

ODE TO A GENTLEMAN UPON HIS TRAVELS  
THROUGH ITALY.

BY THE SAME.

WHILE I with fond officious care  
For you my chorded shell prepare,  
And not unmindful frame an humble lay ;  
Where shall this verse my Cynthio find ?  
What scene of art now charms your mind ?  
Say, on what sacred spot of Roman ground you stray ?

Perhaps you cull each valley's bloom,  
To strew o'er Virgil's laurell'd tomb,  
Whence oft at midnight echoing voices found ;  
For at that hour of silence, there  
The shades of ancient Bards repair,  
To join in choral song his hallow'd urn around :

Or wander in the cooling shade  
Of Sabine bowers, where Horace stray'd,  
And oft repeat in eager thought elate,  
(As round in classic search you trace  
With curious eye the pleasing place)  
" That fount he lov'd, and there beneath that hill he fate."

How



How longs my raptur'd breast with you  
 Great Raphael's magic strokes to view,  
 To whose blest hand each charm the Graces gave!  
 Whence each fair form with beauty glows,  
 Like that of Venus, when she rose  
 Naked in blushing charms from Ocean's hoary wave.

As oft by roving fancy led  
 To smooth Clitumnus' banks you tread,  
 What awful thoughts his fabled waters raise!  
 While the low-thoughted swain, whose flock  
 Grazes around, from some steep rock  
 With vulgar disregard his mazy course surveys.

Now thro' the ruin'd domes my Muse  
 Your steps with eager flight pursues,  
 That their cleft piles on Tyber's plains present,  
 Among whose hollow-winding cells  
 Forlorn and wild Rome's Genius dwells,  
 His golden sceptre broke, and purple mantle rent.

Oft to those mossy mouldering walls,  
 Those caverns dark, and silent halls,  
 Let me repair by midnight's paly fires;  
 There muse on Empire's fallen state,  
 And frail Ambition's hapless fate,  
 While more than mortal thoughts the solemn scene inspires.

What



What lust of power from the cold North  
 Could tempt those Vandal-robbers forth,  
 Fair Italy, thy vine-clad vales to waste !  
 Whose hands profane, with hostile blade,  
 Thy story'd temples dar'd invade,  
 And all thy Parian seats of Attic art defac'd.

They, weeping Art in fetters bound,  
 And gor'd her breast with many a wound,  
 And veil'd her charms in clouds of thickest night ;  
 Sad Poesy, much-injur'd maid,  
 They drove to some dim convent's shade,  
 And quench'd in gloomy mist her lamp's resplendent light.

There long she wept, to darkness doom'd,  
 'Till Cosmo's hand her light relum'd,  
 That once again in lofty Tasso shone ;  
 Since has sweet Spenser caught her fire,  
 She breath'd once more in Milton's lyre,  
 And warm'd the soul divine of Shakespear, Fancy's son.

Nor she, mild queen, will cease to smile  
 On her Britannia's much-lov'd isle,  
 Where these her best, her favourite three were born,  
 While <sup>z</sup> Theron warbles Græcian strains,  
 Or polish'd Dodington remains,  
 The drooping train of Arts to cherish and adorn.

<sup>z</sup> The author of the Pleasures of Imagination.