



The G R O T T O.

Written by the late Mr. GREEN of the Custom-House,
under the Name of PETER DRAKE, a Fisherman of
BRENTFORD.

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*Scilicet hic possis curvo dignoscere rectum,
Atque inter silvas Academi quærere verum.*

HOR.

Our wits Apollo's influence beg,
The Grotto makes them all with egg:
Finding this chalk-stone in my nest,
I strain, and lay among the rest.

A DIEU awhile, forsaken flood,
To ramble in the Delian wood,
And pray the God my well-meant song
May not my subject's merit wrong.

Say, father *Thames*, whose gentle pace
Gives leave to view what beauties grace
Your flow'ry banks, if you have seen
The much sung GROTTO of the queen.
Contemplative, forget awhile
Oxonian towers, and *Windsor's* pile,

And

And *Woolsey's* pride (his greatest guilt)
 And what great *William* since has built;
 And flowing fast by *Richmond* scenes,
 (Honour'd retreat of two great queens)
 From *Sion-house*, whose proud survey
 Brow-beats your flood, look cross the way,
 And view, from highest swell of tide,
 The milder scenes of *Surry* side.

Though yet no palace grace the shore,
 To lodge that pair you shou'd adore;
 Nor abbies, great in ruin, rise,
 Royal equivalents for vice;
 Behold a Grott, in Delphic grove,
 The Graces' and the Muses' love.
 (O might our laureat study here,
 How would he hail his new-born year!)
 A temple from vain glories free,
 Whose goddess is Philosophy,
 Whose sides such licens'd idols crown
 As superstition wou'd pull down;
 The only pilgrimage I know
 That men of sense wou'd chuse to go:
 Which sweet abode, her wisest choice,
Urania cheers with heavenly voice,
 While all the Virtues gather round,
 To see her consecrate the ground.
 If thou the God with winged feet,
 In council talk of this retreat,

And

And jealous gods resentment show
 At altars rais'd to men below ;
 Tell those proud lords of heaven, 'tis fit
 Their house our heroes should admit ;
 While each exists, as poets sing,
 A lazy lewd immortal thing,
 They must (or grow in disrepute)
 With earth's first commoners recruit.

Needless it is in terms unskill'd
 To praise whatever *Boyle* shall build ;
 Needless it is the busts to name
 Of men, monopolists of fame ;
 Four chiefs adorn the modest stone,
 For virtue as for learning known ;
 The thinking sculpture helps to raise
 Deep thoughts, the genii of the place :
 To the mind's ear, and inward sight,
 Their silence speaks, and shade gives light :
 While insects from the threshold preach,
 And minds dispos'd to musing teach :
 Proud of strong limbs and painted hues,
 They perish by the slightest bruise ;
 Or maladies begun within,
 Destroy more slow life's frail machine ;
 From maggot-youth thro' change of state
 They feel like us the turns of Fate ;
 Some born to creep have liv'd to fly,
 And change earth-cells for dwellings high ;

And some that did their six wings keep,
 Before they dy'd been forc'd to creep.
 They politics like ours profess,
 The greater prey upon the less :
 Some strain on foot huge loads to bring ;
 Some toil incessant on the wing ;
 And in their different ways explore
 Wise sense of want by future store ;
 Nor from their vigorous schemes desist
 Till death, and then are never mist,
 Some frolick, toil, marry, increase,
 Are sick and well, have war and peace,
 And broke with age, in half a day
 Yield to successors, and away.

Let not profane this sacred place,
 Hypocrisy with Janus' face ;
 Or pomp, mixt state of pride and care ;
 Court kindness, Falshood's polish'd ware ;
 Scandal disguis'd in Friendship's veil,
 That tells, unask'd, th' injurious tale ;
 Or art politic, which allows
 The jesuit-remedy for vows ;
 Or priest, perfuming crowned head,
 Till in a swoon Truth lies for dead ;
 Or tawdry critic, who perceives
 No grace, which plain proportion gives,
 And more than lineaments divine
 Admires the gilding of the shrine ;

Or

Or that self-haunting spectre Spleen,
 In thickest fog the clearest seen ;
 Or Prophecy, which dreams a lie,
 That fools believe and knaves apply ;
 Or frolick Mirth profanely loud,
 And happy only in a crowd ;
 Or Melancholy's pensive gloom,
 Proxy in Contemplation's room.

O Delia, when I touch this string,
 To thee my Muse directs her wing.
 Unspotted fair, with downcast look
 Mind not so much the murm'ring brook ;
 Nor fixt in thought, with footsteps slow
 Through cypress allies cherish woe :
 I see the soul in pensive fit,
 And mopeing like sick linnet fit,
 With dewy eye and moulting wing,
 Unperch'd, averse to fly or sing ;
 I see the favourite curls begin
 (Disus'd to toilet discipline,)
 To quit their post, lose their smart air,
 And grow again like common hair ;
 And tears, which frequent kerchiefs dry,
 Raise a red circle round the eye ;
 And by this bur about the moon,
 Conjecture more ill weather soon.
 Love not so much the doleful knell ;
 And news the boding night-birds tell ;

Nor watch the wainscot's hollow blow ;
 And hens portentous when they crow ;
 Nor sleeplefs mind the death-watch beat ;
 In taper find no winding sheet ;
 Nor in burnt coal a coffin see,
 Tho' thrown at others meant for thee :
 Or when the coruscation gleams,
 Find out not first the bloody streams ;
 Nor in imprest remembrance keep
 Grim tap'stry figures wrought in sleep ;
 Nor rise to see in antique hall
 The moon-light monsters on the wall,
 And shadowy spectres darkly pass
 Trailing their fables o'er the grass.
 Let vice and guilt act how they please
 In souls, their conquer'd provinces ;
 By heaven's just charter it appears,
 Virtue's exempt from quartering fears.
 Shall then arm'd fancies fiercely drest,
 Live at discretion in your breast ?
 Be wise, and pannic fright disdain,
 As notions, meteors of the brain ;
 And sighs perform'd, illusive scene !
 By magic lanthorn of the spleen.
 Come here, from baleful cares releas'd,
 With Virtue's ticket, to a feast,
 Where decent mirth and wisdom join'd
 In stewardship, regale the mind.

Call back the Cupids to your eyes,
 I see the godlings with surprize
 Not knowing home in such a plight,
 Fly to and fro, afraid to light. —

Far from my theme, from method far,
 Convey'd in Venus' flying car,
 I go compell'd by feather'd steeds,
 That scorn the rein when Delia leads.

No dawb of elegiac strain
 These holy walls shall ever stain;
 As spiders Irish wainscot flee,
 Falshood with them shall disagree:
 This floor let not the vulgar tread,
 Who worship only what they dread;
 Nor bigots who but one way see
 Through blinkers of authority;
 Nor they who its four saints defame
 By making virtue but a name;
 Nor abstract wit, (painful regale
 To hunt the pig with slipperly tail!)
 Artists who richly chase their thought,
 Gaudy without but hollow wrought,
 And beat too thin, and tool'd too much
 To bear the proof and standard touch;
 Nor fops to guard this silvan ark
 With necklace bells in treble bark;
 Nor Cynics growl and fiercely paw,
 The mastiffs of the moral law.

Come Nymph with rural honours drest,
 Virtue's exterior form confest,
 With charms untarnish'd, innocence
 Display, and Eden shall commence :
 When thus you come in sober fit,
 And wisdom is prefer'd to wit ;
 And looks diviner graces tell,
 Which don't with giggling muscles dwell ;
 And beauty like the ray-clipt sun,
 With bolder eye we look upon ;
 Learning shall with obsequious mien
 Tell all the wonders she has seen ;
 Reason her logic armour quit,
 And proof to mild persuasion fit ;
 Religion with free thought dispense,
 And cease crusading against sense ;
 Philosophy and she embrace,
 And their first league again take place ;
 And morals pure, in duty bound,
 Nymph-like the sister chiefs surround ;
 Nature shall smile, and round this cell
 The turf to your light pressure swell,
 And knowing beauty by her shoe,
 Well air its carpet from the dew.
 The Oak, while you his umbrage deck
 Lets fall his acorns in your neck :
 Zephyr his civil kisses gives,
 And plays with curls, instead of leaves :

Birds, seeing you, believe it spring,
 And during their vacation sing;
 And flow'rs lean forward from their seats
 To traffic in exchange of sweets;
 And angels bearing wreaths descend,
 Preferr'd as vergers to attend
 This fane, whose deity intreats
 The Fair to grace its upper seats.

O kindly view our letter'd strife,
 And guard us through polemic life;
 From poison vehicled in praise,
 For satire's shots but slightly graze;
 We claim your zeal, and find within,
 Philosophy and you are kin.

What Virtue is we judge by you,
 For actions right are beauteous too:
 By tracing the sole female mind,
 We best what is true Nature find:
 Your vapours bred from fumes declare,
 How streams create tempestuous air,
 Till gushing tears and hasty rain
 Make heaven and you serene again:
 Our travels through the starry skies
 Were first suggested by your eyes;
 We by the interposing fan,
 Learn how eclipses first began;
 The vast ellipse from Scarbro's home,
 Describes how blazing comets roam;

The glowing colours of the cheek
 Their origin from Phœbus speak;
 Our watch how Luna strays above
 Feels like the care of jealous love;
 And all things we in science know
 From your known love for riddles flow.

Father! forgive, thus far I stray,
 Drawn by attraction from my way.
 Mark next with awe, the foundress well
 Who on these banks delights to dwell;
 You on the terrafs see her plain,
 Move like Diana with her train.
 If you then fairly speak your mind,
 In wedlock since with Isis join'd,
 You'll own, you never yet did see,
 At least in such a high degree,
 Greatness delighted to undress;
 Science a scepter'd hand caress;
 A queen the friends of freedom prize;
 A woman wise men canonize.

