

THE NEWSPAPER. (1)

(1) [This poem was first published in a thin quarto, in March, 1785. The dedication to Lord Thurlow, the preface, and some of the author's footnotes, omitted in the collection of 1807, are now restored from the original edition; which has also supplied several various readings. The obligations under which Mr. Crabbe had been laid by Lord Thurlow, previous to, and after, the publication of "The Newspaper," are detailed in the preceding volume, pp. 101, 123, &c. That the poet did not stoop to unworthy flattery, in the expressions he uses respecting the literary attainments of the Chancellor, is sufficiently proved by the high testimony of Bishop Horsley, in his *Essay on the Prosody of the Greek and Latin Languages*, and by the uniform warmth of the poet Cowper, when alluding to the splendid career of the great man who had been, in early life, his fellow pupil in a Solicitor's chambers. See, in particular, the stanzas —

Round Thurlow's head, in early youth,
And in his sportive days,
Fair Science pour'd the light of Truth,
And Genius shed his rays," &c.]

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDWARD LORD THURLOW,

LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF GREAT BRITAIN (1); ONE OF HIS
MAJESTY's MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL, ETC. ETC.

MY LORD,

My obligations to your Lordship, great as they are, have not induced me to prefix your name to the following poem: nor is it your Lordship's station, exalted as that is, which prevailed upon me to solicit the honour of your protection for it. But, when I considered your Lordship's great abilities and good taste, so well known and so universally acknowledged, I became anxious for the privilege with which you have indulged me; well knowing that the Public would not be easily persuaded to disregard a performance, marked, in any degree, with your Lordship's approbation.

(1) [Lord Thurlow was appointed Lord High Chancellor in 1778, and continued in the situation till 1783; when, upon the success of the Coalition ministry, he was ejected, and the seals put in commission; but, on the final triumph of Mr. Pitt, in 1784, he was re-instated, and possessed the seals till 1793. His Lordship died in 1806.]

It is, my Lord, the province of superior rank, in general, to bestow this kind of patronage; but superior talents only can render it valuable. Of the value of your Lordship's I am fully sensible; and, while I make my acknowledgments for that, and for many other favours, I cannot suppress the pride I have in thus publishing my gratitude, and declaring how much I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,
Your Lordship's most obedient,
most obliged, and devoted servant,

GEORGE CRABBE.

Belvoir Castle,
February 20. 1785.

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TO THE READER

THE Poem which I now offer to the public, is, I believe, the only one written on the subject; at least, it is the only one which I have any knowledge of: and, fearing there may not be found in it many things to engage the Reader's attention, I am willing to take the strongest hold I can upon him, by offering something which has the claim of novelty.

GEORGE CRABBE.
obedient,
devoted servant,

When the subject first occurred to me, I meant, in a few lines only, to give some description of that variety of dissociating articles which are huddled together in our Daily Papers. As the thought dwelt upon me, I conceived this might be done methodically, and with some connection of parts, by taking a larger scope; which notwithstanding I have done, I must still apologise for a want of union and coherence in my poem. Subjects like this will not easily admit of them: we cannot slide from theme to theme in an easy and graceful succession; but, on quitting one thought, there will be an unavoidable hiatus, and in general an awkward transition into that which follows.

That, in writing upon the subject of our News-papers, I have avoided every thing which might ap-

pear like the opinion of a party, is to be accounted for from the knowledge I have gained from them; since, the more of these Instructors a man reads, the less he will infallibly understand: nor would it have been very consistent in me, at the same time to censure their temerity and ignorance, and to adopt their rage.

I should have been glad to have made some discrimination in my remarks on these productions. There is, indeed, some difference; and I have observed, that one editor will sometimes convey his abuse with more decency, and colour his falsehood with more appearance of probability, than another: but until I see that paper, wherein no great character is wantonly abused, nor groundless insinuation wilfully disseminated, I shall not make any distinction in my remarks upon them.

It must, however, be confessed, that these things have their use; and are, besides, vehicles of much amusement: but this does not outweigh the evil they do to society, and the irreparable injury they bring upon the characters of individuals. In the following poem I have given those good properties their due weight: they have changed indignation into mirth, and turned, what would otherwise have been abhorrence, into derision.

February, 1785. (1)

(1) [At this period, party-spirit ran unusually high. The Coalition ministry, of which Mr. Burke was a member, had recently been removed—the

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TO THE READER.

113

India bills both of Fox and Pitt had been thrown out, and the public mind was greatly inflamed by the events of the six weeks' Westminster election, and the consequent scrutiny. Notwithstanding the philosophical tone of his preface, it seems highly probable that Mr. Crabbe had been moved to take up the subject by the indignation he felt on seeing Mr. Burke daily abused, at "this busy, bustling time," by one set of party writers, while the Duke of Rutland was equally the victim of another. Mr. Burke had, at this time, become extremely unpopular, both in and out of the House. At the opening of the new parliament, in May, 1784, so strong was the combination against him, that the moment of his rising became a signal for coughings, or other symptoms of pointed dislike. On one occasion he stopped short in his argument to remark, that "he could teach a pack of hounds to yelp with more melody and equal comprehension."¹

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Influence — Their Numbers — The Sunday Monitor —
Their general Character — Their Effect upon Individuals
— upon Society — in the Country — The Village Free-
holder — What Kind of Composition a Newspaper is; and
the Amusement it affords — Of what Parts it is chiefly
composed — Articles of Intelligence: Advertisements: The
Stage: Quacks: Puffing — The Correspondents to a News-
paper, political and poetical — Advice to the latter — Con-
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Correspondents to a News-
Advice to the latter — Con-

È quibus, hi vacuas implent sermonibus aures:
Hi narrata ferunt alio: mensuraque ficti
Crescit, et auditis aliquid novus adjicit auctor:
Ilic Credulitas, illic temerarius Error,
Vanaque Lætitia est, consternatique Timores,
Seditioque repens, dubioque auctore Susurri.
OVID. *Metamorph.*, lib. xii. (1)

A TIME like this, a busy, bustling time,(2)
Suits ill with writers, very ill with rhyme:
Unheard we sing, when party-rage runs strong,
And mightier madness checks the flowing song:

(1) [“The courts are fill’d with a tumultuous din
Of crowds, or issuing forth, or entering in
A thoroughfare of News: where some devise
Things never heard, some mingle truth with lies;
The troubled air with empty sounds they beat
Intent to hear, and eager to repeat,
Error sits brooding there, with added train
Of vain Credulity, and Joy as vain:
Suspicion, with Sedition join’d, are near
And Rumours raised, and Murmurs mix’d, and Fear.”
DRYDEN.]

(2) The greatest part of this poem was written immediately after the
dissolution of the late parliament.—[The parliament was dissolved in
March, 1784. See note, p. 112. *ante.*] 1 2

Or, should we force the peaceful Muse to wield
 Her feeble arms amid the furious field,
 Where party-pens a wordy war maintain,
 Poor is her anger, and her friendship vain ;
 And oft the foes who feel her sting, combine,
 Till serious vengeance pays an idle line :
 For party-poets are like wasps, who dart
 Death to themselves, and to their foes but smart.
 Hard then our fate : if general themes we choose,
 Neglect awaits the song, and chills the Muse ;
 Or should we sing the subject of the day,
 To-morrow's wonder puffs our praise away.
 More blest the bards of that poetic time,
 When all found readers who could find a rhyme ; (1)
 Green grew the bays on every teeming head,
 And Cibber was enthroned (2), and Settle (3) read.
 Sing, drooping Muse, the cause of thy decline ;
 Why reign no more the once-triumphant Nine ?

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(1) [“ Happy the soil where bards like mushrooms rise
 And ask no culture but what Byshe supplies ! ” — GIFFORD.]

(2) [On the death of Eusden, in 1730, the laureateship was bestowed on Cibber. When, in 1743, Pope published a new edition of the Dunciad, he degraded Theobald from his painful pre-eminence as hero of the poem, and enthroned Cibber in his stead : —

“ Know, Eusden thirsts no more for sack or praise ;
 He sleeps among the dull of ancient days :
 Thou, Cibber, thou his laurel shalt support,
 Folly, my son, has still a friend at court.”]

(3) [A poetaster who made some noise in his day by the violence of his writings. For his factious audacity he was made the city poet, whose annual office was to describe the glories of the mayor’s day. “ Of these bards,” says Dr. Johnson, “ he was the last, and seems not to have deserved even this degree of regard ; for he afterwards wrote a panegyric on the virtues of Judge Jeffreys.” He died, in 1723, a pensioner in the Charter-house.]

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Alas ! new charms the wavering many gain,
And rival sheets the reader’s eye detain ;
A daily swarm, that banish every Muse,
Come flying forth, and mortals call them News : (1)
For these, unread, the noblest volumes lie ; (2)
For these, in sheets unsoil’d, the Muses die ;
Unbought, unblest, the virgin copies wait
In vain for fame, and sink, unseen, to fate.

Since, then, the Town forsakes us for our foes,
The smoothest numbers for the harshest prose ;
Let us, with generous scorn, the taste deride,
And sing our rivals with a rival’s pride.

Ye gentle poets, who so oft complain
That foul neglect is all your labours gain ;
That pity only checks your growing spite
To erring man, and prompts you still to write ;
That your choice works on humble stalls are laid,
Or vainly grace the windows of the trade ; (3)

(1) [“ Quicquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas, Gaudia, discursus, nostri farrago libelli.” — JUVENAL.

“ Whate’er the busy bustling world employs
Our wants and wishes, pleasures, cares, and joys,
These the historians of our times display,
And call it News — the hedge-podge of a day.”

BONNET THORNTON.]

(2) [“ How do I laugh when men of narrow souls,
Whom Folly guides, and Prejudice controls ;
Who, form’d to dulness from their very youth,
Lies of the day prefer to gospel truth,
Pick up their little knowledge from Reviews,
And lay up all their stock of faith in News,
Rail at all liberal arts, deem verse a crime,
And hold not truth as trueth, if told in rhyme.” — CHURCHILL.]

(3) [Original edition : —
While your choice works on quiet shelves remain,
Or grace the windows of the trade in vain ;
Where e’en their fair and comely sculptures fall
Engraved by Grignion, and design’d by Wale.]

Be ye my friends, if friendship e'er can warm
 Those rival bosoms whom the Muses charm :
 Think of the common cause wherein we go,
 Like gallant Greeks against the Trojan foe ;
 Nor let one peevish chief his leader blame,
 Till, crown'd with conquest, we regain our fame ;
 And let us join our forces to subdue
 This bold assuming but successful crew.

I sing of News, and all those vapid sheets
 The rattling hawker vends through gaping streets ;⁽¹⁾
 Whate'er their name, whate'er the time they fly,
 Damp from the press, to charm the reader's eye :
 For, soon as Morning dawns with roseate hue,
 The HERALD of the morn arises too ;
 Post after Post succeeds, and, all day long,
 GAZETTES and LEDGERS swarm, a noisy throng.
 When evening comes, she comes with all her train
 Of LEDGERS, CHRONICLES, and Posts again,
 Like bats, appearing, when the sun goes down,
 From holes obscure and corners of the town.⁽²⁾

(1) [“ We are indebted to the Italians for the idea of newspapers. The title of their Gazetas was, perhaps, derived from Gazzera, a magpie or chattering ; or, more probably, from a farthing coin, peculiar to the city of Venice, called Gazzetta, which was the common price of the papers. Newspapers, then, took their birth in that principal land of modern politicians, Italy, and under the government of that aristocratical republic. The first paper was a Venetian one, and only monthly ; but it was the newspaper of the government only. Other governments afterwards adopted the Venetian plan of a newspaper, with the Venetian name for it ; and from one solitary government gazette, we see what an inundation of newspapers has burst upon us in this country.” — D'ISRAELI.]

(2) [“ Curiosity is the appetite of the mind : it must be satisfied, or we perish. Amongst the improvements, therefore, of modern times, there is none on which I find more reason to congratulate my countrymen, than the increase of knowledge by the multiplication of newspapers. With what a mixture of horror and commiseration do we now look back to that

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Of all these triflers, all like these, I write ;
Oh ! like my subject could my song delight,
The crowd at Lloyd's one poet's name should raise,
And all the Alley echo to his praise.

In shoals the hours their constant numbers bring,
Like insects waking to th' advancing spring ;
Which take their rise from grubs obscene that lie
In shallow pools, or thence ascend the sky :
Such are these base ephemeræ (¹), so born

To die before the next revolving morn.

Yet thus they differ : insect-tribes are lost
In the first visit of a winter's frost ;
While these remain, a base but constant breed,
Whose swarming sons their short-lived sires succeed ;
No changing season makes their number less,
Nor Sunday shines a sabbath on the press ! (²)
Then lo ! the sainted MONITOR is born,
Whose pious face some sacred texts adorn : (³)

period of our history when a written letter came down once a week to the coffee-house, where a proper person, with a clear and strong voice, was pitched upon to read it aloud to the company assembled upon the occasion ! How earnestly did they listen ! How greedily did they suck down every drop of intelligence that fell within their reach ! Happy the man that carried off but half a sentence ! It was his employment, for the rest of the evening, to imagine what the other half might have been. At present, the provision made for us is ample. There are morning papers for breakfast ; there are evening papers for supper,—I beg pardon, I mean dinner ; and, lest, during the interval, wind should get into the stomach, there is a paper published, by way of luncheon, about noon." — BISHOP HORNE, 1787.]

(1) The ephemera, or May fly, is an insect remarked by naturalists for the very short time it lives after assuming its last and more perfect form.

(2) [“ No place is sacred, not the church is free,
E'en Sunday shines no Sabbath day to me.” — POPE.]

(3) [The original edition reads here :—

“ The Oglie now appears, a rival name
Of bolder manners, though of younger fame.”

As artful sinners cloak the secret sin,
 To veil with seeming grace the guile within ;
 So Moral Essays on his front appear,
 But all is carnal business in the rear ;
 The fresh-coin'd lie, the secret whisper'd last,
 And all the gleanings of the six days past.
 With these retired, through half the Sabbath-day,
 The London lounger yawns his hours away :
 Not so, my little flock ! your preacher fly,
 Nor waste the time no worldly wealth can buy ;
 But let the decent maid and sober clown
 Pray for these idlers of the sinful town :
 This day, at least, on nobler themes bestow,
 Nor give to WOODFALL, or the world below. (1)

(1) [“ If any
 (2) [“ Penny-
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But, Sunday past, what numbers flourish then,
 What wondrous labours of the press and pen !
 Diurnal most, some thrice each week affords,
 Some only once, — O avarice of words !
 When thousand starving minds such manna seek, (2)
 To drop the precious food but once a week.

The Oglio here alluded to was a Sunday print, of brief duration, which began in October, 1784.]

(1) [Henry Samson Woodfall, proprietor of the Public Advertiser, in which Junius appeared, was the author of a most important change in the character and influence of the newspaper press. In the conduct of his journal he was strictly impartial; and, notwithstanding the great popularity of Junius, by a reference to his papers of that day, it will be seen that as many essays were admitted on the ministerial side of the question as on that of the opposition. Mr. Woodfall was a man of high personal character: he died in 1805. See NICHOLS'S *Anecdotes*, vol. i. p. 301.]

(2) [“ I sit in window, dry as ark,
 And on the drowning world remark ;
 Or to some coffee-house I stray
 For news — *the manna of the day.* ” — GREEN'S *Spleen.*] T. FORD, 1647.]

“ Pamphlets a
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hours away :
reacher fly,
wealth can buy ;
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ful town :
names bestow,
world below. (1)

Endless it were to sing the powers of all,
Their names, their numbers; how they rise and fall:
Like baneful herbs the gazer's eye they seize,
Rush to the head, and poison where they please : (1)
Like idle flies, a busy, buzzing train,
They drop their maggots in the trifler's brain :
That genial soil receives the fruitful store,
And there they grow, and breed a thousand more. (2)

(1) [“ If any read now-a-days, it is a play-book, or a pamphlet of news.”

BURTON, 1614.]

(2) [“ Penny-boy, jum. In truth they are dainty rooms; what place is this ?
Cymbal. This is the outer room, where my clerks sit
And keep their sides, the Register in the midst ;
The Examiner, he sits private there within ;
And here I have my several rolls and files
Of news by the alphabet, and all put up
Under their heads.

P. jum. But those, too, subdivided ?

Cymb. Into authentical and apocryphal —
Fittom. Or news of doubtful credit ; as barbers' news,
Cymb. And tailors' news, porters', and watermen's news —
Fit. Whereto, besides the Coranti and Gazetti —
Cymb. I have the news of the season
Fit. Together with the names of special friends —
Cymb. Yes ; of all ranks, and all religions —
Fit. Factors and agents —
Cymb. Liegers, that lie out

Through all the shires of the kingdom.

P. jum. This is fine !

And bears a brave relation ! But what says
Mercurius Britannicus to this ? ” &c. &c. — BEN JONSON'S *Staple of News*,
1625 ; Gifford's edit. vol. v. p. 185.
“ Pamphlets are the weekly almanacks, showing what weather is in the
state, which, like the doves of Aleppo, carry news to every part of the
kingdom. They are the silent traitors that affront majesty, and abuse all
authority, under the colour of an imprimatur. Ubiquitary flies, that have,
of late, so blistered the ears of all men, that they cannot endure any solid
truth. The echoes, whereby what is done in every part of the kingdom,
is heard all over. They are like the mushrooms ; spring up in a night, and
dead in a day ; and such is the greediness of man's nature (in these
Athenian days) of news, that they will rather feign than want it.” —
T. FOND, 1647.]

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ecdoles, vol. i. p. 301.]

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Now be their arts display'd, how first they choose
 A cause and party, as the bard his muse ;
 Inspired by these, with clamorous zeal they cry,
 And through the town their dreams and omens fly :
 So the Sibylline leaves (¹) were blown about,
 Disjointed scraps of fate involved in doubt ;
 So idle dreams, the journals of the night,
 Are right and wrong by turns, and mingle wrong with
 right.—

Some champions for the rights that prop the crown,
 Some sturdy patriots, sworn to pull them down ;
 Some neutral powers, with secret forces fraught,
 Wishing for war, but willing to be bought :
 While some to every side and party go,
 Shift every friend, and join with every foe ;
 Like sturdy rogues in privateers, they strike
 This side and that, the foes of both alike ;
 A traitor-crew, who thrive in troubled times,
 Fear'd for their force, and courted for their crimes.
 Chief to the prosperous side the numbers sail,
 Fickle and false, they veer with every gale ; (²)
 As birds that migrate from a freezing shore,
 In search of warmer climes, come skimming o'er,
 Some bold adventurers first prepare to try
 The doubtful sunshine of the distant sky ;
 But soon the growing Summer's certain sun
 Wins more and more, till all at last are won :

(1) Ε in foliis descripsit carmina Virgo ; —
 et teneres turbavit janua frondes. — VIRG. EN. lib. iii.]

(2) [Original edition : —

Soon as the chiefs, whom once they choose, lie low,
 Their praise too, slackens ; and their aid moves slow,
 Not so when leagued with rising powers, their rage
 Then wounds the unwary foe, and burns along the page.]

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 Fly in vast t
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(3) [Mr. Stockd
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THE NEWSPAPER.

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So, on the early prospect of disgrace,
Fly in vast troops this apprehensive race ;
Instinctive tribes ! their failing food they dread,
And buy, with timely change, their future bread.(1)

Such are our guides : how many a peaceful head,
Born to be still, have they to wrangling led !
How many an honest zealot stol'n from trade,
And factious tools of pious pastors made !
With clews like these they thread the maze of state,
These oracles explore, to learn our fate ;
Pleased with the guides who can so well deceive,
Who cannot lie so fast as they believe

Oft lend I, loth, to some sage friend an ear,
(For we who will not speak are doom'd to hear) ;
While he, bewilder'd, tells his anxious thought,
Infectious fear from tainted scribblers caught,
Or idiot hope ; for each his mind assails,
As LLOYD's court-light (2) or STOCKDALE'S (3)
gloom prevails.

Yet stand I patient while but one declaims,
Or gives dull comments on the speech he maims :

- (1) [Original edition :—
Or are there those, who ne'er their friends forsook,
Lured by no promise, by no danger shook ?
Then bolder bribes the venal aid procure,
And golden fetters make the faithless sure ;
For those who deal in flattery or abuse,
Will sell them where they can the most produce.]

(2) [Lloyd's Evening Post — at this time a ministerial journal, published three times a week.]

(3) [Mr. Stockdale was, during the coalition administration, an opposition bookseller.]

But oh ! ye Muses, keep your votary's feet
 From tavern-haunts where politicians meet ;
 Where rector, doctor, and attorney pause,
 First on each parish, then each public cause :
 Indited roads, and rates that still increase ;
 The murmuring poor, who will not fast in peace ;
 Election zeal and friendship, since declined ;
 A tax commuted, or a tithe in kind ;
 The Dutch and Germans kindling into strife ;
 Dull port and poachers vile ! the serious ills of life.
 Here comes the neighbouring Justice, pleased to
 guide

His little club, and in the chair preside.
 In private business his commands prevail,
 On public themes his reasoning turns the scale ;
 Assenting silence soothes his happy ear,
 And, in or out, his party triumphs here.

Nor here th' infectious rage for party stops,
 But flits along from palaces to shops ;
 Our weekly journals o'er the land abound,
 And spread their plague and influenzas round ;
 The village, too, the peaceful, pleasant plain,
 Breeds the Whig farmer and the Tory swain ;
 Brookes' and St. Alban's (1) boasts not, but, instead,
 Stares the Red Ram, and swings the Rodney's
 Head : —

Hither, with all a patriot's care, comes he
 Who owns the little hut that makes him free ;

(1) [Brookes's club, in St. James's Street, still flourishes — the great rendezvous of Whig politicians. The St. Alban's club, an association of the same kind on the Tory side, was broken up when old St. Alban's Street was cleared away among other improvements in the west end of London.]

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THE NEWSPAPER.

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that makes him free ;
Street, still flourishes — the great ren-
St. Alban's club, an association of the
men in the west end of London.]

Whose yearly forty shillings buy the smile
Of mightier men, and never waste the while ;
Who feels his freehold's worth, and looks elate,
A little prop and pillar of the state.

Here he delights the weekly news to con,
And mingle comments as he blunders on ;
To swallow all their varying authors teach,

To spell a title, and confound a speech :

Till with a muddled mind he quits the news,
And claims his nation's license to abuse ;
Then joins the cry, " That all the courtly race

" Are venal candidates for power and place ; " (1)
Yet feels some joy, amid the general vice,
That his own vote will bring its wonted price.

These are the ills the teeming Press supplies,
The pois'ous springs from learning's fountain rise ;
Not there the wise alone their entrance find,
Imparting useful light to mortals blind ;
But, blind themselves, these erring guides hold out
Alluring lights to lead us far about ;
Screen'd by such means, here Scandal whets her quill,
Here Slander shoots unseen, whene'er she will ;
Here Fraud and Falsehood labour to deceive,
And Folly aids them both, impatient to believe. (2)

(1) [Original edition : —

Strive but for power, and parley but for place ;
Yet hopes, good man ! " that all may still be well,"
And thanks the stars he has a vote to sell ;
While thus he reads or raves, around him wait
A rustic band, and join in each debate ;
Partake his manly spirit, and delight
To praise or blame, to judge of wrong or right ;
Measures to mend, and ministers to make,
Till all go madding for their country's sake.]

(2) [“ The spirit of defamation, by which a newspaper is often possessed

Such, sons of Britain ! are the guides ye trust ;
 So wise their counsel, their reports so just ! —
 Yet, though we cannot call their morals pure,
 Their judgment nice, or their decisions sure ;
 Merit they have to mightier works unknown,
 A style, a manner, and a fate their own.
 We, who for longer fame with labour strive,
 Are pain'd to keep our sickly works alive ;
 Studious we toil, with patient care refine,
 Nor let our love protect one languid line. (1)
 Severe ourselves, at last our works appear,
 When, ah ! we find our readers more severe ;
 For, after all our care and pains, how few
 Acquire applause, or keep it if they do ! —
 Not so these sheets, ordain'd to happier fate,
 Praised through their day, and but that day their
 date ;

Their careless authors only strive to join
 As many words as make an even line ; (2)
 As many lines as fill a row complete ;
 As many rows as furnish up a sheet :

has now found its own remedy in the diversity of them ; for though a gentleman may read that he himself is a scoundrel, and his wife no better than she should be to-day, he will be sure to read that both of them are very good sort of people to-morrow. In the same manner, if one paper, through mistake or design, kill his friend, there is another ready to fetch him to life ; nay, if he have good luck in the order of his reading, he may be informed that his friend is alive again before he had perused the account of his death." — BISHOP HORNE.]

(1) [Original edition :—
 Studios we toil, correct, amend, retouch,
 Take much away, yet mostly leave too much.]

(2) “ How many hours bring about the year ?
 How many days will furnish up the year ?
 How many years a mortal man may live ! ”

SHAKSPEARE, *Henry VI.*

From side to s
 The measure's
 Oh, born with
 Your fate to-d
 To you all rea
 Pleased on a H
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THE NEWSPAPER.

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 SHAKSPEARE, *Henry VI.*

From side to side, with ready types they run
 The measure's ended, and the work is done ;
 Oh, born with ease, how envied and how blest !
 Your fate to-day and your to-morrow's rest.
 To you all readers turn, and they can look
 Pleased on a paper, who abhor a book ;
 Those who ne'er deign'd their Bible to peruse,
 Would think it hard to be denied their News ;
 Sinners and saints, the wisest with the weak,
 Here mingle tastes, and one amusement seek ;
 This, like the public inn, provides a treat,
 Where each promiscuous guest sits down to eat ;
 And such this mental food, as we may call
 Something to all men, and to some men all. (1)

Next, in what rare production shall we trace
 Such various subjects in so small a space ?

(1) [“ How shall I speak thee, or thy pow'r address,
 Thou God of our idolatry, the Press ?
 By thee, religion, liberty, and laws,
 Exert their influence, and advance their cause ;
 By thee, worse plagues than Pharaoh's land befell,
 Diffused, make earth the vestibule of hell ;
 Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wise ;
 Like Edén's dread probationary tree,
 Knowledge of good and evil is from thee !
 No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest,
 Till half mankind were like himself possess'd ;
 Philosophers, who darken and put out
 Eternal truth by everlasting doubt ;
 Church quacks, with passions under no command,
 Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,
 Discoverers of they know not what, confined
 Within no bounds — the blind that lead the blind,
 To streams of popular opinion drawn,
 Deposit in those shallows all their spawn.” — COWPER.]

SHAKSPEARE, *Henry VI.*

As the first ship upon the waters bore
 Incongruous kinds who never met before ;
 Or as some curious virtuoso joins,
 In one small room, moths, minerals, and coins,
 Birds, beasts, and fishes ; nor refuses place
 To serpents, toads, and all the reptile race ;
 So here, compress'd within a single sheet,
 Great things and small, the mean and mighty meet,
 'Tis this which makes all Europe's business known,
 Yet here a private man may place his own ;
 And, where he reads of Lords and Commons, he
 May tell their honours that he sells rappee.

Add next th' amusement which the motley page

Affords to either sex and every age :

Lo ! where it comes before the cheerful fire, —
 Damps from the press in smoky curls aspire
 (As from the earth the sun exhales the dew),
 Ere we can read the wonders that ensue :

Then eager every eye surveys the part,
 That brings its favourite subject to the heart ;

Grave politicians look for facts alone,

And gravely add conjectures of their own :

The sprightly nymph, who never broke her rest.
 For tottering crowns, or mighty lands oppress'd,
 Finds broils and battles, but neglects them all
 For songs and suits, a birth-day, or a ball :

The keen warm man o'erlooks each idle tale
 For "Monies wanted," and "Estates on Sale;" (1)

(1) ["Whilst the sages are puffing off our distempers in one page of a newspaper, the auctioneers are puffing off our property in another. If this island of ours is to be credited for their description of it, it must pass for a terrestrial paradise : it makes an English ear tingle to hear of the boundless variety of lawns, groves, and parks; lakes, rivers, and rivulets; de-

(3) Origin

One waters bore
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While some with equal minds to all attend,
Pleased with each part, and grieved to find an end. (1)

So charm the News ; but we, who far from town
Wait till the postman (2) brings the packet down,
Once in the week, a vacant day behold,
And stay for tidings, till they're three days old :
That day arrives ; no welcome post appears,
But the dull morn a sullen aspect wears :
We meet, but ah ! without our wonted smile,
To talk of headachs, and complain of bile ;
Sullen we ponder o'er a dull repast,
Nor feast the body while the mind must fast.

A master-passion is the love of news,
Not music so commands, nor so the Muse :
Give poets claret, they grow idle soon ;
Feed the musician, and he's out of tune ;
But the sick mind, of this disease possess'd,
Flies from all cure, and sickens when at rest. (3)

corated farms and fruitful gardens ; superb and matchless collections of pictures, jewels, plate, furniture, and equipages ; town houses and country houses ; hot-houses and ice-houses ; observatories and conservatories ; offices attached and detached ; with all the numerous et-ceteras that glitter down the columns of our public prints. What is the harp of an Orpheus compared to the hammer of an auctioneer ? ” — CUMBERLAND.]

(1) [Original edition : —

While the sly widow, and the coxcomb sleek,

Dive deep for scandal through a hint oblique.]

(2) [“ He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks ;
News from all nations lumb ring at his back
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful ; messenger of grief,
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some.” &c. — COWPER.]

(3) Original edition : —

Such restless passion is the love of News,
Worse than an itch for music or the muse :

VOL. II.

K

Now sing, my Muse, what various parts compose
These rival sheets of politics and prose.
First, from each brother's hoard a part they draw,
A mutual theft that never fear'd a law ;
Whate'er they gain, to each man's portion fall,
And read it once, you read it through them all :
For this their runners ramble day and night,
To drag each lurking deed to open light ;
For daily bread the dirty trade they ply,
Coin their fresh tales, and live upon the lie :
Like bees for honey, forth for news they spring, —
Industrious creatures ! ever on the wing ;
Home to their several cells they bear the store,
Cull'd of all kinds, then roam abroad for more.

No anxious virgin flies to " fair Tweed-side ;"
No injured husband mourns his faithless bride ;
No duel dooms the fiery youth to bleed ;
But through the town transpires each ven'trous
deed.

Should some fair frail-one drive her prancing pair
Where rival peers contend to please the fair ;
When, with new force, she aids her conquering eyes,
And beauty decks, with all that beauty buys ;
Quickly we learn whose heart her influence feels,
Whose acres melt before her glowing wheels.
To these a thousand idle themes succeed,
Deeds of all kinds, and comments to each deed.

But the sick mind, of this disease possess'd
Has neither chance for cure, nor intervals of rest.
Such powers have things so vile, and they can boast
That those peruse them who despise them most.]

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le day and night,
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ade they ply,
live upon the lie :
for news they spring, —
on the wing ;
they bear the store,
am abroad for more.

Here stocks, the state-barometers, we view,
That rise or fall, by causes known to few ; (1)
Promotion's ladder who goes up or down ;
Who wed, or who seduced, amuse the town ;
What new-born heir has made his father blest ;
What heir exults, his father now at rest ;
That ample list the Tyburn-herald gives.
And each known knave, who still for Tyburn lives. (2)

So grows the work, and now the printer tries
His powers no more, but leans on his allies.

When lo ! the advertising tribe succeed,
Pay to be read, yet find but few will read ;
And chief th' illustrious race, whose drops and pills
Have patent powers to vanquish human ills :
These, with their cures, a constant aid remain,
To bless the pale composer's fertile brain ;

(1) [Original edition : —

Such tales as these with joy the many read,
And paragraphs on paragraphs succeed ;
Then add the common themes that never cease.]

The tide-like stocks, their ebb and their increase.]
(2) [“ From these daily registers, you may not only learn when any-
body is married or hanged, but you have immediate notice whenever his
grace goes to Newmarket, or her ladyship sets out for Bath ; and but last
week, at the same time that the gentlemen of the law were told that the
Lord Chancellor could not sit in the Court of Chancery, people of fashion
had the melancholy news, that Signor Ricciarelli was not able to sing.
Nor is that part of the journal which is allotted to advertisements less
amusing. Not only are the public transactions of auctioneers and horse-
dealers, but the most private concerns of pleasure and gallantry carried on
by their means. Assignations are here made, and the most secret intrigues
formed, at the expense of two shillings. If a genteel young lady, who can
do all kinds of work, wants a place, she will be sure to hear of a master by
advertising. How many gentlemen have made open professions of the
strictest honour and secrecy ! And how many ladies dressed in such a
manner, and seen at such a place, have been desired to leave a line for
A. B. ! The Daily Advertiser, is, therefore, become the universal register
for new faces.” — BONNELL THORNTON.]

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who despise them most.]

one drive her prancing pair
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e themes succeed,
e comments to each deed.

Fertile it is, but still the noblest soil
Requires some pause, some intervals from toil ;
And they at least a certain ease obtain [strain.]⁽²⁾
From Katterfelto's skill (¹), and Graham's glowing
But who

I too must aid, and pay to see my name
Hung in these dirty avenues to fame ;
Nor pay in vain, if aught the Muse has seen,
And sung, could make these avenues more clean ;
Could stop one slander ere it found its way,
And gave to public scorn its helpless prey.
By the same aid, the Stage invites her friends,
And kindly tells the banquet she intends ;
Thither from real life the many run,
With Siddons⁽⁵⁾ weep, or laugh with Abingdon ;⁽⁴⁾

(1) [“The science of adorning and beautifying the human form seems to be systematically cultivated by many artists of all denominations. The professors of the cosmetic art offer innumerable pastes, washes, pomades, and perfumes, by which the ravages of time are prevented or counteracted. Even our public spectacles bespeak a degree of improvement hitherto unknown. Witness that wonderful wonder of all wonders, the brave soldier and learned doctor Katterfelto, whose courage and learning are only equalled by his honesty and love for this country, in remaining here unpensioned, notwithstanding the many offers from the Queen of France, the request of his friend and correspondent, Dr. Franklin, and the positive commands of the King of Prussia.” — GROSE.]

(2) [Captain Grose says — “Highly eminent in the class of public exhibitors stands the learned Dr. Graham, whose philosophic researches and lectures, at the same time that they tend to improve our future progeny, and to make this kingdom the region of health and beauty, serve also to destroy that *mauvaise honte*, or timid bashfulness, so peculiar to the English ladies ; for which he at least deserves the warmest acknowledgments from all parents and husbands.” The beautiful creature, afterwards so well known as Lord Nelson's Lady Hamilton, used to personate the Goddess of Health at this empiric's indecent exhibitions.

(3) [Mrs. Siddons made her first appearance on the London boards in 1775, retired from the stage in 1812, and died in 1831. See *ante*, Vol. I. p. 124.]

(4) [Mrs. Abingdon appeared on the stage in 1751, and died in 1815, at

Pleased in
The mimic
To steal a
From self, ;
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Pleased in fictitious joy or grief, to see
The mimic passion with their own agree ;
To steal a few enchanted hours away
From self, and drop the curtain on the day.

But who can steal from self that wretched wight
Whose darling work is tried, some fatal night ?
Most wretched man ! when, bane to every bliss,
He hears the serpent-critic's rising hiss ;
Then groans succeed ; nor traitors on the wheel
Can feel like him, or have such pangs to feel.
Nor end they here : next day he reads his fall
In every paper ; critics are they all :
He sees his branded name, with wild affright,
And hears again the cat-calls of the night.

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Such help the STAGE affords : a larger space
Is fill'd by PUFFS and all the puffing race.
Physic had once alone the lofty style,
The well-known boast, that ceased to raise a smile :
Now all the province of that tribe invade,
And we abound in quacks of every trade.

The simple barber, once an honest name,
Cervantes founded, Fielding raised his fame : (1)
Barber no more — a gay perfumer comes,
On whose soft cheek his own cosmetic blooms ;
Here he appears, each simple mind to move,
And advertises beauty, grace and love.

the age of eighty-four. For Mr. Crabbé's admiration of her acting, see
ante, Vol. I. p. 124.]
(1) [See *Don Quixote*, and *Tom Jones*.]

—“Come, faded belles, who would your youth renew,
 “ And learn the wonders of Olympian dew ;
 “ Restore the roses that begin to faint,
 “ Nor think celestial washes vulgar paint ;
 “ Your former features, airs, and arts assume,
 “ Circassian virtues, with Circassian bloom.
 “ Come, batter’d beaux, whose locks are turn’d to
 gray,

“ And crop Discretion’s lying badge away ;
 “ Read where they vend these smart engaging things,
 “ These flaxen frontlets with elastic springs ;
 “ No female eye the fair deception sees,
 “ Not Nature’s self so natural as these.” (1)

Such are their arts, but not confined to them,
 The Muse impartial must her sons condemn : (2)
 For they, degenerate ! join the venal throng,
 And puff a lazy Pegasus along :
 More guilty these, by Nature less design’d
 For little arts that suit the vulgar kind.

(1) [“Cataracts of declamation thunder here ;
 There forests of no meaning spread the page,
 In which all comprehension wanders, lost
 While fields of pleasantry amuse us there
 With merry descendants on a nation’s woes.
 The rest appears a wilderness of strange
 But gay confusion ; roses for the cheeks,
 And lilies for the brows of faded age,
 Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
 Heav’n, earth, and ocean plunder’d of their sweets,
 Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,
 Sermons, and city feasts, and favourite airs,
 Ethereal journeys, submarine exploits
 And Katterfelto, with his hair on end
 At his own wonders wondering for his bread.” — COWPER.]

(2) [Original edition.—
 Such are their puffs, and would they all were such ;
 Then should the verse no poet’s laurel touch.]

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That barbers' boys, who would to trade advance,
Wish us to call them, smart Friseurs from France ;
That he who builds a chop-house, on his door
Paints " The true old original Blue Boar ! " —
These are the arts by which a thousand live,
Where Truth may smile, and Justice may forgive : —

But when, amidst this rabble rout, we find
A puffing poet to his honour blind :
Who sly drops quotations all about
Packet or Post, and points their merit out ;
Who advertises what reviewers say,
With sham editions every second day ;
Who dares not trust his praises out of sight,
But hurries into fame with all his might ;
Although the verse some transient praise obtains
Contempt is all the anxious poet gains.

Now Puffs exhausted, Advertisements past,
Their Correspondents stand exposed at last ;
These are a numerous tribe, to fame unknown,
Who for the public good forego their own ;
Who volunteers in paper-war engage,
With double portion of their party's rage :
Such are the Brutii, Decii, who appear
Wooing the printer for admission here ;
Whose generous souls can descend to pray
For leave to throw their precious time away.

Oh ! cruel WOODFALL ! when a patriot draws
His gray-goose quill in his dear country's cause,
To vex and maul a ministerial race,
Can thy stern soul refuse the champion place ?

Alas ! thou know'st not with what anxious heart
 He longs his best-loved labours to impart ;
 How he has sent them to thy brethren round,
 And still the same unkind reception found :
 At length indignant will he damn the state,
 Turn to his trade, and leave us to our fate.

These Roman souls, like Rome's great sons, are known
 To live in cells on labours of their own.

Thus Milo, could we see the noble chief,
 Feeds, for his country's good, on legs of beef :
 Camillus copies deeds for sordid pay,
 Yet fights the public battles twice a day :
 E'en now the godlike Brutus views his score
 Scroll'd on the bar-board, swinging with the door ;
 Where, tippling punch, grave Cato's self you'll see,
 And *Amor Patriæ* vending smuggled tea.

Go ! to
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Last in these ranks, and least, their art's disgrace,
 Neglected stand the Muses' meanest race ;
 Scribblers who court contempt, whose verse the eye
 Disdainful views, and glances swiftly by :
 This Poet's Corner is the place they choose,
 A fatal nursery for an infant Muse ;
 Unlike that Corner where true Poets lie,
 These cannot live, and they shall never die ;
 Hapless the lad whose mind such dreams invade,
 And win to verse the talents due to trade.

Curb then, O youth ! these raptures as they rise,
 Keep down the evil spirit and be wise ;

(1) [See *an*
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at anxious heart
To impart;
Thren round,
on found:
the state,
our fate.

Follow your calling, think the Muses foes,
Nor lean upon the pestle and compose.

I know your day-dreams, and I know the snare
Hid in your flow'ry path, and cry " Beware ! "
Thoughtless of ill, and to the future blind,
A sudden couplet rushes on your mind ;
Here you may nameless print your idle rhymes,
And read your first-born work a thousand times ;
Th' infection spreads, your couplet grows apace,
Stanzas to Delia's dog or Celia's face : (¹)
You take a name; Philander's odes are seen,
Printed, and praised, in every magazine :
Diarian sages greet their brother sage,
And your dark pages please th' enlighten'd age. —
Alas ! what years you thus consume in vain,
Ruled by this wretched bias of the brain !

Go ! to your desks and counters all return ;
Your sonnets scatter, your acrostics burn ;
Trade, and be rich ; or, should your careful sires
Bequeath you wealth, indulge the nobler fires :
Should love of fame your youthful heart betray,
Pursue fair fame, but in a glorious way,
Nor in the idle scenes of Fancy's painting stray.
Of all the good that mortal men pursue,
The Muse has least to give, and gives to few ;
Like some coquettish fair, she leads us on,
With smiles and hopes, till youth and peace are gone ;
to trade.

(¹) [See *ant*, Vol. I. p. 22. " He had," says Mr. Crabbe, speaking of

himself,) " with youthful indiscretion, written for publications wherein

Damons and Delias began the correspondence that does not always end

there, and where diffidence is nursed till it becomes presumption."]

atures as they rise,

wise;

Then, wed for life, the restless wrangling pair
Forget how constant one, and one how fair :
Meanwhile, Ambition, like a blooming bride,
Brings power and wealth to grace her lover's side ;
And though she smiles not with such flattering
charms,

The brave will sooner win her to their arms.

Then wed to her, if Virtue tie the bands,
Go spread your country's fame in hostile lands ;
Her court, her senate, or her arms adorn,
And let her foes lament that you were born :
Or weigh her laws, their ancient rights defend,
Though hosts oppose, be theirs and Reason's friend ;
Arm'd with strong powers, in their defence engage,
And rise the THURLOW of the future age. (1)

(1) [On the first appearance of "The Newspaper," in 1785, the Critical Reviewers said, " Although this performance does not appear so highly finished as 'The Village,' it is certainly entitled to rank in the first class of modern productions ; " and The Monthly Reviewers thus opened their critique : — " This poem is a satire on the newspapers of the present day, which are lashed by the author with much ingenuity. The versification is at once easy and forcible, and the rhymes are chaste and carefully chosen. Mr. Crabbe seems to have selected Pope as his model, and many passages are strongly marked imitations of the great poet. He has introduced the Alexandrine — we do not say the ' needless Alexandrine ' — too frequently ; a custom which prevails too much among modern poets. But still the poem has uncommon merit, and sufficiently evinces that the author is possessed of genius, taste, and imagination."]

It may be observed, that, in 1784, the newspapers published in Great Britain and Ireland were only *seventy-nine* ; now (1834), they amount to *nearly four hundred.*]