the laurel wreath,  
Enjoying conquest then, and fame and spoil:  
If Fortune frown'd adverse, and Death forbade  
The blissful union, with my latest breath  
To dwell on Medway's and Maria's name.  
This ardent vow deep-rooted, from my soul  
No dangers tore; this vow my bosom fired  
To conquer danger, and the spoil enjoy.  
Her shall I leave, with fair events elate,  
Who crown'd mine humblest fortune with her love?  
Her shall I leave, who now, perchance, alone  
Climbs the proud cliff, and chides my slow return?  
And shall that vessel, whose approaching sails  
Shall swell her breast with extasies, convey  
Death to her hopes, and anguish to her soul?  
No! may the deep my villain corse devour,  
If all the wealth Iberian mines conceal,  
If all the charms Iberian maids disclose,  
If thine, Elvira, thine, uniting all,  
Thus far prevail-nor can thy virtuous breast  
Demand what honour, faith, and love, denies.'  
'Oh! happy she,' rejoin'd the pensive maid,



'Who shares thy fame, thy virtue, and thy love!  
And be she happy! thy distinguish'd choice  
Declares her worth, and vindicates her claim.  
Farewell my luckless hopes! my flattering dreams  
Of rapturous days! my guilty suit, farewell!  
Yet fond howe'er my plea, or deep the wound  
That waits my fame, let not the random shaft  
Of Censure pierce with me the Iberian dames;  
They love with caution, and with happier stars.  
And, oh! by pity moved, restrain the taunts  
Of levity, nor brand Elvira's flame;  
By merit raised, by gratitude approved,  
By hope confirm'd, with artless truth reveal'd,  
Let, let me say, but for one matchless maid  
Of happier birth, with mutual ardour crown'd.  
'These radiant gems, which burnish Happiness,  
But mock Misfortune, to thy favourite's hand  
With care convey; and well may such adorn  
Her cheerful front, who finds in thee alone  
The source of every transport, but disgrace  
My pensive breast, which, doom'd to lasting woe,  
In thee the source of every bliss resign.  
'And now, farewell, thou darling youth! the gem  
Of English merit! Peace, content, and joy,  
And tender hopes, and young desires, farewell!  
Attend, ye smiling Train! this gallant mind  
Back to his native shores; there sweetly smooth  
His evening pillow, dance around his groves,  
And, where he treads, with violets paint his way:  
But leave Elvira! leave her, now no more  
Your frail companion! in the sacred cells  
Of some lone cloister let me shroud my shame  
There to the matin bell, obsequious, pour  
My constant orisons. The wanton Loves  
And gay Desires, shall spy the glimmering towers,  
And wing their flight aloof: but rest confirm'd,  
That never shall Elvira's tongue conclude  
Her shortest prayer, ere Henry's dear success  
The warmest accent of her zeal employ.'  
Thus spoke the weeping fair, whose artless mind  
Impartial scorn'd to model her esteem  
By native customs; dress, and face, and air,

And manners, less; nor yet resolved in vain.  
He, bound by prior love, the solemn vow  
Given and received, to soft compassion gave  
A tender tear; then with that kind adieu  
Esteem could warrant, wearied Heaven with prayers  
To shield that tender breast he left forlorn.  
He ceased; and to the cloister's pensive scene  
Elvira shaped her solitary way.

William Shenstone

## Love And Music. Written At Oxford, When Young

Shall Love alone for ever claim  
An universal right to fame,  
An undisputed sway?  
Or has not Music equal charms,  
To fill the breast with strange alarms,  
And make the world obey?

The Thracian bard, as poets tell,  
Could mitigate the powers of hell,  
Even Pluto's nicer ear:  
His arts, no more than Love's, we find  
To deities or men confined,  
Drew brutes in crowds to hear.

Whatever favourite passion reign'd,  
The poet still his right maintain'd  
O'er all that ranged the plain:  
The fiercer tyrants could assuage,  
Or fire the timorous into rage,  
Whene'er he changed the strain.

In milder lays the bard began;  
Soft notes through every finger ran,  
And echoing charm'd the place:  
See! fawning lions gaze around,  
And, taught to quit their savage sound,  
Assume a gentler grace.

When Cymon view'd the fair one's charms,  
Her ruby lips, and snowy arms,  
And told her beauties o'er:  
When Love reform'd his awkward tone,  
And made each clownish gesture known,  
It show'd but equal power.

The bard now tries a sprightlier sound,  
When all the feather'd race around  
Perceived the varied strains;  
The soaring lark the note pursues;

The timorous dove around him coos,  
And Philomel complains.

An equal power of Love I've seen,  
Incite the deer to scour the green,  
And chase his barking foe.  
Sometimes has Love, with greater might,  
To challenge-nay-sometimes-to fight,  
Provoked the enamour'd beau.

When Silvia treads the smiling plain,  
How glows the heart of every swain,  
By pleasing tumults tost!  
When Handel's solemn accents roll,  
Each breast is fired, each raptured soul  
In sweet confusion lost.

If she her melting glances dart,  
Or he his dying airs impart,  
Our spirits sink away.  
Enough, enough! dear nymph, give o'er;  
And thou, great artist! urge no more  
Thy unresisted sway.

Thus Love or Sound affects the mind:  
But when their various powers are join'd,  
Fly, daring mortal, fly!  
For when Selinda's charms appear,  
And I her tuneful accents hear-  
I burn, I faint, I die!

William Shenstone

# Nancy Of The Vale

The western sky was purpled o'er  
With every pleasing ray;  
And flocks reviving felt no more  
The sultry heats of day;

When from an hazel's artless bower  
Soft warbled Strephon's tongue;  
He blest the scene, he blest the hour,  
While Nancy's praise he sung.

'Let fops with fickle falsehood range  
The paths of wanton love,  
While weeping maids lament their change,  
And sadden every grove:

'But endless blessings crown the day  
I saw fair Esham's dale!  
And every blessing find its way  
To Nancy of the Vale.

"Twas from Avona's banks the maid  
Diffused her lovely beams,  
And every shining glance display'd  
The Naiad of the streams.

'Soft as the wild-duck's tender young,  
That float on Avon's tide;  
Bright as the water-lily, sprung,  
And glittering near its side

'Fresh as the bordering flowers her bloom,  
Her eye all mild to view;  
The little halcyon's azure plume  
Was never half so blue.

'Her shape was like the reed so sleek,  
So taper, strait, and fair;  
Her dimpled smile, her blushing cheek,  
How charming sweet they were!

'Far in the winding vale retired,  
This peerless bud I found,  
And shadowing rocks and woods conspired  
To fence her beauties round.

'That Nature in so lone a dell  
Should form a nymph so sweet!  
Or Fortune to her secret cell  
Conduct my wandering feet!

'Gay lordlings sought her for their bride,  
But she would ne'er incline:  
'Prove to your equals true,' she cried,  
'As I will prove to mine.

'Tis Strephon, on the mountain's brow,  
Has won my right good will;  
To him I gave my plighted vow,  
With him I'll climb the hill.'

'Struck with her charms and gentle truth,  
I clasp'd the constant fair;  
To her alone I gave my youth,  
And vow my future care.

'And when this vow shall faithless prove,  
Or I those charms forego;  
The stream that saw our tender love,  
That stream shall cease to flow.'

William Shenstone

# Ode - So Dear My Lucio Is To Me

So dear my Lucio is to me,  
So well our minds and tempers blend,  
That seasons may for ever flee,  
And ne'er divide me from my friend;  
But let the favour'd boy forbear  
To tempt with love my only fair.

O Lycon! born when every Muse,  
When every Grace, benignant smiled,  
With all a parent's breast could choose  
To bless her loved, her only child;  
'Tis thine, so richly graced, to prove  
More noble cares than cares of love.

Together we from early youth  
Have trod the flowery tracks of time,  
Together mused in search of truth,  
O'er learned sage, or bard sublime;  
And well thy cultured breast I know,  
What wondrous treasure it can show!

Come, then, resume thy charming lyre,  
And sing some patriot's worth sublime,  
Whilst I in fields of soft desire  
Consume my fair and fruitless prime;  
Whose reed aspires but to display  
The flame that burns me night and day.

O come! the Dryads of the woods  
Shall daily soothe thy studious mind,  
The blue-eyed nymphs of yonder floods  
Shall meet and court thee to be kind;  
And Fame sits listening for thy lays  
To swell her trump with Lucio's praise.

Like me, the plover fondly tries  
To lure the sportsman from her nest,  
And fluttering on with anxious cries,  
Too plainly shows her tortured breast;

O let him, conscious of her care,  
Pity her pains, and learn to spare.

William Shenstone



# Ode To A Young Lady

[Somewhat Too Solicitous about Her Manner of Expression]

Survey, my fair! that lucid stream,  
Adown the smiling valley stray;  
Would Art attempt, or Fancy dream,  
To regulate its winding way?

So pleas'd I view thy shining hair  
In loose dishevell'd ringlets flow:  
Not all thy art, not all thy care,  
Can there one single grace bestow.

Survey again that verdant hill,  
With native plants enamell'd o'er;  
Say, can the painter's utmost skill  
Instruct one flower to please us more?

As vain it were, with artful dye  
To change the bloom thy cheeks disclose;  
And oh may Laura, ere she try,  
With fresh vermilion paint the rose.

Hark how the wood-lark's tuneful throat  
Can every study'd grace excel;  
Let Art constrain the rambling note,  
And will she, Laura, please so well?

Oh ever keep thy native ease,  
By no pedantic law confin'd!  
For Laura's voice is form'd to please,  
So Laura's words be not unkind.

William Shenstone

# Ode To Cynthia, On The Approach Of Spring

Now in the cowslip's dewy cell  
The fairies make their bed,  
They hover round the crystal well,  
The turf in circles tread.

The lovely linnet now her song  
Tunes sweetest in the wood;  
The twittering swallow skims along  
The azure liquid flood.

The morning breeze wafts Flora's kiss  
In fragrance to the sense;  
The happy shepherd feels the bliss,  
And she takes no offence.

But not the linnet's sweetest song  
That ever fill'd the wood;  
Or twittering swallow that along  
The azure liquid flood

Skims swiftly, harbinger of spring,  
Or morning's sweetest breath,  
Or Flora's kiss, to me can bring  
A remedy for death.

For death-what do I say? Yes, death  
Must surely end my days,  
If cruel Cynthia slights my faith,  
And will not hear my lays.

No more with festive garlands bound,  
I at the wake shall be;  
No more my feet shall press the ground  
In dance with wonted glee;

No more my little flock I'll keep,  
To some dark cave I'll fly;  
I've nothing now to do but weep,  
To mourn my fate, and sigh.

Ah! Cynthia, thy Damon's cries  
Are heard at dead of night;  
But they, alas! are doom'd to rise  
Like smoke upon the sight.

They rise in vain, ah me! in vain  
Are scatter'd in the wind;  
Cynthia does not know the pain  
That rankles in my mind.

If sleep perhaps my eyelids close,  
'Tis but to dream of you;  
A while I cease to feel my woes,  
Nay, think I 'm happy too.

I think I press with kisses pure,  
Your lovely rosy lips;  
And you're my bride, I think I'm sure,  
Till gold the mountain tips.

When waked, aghast I look around,  
And find my charmer floun;  
Then bleeds afresh my galling wound,  
While I am left alone.

Take pity, then, O gentlest maid!  
On thy poor Damon's heart:  
Remember what I've often said,  
'Tis you can cure my smart.

William Shenstone

# Ode To Health, 1730

O Health! capricious maid!  
Why dost thou shun my peaceful bower,  
Where I had hope to share thy power,  
And bless thy lasting aid?

Since thou, alas! art flown,  
It 'vails not whether Muse or Grace,  
With tempting smile, frequent the place;  
I sigh for thee alone.

Age not forbids thy stay:  
Thou yet mightst act the friendly part;  
Thou yet mightst raise this languid heart;  
Why speed so swift away?

Thou scorn'st the city air;  
I breathe fresh gales o'er furrow'd ground,  
Yet hast not thou my wishes crown'd,  
O false! O partial Fair!

I plunge into the wave;  
And though with purest hands I raise  
A rural altar to thy praise,  
Thou wilt not deign to save.

Amid my well-known grove,  
Where mineral fountains vainly bear  
Thy boasted name, and titles fair,  
Why scorns thy foot to rove?

Thou hear'st the sportsman's claim;  
Enabling him, with idle noise,  
To drown the Muse's melting voice,  
And fright the timorous game.

Is thought thy foe? Adieu,  
Ye midnight lamps! ye curious tomes!  
Mine eye o'er hills and valleys roams,  
And deals no more with you.

Is it the clime you flee?  
Yet midst his unremitting snows  
The poor Laponian's bosom glows,  
And shares bright rays from thee.

There was, there was a time,  
When, though I scorn'd thy guardian care,  
Nor made a vow, nor said a prayer,  
I did not rue the crime.

Who then more blest than  
When the glad schoolboy's task was done,  
And forth, with jocund spirit, I run  
To freedom and to joy?

How jovial then the day!  
What since have all my labours found,  
Thus climbing life, to gaze around,  
That can thy loss repay?

Wert thou, alas! but kind,  
Methinks no frown that Fortune wears,  
Nor lessen'd hopes, nor growing cares,  
Could sink my cheerful mind.

Whate'er my stars include,  
What other breasts convert to pain,  
My towering mind should soon disdain,  
Should scorn-Ingratitude!

Repair this mouldering cell,  
And, blest with objects found at home,  
And envying none their fairer dome,  
How pleased my soul should dwell!

Temperance should guard the doors;  
From room to room should Memory stray,  
And, ranging all in neat array,  
Enjoy her pleasing stores--

There let them rest unknown,

The types of many a pleasing scene;  
But to preserve them bright or clean,  
Is thine, Fair Queen! alone.

William Shenstone

# Ode To Indolence

Ah! why for ever on the wing  
Persists my wearied soul to roam?  
Why, ever cheated, strives to bring  
Or pleasure or contentment home?

Thus the poor bird, that draws his name  
From Paradise's honour'd groves,  
Careless fatigues his little frame,  
Nor finds the resting-place he loves.

Lo! on the rural mossy bed  
My limbs with careless ease reclined;  
Ah, gentle Sloth! indulgent spread  
The same soft bandage o'er my mind.

For why should lingering thought invade,  
Yet every worldly prospect cloy?  
Lend me, soft Sloth! thy friendly aid,  
And give me peace, debarr'd of joy.

Lov'st thou yon calm and silent flood,  
That never ebbs, that never flows;  
Protected by the circling wood  
From each tempestuous wind that blows?

An altar on its bank shall rise,  
Where oft thy votary shall be found;  
What time pale Autumn lulls the skies,  
And sickening verdure fades around.

Ye busy Race! ye factious Train!  
That haunt ambition's guilty shrine;  
No more perplex the world in vain,  
But offer here your vows with mine.

And thou, puissant Queen! be kind:  
If e'er I shared thy balmy power,  
If e'er I sway'd my active mind  
To weave for thee the rural bower;

Dissolve in sleep each anxious care;  
Each unavailing sigh remove;  
And only let me wake to share  
The sweets of friendship and of love.

William Shenstone



# Ode To Memory

O Memory! Celestial maid!  
Who glean'st the flowerets cropt by time;  
And, suffering not a leaf to fade,  
Preserv'st the blossoms of our prime;  
Bring, bring those moments to my mind  
When life was new and Lesbia kind.

And bring that garland to my sight,  
With which my favour'd crook she bound;  
And bring that wreath of roses bright,  
Which then my festive temples crown'd;  
And to my raptured ear convey  
The gentle things she deign'd to say

And sketch with care the Muse's bower,  
Where Isis rolls her silver tide  
Nor yet omit one reed or flower  
That shines on Cherwell's verdant side;  
If so thou mayst those hours prolong,  
When polish'd Lycon join'd my song.

The song it 'vails not to recite-  
But, sure, to soothe our youthful dreams,  
Those banks and streams appear'd more bright  
Than other banks, than other streams;  
Or, by the softening pencil shown,  
Assume they beauties not their own?

And paint that sweetly-vacant scene,  
When, all beneath the poplar bough,  
My spirits light, my soul serene,  
I breathed in verse one cordial vow:  
That nothing should my soul inspire  
But friendship warm and love entire.

Dull to the sense of new delight,  
On thee the drooping muse attends;  
As some fond lover, robb'd of sight,  
On thy expressive power depends,

Nor would exchange thy glowing lines,  
To live the lord of all that shines.

But let me chase those vows away,  
Which at Ambition's shrine I made;  
Nor ever let thy skill display  
Those anxious moments, ill repaid:  
Oh! from my breast that season rase,  
And bring my childhood in its place.

Bring me the bells, the rattle bring,  
And bring the hobby I bestrode,  
When pleased, in many a sportive ring,  
Around the room I jovial rode;  
Even let me bid my lyre adieu,  
And bring the whistle that I blew.

Then will I muse, and, pensive, say,  
Why did not these enjoyments last?  
How sweetly wasted I the day,  
While innocence allow'd to waste!  
Ambition's toils alike are vain,  
But ah! for pleasure yield us pain.

William Shenstone

# Ode, Written 1739

Urit spes animi credula mutui.-Hor.

Imitation.

Fond hope of a reciprocal desire  
Inflames the breast.

'Twas not by beauty's aid alone  
That Love usurp'd his airy throne,  
His boasted power display'd;  
'Tis kindness that secures his aim,  
'Tis hope that feeds the kindling flame  
Which beauty first convey'd.

In Clara's eyes the lightning view;  
Her lips with all the rose's hue  
Have all its sweets combined;  
Yet vain the blush, and faint the fire,  
Till lips at once, and eyes, conspire  
To prove the charmer kind--

Though wit might gild the tempting snare  
With softest accent, sweetest air,  
By envy's self admired;  
If Lesbia's wit betray'd her scorn,  
In vain might every Grace adorn  
What every Muse inspired.

Thus airy Strephon tuned his lyre-  
He scorn'd the pangs of wild desire,  
Which lovesick swains endure;  
Resolved to brave the keenest dart,  
Since frowns could never wound his heart;  
And smiles-must ever cure.

But, ah! how false these maxims prove,  
How frail security from love,  
Experience hourly shows;

Love can imagined smiles supply;  
On every charming lip and eye  
Eternal sweets bestows.

In vain we trust the fair one's eyes;  
In vain the sage explores the skies,  
To learn from stars his fate;  
Till, led by fancy wide astray,  
He finds no planet mark his way;  
Convinced and wise-too late.

As partial to their words we prove,  
Then boldly join the lists of love,  
With towering hopes supplied:  
So heroes, taught by doubtful shrines,  
Mistook their deity's designs;  
Then took the field-and died.

William Shenstone

## On Certain Pastorals

So rude and tuneless are thy lays,  
The weary audience vow  
'Tis not th' Arcadian swain that sings,  
But 'tis his herds that low.

William Shenstone

## On Miss M--'s's Dancing

Of all that gives politeness birth,  
Of all that claims to please,  
In motion, manners, or in mirth,  
The surest source is ease.

With silent step, and graceful air,  
See gentle Sylvia move;  
Whilst heedless gazers, unaware,  
Resign their soul to love.

Accomplish'd maid! my trivial rhyme  
Must do thy graces wrong;  
Who dost not only dance in time,  
But steal, like time, along.

William Shenstone

## On Mr. C -- Of Kidderminster's Poetry

Thy verses, friend! are Kidderminster stuff,  
And I must own you've measured out enough.

William Shenstone

# Rural Elegance, An Ode To The Late Duchess Of Somerset

While orient skies restore the day,  
And dew-drops catch the lucid ray;  
Amid the sprightly scenes of morn  
Will aught the Muse inspire?  
Oh! peace to yonder clamorous horn  
That drowns the sacred lyre!

Ye rural Thanes! that o'er the mossy down  
Some panting, timorous hare pursue,  
Does Nature mean your joys alone to crown?  
Say, does she smooth her lawns for you?  
For you does Echo bid the rocks reply,  
And, urged by rude constraint, resound the jovial cry?

See from the neighbouring hill, forlorn,  
The wretched swain your sport survey;  
He finds his faithful fences torn,  
He finds his labour'd crops a prey;  
He sees his flock no more in circles feed,  
Haply beneath your ravage bleed,  
And with no random curses loads the deed.

Nor yet, ye Swains! conclude  
That Nature smiles for you alone;  
Your bounded souls and your conceptions crude,  
The proud, the selfish boast disown:  
Yours be the produce of the soil;  
O may it still reward your toil!  
Nor ever the defenceless train  
Of clinging infants ask support in vain!

But though the various harvest gild your plains,  
Does the mere landscape feast your eye?  
Or the warm hope of distant gains  
Far other cause of glee supply?  
Is not the red-streak's future juice  
The source of your delight profound,



Where Ariconium pours her gems profuse,  
Purpling a whole horizon round?  
Athirst ye praise the limpid stream, 'tis true;  
But though the pebbled shores among  
It mimic no unpleasing song,  
The limpid fountain murmurs not for you.

Unpleased ye see the thickets bloom,  
Unpleased the spring her flowery robe resume;  
Unmoved the mountain's airy pile,  
The dappled mead without a smile  
O let a rural conscious Muse,  
For well she knows, your froward sense accuse:  
Forth to the solemn oak you bring the square,  
And span the massy trunk, before you cry, 'Tis fair.

Nor yet, ye Learn'd! nor yet, ye Courtly Train!  
If haply from your haunts ye stray  
To waste with us a summer's day,  
Exclude the taste of every swain,  
Nor our untutor'd sense disdain:  
'Tis nature only gives exclusive right  
To relish her supreme delight  
She, where she pleases, kind or coy,  
Who furnishes the scene, and forms us to enjoy.

Then hither bring the fair ingenuous mind,  
By her auspicious aid refined.  
Lo! not an hedge-row hawthorn blows,  
Or humble harebell paints the plain,  
Or valley winds, or fountain flows,  
Or purple heath is tinged in vain:  
For such the rivers dash the foaming tides,  
The mountain swells, the dale subsides:  
Even thriftless furze detains their wandering sight,  
And the rough barren rock grows pregnant with delight.

With what suspicious fearful care  
The sordid wretch secures his claim,  
If haply some luxurious heir  
Should alienate the fields that wear his name!  
What scruples lest some future birth

Should litigate a span of earth!  
Bonds, contracts, feoffments, names unmeet for prose,  
The towering Muse endures not to disclose;  
Alas! her unreversed decree,  
More comprehensive and more free,  
Her lavish charter, taste, appropriates all we see.

Let gondolas their painted flags unfolds,  
And be the solemn day enroll'd,  
When, to confirm his lofty plea,  
In nuptial sort, with bridal gold,  
The grave Venetian weds the sea;  
Each laughing Muse derides the vow;  
Even Adria scorns the mock embrace,  
To some lone hermit on the mountain's brow,  
Allotted, from his natal hour,  
With all her myrtle shores in dower.  
His breast, to admiration prone,  
Enjoys the smile upon her face,  
Enjoys triumphant every grace,  
And finds her more his own.

Fatigued with Form's oppressive laws,  
When Somerset avoids the great,  
When, cloy'd with merited applause,  
She seeks the rural calm retreat,  
Does she not praise each mossy cell,  
And feel the truth my numbers tell?  
When deafen'd by the loud acclaim  
Which genius graced with rank obtains,  
Could she not more delighted hear  
Yon throstle chant the rising year?  
Could she not spurn the wreaths of fame,  
To crop the primrose of the plains?  
Does she not sweets in each fair valley find,  
Lost to the sons of power, unknown to half mankind?

Ah! can she covet there to see  
The splendid slaves, the reptile race,  
That oil the tongue, and bow the knee,  
That slight her merit, but adore her place?  
Far happier, if aright I deem,

When from gay throngs, and gilded spires,  
To where the lonely halcyons play,  
Her philosophic step retires:  
While studious of the moral theme,  
She, to some smooth sequester'd stream  
Likens the swains' inglorious day;  
Pleased from the flowery margin to survey,  
How cool, serene, and clear, the current glides away.

O blind to truth, to virtue blind,  
Who slight the sweetly pensive mind!  
On whose fair birth the Graces mild,  
And every Muse prophetic smiled.  
Not that the poet's boasted fire  
Should Fame's wide-echoing trumpet swell;  
Or, on the music of his lyre  
Each future age with rapture dwell;  
The vaunted sweets of praise remove,  
Yet shall such bosoms claim a part  
In all that glads the human heart;  
Yet these the spirits form'd to judge and prove  
All Nature's charms immense, and heaven's unbounded love.

And, oh! the transport most allied to song,  
In some fair villa's peaceful bound,  
To catch soft hints from Nature's tongue,  
And bid Arcadia bloom around;  
Whether we fringe the sloping hill,  
Or smoothe below the verdant mead;  
Whether we break the falling rill,  
Or through meandering mazes lead;  
Or in the horrid brambles' room  
Bid careless groups of roses bloom;  
Or let some shelter'd lake serene  
Reflect flowers, woods, and spires, and brighten all the scene.

O sweet disposal of the rural hour!  
O beauties never known to cloy!  
While Worth and Genius haunt the favour'd bower,  
And every gentle breast partakes the joy;  
While Charity at eve surveys the swain,  
Enabled by these toils to cheer

A train of helpless infants dear,  
Speed whistling home across the plain;  
See vagrant Luxury, her handmaid grown,  
For half her graceless deeds atone,  
And hails the bounteous work, and ranks it with her own.

Why brand these pleasures with the name  
Of soft, unsocial toils, of indolence and shame?  
Search but the garden, or the wood,  
Let yon admired carnation own,  
Not all was meant for raiment, or for food,  
Not all for needful use alone;  
There while the seeds of future blossoms dwell,  
'Tis colour'd for the sight, perfumed to please the smell.  
Why knows the nightingale to sing?  
Why flows the pine's nectareous juice?  
Why shines with paint the linnet's wing?  
For sustenance alone? for use?  
For preservation? Every sphere  
Shall bid fair Pleasure's rightful claim appear.

And sure there seem, of humankind,  
Some born to shun the solemn strife;  
Some for amusive tasks design'd,  
To soothe the certain ills of life;  
Grace its lone vales with many a budding rose,  
New founts of bliss disclose,  
Call forth refreshing shades, and decorate repose.

From plains and woodlands; from the view  
Of rural Nature's blooming face,  
Smit with the glare of rank and place,  
To courts the sons of Fancy flew;  
There long had Art ordain'd a rival seat,  
There had she lavish'd all her care  
To form a scene more dazzling fair,  
And call'd them from their green retreat  
To share her proud control;  
Had given the robe with grace to flow,  
Had taught exotic gems to glow;  
And emulous of Nature's power,  
Mimic'd the plume, the leaf, the flower;

Changed the complexion's native hue,  
Moulded each rustic limb anew,  
And warp'd the very soul!

Awhile her magic strikes the novel eye,  
Awhile the fairy forms delight;  
And now aloof we seem to fly  
On purple pinions through a purer sky,  
Where all is wondrous, all is bright:  
Now, landed on some spangled shore,  
Awhile each dazzled maniac roves,  
By sapphire lakes through emerald groves:  
Paternal acres please no more:  
Adieu, the simple, the sincere delight!  
The habitual scene of hill and dale,  
The rural herds, the vernal gale,  
The tangled vetch's purple bloom,  
The fragrance of the bean's perfume,  
Be theirs alone who cultivate the soil,  
And drink the cup of thirst, and eat the bread of toil.

But soon the pageant fades away!  
'Tis Nature only bears perpetual sway.  
We pierce the counterfeit delight,  
Fatigued with splendour's irksome beams.  
Fancy again demands the sight  
Of native groves and wonted streams,  
Pants for the scenes that charm'd her youthful eyes,  
Where Truth maintains her court, and banishes Disguise.

Then hither oft, ye Senators! retire;  
With Nature here high converse hold;  
For who like Stamford her delights admire,  
Like Stamford shall with scorn behold  
The unequal bribes of pageantry and gold;  
Beneath the British oak's majestic shade,  
Shall see fair Truth, immortal maid!  
Friendship in artless guise array'd,  
Honour and moral beauty shine  
With more attractive charms, with radiance more divine.

Yes, here alone did highest Heaven ordain

The lasting magazine of charms,  
Whatever wins, whatever warms,  
Whatever fancy seeks to share,  
The great, the various, and the fair,  
For ever should remain!

Her impulse nothing may restrain-  
Or whence the joy 'mid columns, towers,  
Midst all the city's artful trim,  
To rear some breathless vapid flowers  
Or shrubs fuliginously grim?  
From rooms of silken foliage vain,  
To trace the dun far distant grove,  
Where, smit with undissembled pain,  
The woodlark mourns her absent love,  
Borne to the dusty town from native air,  
To mimic rural life, and soothe some vapour'd fair?

But how must faithless Art prevail,  
Should all who taste our joy sincere,  
To virtue, truth, or science, dear,  
Forego a court's alluring pale,  
For dimpled brook and leafy grove,  
For that rich luxury of thought they love!  
Ah, no! from these the public sphere requires  
Examples for its giddy bands;  
From these impartial Heaven demands  
To spread the flame itself inspires;  
To sift Opinion's mingled mass,  
Impress a nation's taste, and bid the sterling pass.

Happy, thrice happy they,  
Whose graceful deeds have exemplary shone  
Round the gay precincts of a throne,  
With mild effective beams!  
Who bands of fair ideas bring,  
By solemn grot, or shady spring,  
To join their pleasing dreams!  
Theirs is the rural bliss without alloy;  
They only that deserve, enjoy.

What though nor fabled Dryad haunt their grove,

Nor Naiad near their fountain rove?  
Yet all embodied to the mental sight,  
A train of smiling Virtues bright  
Shall there the wise retreat allow,  
Shall twine triumphant palms to deck the wanderer's brow.

And though by faithless friends alarm'd,  
Art have with Nature waged presumptuous war,  
By Seymour's winning influence charm'd,  
In whom their gifts united shine,  
No longer shall their councils jar.  
'Tis hers to mediate the peace;  
Near Percy-lodge, with awe-struck mien,  
The rebel seeks her lawful queen,  
And havoc and contention cease.  
I see the rival powers combine,  
And aid each other's fair design:  
Nature exalt the mound where Art shall build;  
Art shape the gay alcove, while Nature paints the field.

Begin, ye songsters of the grove!  
O warble forth your noblest lay:  
Where Somerset vouchsafes to rove,  
Ye leverets! freely sport and play.  
-Peace to the strepent horn!  
Let no harsh dissonance disturb the Morn;  
No sounds inelegant and rude  
Her sacred solitudes profane!  
Unless her candour not exclude  
The lowly shepherd's votive strain,  
Who tunes his reed amidst his rural cheer,  
Fearful, yet not averse, that Somerset should hear.

William Shenstone

# Slender's Ghost

Vide Shakspeare.

Beneath a churchyard yew,  
Decay'd and worn with age,  
At dusk of eve methought I spied  
Poor Slender's Ghost, that whimpering cried,  
'O sweet! O sweet Anne Page!'

Ye gentle Bards! give ear,  
Who talk of amorous rage,  
Who spoil the lily, rob the rose,  
Come learn of me to weep your woes:  
'O sweet! O sweet Anne Page!'

Why should such labour'd strains  
Your formal Muse engage?  
I never dreamt of flame or dart,  
That fired my breast or pierced my heart,  
But sigh'd, 'O sweet Anne Page!'

And you! whose lovesick minds  
No med'cine can assuage,  
Accuse the leech's art no more,  
But learn of Slender to deplore;  
'O sweet! O sweet Anne Page!'

And ye! whose souls are held,  
Like linnets in a cage;  
Who talk of fetters, links, and chains,  
Attend and imitate my strains;  
'O sweet! O sweet Anne Page!'

And you! who boast or grieve,  
What horrid wars ye wage,  
Of wounds received from many an eye,  
Yet mean as I do, when I sigh,  
'O sweet! O sweet Anne Page!'

Hence every fond conceit



Of shepherd or of sage;  
'Tis Slender's voice, 'tis Slender's way,  
Expresses all you have to say,  
'O sweet! O sweet Anne Page!'

William Shenstone

# Song

I told my nymph, I told her true,  
My fields were small, my flocks were few,  
While faltering accents spoke my fear,  
That Flavia might not prove sincere.

Of crops destroyed by vernal cold,  
And vagrant sheep that left my fold;  
Of these she heard, yet bore to hear;  
And is not Flavia then sincere?

How, chang'd by fortune's fickle wind,  
The friends I loved became unkind;  
She heard, and shed a generous tear;  
And is not Flavia then sincere?

How, if she deign'd my love to bless,  
My Flavia must not hope for fress;  
This, too, she heard, and smiled to hear;  
And Flavia, sure, must be sincere.

Go shear your flocks, ye jovial swains;  
Go reap the plenty of your plains;  
Despoiled of all which you revere,  
I know my Flavia's love sincere.

William Shenstone

## Song II. The Landscape

How pleased within my native bowers  
Erewhile I pass'd the day!  
Was ever scene so deck'd with flowers?  
Were ever flowers so gay?

How sweetly smiled the hill, the vale,  
And all the landscape round!  
The river gliding down the dale,  
The hill with beeches crown'd!

But now, when urged by tender woes,  
I speed to meet my dear,  
That hill and stream my zeal oppose,  
And check my fond career.

No more, since Daphne was my theme,  
Their wonted charms I see;  
That verdant hill and silver stream,  
Divide my love and me.

William Shenstone

## Song Iii. - Ye Gentle Nymphs And Generous Dames

Ye gentle Nymphs and generous Dames,  
That rule o'er every British mind!  
Be sure ye soothe their amorous flames,  
Be sure your laws are not unkind:

For hard it is to wear their bloom  
In unremitting sighs away;  
To mourn the night's oppressive gloom,  
And faintly bless the rising day.

And cruel 'twere a freeborn swain,  
A British youth, should vainly moan;  
Who, scornful of a tyrant's chain,  
Submits to yours, and yours alone.

Nor pointed spear, nor links of steel,  
Could e'er those gallant minds subdue,  
Who Beauty's wounds with pleasure feel,  
And boast the fetters wrought by you.

William Shenstone

## Song IX. - The Fatal Hours Are Wondrous Near

The fatal hours are wondrous near,  
That from these fountains bear my dear;  
A little space is given; in vain  
She robs my sight, and shuns the plain.

A little space, for me to prove  
My boundless flame, my endless love;  
And, like the train of vulgar hours,  
Invidious Time that space devours.

Near yonder beech is Delia's way,  
On that I gaze the livelong day;  
No eastern monarch's dazzling pride  
Should draw my longing eyes aside.

The chief that knows of succours nigh,  
And sees his mangled legions die,  
Casts not a more impatient glance  
To see the loitering aids advance.

Not more the schoolboy, that expires  
Far from his native home, requires  
To see some friend's familiar face,  
Or meet a parent's last embrace-

She comes-but, ah! what crowds of beaus  
In radiant bands my fair enclose!  
Oh! better hadst thou shunn'd the green;  
Oh, Delia! better far unseen.

Methinks, by all my tender fears,  
By all my sighs, by all my tears,  
I might from torture now be free-  
'Tis more than death to part from thee!

William Shenstone

## Song V. - On Every Tree, In Every Plain

Ah! ego non aliter tristes evincere morbos  
Optarem, quam te sic quoque velle putem.

On every tree, in every plain,  
I trace the jovial spring in vain;  
A sickly langour veils mine eyes,  
And fast my waning vigour flies.

Nor flowery plain, nor budding tree,  
That smile on others, smile on me;  
Mine eyes from death shall court repose,  
Nor shed a tear before they close.

What bliss to me can seasons bring?  
Or what the needless pride of spring?  
The cypress bough, that suits the bier,  
Retains its verdure all the year.

'Tis true, my vine, so fresh and fair,  
Might claim awhile my wonted care;  
My rural store some pleasure yield,  
So white a flock, so green a field!

My friends, that each in kindness vie,  
Might well expect one parting sigh;  
Might well demand one tender tear;  
For when was Damon insincere?

But ere I ask once more to view  
Yon setting sun his race renew,  
Inform me, Swains! my friends, declare,  
Will pitying Delia join the prayer?

William Shenstone

## Song VII. - When Bright Roxana Treads The Green

When bright Roxana treads the green,  
In all the pride of dress and mien,  
Averse to freedom, love, and play,  
The dazzling rival of the day;  
None other beauty strikes mine eye,  
The lilies droop, the roses die.

But when, disclaiming art, the fair  
Assumes a soft engaging air;  
Mild as the opening morn of May,  
Familiar, friendly, free and gay,  
The scene improves where'er she goes,  
More sweetly smile the pink and rose.

O lovely Maid! propitious hear,  
Nor deem thy shepherd insincere;  
Pity a wild illusive flame,  
That varies objects still the same;  
And let their very changes prove  
The never-varied force of love.

William Shenstone

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William Shenstone



## Song X. - The Lovely Delia Smiles Again!

The lovely Delia smiles again!  
That killing frown has left her brow;  
Can she forgive my jealous pain,  
And give me back my angry vow?

Love is an April's doubtful day;  
Awhile we see the tempest lower,  
Anon the radiant heaven survey,  
And quite forget the flitting shower.

The flowers, that hung their languid head,  
Are burnish'd by the transient rains;  
The vines their wonted tendrils spread,  
And double verdure gilds the plains.

The sprightly birds, that droop'd no less  
Beneath the power of rain and wind,  
In every raptured note express  
The joy I feel-when thou art kind.

William Shenstone

## Song Xi. - Perhaps It Is Not Love

Perhaps it is not love, said I,  
That melts my soul when Flavia's nigh;  
Where wit and sense like hers agree,  
One may be pleased, and yet be free.

The beauties of her polish'd mind  
It needs no lover's eye to find;  
The hermit freezing in his cell  
Might wish the gentle Flavia well.

It is not love-averse to bear  
The servile chain that lovers wear;  
Let, let me all my fears remove,  
My doubts dispel-it is not love.

Oh! when did wit so brightly shine  
In any form less fair than thine?  
It is-it is love's subtle fire,  
And under friendship lurks desire.

William Shenstone

## Song Xii. - O'Er Desert Plains, And Rushy Meres

O'er desert plains, and rushy meres,  
And wither'd heaths I rove;  
Where tree, nor spire, nor cot, appears,  
I pass to meet my love.

But, though my path were damask'd o'er  
With beauties e'er so fine,  
My busy thoughts would fly before,  
To fix alone-on thine.

No fir-crown'd hills could give delight,  
No palace please mine eye;  
No pyramid's aerial height,  
Where mould'ring monarchs lie.

Unmoved, should Eastern kings advance,  
Could I the pageant see:  
Splendour might catch one scornful glance,  
Nor steal one thought from thee.

William Shenstone

## Song Xiii. - Winter

No more, ye warbling birds! rejoice:  
Of all that cheer'd the plain,  
Echo alone preserves her voice,  
And she-repeats my pain.

Where'er my lovesick limbs I lay  
To shun the rushing wind,  
Its busy murmurs seem to say,  
'She never will be kind!'

The Naiads, o'er their frozen urns,  
In icy chains repine;  
And each in sullen silence mourns  
Her freedom lost, like mine!

Soon will the sun's returning rays  
The cheerless frost control;  
When will relenting Delia chase  
The winter of my soul?

William Shenstone

## Song Xix. - When Bright Ophelia Treads The Green

When bright Ophelia treads the green,  
In all the pride of dress and mien;  
Averse to freedom, mirth and play,  
The lofty rival of the day;  
Methinks, to my enchanted eye,  
The lilies droop, the roses die.

But when, disdainful art, the fair  
Assumes a soft engaging air;  
Mild as the opening morn of May,  
And as the feather'd warblers gay;  
The scene improves where'er she goes,  
More sweetly smile the pink and rose.

O lovely maid! propitious hear,  
Nor think thy Damon insincere.  
Pity my wild delusive flame;  
For though the flowers are still the same,  
To me they languish, or improve,  
And plainly tell me that I love.

William Shenstone

## Song XVIII. - Imitated From The French

Yes, these are the scenes where with Iris I stray'd,  
But short was her sway for so lovely a maid!  
In the bloom of her youth to a cloister she run,  
In the bloom of her graces too fair for a nun!  
Ill-grounded, no doubt, a devotion must prove,  
So fatal to beauty, so killing to love!

Yes, these are the meadows, the shrubs, and the plains,  
Once the scene of my pleasures, the scene of my pains;  
How many soft moments I spent in this grove!  
How fair was my nymph! and how fervent my love!  
Be still though, my Heart! thine emotion give o'er;  
Remember, the season of love is no more.

With her how I stray'd amid fountains and bowers  
Or loiter'd behind, and collected the flowers!  
Then breathless with ardour my fair one pursued,  
And to think with what kindness my garland she view'd!  
But be still, my fond Heart! this emotion give o'er;  
Fain wouldst thou forget thou must love her no more.

William Shenstone

# Stanzas - To The Memory Of An Agreeable Lady, Buried In Marriage To A Person Undeserving Her

'Twas always held, and ever will,  
By sage mankind, discreeter  
To anticipate a lesser ill  
Than undergo a greater.

When mortals dread disease, pain,  
And languishing conditions,  
Who don't the lesser ills sustain  
Of physic-and physicians?

Rather than lose his whole estate,  
He that but little wise is,  
Full gladly pays four parts in eight,  
To taxes and excises.

Our merchants Spain has near undone,  
For lost ships not requiting;  
This bears our noble King to shun  
The loss of blood-in fighting!

With numerous ills, in single life,  
The bachelor's attended;  
Such to avoid, he takes a wife-  
And much the case is mended!

Poor Gratia, in her twentieth year,  
Foreseeing future woe,  
Chose to attend a monkey here,  
Before an ape below.

William Shenstone

# The Attribute Of Venus

Yes; Fulvia is like Venus fair,  
Has all her bloom, and shape, and air;  
But still, to perfect every grace,  
She wants-the smile upon her face.

The crown majestic Juno wore;  
And Cynthia's brow the crescent bore;  
An helmet mark'd Minerva's mien;  
But smiles distinguish'd Beauty's queen.

Her train was form'd of Smiles and Loves;  
Her chariot drawn by gentlest doves;  
And from her zone, the nymph may find  
'Tis Beauty's province to be kind.

Then smile, my Fair! and all, whose aim  
Aspires to paint the Cyprian dame,  
Or bid her breathe in living stone,  
Shall take their forms from you alone.

William Shenstone



# The Beau To The Virtuoso

Hail curious wights, to whom so fair  
The form of mortal flies is!  
Who deem those grubs beyond compare,  
Which common sense despises.

Whether o'er hill, morass or mound,  
You make your sportsman sallies;  
Or that your prey in gardens found  
Is urg'd thro' walks and alleys,

Yet, in the fury of the chase,  
No slope could e'er retard you;  
Blest, if one fly repay the race,  
Or painted wing reward you.

Fierce as Camilla, o'er the plain,  
Pursu'd the glittering stranger;  
Still ey'd the purple's pleasing stain,  
And knew not fear nor danger.

'Tis you dispense the fav'rite meat  
To nature's filmy people;  
Know what conserves they choose to eat,  
And what liquers, to tipple.

And, if her brood of insects dies,  
You sage assistance lend her;  
Can stoop to pimp for am'rous flies,  
And help 'em to engender.

'Tis you protect their pregnant hour;  
And when the birth's at hand,  
Exerting your obstetric pow'r,  
Prevent a mothless land.

Yet oh! howe'er your tow'ring view  
Above gross objects rises;  
Whate'er refinements you pursue,  
Hear, what a friend advises.

A friend, who, weigh'd with yours, must prize  
Domitian's idle passion;  
That wrought the death of teasing flies,  
But ne'er their propagation.

Let Flavia's eyes more deeply warm,  
Nor thus your hearts determine,  
To slight dame Nature's fairest form,  
And sigh for Nature's vermin.

And speak with some respect of beaux;  
No more, as triflers, treat 'em;  
'Tis better learn to save one's clothes,  
Than cherish moths that eat 'em.

William Shenstone

# The Dying Kid

Optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi  
Prima fugit-...

~Virg.

Imitation.

Ah! wretched mortals we! - our brightest days  
On fleetest pinions fly.

A tear bedews my Delia's eye,  
To think yon playful kid must die;  
From crystal spring, and flowery mead,  
Must, in his prime of life, recede!

Erewhile, in sportive circles round  
She saw him wheel, and frisk, and bound!  
From rock to rock pursue his way,  
And on the fearful margin play.

Pleased on his various freaks to dwell,  
She saw him climb my rustic cell;  
Thence eye my lawns with verdure bright,  
And seem'd all ravish'd at the sight:

She tells with what delight he stood,  
To trace his features in the flood:  
Then skipp'd aloof with quaint amaze,  
And then drew near again to gaze.

She tells me how with eager speed  
He flew to hear my vocal reed;  
And how, with critic face profound,  
And steadfast ear, devour'd the sound.

His every frolic, light as air,  
Deserves the gentle Delia's care;  
And tears bedew her tender eye,  
To think the playful kid must die.

But knows my Delia, timely wise,

How soon this blameless era flies;  
While violence and craft succeed,  
Unfair design, and ruthless deed?

Soon would the vine his wounds deplore,  
And yield her purple gifts no more;  
Ah! soon erased from every grove  
Were Delia's name, and Strephon's love.

No more those bowers might Strephon see,  
Where first he fondly gazed on thee;  
No more those beds of flowerets find,  
Which for thy charming brows he twined.

Each wayward passion soon would tear  
His bosom, now so void of care;  
And, when they left his ebbing vein,  
What, but insipid age, remain?

Then mourn not the decrees of Fate,  
That gave his life so short a date;  
And I will join my tenderest sighs,  
To think that youth so swiftly flies!

William Shenstone

# The Extent Of Cookery

Aliusque et idem.

Explanation.

Another and the Same.

When Tom to Cambridge first was sent,  
A plain brown bob he wore;  
Read much, and look'd as though he meant  
To be a fop no more.

See him to Lincoln's-Inn repair,  
His resolution flag;  
He cherishes a length of hair,  
And tucks it in a bag.

Nor Coke nor Salkeld he regards,  
But gets into the House,  
And soon a judge's rank rewards  
His pliant votes and bows.

Adieu, ye bobs! ye bags! give place;  
Full bottoms come instead;  
Good L-d! to see the various ways  
Of dressing-a calf's head!

William Shenstone

# The Halcyon

Why o'er the verdant banks of Ouse  
Does yonder Halcyon speed so fast?  
'Tis all because she would not lose  
Her favourite calm, that will not last.

The sun with azure paints the skies,  
The stream reflects each flowery spray,  
And, frugal of her time, she flies  
To take her fill of love and play!

See her, when rugged Boreas blows,  
Warm in some rocky cell remain;  
To seek for pleasure, well she knows,  
Would only then enhance the pain.

'Descend,' she cries, 'thou hated shower,  
Deform my limpid waves to-day,  
For I have chose a fairer hour  
To take my fill of love and play!'

You, too, my Silvia, sure will own  
Life's azure seasons swiftly roll,  
And when our youth or health is flown,  
To think of love, but shocks the soul.

Could Damon but deserve thy charms,  
As thou art Damon's only theme;  
He'd fly as quick to Celia's arms  
As yonder Halcyon stems the stream.

William Shenstone

# The Invidious

Martial.

O Fortune! if my prayer of old  
Was ne'er solicitous for gold,  
With better grace thou may'st allow  
My suppliant wish, that asks it now:  
Yet think not, Goddess! I require it  
For the same end your clowns desire it.  
In a well made effectual string  
Fain would I see Lovidio swing;  
Hear him, from Tyburn's height haranguing;  
But such a cur's not worth one's hanging.  
Give me, O Goddess! store of pelf,  
And he will tie the knot himself.

William Shenstone

# The Judgement Of Hercules

While blooming Spring descends from genial skies,  
By whose mild influence instant wonders rise;  
From whose soft breath Elysian beauties flow;  
The sweets of Hagley, or the pride of Stowe;  
Will Lyttleton the rural landscape range,  
Leave noisy fame, and not regret the change?  
Pleased will he tread the garden's early scenes,  
And learn a moral from the rising greens?  
There, warm'd alike by Sol's enlivening power,  
The weed, aspiring, emulates the flower;  
The drooping flower, its fairer charms display'd,  
Invites, from grateful hands, their generous aid:  
Soon, if none check'd the invasive foe's designs,  
The lively lustre of these scenes declines!

'Tis thus the spring of youth, the morn of life,  
Rears in our minds the rival seeds of strife:  
Then passion riots, reason then contends,  
And on the conquest every bliss depends:  
Life from the nice decision takes its hue,  
And blest those judges who decide like you!  
On worth like theirs shall every bliss attend,  
The world their favourite, and the world their friend.

There are, who, blind to Thought's fatiguing ray,  
As Fortune gives examples, urge their way;  
Not Virtue's foes, though they her paths decline,  
And scarce her friends, though with her friends they join;  
In hers or Vice's casual road advance,  
Thoughtless, the sinners or the saints of Chance!  
Yet some more nobly scorn the vulgar voice,  
With judgment fix, with zeal pursue their choice,  
When ripen'd thought, when Reason, born to reign,  
Checks the wild tumults of the youthful vein;  
While passion's lawless tides, at their command,  
Glide through more useful tracks, and bless the land.

Happiest of these is he whose matchless mind,  
By learning strengthen'd, and by taste refined,



In Virtue's cause essay'd its earliest powers,  
Chose Virtue's paths, and strew'd her paths with flowers.  
The first alarm'd, if Freedom waves her wings,  
The fittest to adorn each art she brings;  
Loved by that prince whom every virtue fires,  
Praised by that bard whom every Muse inspires;  
Blest in the tuneful art, the social flame;  
In all that wins, in all that merits, fame!

'Twas youth's perplexing stage his doubts inspired,  
When great Alcides to a grove retired:  
Through the lone windings of a devious glade,  
Resign'd to thought, with lingering steps he stray'd;  
Blest with a mind to taste sincerer joys,  
Arm'd with a heart each false one to despise.  
Dubious he stray'd, with wavering thoughts possest,  
Alternate passions struggling shared his breast;  
The various arts which human cares divide,  
In deep attention all his mind employ'd;  
Anxious, if Fame an equal bliss secured;  
Or silent Ease with softer charms allured.  
The sylvan choir, whose numbers sweetly flow'd,  
The fount that murmur'd, and the flowers that blow'd;  
The silver flood that in meanders led  
His glittering streams along the enliven'd mead;  
The soothing breeze, and all those beauties join'd,  
Which, whilst they please, effeminate the mind;  
In vain! while distant, on a summit raised,  
The imperial towers of Fame attractive blazed.

While thus he traced through Fancy's puzzling maze  
The separate sweets of pleasure and of praise,  
Sudden the wind a fragrant gale convey'd,  
And a new lustre gain'd upon the shade:  
At once, before his wondering eyes were seen  
Two female forms, of more than mortal mien:  
Various their charms, and in their dress and face,  
Each seem'd to vie with some peculiar grace.  
This, whose attire less clogg'd with art appear'd,  
The simple sweets of innocence endear'd;  
Her sprightly bloom, her quick sagacious eye,  
Show'd native merit mix'd with modesty:

Her air diffused a mild, yet awful ray,  
Severely sweet, and innocently gay;  
Such the chaste image of the martial maid,  
In artless folds of virgin white array'd;  
She let no borrow'd rose her cheeks adorn,  
Her blushing cheeks, that shamed the purple morn:  
Her charms nor had nor wanted artful foils,  
Or studied gestures, or well-practised smiles:  
She scorn'd the toys which render beauty less;  
She proved the engaging chastity of dress;  
And while she chose in native charms to shine,  
Even thus she seem'd, nay, more than seem'd divine.  
One modest emerald clasp'd the robe she wore,  
And in her hand the imperial sword she bore.  
Sublime her height, majestic was her pace,  
And match'd the awful honours of her face.  
The shrubs, the flowers, that deck'd the verdant ground,  
Seem'd, where she trod, with rising lustre crown'd.  
Still her approach with stronger influence warm'd;  
She pleased while distant, but when near she charm'd.  
So strikes the gazer's eye the silver gleam  
That, glittering, quivers o'er a distant stream;  
But from its banks we see new beauties rise,  
And, in its crystal bosom, trace the skies.

With other charms the rival vision glow'd,  
And from her dress her tinsel beauties flow'd.  
A fluttering robe her pamper'd shape conceal'd,  
And seem'd to shade the charms it best reveal'd:  
Its form contrived her faulty size to grace,  
Its hue, to give fresh lustre to her face.  
Her plaited hair, disguised, with brilliants glared;  
Her cheeks the ruby's neighbouring lustre shared;  
The gaudy topaz lent its gay supplies,  
And every gem that strikes less curious eyes;  
Exposed her breast, with foreign sweets perfumed,  
And round her brow a roseate garland bloom'd.  
Soft smiling, blushing lips conceal'd her wiles;  
Yet, ah! the blushes artful as the smiles.  
Oft, gazing on her shade, the enraptured fair  
Decreed the substance well deserved her care;  
Her thoughts, to others' charms malignly blind,

Center'd in that, and were to that confined;  
And if on others' eyes a glance were thrown,  
'Twas but to watch the influence of her own:  
Much like her guardian, fair Cythera's queen,  
When for her warrior she refines her mien;  
Or when, to bless her Delian favourite's arms,  
The radiant fair invigorates her charms:  
Much like her pupil, Egypt's sportive dame,  
Her dress expressive, and her air the same,  
When her gay bark o'er silver Cydnus roll'd,  
And all the emblazon'd streamers waved in gold.  
Such shone the vision, nor forbore to move  
The fond contagious airs of lawless love;  
Each wanton eye deluding glances fired,  
And amorous dimples on each cheek conspired.  
Lifeless her gait, and slow; with seeming pain  
She dragg'd her loitering limbs along the plain,  
Yet made some faint efforts, and first approach'd the swain.  
So glaring draughts, with tawdry lustre bright,  
Spring to the view, and rush upon the sight;  
More slowly charms a Raphael's chaster air,  
Waits the calm search, and pays the searcher's care.

Wrapp'd in a pleased suspense, the youth survey'd  
The various charms of each attractive maid:  
Alternate each he view'd, and each admired,  
And found, alternate, varying flames inspired:  
Quick o'er their forms his eyes with pleasure ran,  
When she, who first approach'd him, first began:-

'Hither, dear boy, direct thy wandering eyes;  
'Tis here the lovely Vale of Pleasure lies:  
Debate no more, to me thy life resign;  
Each sweet which Nature can diffuse is mine:  
For me the nymph diversifies her power,  
Springs in a tree, or blossoms in a flower;  
To please my ear, she tunes the linnets' strains;  
To please my eye, with lilies paints the plains;  
To form my couch, in mossy beds she grows;  
To gratify my smell, perfumes the rose;  
Reveals the fair, the fertile scene you see,  
And swells the vegetable world for me.

'Let the gull'd fool the toils of war pursue,  
Where bleed the many to enrich the few  
Where Chance from Courage claims the boasted prize;  
Where, though she give, your country oft denies.  
Industrious thou shalt Cupid's wars maintain,  
And ever gently fight his soft campaign;  
His darts alone shalt wield, his wounds endure,  
Yet only suffer, to enjoy the cure.  
Yield but to me-a choir of nymphs shall rise,  
And fire thy breast, and bless thy ravish'd eyes:  
Their beauteous cheeks a fairer rose shall wear,  
A brighter lily on their necks appear;  
Where fondly thou thy favour'd head shalt rest,  
Soft as the down that swells the cygnet's nest;  
While Philomel in each soft voice complains,  
And gently lulls thee with mellifluous strains;  
Whilst with each accent sweetest odours flow,  
And spicy gums round every bosom glow.  
Not the famed bird Arabian climes admire  
Shall in such luxury of sweets expire.  
At Sloth let War's victorious sons exclaim,  
In vain! for Pleasure is my real name:  
Nor envy thou the heads with bays o'ergrown;  
No, seek thou roses to adorn thy own;  
For well each opening scene that claims my care  
Suits and deserves the beauteous crown I wear.

'Let others prune the vine; the genial bowl  
Shall crown thy table, and enlarge thy soul.  
Let vulgar hands explore the brilliant mine,  
So the gay produce glitter still on thine.  
Indulgent Bacchus loads his labouring tree,  
And, guarding, gives its clustering sweets to me.  
For my loved train, Apollo's piercing beam  
Darts through the passive globe, and frames the gem.  
See in my cause consenting gods employ'd,  
Nor slight these gods, their blessings unenjoy'd.  
For thee the poplar shall its amber drain;  
For thee, in clouded beauty, spring the cane;  
Some costly tribute every clime shall pay,  
Some charming treasure every wind convey;

Each object round some pleasing scene shall yield,  
Art built thy dome, while Nature decks thy field:  
Of Corinth's Order shall the structure rise,  
The spiring turrets glitter through the skies;  
Thy costly robe shall glow with Tyrian rays,  
Thy vase shall sparkle, and thy car shall blaze;  
Yet thou, whatever pomp the sun display,  
Shalt own the amorous night exceeds the day.

'When melting flutes and sweetly sounding lyres  
Wake the gay Loves, and cite the young Desires;  
Or in the Ionian dance some favourite maid  
Improves the flame her sparkling eyes convey'd;  
Think, canst thou quit a glowing Delia's arms  
To feed on Virtue's visionary charms?  
Or slight the joys which wit and youth engage  
For the faint honour of a frozen sage?  
To find dull envy even that hope deface,  
And, where you toiled for glory, reap disgrace?

'Oh! think that beauty waits on thy decree,  
And thy loved loveliest charmer pleads with me;  
She whose soft smile, or gentler glance, to move,  
You vow'd the wild extremities of love;  
In whose endearments years, like moments, flew;  
For whose endearments millions seem'd too few;  
She, she implores; she bids thee seize the prime,  
And tread with her the flowery tracts of time,  
Nor thus her lovely bloom of life bestow  
On some cold lover, or insulting foe.  
Think, if against that tongue thou canst rebel,  
Where Love yet dwelt, and Reason seem'd to dwell,  
What strong persuasion arms her softer sighs!  
What full conviction sparkles in her eyes!

'See, Nature smiles, and birds salute the shade,  
Where breathing jasmine screens the sleeping maid;  
And such her charms, as to the vain may prove  
Ambition seeks more humble joys than Love!  
There busy toil shall ne'er invade thy reign,  
Nor sciences perplex thy labouring brain;  
Or none, but what with equal sweets invite,

Nor other arts, but to prolong delight.  
Sometimes thy fancy prune her tender wing,  
To praise a pendant, or to grace a ring;  
To fix the dress that suits each varying mien;  
To show where best the clustering gems are seen;  
To sigh soft strains along the vocal grove,  
And tell the charms, the sweet effects, of love!  
Nor fear to find a coy disdainful Muse,  
Nor think the Sisters will their aid refuse:  
Cool grotts, and tinkling rills, or silent shades,  
Soft scenes of leisure, suit the harmonious maids;  
And all the wise, and all the grave decree  
Some of that sacred train allied to me.

'But if more specious ease thy wishes claim,  
And thy breast glow with faint desire of fame,  
Some softer science shall thy thoughts amuse,  
And learning's name a solemn sound diffuse.  
To thee all Nature's curious stores I'll bring,  
Explain the beauties of an insect's wing;  
The plant which Nature, less diffusely kind,  
Has to few climes with partial care confined;  
The shell she scatters with more careless air,  
And in her frolics seems supremely fair;  
The worth that dazzles in the tulip's stains,  
Or lurks beneath a pebble's various veins.

'Sleep's downy god, averse to war's alarms,  
Shall o'er thy head diffuse his softest charms,  
Ere anxious thought thy dear repose assail,  
Or care, my most destructive foe, prevail.  
The watery nymphs shall tune the vocal vales,  
And gentle zephyrs harmonize their gales;  
For thy repose, inform, with rival joy,  
Their streams to murmur, and their winds to sigh.  
Thus shalt thou spend the sweetly-flowing day,  
Till, lost in bliss, thou breathe thy soul away;  
Till she the Elysian bowers of joy repair,  
Nor find my charming scenes exceeded there.'

She ceased; and on a liliated bank reclined,  
Her flowing robe waved wanton with the wind;

One tender hand her drooping head sustains,  
One points, expressive, to the flowery plains.  
Soon the fond youth perceived her influence roll  
Deep in his breast, to melt his manly soul;  
As when Favonius joins the solar blaze,  
And each fair fabric of the frost decays,  
Soon, to his breast, the soft harangue convey'd  
Resolves too partial to the specious maid.  
He sigh'd, he gazed, so sweetly smiled the dame,  
Yet sighing, gazing, seem'd to scorn his flame;  
And oft as Virtue caught his wandering eye,  
A crimson blush condemn'd the rising sigh.  
'Twas such the lingering Trojan's shame betray'd  
When Maia's son the frown of Jove display'd;  
When wealth, fame, empire, could no balance prove  
For the soft reign of Dido, and of love.  
Thus ill with arduous glory love conspires,  
Soft tender flames with bold impetuous fires!  
Some hovering doubts his anxious bosom moved,  
And Virtue, zealous fair! those doubts improved.-

'Fly, fly, fond youth! the too indulgent maid,  
Nor err, by such fantastic scenes betray'd.  
Though in my path the rugged thorn be seen,  
And the dry turf disclose a fainter green;  
Though no gay rose or flowery product shine,  
The barren surface still conceals the mine.  
Each thorn that threatens, even the weed that grows  
In Virtue's path, superior sweets bestows-  
Yet should those boasted specious toys allure,  
Whence could fond Sloth the flattering gifts procure?  
The various wealth that tempts thy fond desire,  
'Tis I alone, her greatest foe, acquire.  
I from old Ocean rob the treasured store;  
I through each region latent gems explore:  
'Twas I the rugged brilliant first reveal'd,  
By numerous strata deep in earth conceal'd;  
'Tis I the surface yet refine, and show  
The modest gem's intrinsic charms to glow;  
Nor swells the grape, nor spires its feeble tree,  
Without the firm supports of industry.

'But grant we Sloth the scene herself has drawn,  
The mossy grotto, and the flowery lawn;  
Let Philomela tune the harmonious gale,  
And with each breeze eternal sweets exhale;  
Let gay Pomona slight the plains around,  
And choose, for fairest fruits, the favour'd ground;  
To bless the fertile vale should Virtue cease,  
Nor mossy grotts, nor flowery lawns could please;  
Nor gay Pomona's luscious gifts avail,  
The sound harmonious, or the spicy gale.

'Seest thou yon rocks in dreadful pomp arise,  
Whose rugged cliffs deform the encircling skies?  
Those fields, whence Phœbus all the moisture drains,  
And, too profusely fond, disrobes the plains?  
When I vouchsafe to tread the barren soil,  
Those rocks seem lovely, and those deserts smile:  
The form thou view'st to every scene with ease  
Transfers its charms, and every scene can please.  
When I have on those pathless wilds appear'd,  
And the lone wanderer with my presence cheer'd,  
Those cliffs the exile has with pleasure view'd,  
And call'd that desert, blissful solitude!

'Nor I alone to such extend my care,  
Fair blooming Health surveys her altars there  
Brown Exercise will lead thee where she reigns,  
And with reflected lustre gild the plains:  
With her in flower of youth and beauty's pride,  
Her offspring, calm Content and Peace, reside;  
One ready offering suits each neighbouring shrine,  
And all obey their laws, who practise mine.

'But Health averse, from Sloth's smooth region flies,  
And, in her absence, Pleasure droops and dies;  
Her bright companions, Mirth, Delight, Repose,  
Smile where she smiles, and sicken when she goes:  
A galaxy of powers! whose forms appear  
For ever beauteous, and for ever near.

'Nor will soft Sleep to Sloth's request incline,  
He from her couches flies unbid to mine.



'Vain is the sparkling bowl, the warbling strain,  
The incentive song, the labour'd viand vain!  
Where she, relentless, reigns without control,  
And checks each gay excursion of the soul;  
Unmoved though Beauty, deck'd in all its charms,  
Grace the rich couch, and spread the softest arms;  
Till joyless Indolence suggests desires,  
Or drugs are sought to furnish languid fires;  
Such languid fires as on the vitals prey,  
Barren of bliss, but fertile of decay:  
As artful heats, applied to thirsty lands,  
Produce no flowers, and but debase the sands.

'But let fair Health her cheering smiles impart!  
How sweet is Nature, how superfluous Art!  
'Tis she the fountain's ready draught commends,  
And smooths the flinty couch which Fortune lends;  
And when my hero from his toils retires,  
Fills his gay bosom with unusual fires;  
And while no checks the unbounded joy reprove,  
Aids and refines the genuine sweets of love.  
His fairest prospect rising trophies frame;  
His sweetest music is the voice of Fame:  
Pleasures to Sloth unknown! she never found  
How fair the prospect, or how sweet the sound.

'See Fame's gay structure from yon summit charms,  
And fires the manly breast to arts or arms;  
Nor dread the steep ascent, by which you rise  
From grovelling vales to towers which reach the skies.

'Love, fame, esteem, 'tis labour must acquire,  
The smiling offspring of a rigid fire!  
To fix the friend, your service must be shown;  
All, ere they loved your merit, loved their own;  
That wondering Greece your portrait may admire,  
That tuneful bards may string for you their lyre,  
That books may praise, or coins record your name,-  
Such, such rewards 'tis toil alone can claim!  
And the same column which displays to view  
The conqueror's name, displays the conquest too.

"Twas slow Experience, tedious mistress! taught  
All that e'er nobly spoke or bravely fought:  
'Twas she the patriot, she the bard, refined  
In arts that serve, protect, or please mankind.  
Not the vain visions of inactive schools,  
Not Fancy's maxims, nor Opinion's rules,  
E'er form'd the man whose generous warmth extends  
To enrich his country, or to serve his friends.  
On active worth the laurel War bestows;  
Peace rears her olive for industrious brows;  
Nor earth, uncultured, yields its kind supplies;  
Nor heaven its showers, without a sacrifice.

'See, far below such grovelling scenes of shame,  
As lull to rest Ignavia's slumbering dame;  
Her friends, from all the toils of Fame secure,  
Alas! inglorious, greater toils endure;  
Doom'd all to mourn who in her cause engage;  
A youth enervate, and a painful age;  
A sickly sapless mass, if Reason flies,  
And, if she linger, impotently wise!  
A thoughtless train, who, pamper'd, sleek, and gay,  
Invite old age, and revel youth away;  
From life's fresh vigour move the load of care,  
And idly place it where they least can bear;  
When to the mind, diseased, for aid they fly,  
What kind reflection shall the mind supply?  
When with lost health, what should the loss allay?  
Peace, peace is lost; a comfortless decay!  
But to my friends, when youth, when pleasure, flies,  
And earth's dim beauties fade before their eyes,  
Through death's dark vista flowery tracts are seen,  
Elysian plains, and groves for ever green.  
If o'er their lives a refluent glance they cast,  
Theirs is the present who can praise the past;  
Life has its bliss for these, when past its bloom,  
As wither'd roses yield a late perfume.

'Serene, and safe from passion's stormy rage,  
How calm they glide into the port of Age!  
Of the rude voyage less deprived than eased;

More tired than pain'd, and weaken'd than diseased;  
For health on age 'tis temperance must bestow,  
And peace from piety alone can flow;  
And all the incense bounteous Jove requires,  
Has sweets for him who feeds the sacred fires.

'Sloth views the towers of Fame with envious eyes,  
Desirous still, still impotent to rise.

Oft, when resolved to gain those blissful towers,  
The pensive queen the dire ascent explores,  
Comes onward, wafted by the balmy trees,  
Some sylvan music, or some scented breeze;  
She turns her head, her own gay realm she spies,  
And all the short-lived resolution dies.

Thus some fond insect's faltering pinions wave,  
Clasp'd in its favourite sweets, a lasting slave;  
And thus in vain these charming visions please  
The wretch of glory, and the slave of ease,  
Doom'd ever in ignoble state to pine,  
Boast her own scenes, and languish after mine.

But shun her snares; nor let the world exclaim,  
Thy birth, which was thy glory, proved thy shame.

With early hope thine infant actions fired,  
Let manhood crown what infancy inspired;  
Let generous toils with health reward thy days,  
Prolong thy prime, and eternize thy praise.

The bold exploit that charms the attesting age,  
To latest times shall generous hearts engage;  
And with that myrtle shall thy shrine be crown'd,  
With which, alive, thy graceful brows were bound,  
Till Time shall bid thy virtues freely bloom,  
And raise a temple where it found a tomb.

'Then in their feasts thy name shall Grecians join,  
Shall pour the sparkling juice to Jove's and thine:  
Thine, used in war, shall raise their native fire;  
Thine, used in peace, their mutual faith inspire.  
Dulness, perhaps, through want of sight, may blame,  
And Spleen, with odious industry, defame;  
And that, the honours given, with wonder view,  
And this, in secret sadness, own them due.  
Contempt and Envy were by fate design'd

The rival tyrants which divide mankind;  
Contempt, which none but who deserve can bear,  
While Envy's wounds the smiles of Fame repair:  
For know, the generous thine exploits shall fire,  
Thine every friend it suits thee to require;  
Loved by the gods, and, till their seats I show,  
Loved by the good, their images below.'

'Cease, lovely maid! fair daughter of the Skies;  
My guide! my queen!' the ecstatic youth replies:  
'In thee I trace a form design'd for sway,  
Which chiefs may court, and kings with pride obey;  
And by thy bright immortal friends I swear,  
Thy fair idea shall no toils impair.  
Lead me, O lead me! where whole hosts of foes  
Thy form depreciate, and thy friends oppose.  
Welcome all toils the unequal Fates decree,  
While toils endear thy faithful charge to thee.  
Such be my cares to bind the oppressive hand,  
And crush the fetters of an injured land;  
To see the monster's noxious life resign'd,  
And tyrants quell'd, the monsters of mankind!  
Nature shall smile to view the vanquish'd brood,  
And none, but Envy, riot unsubdued.  
In cloister'd state let selfish sages dwell,  
Proud that their heart is narrow as their cell!  
And boast their mazy labyrinth of rules,  
Far less the friends of Virtue, than the fools;  
Yet such in vain thy favouring smiles pretend,  
For he is thine, who proves his country's friend.  
Thus when my life, well spent, the good enjoy,  
And the mean envious labour to destroy;  
When strongly lured by Fame's contiguous shrine,  
I yet devote my choicer vows to thine;  
If all my toils thy promised favour claim,  
O lead thy favourite through the gates of Fame!'

He ceased his vows, and, with disdainful air,  
He turn'd to blast the late exulting fair:  
But vanish'd, fled to some more friendly shore,  
The conscious phantom's beauty pleased no more;  
Convinced her spurious charms of dress and face,

Claim'd a quick conquest, or a sure disgrace.  
Fantastic power! whose transient charms allured,  
While Error's mist the reasoning mind obscured;  
Not such the victress, Virtue's constant queen,  
Endured the test of truth, and dared be seen;  
Her brightening form and features seem'd to own,  
'Twas all her wish, her interest to be known;  
And when his longing view the fair declined,  
Left a full image of her charms behind.

Thus reigns the moon, with furtive splendour crown'd,  
While glooms oppress us, and thick shades surround;  
But let the source of light its beams display,  
Languid and faint the mimic flames decay,  
And all the sickening splendour fades away.

William Shenstone

# The Landskip

How pleas'd within my native bowers  
Erewhile I pass'd the day!  
Was ever scene so deck'd with flowers?  
Were ever flowers so gay?

How sweetly smil'd the hill, the vale,  
And all the landskip round!  
The river gliding down the dale!  
The hill with beeches crown'd!

But now, when urg'd by tender woes,  
I speed to meet my dear,  
That hill and stream my zeal oppose,  
And check my fond career.

No more, since Daphne was my theme,  
Their wonted charms I see:  
That verdant hill, and silver stream,  
Divide my love and me.

William Shenstone

# The Poet And The Dun

'These are messengers  
That feelingly persuade me what I am.' -Shakspeare.

Comes a dun in the morning and raps at my door-  
'I made bold to call-'tis a twelvemonth and more-  
I'm sorry, believe me, to trouble you thus, sir-  
But Job would be paid, sir, had Job been a mercer.'  
My friend, have but patience-'Ay, these are your ways.'  
I have got but one shilling to serve me two days-  
But, sir-prithee take it, and tell your attorney,  
If I han't paid your bill, I have paid for your journey.  
Well, now thou art gone, let me govern my passion,  
And calmly consider-consider? vexation!  
What whore that must paint, and must put on false locks,  
And counterfeit joy in the pangs of the pox?  
What beggar's wife's nephew, now starved, and now beaten,  
Who, wanting to eat, fears himself shall be eaten?  
What porter, what turnspit, can deem his case hard?  
Or what Dun boast of patience that thinks of a Bard?  
Well, I'll leave this poor trade, for no trade can be poorer,  
Turn shoe-boy, or courtier, or pimp, or procurer;  
Get love, and respect, and good living, and pelf,  
And dun some poor dog of a poet myself.  
One's credit, however, of course will grow better.  
Here enters the footman, and brings me a letter:  
'Dear Sir! I received your obliging epistle;  
Your fame is secure-bid the critics go whistle.  
I read over with wonder the poem you sent me,  
And I must speak your praises, no soul shall prevent me.  
The audience, believe me, cried out, every line  
Was strong, was affecting, was just, was divine;  
All pregnant as gold is, with worth, weight, and beauty,  
And to hide such a genius was-far from your duty.  
I foresee that the court will be hugely delighted:  
Sir Richard, for much a less genius, was knighted:  
Adieu, my good friend! and for high life prepare ye;  
I could say much more, but you're modest, I spare ye.'  
Quite fired with the flattery, I call for my paper,  
And waste that, and health, and my time, and my taper;

I scribble till morn, when, with wrath no small store,  
Comes my old friend the mercer, and raps at my door.  
'Ah, Friend! 'tis but idle to make such a pother;  
Fate, Fate has ordain'd us to plague one another.'

William Shenstone



# The Price Of An Equipage

Servum si potes, Ole, non habere,  
Et regem potes, Ole, non habere. Mart.

('If thou from Fortune dost no servant crave,  
Believe me thou no master need'st to have.')

I ask'd a friend, amidst the throng,  
Whose coach it was that trail'd along?  
'The gilded coach there - don't ye mind?  
That with the footmen stuck behind.'  
'O Sir!' says he, 'what! han't you seen it?  
'Tis Damon's Coach, and Damon in it.  
'Tis odd, methinks, you have forgot  
Your friend, your neighbour, and - what not!  
Your old acquaintance Damon!' - 'True;  
But faith his Equipage is new.'  
'Bless me,' said I, 'where can it end?  
That madness has possess'd my friend?  
Four powder'd slaves, and those the tallest,  
Their stomachs, doubtless, not the smallest!  
Can Damon's revenue maintain,  
In lace and food, so large a train?  
I know his land - each inch of ground -  
'Tis not a mile to walk it round -  
If Damon's whole estate can bear  
To keep his lad and one-horse chair,  
I own 'tis past my comprehension.'  
'Yes, Sir; but Damon has a pension.'  
Thus does a false ambition rule us,  
Thus pomp delude, and folly fool us;  
To keep a race of flickering knaves,  
He grows himself the worst of slaves.

William Shenstone

# The Princess Elizabeth, When A Prisoner At Woodstock, 1554

Will you hear how once repining  
Great Eliza captive lay,  
Each ambitious thought resigning,  
Foe to riches, pomp, and sway?

While the nymphs and swains delighted  
Tripp'd around in all their pride,  
Envyng joys by others slighted,  
Thus the royal maiden cried:

'Bred on plains, or born in valleys,  
Who would bid those scenes adieu?  
Stranger to the arts of malice,  
Who would ever courts pursue?

Malice never taught to treasure,  
Censure never taught to bear;  
Love is all the shepherd's pleasure;  
Love is all the damsel's care.

How can they of humble station  
Vainly blame the powers above  
Or accuse the dispensation  
Which allows them all to love?

Love, like air, is widely given;  
Power nor chance can these restraint;  
Truest, noblest, gifts of heaven!  
Only purest on the plain!

Peers can no such charms discover,  
All in stars and garters drest,  
As on Sundays does the lover,  
With his nosegay on his breast.

Pinks and roses in profusion,  
Said to fade when Chloe's near;

Fops may use the same allusion,  
But the shepherd is sincere.

Hark to yonder milkmaid singing  
Cheerly o'er the brimming pail,  
Cowslips all around her springing  
Sweetly paint the golden vale.

Never yet did courtly maiden  
Move so sprightly, look so fair;  
Never breast with jewels laden  
Pour a song so void of care.

Would indulgent heaven had granted  
Me some rural damsel's part!  
All the empire I had wanted  
Then had been my shepherd's heart.

Then with him o'er hills and mountains  
Free from fetters, might I rove,  
Fearless taste the crystal fountains,  
Peaceful sleep beneath the grove.

Rustics had been more forgiving,  
Partial to my virgin bloom;  
None had envied my when living,  
None had triumph'd o'er my tomb.'

William Shenstone

# The Progress Of Taste, Or The Fate Of Delicacy

Part first.

Perhaps some cloud eclipsed the day,  
When thus I tuned my pensive lay:  
The ship is launch'd-we catch the gale-  
On life's extended ocean sail:  
For happiness our course we bend,  
Our ardent cry, our general end!  
Yet, ah! the scenes which tempt our care  
Are, like the forms dispersed in air,  
Still dancing near disorder'd eyes,  
And weakest his who best descries!  
Yet let me not my birthright barter,  
(For wishing is the poet's charter;  
All bards have leave to wish what's wanted,  
Though few e'er found their wishes granted;  
Extensive field! where poets pride them  
In singing all that is denied them).  
For humble ease, ye Powers! I pray;  
That plain warm suit for every day,  
And pleasure and brocade, bestow,  
To flaunt it-once a month, or so.  
The first for constant wear we want;  
The first, ye Powers! for ever grant;  
But constant wear the last bespatters,  
And turns the tissue into tatters.  
Where'er my vagrant course I bend,  
Let me secure one faithful friend.  
Let me, in public scenes, request  
A friend of wit and taste, well drest;  
And, if I must not hope such favour,  
A friend of wit and taste, however.  
Alas! that Wisdom ever shuns  
To congregate her scatter'd Sons,  
Whose nervous forces, well combined,  
Would win the field, and sway mankind.  
The fool will squeeze, from morn to night,  
To fix his follies full in sight;  
The note he strikes, the plume he shows,

Attract whole flights of fops and beaus,  
And kindred fools, who ne'er had known him,  
Flock at the sight, caress and own him;  
But ill-starr'd Sense, not gay nor loud,  
Steals soft on tiptoe through the crowd;  
Conveys his meagre form between,  
And slides, like pervious air, unseen;  
Contracts his known tenuity,  
As though 'twere even a crime to be;  
Nor even permits his eyes to stray,  
And win acquaintance in their way.  
In company, so mean his air,  
You scarce are conscious he is there;  
Till from some nook, like sharpen'd steel,  
Occurs his face's thin profile,  
Still seeming, from the gazer's eye,  
Like Venus newly bathed, to fly:  
Yet while reluctant he displays  
His real gems before the blaze,  
The fool hath, in its centre, placed  
His tawdry stock of painted paste.  
Disused to speak, he tries his skill,  
Speaks coldly, and succeeds but ill;  
His pensive manner dulness deem'd,  
His modesty reserve esteem'd;  
His wit unknown, his learning vain,  
He wins not one of all the train:  
And those who, mutually known,  
In friendship's fairest list had shone,  
Less prone than pebbles to unite,  
Retire to shades from public sight,  
Grow savage, quit their social nature,  
And starve, to study mutual satire.  
But friends and favourites, to chagrin them,  
Find counties, countries, seas, between them;  
Meet once a year, then part, and then  
Retiring, wish to meet again.  
Sick of the thought, let me provide  
Some human form to grace my side:  
At hand, where'er I shape my course,  
An useful, pliant, stalking-horse!  
No gesture free from some grimace,

No seam, without its share of lace,  
But, mark'd with gold or silver either,  
Hint where his coat was pieced together.  
His legs be lengthen'd, I advise,  
And stockings roll'd abridge his thighs.  
What though Vandyke had other rules?  
What had Vandyke to do with fools?  
Be nothing wanting, but his mind;  
Before a solitaire, behind  
A twisted ribband, like the track  
Which Nature gives an ass's back.  
Silent as midnight! pity 'twere,  
His wisdom's slender wealth to share!  
And, whilst in flocks our fancies stray,  
To wish the poor man's lamb away.  
This form attracting every eye,  
I stroll all unregarded by:  
This wards the jokes of every kind,  
As an umbrella sun or wind;  
Or, like a sponge, absorbs the sallies  
And pestilential fumes of malice;  
Or, like a splendid shield, is fit  
To screen the Templar's random wit;  
Or, what some gentler cit lets fall,  
As woolpacks quash the leaden ball.  
Allusions these of weaker force,  
And apter still the stalking-horse!  
O let me wander all unseen  
Beneath the sanction of his mien!  
As lilies soft, as roses fair!  
Empty as airpumps drain'd of air!  
With steady eye and pace remark  
The speckled flock that haunts the Park;  
Level my pen with wondrous heed  
At follies, flocking there to feed;  
And as my satire burns amain,  
See feather'd foppery strew the plain.  
But when I seek my rural grove,  
And share the peaceful haunts I love,  
Let none of this unhallow'd train  
My sweet sequester'd paths profane.  
Oft may some polish'd virtuous friend

To these soft-winding vales descend,  
And love with me inglorious things,  
And scorn with me the pomp of kings;  
And check me when my bosom burns  
For statues, paintings, coins, and urns;  
For I in Damon's prayer could join,  
And Damon's wish might now be mine-  
But all dispersed! the wish, the prayer,  
Are driven to mix with common air.

Part second.

How happy once was Damon's lot,  
While yet romantic schemes were not,  
Ere yet he sent his weakly eyes,  
To plan frail castles in the skies!  
Forsaking pleasures cheap and common,  
To court a blaze, still flitting from one.  
Ah! happy Damon! thrice and more,  
Had Taste ne'er touch'd thy tranquil shore.  
Oh days! when to a girdle tied  
The couples jingled at his side,  
And Damon swore he would not barter  
The sportsman's girdle for a garter.  
Whoever came to kill an hour,  
Found easy Damon in their power,  
Pure social Nature all his guide;  
'Damon had not a grain of pride.'  
He wish'd not to elude the snares  
Which Knavery plans, and Craft prepares,  
But rather wealth to crown their wiles,  
And win their universal smiles:  
For who are cheerful, who at ease,  
But they who cheat us as they please?  
He wink'd at many a gross design  
The new-fallen calf might countermine:  
Thus every fool allow'd his merit;  
'Yes; Damon had a generous spirit.'  
A coxcomb's jest, however vile,  
Was sure, at least, of Damon's smile;  
That coxcomb ne'er denied him sense;

For why? it proved his own pretence.  
All own'd, were modesty away,  
Damon could shine as much as they.  
When wine and folly came in season,  
Damon ne'er strove to save his reason;  
Obnoxious to the mad uproar,  
A spy upon a hostile shore!  
'Twas this his company endear'd;  
Mirth never came till he appear'd.  
His lodgings-every drawer could show them;  
The slave was kick'd who did not know them.  
Thus Damon, studious of his ease,  
And pleasing all whom mirth could please,  
Defied the world, like idle Colley,  
To show a softer word than folly.  
Since Wisdom's gorgon-shield was known  
To stare the gazer into stone,  
He chose to trust in Folly's charm,  
To keep his breast alive and warm.  
At length grave Learning's sober train  
Remark'd the trifler with disdain;  
The sons of Taste contemn'd his ways,  
And rank'd him with the brutes that graze;  
While they to nobler heights aspired,  
And grew beloved, esteem'd, admired.  
Hence with our youth, not void of spirit,  
His old companions lost their merit,  
And every kind well-natured sot  
Seem'd a dull play, without a plot,  
Where every yawning guest agrees,  
The willing creature strives to please:  
But temper never could amuse;  
It barely led us to excuse;  
'Twas true, conversing they averr'd  
All they had seen, or felt, or heard;  
Talents of weight! for wights like these  
The law might choose for witnesses;  
But sure th' attesting dry narration  
Ill suits a judge of conversation.  
What were their freedoms? mere excuses  
To vent ill-manners, blows, and bruises.  
Yet freedom, gallant freedom! hailing,



At form, at form, incessant railing,  
Would they examine each offence,  
Its latent cause, its known pretence.  
Punctilio ne'er was known to breed them,  
So sure as fond prolific freedom.  
Their courage! but a loaded gun,  
Machine the wise would wish to shun;  
Its guard unsafe, its lock an ill one,  
Where accident might fire and kill one  
In short, disgusted out of measure,  
Through much contempt, and slender pleasure,  
His sense of dignity returns;  
With native pride his bosom burns;  
He seeks respect-but how to gain it?  
Wit, social mirth, could ne'er obtain it;  
And laughter, where it reigns uncheck'd,  
Discards and dissipates respect:  
The man who gravely bows, enjoys it,  
But shaking hands, at once destroys it;  
Precarious plant! which, fresh and gay,  
Shrinks at the touch, and fades away!  
Come then, Reserve! yet from thy train  
Banish Contempt and cursed Disdain.  
Teach me, he cried, thy magic art,  
To act the decent distant part;  
To husband well my complaisance;  
Nor let even Wit too far advance;  
But choose calm Reason for my theme,  
In these her royal realms supreme,  
And o'er her charms, with caution shown,  
Be still a graceful umbrage thrown,  
And each abrupt period crown'd  
With nods, and winks, and smiles profound;  
Till, rescued from the crowd beneath,  
No more with pain to move or breathe,  
I rise with head elate, to share  
Salubrious draughts of purer air.  
Respect is won by grave pretence,  
And silence, surer even than sense.  
'Tis hence the sacred grandeur springs  
Of Eastern, and of other kings;  
Or whence this awe to Virtue due,

While Virtue's distant as Peru?  
The sheathless sword the guard displays,  
Which round emits its dazzling rays;  
The stately fort, the turrets tall,  
Portculliss'd gate, and battled wall,  
Less screens the body than controls,  
And wards contempt from royal souls.  
The crowns they wear but check the eye  
Before it fondly pierce too nigh;  
That dazzled crowds may be employ'd  
Around the surface of-the void.  
Oh, 'tis the stateman's craft profound  
To scatter his amusements round,  
To tempt us from their conscious breast,  
Where full-fledged crimes enjoy their nest;  
Nor awes us every worth reveal'd,  
So deeply as each vice conceal'd.  
The lordly log, despatch'd of yore,  
That the frog people might adore,  
With guards to keep them at a distance,  
Had reign'd, nor wanted Wit's assistance;  
Nay-had addresses from his nation,  
In praise of log-administration.

Part third.

The buoyant fires of youth were o'er,  
And fame and finery pleased no more,  
Productive of that general stare,  
Which cool reflection ill can bear!  
And, crowds commencing mere vexation,  
Retirement sent its invitation.  
Romantic scenes of pendent hills,  
And verdant vales, and falling rills,  
And mossy banks the fields adorn,  
Where Damon, simple swain! was born.  
The Dryads rear'd a shady grove,  
Where such as think, and such as love,  
May safely sigh their summer's day,  
Or muse their silent hours away.  
The Oreads liked the climate well,

And taught the level plain to swell  
In verdant mounds, from whence the eye  
Might all their larger works descry.  
The Naiads pour'd their urns around,  
From nodding rocks o'er vales profound;  
They form'd their streams to please the view,  
And bade them wind, as serpents do,  
And having shown them where to stray,  
Threw little pebbles in their way.  
These Fancy, all-sagacious maid!  
Had at their several tasks survey'd:  
She saw and smiled; and oft would lead  
Our Damon's foot o'er hill and mead;  
There, with descriptive finger, trace  
The genuine beauties of the place;  
And when she all its charms had shown,  
Prescribe improvements of her own.-  
'See yonder hill, so green, so round,  
Its brow with ambient beeches crown'd!  
'Twould well become thy gentle care  
To raise a dome to Venus there;  
Pleased would the nymphs thy zeal survey,  
And Venus, in their arms, repay.  
'Twas such a shade, and such a nook,  
In such a vale, near such a brook;  
From such a rocky fragment springing,  
That fated Apollo chose to sing in;  
There let an altar wrought with art  
Engage the tuneful patron's heart:  
How charming there to muse and warble  
Beneath his bust of breathing marble!  
With laurel wreath and mimic lyre,  
That crown a poet's vast desire  
Then, near it, scoop the vaulted cell  
Where Music's charming maids may dwell;  
Prone to indulge thy tender passion,  
And make thee many an assignation.  
Deep in the grove's obscure retreat  
Be placed Minerva's sacred seat;  
There let her awful turrets rise,  
(For wisdom flies from vulgar eyes);  
There her calm dictates shalt thou hear

Distinctly strike thy listening ear;  
And who would shun the pleasing labour,  
To have Minerva for his neighbour?'  
In short, so charm'd each wild suggestion,  
Its truth was little call'd in question  
And Damon dreamt he saw the Fawns  
And nymphs distinctly skim the lawns;  
Now traced amid the trees, and then  
Lost in the circling shades again,  
With leer oblique their lover viewing-  
And Cupid-panting-and pursuing-  
'Fancy, enchanting Fair!' he cried,  
'Be thou my goddess, thou my guide;  
For thy bright visions I despise  
What foes may think, or friends advise.  
The feign'd concern when folks survey  
Expense, time, study, cast away;  
The real spleen with which they see;  
I please myself and follow thee.'  
Thus glow'd his breast, by Fancy warm'd,  
And thus the fairy landscape charm'd;  
But most he hoped his constant care,  
Might win the favour of the fair;  
And, wandering late through yonder glade,  
He thus the soft design betray'd:-  
'Ye Doves! for whom I rear'd the grove,  
With melting lays salute my love!  
My Delia with your notes detain,  
Or I have rear'd the grove in vain.  
Ye flowers which early spring supplies,  
Display at once your brightest dyes,  
That she your opening charms may see,  
Or what were else your charms to me?  
Kind Zephyr! brush each fragrant flower,  
And shed its odours round my bower,  
Or ne'er again, O gentle wind,  
Shall I in thee refreshment find.  
Ye Streams! if e'er your banks I loved.  
If e'er your native sounds improved,  
May each soft murmur soothe my fair,  
Or, oh! 'twill deepen my despair.  
Be sure, ye Willows, you be seen,

Array'd in liveliest robes of green,  
Or I will tear your slighted boughs,  
And let them fade around my brows;  
And thou, my Grot! whose lonely bounds  
The melancholy pine surrounds,  
May she admire thy peaceful gloom,  
Or thou shalt prove her lover's tomb.'  
And now the lofty domes were rear'd,  
Loud laugh'd the squires, the rabble stared.  
'See, Neighbours! what our Damon's doing;  
I think some folks are fond of ruin!  
I saw his sheep at random stray-  
But he has thrown his crook away-  
And builds such huts as, in foul weather,  
Are fit for sheep nor shepherd neither.'  
Whence came the sober swain misled?  
Why, Phoebus put it in his head:  
Phoebus befriends him we are told;  
And Phoebus coins bright tuns of gold.  
'Twere prudent not to be so vain on't.  
I think he'll never touch a grain on't.  
And if from Phoebus and his muse,  
Mere earthly laziness ensues;  
'Tis plain, for aught that I can say,  
The devil inspires as well as they.  
So they-while fools of grosser kind,  
Less weeting what our bard design'd,  
Impute his schemes to real evil;  
That in these haunts he met the devil.  
He own'd, though their advice was vain,  
It suited wights who trod the plain;  
For dulness-though he might abhor it,  
In them he made allowance for it;  
Nor wonder'd, if, beholding mottos,  
And urns, and domes, and cells, and grottos,  
Folks, little dreaming of the Muses,  
Were plagued to guess their proper uses.  
But did the Muses haunt his cell?  
Or in his dome did Venus dwell?  
Did Pallas in his counsels share?  
The Delian god reward his prayer?  
Or did his zeal engage the fair?

When all the structure shone complete,  
Not much convenient, wondrous neat;  
Adorn'd with gilding, painting, planting,  
And the fair guests alone were wanting;  
Ah, me! ('twas Damon's own confession)  
Came Poverty and took possession.

Part fourth.

Why droops my Damon, whilst he roves  
Through ornamented meads and groves,  
Near columns, obelisks, and spires,  
Which every critic eye admires?  
'Tis Poverty, detested maid!  
Sole tenant of their ample shade;  
'Tis she that robs him of his ease,  
And bids their very charms displease.  
But now, by Fancy long controll'd,  
And with the sons of Taste enroll'd,  
He deem'd it shameful to commence  
First minister to Common-sense;  
Far more elated, to pursue  
The lowest talk of dear vertu.  
And now, behold his lofty soul,  
That whilom flew from pole to pole,  
Settle on some elaborate flower,  
And, like a bee, the sweets devour!  
Now, of a rose enamour'd, prove  
The wild solitudes of love!  
Now, in a lily's cup enshrined,  
Forego the commerce of mankind!  
As in these toils he wore away  
The calm remainder of his day;  
Conducting sun, and shade, and shower,  
As most might glad the new-born flower,  
So fate ordain'd-before his eye  
Starts up the long-sought butterfly,  
While fluttering round, her plumes unfold  
Celestial crimson, dropt with gold.  
Adieu, ye bands of flowerets fair!  
The living beauty claims his care:  
For this he strips-nor bolt nor chain

Could Damon's warm pursuit restrain.  
See him o'er hill, morass, or mound,  
Where'er the speckled game is found,  
Though bent with age, with zeal pursue,  
And totter towards the prey in view.  
Nor rock nor stream his steps retard  
Intent upon the blest reward!  
One vassal fly repays the chase!  
A wing, a film, rewards the race!  
Rewards him, though disease attend,  
And in a fatal surfeit end.  
So fierce Camilla skimm'd the plain,  
Smit with the purple's pleasing stain;  
She eyed intent the glittering stranger,  
And knew, alas! nor fear nor danger;  
Till deep within her panting heart  
Malicious Fate impell'd the dart.  
How studious he what favourite food  
Regales Dame Nature's tiny brood;  
What junkets fat the filmy people,  
And what liqueurs they choose to tipple!  
Behold him, at some crise, prescribe,  
And raise with drugs the sickening tribe!  
Or haply, when their spirits falter,  
Sprinkling my Lord of Cloyne's tar-water!  
When Nature's brood of insects dies,  
See how he pimps for amorous flies!  
See him the timely succour lend her,  
And help the wantons to engender!  
Or see him guard their pregnant hour,  
Exert his soft obstetric power,  
And lending each his lenient hand,  
With new-born grubs enrich the land!  
O Wilks! what poet's loftiest lays  
Can match thy labours, and thy praise?  
Immortal Sage! by Fate decreed  
To guard the moth's illustrious breed!  
Till fluttering swarms on swarms arise,  
And all our wardrobes teem with flies!  
And must we praise this taste for toys?  
Admire it then in girls and boys.  
Ye youths of fifteen years, or more!

Resign your moths-the season's o'er;  
'Tis time more social joys to prove;  
'Twere now your nobler task to love.  
Let -'s eyes more deeply warm;  
Nor, slighting Nature's fairest form,  
The bias of your souls determine  
Towards the mean love of Nature's vermin.  
But, ah! how wondrous few have known,  
To give each stage of life its own!  
'Tis the pretexta's utmost bound,  
With radiant purple edged around,  
To please the child; whose glowing dyes  
Too long delight maturer eyes:  
And few, but with regret, assume  
The plain-wrought labours of the loom.  
Ah! let not me by fancy steer,  
When life's autumnal clouds appear;  
Nor even in learning's long delays  
Consume my fairest, fruitless days;  
Like him, who should in armour spend  
The sums that armour should defend.  
Awhile in Pleasure's myrtle bower  
We share her smiles, and bless her power;  
But find at last, we vainly strive  
To fix the worst coquette alive.  
O you! that with assiduous flame  
Have long pursued the faithless dame;  
Forsake her soft abodes awhile,  
And dare her frown, and slight her smile;  
Nor scorn, whatever wits may say,  
The footpath road, the king's highway;  
No more the scrupulous charmer tease,  
But seek the roofs of honest Ease;  
The rival fair, no more pursued,  
Shall there with forward pace intrude;  
Shall there her every art essay  
To win you to her slighted sway,  
And grant your scorn a glance more fair  
Than e'er she gave your fondest prayer.  
But would you happiness pursue?  
Partake both ease and pleasure too?  
Would you, through all your days, dispense



The joys of reason and of sense?  
Or give to life the most you can?  
Let social virtue shape the plan.  
For does not to the virtuous deed  
A train of pleasing sweets succeed?  
Or, like the sweets of wild desire,  
Did social pleasures ever tire?  
Yet midst the group be some preferr'd,  
Be some abhorr'd-for Damon err'd:  
And such there are-of fair address-  
As 'twere unsocial to caress.  
O learn by Reason's equal rule  
To shun the praise of knave or fool;  
Then, though you deem it better still  
To gain some rustic squire's good-will;  
And souls, however mean or vile,  
Like features, brighten by a smile;  
Yet Reason holds it for a crime,  
The trivial breast should share thy time:  
And Virtue, with reluctant eyes,  
Beholds this human sacrifice!  
Through deep reserve and air erect,  
Mistaken Damon won respect;  
But could the specious homage pass  
With any creature, but an ass?  
If conscious, they who fear'd the skin  
Would scorn the sluggish brute within.  
What awe-struck slaves the towers enclose,  
Where Persian monarchs eat and doze!  
What prostrate reverence all agree  
To pay a prince they never see!  
Mere vassals of a royal throne;  
The Sophi's virtues must be shown,  
To make the reverence his own.  
As for Thalia-wouldst thou make her  
Thy bride without a portion?-take her:  
She will with duteous care attend,  
And all thy pensive hours befriend;  
Will swell thy joys, will share thy pain,  
With thee rejoice, with thee complain;  
Will smooth thy pillow, plait thy bowers,  
And bind thy aching head with flowers.

But be this previous maxim known-  
If thou canst feed on love alone;  
If, bless'd with her, thou canst sustain  
Contempt, and poverty, and pain;  
If so-then rifle all her graces-  
And fruitful be your fond embraces!  
Too soon, by caitiff Spleen inspired,  
Sage Damon to his groves retired,  
The path disclaimed by sober Reason;  
Retirement claims a later season,  
Ere active youth and warm desires,  
Have quite withdrawn their lingering fires.  
With the warm bosom, ill agree  
Or limpid stream or shady tree  
Love lurks within the rosy bower,  
And claims the speculative hour;  
Ambition finds his calm retreat,  
And bids his pulse too fiercely beat;  
Even social Friendship duns his ear,  
And cites him to the public sphere.  
Does he resist their genuine force?  
His temper takes some froward course,  
Till passion, misdirected, sighs  
For weeds, or shells, or grubs, or flies!  
Far happiest he whose early days,  
Spent in the social paths of praise,  
Leave, fairly printed on his mind,  
A train of virtuous deeds behind:  
From this rich fund the memory draws  
The lasting meed of self-applause.  
Such fair ideas lend their aid  
To people the sequester'd shade:  
Such are the Naiads, Nymphs, and Fawns,  
That haunt his floods or cheer his lawns.  
If, where his devious ramble strays,  
He Virtue's radiant form surveys,  
She seems no longer now to wear  
The rigid mien, the frown severe;  
To show him her remote abode,  
To point the rocky arduous road;  
But from each flower his fields allow,  
She twines a garland for his brow.

William Shenstone

# The Rape Of The Trap. A Ballad

'Twas in a land of learning,  
The Muse's favourite city,  
Such pranks of late  
Were play'd by a rat,  
As-tempt one to be witty.

All in a college study,  
Where books were in great plenty;  
This rat would devour  
More sense in an hour,  
Than I could write-in twenty.

Corporeal food, 'tis granted,  
Serves vermin less refined,  
Sir But this, a rat of taste,  
All other rats surpass'd,  
And he prey'd on the food of the mind, Sir.

His breakfast, half the morning  
He constantly attended;  
And when the bell rung  
For evening song,  
His dinner scarce was ended!

He spared not even heroics,  
On which we poets pride us,  
And would make no more  
Of King Arthurs, by the score,  
Than-all the world beside does.

In books of geography  
He made the maps to flutter;  
A river or a sea  
Was to him a dish of tea;  
And a kingdom, bread and butter.

But if some mawkish potion  
Might chance to overdose him,  
To check its rage,

He took a page  
Of logic-to compose him-

A Trap, in haste and anger,  
Was brought, you need not doubt on't,  
And, such was the gin,  
Were a lion once got in,  
He could not, I think, get out on't.

With cheese, not books, 'twas baited;  
The fact-I'll not belie it-  
Since none-I tell you that-  
Whether scholar or rat,  
Minds books when he has other diet.

But more of Trap and bait, Sir,  
Why should I sing, or either?  
Since the rat, who knew the sleight,  
Came in the dead of night,  
And dragg'd them away together.

Both Trap and bait were vanish'd  
Through a fracture in the flooring;  
Which though so trim  
It now may seem  
Had then-a dozen or more in.

Then answer this, ye sages!  
Nor deem I mean to wrong ye,  
Had the rat, which thus did seize on  
The Trap, less claim to reason,  
Than many a skull among ye?

Dan Prior's mice, I own it,  
Were vermin of condition;  
But this rat, who merely learn'd  
What rats alone concern'd,  
Was the greater politician.

That England's topsyturvy  
Is clear from these mishaps, Sir;  
Since Traps, we may determine,

Will no longer take our vermin,  
But vermin take our Traps, Sir.

Let sophs, by rats infested,  
Then trust in cats to catch them,  
Lest they grow as learn'd as we  
In our studies ; where, d' ye see,  
No mortal sits to watch them.

Good luck betide our captains,  
Good luck betide our cats, Sir,  
And grant that the one  
May quell the Spanish Don,  
And the other destroy our rats, Sir.

William Shenstone

# The Rose-Bud

'See, Daphne, see!' Florelia cried,  
'And learn the sad effects of pride;  
Yon shelter'd rose, how safe conceal'd!  
How quickly blasted when reveal'd!

'The sun with warm attractive rays  
Tempt it to wanton in the blaze;  
A gale succeeds from eastern skies,  
And all its blushing radiance dies.

'So you, my Fair! of charms divine,  
Will quit the plains, too fond to shine  
Where Fame's transporting rays allure,  
Though here more happy, more secure.

'The breath of some neglected maid  
Shall make you sigh you left the shade;  
A breath to beauty's bloom unkind,  
As, to the rose, an eastern wind.'

The nymph replied!-'You first, my Swain!  
Confine your sonnets to the plain;  
One envious tongue alike disarms  
You of your wit, me of my charms.

'What is, unknown, the poet's skill?  
Or what, unheard, the tuneful thrill?  
What, unadmired, a charming mien?  
Or what the rose's blush unseen?'

William Shenstone

# The Ruined Abbey, Or, The Affects Of Superstition

At length fair Peace, with olive crown'd, regains  
Her lawful throne, and to the sacred haunts  
Of wood or fount the frighted Muse returns.  
Happy the bard who, from his native hills,  
Soft musing on a summer's eve, surveys  
His azure stream, with pensile woods enclosed;  
Or o'er the glassy surface with his friend,  
Or faithful fair, through bordering willows green,  
Wafts his small frigate. Fearless he of shouts,  
Or taunts, the rhetoric of the watery crew  
That ape confusion from the realms they rule;  
Fearless of these; who shares the gentler voice  
Of peace and music; birds of sweetest song  
Attune from native boughs their various lay,  
And cheer the forest; birds of brighter plume  
With busy pinion skim the glittering wave,  
And tempt the sun; ambitious to display  
Their several merit, while the vocal flute  
Or number'd verse, by female voice endear'd,  
Crowns his delight, and mollifies the scene.  
If solitude his wandering steps invite  
To some more deep recess (for hours there are  
When gay, when social minds to Friendship's voice,  
Or Beauty's charm, her wild abodes prefer),  
How pleased he treads her venerable shades,  
Her solemn courts! the centre of the grove!  
The root-built cave, by far extended rocks  
Around embosom'd, how it soothes the soul!  
If scoop'd at first by superstitious hands,  
The rugged cell received alone the shoals  
Of bigot minds, Religion dwells not here,  
Yet Virtue, pleased at intervals retires:  
Yet here may Wisdom, as she walks the maze,  
Some serious truths collect, the rules of life,  
And serious truths of mightier weight than gold!  
I ask not wealth; but let me hoard with care,  
With frugal cunning, with a niggard's art,  
A few fix'd principles, in early life,  
Ere indolence impede the search, explored;



Then, like old Latimer, when age impairs  
My judgment's eye, when quibbling schools attack  
My grounded hope, or subtler wits deride,  
Will I not blush to shun the vain debate,  
And this mine answer: 'Thus, 'twas thus I thought,  
My mind yet vigorous, and my soul entire;  
Thus will I think, averse to listen more  
To intricate discussion, prone to stray.  
Perhaps my reason may but ill defend  
My settled faith; my mind, with age impair'd,  
Too sure its own infirmities declare.  
But I am arm'd by caution, studious youth,  
And early foresight: now the winds may rise,  
The tempest whistle, and the billows roar;  
My pinnacle rides in port, despoil'd and worn,  
Shatter'd by time and storms, but while it shuns  
The unequal conflict, and declines the deep,  
Sees the strong vessel fluctuate, less secure.'  
Thus while he strays, a thousand rural scenes  
Suggest instruction, and instructing please.  
And see betwixt the grove's extended arms  
An Abbey's rude remains attract thy view,  
Gilt by the mid-day sun: with lingering step  
Produce thine axe (for, aiming to destroy  
Tree, branch, or shade, for never shall thy breast  
Too long deliberate), with timorous hand  
Remove the obstructive bough; nor yet refuse,  
Though sighing, to destroy that favourite pine,  
Raised by thine hand, in its luxuriant prime  
Of beauty fair, that screens the vast remains.  
Aggrieved, but constant as the Roman sire,  
The rigid Manlius, when his conquering son  
Bled by a parent's voice, the cruel meed  
Of virtuous ardour, timelessly display'd;  
Nor cease till; through the gloomy road, the pile  
Gleam unobstructed: thither oft thine eye  
Shall sweetly wander; thence returning, soothe  
With pensive scenes thy philosophic mind.  
These were thy haunts, thy opulent abodes,  
O Superstition! hence the dire disease  
(Balanced with which the famed Athenian pest  
Were a short headache, were the trivial pain

Of transient indigestion) seized mankind.  
Long time she raged, and scarce a southern gale  
Warm'd our chill air, unloaded with the threats  
Of tyrant Rome; but futile all, till she,  
Rome's abler legate, magnified their power,  
And in a thousand horrid forms attired.  
Where then was truth to sanctify the page  
Of British annals? if a foe expired,  
The perjured monk suborn'd infernal shrieks,  
And fiends to snatch at the departing soul  
With hellish emulation: if a friend,  
High o'er his roof exultant angels tune  
Their golden lyres, and waft him to the skies.  
What then were vows, were oaths, were plighted faith?  
The sovereign's just, the subject's loyal pact,  
To cherish mutual good, annull'd and vain  
By Roman magic, grew an idle scroll  
Ere the frail sanction of the wax was cold.  
With thee, Plantagenet! from civil broils  
The land awhile respired, and all was peace.  
Then Becket rose, and, impotent of mind,  
From regal courts with lawless fury march'd  
The Church's blood-stain'd convicts, and forgave;  
Bid murderous priests the sovereign frown contemn,  
And with unhallow'd crosier bruised the crown.  
Yet yielded not supinely tame a prince  
Of Henry's virtues; learn'd, courageous, wise,  
Of fair ambition. Long his regal soul,  
Firm and erect, the peevish priest exiled,  
And braved the fury of revengeful Rome.  
In vain! let one faint malady diffuse  
The pensive gloom which Superstition loves,  
And see him, dwindled to a recreant groom,  
Rein the proud palfrey while the priest ascends!  
Was Coeur-de-Lion blest with whiter days?  
Here the cowl'd zealots with united cries  
Urged the crusade; and see! of half his stores  
Despoil'd the wretch, whose wiser bosom chose  
To bless his friends, his race, his native land.  
Of ten fair suns that rode their annual race,  
Not one beheld him on his vacant throne;  
While haughty Longchamp, 'mid his liveried files

Of wanton vassals, spoil'd his faithful realm,  
Battling in foreign fields; collecting wide  
A laurel harvest for a pillaged land.  
Oh! dear-bought trophies! when a prince deserts  
His drooping realm, to pluck the barren sprays!  
When faithless John usurp'd the sullied crown,  
What ample tyranny! the groaning land  
Deem'd earth, deem'd heaven, its foe! Six tedious years  
Our helpless fathers in despair obey'd  
The papal interdict; and who obey'd  
The sovereign plunder'd. O inglorious days!  
When the French tyrant, by the futile grant  
Of papal rescript, claim'd Britannia's throne,  
And durst invade! be such inglorious days  
Or hence forgot, or not recall'd in vain!  
Scarce had the tortured ear, dejected heard  
Rome's loud anathema, but heartless, dead  
To every purpose, men nor wish'd to live  
Nor dared to die. The poor laborious hind  
Heard the dire curse, and from his trembling hand  
Fell the neglected crook that ruled the plain:  
Thence journeying home, in every cloud he sees  
A vengeful angel, in whose waving scroll  
He reads damnation; sees its sable train  
Of grim attendants, pencill'd by despair!  
The weary pilgrim from remoter climes  
By painful steps arrived; his home, his friends,  
His offspring left, to lavish on the shrine  
Of some far-honour'd saint his costly stores,  
Inverts his foot-step; sickens at the sight  
Of the barr'd fane, and silent sheds his tear.  
The wretch, whose hope by stern Oppression chased  
From every earthly bliss, still as it saw  
Triumphant wrong, took wing, and flew to heaven,  
And rested there, now mourn'd his refuge lost,  
And wanted peace. The sacred fane was barr'd;  
And the lone altar, where the mourners throng'd  
To supplicate remission, smoked no more:  
While the green weed luxuriant round uprose,  
Some from their deathbed, whose delirious faith  
Through every stage of life to Rome's decrees  
Obsequious, humbly hoped to die in peace,

Now saw the ghastly king approach, begirt  
In tenfold terrors; now expiring heard  
The last loud clarion sound, and Heaven's decree  
With unremitting vengeance bar the skies.  
Nor light the grief, by Superstition weigh'd,  
That their dishonour'd corse, shut from the verge  
Of hallow'd earth, or tutelary fane,  
Must sleep with brutes, their vassals, on the field,  
Unneath some path, in marl unexercised!  
No solemn bell extort a neighbour's tear!  
No tongue of priest pronounce their soul secure,  
Nor fondest friend assure their peace obtain'd!  
The priest, alas! so boundless was the ill,  
He, like the flock he pillaged, pined forlorn;  
The vivid vermeil fled his fady cheek;  
And his big paunch, distended with the spoils  
Of half his flock, emaciate, groan'd beneath  
Superior pride, and mightier lust of power!  
'Twas now Rome's fondest friend, whose meagre hand  
Told to the midnight lamp his holy beads  
With nice precision, felt the deeper wound,  
As his gull'd soul revered the conclave more.  
Whom did the ruin spare? for wealth, for power,  
Birth, honour, virtue, enemy, and friend,  
Sunk helpless, in the dreary gulf involved,  
And one capricious curse enveloped all!  
Were kings secure? in towering stations born,  
In flattery nursed, inured to scorn mankind,  
Or view diminish'd from their site sublime  
As when a shepherd, from the lofty brow  
Of some proud cliff surveys his lessening flock  
In snowy groups diffusive stud the vale.  
Awhile the furious menace John return'd,  
And breathed defiance loud. Alas! too soon  
Allegiance sickening, saw its sovereign yield,  
An angry prey to scruples not his own.  
The loyal soldier, girt around with strength,  
Who stole from mirth and wine his blooming years,  
And seized the falchion, resolute to guard  
His sovereign's right, impalsied at the news,  
Finds the firm bias of his soul reversed  
For foul desertion; drops the lifted steel,

And quits Fame's noble harvest, to expire  
The death of monks, of surfeit and of sloth!  
At length, fatigued with wrongs, the servile king  
Drain'd from his land its small remaining stores  
To buy remission. But could these obtain?  
No! resolute in wrongs the priest obdured,  
Till crawling base, to Rome's deputed slave,  
His fame, his people, and his crown, he gave.  
Mean monarch! slighted, braved, abhorr'd, before!  
And now, appeased by delegated sway,  
The wily pontiff scorns not to recall  
His interdictions. Now the sacred doors  
Admit repentant multitudes, prepared  
To buy deceit; admit obsequious tribes  
Of satraps: princes crawling to the shrine  
Of sainted villany! the pompous tomb  
Dazzling with gems and gold, or in a cloud  
Of incense wreath'd amidst a drooping land  
That sigh'd for bread! 'Tis thus the Indian clove  
Displays its verdant leaf, its crimson flower,  
And sheds its odours; while the flocks around,  
Hungry and faint, the barren sands explore  
In vain! nor plant nor herb endears the soil,  
Drain'd and exhaust to swell its thirsty pores,  
And furnish luxury.-Yet, yet in vain  
Britannia strove; and whether artful Rome  
Caress'd or cursed her, Superstition raged,  
And blinded, fetter'd, and despoil'd the land.  
At length some murderous monk, with poisonous art,  
Expell'd the life his brethren robb'd of peace.  
Nor yet surceas'd with John's disastrous fate  
Pontific fury: English wealth exhaust,  
The sequent reign beheld the beggar'd shore  
Grim with Italian usurers; prepared  
To lend, for griping unexampled hire,  
To lend-what Rome might pillage uncontroll'd.  
For now with more extensive havoc raged  
Relentless Gregory, with a thousand arts,  
And each rapacious, born to drain the world!  
Nor shall the Muse repeat how oft he blew  
The croise's trumpet; then for sums of gold  
Annull'd the vow, and bade the false alarm

Swell the gross hoards of Henry, or his own:  
Nor shall she tell how pontiffs dared repeal  
The best of charters! dared absolve the tie  
Of British kings, by legal oath restrain'd:  
Nor can she dwell on argosies of gold  
From Albion's realm to servile shores convey'd,  
Wrung from her sons, and speeded by her kings!  
Oh, irksome days! when wicked thrones combine  
With papal craft to gull their native land!  
Such was our fate, while Rome's director taught  
Of subjects, born to be their monarch's prey,  
To toil for monks, for gluttony to toil,  
For vacant gluttony; extortion, fraud,  
For avarice, envy, pride, revenge, and shame!  
O doctrine breathed from Stygian caves! exhaled  
From inmost Erebus!-Such Henry's reign!  
Urging his royal realm's reluctant hand  
To wield the peaceful sword, by John erewhile  
Forced from its scabbard, and with burnish'd lance,  
Essay the savage cure, domestic war!  
And now some nobler spirits chased the mist  
Of general darkness. Grosted now adorn'd  
The mitred wreath he wore, with Reason's sword  
Staggering delusion's frauds; at length beneath  
Rome's interdict expiring calm, resign'd  
No vulgar soul, that dared to Heav'n appeal!  
But, ah! this fertile glebe, this fair domain,  
Had well-nigh ceded to the slothful hands  
Of monks libidinous; ere Edward's care  
The lavish hand of deathbed Fear restrain'd.  
Yet was he clear of Superstition's taint?  
He, too, misdeemful of his wholesome law,  
Even he, expiring, gave his treasured gold  
To fatten monks on Salem's distant soil!  
Yes, the Third Edward's breast, to papal sway  
So little prone, and fierce in honour's cause,  
Could Superstition quell! before the towers  
Of haggard Paris, at the thunder's voice  
He drops the sword, and signs ignoble peace!  
But still the Night, by Romish art diffused,  
Collects her clouds, and with slow pace recedes;  
When, by soft Bourdeau's braver queen approved,

Bold Wickliff rose; and while the bigot power  
Amidst her native darkness skulk'd secure,  
The demon vanish'd as he spread the day.  
So from his bosom Cacus breathed of old  
The pitchy cloud, and in a night of smoke  
Secure, awhile his recreant life sustain'd;  
Till famed Alcides, o'er his subtlest wiles  
Victorious, cheer'd the ravaged nations round.  
Hail, honour'd Wickliff! enterprising sage!  
An Epicurus in the cause of truth!  
For 'tis not radiant suns, the jovial hours  
Of youthful Spring, an ether all serene,  
Nor all the verdure of Campania's vales,  
Can chase religious gloom! 'Tis reason, thought,  
The light, the radiance, that pervades the soul,  
And sheds its beams on heaven's mysterious way!  
As yet this light but glimmer'd, and again  
Error prevail'd; while kings by force upraised,  
Let loose the rage of bigots on their foes,  
And seek affection by the dreadful boon  
Of licensed murder. Even the kindest prince,  
The most extended breast, the royal Hal,  
All unrelenting heard the Lollards' cry  
Burst from the centre of remorseless flames;  
Their shrieks endured! O stain to martial praise!  
When Cobham, generous as the noble peer  
That wears his honours, paid the fatal price  
Of virtue blooming ere the storms were laid!  
'Twas thus, alternate, truth's precarious flame  
Decay'd or flourish'd. With malignant eye  
The pontiff saw Britannia's golden fleece,  
Once all his own, invest her worthier sons!  
Her verdant valleys, and her fertile plains,  
Yellow with grain, abjure his hateful sway!  
Essay'd his utmost art, and inly own'd  
No labours bore proportion to the prize.  
So when the tempter view'd, with envious eye,  
The first fair pattern of the female frame,  
All Nature's beauties in one form display'd,  
And centering there, in wild amaze he stood;  
Then only envying Heaven's creative hand;  
Wish'd to his gloomy reign his envious arts

Might win this prize, and doubled every snare.  
And vain were reason, courage, learning, all,  
Till power accede; till Tudor's wild caprice  
Smile on their cause; Tudor! whose tyrant reign,  
With mental freedom crown'd, the best of kings  
Might envious view, and ill prefer their own!  
Then Wolsey rose, by Nature form'd to seek  
Ambition's trophies, by address to win,  
By temper to enjoy-whose humbler birth  
Taught the gay scenes of pomp to dazzle more.  
Then from its towering height with horrid sound  
Rush'd the proud abbey: then the vaulted roofs,  
Torn from their walls, disclosed the wanton scene  
Of monkish chastity! Each angry friar  
Crawl'd from his bedded strumpet, muttering low  
An ineffectual curse. The pervious nooks,  
That, ages past, convey'd the guileful priest  
To play some image on the gaping crowd,  
Imbibe the novel daylight, and expose,  
Obvious, the fraudulent enginery of Rome.  
As though this opening earth to nether realms  
Should flash meridian day, the hooded race  
Shudder, abash'd to find their cheats display'd,  
And, conscious of their guilt, and pleased to waive  
Its fearful meed, resign'd their fair domain.  
Nor yet supine, nor void of rage, retired  
The pest gigantic; whose revengeful stroke  
Tinged the red annals of Maria's reign,  
When from the tenderest breast each wayward priest  
Could banish mercy and implant a fiend!  
When cruelty the funeral pyre uprear'd,  
And bound Religion there, and fired the base!  
When the same blaze, which on each tortured limb  
Fed with luxuriant rage, in every face  
Triumphant faith appear'd, and smiling hope.  
O blest Eliza! from thy piercing beam  
Forth flew this hated fiend, the child of Rome;  
Driven to the verge of Albion, linger'd there,  
Then with her James receding, cast behind  
One angry frown, and sought more servile climes.  
Henceforth they plied the long-continued task  
Of righteous havoc, covering distant fields



With the wrought remnants of the shatter'd pile;  
While through the land the musing pilgrim sees  
A tract of brighter green, and in the midst  
Appears a mouldering wall, with ivy crown'd,  
Or Gothic turret, pride of ancient days!  
Now but of use to grace a rural scene,  
To bound our vistas, and to glad the sons  
Of George's reign, reserved for fairer times!

William Shenstone

# The School-Mistress. In Imitation Of Spenser (Excerpt)

Audit&aelig; voces, vagitus et ingens, Infantunque anim&aelig; flentes in limine primo. TISEMENT

What particulars in Spenser were imagined most proper for the author's imitation on this occasion, are his language, his simplicity, his manner of description, and a peculiar tenderness of sentiment remarkable throughout his works.

Ah me! full sorely is my heart forlorn,  
To think how modest worth neglected lies;  
While partial fame doth with her blasts adorn  
Such deeds alone, as pride and pomp disguise;  
Deeds of ill sort, and mischievous emprize!  
Lend me thy clarion, goddess! let me try  
To sound the praise of merit, ere it dies;  
Such as I oft have chaunced to espy,  
Lost in the dreary shades of dull obscurity.

In ev'ry village mark'd with little spire,  
Embow'r'd in trees, and hardly known to fame,  
There dwells, in lowly shed, and mean attire,  
A matron old, whom we school-mistress name;  
Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame;  
They grieven sore, in piteous durance pent,  
Aw'd by the pow'r of this relentless dame;  
And oft-times, on vagaries idly bent,  
For unkempt hair, or task unconn'd, are sorely shent.

And all in sight doth rise a birchen tree,  
Which learning near her little dome did stowe;  
Whilom a twig of small regard to see,  
Tho' now so wide its waving branches flow;  
And work the simple vassals mickle woe;  
For not a wind might curl the leaves that blew,  
But their limbs shudder'd, and their pulse beat low;  
And, as they look'd, they found their horror grew,  
And shap'd it into rods, and tingled at the view.

So have I seen (who has not, may conceive,)

A lifeless phantom near a garden plac'd;  
So doth it wanton birds of peace bereave,  
Of sport, of song, of pleasure, of repast;  
They start, they stare, they wheel, they look aghast:  
Sad servitude! such comfortless annoy  
May no bold Briton's riper age e'er taste!  
Ne superstition clog his dance of joy,  
Ne vision empty, vain, his native bliss destroy.

Near to this dome is found a patch so green,  
On which the tribe their gambols do display;  
And at the door impris'ning board is seen,  
Lest weakly wights of smaller size should stray;  
Eager, perdie, to bask in sunny day!  
The noises intermix'd, which thence resound,  
Do learning's little tenement betray:  
Where sits the dame, disguis'd in look profound,  
And eyes her fairy throng, and turns her wheel around.

Her cap, far whiter than the driven snow,  
Emblem right meet of decency does yield:  
Her apron dy'd in grain, as blue, I trowe,  
As is the hare-bell that adorns the field:  
And in her hand, for scepter, she does wield  
Tway birchen sprays; with anxious fear entwin'd,  
With dark distrust, and sad repentance fill'd;  
And stedfast hate, and sharp affliction join'd,  
And fury uncontroul'd, and chastisement unkind.

Few but have kenn'd, in semblance meet pourtray'd,  
The childish faces of old Eol's train;  
Libs, Notus, Auster: these in frowns array'd,  
How then would fare or earth, or sky, or main,  
Were the stern god to give his slaves the rein?  
And were not she rebellious breasts to quell,  
And were not she her statutes to maintain,  
The cott no more, I ween, were deem'd the cell,  
Where comely peace of mind, and decent order dwell.

A russet stole was o'er her shoulders thrown;  
A russet kirtle fenc'd the nipping air;  
'Twas simple russet, but it was her own;

'Twas her own country bred the flock so fair;  
'Twas her own labour did the fleece prepare;  
And, sooth to say, her pupils, rang'd around,  
Thro' pious awe, did term it passing rare;  
For they in gaping wonderment abound,  
And think, no doubt, she been the greatest wight on ground

Albeit ne flatt'ry did corrupt her truth,  
Ne pompous title did debauch her ear;  
Goody, good-woman, gossip, n'aunt, forsooth,  
Or dame, the sole additions she did hear;  
Yet these she challeng'd, these she held right dear:  
Ne would esteem him act as mought behove,  
Who should not honour'd eld with these revere:  
For never title yet so mean could prove,  
But there was eke a mind which did that title love.

One ancient hen she took delight to feed,  
The plodding pattern of the busy dame;  
Which, ever and anon, impell'd by need,  
Into her school, begirt with chickens, came;  
Such favour did her past deportment claim:  
And, if neglect had lavish'd on the ground  
Fragment of bread, she would collect the same;  
For well she knew, and quaintly could expound,  
What sin it were to waste the smallest crumb she found.

...

William Shenstone

# The Skylark

Go, tuneful bird! that gladd'st the skies.  
To Daphne's window speed thy way,  
And there on quivering pinions rise,  
And there thy vocal art display.

And if she deign thy notes to hear,  
And if she praise thy matin song,  
Tell her the sounds that soothe her ear  
To Damon's native plains belong.

Tell her in livelier plumes array'd,  
The bird from Indian groves may shine;  
But ask the lovely partial maid  
What are his notes compared to thine!

Then bid her treat yon witless beau,  
And all his flaunting race with scorn,  
And lend an ear to Damon's woe,  
Who sings her praise, and sings forlorn.

William Shenstone

# The Speeches Of Sloth And Virtue

[Upon the Plan of Xenophen's Judgment of Hercules]

## SLOTH

Hither, dear Boy, direct thy wandring Eyes,  
'Tis here the lovely Vale of Pleasure lies.  
Debate no more -- to me thy self resign;  
Her mossy Caves, her Groves, and all are mine.  
For me the Goddess opes her various Pow'r,  
Springs in a Tree, or blossoms in a Flow'r:  
To please my Ear she breaths celestial Strains:  
To please my Eye, with Lillies strews the Plains:  
To form my Couch in mossy Beds she grows:  
To gratify my Smell she blooms a Rose.  
Oft' in some Nymph the Deity I find,  
Where in one Form the various Sweets are join'd.  
Yield but to me, -- a Choir of Nymphs shall rise,  
And with the blooming Sight regale thy Eyes:  
Their beauteous Cheeks a fairer Rose shall wear,  
A brighter Lilly in their Necks appear:  
Thou on their Breasts thy wearied Head recline,  
Nor at the Swan's less pleasing Nest repine:  
Whilst Philomel in each soft Voice complains,  
And gently lulls thee with her dying Strains:  
Whilst spicy Gums round each fair Bosom glow;  
And in each Accent myrrhy Odours flow.  
For thee with softest Art the Dome shall rise,  
And spiring Turrets glitter thro' the Skies.  
For thee the Robe shall glow with purple Rays;  
The Side-board sparkle, and gilt Chariot blaze.  
In brilliant Mines, be other Hands employ'd,  
So the gay Product be by thine enjoy'd.  
For thee the Poplar shall her Amber drain:  
For thee in clouded Beauty spring the Cane.  
To please thy Taste shall Gallia prune the Vine:  
To swell thy Treasures India sink the Mine.  
For thee each Nations nicer Stores shall grow,  
And ev'ry Wind some lovely Tribute blow.  
Learning shall ne'er molest thy tranquil Reign,

Nor Science puzzle thy inactive Brain:  
Sometimes perhaps thy Fancy take her Wing  
To grace a Fan, or celebrate a Ring:  
Fix various Dyes to suit each varying Mien:  
Prescribe where Patches shou'd in Crouds be seen:

Or sigh soft Strains along the vocal Grove,  
And tell the Charms, the sweet Effects of Love!  
Or if more specious Ease thy Care shou'd claim,  
And thy Breast glow with faint Desire of Fame,  
Some trivial Science shall thy Thoughts amuse;  
And Learning's Name a solemn Sound diffuse.  
To Thee all Nature's shelly Store I'll bring,  
To thee the Sparklings on the Insect's Wing.  
Pleasure in infant Forms shalt thou descry;  
View, in an Ant, or hear her in a Fly;

When near thy Path, as oft as Spring appears,  
The sportive Goddess buzzes round thy Ears:  
Now in some Pebble's curious Vein is seen,  
Or on some Leaf bestows unusual Green.  
Then Sleep shall wrap thee in her downy Arms,  
And round thy weary'd Head diffuse her Charms;  
Lest growing Pride thy peaceful Schemes o'erthrow,  
And Thought succeed, -- my most destructive Foe.  
The watry Nymphs shall tune the tinkling Vales,  
And gentle Zephyrs harmonize their Gales:

For thy repose instruct, with Rival Joy,  
Their Streams to murmur, and their Winds to sigh.  
Thus shalt thou spend the sweetly-flowing Day,  
Till lost in Bliss thou breath thy Soul away:  
How easy a Transition should'st thou find,  
Were to thy Fate Annihilation join'd!

VIRTUE.

Fly, fly, fond Youth, the too indulgent Maid,  
Nor err, by such fantastick Scenes betray'd.  
Tho' in my Path the prickly Thorn be seen,  
And the waste Turf produce a fainter Green;

Tho' no gay Rose, or purple Product shine,  
The rugged Surface still conceals the Mine;  
And each unsightly Object can supply  
More lasting Pleasure, more substantial Joy.  
But shou'd those airy glitter'ing Toys allure,  
Yet whence cou'd Sloth the mighty Boon procure?  
Or whence receive, or how those Gifts bestow,  
Which I alone possess -- her greatest Foe?  
I from old Ocean rob the treasur'd Store,  
And hidden Gems thro' ev'ry Realm explore:

'Twas I the rugged Brilliant first reveal'd,  
By tenfold Strata in the Earth conceal'd:  
'Tis I the shapeless Surface still refine,  
And teach the rugged Brilliant how to shine.  
Where blooms the Rose, where spires the shapely Tree,  
Where smiles the Grape, without fair Industry?  
But grant we Sloth the Scene herself has drawn,  
The mossy Grotto, and the flow'ry Lawn:  
Let Frankincense with ev'ry Wind exhale,  
And Philomela breath in ev'ry Gale:

Let Brilliants sparkle, (dear Machines of Pride!)  
And from the Poplar flow the Amber Tide:  
Let gay Pomona, quitting all around,  
For choicest Fruits select the hallow'd Ground;  
To tread the favour'd Soil shou'd Virtue cease,  
Nor mossy Grotts, nor flow'ry Lawns cou'd please:  
Nor ought Pomona's luscious Gifts avail:  
The Sound harmonious; or the spicy Gale.  
See'st thou those Rocks in dreadful Pomp arise,  
And barren Cliffs that sweep the vaulted Skies?

Those Fields whence Phoebus all their Moisture drains,  
And, too profusely kind, disrobes the Plains?  
When I vouchsafe to tread the lonely Soil,  
Those Rocks seem lovely, and those Desarts smile;  
Oft' on those pathless Wilds as I appear,  
(With Converse sweet his lonely Steps to chear)  
Those Cliffs the Exile has with Pleasure view'd,  
And call'd that Desart, `` Blissful Solitude!



Known by its airy Height and tow'ring Spires,  
Behind that Scene Fame's lofty Dome retires.

Steep the Ascent by which to Fame we rise,  
Yet equal to the Labour is the Prize:  
From thence you gain an earthly Crown;  
From thence -- you reach the Skies.  
Far, far below the downy Throne is seen  
That lulls to Rest Ignavia's softer Queen:

Thence to Fame's Turrets oft' She lifts her Eyes,  
Desirous still, still impotent to rise.  
Oft', when resolv'd to gain those shining Tow'rs,  
The pensive Queen the dire Ascent explores;

Comes onward, wafted by the gummy Trees,  
Some Sylvan Musick, or some scented Breeze;  
She turns her Head; her own gay Realm she spies,  
And all the airy Resolution dies.  
Thus still in vain these gilded Visions please  
The Wretch of Glory, whilst the Slave of Ease;  
Doom'd ever in ignoble State to pine,  
Boast her own Scenes, and languish after mine.

William Shenstone

## To A Friend

Have you ne'er seen, my gentle Squire!  
The humours of your kitchen fire?  
Says Ned to Sal, 'I lead a spade;  
Why don't ye play?-the girl's afraid-  
Play something-anything-but play-  
'Tis but to pass the time away-  
Phoo-how she stands-biting her nails-  
As though she play'd for half her vails-  
Sorting her cards, haggling, and picking-  
We play for nothing, do us, chicken?  
That card will do-'blood never doubt it,  
It's not worth while to think about it.'  
Sal thought, and thought, and miss'd her aim,  
And Ned ne'er studying won the game.  
Methinks, old friend! 'tis wondrous true  
That verse is but a game at loo:  
While many a bard, that shows so clearly  
He writes for his amusement merely,  
Is known to study, fret, and toil,  
And play for nothing all the while,  
Or praise at most; for wreaths of yore  
Ne'er signified a farthing more!  
Till having vainly toil'd to gain it,  
He sees your flying pen obtain it.  
Through fragrant scenes the trifler roves,  
And hallow'd haunts that Phoebus loves:  
Where with strange heats his bosom glows,  
And mystic flames the god bestows.  
You now none other flames require  
Than a good blazing parlour fire;  
Write verses-to defy the scorners  
In -houses and chimney-corners.  
Sal found her deep-laid schemes were vain-  
The cards were cut-come, deal again-  
No good comes on it when one lingers-  
I'll play the cards come next my fingers-  
Fortune could never let Ned loo her,  
When she had left it wholly to her.  
Well, now who wins?-why, still the same-

For Sal has lost another game.  
I've done (she mutter'd); I was saying,  
It did not argufy my playing.  
Some folks will win, they cannot choose;  
But think or not think-some must lose.  
I may have won a game or so-  
But then it was an age ago-  
It ne'er will be my lot again-  
I won it of a baby then-  
Give me an ace of trumps, and see!  
Our Ned will beat me with a three!  
'Tis all by luck that things are carried-  
He'll suffer for it, when he's married.'  
Thus Sal, with tears in either eye,  
While victor Ned sate tittering by.  
Thus I, long envying your success,  
And bent to write and study less,  
Sate down, and scribbled in a trice,  
Just what you see-and you despise.  
You, who can frame a tuneful song,  
And hum it as you ride along,  
And, trotting on the king's highway,  
Snatch from the hedge a sprig of bay,  
Accept this verse, howe'er it flows,  
From one that is your friend in prose.  
What is this wreath, so green, so fair,  
Which many wish, and few must wear;  
Which some men's indolence can gain,  
And some men's vigils ne'er obtain?  
For what must Sal or poet sue,  
Ere they engage with Ned or you?  
For luck in verse, for luck at loo?  
Ah, no! 'tis genius gives you fame,  
And Ned, through skill, secures the game.

William Shenstone

# To A Lady Of Quality, Fitting Up Her Library

Ah! what is science, what is art,  
Or what the pleasure these impart?  
Ye trophies, which the learn'd pursue  
Through endless, fruitless toils, adieu!

What can the tedious tomes bestow,  
To soothe the miseries they show?  
What like the bliss for him decreed,  
Who tends his flock and tunes his reed?

Say, wretched Fancy! thus refined  
From all that glads the simplest hind,  
How rare that object which supplies  
A charm for too discerning eyes!

The polish'd bard, of genius vain,  
Endures a deeper sense of pain;  
As each invading blast devours  
The richest fruits, the fairest flowers.

Sages, with irksome waste of time,  
The steep ascent of knowledge climb;  
Then, from the towering heights they scale,  
Behold contentment range-the vale.

Yet why, Asteria, tell us why  
We scorn the crowd when you are nigh?  
Why then does reason seem so fair,  
Why learning, then, deserve our care?

Who can unpleas'd your shelves behold,  
While you so fair a proof unfold,  
What force the brightest genius draws  
From polish'd wisdom's written laws?

Where are our humbler tenets flown?  
What strange perfection bids us own  
That Bliss with toilsome Science dwells,  
And happiest he who most excels?

William Shenstone

# To A Lady, With Some Coloured Patterns Of Flowers

Madam,-

Though rude the draughts, though artless seem the lines,  
From one unskill'd in verse, or in designs;  
Oft has good-nature been the fool's defence,  
And honest meaning gilded want of sense.  
Fear not, though flowers and beauty grace my lay,  
To praise one fair, another shall decay.  
No lily, bright with painted foliage, here,  
Shall only languish, when Selinda's near:  
A fate reversed no smiling rose shall know,  
Nor with reflected lustre doubly glow.  
Praises which languish when applied to you,  
Where flattering schemes seem obviously true.  
Yet sure your sex is near to flowers allied,  
Alike in softness, and alike in pride:  
Foes to retreat, and ever fond to shine,  
Both rush to danger, and the shades decline;  
Exposed, the short-lived pageants of a day,  
To painted flies or glittering fops a prey:  
Changed with each wind, nor one short day the same,  
Each clouded sky affects their tender frame.  
In glaring Chloe's man-like taste and mien,  
Are the gross splendours of the tulip seen:  
Distant they strike, inelegantly gay,  
To the near view no pleasing charms display.  
To form the nymph, a vulgar wit must join,  
As coarser soils will most the flower refine.  
Ophelia's beauties let the jasmine paint,  
Too faintly soft, too nicely elegant.  
Around with seeming sanctity endued,  
The passion-flower may best express the prude.  
Like the gay rose, too rigid Silvia shines,  
While, like its guardian thorn, her virtue joins.  
Happy the nymph from all their failures free!  
Happy the nymph in whom their charms agree!  
Faint these productions, till you bid disclose,  
The pink new splendours, and fresh tints the rose:  
And yet condemn not trivial draughts like these,

Form'd to improve, and make even trifles please.  
A power like yours minuter beauties warms,  
And yet can blast the most aspiring charms:  
Thus, at the rays whence other objects shine,  
The taper sickens, and its flames decline.  
When by your art the purple violet lives,  
And the pale lily sprightlier charms receives;  
Garters to me shall glow inferior far,  
And with less pleasing lustre shine the star.  
Let serious triflers, fond of wealth or fame,  
On toils like these bestow too soft a name;  
Each gentler art with wise indifference view,  
And scorn one trifle, millions to pursue:  
More artful I their specious schemes deride  
Fond to please you, by you in these employed;  
A nobler task, or more sublime desire,  
Ambition ne'er could form, nor pride inspire.  
The sweets of tranquil life and rural ease  
Amuse securely, nor less justly please.  
Where gentle pleasure shows her milder power,  
Or blooms in fruit, or sparkles in the flower;  
Smiles in the groves, the raptured poet's theme;  
Flows in the brook, his Naiad of the stream;  
Dawns, with each happier stroke the pencil gives,  
And, in each livelier image, smiling lives;  
Is heard, when Silvia strikes the warbling strings,  
Selinda speaks, or Philomela sings:  
Breathes with the morn; attends, propitious maid,  
The evening ramble, and the noon-day glade  
Some visionary fair she cheats our view,  
Then only vigorous when she seems like you.  
Yet Nature some for sprightlier joys design'd,  
For brighter scenes, with nicer care, refined.  
When the gay jewel radiant streams supplies,  
And vivid brilliants meet your brighter eyes;  
When dress and pomp around the fancy play,  
By fortune's dazzling beauties borne away;  
When theatres for you the scenes forego,  
And the box bows obsequiously low:  
How dull the plan which indolence has drawn,  
The mossy grotto, or the flowery lawn!  
Though roseate scents in every wind exhale,

And sylvan warblers charm in every pale.  
Of these be hers the choice whom all approve;  
And whom but those who envy, all must love:  
By nature modell'd, by experience taught,  
To know and pity every female fault:  
Pleased even to hear her sex's virtues shown,  
And blind to none's perfections but her own:  
Whilst, humble fair! of these too few she knows,  
Yet owns too many for the world's repose;  
From wit's wild petulance serenely free,  
Yet blest in all that nature can decree.  
Not like a fire, which, whilst it burns, alarms;  
A modest flame, that gently shines and warms:  
Whose mind, in every light, can charms display,  
With wisdom serious, and with humour gay;  
Just as her eyes in each bright posture warm,  
And fiercely strike, or languishingly charm:  
Such are your honours-mention'd to your cost,  
Those least can hear them, who deserve them most:  
Yet ah! forgive-the less inventive muse,  
If e'er she sing, a copious theme must choose.

William Shenstone



# To The Virtuosi

Hail curious Wights! to whom so fair  
The form of mortal flies is!  
Who deem those grubs beyond compare,  
Which common sense despises.

Whether o'er hill, morass or mound,  
You make your sportsman sallies;  
Or that your prey, in gardens found  
Is urged through walks and alleys,

Yet, in the fury of the chase,  
No slope could e'er retard you;  
Blest, if one fly repay the race,  
Or painted wing reward you.

Fierce as Camilla, o'er the plain,  
Pursued the glittering stranger;  
Still ey'd the purple's pleasing stain,  
And knew not fear nor danger.

'Tis you dispense the favourite meat  
To nature's filmy people;  
Know what conserves they choose to eat,  
And what liqueurs, to tipple.

And, if her brood of insects dies,  
You sage assistance lend her;  
Can stoop to pimp for amorous flies,  
And help them to engender.

'Tis you protect their pregnant hour;  
And when the birth's at hand,  
Exerting your obstetric power,  
Prevent a mothless land.

Yet oh! however your towering view  
Above gross objects rises;  
Whate'er refinements you pursue,  
Hear, what a friend advises.

A friend, who, weigh'd with yours, must prize  
Domitian's idle passion;  
That wrought the death of teasing flies,  
But ne'er their propagation.

Let Flavia's eyes more deeply warm,  
Nor thus your hearts determine,  
To slight Dame Nature's fairest form,  
And sigh for nature's vermin.

And speak with some respect of beaus;  
No more, as triflers, treat them;  
'Tis better learn to save one's clothes,  
Than cherish moths that eat them.

William Shenstone

# Upon A Visit To A Lady Of Quality

On fair Asteria's blissful plains,  
Where ever-blooming fancy reigns,  
How pleased we pass the winter's day,  
And charm the dull-eyed Spleen away!

No linnet, from the leafless bough,  
Pours forth her note melodious now,  
But all admire Asteria's tongue,  
Nor wish the linnet's vernal song.

No flowers emit their transient rays;  
Yet sure Asteria's wit displays  
More various tints, more glowing lines,  
And with perennial beauty shines.

Though rifled groves and fetter'd streams  
But ill befriend a poet's dreams;  
Asteria's presence wakes the lyre,  
And well supplies poetic fire.

The fields have lost their lovely dye;  
No cheerful azure decks the sky:  
Yet still we bless the lowering day;  
Asteria smiles-and all is gay.

Hence let the Muse no more presume,  
To blame the winter's dreary gloom;  
Accuse his loitering hours no more,  
But, ah! their envious haste deplore.

For soon, from Wit and Friendship's reign,  
The social hearth, the sprightly vein,  
I go-to meet the coming year,  
On savage plains, and deserts drear!

I go-to feed on pleasures flown,  
Nor find the spring my loss atone;  
But, 'mid the flowery sweets of May,  
With pride recall this winter's day.

William Shenstone

# Valentine's Day

'Tis said that under distant skies,  
Nor you the fact deny,  
What first attracts an Indian's eyes  
Becomes his deity.

Perhaps a lily, or a rose,  
That shares the morning's ray,  
May to the waking swain disclose  
The regent of the day.

Perhaps a plant in yonder grove,  
Enrich'd with fragrant power,  
May tempt his vagrant eyes to rove  
Where blooms the sovereign flower.

Perch'd on the cedar's topmost bough,  
And gay with gilded wings,  
Perchance, the patron of his vow,  
Some artless linnet sings.

The swain surveys her pleased, afraid,  
Then low to earth he bends;  
And owns, upon her friendly aid,  
His health, his life depends.

Vain futile idols, bird or flower,  
To tempt a votary's prayer!-  
How would his humble homage tower  
Should he behold my fair!

Yes-might the Pagan's waking eyes,  
O'er Flavia's beauty range,  
He there would fix his lasting choice,  
Nor dare, nor wish, to change.

William Shenstone

## Verses, To William Lyttleton, Esq.

How blithely pass'd the summer's day!  
How bright was every flower!  
While friends arrived in circles gay,  
To visit Damon's bower!

But now, with silent step I range  
Along some lonely shore;  
And Damon's bower, alas the change!  
Is gay with friends no more.

Away to crowds and cities borne,  
In quest of joy they steer,  
Whilst I, alas! am left forlorn,  
To weep the parting year!

O pensive autumn! how I grieve  
Thy sorrowing face to see!  
When languid suns are taking leave  
Of every drooping tree.

Ah! let me not, with heavy eye,  
This dying scene survey!  
Haste Winter! Haste! usurp the sky;  
Complete my bower's decay.

Ill can I bear the motley cast  
Yon sickening leaves retain;  
That speak at once of pleasure past,  
And bode approaching pain.

At home, unblest, I gaze around,  
My distant scenes require;  
Where, all in murky vapours drown'd,  
Are hamlet, hill, and spire.

Though Thomson, sweet descriptive bard!  
Inspiring Autumn sung;  
Yet how should we the months regard,  
That stopt his flowing tongue?

Ah! luckless months, of all the rest,  
To whose hard share it fell!  
For sure his was the gentlest breast  
That ever sung so well.

And see, the swallows now disown  
The roofs they loved before,  
Each, like his tuneful genius, flown  
To glad some happier shore.

The wood-nymph eyes, with pale affright,  
The sportsman's frantic deed,  
While hounds, and horns, and yells, unite  
To drown the Muse's reed.

Ye fields, with blighted herbage brown!  
Ye skies, no longer blue!  
Too much we feel from Fortune's frown  
To bear these frowns from you.

Where is the mead's unsullied green?  
The zephyr's balmy gale?  
And where sweet friendship's cordial mien,  
That brighten'd every vale?

What though the vine disclose her dyes,  
And boast her purple store?  
Not all the vineyard's rich supplies  
Can soothe our sorrows more.

He! he is gone, whose moral strain  
Could wit and mirth refine;  
He! he is gone, whose social vein  
Surpass'd the power of wine.

Fast by the streams he deign'd to praise,  
In yon sequester'd grove,  
To him a votive urn I raise,  
To him, and friendly Love.

Yes, there, my friend! forlorn and sad

I grave your Thomson's name,  
And there, his lyre; which Fate forbade  
To sound your growing fame.

There shall my plaintive song recount  
Dark themes of hopeless woe,  
And faster than the drooping fount  
I'll teach mine eyes to flow.

There leaves, in spite of Autumn green,  
Shall shade the hallow'd ground,  
And Spring will there again be seen  
To call forth flowers around.

But no kind suns will bid me share,  
Once more, his social hour;  
Ah! Spring! thou never canst repair  
This loss to Damon's bower.

William Shenstone



# Written At An Inn At Henley

To thee, fair Freedom! I retire,  
From flattery, cards, and dice, and din;  
Nor art thou found in mansions higher  
Than the low cot, or humble inn.

'Tis here with boundless power I reign,  
And every health which I begin,  
Converts dull port to bright champagne;  
Such Freedom crowns it, at an inn.

I fly from pomp, I fly from plate,  
I fly from Falsehood's specious grin;  
Freedom I love, and form I hate,  
And choose my lodgings, at an inn.

Here, waiter! take my sordid ore,  
Which lackeys else might hope to win;  
It buys what courts have not in store,  
It buys me Freedom, at an inn.

Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,  
Where'er his stages may have been,  
May sigh to think he still has found  
The warmest welcome -- at an inn.

William Shenstone

# Written In A Collection Of Bacchanalian Songs

Adieu, ye jovial Youths! who join  
To plunge old Care in floods of wine;  
And, as your dazzled eyeballs roll,  
Discern him struggling in the bowl.

Nor yet is hope so wholly flown,  
Nor yet is thought so tedious grown,  
But limpid stream and shady tree  
Retain, as yet, some sweets for me.

And see, through yonder silent grove,  
See, yonder does my Daphne rove!  
With pride her footsteps I pursue,  
And bid your frantic joys adieu.

The sole confusion I admire,  
Is that my Daphne's eyes inspire;  
I scorn the madness you approve,  
And value reason next to love.

William Shenstone

# Written In A Flower Book, Of My Own Colouring, Designed For Lady Plymouth

Debitae nymphis opifex coronae.-Hor.

Imitation.

Constructor of the tributary wreath  
For rural maids.

Bring, Flora, bring thy treasures here,  
The pride of all the blooming year;  
And let me thence a garland frame,  
To crown this fair, this peerless dame!  
But, ah! since envious Winter lowers,  
And Hewell meads resign their flowers,  
Let Art and Friendship's joint essay  
Diffuse their flowerets in her way.  
Not Nature can, herself, prepare  
A worthy wreath for Lesbia's hair,  
Whose temper, like her forehead, smooth,  
Whose thoughts and accents form'd to soothe,  
Whose pleasing mien, and make refined,  
Whose artless breast, and polish'd mind,  
From all the nymphs of plain or grove,  
Deserved and won by Plymouth's love!

William Shenstone