

AN

E S S A Y

ON

S A T I R E,

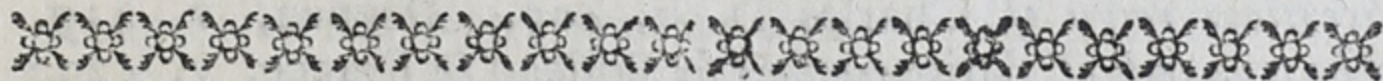
Occasioned by the Death of Mr. POPE.

INSCRIBED TO

Dr. W A R B U R T O N.

By J O H N B R O W N, D. D,

*O while along the stream of Time thy Name
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;
Say, shall my little barque attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?*



C O N T E N T S.

P A R T I.

OF the end and efficacy of Satire. *The love of glory and fear of shame universal, v. 29. This passion, implanted in man as a spur to virtue, is generally perverted, v. 41. And thus becomes the occasion of the greatest follies, vices, and miseries, v. 61. It is the work of Satire to rectify this passion, to reduce it to its proper channel, and to convert it into an incentive to wisdom and virtue, v. 89. Hence it appears that Satire may influence those who defy all laws human and divine, v. 99. An objection answered, v. 131.*

P A R T II.

Rules for the conduct of Satire. *Justice and truth its chief and essential property, v. 169. Prudence in the application of wit and ridicule, whose province is, not to explore unknown, but to enforce known truths, v. 191. Proper subjects of Satire are the manners of present times, v. 239. Decency of expression recommended, v. 255. The different methods in which folly and vice ought to be chastised, v. 269. The variety of stile and manner which these two subjects require, v. 277. The praise of virtue may be admitted with propriety, v. 315. Caution with regard to panegyrick, v. 319. The dignity of true Satire, v. 331.*

P A R T III.

The history of Satire. *Roman Satirists, Lucilius, Horace, Persius, Juvenal, v. 347, &c. Causes of the decay of literature, particularly of Satire, v. 379. Revival of Satire, v. 391. Erasmus one of its principal restorers, v. 395. Donne, v. 401. The abuse of Satire in England, during the licentious reign of Charles II. v. 405. Dryden, v. 419. The true ends of Satire pursued by Boileau in France, v. 429; and by Mr. Pope in England, v. 435.*



A N
 ESSAY on SATIRE.
 PART I.

FA T E gave the word ; the cruel arrow sped ;
 And P O P E lies number'd with the mighty dead !
 Resign'd he fell superior to the dart,
 That quench'd its rage in Y O U R S and B R I T A I N ' s heart :
 You

You mourn: but BRITAIN, lull'd in rest profound, 5
 (Unconscious *Britain!*) slumbers o'er her wound.
 Exulting Dulness ey'd the setting light,
 And flapp'd her wing, impatient for the night:
 Rous'd at the signal, Guilt collects her train,
 And counts the triumphs of her growing reign: 10
 With inextinguishable rage they burn,
 And snake-hung Envy hisses o'er his urn:
 Th' envenom'd monsters spit their deadly foam,
 To blast the laurel that surrounds his tomb.

But You, O WARBURTON! whose eye refin'd 15
 Can see the greatness of an honest mind;
 Can see each virtue and each grace unite,
 And taste the raptures of a *pure* delight;
 You visit oft' his awful page with care,
 And view that bright assemblage treasur'd there; 20
 You trace the chain that links his deep design,
 And pour new lustre on the glowing line.
 Yet deign to hear the efforts of a Muse,
 Whose eye, not wing, his ardent flight pursues;
 Intent from this great archetype to draw 25
 SATIRE's bright form, and fix her equal law;
 Pleas'd if from hence th' unlearn'd may comprehend,
 And reverence HIS and SATIRE's generous end.

In ev'ry breast there burns an active flame,
 The love of glory, or the dread of shame: 30
 The passion ONE, tho' various it appear,
 As brighten'd into hope, or dimm'd by fear.

The lisping infant, and the hoary fire,
 And youth and manhood feel the heart-born fire ;
 The charms of praise the coy, the modest wooe, 35
 And only fly, that glory may pursue :
 She, pow'r resistless, rules the wise and great ;
 Bends ev'n reluctant hermits at her feet :
 Haunts the proud city, and the lowly shade,
 And sways alike the scepter and the spade. 40

Thus heav'n in pity wakes the friendly flame,
 To urge mankind on deeds that merit fame :
 But man, vain man, in folly only wise,
 Rejects the manna sent him from the skies :
 With rapture hears corrupted passion's call, 45
 Still proudly prone to mingle with the stall.
 As each deceitful shadow tempts his view,
 He for the imag'd substance quits the true :
 Eager to catch the visionary prize,
 In quest of glory plunges deep in vice ; 50
 Till madly zealous, impotently vain,
 He forfeits ev'ry praise he pants to gain.

Thus still imperious Nature plies her part ;
 And still her dictates work in ev'ry heart.
 Each pow'r that sov'reign Nature bids enjoy, 55
 Man may corrupt, but man can ne'er destroy.
 Like mighty rivers, with resistless force
 The passions rage, obstructed in their course ;
 Swell to new heights, forbidden paths explore,
 And drown those virtues which they fed before. 60

And

And sure, the dreadliest foe to virtue's flame,
Our worst of evils, is *perverted shame*.

Beneath this load what abject numbers groan,
Th' entangled slaves to folly not their own!

Meanly by fashionable fear oppress'd,

65

We seek our virtues in each other's breast;

Blind to ourselves, adopt each foreign vice,

Another's weakness, interest, or caprice.

Each fool to low ambition, poorly great,

That pines in splendid wretchedness of state,

70

Tir'd in the treach'rous chase, wou'd nobly yield,

And but for shame, like SYLLA, quit the field:

The dæmon *Shame* paints strong the ridicule,

And whispers close "*the world will call you fool.*"

Behold, yon wretch, by impious fashion driv'n,

75

Believes and trembles while he scoffs at heav'n.

By weakness strong, and bold thro' fear alone,

He dreads the sneer by shallow coxcombs thrown;

Dauntless pursues the path *Spinoza* trod;

To man a *coward*, and a *brave* to God.*

80

Faith, Justice, heav'n itself now quit their hold,

When to false fame the captiv'd heart is sold:

Hence blind to truth, relentless *Cato* dy'd:

Nought cou'd subdue his virtue, but his pride.

* *Vois tu ce libertin en public intrepide,
Qui preche contre un Dieu que dans son Ame il croit ?
Il iroit embrasser la verité qu'il voit ;
Mais de ses faux amis il craint la raillerie,
Et ne brave ainsi Dieu que par poltronnerie.*

BOILEAU, Ep. 3.
Hence

Hence chaste *Lucretia's* innocence betray'd 85
 Fell by that honour which was meant its aid.
 Thus Virtue sinks beneath unnumber'd woes,
 When passions born her friends, revolt, her foes.

Hence SATIRE's pow'r: 'tis her corrective part
 To calm the wild disorders of the heart. 90

She points the arduous height where glory lies,
 And teaches mad ambition to be wise:
 In the dark bosom wakes the fair desire,
 Draws good from ill, a brighter flame from fire;
 Strips black Oppression of her gay disguise, 95
 And bids the hag in native horror rise;
 Strikes tow'ring pride and lawless rapine dead,
 And plants the wreath on Virtue's awful head.

Nor boasts the Muse a vain imagin'd pow'r,
 Tho' oft she mourn those ills she cannot cure. 100
 The worthy court her, and the worthless fear;
 Who shun her piercing eye, that eye revere.
 Her awful voice the vain and vile obey,
 And every foe to wisdom feel her sway.
 Smarts, pedants, as she smiles, no more are vain; 105
 Desponding fops resign the *clouded cane*:
 Hush'd at her voice, pert Folly's self is still,
 And Dulness wonders while she drops her quill.
 * Like the arm'd BEE, with art most subtly true
 From pois'nous Vice she draws a healing dew: 110

* Alluding to these lines of Mr. Pope;
*In the nice bee what art so subtly true,
 From pois'nous herbs extracts a healing dew.*

Weak are the ties that civil arts can find,
 To quell the ferment of the tainted mind:
 Cunning evades, securely wrapt in wiles;
 And Force strong-sinew'd rends th' unequal toils:
 The stream of vice impetuous drives along, 115
 Too deep for policy, for pow'r too strong.
 Ev'n fair Religion, native of the skies,
 Scorn'd by the crowd, seeks refuge with the wise;
 The crowd with laughter spurns her awful train,
 And Mercy courts, and Justice frowns in vain. 120
 But SATIRE's shaft can pierce the harden'd breast:
 She *plays* a *ruling* passion on the rest:
 Undaunted mounts the battery of his pride,
 And awes the *Brave*, that earth and heav'n defy'd.
 When fell Corruption, by her vassals crown'd, 125
 Derides fall'n Justice prostrate on the ground;
 Swift to redress an injur'd people's groan,
 Bold SATIRE shakes the tyrant on her throne;
 Pow'rful as death, defies the sordid train,
 And slaves and sycophants surround in vain. 130
 But with the friends of Vice, the foes of SATIRE,
 All truth is spleen; all just reproof, ill-nature.
 Well may they dread the Muse's fatal skill;
 Well may they tremble when she draws her quill:
 Her magick quill, that like ITHURIEL's spear 135
 Reveals the cloven hoof, or lengthen'd ear:
 Bids Vice and Folly take their natural shapes,
 Turns duchesses to strumpets, beaux to apes;

Drags

Drags the vile whisperer from his dark abode,
Till all the dæmon starts up from the toad. 140

O sordid maxim, form'd to screen the vile,
That true good-nature still must wear a smile!
In frowns array'd her beauties stronger rise,
When love of virtue wakes her scorn of vice:
Where justice calls, 'tis cruelty to save; 145
And 'tis the law's good-nature hangs the knave.
Who combats Virtue's foe is Virtue's friend;
Then judge of SATIRE's merit by her end:
To guilt alone her vengeance stands confin'd,
The object of her love is all mankind. 150

Scarce more the friend of man, the wise must own,
Ev'n ALLEN's bounteous hand, than SATIRE's frown:
This to chastise, as that to bless, was giv'n;
Alike the faithful ministers of heav'n.

Oft' on unfeeling hearts the shaft is spent: 155
Tho' strong th' example, weak the punishment.
They least are pain'd, who merit Satire most;
Folly the *Laureat's*, Vice was *Chartres'* boast;
Then where's the wrong, to gibbet high the name
Of fools and knaves already dead to shame? 160
Oft' SATIRE acts the faithful surgeon's part;
Generous and kind, tho' painful is her art:
With caution bold, she only strikes to heal,
Tho' folly raves to break the friendly steel.
Then sure no fault impartial SATIRE knows, 165
Kind, ev'n in vengeance kind, to Virtue's foes.

Whose is the crime, the scandal too be theirs :
The knave and fool are their own libellers.

P A R T II.

DA R E nobly then : but conscious of your trust,
As ever warm and bold, be ever just : 170
Nor court applause in these degenerate days :
The villain's censure is extorted praise.

But chief, be steady in a noble end,
And shew mankind that truth has yet a friend.
'Tis mean for empty praise of wit to write, 175
As foplings grin to show their teeth are white :
To brand a doubtful folly with a smile,
Or madly blaze unknown defects, is vile :
'Tis doubly vile, when but to prove your art,
You fix an arrow in a blameless heart. 180
O lost to honour's voice, O doom'd to shame,
Thou fiend accurs'd, thou murderer of fame !
Fell ravisher, from innocence to tear
That name, than liberty, than life more dear !
Where shall thy baseness meet its just return, 185
Or what repay thy guilt, but endless scorn !
And know, immortal truth shall mock thy toil :
Immortal truth shall bid the shaft recoil ;
With rage retorted, wing the deadly dart ;
And empty all its poison in thy heart. 190

With caution, next, the dang'rous power apply ;
An eagle's talon asks an eagle's eye :

Let

Let SATIRE then her proper object know,
 And ere she strike, be sure she strikes a foe.
 Nor fondly deem the real fool confest,
 Because blind *Ridicule* conceives a jest :
 Before whose altar *Virtue* oft' hath bled,
 And oft' a destin'd victim shall be led :
 Lo, ^a *Shaftsb'ry* rears her high on Reason's throne,
 And loads the slave with honours not her own : 195 200

Big-

^a *It were to be wished that lord Shaftsbury had expressed himself with greater precision on this subject : however, thus much may be affirmed with truth.*

1st, *By the general tenor of his essays on Enthusiasm, and the freedom of wit and humour, it appears that his principal design was to recommend the way of ridicule, (as he calls it) for the investigation of truth, and detection of falsehood, not only in moral but religious subjects.*

2^{dly}, *It appears no less evident, that in the course of his reasonings on this question, he confounds two things which are in their nature and consequences entirely different. These are ridicule and good-humour : the latter acknowledged by all to be the best mediator in every debate ; the former no less regarded by most, as an embroiler and incendiary. Tho' he sets out with a formal profession of proving the efficacy of wit, humour, and ridicule, in the investigation of truth, yet by shifting and mixing his terms, he generally slides insensibly into mere encomiums on good-breeding, chearfulness, urbanity, and free enquiry. This indeed keeps something like an argument on foot, and amuses the superficial reader ; but to a more observant eye discovers a very contemptible defect, either of sincerity or penetration.*

The question concerning ridicule may be thus not improperly stated, Whether doubtful propositions of any kind can be determined by the application of ridicule ? Much might be

Big-swoln with folly, as her smiles provoke,
 Prophaneness spawns, pert dunces nurse the joke !
 Come, let us join awhile this tittering crew,
 And own the *ideot guide* for once is true ;
 Deride our weak forefathers' musty rule,
 Who *therefore* smil'd, *because* they saw a fool ;

205

Sublimer

said on this question ; but a few words will make the matter clear to an unprejudiced mind.

The disapprobation or contempt which certain objects raise in the mind of man, is a particular mode of passion. The objects of this passion are apparent falsehood, incongruity, or impropriety of some particular kinds. Thus, the object of fear is apparent danger : the object of anger is apparent injury. But who hath ever dreamt of exalting the passions of fear and anger into a standard or test of real danger and injury ? The design must have been rejected as absurd, because it is the work of reason only, to correct and fix the passions on their proper objects. The case is parallel : apparent or seeming falsehoods, &c. are the objects of contempt ; but it is the work of reason only, to determine whether the supposed falsehood be real or fictitious. But it is said, "The sense of ridicule can never be mistaken."——Why, no more can the sense of danger, or the sense of injury.——
 "What, do men never fear or resent without reason ?"——
 Yes, very commonly : but they as often despise and laugh without reason. Thus before any thing can be determined in either case, reason, and reason only, must examine circumstances, separate ideas, decide upon, restrain, and correct the passion.

Hence it follows, that the way of ridicule, of late so much celebrated, is in fact no more than a species of eloquence ; and that too the lowest of all others : so Tully justly calls it, *tenuissimus ingenii fructus*. It applies to a passion, and therefore can go no farther in the investigation of truth, than

Sublimer logick now adorns our isle,
 We *therefore* see a fool, *because* we smile.
 Truth in her gloomy cave why fondly seek?
 Lo, gay she sits in Laughter's dimpled cheek :
 Contemns each furly academic foe,
 And courts the spruce free-thinker and the beau.

210

than any of those arts which tend to raise love, pity, terror, rage or hatred in the heart of man. Consequently, his lordship might have transplanted the whole system of rhetorick into his new scheme, with the same propriety as he hath introduced the way of ridicule itself. A hopeful project this, for the propagation of truth!

As this seems to be the real nature of ridicule, it hath been generally discouraged by philosophers and divines, together with every other mode of eloquence, when applied to controverted opinions. This discouragement, from what is said above, appears to have been rational and just: therefore the charge laid against divines with regard to this affair by a zealous admirer of Lord Shaftsbury (see a note on the Pleasures of Imagination, Book III.) seems entirely groundless. The distinction which the same author hath attempted with respect to the influence of ridicule, between speculative and moral truths, seems no better founded. It is certain that opinions are no less liable to ridicule than actions. And it is no less certain, that the way of ridicule cannot determine the propriety or impropriety of the one, more than the truth or falsehood of the other; because the same passion of contempt is equally engaged in both cases, and therefore, as above, reason only can examine the circumstances of the action or opinion, and thus fix the passion on its proper objects.

Upon the whole, this new design of discovering truth by the vague and unsteady light of ridicule, puts one in mind of the honest Irishman, who apply'd his candle to the sun-dial in order to see how the night went.

Dædalian arguments but few can trace,
 But all can read the language of grimace.
 Hence mighty Ridicule's all-conqu'ring hand
 Shall work *Herculean* wonders thro' the land :
 Bound in the magick of her cobweb chain,
 You, mighty WARBURTON, shall rage in vain,
 In the vain trackless maze of Truth You scan,
 And lend th' informing clue to erring man :
 No more shall Reason boast her pow'r divine,
 Her base eternal shook by Folly's mine !
 Truth's sacred fort th' exploded laugh shall win ;
 And coxcombs vanquish BERKLEY by a grin.

215

220

But you, more sage, reject th' inverted rule,
 That Truth is e'er explor'd by Ridicule :
 On truth, on falsehood let her colours fall,
 She throws a dazzling glare alike on all ;
 As the gay prism but mocks the flatter'd eye,
 And gives to ev'ry object ev'ry dye.
 Beware the mad advent'rer : bold and blind
 She hoists her sail, and drives with ev'ry wind ;
 Deaf as the storm to sinking Virtue's groan,
 Nor heeds a friend's destruction, or her own.
 Let clear-ey'd Reason at the helm preside,
 Bear to the wind, or stem the furious tide ;
 Then mirth may urge, when reason can explore,
 This point the way, that waft us glad to shore.

225

230

235

Tho' distant times may rise in SATIRE's page,
 Yet chief 'tis her's to draw the *present age* :

240

With

With Wisdom's lustre, Folly's shade contrast,
 And judge the reigning manners by the past :
 Bid *Britain's* heroes (aweful shades!) arise,
 And ancient honour beam on modern vice :
 Point back to minds ingenuous, actions fair, 245
 Till the sons blush at what their fathers were :
 Ere yet 'twas beggary the great to trust ;
 Ere yet 'twas quite a folly to be just ;
 When *low-born* sharpeners only dar'd a lye,
 Or falsify'd the card, or cogg'd the dye : 250
 Ere lewdness the stain'd garb of honour wore,
 Or chastity was carted for the whore ;
 Vice flutter'd, in the plumes of freedom dress'd ;
 Or publick spirit was the publick jest.

Be ever in a just expression bold, 255
 Yet ne'er degrade fair SATIRE to a scold :
 Let no unworthy mien her form debase,
 But let her smile, and let her frown with grace ;
 In mirth be temp'rate, temp'rate in her spleen ;
 Nor while she preaches modesty, obscene. 260
 Deep let her wound, not rankle to a sore,
 Nor call his lordship —, her grace a — :
 The Muse's charms resistless then assail,
 When wrapt in *irony's* transparent veil :
 Her beauties half-conceal'd the more surprize, 265
 And keener lustre sparkles in her eyes.
 Then be your line with sharp encomiums grac'd :
 Stile *Clodius* honourable, *Busa* chaste.

Dart

Dart not on Folly an indignant eye:
Who e'er discharg'd artillery on a fly? 270

Deride not Vice: absurd the thought and vain,
To bind the tyger in so weak a chain.

Nay more: when flagrant crimes your laughter move,
The knave exults: to smile is to approve.

The Muse' labour then success shall crown, 275
When Folly feels her smile, and Vice her frown.

Know next what measures to each theme belong,
And suit your thoughts and numbers to your song:
On wing proportion'd to your quarry rise,
And stoop to earth, or soar among the skies. 280

Thus when a modish folly you rehearse,
Free the expression, simple be the verse.
In artless numbers paint th' ambitious peer
That mounts the box, and shines a charioteer:
In strains familiar sing the midnight toil 285
Of camps and senates disciplin'd by *Hoyle*.

Patriots and chiefs whose deep design invades
And carries off the captive king of —*spades*!
Let SATIRE here in milder vigour shine,
And gayly graceful sport along the line; 290
Bid courtly Fashion quit her thin pretence,
And smile each affectation into sense.

Not so when Virtue by her guards betray'd,
Spurn'd from her throne, implores the Muse's aid;
When *crimes*, which erst in kindred darkness lay, 295
Rise frontless, and insult the eye of day;

Indignant

Indignant *Hymen* veils his hallow'd fires,
 And white-rob'd Chastity with tears retires ;
 When rank Adultery on the genial bed
 Hot from *Cocytus* rears her baleful head : 300
 When private faith and publick trust are sold,
 And traitors barter liberty for gold ;
 When fell Corruption dark and deep, like Fate,
 Saps the foundation of a sinking state :
 When giant-vice and irreligion rise, 305
 On mountain'd falsehoods to invade the skies :
 Then warmer numbers glow thro' SATIRE's page,
 And all her smiles are darken'd into rage :
 On eagle-wing she gains *Parnassus*' height,
 Not lofty EPIC soars a nobler flight : 310
 Then keener indignation fires her eye ;
 Then flash her lightnings, and her thunders fly ;
 Wide and more wide her flaming bolts are hurl'd,
 Till all her wrath involves the guilty world.

Yet SATIRE oft' assumes a gentler mien, 315
 And beams on Virtue's friends a look serene :
 She wounds reluctant, pours her balm and joy,
 Glad to commend where merit strikes her eye.
 But tread with cautious step this dangerous ground,
 Beset with faithless precipices round : 320
 Truth be your guide : disdain Ambition's call ;
 And if you fall with truth, you greatly fall.
 'Tis Virtue's *native lustre* that must *shine* :
 The poet can but *set it* in his line :

And

And who unmov'd with laughter can behold 325
A sordid pebble meanly grac'd with *gold*?

Let *real* merit then adorn your lays,
 For shame attends on prostituted praise:
 And all your wit, your most distinguish'd art
 But makes us grieve, you want an honest heart. 330

Nor think the Muse by SATIRE's law confin'd:
 She yields description of the noblest kind,
 Inferior art the landkip may design,
 And paint the purple evening in the line:
 Her daring thought essays a higher plan; 335
 Her hand delineates passion, pictures man.
 And great the toil, the latent soul to trace,
 To paint the heart, and catch internal grace;
 By turns bid vice or virtue strike our eyes,
 Now bid a *Wolsey* or a *Cromwell* rise; 340
 Now with a touch more sacred and refin'd,
 Call forth a CHESTERFIELD's or LONSDALE's mind.
 Here sweet or strong may ev'ry colour flow,
 Here let the pencil warm, the canvass glow:
 Of light and shade provoke the noble strife, 345
 And wake each striking feature into life.

P A R T III.

THRO' ages thus hath SATIRE keenly shin'd,
 The friend to truth, to virtue, and mankind:
 Yet the bright flame from virtue ne'er had sprung,
 And man was guilty ere the poet sung. 350
 This

This Muse in silence joy'd each better age,
Till glowing crimes had wak'd her into rage.
Truth saw her honest spleen with new delight,
And bade her wing her shafts, and urge their flight.
First on the sons of Greece she prov'd her art, 355
And Sparta felt the fierce IAMBICK dart ^b.

To LATIUM next avenging SATIRE flew:
The flaming faulchion rough LUCILIUS ^c drew;
With dauntless warmth in Virtue's cause engag'd,
And conscious villains trembled as he rag'd. 360

Then sportive HORACE ^d caught the generous fire
For SATIRE's bow resign'd the sounding lyre:
Each arrow polish'd in his hand was seen,
And as it grew more polish'd, grew more keen.
His art, conceal'd in study'd negligence 365
Politely fly, cajol'd the foes of sense:
He seem'd to sport and trifle with the dart,
But while he sported, drove it to the heart.

In graver strains majestick PERSIUS wrote,
Big with a ripe exuberance of thought: 370
Greatly sedate, contemn'd a tyrant's reign,
And lash'd corruption with a calm disdain.

^b *Archilocum proprio rabies armavit Iambo.* HOR.

^c *Ense velut stricto quoties Lucilius ardens
Infremuit, rubet auditor cui frigida mens est
Criminibus, tacita sudant præcordia culpa.* JUV. S. I.

^d *Omne vaser vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
Tangit, & admissus circum præcordia ludit,
Callidus excusso populum suspendere Naso.* PERS. S. I.

More ardent eloquence, and boundless rage
Inflame bold JUVENAL's exalted page.

His mighty numbers aw'd corrupted *Rome*,
And swept audacious greatness to its doom;
The headlong torrent thundering from on high,
Rent the proud rock that lately brav'd the sky.

375

But lo! the fatal victor of mankind,
Swoln *Luxury*!—Pale *Ruin* stalks behind!
As countless insects from the north-east pour,
To blast the spring, and ravage ev'ry flow'r:
So barb'rous millions spread contagious death:

380

The sick'ning laurel wither'd at their breath.
Deep superstition's night the skies o'erhung,
Beneath whose baleful dews the poppy sprung.

385

No longer Genius woo'd the Nine to love,
But Dulness nodded in the Muses' grove:
Wit, spirit, freedom, were the sole offence,
Nor aught was held so dangerous as sense.

390

At length, again fair Science shot her ray,
Dawn'd in the skies, and spoke returning day.
Now SATIRE, triumph o'er thy flying foe,
Now load thy quiver, string thy slacken'd bow!

'Tis done—See, great ERASMUS breaks the spell,
And wounds triumphant Folly in her cell!

395

(In vain the solemn cowl furrounds her face,
Vain all her bigot cant, her sowl grimace)
With shame compell'd her leaden throne to quit,
And own the force of reason urg'd by wit.

400

'Twas

'Twas then plain DONNE in honest vengeance rose,
 His wit refulgent, tho' his rhyme was prose:
 He 'midst an age of puns and pedants wrote
 With genuine sense, and *Roman* strength of thought.

Yet scarce had SATIRE well relum'd her flame, 405
 (With grief the Muse records her country's shame)
 Ere *Britain* saw the foul revolt commence,
 And treach'rous Wit began her war with Sense.
 Then 'rose a shameless, mercenary train,
 Whom latest time shall view with just disdain: 410
 A race fantastick, in whose gaudy line
 Untutor'd thought, and tinsel beauty shine;
 Wit's shatter'd mirror lies in fragments bright,
 Reflects not nature, but confounds the sight.
 Dry morals the court-poet blush'd to sing: 415
 'Twas all his praise to say "*the oddest thing*."
 Proud for a jest obscene, a patron's nod,
 To martyr Virtue, or blaspheme his God.

Ill-fated DRYDEN! who unmov'd can see
 Th' extremes of wit and meanness join'd in thee! 420
 Flames that cou'd mount, and gain their kindred skies,
 Low creeping in the putrid sink of vice:
 A Muse whom Wisdom woo'd, but woo'd in vain,
 The pimp of pow'r, the prostitute to gain:
 Wreaths, that shou'd deck fair Virtue's form alone, 425
 To strumpets, traitors, tyrants, vilely thrown:
 Unrival'd parts, the scorn of honest fame;
 And genius rise, a monument of shame!

More happy *France*: immortal BOILEAU there
 Supported genius with a sage's care: 430
 Him with her love propitious SATIRE blest,
 And breath'd her airs divine into his breast:
 Fancy and sense to form his line conspire,
 And faultless judgment guides the purest fire.
 But see, at length, the *British* Genius smile, 435
 And show'r her bounties o'er her favour'd isle:
 Behold for POPE she twines the laurel crown,
 And centers ev'ry poet's pow'r in *one*:
 Each *Roman*'s force adorns his various page;
 Gay smiles, collected strength, and manly rage. 440
 Despairing Guilt and Dulness loath the sight,
 As spectres vanish at approaching light:
 In this clear mirror with delight we view
 Each image justly fine, and boldly true:
 Here Vice, drag'd forth by Truth's supreme decree, 445
 Beholds and hates her own deformity:
 While self-seen Virtue in the faithful line
 With modest joy surveys her form divine.
 But oh, what thoughts, what numbers shall I find,
 But faintly to express the poet's mind! 450
 Who yonder star's effulgence can display,
 Unless he dip his pencil in the ray?
 Who paint a god, unless the god inspire?
 What catch the lightning, but the speed of fire?
 So, mighty POPE, to make thy genius known, 455
 All pow'r is weak, all numbers — but thy own.
 Each

Each Muse for thee with kind contention strove,
 For thee the Graces left th' IDALIAN grove :
 With watchful fondness o'er thy cradle hung,
 Attun'd thy voice, and form'd thy infant tongue. 460
 Next, to her bard majestick Wisdom came ;
 The bard enraptur'd caught the heav'nly flame :
 With taste superior scorn'd the venal tribe,
 Whom fear can sway, or guilty greatness bribe ;
 At fancy's call who rear the wanton sail, 465
 Sport with the stream, and trifle in the gale :
 Sublimer views *thy* daring spirit bound ;
 Thy mighty voyage was creation's round ;
 Intent new worlds of wisdom to explore,
 And blest mankind with Virtue's sacred store ; 470
 A nobler joy than wit can give, impart ;
 And pour a moral transport o'er the heart.
 Fantastick wit shoots momentary fires,
 And like a meteor, while we gaze, expires :
 Wit kindled by the sulph'rous breath of Vice, 475
 Like the blue lightning, while it shines, destroys :
 But genius, fir'd by truth's eternal ray,
 Burns clear and constant, like the source of day :
 Like this, its beam prolifick and refin'd
 Feeds, warms, inspirits, and exalts the mind ; 480
 Mildly dispels each wint'ry passion's gloom,
 And opens all the virtues into bloom.
 This praise, immortal POPE, to thee be giv'n :
 Thy genius was indeed a *gift* from heav'n.

Hail, bard unequall'd, in whose deathless line 485
 Reason and wit with strength collected shine :
 Where matchless wit but wins the second praise,
 Lost, nobly lost, in truth's superior blaze.

Did FRIENDSHIP e'er mislead thy wand'ring Muse ?
 That friendship sure may plead the *great* excuse : 490
 That sacred friendship which inspir'd thy song,
Fair in defect, and *amiably* wrong.

Error like this ev'n truth can scarce reprove ;
 'Tis almost virtue when it flows from love.

Ye deathless names, ye sons of endless praise, 495
 By Virtue crown'd with never-fading bays !
 Say, shall an artless Muse, if you inspire,
 Light her pale lamp at your immortal fire ?
 Or if, O WARBURTON, inspir'd by You,
 The daring Muse a nobler path pursue, 500
 By You inspir'd, on trembling pinion soar,
 The sacred founts of social bliss explore,
 In her bold numbers chain the tyrant's rage,
 And bid *her country's glory* fire her page :
 If such her fate, do thou, fair *Truth*, descend, 505
 And watchful guard her in an honest end :

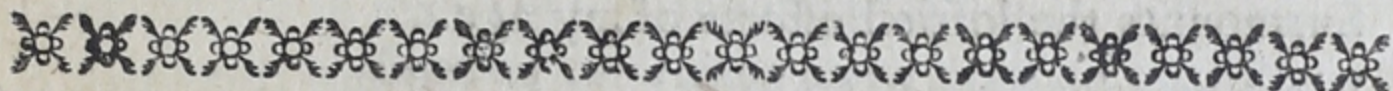
Kindly severe, instruct her equal line
 To court no friend, nor own a foe but *thine*.
 But if her giddy eye should vainly quit
 Thy sacred paths, to run the maze of wit; 510
 If her apostate heart shou'd e'er incline
 To offer incense at Corruption's shrine ;

Urge,

Urge, urge thy pow'r, the black attempt confound,
And dash the smoaking censer to the ground.

Thus aw'd to fear, instructed bards may see,
That guilt is doom'd to sink in infamy.

515



A Character of Mr. POPE's WRITINGS.

B E I N G

An Episode from the Poem call'd SICKNESS, Book II.

By the Rev. Mr. THOMPSON.

———In measur'd time
(So heav'n has will'd) together with their snows,
The everlasting hills shall melt away :
This solid globe dissolve, as ductile wax
Before the breath of Vulcan ; like a scroll
Shrivel th' unfolded curtains of the sky ;
Thy planets, NEWTON, tumble from their spheres ;
The moon be perish'd from her bloody orb ;
The sun himself, in liquid ruin, rush
And deluge with destroying flames the globe —
Peace then, my soul, nor grieve that POPE is dead.

If e'er the tuneful spirit, sweetly strong,
Spontaneous numbers, teeming in my breast,

Y 2

Enkindle;