

Then, to th' expecting Audience, rais'd his Look,  
And not without prepar'd Attention spoke:  
Soft was his Tone, and sober was his Face;  
Action his Words, and Words his Action grace.

If Heav'n, my Lords, had heard our common  
Pray'r,

These Arms had caus'd no Quarrel for an Heir;  
Still great *Achilles* had his own possess'd,  
And we with great *Achilles* had been blest'd;  
But since hard Fate, and Heav'n's severe Decree,  
Have ravish'd him away from you and me,  
(At this he sigh'd, and wip'd his Eyes, and drew,  
Or seem'd to draw, some Drops of kindly Dew)  
Who better can succeed *Achilles* lost,  
Than He who gave *Achilles* to your Hoast?  
This only I request, that neither He  
May gain, by being what he seems to be,  
A stupid Thing, nor I may lose the Prize,  
By having Sense, which Heav'n to him denies:  
Since, great or small, the Talent I enjoy'd  
Was ever in the common Cause employ'd:  
Nor let my Wit, and wonted Eloquence,  
Which often has been us'd in your Defence

And in my own, this only time be brought  
 To bear against my self, and deem'd a Fault.  
 Make not a Crime, where Nature made it none;  
 For ev'ry Man may freely use his own.  
 The Deeds of long descended Ancestors  
 Are but by grace of Imputation ours,  
 Theirs in effect; but since he draws his Line  
 From *Jove*, and seems to plead a Right Divine;  
 From *Jove*, like him, I claim my Pedigree,  
 And am descended in the same degree:  
 My Sire *Laertes* was *Arceſius*' Heir,  
*Arceſius* was the Son of *Jupiter*:  
 No Paricide, no banish'd Man, is known  
 In all my Line: Let him excuse his own.  
*Hermes* ennobles too my Mother's Side,  
 By both my Parents to the Gods ally'd;  
 But not because that on the Female Part  
 My Blood is better, dare I claim Desert,  
 Or that my Sire from Paricide is free;  
 But judge by Merit betwixt Him and Me:  
 The Prize be to the best; provided yet,  
 That *Ajax* for a while his Kin forget;

And his great Sire, and greater Uncles, Name,  
To fortifie by them his feeble Claim :  
Be Kindred and Relation laid aside,  
And Honour's Cause by Laws of Honour try'd :  
For if he plead Proximity of Blood ;  
That empty Title is with Ease withstood.  
*Peleus*, the Hero's Sire, more nigh than he,  
And *Pyrrhus*, his undoubted Progeny,  
Inherit first these Trophies of the Field ;  
To *Scyros*, or to *Pthya*, send the Shield :  
And *Teucer* has an Uncle's Right ; yet he  
Waves his Pretensions, nor contends with me.

Then since the Cause on pure Desert is plac'd,  
Whence shall I take my rise, what reckon last ?  
I not presume on ev'ry Act to dwell,  
But take these few, in order as they fell.


*Thetis*, who knew the Fates, apply'd her Care  
To keep *Achilles* in Disguise from War ;  
And till the threatning Influence were past,  
A Woman's Habit on the Hero cast :  
All Eyes were cozen'd by the borrow'd Vest,  
And *Ajax* (never wiser than the rest)

Found

Found no *Pelides* there: At length I came  
 With proffer'd Wares to this pretended Dame;  
 She, not discover'd by her Mien or Voice,  
 Betray'd her Manhood by her manly Choice;  
 And while on Female Toys her Fellows look,  
 Grasp'd in her Warlike Hand, a Javelin shook;  
 Whom, by this Act reveal'd, I thus bespoke:  
 O Goddess-born! resist not Heav'n's Decree,  
 The Fall of *Ilium* is reserv'd for Thee;  
 Then seiz'd him, and produc'd in open Light,  
 Sent blushing to the Field the fatal Knight.  
 Mine then are all his Actions of the War,  
 Great *Telephus* was conquer'd by my Spear,  
 And after cur'd: To me the *Thebans* owe,  
*Lebos*, and *Tenedos*, their Overthrow;  
*Syros* and *Cylla*! Not on all to dwell,  
 By me *Lyrnessus* and strong *Chrysa* fell:  
 And since I sent the Man who *Hector* slew,  
 To me the noble *Nector's* Death is due:  
 Those Arms I put into his living Hand,  
 Those Arms, *Pelides* dead, I now demand.



When *Greece* was injur'd in the *Spartan* Prince,  
And met at *Aulis* to avenge th' Offence,  
'Twas a dead Calm, or adverse Blasts, that reign'd,  
And in the Port the Wind-bound Fleet detain'd:  
Bad Signs were seen, and Oracles severe  
Were daily thunder'd in our Gen'ral's Ear;  
That by his Daughter's Blood we must appease  
*Diana's* kindled Wrath, and free the Seas.  
Affection, Int'rest, Fame, his Heart assail'd;  
But soon the Father o'er the King prevail'd:  
Bold, on himself he took the pious Crime,  
As angry with the Gods, as they with him.  
No Subject cou'd sustain their Sov'reign's Look,  
Till this hard Enterprize I undertook:  
I only durst th' Imperial Pow'r controul,  
And undermin'd the Parent in his Soul;  
Forc'd him t'exert the King for common Good,  
And pay our Ransom with his Daughter's Blood.  
Never was Cause more difficult to plead,  
Than where the Judge against himself decreed:  
Yet this I won by dint of Argument;  
The Wrongs his injur'd Brother underwent,  
And his own Office, sham'd him to consent.



'Twas harder yet to move the Mother's Mind,  
And to this heavy Task was I design'd:  
Reasons against her Love I knew were vain;  
I circumvented whom I could not gain:  
Had *Ajax* been employ'd, our slacken'd Sails  
Had still at *Aulis* waited happy Gales.

Arriv'd at *Troy*, your Choice was fix'd on me,  
A fearless Envoy, fit for a bold Embassy:  
Secure, I enter'd through the hostile Court,  
Glitt'ring with Steel, and crowded with Resort:  
There, in the midst of Arms, I plead our Cause,  
Urge the foul Rape, and violated Laws;  
Accuse the Foes, as Authors of the Strife,  
Reproach the Ravisher, demand the Wife.  
*Priam*, *Antenor*, and the wiser few,  
I mov'd; but *Paris* and his lawless Crew  
Scarce held their Hands, and lifted Swords;

But stood  
In Act to quench their impious Thirst of Blood:  
This *Menelaus* knows; expos'd to share  
With me the rough Preludium of the War.

Endless it were to tell what I have done,  
In Arms, or Council, since the Siege begun:

The first Encounter's past, the Foe repell'd,  
 They skulk'd within the Town, we kept the Field.  
 War seem'd asleep for nine long Years, at length  
 Both Sides resolv'd to push, we try'd our Strength.  
 Now what did *Ajax* while our Arms took Breath,  
 Vers'd only in the gross mechanick Trade of Death?  
 If you require my Deeds, with ambush'd Arms  
 I trapp'd the Foe, or tir'd with false Alarms;  
 Secur'd the Ships, drew Lines along the Plain,  
 The Fainting cheer'd, chastis'd the Rebel-train,  
 Provided Forage, our spent Arms renew'd;  
 Employ'd at home, or sent abroad, the common  
 Cause pursu'd.

The King, deluded in a Dream by *Jove*,  
 Despair'd to take the Town, and order'd to remove.  
 What Subject durst arraign the Pow'r Supream,  
 Producing *Jove* to justify his Dream?  
*Ajax* might with the Soldiers to retain  
 From shameful Flight, but Wishes were in vain:  
 As wanting of Effect had been his Words,  
 Such as of Course his thundering Tongue affords.

But did this Boaster threaten, did he pray,  
 Or by his own Example urge their Stay?  
 None, none of these, but ran himself away.  
 I saw him run, and was asham'd to see;  
 Who ply'd his Feet so fast to get aboard as He?  
 Then speeding through the Place, I made a stand,  
 And loudly cry'd, O base, degenerate Band,  
 To leave a Town already in your Hand!  
 After so long Expende of Blood, for Fame,  
 To bring home nothing but perpetual Shame!  
 These Words, or what I have forgotten since,  
 (For Grief inspir'd me then with Eloquence)  
 Reduc'd their Minds, they leave the crowded Port,  
 And to their late forsaken Camp resort:  
 Dismay'd the Council met: This Man was there,  
 But mute, and not recover'd of his Fear:  
*Thersites* tax'd the King, and loudly rail'd,  
 But his wide opening Mouth with Blows I seal'd.  
 Then, rising, I excite their Souls to Fame,  
 And kindle sleeping Virtue into Flame.  
 From thence, whatever he perform'd in Fight  
 Is justly mine, who drew him back from Flight.

Which of the *Grecian* Chiefs confor<sup>t</sup>s with Thee?  
 But *Diomedes* desires my Company,  
 And still communicates his Praise with me.  
 As guided by a God, secure he goes,  
 Arm'd with my Fellowship, amid the Foes;  
 And sure no little Merit I may boast,  
 Whom such a Man selects from such an Host;  
 Unforc'd by Lots I went without affright,  
 To dare with him the Dangers of the Night:  
 On the same Errand sent, we met the Spy  
 Of *Hector*, double-tongu'd, and us'd to lie;  
 Him I dispatch'd, but not till undermin'd,  
 Idrew him first to tell what treach'rous *Troy* de-  
 sign'd:

My Task perform'd, with Praise I had retir'd,  
 But not content with this, to greater Praise aspir'd.  
 Invaded *Rhesus*, and his *Thracian* Crew,  
 And him, and his, in their own Strength I slew:  
 Return'd a Victor all my Vows compleat,  
 With the King's Chariot, in his Royal Seat:  
 Refuse me now his Arms, whose fiery Steeds  
 Where promis'd to the Spy for his Nocturnal Deeds:

And let dull *Ajax* bear away my Right,  
When all his Days out-balance this one Night.

Nor fought I Darkling still: The Sun beheld  
With slaughter'd *Lycians* when I strew'd the Field:  
You saw, and counted as I pass'd along,  
*Alastor*, *Cromyus*, *Ceranos* the Strong,  
*Alcander*, *Prytanis*, and *Halius*,  
*Noemon*, *Charopes*, and *Ennomus*;  
*Choon*, *Chersidamas*; and five beside,  
Men of obscure Descent, but Courage try'd:  
All these this Hand laid breathless on the Ground;  
Nor want I Proofs of many a manly Wound:  
All honest, all before: Believe not me;  
Words may deceive, but credit what you see.

At this he bar'd his Breast, and show'd his Scars,  
As of a furrow'd Field, well plough'd with Wars;  
Nor is this Part unexercis'd, said he;  
That Gyant-bulk of his from Wounds is free:  
Safe in his Shield he fears no Foe to try,  
And better manages his Blood than I:  
But this avails me not; our Boaster strove  
Not with our Foes alone, but partial *Jove*,

To save the Fleet: This I confess is true,  
(Nor will I take from any Man his due:)  
But thus assuming all, he robs from you.  
Some part of Honour to your share will fall,  
He did the best indeed, but did not all.  
*Patroclus* in *Achilles*' Arms, and thought  
The Chief he seem'd, with equal Ardour fought;  
Preserv'd the Fleet, repell'd the raging Fire,  
And forc'd the fearful *Trojans* to retire.

But *Ajax* boasts, that he was only thought  
A Match for *Hector*, who the Combat fought:  
Sure he forgets the King, the Chiefs, and Me:  
All were as eager for the Fight as He:  
He but the ninth, and not by publick Voice,  
Or ours preferr'd, was only Fortune's Choice:  
They fought; nor can our Hero boast th' Event,  
For *Hector* from the Field unwounded went.

Why am I forc'd to name that fatal Day,  
That snatch'd the Prop and Pride of *Greece* away?  
I saw *Pelides* sink: With pious Grief,  
And ran in vain, alas! to his Relief;  
For the brave Soul was fled: Full of my Friend  
I rush'd amid the War, his Relicks to defend:

Nor ceas'd my Toil till I redeem'd the Prey,  
And, loaded with *Achilles*, march'd away:  
Those Arms, which on these Shoulders then I bore,  
'Tis just you to these Shoulders should restore.  
You see I want not Nerves, who cou'd sustain  
The pond'rous Ruins of so great a Man:  
Or if in others equal Force you find,  
None is endu'd with a more grateful Mind.

Did *Thetis* then, ambitious in her Care,  
These Arms thus labour'd for her Son prepare;  
That *Ajax* after him the heav'nly Gift shou'd wear! }  
For that dull Soul to stare, with stupid Eyes,  
On the learn'd unintelligible Prize!

What are to him the Sculptures of the Shield,  
Heav'n's Planets, Earth, and Ocean's watry Field?  
The *Pleiads*, *Hyads*; less, and greater *Bear*,  
Undipp'd in Seas; *Orion's* angry Star;  
Two diff'ring Cities, grav'd on either Hand;  
Would he wear Arms he cannot understand?

Beside, what wise Objections he prepares  
Against my late Accession to the Wars?  
Does not the Fool perceive his Argument  
Is with more Force against *Achilles* bent?



For if Dissembling be so great a Crime,  
The Fault is common, and the same in him:  
And if he taxes both of long delay,  
My Guilt is less, who sooner came away.  
His pious Mother, anxious for his Life,  
Detain'd her Son ; and me, my pious Wife.  
To them the Blossoms of our Youth were due,  
Our riper Manhood we reserv'd for you.  
But grant me guilty, 'tis not much my Care,  
When with so great a Man my Guilt I share:  
My Wit to War the matchless Hero brought,  
But by this Fool I never had been caught.

Nor need I wonder, that on me he threw  
Such foul Aspersions, when he spares not you:  
If *Palamede* unjustly fell by me,  
Your Honour suffer'd in th' unjust Decree:  
I but accus'd, you doom'd: And yet he dy'd,  
Convinc'd of Treason, and we's fairly try'd:  
You heard not he was false; Your Eyes beheld  
The Traytor manifest; the Bribe reveal'd.

That *Philoctetes* is on *Lemnos* left,  
Wounded, forlorn, of human Aid bereft,

Is not my Crime, or not my Crime alone;  
 Defend your Justice, for the Fact's your own:  
 'Tis true, th' Advice was mine; that staying there  
 He might his weary Limbs with Rest repair,  
 From a long Voyage free, and from a longer War.  
 He took the Counsel, and he lives at least;  
 Th' Event declares I counsell'd for the best:  
 Though Faith is all, in Ministers of State;  
 For who can promise to be fortunate?  
 Now since his Arrows are the Fate of *Troy*,  
 Do not my Wit, or weak Address, employ;  
 Send *Ajax* there, with his persuasive Sense,  
 To mollifie the Man, and draw him thence:  
 But *Xanthus* shall run backward; *Ida* stand  
 A leafless Mountain; and the *Grecian* Band  
 Shall fight for *Troy*; if, when my Counsel fail,  
 The Wit of heavy *Ajax* can prevail.

Hard *Philoctetes*, exercise thy Spleen  
 Against thy Fellow, and the King of Men;  
 Curse my devoted Head, above the rest,  
 And wish in Arms to meet me Breast to Breast:  
 Yet I the dang'rous Task will undertake,  
 And either die my self, or bring thee back.

Nor doubt the same Success, as when before  
The *Phrygian* Prophet to these Tents I bore,  
Surpriz'd by Night, and forc'd him to declare  
In what was plac'd the Fortune of the War,  
Heav'n's dark Decrees, and Answers to display,  
And how to take the Town, and where the Secret lay:

Yet this I compass'd, and from *Troy* convey'd  
The fatal Image of their Guardian-Maid ;  
That Work was mine ; for *Pallas*, though our  
Friend,

Yet while she was in *Troy* did *Troy* defend.  
Now what has *Ajax* done, or what design'd ?  
A noisie Nothing, and an empty Wind.  
If he be what he promises in Show,  
Why was I sent, and why fear'd he to go ?  
Our boasting Champion thought the Task not light  
To pass the Guards, commit himself to Night ;  
Not only through a hostile Town to pass,  
But scale, with steep Ascent, the sacred Place ;  
With wand'ring Steps to search the Cittadel,  
And from the Priests their Patroness to steal :

Then through surrounding Foes to force my way,  
And bear in Triumph home the heav'nly Prey ;  
Which had I not, *Ajax* in vain had held,  
Before that monstrous Bulk, his sev'nfold Shield.  
That Night to conquer *Troy* I might be said,  
When *Troy* was liable to Conquest made.

Why point'st thou to my Partner of the War ?  
*Tydidēs* had indeed a worthy share  
In all my Toil, and Praise ; but when thy Might  
Our Ships protected, did'st thou singly fight ?  
All join'd, and thou of many wert but one ;  
I ask'd no Friend, nor had, but him alone :  
Who, had he not been well assur'd, that Art  
And Conduct were of War the better part,  
And more avail'd than Strength, my valiant Friend  
Had urg'd a better Right, than *Ajax* can pretend :  
As good at least *Euripylus* may claim,  
And the more moderate *Ajax* of the Name :  
The *Cretan* King, and his brave Charioteer,  
And *Menelaus* bold with Sword and Spear :  
All these had been my Rivals in the Shield,  
And yet all these to my Pretensions yield.

Thy boist'rous Hands are then of use, when I  
With this directing Head those Hands apply.  
Brawn without Brain is thine : My prudent Care  
Foresees, provides, administers the War :  
Thy Province is to Fight ; but when shall be  
The time to Fight, the King consults with me :  
No dram of Judgment with thy Force is join'd ;  
Thy Body is of Profit, and my Mind.

But how much more the Ship her Safety owes  
To him who steers, than him that only rows,  
By how much more the Captain merits Praise  
Than he who fights, and fighting but obeys ;  
But so much greater is my Worth than thine,  
Who canst but execute what I design.

What gain'st thou, brutal Man, if I confess  
Thy Strength superior, when thy Wit is less ?  
Mind is the Man : I claim my whole Desert,  
From the Mind's Vigour, and h' immortal Part.

But you, O *Grecian* Chiefs, reward my Care,  
Be grateful to your Watchman of the War :  
For all my Labours in so long a space,  
Sure I may plead a Title to your Grace :

Enter the Town; I then unbarr'd the Gates,  
 When I remov'd their tutelary Fates.  
 By all our common Hopes, if Hopes they be  
 Which I have now reduc'd to Certainty;  
 By falling *Troy*, by yonder tott'ring Tow'rs,  
 And by their taken Gods, which now are ours;  
 Or if there yet a farther Task remains,  
 To be perform'd by Prudence or by Pains;  
 If yet some desp'rate Action rests behind,  
 That asks high Conduct, and a dauntless Mind;  
 If ought be wanting to the *Trojan* Doom,  
 Which none but I can manage and o'ercome,  
 Award, those Arms I ask, by your Decree:  
 Or give to this what you refuse to me.

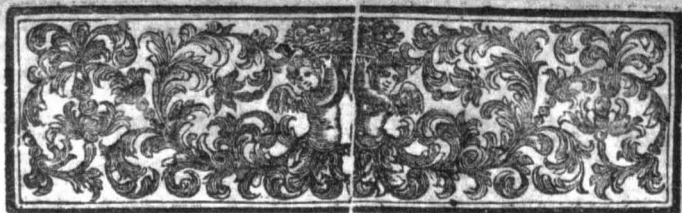
He ceas'd: And ceasing with Respect he bow'd,  
 And with his Hand at once the fatal Statue show'd.  
 Heav'n, Air and Ocean rung, with loud Applause,  
 And by the gen'ral Vote he gain'd his Cause.  
 Thus Conduct won the Prize, when Courage fail'd,  
 And Eloquence o'er brutal Force prevail'd.

*The Death of A J A X.*

He who cou'd often, and alone, withstand  
 The Foe, the Fire, and *Jove's* own partial Hand,  
 Now cannot his unmaster'd Grief sustain,  
 But yields to Rage, to Madness, and Disdain;  
 Then snatching out his Fauchion, Thou, said He,  
 Art mine; *Ulysses* lays no Claim to Thee.  
 O often try'd, and ever trusty Sword,  
 Now do thy last kind Office to thy Lord:  
 'Tis *Ajax* who requests thy Aid, to show  
 None but himself, himself cou'd overthrow:  
 He said, and with so good a Will to die  
 Did to his Breast the fatal Point apply,  
 It found his Heart, a way till then unknown,  
 Where never Weapon enter'd, but his own.  
 No Hands cou'd force it thence, so fix'd it stood,  
 Till out it rush'd, expell'd by Streams of spouting  
 Blood.

The fruitful Blood produc'd a Flow'r, which grew  
 On a green Stem; and of a Purple Hue:  
 Like his, whom unaware *Apollo* flew:  
 Inscib'd in both, the Letters are the same,  
 But those express the Grief, and these the Name.

THE



THE  
Wife of *BATH*  
HER  
T A L E.



IN Days of Old, when *Arthur* fill'd  
the Throne,  
Whose Acts and Fame to foreign  
Lands were blown;  
The King of Elfs and little Fairy Queen  
Gamboll'd on Heaths, and danc'd on ev'ry Green.



And where the jolly Troop had led the Round,  
The Grass unbidden rose, and mark'd the Ground:  
Nor darkling did they dance, the Silver Light  
Of *Phæbe* serv'd to guide their Steps aright, [Night.  
And, with their Tripping pleas'd, prolong'd the  
Her Beams they follow'd, where at full she plaid,  
Nor longer than she shed her Horns they staid,  
From thence with airy Flight to Foreign Lands  
convey'd.

Above the rest our *Britain* held they dear,  
More solemnly they kept their Sabbaths here,  
And made more spacious Rings, and revell'd  
half the Year.

I speak of ancient Times, for now the Swain  
Returning late may pass the Woods in vain,  
And never hope to see the nightly Train:  
In vain the Dairy now with Mints is dress'd,  
The Dairy-Maid expects no Fairy Guest,  
To skim the Bowls, and after pay the Feast.  
She sighs and shakes her empty Shoes in vain,  
No Silver Penny to reward her Pain:

For Priests with Pray'rs, and other godly Geer,  
Have made the merry Goblins disappear;  
And where they plaid their merry Pranks before,  
Have sprinkled Holy Water on the Floor:  
And Fry'rs that through the wealthy Regions run  
Thick as the Motes, that twinkle in the Sun;  
Resort to Farmers rich, and bless their Halls,  
And exorcise the Beds, and cross the Walls:  
This makes the Fairy Quires forsake the Place,  
When once 'tis hallow'd with the Rites of Grace:  
But in the Walks where wicked Elves have been,  
The Learning of the Parish now is seen,  
The Midnight Parson posting o'er the Green  
With Gown tuck'd up to Wakes; for *Sunday* next,  
With humming Ale encouraging his Text;  
Nor wants the holy Leer to Country-Girl betwixt.  
From Fiends and Imps he sets the Village free,  
There haunts not any Incubus, but He.  
The Maids and Women need no Danger fear  
To walk by Night, and Sanctity so near:  
For by some Haycock, or some shady Thorn,  
He bids his Beads both Even-song and Morn.

It so befel in this King *Arthur's* Reign,  
A lusty Knight was pricking o'er the Plain;  
A Batchelor he was, and of the courtly Train. }  
It happen'd as he rode, a Damsel gay  
In Ruffet-Robes to Market took her Way;  
Soon on the Girl he cast an amorous Eye,  
So strait she walk'd, and on her Pasterns high:  
If seeing her behind he lik'd her Pace,  
Now turning short he better lik'd her Face:  
He lights in haste, and, full of youthful Fire,  
By Force accomplish'd his obscene Desire:  
This done away he rode, not unesp'y'd,  
For swarming at his Back the Country cry'd;  
And once in view they never lost the Sight,  
But seiz'd, and pinion'd brought to Court the Knight.

Then Courts of Kings were held in high renown,  
Ere made the common Brothels of the Town:  
There, Virgins honourable Vows receiv'd,  
But chaste as Maids in Monasteries liv'd:  
The King himself, to Nuptial Ties a Slave,  
No bad Example to his Poets gave:  
And they not bad, but in a vicious Age,  
Had not to please the Prince debauch'd the Stage.

Now what shou'd *Arthur* do? He lov'd the Knight,  
But Sovereign Monarchs are the Source of Right:  
Mov'd by the Damsel's Tears and common Cry,  
He doom'd the brutal Ravisher to die.

But fair *Geneura* rose in his Defence,  
And pray'd so hard for Mercy from the Prince;  
That to his Queen the King th' Offender gave,  
And left it in her Pow'r to Kill or Save:

This gracious Act the Ladies all approve,  
Who thought it much a Man shou'd die for Love.

And with their Mistresses join'd in close Debate,  
(Covering their Kindness with dissembled Hate;)

If not to free him, to prolong his Fate.

At last agreed they call'd him by consent  
Before the Queen and Female Parliament.

And the fair Speaker rising from her Chair,  
Did thus the Judgment of the House declare.

Sir Knight, tho' I have ask'd thy Life, yet still  
Thy Destiny depends upon my Will:

Nor hast thou other Surety than the Grace  
Not due to thee from our offended Race.

But as our Kind is of a softer Mold,  
And cannot Blood without a Sigh behold,

I grant thee Life; reserving still the Pow'r  
To take the Forfeit when I see my Hour:  
Unless thy Answer to my next Demand  
Shall set Thee free from our avenging Hand;  
The Question, whose Solution I require,  
*Is what the Sex of Women most desire?*  
In this Dispute thy Judges are at Strife;  
Beware; for on thy Wit depends thy Life.  
Yet (lest surpriz'd, unknowing what to say  
Thou damn thy self) we give thee farther Day:  
A Year is thine to wander at thy Will;  
And learn from others, if thou want'st the Skill.  
But, not to hold our Proffer turn'd in Scorn,  
Good Sureties will we have for thy Return;  
That at the Time prefix'd thou shalt obey,  
And at thy Pledges Peril keep thy Day.

Woe was the Knight at this severe Command!  
But well he knew 'twas bootless to withstand:  
The Terms accepted as the Fair ordain,  
He put in Bail for his Return again.  
And promis'd Answer at the Day assign'd,  
The best, with Heav'n's Assistance, he cou'd find.

His Leave thus taken, on his Way he went  
With heavy Heart, and full of Discontent,  
Misdoubting much, and fearful of th' Event.  
'Twas hard the Truth of such a Point to find,  
As was not yet agreed among the Kind.  
Thus on he went; still anxious more and more,  
Ask'd all he met, and knock'd at ev'ry Door;  
Enquir'd of Men; but made his chief Request  
To learn from Women what they lov'd the best.  
They answer'd each according to her Mind  
To please her self, not all the Female Kind.  
One was for Wealth, another was for Place:  
Crones, old and ugly, wish'd a better Face.  
The Widow's Wish was oftentimes to Wed;  
The wanton Maids were all for Sport a-Bed.  
Some said the Sex were pleas'd with handsom Lies,  
And some gross Flatt'ry lov'd without disguise:  
Truth is, says one, he seldom fails to win  
Who Flatters well, for that's our darling Sin.  
But long Attendance, and a duteous Mind,  
Will work ev'n with the wisest of the Kind.  
One thought the Sexes prime Felicity  
Was from the Bonds of Wedlock to be free:

Their Pleasures, Hours, and Actions all their own,  
And uncontroll'd to give Account to none.

Some with a Husband-Fool; but such are curst,  
For Fools perverse, of Husbands are the worst:  
All Women wou'd be counted Chast and Wife,  
Nor should our Spouses see, but with our Eyes;  
For Fools will prate; and tho' they want the Wit  
To find close Faults, yet open Bolts will hit:  
Tho' better for their Ease to hold their Tongue;  
For Womankind was never in the Wrong.

So Noise ensues, and Quarrels last for Life;  
The Wife abhors the Fool, the Fool the Wife.  
And some Men say that great Delight have we,  
To be for Truth extoll'd, and Secrecy:  
And constant in one Purpose still to dwell;  
And not our Husband's Counsels to reveal.  
But that's a Fable; for our Sex is frail,  
Inventing rather than not tell a Tale.  
Like leaky Sives no Secrets we can hold;  
Witness the famous Tale that *Ovid* told.

*Midas* the King, as in his Book appears,  
By *Phœbus* was endow'd with Asses Ears,



Which under his long Locks he well conceal'd,  
(As Monarchs Vices must not be reveal'd)  
For fear the People have 'em in the Wind,  
Who long ago were neither Dumb nor Blind;  
Nor apt to think from Heav'n their Title springs,  
Since *Jove* and *Mars* left off begetting Kings.  
This *Midas* knew; and durst communicate  
To none but to his Wife, his Ears of State:  
One must be trusted, and he thought her fit,  
As passing prudent; and a parlous Wit.  
To this sagacious Confessor he went,  
And told her what a Gift the Gods had sent;  
But told it under Matrimonial Seal,  
With strict Injunction never to reveal.  
The Secret heard, she plighted him her Troth,  
(And sacred sure is every Woman's Oath)  
The Royal Malady should rest unknown,  
Both for her Husband's Honour and her own:  
But ne'ertheless she pin'd with Discontent;  
The Counsel rumbled till it found a vent.  
The Thing she knew she was oblig'd to hide;  
By Int'rest and by Oath the Wife was ty'd;  
But if she told it not the Woman dy'd.



Loth to betray a Husband and a Prince,  
But she must burst, or blab; and no Pretence }  
Of Honour ty'd her Tongue from Self-defence. }  
A marshy Ground commodiously was near,  
Thither she ran, and held her breath for fear,  
Lest if a Word she spoke of any Thing,  
That Word might be the Secret of the King.  
Thus full of Counsel to the Fen she went,  
Grip'd all the way, and longing for a Vent:  
Arriv'd, by pure Necessity compell'd,  
On her majestick Mary-bones she kneel'd:  
Then to the Waters-brink she laid her Head,  
And, as a Bittour bumps within a Reed,  
To thee alone, O Lake, she said, I tell  
(And as thy Queen command thee to conceal)  
Beneath his Locks the King my Husband wears  
A goodly Royal pair of Asses Ears:  
Now I have eas'd my Bosom of the Pain,  
Till the next longing Fit return again!

Thus through a Woman was the Secret known;  
Tell us, and in effect you tell the Town:  
But to my Tale: The Knight with heavy Cheer,  
Wandering in vain had now consum'd the Year:

One Day was only left to solve the Doubt,  
Yet knew no more than when he first set out.  
But home he must: And, as th' Award had been,  
Yield up his Body Captive to the Queen.  
In this despairing State he hap'd to ride,  
As Fortune led him, by a Forest-side:  
Lonely the Vale, and full of Horror stood  
Brown' with the Shade of a religious Wood:  
When full before him at the Noon of Night,  
(The Moon was up and shot a gleamy Light)  
He saw a Quire of Ladies in a round,  
That featly footing seem'd to skim the Ground:  
Thus dancing Hand in Hand, so light they were,  
He knew not where they trod, on Earth or Air.  
At speed he drove, and came a sudden Guest,  
In hope where many Women were, at least,  
Some one by chance might answer his Request.  
But faster than his Horse the Ladies flew,  
And in a trice were vanish'd out of view.

One only Hag remain'd: But fowler far  
Than Grandame Apes in *Indian* Forests are:

Against a wither'd Oak she lean'd her weight,  
Prop'd on her trusty Staff, not half upright,  
And drop'd an awkward Court'sie to the Knight. }

Then said, What make you Sir so late abroad  
Without a Guide, and this no beaten Road?

Or want you ought that here you hope to find,  
Or travel for some Trouble in your Mind?

The last I guess; and, if I read aright,

Those of our Sex are bound to serve a Knight:  
Perhaps good Counsel may your Grief assuage,  
Then tell your Pain: For Wisdom is in Age.

To this the Knight: Good Mother, wou'd you  
know

The secret Cause and Spring of all my Woe?

My Life must with to-Morrow's Light expire,  
Unless I tell, what Women most desire:

Now cou'd you help me at this hard Essay,

Or for your inborn Goodness, or for Pay;

Yours is my Life, redeem'd by your Advice,

Ask what you please, and I will pay the Price:

The proudest Kerchief of the Court shall rest

Well satisfied of what they love the best.

Plight me thy Faith, quoth she, That what I ask,  
Thy Danger over, and perform'd the Task;  
That shalt thou give for Hire of thy Demand,  
Here take thy Oath; and seal it on my Hand;  
I warrant thee, on Peril of my Life,

[Wife.

Thy Word shall please both Widow, Maid and

More Words there needed not to move the Knight  
To take her Offer, and his Truth to plight.

With that she spread her Mantle on the Ground,  
And, first enquiring whither he was bound,

Bade him not fear, tho' long and rough the Way,  
At Court he should arrive ere break of Day:

His Horse should find the way without a Guide.

She said: With Fury they began to ride,

He on the midst, the Beldam at his Side.

The Horse, what Devil drove I cannot tell,

But only this, they sped their Journey well:

And all the way the Crone inform'd the Knight,  
How he should answer the Demand aright.

To Court they came: The News was quickly  
Of his returning to redeem his Head. [spread

The Female Senate was assembled soon,

With all the Mob of Women in the Town:

The Queen fate Lord Chief Justice of the Hall,  
And bad the Cryer cite the Criminal.

The Knight appear'd; and Silence they proclaim,  
Then first the *Culprit* answer'd to his Name:  
And after Forms of Laws, was last requir'd  
To name the Thing that Women most desir'd.

Th' Offender, taught his Lesson by the way,  
And by his Counsel order'd what to say,  
Thus bold began; My Lady Liege, said he,  
What all your Sex desire is *Sovereignty*.

The Wife affects her Husband to command,  
All must be hers, both Mony, House, and Land.  
The Maids are Mistresses ev'n in their Name;  
And of their Servants full Dominion claim.

This, at the Peril of my Head, I say,  
A blunt plain Truth, the Sex aspires to sway, }  
You to rule all; while we, like Slaves, obey. }

There was not one, or Widow, Maid, or Wife,  
But said the Knight had well deserv'd his Life.

Ev'n fair *Geneura*, with a Blush, confess'd  
The Man had found what Women love the Best.

Upstarts the Beldam, who was there unseen,  
And Reverence made, accosted thus the Queen.

My Liege, said she, before the Court arise,  
May I poor Wretch find Favour in your Eyes:  
To grant my just Request: 'Twas I who taught  
The Knight this Answer, and inspir'd his Thought.  
None but a Woman could a Man direct  
To tell us Women, what we most affect.  
But first I swore him on his Knightly Troth,  
(And here demand Performance of his Oath)  
To grant the Boon that next I should desire;  
He gave his Faith, and I expect my Hire:  
My Promise is fulfill'd: I sav'd his Life,  
And claim his Debt to take me for his Wife.  
The Knight was ask'd, nor cou'd his Oath deny,  
But hop'd they would not force him to comply.  
The Women, who would rather wrest the Laws,  
Than let a Sister-Plaintiff lose the Cause,  
(As Judges on the Bench more gracious are,  
And more attent to Brothers of the Bar)  
Cry'd, one and all, the Suppliant should have Right,  
And to the Grandame-Hag adjudg'd the Knight.  
In vain he sigh'd, and oft with Tears desir'd,  
Some reasonable Sute might be requir'd.

But still the Crone was constant to her Note;  
 The more he spoke, the more she stretch'd her  
 In vain he proffer'd all his Goods, to save [Throat.  
 His Body, destin'd to that living Grave.

The liquorish Hag rejects the Pelf with Scorn:  
 And nothing but the Man would serve her turn.  
 Not all the Wealth of Eastern Kings, said she,  
 Have Pow'r to part my plighted Love, and me;  
 And Old, and Ugly as I am, and Poor;  
 Yet never will I break the Faith I swore;  
 For mine thou art by Promise, during Life,  
 And I thy loving and obedient Wife.

My Love! Nay rather my Damnation Thou,  
 Said he: Nor am I bound to keep my Vow:  
 The Fiend thy Sire has sent thee from below,  
 Else how could'st thou my secret Sorrows know?  
 Avaunt old Witch, for I renounce thy Bed:  
 The Queen may take the Forfeit of my Head,  
 Ere any of my Race so foul a Crone shall wed. }

Both heard, the Judge pronounc'd against the  
 So was he Marry'd in his own despite; [Knight;

And



And all Day after hid him as an Owl,  
Not able to sustain a Sight so foul.  
Perhaps the Reader thinks I do him wrong,  
To pass the Marriage-Feast, and Nuptial Song:  
Mirth there was none, the Man was *a-la-mort*:  
And little Courage had to make his Court.  
To Bed they went, the Bridegroom and the Bride:  
Was never such an ill-pair'd Couple ty'd.  
Restless he toss'd and tumbled to and fro,  
And rowl'd, and wriggled further off, for Woe.  
The good old Wife lay smiling by his Side,  
And caught him in her quiv'ring Arms, and cry'd,  
When you my ravish'd Predecessor saw,  
You were not then become this Man of Straw;  
Had you been such, you might have escap'd the Law.  
Is this the Custom of King *Arthur's* Court?  
Are all Round-Table Knights of such a sort?  
Remember I am she who sav'd your Life,  
Your loving, lawful, and complying Wife:  
Not thus you swore in your unhappy Hour,  
Nor I for this Return employ'd my Pow'r.



In time of Need I was your faithful Friend;  
Nor did I since, nor ever will, offend.  
Believe me, my lov'd Lord, 'tis much unkind;  
What Fury has possess'd your alter'd Mind?  
Thus on my Wedding-night—Without Pretence—  
Come turn this way, or tell me my Offence.  
If not your Wife, let Reason's Rule persuade,  
Name but my Fault, Amends shall soon be made.

Amends! Nay that's impossible, said he,  
What Change of Age or Ugliness can be!  
Or, could *Medea's* Magick mend thy Face,  
Thou art descended from so mean a Race,  
That never Knight was match'd with such Disgrace. }  
What Wonder, Madam, if I move my Side,  
When, if I turn, I turn to such a Bride?

And is this all that troubles you so fore!  
And what the Devil cou'dst thou wish me more?  
Ah *Benedicite*, reply'd the Crone:  
Then Cause of just Complaining have you none.  
The Remedy to this were soon apply'd,  
Wou'd you be like the Bridegroom to the Bride.  
But, for you say a long descended Race,  
And Wealth, and Dignity, and Pow'r, and Place,

Make Gentlemen, and that your high Degree  
Is much disparag'd to be match'd with me;  
Know this, my Lord, Nobility of Blood  
Is but a glitt'ring and fallacious Good:  
The Nobleman is he whose noble Mind [Kind.  
Is fill'd with inborn Worth, unborrow'd from his  
The King of Heav'n was in a Manger laid;  
And took his Earth but from an humble Maid:  
Then what can Birth, or mortal Men, bestow?  
Since Floods no higher than their Fountains flow.  
We, who for Name and empty Honour strive,  
Our true Nobility from him derive.  
Your Ancestors, who puff your Mind with Pride,  
And vast Estates to mighty Titles ty'd,  
Did not your Honour, but their own, advance;  
For Virtue comes not by Inheritance.  
If you tralineate from your Father's Mind,  
What are you else but of a Bastard-kind?  
Do, as your great Progenitors have done,  
And by their Virtues prove your self their Son.  
No Father can infuse, or Wit, or Grace,  
A Mother comes across, and marrs the Race.

A Grandfire, or a Grandame, taints the Blood;  
And seldom three Descents continue Good.  
Were Virtue by Descent, a noble Name  
Cou'd never villanize his Father's Fame:  
But, as the first, the last of all the Line,  
Wou'd like the Sun ev'n in Descending shine.  
Take Fire; and bear it to the darkeſt Houſe,  
Betwixt King *Arthur's* Court and *Caucasus*,  
If you depart, the Flame ſhall ſtill remain,  
And the bright Blaze enlighten all the Plain:  
Nor, till the Fewel periſh, can decay,  
By Nature form'd on Things combuſtible to prey.  
Such is not Man, who mixing better Seed  
With worſe, begets a baſe degen'rate Breed:  
The Bad corrupts the Good, and leaves behind  
No Trace of all the great Begetter's Mind.  
The Father ſinks within his Son, we ſee,  
And often riſes in the third Degree;  
If better Luck, a better Mother give:  
Chance gave us Being, and by Chance we live.  
Such as our Atoms were, ev'n ſuch are we,  
Or call it Chance, or ſtrong Neceſſity,  
Thus, loaded with dead weight, the Will is free. }

And thus it needs must be: For Seed conjoin'd  
Lets into Nature's Work th' imperfect Kind:  
But Fire, th' Enliv'ner of the general Frame,  
Is one, its Operation still the same.  
Its Principle is in it self: While ours  
Works, as Confederates War, with mingled Pow'rs:  
Or Man, or Woman, whichsoever fails:  
And, oft, the Vigour of the Worse prevails.  
*Æther* with Sulphur blended alters Hue,  
And casts a dusky Gleam of *Sodom* blue.  
Thus in a Brute, their ancient Honour ends,  
And the fair Mermaid in a Fish descends:  
The Line is gone; no longer Duke or Earl;  
But, by himself degraded, turns a Churl.  
Nobility of Blood is but Renown  
Of thy great Fathers by their Virtue known,  
And a long trail of Light, to thee descending down. }  
If in thy Smoke it ends: Their Glories shine;  
But Infamy and Villanage are thine.  
Then what, I said before is plainly show'd,  
That true Nobility proceeds from God:  
Not left us by Inheritance, but giv'n  
By Bounty of our Stars, and Grace of Heav'n.

Thus from a Captive *Servius Tullus* rose,  
Whom for his Virtues the first *Romans* chose:  
*Fabritius* from their Walls repell'd the Foe,  
Whose noble Hands had exercis'd the Plough.  
From hence, my Lord, and Love, I thus conclude,  
That tho' my homely Ancestors were rude,  
Mean as I am, yet I may have the Grace  
To make you Father of a generous Race  
And Noble then am I, when I begin,  
In Virtue cloath'd, to cast the Rags of Sin:  
If Poverty be my upbraided Crime,  
And you believe in Heav'n, there was a time  
When He, the great Controller of our Fate,  
Deign'd to be Man, and liv'd in low Estate:  
Which he who had the World at his dispose,  
If Poverty were Vice, wou'd never chuse.  
Philosophers have said, and Poets sing,  
That a glad Poverty's an honest Thing.  
Content is Wealth, the Riches of the Mind;  
And happy He who can that Treasure find.  
But the base Miser starves amidst his Store,  
Broods on his Gold, and griping still at more,  
Sits sadly pining, and believes he's Poor.

The ragged Beggar, tho' he wants Relief,  
Has not to lose, and sings before the Thief.  
Want is a bitter and a hateful Good,  
Because its Virtues are not understood :  
Yet many Things, impossible to Thought,  
Have been by Need to full Perfection brought :  
The daring of the Soul proceeds from thence,  
Sharpness of Wit, and active Diligence :  
Prudence at once, and Fortitude, it gives,  
And, if in Patience taken, mends our Lives ;  
For ev'n that Indigence that brings me low,  
Makes me my self, and Him above, to know.  
A Good which none would challenge, few wou'd  
A fair Possession, which Mankind refuse. [chuse,

If we from Wealth to Poverty descend,  
Want gives to know the Flatt'rer from the Friend.  
If I am Old and Ugly, well for you,  
No leud Adult'rer will my Love pursue.  
Nor Jealousie, the Bane of Marry'd Life,  
Shall haunt you, for a wither'd homely Wife :  
For Age, and Uglinefs, as all agree,  
Are the best Guards of Female Chastity.

Yet since I see your Mind is Worldly bent,  
I'll do my best to further your Content.  
And therefore of two Gifts in my Dispose,  
Think ere you speak, I grant you leave to chuse :  
Wou'd you I should be still Deform'd, and Old,  
Nauseous to Touch, and Loathsome to Behold ;  
On this Condition, to remain for Life  
A careful, tender and obedient Wife,  
In all I can contribute to your Ease,  
And not in Deed, or Word, or Thought, displease ?  
Or would you rather have me Young and Fair,  
And take the Chance that happens to your Share ?  
Temptations are in Beauty, and in Youth,  
And how can you depend upon my Truth ?  
Now weigh the Danger, with the doubtful Bliss,  
And thank your self, if ought should fall amiss.

Sore sigh'd the Knight, who this long Sermon  
heard :

At length, considering all, his Heart he chear'd ;  
And thus reply'd : My Lady, and my Wife,  
To your wife Conduct I resign my Life :  
Chuse you for me, for well you understand  
The future Good and Ill, on either Hand :



But if an humble Husband may request,  
Provide, and order all Things for the best;  
Your's be the Care to profit, and to please:  
And let your Subject-Servant take his Ease.

Then thus in Peace, quoth she, concludes the Strife,  
Since I am turn'd the Husband, you the Wife:  
The Matrimonial Victory is mine,  
Which, having fairly gain'd, I will resign;  
Forgive, if I have said, or done amiss,  
And seal the Bargain with a Friendly Kiss:  
I promis'd you but one Content to share,  
But now I will become both Good, and Fair.  
No Nuptial Quarrel shall disturb your Ease,  
The Business of my Life shall be to please:  
And for my Beauty that, as Time shall try;  
But draw the Curtain first, and cast your Eye.

He look'd, and saw a Creature heav'nly Fair,  
In bloom of Youth, and of a charming Air.  
With Joy he turn'd, and seiz'd her Iv'ry Arm;  
And, like *Pygmalion*; found the Statue warm.  
Small Arguments there needed to prevail,  
A Storm of Kisses pour'd as thick as Hail.



Thus long in mutual Blifs they lay embrac'd,  
And their first Love continu'd to the last:  
One Sun-shine was their Life; no Cloud between;  
Nor ever was a kinder Couple seen.

And so may all our Lives like theirs be led;  
Heav'n send the Maids young Husbands, fresh in  
May Widows wed as often as they can, [Bed:  
And ever for the better change their Man.  
And some devouring Plague pursue their Lives,  
Who will not well be govern'd by their Wives.





OF THE  
*Pythagorean* Philosophy.

From the Fifteenth Book of

OVID'S *Metamorphoses*.

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*The Fourteenth Book concludes with the Death and Deification of Romulus: The Fifteenth begins with the Election of Numa to the Crown of Rome. On this Occasion, Ovid, following the Opinion of some Authors, makes Numa the Scholar of Pythagoras; and to have begun his Acquaintance with that Philosopher at Crotona, a Town in Italy; from thence he makes a Digression to the Moral and Natural Philosophy of Pythagoras: On both which our Author enlarges; and which are the most learned and beautiful Parts of the whole Metamorphoses.*



King is fought to guide the grow-  
 ing State, [Weight,  
 One able to support the Publick  
 And fill the Throne where *Romulus*  
*lus* had fate.]

Renown, which oft bespeaks the Publick Voice,  
 Had recommended *Numa* to their Choice:  
 A peaceful, pious Prince; who not content  
 To know the *Sabine* Rites, his Study bent  
 To cultivate his Mind: To learn the Laws  
 Of Nature, and explore their hidden Cause.  
 Urg'd by this Care, his Country he forfook,  
 And to *Crotona* thence his Journey took.  
 Arriv'd, he first enquir'd the Founder's Name  
 Of this new Colony; and whence he came.  
 Then thus a Senior of the Place replies,  
 (Well read, and curious of Antiquities)  
 'Tis said; *Alcides* hither took his way  
 From *Spain*, and drove along his conquer'd Prey;  
 Then, leaving in the Fields his grazing Cows,  
 He fought himself some hospitable House:

Good *Croton* entertain'd his Godlike Guest;  
While he repair'd his weary Limbs with Rest.  
The Hero, thence departing, blest'd the Place;  
And here, he said, in Time's revolving Race,  
A rising Town shall take his Name from thee;  
Revolving Time fulfill'd the Prophecy:  
For *Myselos*, the justest Man on Earth,  
*Alemon's* Son, at *Argos* had his Birth:  
Him *Hercules*, arm'd with his Club of Oak,  
O'ershadow'd in a Dream, and thus bespoke;  
Go, leave thy Native Soil, and make Abode  
Where *Æsaris* rows down his rapid Flood: }  
He said; and Sleep forsook him, and the God. }  
Trembling he wak'd, and rose with anxious Heart;  
His Country Laws forbade him to depart:  
What shou'd he do? 'Twas Death to go away,  
And the God menac'd if he dar'd to stay:  
All Day he doubted, and when Night came on,  
Sleep, and the same forewarning Dream, begun:  
Once more the God stood threatning o'er his Head;  
With added Curses if he disobey'd. [convey,  
Twice warn'd, he study'd Flight; but wou'd  
At once, his Person and his Wealth away:

478      *Of the Pythagorean Philosophy.*

Thus while he linger'd, his Design was heard;  
A speedy Process form'd, and Death declar'd.  
Witness there needed none of his Offence,  
Against himself the Wretch was Evidence:  
Condemn'd, and destitute of human Aid,  
To him, for whom he suffer'd, thus he pray'd.

O Pow'r who hast deserv'd in Heav'n a Throne  
Not giv'n, but by thy Labours made thy own,  
Pity thy Suppliant, and protect his Cause,  
Whom thou hast made obnoxious to the Laws.

A Custom was of old, and still remains;  
Which Life or Death by Suffrages ordains;  
White Stones and Black within an Urn are cast,  
The first absolve, but Fate is in the last.  
The Judges to the common Urn bequeath  
Their Votes, and drop the Sable Signs of Death;  
The Box receives all Black, but, pour'd from thence,  
The Stones came candid forth: The Hue of Inno-  
Thus *Alemonides* his Safety won,      [cence.  
Preserv'd from Death by *Alcumena's* Son:  
Then to his Kinsman-God his Vows he pays,  
And cuts with prosp'rous Gales th' *Ionian* Seas:

He leaves *Tarentum*, favour'd by the Wind,  
And *Thurine* Bays, and *Temisès*, behind;  
Soft *Sybaris*, and all the Capes that stand  
Along the Shore, he makes in sight of Land;  
Still doubling, and still coasting, till he found  
The Mouth of *Æfæris*, and promis'd Ground,  
Then saw where, on the Margin of the Flood,  
The Tomb that held the Bones of *Croton* stood:  
Here, by the God's Command, he built and wall'd  
The Place predicted; and *Crotona* call'd:  
Thus Fame, from time to time, delivers down  
The sure Tradition of th' *Italian* Town.

Here dwelt the Man divine whom *Samos* bore,  
But now Self-banish'd from his Native Shore,  
Because he hatèd Tyrants, nor cou'd bear  
The Chains which none but servile Souls will wear:  
He, tho' from Heav'n remote, to Heav'n cou'd move,  
With Strength of Mind, and tread th' Abyfs above;  
And penetrate, with his interior Light, [Sight:  
Those upper Depths, which Nature hid from  
And what he had observ'd, and learnt from thence,  
Lov'd in familiar Language to dispence.

The Crowd with silent Admiration stand,  
 And heard him, as they heard their God's Command;  
 While he discours'd of Heav'n's mysterious Laws,  
 The World's Original, and Nature's Cause; ♦ ♦  
 And what was God, and why the fleecy Snows  
 In Silence fell, and rattling Winds arose;  
 What shook the stedfast Earth, and whence begun  
 The Dance of Planets round the radiant Sun;  
 If Thunder was the Voice of angry *Jove*,  
 Or Clouds, with Nitre pregnant, burst above:  
 Of these, and Things beyond the common Reach,  
 He spoke, and charm'd his Audience with his  
 Speech.

He first the Taste of Flesh from Tables drove,  
 And argu'd well, if Arguments cou'd move.  
 O Mortals! from your Fellows Blood abstain,  
 Nor taint your Bodies with a Food profane:  
 While Corn and Pulse by Nature are bestow'd,  
 And planted Orchards bend their willing Load;  
 While labour'd Gardens wholsom Herbs produce,  
 And teeming Vines afford their gen'rous Juice;

While



Nor tardier Fruits of cruder Kind are lost,  
But tam'd with Fire, or mellow'd by the Frost;  
While Kine to Pails distended Udders bring,  
And Bees their Hony redolent of Spring;  
While Earth not only can your Needs supply,  
But, lavish of her Store, provides for Luxury;  
A guiltless Feast administers with Ease,  
And without Blood is prodigal to please.  
Wild Beasts their Maws with their slain Brethren  
And yet not all, for some refuse to kill: [fill;  
Sheep, Goats, and Oxen, and the nobler Steed,  
On Browz, and Corn, and flow'ry Meadows, feed.  
Bears, Tygers, Wolves, the Lion's angry Brood,  
Whom Heav'n endu'd with Principles of Blood,  
He wisely fundred from the rest, to yell  
In Forests, and in lonely Caves to dwell,  
Where stronger Beasts oppress the weak by Might,  
And all in Prey and Purple Feasts delight.  
O impious Use! to Nature's Laws oppos'd,  
Where Bowels are in other Bowels clos'd:  
Where, fatten'd by their Fellow's Fat, they thrive;  
Maintain'd by Murder, and by Death they live.



'Tis then for nought that Mother Earth provides  
The Stores of all she shows, and all she hides,  
If Men with fleshy Morfels must be fed,  
And chaw with bloody Teeth the breathing Bread:  
What else is this but to devour our Guests,  
And barb'rously renew *Cyclopean* Feasts!  
We, by destroying Life, our Life sustain;  
And gorge th'ungodly Maw with Meats obscene.

Not so the Golden Age, who fed on Fruit,  
Nor durst with bloody Meals their Mouths pollute.  
Then Birds in airy Space might safely move,  
And tim'rous Hares on Heaths securely rove:  
Nor needed Fish the guileful Hooks to fear,  
For all was peaceful; and that Peace sincere.  
Whoever was the Wretch (and curs'd be he)  
That envy'd first our Food's Simplicity;  
Th'essay of bloody Feasts on Brutes began,  
And after forg'd the Sword to murder Man.  
Had he the sharpen'd Steel alone employ'd,  
On Beasts of Prey that other Beasts destroy'd,  
Or Man invaded with their Fangs and Paws,  
This had been justify'd by Nature's Laws,

And Self-defence: But who did Feasts begin  
Of Flesh, He stretch'd Necessity to Sin.  
To kill Man-killers, Man has lawful Pow'r,  
But not th'extended Licence, to devour.

Ill Habits gather by unseen degrees,  
As Brooks make Rivers, Rivers run to Seas.  
The Sow, with her broad Snout for rooting up  
Th'intrusted Seed, was judg'd to spoil the Crop,  
And intercept the sweating Farmer's Hope:  
The covet'ous Churl, of unforgiving kind,  
Th'Offender to the bloody Priest resign'd:  
Her Hunger was no Plea: For that she dy'd.  
The Goat came next in order, to be try'd:  
The Goat had cropt the Tendrills of the Vine:  
In vengeance Laity and Clergy join,  
Where one had lost his Profit, one his Wine.  
Here was, at least, some Shadow of Offence:  
The Sheep was sacrific'd on no pretence,  
But meek and unresisting Innocence.  
A patient, useful Creature, born to bear  
The warm and woolly Fleece, that cloath'd her Mur-  
[derer,

484     *Of the Pythagorean Philosophy.*

And daily to give down the Milk she bred,  
A Tribute for the Grass on which she fed.  
Living, both Food and Rayment she supplies,  
And is of least Advantage when she dies.

How did the toiling Oxe his Death deserve,  
A downright simple Drudge, and born to serve?  
O Tyrant! with what Justice canst thou hope  
The Promise of the Year, a plenteous Crop;  
When thou destroy'st thy lab'ring Steer, who till'd,  
And plough'd with Pains, thy else ungrateful Field?  
From his yet reeking Neck to draw the Yoke,  
That Neck with which the furly Clods he broke;  
And to the Hatchet yield thy Husband-Man,  
Who finish'd Autumn, and the Spring began!

Nor this alone! but Heav'n it self to bribe,  
We to the Gods our impious Acts ascribe:  
First recompence with Death their Creatures Toil,  
Then call the Bless'd above to share the Spoil:  
The fairest Victim must the Pow'rs appease,  
(So fatal 'tis sometimes too much to please!)  
A purple Fillet his broad Brows adorns,  
With flow'ry Garlands crown'd, and gilded Horns:

He hears the murd'rous Pray'r the Priest prefers,  
But understands not, 'tis his Doom he hears:  
Beholds the Meal betwixt his Temples cast,  
(The Fruit and Product of his Labours past; )  
And in the Water views perhaps the Knife  
Uplifted, to deprive him of his Life;  
Then broken up alive, his Entrails sees  
Torn out, for Priests t'inspect the Gods Decrees.

From whence, O mortal Men, this gust of Blood  
Have you deriv'd, and interdicted Food?  
Be taught by me this dire Delight to shun,  
Warn'd by my Precepts, by my Practice won:  
And when you eat the well-deserving Beast,  
Think, on the Lab'rer of your Field you feast!

Now since the God inspires me to proceed,  
Be that, whate'er inspiring Pow'r, obey'd.  
For I will sing of mighty Mysteries,  
Of Truths conceal'd before, from human Eyes, }  
Dark Oracles unveil, and open all the Skies. }  
Pleas'd as I am to walk along the Sphere  
Of shining Stars, and travel with the Year,

486    *Of the Pythagorean Philosophy.*

To leave the heavy Earth, and scale the height  
Of *Atlas*, who supports the heav'nly Weight;  
To look from upper Light, and thence survey  
Mistaken Mortals wandring from the Way,  
And wanting Wisdom, fearful for the State  
Of future Things, and trembling at their Fate!

Those I wou'd teach; and by right Reason bring  
To think of Death, as but an idle Thing.  
Why thus affrighted at an empty Name,  
A Dream of Darknes, and fictitious Flame?  
Vain Themes of Wit, which but in Poems pass,  
And Fables of a World, that never was!  
What feels the Body when the Soul expires,  
By Time corrupted, or consum'd by Fires?  
Nor dies the Spirit, but new Life repeats  
In other Forms, and only changes Seats.

Ev'n I, who these mysterious Truths declare,  
Was once *Euphorbus* in the *Trojan* War;  
My Name and Lineage I remember well,  
And how in Fight by *Sparta's* King I fell.  
In *Argive* *Juno's* Fane I late beheld  
My Buckler hung on high, and own'd my former  
Then,

[Shield.

Then, Death, so call'd, is but old Matter dress'd  
In some new Figure, and a vary'd Vest:

Thus all Things are but alter'd, nothing dies;  
And here and there th' unbody'd Spirit flies,  
By Time, or Force, or Sickness dispossest,  
And lodges, where it lights, in Man or Beast;  
Or hunts without, till ready Limbs it find,  
And actuates those according to their Kind;  
From Tenement to Tenement is tofs'd;  
The Soul is still the same, the Figure only lost:  
And, as the soften'd Wax new Seals receives,  
This Face assumes, and that Impression leaves;  
Now call'd by one, now by another Name;  
The Form is only chang'd, the Wax is still the same:  
So Death, so call'd, can but the Form deface,  
Th' immortal Soul flies out in empty Space;  
To seek her Fortune in some other Place.

Then let not Piety be put to flight,  
To please the Taste of Glutton Appetite;  
But suffer inmate Souls secure to dwell,  
Lest from their Seats your Parents you expel;

488      *Of the Pythagorean Philosophy.*

With rabid Hunger feed upon your Kind,  
Or from a Beast dislodge a Brother's Mind.

And since, like *Tiphys* parting from the Shore,  
In ample Seas I fail, and Depths untry'd before,  
This let me further add, that Nature knows  
No stedfast Station, but, or Ebbs, or Flows:  
Ever in Motion; she destroys her old,  
And casts new Figures in another Mold.

Ev'n Times are in perpetual Flux; and run,  
Like Rivers from their Fountain, rowling on;  
For Time, no more than Streams, is at a stay:  
The flying Hour is ever on her Way;  
And as the Fountain still supplies her Store,  
The Wave behind impels the Wave before;  
Thus in successive Course the Minutes run,  
And urge their Predecessor Minutes on,  
Still moving, ever new: For former Things  
Are set aside, like abdicated Kings:  
And every moment alters what is done,  
And innovates some Act till then unknown.

Darkness we see emerges into Light,  
And shining Suns descend to Sable Night;



Ev'n Heav'n it self receives another die,  
When weary'd Animals in Slumbers lie  
Of Midnight Ease: Another, when the gray  
Of Morn preludes the Splendor of the Day.  
The disk of *Phæbus*, when he climbs on high,  
Appears at first but as a bloodshot Eye;  
And when his Chariot downward drives to Bed,  
His Ball is with the same Suffusion red;  
But mounted high in his Meridian Race  
All bright he shines, and with a better Face:  
For there, pure Particles of *Æther* flow,  
Far from th' Infection of the World below.

Nor equal Light th' unequal Moon adorns,  
Or in her waxing or her waning Horns.  
For ev'ry Day she wanes, her Face is less,  
But gath'ring into Globe, she fattens at Increase.

Perceiv'st thou not the Process of the Year,  
How the four Seasons in four Forms appear,  
Resembling human Life in ev'ry Shape they wear?  
Spring first, like Infancy, shoots out her Head,  
With milky Juice requiring to be fed:  
Helpless, tho' fresh, and wanting to be led.