

ODE FOR MUSIC.

PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE IN OXFORD, ON THE
SECOND OF JULY, MDCCLI,

BEING THE ANNIVERSARY APPOINTED BY THE LATE
LORD CREW, BISHOP OF DURHAM,

FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF BENEFACTORS TO THE
UNIVERSITY.

BY THE SAME.

I.

WHERE shall the muse, that on the sacred shell
Of men in arts and arms renown'd
The solemn strain delights to swell;
O! where shall Clio chuse a race,
Whom fame with every laurel, every grace,
Like those of Albion's envied isle, has crown'd?
Daughter and mistress of the sea,
All-honour'd Albion, hail!
Where-e'er thy commerce spreads the swelling sail,
Ne'er shall she find a land like thee,
So brave, so learned, and so free;
All-honour'd Albion, hail!

II. But

II.

But in the princely land of all that's good and great,
 Would Clio seek the most distinguish'd seat,
 Most blest, where all is so sublimely blest,
 That with superior grace o'erlooks the rest,
 Like a rich gem in circling gold enshrin'd;

Where Isis' waters wind

Along the sweetest shore

That ever felt fair Culture's hands,

Or Spring's embroider'd mantle wore,

Lo! where majestic Oxford stands;

Virtue's awful throne!

Wisdom's immortal source!

There well her best belov'd may boasting Albion own,

Whence each fair purpose of ingenuous praise,

All that in thought or deed divine is deem'd,

In one unbounded tide, one unremitted course,

From age to age has still successive stream'd;

Where Learning and where Liberty have nurs'd,

For those that in their ranks have shone the first,

Their most luxuriant growth of ever-blooming bays.

III.

In ancient days, when she the queen endu'd

With more than female fortitude,

Bouduca led her painted ranks to fight;

Off-times, in adamantine arms array'd,

Pallas descended from the realms of light,

Imperial Britoness! thy kindred aid,

As

As once, all-glowing from the well-fought day,
 The goddesses fought a cooling stream,
 By chance, inviting with their glassy gleam,
 Fair Isis' waters flow'd not far away.

Eager she view'd the wave,
 On the cool bank she bar'd her breast,
 To the soft gale her locks ambrosial gave;
 And thus the watry nymph address'd.
 Hear, gentle nymph, whoe'er thou art,
 Thy sweet refreshing stores impart:
 A Goddess from thy mossy brink
 Asks of thy crystal stream to drink:
 Lo! Pallas asks the friendly gift;
 Thy coral crowned tresses lift,
 Rise from the wave, propitious power,
 O listen from thy pearly bower!

IV.

Her accents Isis' calm attention caught,
 As lonesome, in her secret cell,
 In ever-varying hues, as mimic fancy taught,
 She rang'd the many-tinctur'd shell:
 Then from her work arose the Nais mild;
 She rose, and sweetly smil'd
 With many a lovely look,
 That whisper'd soft consent:
 She smil'd, and gave the Goddesses in her flood
 To dip her casque, tho' dy'd in recent blood;
 While Pallas, as the boon she took,
 Thus pour'd the grateful sentiment.

For this, thy flood the fairest name
 Of all Britannia's streams shall glide;
 Best favourite of the sons of fame,
 Of every tuneful breast the pride:
 For on thy borders, bounteous queen,
 Where now the cowslip paints the green

 With unregarded grace,
 Her wanton herds where nature feeds,
 As lonesome o'er the breezy reeds
 She bends her silent pace;
 Lo! there, to wisdom's goddess dear,
 A far-fam'd city shall her turrets rear,
 There all her force shall Pallas prove;
 Of classic leaf with every crown,
 Each olive, meed of old renown,
 Each ancient wreath, which Athens wove;
 I'll bid her blooming bowers abound;
 And Oxford's sacred seats shall tower
 To thee, mild Nais of the flood,
 The trophy of my gratitude!
 The temple of my power!

V.

Nor was the pious promise vain;
 Soon illustrious Alfred came,
 And pitch'd fair Wisdom's tent on Isis' plenteous plain:
 Alfred, on thee shall all the muses wait,
 Alfred, majestic name!
 Of all our praise the spring!

Thee all thy sons shall sing,
 Deck'd with the marshal and the civic wreath:
 In notes most awful shall the trumpet breathe
 To thee, great Romanus of Learning's richest state.

VI.

Nor Alfred's bounteous hand alone,
 Oxford, thy rising temples own:
 Soon many a man munificent,
 The prince, the prelate, laurel-crown'd crowd,
 Their ample bounty lent
 To build the beauteous monument,
 That Pallas vow'd.
 And now she lifts her head sublime:
 Majestic in the mists of time;
 Nor wants there Grecia's better part,
 'Mid the proud piles of ancient art,
 Whole fretted spires, with ruder hand,
 Wainfleet and Wickham bravely plann'd;
 Nor decent Doric to dispense
 New charms 'mid old magnificence;
 And here and there soft Corinth weaves
 Her dædal coronet of leaves;
 While, as with rival pride their towers invade the sky,
 Radcliffe and Bodley seem to vye,
 Which shall deserve the foremost place,
 Or Gothic strength, or Attic grace.

VII.

O Isis! ever will I chant thy praise:
 Not that thy sons have struck the golden lyre
 With hands most skilful; have their brows entwin'd
 With every fairest flower of Helicon,
 The sweetest swans of all th' harmonious choir;
 Have had the musing mind
 Of every science pierce the pathless ways,
 And from the rest the wreath of wisdom won;
 But that thy sons have dar'd to feel
 For Freedom's cause a sacred zeal;
 With British breast, and patriot pride,
 Have still Corruption's cup defy'd;
 In dangerous days untaught to fear,
 Have held the name of honour dear.

VIII.

But chief of this illustrious day,
 The Muse her loudest Pæans loves to pay.
 Ere while she strove with accents weak
 In vain to build the lofty rhyme;
 At length, by better days of bounty chear'd,
 She dares unfold her wing.
 Hail hour of transport most sublime!
 In which, the man rever'd
 Immortal Crew commands to sing,
 And gives the pipe to breathe, the string to speak.

IX. Blest

IX.

Blest prelate, hail!
 Most pious patron, most triumphant theme!
 From whose auspicious hand
 On Isis' towers new beauties beam,
 New praise her nursing fathers gain;
 Immortal Crew!
 Blest prelate, hail!
 Ev'n now fir'd Fancy sees thee lead
 To Fame's high-seated fane
 The shouting band!
 O'er every hallowed head
 Fame's choicest wreaths she sees thee spread:
 Alfred superior smiles the solemn scene to view;
 And bids the Goddess lift
 Her loudest trumpet to proclaim,
 O Crew! thy consecrated gift,
 And echo with his own in social strains thy name.

