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GRAY'S
ODES AND ELEGY

WITH
Life and Notes



W. & R. CHAMBERS
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LIFE OF GRAY.

THOMAS GRAY (1716—1771), the son of a London scrivener, was educated at Cambridge, and originally destined for the profession of the law. He spent the greater part of his life in studious retirement at Cambridge, where he ultimately became professor of modern languages and history. He died in 1771, and was buried, according to his desire, by the side of his mother, at Stoke, near Eton.*

The most popular and admired work of Gray is his *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard*, which was published in 1750. His other pieces are chiefly lyrical, and their principal charm, according to a distinguished critic, is to be traced 'to the naturally exquisite ear of the poet, having been trained to consummate skill in harmony, by long familiarity with the finest models in the most poetical of all languages, the Greek and Italian.' In the odes *To Adversity*, *On the Spring*, and *On Vicissitude*, the genius of Gray is exhibited in its softer graces; but in that *On the Progress of Poesy*, and in the wild descriptive ode entitled *The Bard*, in which he represents a Welsh harper denouncing Edward I. as the spoiler of his country, the poet rises to a strength and dignity little inferior to Milton. The lyrics of Gray also display the superior qualities of fancy and tenderness, and, perhaps, owe most of their success to the strong sympathy which the poet everywhere manifests with the joys and sufferings of human nature.

* Gray's epitaph on his mother has an interesting touch of his peculiar melancholy: 'Dorothy Gray, widow, the careful, tender mother of many children, *one of whom alone had the misfortune to survive her.*'

GRAY'S ODES AND ELEGY.

ODES.

ODE I.

ON THE SPRING.

. The asterisk indicates that there is a note at the end on the line to which it is prefixed.

*L O! where the rosy-bosomed Hours,
*Fair Venus' train, appear ;
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
*And wake the purple year ;
*The Attic warbler pours her throat, 5
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of Spring ;
*While, whispering pleasure'as they fly,
Cool zephyrs through the clear blue sky
Their gathered fragrance fling. 10

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink 15
With me the Muse shall sit, and think

(At ease reclined in rustic state)

How vain the ardour of the crowd !

How low, how little, are the proud !

How indigent the great !

20

Still is the toiling hand of Care,

The panting herds repose,

*Yet hark ! how through the peopled air

The busy murmur glows !

The insect youth are on the wing,

25

Eager to taste the honied Spring,

And float amid the liquid noon ;

Some lightly o'er the current skim,

*Some shew their gaily-gilded trim,

Quick-glancing to the sun.

30

*To Contemplation's sober eye,

Such is the race of man :

And they that creep, and they that fly,

Shall end where they began.

Alike the busy and the gay

35

But flutter through life's little day,

In Fortune's varying colours drest :

Brushed by the hand of rough mischance,

Or chilled by age, their airy dance

They leave, in dust to rest.

40

Methinks I hear, in accents low,

The sportive kind reply :

Poor moralist ! and what art thou ?

A solitary fly !

Thy joys no glittering female meets,

45

No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,

No painted plumage to display ;

On hasty wings thy youth is flown,

Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—

We frolic while 'tis May.

50

ODE II.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT,

Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes.

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
 Where China's gayest art had dyed
 The azure flowers that blow ;
 Demurest of the tabby kind,
 The pensive Selima reclined, 5
 Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared ;
 The fair round face, the snowy beard,
 The velvet of her paws,
 Her coat, that with the tortoise vies, 10
 Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
 She saw ; and purred applause.

Still had she gazed ; but 'midst the tide
 Two angel forms were seen to glide,
 The Genii of the stream : 15
 Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
 Through richest purple to the view
 Betrayed a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw :
 A whisker first and then a claw, 20
 With many an ardent wish,
 She stretched in vain to reach the prize,
 What female heart can gold despise ?
 What cat's averse to fish ?

Presumptuous maid ! with looks intent 25
 Again she stretched, again she bent,

Nor knew the gulf between.
 (Malignant Fate sat by, and smiled)
 The slippery verge her feet beguiled,
 She tumbled headlong in. 30

*Eight times emerging from the flood
 She mewed to every watery god,
 Some speedy aid to send :
 *No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirred :
 Nor cruel Tom, nor Susan heard. 35
 A favourite has no friend !

From hence, ye beauties undeceived,
 Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,
 And be with caution bold.
 Not all that tempts your wandering eyes 40
 And heedless hearts, is lawful prize ;
 *Nor all that glisters gold.

ODE III.

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.

YE distant spires, ye antique towers,
 That crown the watery glade,
 Where grateful Science still adores
 *Her Henry's holy shade ; 5
 And ye, that from the stately brow
 *Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
 Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
 *Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
 Wanders the hoary Thames along
 His silver-winding way. 10

Ah happy hills, ah pleasing shade,
 Ah fields beloved in vain,
 Where once my careless childhood strayed,
 A stranger yet to pain !
 I feel the gales that from ye blow, 15
 A momentary bliss bestow,
 As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
 My weary soul they seem to soothe,
 And, redolent of joy and youth,
 To breathe a second spring. 20

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
 Full many a sprightly race
 *Disporting on thy margent green
 The paths of pleasure trace,
 Who foremost now delight to cleave 25
 With pliant arm thy glassy wave ?
 The captive linnet which enthral ?
 What idle progeny succeed
 To chase the rolling circle's speed,
 Or urge the flying ball ? 30

While some on earnest business bent
 Their murmuring labours ply
 'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
 To sweeten liberty :
 Some bold adventurers disdain 35
 The limits of their little reign,
 And unknown regions dare descry :
 Still as they run they look behind,
 They hear a voice in every wind,
 And snatch a fearful joy. 40

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
 Less pleasing when possess'd ;

The tear forgot as soon as shed,
 The sunshine of the breast :
 Theirs buxom health of rosy hue, 45
 Wild wit, invention ever-new,
 And lively cheer of vigour born ;
 The thoughtless day, the easy night,
 The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
 That fly the approach of morn. 50

Alas ! regardless of their doom,
 The little victims play !
 No sense have they of ills to come,
 Nor care beyond to-day :
 Yet see how all around 'em wait 55
 The ministers of human fate,
 And black Misfortune's baleful train !
 Ah, shew them where in ambush stand
 To seize their prey the murderous band !
 Ah, tell them they are men ! 60

These shall the fury Passions tear,
 The vultures of the mind,
 Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
 And Shame that skulks behind ;
 Or pining Love shall waste their youth, 65
 *Or Jealousy with rankling tooth,
 That inly gnaws the secret heart,
 And Envy wan, and faded Care,
 Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
 And Sorrow's piercing dart. 70

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
 Then whirl the wretch from high,
 To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
 And grinning Infamy.

The stings of Falsehood those shall try, 75
 And hard Unkindness' altered eye,
 That mocks the tear it forced to flow ;
 And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
 And moody Madness laughing wild
 Amid severest woe. 80

*Lo, in the vale of years beneath
 A grisly troop are seen,
 The painful family of Death,
 More hideous than their queen :
 This racks the joints, this fires the veins, 85
 *That every labouring sinew strains,
 Those in the deeper vitals rage :
 Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,
 That numbs the soul with icy hand,
 And slow-consuming Age. 90

To each his sufferings : all are men,
 Condemned alike to groan ;
 The tender for another's pain,
 The unfeeling for his own.
 *Yet, ah ! why should they know their fate ? 95
 Since sorrow never comes too late,
 And happiness too swiftly flies.
 Thought would destroy their paradise.
 No more ;—where ignorance is bliss,
 'Tis folly to be wise. 100

O D E I V.

T O A D V E R S I T Y.

- *DAUGHTER of Jove, relentless power,
 Thou tamer of the human breast,
 Whose iron scourge and torturing honr,
 The bad affright, afflict the best!
 Bound in thy adamantine chain 5
 The proud are taught to taste of pain,
 And purple tyrants vainly groan
 With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.
- When first thy sire to send on earth
 Virtue, his darling child, designed, 10
 To thee he gave the heavenly birth,
 And bade to form her infant mind.
 Stern rugged nurse! thy rigid lore
 With patience many a year she bore:
 What sorrow was, thou had'st her know, 15
 And from her own she learned to melt at others' woe.
- Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
 Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
 Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
 And leave us leisure to be good. 20
 Light they disperse, and with them go
 The summer friend, the flattering foe;
 By vain Prosperity received,
 To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.
- *Wisdom in sable garb arrayed 25
 *Immersed in rapturous thought profound,
 And Melancholy, silent maid
 With leaden eye, that loves the ground,

Still on thy solemn steps attend :
 Warm Charity, the general friend, 30
 With Justice to herself severe,
 And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh, gently on thy suppliant's head,
 Dread goddess, lay thy chastening hand?
 *Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad, 35
 Nor circled with the vengeful band
 (As by the impious thou art seen),
 With thundering voice, and threatening mien,
 With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
 Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty. 40

Thy form benign, O goddess, wear,
 Thy milder influence impart,
 Thy philosophic train be there
 To soften, not to wound my heart.
 The generous spark extinct revive, 45
 Teach me to love and to forgive,
 Exact my own defects to scan,
 What others are to feel, and know myself a man.

ODE V.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

PINDARIC.

L. I.

*AWAKE, Æolian lyre, awake,
 And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
 *From Helicon's harmonious springs
 A thousand rills their mazy progress take :

*The laughing flowers, that round them blow, 5
 Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
 Now the rich stream of music winds along
 Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
 *Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign :
 Now rolling down the steep amain, 10
 Headlong, impetuous, see it pour :
 *The rocks and nodding groves, rebellow to the roar.

L. 2.

*Oh ! sovereign of the willing soul,
 Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
 Enchanting shell ! the sullen Careas, 15
 And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
 *On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
 Has curbed the fury of his car,
 And dropped his thirsty lance at thy command.
 Perching on the sceptered hand 20
 *Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
 With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing :
 Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
 The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

L. 3.

*Thee the voice, the dance, obey, 25
 Tempered to thy warbled lay.
 *O'er Idalia's velvet-green
 *The rosy-crowned Loves are seen
 *On Cytherea's day
 With antic Sport, and blue-eyed Pleasures, 30
 Frisking light in frolic measures ;
 Now pursuing, now retreating,
 Now in circling troops they meet :
 To brisk notes in cadence beating
 Glance their many-twinkling feet. 35

Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare :
 *Where'er she turns the Graces homage pay,
 With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
 In gliding state she wins her easy way :
 O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move, 40
 The bloom of young desire and purple light of love.

II. 1.

*Man's feeble race what ills await !
 Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
 Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
 And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate ! 45
 The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
 And justify the laws of Jove.
 Say, has he given in vain the Heavenly Muse ?
 Night, and all her sickly dews,
 Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry, 50
 He gives to range the dreary sky :
 Till down the eastern cliffs afar
 *Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

II. 2.

*In climes beyond the solar road,
 Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam, 55
 The Muse has broke the twilight gloom
 To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
 And oft, beneath the odorous shade
 Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
 She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat 60
 In loose numbers wildly sweet
 Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
 Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
 Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
 The unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame. 65

II. 3.

*Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
 *Isles, that crown the Ægean deep,
 *Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
 *Or where Mæander's amber waves
 In lingering labyrinths creep, 70
 How do your tuneful echoes languish,
 Mute, but to the voice of anguish?
 Where each old poetic mountain
 Inspiration breathed around;
 Every shade and hallowed fountain 75
 Murmured deep a solemn sound:
 *Till the sad Nine in Greece's evil hour
 *Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
 Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
 And coward Vice, that revels in her chains. 80
 When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
 They sought, O Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III. 1.

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
 *In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
 What time, where lucid Avon strayed, 85
 To him the mighty mother did unveil
 Her awful face: The dauntless child
 Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.
 'This pencil take,' she said, 'whose colours clear
 Richly paint the vernal year: 90
 Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!
 This can unlock the gates of Joy;
 Of Horror that, and thrilling Fears,
 Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic Tears.'

III. 2.

*Nor second he, that rode sublime 95
 Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy,
 The secrets of the Abyss to spy.
 He passed the flaming bounds of place and time :
 *The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
 Where angels tremble, while they gaze, 100
 He saw ; but blasted with excess of light,
 Closed his eyes in endless night.
 Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
 Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
 Two coursers of ethereal race, 105
 *With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding
 pace.

III. 3.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore !
 Bright-eyed Fancy hovering o'er
 Scatters from her pictured urn
 Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn. 110
 *But ah ! 'tis heard no more——
 Oh ! lyre divine, what daring spirit
 Wakes thee now ? though he inherit
 Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
 *That the Theban eagle bear 115
 Sailing with supreme dominion
 Through the azure deep of air :
 Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
 Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray,
 With orient hues, unborrowed of the sun : 120
 Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
 Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
 Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great.

O D E V I.

THE BARD.

A PINDARIC ODE.

This Ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales, that Edward I., when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the bards that fell into his hands to be put to death.

I. 1.

‘RUIN seize thee, ruthless King!
 Confusion on thy banners wait,
 Though fanned by Conquest’s crimson wing
 *They mock the air with idle state.
 *Helm, nor hauberk’s twisted mail, 5
 Nor e’en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
 To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
 *From Cambria’s curse, from Cambria’s tears!’
 *Such were the sounds, that o’er the crested pride
 Of the first Edward scattered wild dismay, 10
 *As down the steep of Snowdon’s shaggy side
 He wound with toilsome march his long array.
 *Stout Glo’ster stood aghast in speechless trance:
 *‘To arms!’ cried Mortimer, and couched his quivering
 lance.

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow 15
 Frowns o’er old Conway’s foaming flood,
 Robed in the sable garb of woe,
 With haggard eyes the Poet stood
 *(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
 *Streamed, like a meteor, to the troubled air); 20
 And with a master’s hand, and prophet’s fire,
 Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.

' Hark, how each giant oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath !
O'er thee, O King! their hundred arms they wave, 25
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe ;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
'To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

L. 3.

*' Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hushed the stormy main : 30
*Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed :
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
*Modred, whose magic song
*Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topped head.
*On dreary Arvon's shore they lie, 35
Smeared with gore, and ghastly pale :
Far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail ;
*The famished eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
*Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes, 40
Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries—
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit, they linger yet, 45
Avengers of their native land :
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
*And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.'

II. 1.

' Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race. 50
Give ample room, and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.

Mark the year, and mark the night,
 When Severn shall re-echo with affright
 *The shrieks of death, through Berkley's roofs that ring,
 *Shrieks of an agonising King! 56
 *She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,
 That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
 From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
 *The scourge of heaven. What terrors round him wait!
 Amazement in his van, with Flight combined, 61
 And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

II. 2.

'Mighty Victor, mighty Lord,
 *Low on his funeral couch he lies!
 No pitying heart, no eye, afford 65
 A tear to grace his obsequies.
 *Is the sable warrior fled?
 Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
 The swarm, that in thy noon-tide beam were born?
 Gone to salute the rising morn. 70
 *Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
 While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
 In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
 Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
 Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway, 75
 That, hushed in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

II. 3.

*Fill high the sparkling bowl,
 The rich repast prepare,
 Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
 Close by the regal chair 80
 Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
 A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
 *Heard ye the din of battle bray,

Lance to lance, and horse to horse ?
 Long years of havoc urge their destined course, 85
 And through the kindred squadrons mow their way.
 *Ye Towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
 With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
 *Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
 *And spare the meek usurper's holy head. 90
 *Above, below, the rose of snow,
 Twined with her blushing foe, we spread :
 *The bristled boar in infant gore
 Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
 Now, brothers, bending o'er the accursed loom, 95
 Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III. 1.

' " Edward, lo! to sudden fate
 (Weave the woof. The thread is spun.)
 *Half of thy heart we consecrate.
 (The web is wove. The work is done.)" 100
 Stay, O stay! nor thus forlorn
 Leave me unblest, unpitied, here to mourn :
 In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
 They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
 But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height 105
 Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll?
 Visions of glory, spare my aching sight,
 Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
 *No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
 *All-hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail. 110

III. 2.

'Girt with many a baron bold
 Sublime their starry fronts they rear ;
 And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
 In bearded majesty, appear.

In the midst a form divine ! 115
 Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line ;
 *Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,
 Attempered sweet to virgin-grace.
 What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
 What strains of vocal transport round her play ! 120
 *Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear ;
 They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
 Bright Rapture calls, and soaring, as she sings,
 Waves in the eye of heaven her many-coloured wings.

III. 3.

'The verse adorn again 125
 Fierce War, and faithful Love,
 And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction drest.
 *In buskined measures move
 Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
 With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast. 130
 *A voice as of the cherub-choir,
 Gales from blooming Eden bear ;
 *And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
 That lost in long futurity expire.
 Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud 135
 Raised by thy breath, has quenched the orb of day ?
 To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
 And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
 Enough for me : With joy I see
 The different doom our Fates assign. 140
 Be thine Despair, and sceptered Care,
 To triumph, and to die, are mine.'
 He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
 Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

ODE VII

THE FATAL SISTERS.

FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.

In the eleventh century, *Sigurd*, Earl of the Orkney Islands, went with a fleet of ships and a considerable body of troops into Ireland, to the assistance of *Sictryg* with the silken beard, who was then making war on his father-in-law *Brian*, king of Dublin. The earl and all his forces were cut to pieces, and *Sictryg* was in danger of a total defeat; but the enemy had a greater loss by the death of *Brian*, their king, who fell in the action. On Christmas-day (the day of the battle), a native of Caithness in Scotland saw at a distance a number of persons on horseback, riding full speed towards a hill, and seeming to enter into it. Curiosity led him to follow them, till, looking through an opening in the rocks, he saw twelve gigantic figures resembling women: they were all employed about a loom, and as they wove, they sung the following dreadful song: which, when they had finished, they tore the web into twelve pieces, and, each taking her portion, galloped six to the north, and as many to the south. These were the *Valkyriur*, female divinities, servants of *Odin* (or *Woden*) in the Gothic mythology. Their name signifies *choosers of the slain*. They were mounted on swift horses, with drawn swords in their hands; and in the throng of battle, selected such as were destined to slaughter, and conducted them to *Valkalla*, the hall of *Odin*, or paradise of the brave, where they attended the banquet, and served the departed heroes with horns of mead and ale.

1.

Now the storm begins to lower
 (Haste, the loom of hell prepare),
 *Iron sleet of arrowy shower
 *Hurtles in the darkened air.

2.

Glittering lances are the loom,
 Where the dusky warp we strain,
 Weaving many a soldier's doom,
 Orkney's woe, and Randver's bane,

3.

See the grisly texture grow
(’Tis of human entrails made),
And the weights, that play below,
Each a gasping warrior’s head.

4.

Shafts for shuttles, dipt in gore,
Shoot the trembling cords along.
Sword, that once a monarch bore,
Keep the tissue close and strong.

5.

Mista black, terrific maid,
Sangrida, and Hilda see,
Join the wayward work to aid :
’Tis the woof of victory.

6.

Ere the ruddy sun be set,
Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,
Blade with clattering buckler meet,
Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.

7.

(Weave the crimson web of war)
Let us go, and let us fly,
Where our friends the conflict share,
Where they triumph, where they die.

8.

As the paths of fate we tread,
Wading through the ensanguined field :
Gondula, and Geira, spread
O’er the youthful king your shield.

9.

We the reins to slaughter give,
Ours to kill, and ours to spare :
Spite of danger he shall live
(Weave the crimson web of war).

10.

They, whom once the desert-beach
 Pent within its bleak domain,
 Soon their ample sway shall stretch
 O'er the plenty of the plain.

11.

Low the dauntless earl is laid,
 Gored with many a gaping wound :
 Fate demands a nobler head ;
 Soon a king shall bite the ground.

12.

*Long his loss shall Eirin weep,
 Ne'er again his likeness see ;
 Long her strains in sorrow steep,
 Strains of immortality !

13.

Horror covers all the heath,
 Clouds of carnage blot the sun.
 Sisters, weave the web of death !
 Sisters, cease ! the work is done !

14.

Hail the task, and hail the hands !
 Songs of joy and triumph sing !
 Joy to the victorious bands ;
 Triumph to the younger king.

15.

Mortal, thou that hear'st the tale,
 Learn the tenor of our song.
 Scotland, through each winding vale
 Far and wide the notes prolong.

16.

Sisters, hence with spurs of speed :
 Each her thundering falchion wield ;
 Each bestride her sable steed.
 Hurry, hurry to the field.

ODE VIII

THE DESCENT OF ODIN.

FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.

UPROSE the King of Men with speed,
 And saddled straight his coal-black steed ;
 Down the yawning steep he rode,
 *That leads to Hela's drear abode.
 Him the dog of darkness spied, 5
 His shaggy throat he opened wide,
 While from his jaws, with carnage filled,
 Foam and human gore distilled :
 Hoarse he bays with hideous din,
 Eyes that glow, and fangs that grin ; 10
 And long pursues, with fruitless yell,
 The father of the powerful spell.
 Onward still his way he takes
 (The groaning earth beneath him shakes),
 Till full before his fearless eyes 15
 The portals nine of hell arise.

Right against the eastern gate,
 By the moss-grown pile he sate ;
 Where long of yore to sleep was laid
 The dust of the prophetic maid. 20
 Facing to the northern clime,
 *Thrice he traced the Runic rhyme ;
 Thrice pronounced, in accents dread,
 The thrilling verse that wakes the dead ;
 Till from out the hollow ground 25
 Slowly breathed a sullen sound.

PROPHETESS.

What call unknown, what charms presume
 To break the quiet of the tomb ?

Who thus afflicts my troubled sprite,
 And drags me from the realms of night ? 30
 Long on these mouldering bones have beat
 The winter's snow, the summer's heat,
 The drenching dews, and driving rain !
 Let me, let me sleep again.
 Who is he, with voice unblest, 35
 That calls me from the bed of rest ?

ODIN.

A traveller, to thee unknown,
 Is he that calls, a warrior's son.
 Thou the deeds of light shalt know ;
 *Tell me what is done below, 40
 For whom yon glittering board is spread,
 Drest for whom yon golden bed.

PROPHETESS.

Mantling in the goblet see
 The pure beverage of the bee ;
 O'er it hangs the shield of gold ; 45
 'Tis the drink of Balder bold :
 Balder's head to death is given.
 Pain can reach the sons of heaven !
 Unwilling I my lips unclose :
 Leave me, leave me to repose. 50

ODIN.

Once again my call obey.
 Prophetess, arise, and say,
 What dangers Odin's child await,
 Who the author of his fate.

PROPHETESS.

In Hoder's hand the hero's doom : 55
 His brother sends him to the tomb.

Now my weary lips I close :
 Leave me, leave me to repose.

ODIN.

Prophetess, my spell obey,
 Once again arise, and say, 60
 Who the avenger of his guilt,
 By whom shall Hoder's blood be spilt.

PROPHETESS.

In the caverns of the west,
 By Odin's fierce embrace compr'est,
 A wonderous boy shall Rinda bear, 65
 Who ne'er shall comb his raven hair,
 Nor wash his visage in the stream,
 Nor see the sun's departing beam ;
 Till he on Hoder's corse shall smile
 Flaming on the funeral pile. 70
 Now my weary lips I close :
 Leave me, leave me to repose.

ODIN.

Yet a while my call obey.
 Prophetess, awake, and say,
 What virgins these, in speechless woe, 75
 That bend to earth their solemn brow,
 That their flaxen tresses tear,
 And snowy veils, that float in air.
 Tell me whence their sorrows rose :
 Then I leave thee to repose. 80

PROPHETESS.

Ha ! no traveller art thou,
 King of Men, I know thee now,
 Mightiest of a mighty line——

ODIN.

No boding maid of skill divine
 Art thou, nor prophetess of good ; 85
 But mother of the giant brood !

PROPHETESS.

Hie thee hence, and boast at home,
 That never shall inquirer come
 To break my iron sleep again ;
 *Till Lok has burst his tenfold chain. 90
 Never, till substantial night
 Has reassumed her ancient right ;
 Till warped in flames, in ruin hurled,
 Sinks the fabric of the world.

O D E I X.

THE TRIUMPHS OF OWEN.

FROM THE WELSH.

From Mr Evans's *Specimens of the Welsh Poetry*, London, 1764, quarto. Owen succeeded his father Griffin in the principality of North Wales, 1137 A.D. This battle was fought in 1157.

OWEN'S praise demands my song,
 Owen swift, and Owen strong ;
 Fairest flower of Roderic's stem,
 *Gwyneth's shield, and Britain's gem.
 He nor heaps his brooded stores, 5
 Nor on all profusely pours ;
 Lord of every regal art,
 Liberal hand, and open heart.

Big with hosts of mighty name,
 Squadrons three against him came ; 10
 This the force of Eirin hiding,
 Side by side as proudly riding,
 On her shadow long and gay
 *Lochlin ploughs the watery way ;
 There the Norman sails afar 15
 Catch the winds, and join the war :
 Black and huge along they sweep,
 Burthens of the angry deep.

Dauntless on his native sands
 *The dragon-son of Mona stands ; 20
 In glittering arms and glory drest,
 High he rears his ruby crest.
 There the thundering strokes begin,
 There the press, and there the din ;
 Talymalfra's rocky shore 25
 Echoing to the battle's roar.
 Checked by the torrent-tide of blood
 Backward Meinai rolls his flood ;
 While, heaped his master's feet around,
 Prostrate warriors gnaw the ground. 30
 Where his glowing eyeballs turn,
 Thousand banners round him burn.
 Where he points his purple spear,
 Hasty, hasty rout is there,
 Marking with indignant eye 35
 Fear to stop, and shame to fly.
 There confusion, terror's child,
 Conflict fierce, and ruin wild,
 Agony, that pants for breath,
 Despair and honourable death. 40

ODE X.

THE DEATH OF HOEL.

FROM THE WELSH.*

HAD I but the torrent's might,
 With headlong rage and wild affright
 *Upon Deira's squadrons hurled,
 To rush, and sweep them from the world!

Too, too secure in youthful pride 5
 By them my friend, my Hoel, died,
 Great Cian's son : of Madoe old
 He asked no heaps of hoarded gold ;
 Alone in nature's wealth arrayed,
 He asked, and had the lovely maid. 10

*To Cattræth's vale in glittering row
 Twice two hundred warriors go ;
 Every warrior's manly neck
 Chains of regal honour deck,
 Wreathed in many a golden link : 15
 From the golden cup they drink
 Nectar, that the bees produce,
 Or the grape's ecstatic juice.
 Flushed with mirth, and hope they burn :
 But none from Cattræth's vale return, 20
 Save Aeron brave, and Conan strong
 (Bursting through the bloody throng),
 And I, the meanest of them all,
 That live to weep, and sing their fall.

* Of Aneurim, styled the Monarch of the Bards. He flourished about the time of Taliessin, 570 A.D.

ODE XL

FOR MUSIC.

IRREGULAR.

This Ode was performed in the Senate-house at Cambridge, July 1, 1769, at the installation of his Grace Augustus-Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, Chancellor of the University.

I

‘HENCE, avaunt (’tis holy ground),
 Comus, and his midnight crew,
 And Ignorance with looks profound,
 And dreaming Sloth of pallid hue,
 Mad Sedition’s cry profane, 5
 Servitude that hugs her chain,
 Nor in these consecrated bowers
 Let painted Flattery hide her serpent-train in flowers.
 Nor Envy base, nor creeping Gain,
 Dare the Muse’s walk to stain, 10
 While bright-eyed Science watches round ;
 Hence, away, ’tis holy ground !’

II

From yonder realms of empyrean day
 Bursts on my ear the indignant lay :
 There sit the sainted sage, the bard divine, 15
 The few, whom genius gave to shine
 Through every unborn age, and undiscovered clime.
 Rapt in celestial transport they :
 Yet hither oft a glance from high
 They send of tender sympathy 20
 To bless the place, where on their opening soul
 First the genuine ardour stole.

'Twas Milton struck the deep-toned shell,
 And, as the choral warblings round him swell,
 Meek Newton's self bends from his state sublime, 25
 And nods his hoary head, and listens to the rhyme.

III.

'Ye brown o'er-arching groves,
 That contemplation loves,
 *Where willow Camus lingers with delight!
 Oft at the blush of dawn 30
 I trod your level lawn,
 *Oft wooed the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright
 In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,
 With Freedom by my side, and soft-eyed Melancholy.'

IV.

But hark! the portals sound, and pacing forth 35
 With solemn steps and slow,
 High potentates, and dames of royal birth,
 And mitred fathers in long order go:
 *Great Edward with the lilies on his brow
 From haughty Gallia torn, 40
 *And sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn
 *That wept her bleeding love, and princely Clare,
 *And Anjou's heroine, and the paler rose,
 The rival of her crown, and of her woes,
 *And either Henry there, 45
 The murdered saint, and the majestic lord,
 That broke the bonds of Rome.
 (Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,
 Their human passions now no more,
 Save charity, that glows beyond the tomb.) 50
 *All that on Granta's fruitful plain
 Rich streams of regal bounty poured,
 And bade these awful fanes and turrets rise,
 To hail their Fitzroy's festal morning come;

And thus they speak in soft accord 55
The liquid language of the skies :

V.

'What is grandeur, what is power?
Heavier toil, superior pain.
What the bright reward we gain?
The grateful memory of the good. 60
Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
The bee's collected treasures sweet,
Sweet music's melting fall, but sweeter yet
The still small voice of gratitude.'

VI.

Foremost and leaning from her golden cloud 65
*The venerable Margaret see!
'Welcome, my noble son,' she cries aloud,
'To this, thy kindred train, and me :
Pleased in thy lineaments we trace
*A Tudor's fire, a Beaufort's grace. 70
Thy liberal heart, thy judging eye,
The flower unheeded shall descry,
And bid it round heaven's altars shed
The fragrance of its blushing head :
Shall raise from earth the latent gem 75
To glitter on the diadem.

VII.

'Lo, Granta waits to lead her blooming band,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, she
No vulgar praise, no venal incense flings ;
Nor dares with courtly tongue refined 80
Profane thy inborn royalty of mind :
She reveres herself and thee.
With modest pride to grace thy youthful brow

*The laureate wreath, that Cecil wore, she brings,
 And to thy just, thy gentle hand 85
 Submits the fasces of her sway,
 While spirits blest above and men below
 Join with glad voice the loud symphonious lay.

VIII.

'Through the wild waves as they roar
 With watchful eye and dauntless mien 90
 Thy steady course of honour keep,
 Nor fear the rocks, nor seek the shore:
 The star of Brunswick smiles serene,
 And gilds the horrors of the deep.'

ODE XII

ON THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM VICISSITUDE.

Left unfinished by Gray. The additions by Mason, a poet, and friend of Gray, are distinguished by inverted commas.

Now the golden morn aloft
 Waves her dew-bespangled wing,
 *With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
 She woos the tardy spring :
 Till April starts, and calls around 5
 The sleeping fragrance from the ground ;
 And lightly o'er the living scene
 Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,
 Frisking ply their feeble feet ; 10
 Forgetful of their wintry trance
 The birds his presence greet :

But chief, the sky-lark warbles high
 His trembling thrilling ecstasy ;
 And, lessening from the dazzled sight,
 *Melts into air and liquid light. 15

Rise, my soul ! on wings of fire,
 Rise the rapturous choir among ;
 Hark ! 'tis nature strikes the lyre,
 And leads the general song : 20
 ' Warm let the lyric transport flow,
 Warm as the ray that bids it glow ;
 And animates the vernal grove
 With health, with harmony, and love.'

Yesterday the sullen year 25
 Saw the snowy whirlwind fly ;
 Mute was the music of the air,
 The herd stood drooping by :
 Their raptures now that wildly flow,
 No yesterday nor morrow know ; 30
 'Tis man alone that joy descries
 With forward, and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past misfortune's brow
 Soft reflection's hand can trace ;
 And o'er the cheek of sorrow throw 35
 A melancholy grace ;
 While hope prolongs our happier hour,
 Or deepest shades, that dimly lower
 And blacken round our weary way,
 Gilda with a gleam of distant day. 40

Still, where rosy pleasure leads,
 See a kindred grief pursue ;
 Behind the steps that misery treads,
 Approaching comfort view :

The hues of bliss more brightly glow, 45
 Chastised by sabler tints of woe ;
 And blended form, with artful strife,
 The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch, that long has tost
 On the thorny bed of pain, 50
 At length repair his vigour lost,
 And breathe and walk again :
 The meanest floweret of the vale,
 The simplest note that swells the gale,
 The common sun, the air, the skies, 55
 To him are opening paradise.

Humble Quiet builds her cell,
 Near the source whence pleasure flows ;
 She eyes the clear crystalline well,
 And tastes it as it goes. 60
 ' While ' far below the ' madding ' crowd
 ' Rush headlong to the dangerous flood,'
 Where broad and turbulent it sweeps,
 ' And ' perish in the boundless deepa.

Mark where Indolence and Pride, 65
 ' Soothed by flattery's tinkling sound,'
 Go, softly rolling, side by side,
 Their dull but daily round :
 " To these, if Hebe's self should bring
 The purest cup from pleasure's spring, 70
 Say, can they taste the flavour high
 Of sober, simple, genuine joy ?

' Mark Ambition's march sublime
 Up to power's meridian height ;
 While pale-eyed Envy sees him climb, 75
 And sickens at the sight.

Phantoms of danger, death, and dread,
 Float hourly round Ambition's head ;
 While spleen, within his rival's breast,
 Sits brooding on her scorpion nest. 80

' Happier he, the peasant, far,
 From the pangs of passion free,
 That breathes the keen yet wholesome air
 Of rugged penury. 85
 He, when his morning task is done,
 Can slumber in the noontide sun ;
 And hie him home, at evening's close,
 To sweet repast, and calm repose.

' He, unconscious whence the bliss,
 Feels, and owns in carols rude, 90
 That all the circling joys are his,
 Of dear Vicissitude.
 From toil he wins his spirits light,
 From busy day the peaceful night ;
 Rich, from the very want of wealth, 95
 In heaven's best treasures, peace and health.'

ELEGY

WRITTEN IN A
COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

1.

*THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

2.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
*And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
*Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
*And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds ;

3.

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
*Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
*Molest her ancient solitary reign.

4.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
*Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
*The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

5.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
*The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
*No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

6.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
 *Or busy housewife ply her evening care :
 *No children run to lisp their sire's return,
 Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

7.

Offt did the harvest to their sickle yield,
 *Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke ;
 *How jocund did they drive their team afield !
 How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

8.

*Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
 *Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
 *The short and simple annals of the Poor.

9.

*The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
 *Await alike the inevitable hour.
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

10.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
 *If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
 *Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

11.

*Can storied urn or animated bust
 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
 *Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
 Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death ?

12.

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
 Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
 *Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

13.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
 *Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll ;
 *Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
 And froze the genial current of the soul.

14.

*Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
 The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear ;
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

15.

*Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
 The little tyrant of his fields withstood ;
 *Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
 *Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

16.

The applause of listening senates to command,
 The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
 *To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
 *And read their history in a nation's eyes,

17.

*Their lot forbade : nor circumscribed alone
 Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;
 Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
 And shut the gates of mercy on mankind ;

18.

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
 To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
 Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
 *With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

19.

*Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
 Their sober wishes never learned to stray ;
 Along the cool sequestered vale of life
 *They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

20.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect
 *Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
 With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
 Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

21.

*Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered Muse,
 *The place of fame and elegy supply :
 *And many a holy text around she strews,
 That teach the rustic moralist to die.

22.

For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
 This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
 Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
 Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind ?

23.

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
 *Some pious drops the closing eye requires ;
 Even from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
 Even in our ashes live their wonted fires.

24.

*For thee, who, mindful of the unhonoured dead,
 Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;
 *If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
 *Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

25.

*Haply some hoary-headed swain may say :
 'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
 Brushing with hasty step the dews away
 *To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

26.

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
 *That wreathes its old fantastic roots so-high,
 His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
 And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

27.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove ;
*Now drooping, woful wan, like one forlorn,
*Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

28.

* One morn I missed him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath and near his favourite tree ;
* Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he ;

29.

* The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
* Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

THE EPITAPH.

* HERE rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown :
* Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
* And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send ;
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
He gained from heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),
* The bosom of his Father and his God.

NOTES.

NOTES ON ODE I.

1. *Rosy-bosomed*, with bosoms full of roses.
Hours, the goddesses of the seasons, or of the hours of the day.
Rosy-bosomed Hours—
 'The rosy-bosomed Spring
 To weeping Fancy pipes.'—Thomson's *Spring*, line 1010.
 'Along the crisped shades and bowers,
 Revels the spruce and jocund Spring,
 The Graces and the rosy-bosomed Hours
 Thither all their bounties bring.'
 —Milton's *Comus*, 984—987.
2. *Fair Venus' train*. It has been well remarked that the goddess
 'Venus is here employed, in conformity to the mythology of
 the Greeks, as the source of creation and beauty—as the
 principle that pervades and invigorates universal nature: and
 with peculiar propriety on this occasion, because a new
 creation, as it were, takes place with the commencement of
 the spring, after the languor and inactivity of winter.'
4. 'And lavish Nature paints the purple year.'
 —Pope's *Pastorals*, i. 28.
5. *Attic*, relating to Athens.—*Attic warbler*, the nightingale,
 referring to the legend of Philomela, daughter of Pandion,
 king of Athens, who was changed into that bird. Compare
 Milton's *Sonnet on the Nightingale*.
 'The Attic bird
 Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long.'
 —Milton's *Paradise Regained*, iv. 245.
- Pours her throat*—
 'Is it for thee the linnet pours her throat?'
 —Pope's *Essay on Man*, iii. 33.
- 8—10. 'Now gentle gales
 Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils.'—Milton's *Paradise Lost*, iv. 156—159.
- 23, 24. 'Here their delicious task the fervent bees,
 In swarming millions, tend: around, athwart,
 Through the soft air the busy nations fly.'
 —Thomson's *Spring*, 508—510.

- 23—30. 'Waked by his warmer ray, the reptile young
Come winged abroad.

By myriads forth at once
Swarming they pour; of all the varied hues
Their beauty-beaming parents can disclose.
Ten thousand forms, ten thousand different tribes,
People the blaze. To sunny waters some
By fatal instinct fly, where on the pool
They sportive wheel.'—Thomson's *Summer*, 241—252.

- 29, 30. 'Sporting with quick glance
Shew to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold.'
—Milton's *Paradise Lost*, vii. 405, 406.

- 31—40. 'Thick in yon stream of light, a thousand ways,
Upward and downward, thwarting and convolved,
The quivering nations sport; till tempest-winged,
Fierce winter sweeps them from the face of day.
Even so luxurious men, unheeding, pass
An idle summer-life in Fortune's shine,
A season's glitter! Thus they flutter on
From toy to toy, from vanity to vice!
Till blown away by Death, Oblivion comes
Behind, and strikes them from the book of life.'
—Thomson's *Summer*, 342—351.

NOTES ON ODE II.

31. *Eight times.* An allusion to the supposition that the cat has nine lives.
34. *No Dolphin came.* An allusion to the story of Arion, a celebrated lute-player of Lesbos, an island in the Grecian archipelago. While returning from Italy in a Corinthian ship, laden with gifts which he had won in poetical contests, the sailors determined to kill him and seize his wealth. Arion, having played on his lute, threw himself into the sea. Charmed by his music, a number of dolphins had assembled round the vessel, and on the back of one of these the musician rode safely to land.
- Nereid.* A sea-nymph, one of the daughters of the sea-god Nereus, who attended Neptune, riding on sea-horses.
42. A proverbial expression, and a favourite among the old poets.

NOTES ON ODE III.

4. Henry VI., founder of the college, termed *holy* because he was near being canonised.

5, 6. 'And now to where

Majestic Windsor lifts his princely brow.'

—Thomson's *Summer*, 1412, 1413.

8. The turf of whose lawn, the shade of whose grove, the flowers of whose mead. Compare Shakspeare, *Hamlet*, III. i. 159—

'The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword.'

i.e., The courtier's eye, the soldier's sword, the scholar's tongue.

23. *Margent green.*

'By slow Meander's margent green.'—Milton's *Comus*, 232.

66, 67. 'But gnawing Jealousy out of their sight,

Sitting alone, his bitter lips did bite.'

—Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, vi. 23.

81—90. 'Immediately a place

Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark ;

A lazarus-house it seemed ; wherein were laid

Numbers of all diseased, all maladies

Of ghastly spasm or racking torture, qualms

Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,

Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,

Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,

Demoniac phrensy, moping melancholy,

And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,

Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,

Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheuma.

Dire was the tossing, deep the groans : Despair

Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch ;

And over them triumphant Death his dart

Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked

With vows, as their chief good and final hope.'

—Milton's *Paradise Lost*, xi. 477—493.

86. Observe the suitability of the words to the sense—

'The verse too labours, and the words move slow.'

95—100. 'Peace, brother, be not over exquisite

To cast the fashion of uncertain evils.

For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,

What need a man forestall his date of grief

And run to meet what he would most avoid ?'

—Milton's *Comus*, 359—363.

NOTES ON ODE IV.

1. The reference is either to A'te, the goddess of retribution, a daughter of Jupiter, or to Affliction, described by Æschylus, the father of Greek tragedy, as sent by Jupiter for the benefit of mankind.
25. 'O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue.'
—Milton's *Il Penseroso*, 16.
- 26—28. 'With even step and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.'
—Milton's *Il Penseroso*, 38—44.
35. *Gorgon*. The Gorgons or 'grim ones,' from Greek *gorgos*, grim, were monsters represented as girt with serpents with heads erect, vibrating their tongues, and gnashing their teeth. They are otherwise described as winged virgins with brazen claws and enormous teeth, having two serpents round their bodies by way of girdle. The name Gorgon was more especially given to Medusa, a maiden, who, having offended Minerva, had her hair changed into serpents, which gave her so fearful an appearance that whoever looked upon her was turned into stone.
'Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards the ford.'
—Milton's *Paradise Lost*, ð. 611.

NOTES ON ODE V.

- Pindar'ic*. After the manner of Pindar, the great lyric poet of Greece, who sprung from a noble family of Thebes.
1. Pindar styled his own poetry, with its musical accompaniments, 'Æolian song,' 'Æolian strings,' 'the breath of the Æolian flute.'—*Æolian*, relating to Æolia in Asia Minor, or to its language, a dialect of the Greek; in this case perhaps to the Æolian rhythm not unfrequently used by Pindar.
3. *Helicon*, a mountain-range in the S.W. of Bœotia, in Greece, was celebrated by ancient poets as the favourite seat of the Muses. Its springs, Aganip'pe and Hip'pocrene, were fabled to bestow inspiration.

The subject and simile, as usual with Pindar, are united. The various sources of poetry, which gives life and lustre to all it touches, are here described; its quiet majestic progress enriching every subject (otherwise dry and barren) with a pomp of diction and luxuriant harmony of numbers; and its more rapid and irresistible course, when swollen and hurried away by the conflict of tumultuous passions.—*Gray*.

5. 'How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With many error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise.'
—Milton's *Paradise Lost*, iv. 237—241.
9. *Ceres*, the goddess of agriculture.
12. 'And rocks the bellowing voice of boiling seas resound.'
—Dryden's *Virgil*, Georgics I.
'Rocks rebellow to the roar.'—Pope's *Iliad*.
13. Power of harmony to calm the turbulent sallies of the soul.—*Gray*.
17. The Roman Mars, Greek Ares, the god of war, whose worship is believed to have been imported from Thrace.
21. *Feathered king*. The eagle, the only creature whose eyes were strong enough to look on Jupiter, who often employed him to fetch and carry thunderbolts.
'Every fowl of tyrant wing,
Save the Eagle feathered king.'
—Shak. *Passionate Pilgrim*, xx.
25. Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body.—*Gray*.
27. *Ida'lia*, in Cyprus, a favourite retreat of Venus, the goddess of love and beauty.
28. *Loves* or Cupids which fluttered about Venus, and fanned their light wings over her.
29. *Cythera's Day*, the festival of Venus, who was so called from her having been produced from the foam of the sea near the island of Cythera, south of Greece.
37. *The Graces*, three sister-goddesses, Euphros'yne, Agla'ia, and Tha'lia, in whom beauty and joy were deified.
42. To compensate the real and imaginary ills of life, the Muse was given to mankind by the same Providence that sends

- the day by its cheerful presence to dispel the gloom and terrors of the night.—*Gray*.
53. *Hyperion*, a name given to Apollo, the sun-god, and son of Hyperion.
54. Extensive influence of poetic genius over the remotest and most uncivilised nations: its connection with liberty, and the virtues that naturally attend on it.—*Gray*.
66. Progress of Poetry from Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. Chaucer was not unacquainted with the writings of Dante or of Petrarch. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt had travelled in Italy, and formed their taste there; Spenser imitated the Italian writers; Milton improved on them: but this school expired soon after the Restoration, and a new one arose on the French model, which has subsisted ever since.—*Gray*.
- Delphi*, in Phocis, the seat of the oracle of Apollo, the god of poetry.
- ‘With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.’
—Milton’s *Hymn to the Nativity*, xix.
67. *Ægean*, the Ægean Sea or Grecian Archipelago.
68. *Ilissus*, one of the rivers of Athens.
69. *Meander*, a river in Asia Minor remarkable for its windings.
77. *Nine*, the Muses, goddesses of song.
78. *Parnassus*, a mountain in Greece sacred to Apollo and the Muses.
- Latian plains*, Latium, a country of ancient Italy, on the south side of the Tiber.
84. *Nature’s darling*, Shakspeare, who was born at Stratford-on-Avon.
95. *He*, Milton.
99. ‘For the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.’
—*Ezek.* i. 20, 26, 28.—*Gray*.
106. ‘Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?’—*Job*. This verse and the foregoing are meant to express the stately march and sounding energy of Dryden’s rhymes.—*Gray*.
111. We have had in our language no other odes of the sublime kind than that of Dryden on St Cecilia’s Day.—*Gray*.
115. Pindar compares himself to that bird, and his enemies to ravens that croak and clamour in vain below, while it pursues its flight, regardless of their noise.—*Gray*.

NOTES ON ODE VI.

4. 'Mocking the air with colours idly spread.'
—Shak. *King John*, Act V. Sc. 1.—*Gray*.
5. The hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets, or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail, that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion.—*Gray*.
8. *Cambria*, the ancient name of Wales, derived from that of Cymbri or Cymri, by which the Welsh have always called themselves.
9. 'The crested adder's pride.'—Dryden's *Indian Queen*.—*Gray*.
11. *Snowdon* was a name given by the Saxons to that mountainous tract which the Welsh themselves call *Craigian-cryri*. It included all the highlands of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, as far east as the river Conway.—*Gray*.
13. Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, son-in-law to King Edward.—*Gray*.
14. Edmond de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore. They both were Lords-Marchers, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the king in this expedition.—*Gray*.
19. The image was taken from a well-known picture of Raphael representing the Supreme Being in the vision of Ezekiel. There are two of these paintings, both believed original, one at Florence, the other at Paris.—*Gray*.
20. 'The imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor, streaming to the wind.'
—Milton's *Paradise Lost*, i. 536.
28. *High-born Hoel*. Hoel was a famous bard and son of a prince of North Wales.
Llewellyn, a Welsh prince, famed, in Welsh poems, for his tender-heartedness.
- 29, 31, 33. *Cadwal'lo*, *U'rien*, *Mad'red*, Welsh bards.
34. *Plinlimmon*, one of the loftiest mountains of Wales, in the counties of Montgomery and Cardigan.
35. The shores of Caernarvonshire, opposite to the Isle of Anglesey.—*Gray*.
38. Camden and others observe that eagles used annually to build their aerie among the rocks of Snowdon, which from thence (as some think) were named by the Welsh *Craigian-cryri*, or the crags of the eagles. At this day (I am told) the highest point of Snowdon is called *the eagle's nest*. That bird is

certainly no stranger to this island, as the Scots, and the people of Cumberland, Westmoreland, &c., can testify; it even has built its nest in the Peak of Derbyshire.—*Gray*.

40. 'As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
That visit my sad heart.'
—Shak. *Julius Cæsar*, Act II. Sc. 1.—*Gray*.
48. See the Norwegian Ode that follows.—*Gray*.
53. Edward II., cruelly butchered in Berkley Castle.—*Gray*.
56. 'The screams with which the agonising king filled the castle,'—*Hume's England*, ii. 359.
57. Isabel of France, Edward II.'s adulterous queen.—*Gray*.
'She-wolf of France, but worse than wolves of France.'
—Shak. *Henry VI. Part III.*, Act I. Sc. 4.
60. Triumphs of Edward III. in France.—*Gray*.
64. Death of that king, abandoned by his children, and even robbed in his last moments by his courtiers and his mistress.—*Gray*.
67. Edward, the Black Prince, dead some time before his father.—*Gray*.
71. Magnificence of Richard II.'s reign. See Froissard and other contemporary writers.—*Gray*.
77. Richard II. (as we are told by Archbishop Scroop and the confederate lords in their manifesto, by Thomas of Walsingham, and all the olders writers) was starved to death. The story of his assassination by Sir Piers of Exon is of much later date.—*Gray*.
83. Ruinous civil wars of York and Lancaster.—*Gray*.
87. Henry VI., George Duke of Clarence, Edward V., Richard Duke of York, &c., believed to be murdered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Cæsar.—*Gray*.
89. *His consort*, Margaret of Anjou, a woman of heroic spirit, who struggled hard to save her husband and her crown.—*Gray*.
His father, Henry V.—*Gray*.
90. Henry VI., very near being canonised. The line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the crown.—*Gray*.
91. The white and red roses, devices of York and Lancaster.—*Gray*.
93. The silver Boar was the badge of Richard III., whence he was usually known in his own time by the name of *the Boar*.—*Gray*.
99. Eleanor of Castile died a few years after the conquest of Wales. The heroic proof she gave of her affection for her lord is well known. The monuments of his regret and sorrow for the loss of her are still to be seen at Northampton, Gaddington, Waltham, and other places.—*Gray*.

109. It was the common belief of the Welsh nation that King Arthur was still alive in fairy-land, and would return again to reign over Britain.—*Gray*.
110. Both Merlin and Taliessin had prophesied that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island, which seemed to be accomplished in the House of Tudor.—*Gray*.
117. Speed, relating an audience given by Queen Elizabeth to Paul Dzialinski, ambassador of Poland, says: 'And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert orator no less with her stately port and majestic deporture, than with the tartness of her princelie checkes.'—*Gray*.
121. Taliessin, chief of the bards, flourished in the sixth century. His works are still preserved, and his memory held in high veneration among his countrymen.—*Gray*.
128. Shakspeare.—*Gray*.
'Ennobled hath the buskined stage.'
—Milton's *Il Penseroso*, 102.
131. Milton.—*Gray*.
133. The succession of poets after Milton's time.—*Gray*.

NOTES ON ODE VII.

- I. 3. 'How quick they wheeled, and flying behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy shower.'
—Milton's *Paradise Regained*, lii. 324.—*Gray*.
- I. 4. 'The noise of battle hurtled in the air.'—Shak. *Julius Cæsar*,
Act II. Sc. 2.—*Gray*.
Hurtles, makes a clashing or terrifying sound.
- XII. 1. *Eirin*. Erin, Ireland.

NOTES ON ODE VIII.

4. *Nifheliar*, the hell of the Gothic nations, consisted of nine worlds, to which were devoted all such as died of sickness, old age, or by any other means than in battle: over it presided *Hela*, the goddess of death.—*Mason*.
Hela, in the Edda, is described with a dreadful countenance, and her body half flesh-colour and half blue.—*Gray*.
22. *Runic*, composed of Runes, the earliest alphabet in use among the Teutonic and Gothic nations of N. Europe. The word is from Teutonic *raun*, a mystery, and the characters seem to have been originally used for purposes of secrecy and divination.



40. Odin was anxious about the fate of his son, Balder, who had dreamed he was soon to die. He was killed by Odin's other son, Hoder, who was himself slain by Vali, the son of Odin and Rinda, consonant with this prophecy.—*Aldine Edition*.
90. *Lok* is the evil being, who continues in chains till the *twilight of the gods* approaches, when he shall break his bonds; the human race, the stars, and sun, shall disappear; the earth sink in the seas, and fire consume the skies: even Odin himself and his kindred deities shall perish.—*Mason*.

NOTES ON ODE IX.

4. *Gwyneth*, North Wales.
14. *Lochlin*, Denmark.
20. The red dragon is the device of Cadwallader, which all his descendants bore on their banners.—*Mason*.
Mona, the Roman name of Anglesey.

NOTES ON ODE X.

3. *Deira*. The kingdom of Deira included the counties of Yorkshire, Durham, Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland.
11. The legend is that the Britons lost the battle of Cattræth, and suffered so severely, because they had drunk their mead too profusely.

NOTES ON ODE XI.

2. 'Meanwhile welcome joy, and feast,
Midnight shout and revelry,
Topsy dance, and jollity.'—Milton's *Comus*, 102.
29. *Camus*, the Cam, on which Cambridge is situate.
32. *Cynthia*, the moon. Diana, the goddess of the moon, was so called from Mount Cynthus, in the Isle of Delos, the place of her birth.
39. Edward III., who added the *fleur de lis* of France to the arms of England. He founded Trinity College.—*Gray*.
41. Mary de Valentia, Countess of Pembroke, daughter of Guy de Chatillon, Comte de St Paul, in France, of whom tradition says that her husband, Audemar de Valentia, Earl of Pembroke, was slain at a tournament on the day of his nuptials. She was the foundress of Pembroke College or Hall, under the name of Aula Mariæ de Valentia.—*Gray*.

42. Elizabeth de Burg, Countess of Clare, was wife of John de Burg, son and heir of the Earl of Ulster, and daughter of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, by Joan of Acres, daughter of Edward I. Hence the poet gives her the epithet of 'Princely.' She founded Clare Hall.—*Gray*.
43. Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry VI., foundress of Queen's College.—Elizabeth Widville, wife of Edward IV. (hence called the paler rose, as being of the House of York). She added to the foundation of Margaret of Anjou.—*Gray*.
45. Henry VI. and VIII. The former the founder of King's, the latter the greatest benefactor to Trinity College.—*Gray*.
51. *Granta*, the river Cam, anciently so called.
65. Countess of Richmond and Derby, the mother of Henry VII., foundress of St John's and Christ's Colleges.—*Gray*.
70. The Countess was a Beaufort, and married to a Tudor: hence the application of this line to the Duke of Grafton, who claims descent from both these families.—*Gray*.
84. Lord Treasurer Burleigh was Chancellor of the university in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.—*Gray*.

NOTES ON ODE XII.

3. *Vermeil*, vermilion, red.
16. 'And drank the liquid light.'—Milton's *Paradise Lost*, vii. 362.
69. *Hébe*, the goddess of youth, and cup-bearer to Zeus, the supreme deity of Greece.

NOTES ON THE ELEGY.

STANZA

1. *Curfew* (*Fr. couvre-feu*, cover-fire), a bell rung in England, in Norman times, at eight o'clock every night, to warn the people to cover up their fires, and retire to rest. The custom, which was introduced into England by William the Conqueror, has been frequently represented as a piece of Norman tyranny, but should rather be regarded as a necessary precaution against fire in the days of wooden dwelling-houses. The practice of ringing the curfew-bell seems to have prevailed throughout Europe, with this intention, long before the era of the Norman conquest. The curfew-bell is still rung in some parts of England, though its original significance is lost.—*Parting*, departing.

2. *All the air, &c.*, a solemn stillness holds all the air.—*Droning*, giving a dull, buzzing sound.—*Drowsy tinklings*, tinklings producing a drowsy or sleepy effect.
3. *Bower* (A. S. *bár*, a chamber; Welsh *bwr*, an inclosure), place of retirement.—*Reign*, here equal to Lat. *regnum*, kingdom, the place reigned over.
4. Observe the transition in this stanza from description of nature to objects of human interest.—*Where heaves the turf, &c.*, where the turf rises in many a mouldering heap; that is, the mounds above the graves.—*Rude*, unpolished, uneducated; not used in the ordinary bad sense.
5. *Clarion*, a kind of trumpet, the notes of which are clear and shrill (Fr. *clairon*, *clair*, clear). Here, the crowing of the cock.—*Lowly bed*, really the *bed*; not metaphorically used for the *grave*, as has been supposed.
6. *Care*, object of care, task.—*To lisp their sire's return*, to express with childish utterance their delight at their father's return.
7. *Glebe* (Lat. *gleba*, a clod), the earth, soil.—*Jocund*, adjective for adverb, jocundly, joyously (Lat. *jocundus* or *jucundus*, from *jocus*, a jest).—*Afield*, to or towards the field. Compare *aback*, *aside*, *ashore*, &c.
8. *Ambition* and *Grandeur* are used for the ambitious, the grand, and (like Honour, Flattery, Memory, &c. below) are instances of the figure called *personification*, by which inanimate things are represented as animate.—*Annals*, history; originally records classified by years (Lat. *annales*, from *annus*, a year).
9. *The boast of heraldry*, the boasting of those who, from their high rank, are entitled to coats of arms.—*Inevitable hour*, the hour that cannot be avoided—that, namely, of death.
10. *Memory*, remembering ones.—*Where, &c.*, that is, in some abbey or other church, such as Westminster Abbey, where great men are buried, and where monuments are raised over their graves.—*Long-drawn aisle*. This expression pictures the long narrow vista of the aisle of a cathedral or large church.—*Fretted*, ornamented with frets or small bars or fillets, interlaced crosswise (old Fr. *fretter*, to interlace).
11. *Storied*, inscribed with story. Compare Milton's *Il Penseroso*: 'And storied window richly dight,' and Scott's *Marmion*: 'Achievements on the storied pane.' More usually *celebrated in story*.—*Animated*, lifelike.—*Provoke* (Lat. *provoco*), used in the original Latin sense of *call forth*.
12. *Waked to ecstasy the living lyre*, produced such delicious

- music upon the lyre that it would have seemed alive and in raptures.
13. *The spoils of time*, all the wise and beautiful sayings collected throughout all time.—*Noble rage*, noble aspirations; *rage* is here used for emotion in general.
 14. *Serene*, clear and bright, perfectly transparent.
 15. *Hampden*, John Hampden, cousin of Oliver Cromwell, celebrated for his patriotic opposition to the exactions of Charles I.—*Milton*, John Milton, the renowned author of *Paradise Lost*.—*Cromwell*, the Protector, Oliver Cromwell.
 16. Each line of this stanza forms a noun-clause, governed by *forbade* in stanza 17.—*Smiling* may either mean *fertile*, applied to the land itself, or *happy and grateful*, referring to the inhabitants.—*And read their history in a nation's eyes*, see from the loving looks of the people whom they have benefited, that their deeds are treasured up in the hearts of the nation as in a history.
 17. *Circumscribed*, the nominative to be supplied for this (as well as for the *forbade* following) is *let*.
 18. The three noun-clauses of this verse are each governed by *forbade* in the preceding stanza.—*The Muse's flame*. There were nine Muses in ancient Greek mythology, but the *Muse* is regularly used in the sense of the genius of poetry or poetic inspiration.
 19. *Madding*, mad; present participle of the old English verb *to mad*, to rave, to be mad.—*Tenor*, the holding on, continued course (Lat. *teneo*, to hold).
 20. *Still erected nigh*, erected near and still standing.
 21. *The unlettered Muse*, the uneducated author of the inscription upon the tombstone, or rather that which inspired him.—*Elegy*, a funeral song, a poem expressing grief for the death of a friend, and praising his virtues.—*SAs*, the Muse.
 22. *Pious drops*, tears of dutiful affection. *Pious* is here used in the primary meaning of the Latin *pius*, dutiful to near relatives.
 23. *For thee*, with regard to thee. The poet here addresses himself.—*Chance*, perchance.—*Kindred spirit*, some one of a similar thoughtful and meditative nature.
 24. *Haply*, perhaps.—*Upland*, in an elevated situation, above the level of low-lying meadows, &c.—*Lawn*, a piece of ground covered with grass, here a grassy hill; now generally used for the grass in front of, or around a house (akin to *land*).
 25. *That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high*. The roots of an old beech are often found joining the trunk a good way above

the level of the ground. The epithet *fantastic* refers to the curious twisted forms often assumed by the roots.—*Peer*, to look steadily and intently at (connected with *peer*).

27. *Woful wan*, woful and wan, or wofully wan.—*Or . . . or*, poetical usage for *either . . . or*.—The meaning of this stanza is: Hard by yon wood he used to rove, now (at one time) smiling as in scorn and muttering his wayward fancies, now (at another time) drooping, woful and wan like one forlorn, either crazed with care or crossed in hopeless love.
28. *Customed*, accustomed.—*Another*, that is, morning.
29. *Dirges*, funeral songs.—*For thou canst read*. This parenthetical clause brings back to our remembrance that it is an old uneducated peasant that is speaking. It is as if he said: 'You can read the epitaph for yourself, although I cannot.'

THE EPITAPH—*The lap of Earth*, in allusion to the personification of the earth as the mother of the beings that live upon its surface. The meaning is: He rests here like a tired child in the lap of its mother.—*Science*, knowledge (Lat. *scientia*). The meaning of the last two lines of the first stanza of the epitaph seems to be, that love of learning and melancholy both took possession of him—were, so to speak, his guiding geni.—*Bosom* is in apposition with *abode*.

THE END.



