

## Literary Traditions

### Classical definitions of poetry and its rôle:

a speaking picture (Plutarch)

to teach and delight (Horace)

an imitation of life (Aristotle)

#### Aristotle

Mimesis: imitation of human action through the medium of words.

#### Horace

The art of poetry is the imitation of the best models as a method of extending one's literary and oratorical techniques.

### Epic

Epic is one of the earliest literary forms. Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid* are the best known classical examples. The best known English examples are probably Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (pub.1596) and Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667).

Epic was traditionally held to be the highest and most serious form of writing, centring on a heroic or divine figure, usually male. The setting was often vast in geographical scale; the language was highly formal, with a very stylised form of narration: invocations to gods, set-piece portraits of heroes and villains, long formal speeches, accounts of histories of gods, races and heroes.

Epic works are generally long narratives, usually in verse, dealing with one important action or theme eg the fate of a nation or the fate of humanity. The style and subject should be sublime, eg. great odds at stake, armies, battles, epic journeys (may include journey to the Underworld), elaborate preparations as heroes don their arms, superhuman deeds performed. Gods and supernatural beings are often involved (they were referred to as 'machinery' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries eg Pope's references to sylphs etc in *Rape of the Lock*).

Epic made sense of history as myth within the collective consciousness eg *Paradise Lost* makes sense of the Fall of Man, which is part of British cultural consciousness even for non-Christians.

### Satire

'Two things...are essential to satire; one is wit or humour founded on fantasy or a sense of the grotesque or absurd, the other is an object of attack. Attack without humour, or pure denunciation, forms one of the boundaries of satire'. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, Princeton, 1957, p.224.

**Addison** often criticised satirists as irresponsible. In an essay in the *Spectator* in 1711 he commented: 'Lampoons and Satyrs, that are written with Wit and Spirit, are like poison'd Darts'. He argued that satire undermined the authority of the legal system, which should alone judge and punish vice. Addison's attitude was typical of Whig confidence in the integrity of the authorities.

**Dryden** emphasised the deterrent and correctional function of satire, drawing on the tradition of Juvenal as opposed to Horace, excusing the savagery of satire and dignifying it by emphasising its didactic and reformative potential. In the Preface to *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681) he argued: 'The true end of *Satyre*, is the amendment of Vices by correction. And he who writes Honestly, is no more an Enemy to the Offendour, than the Physician to the Patient, when he prescribes harsh Remedies to an inveterate Disease'.

**Swift** had a dual attitude to satire: when it suited him he vindicated it through its ability to correct, although he often admitted that it was unable to change anything. In an essay in *The Examiner* (1711), Swift argued that satire and the law have mutually supportive rôles in that satire may punish where the law cannot reach: 'tis very plain, that considering the Defectiveness of our Laws...it is possible, that many great Abuses may be visibly committed, which cannot be legally Punish'd'; 'it is very false Reasoning, especially in the Management of Publick Affairs, to argue that Men are Innocent, because the Law hath not pronounc'd them Guilty'.

Humour 'is the best Ingredient towards that Kind of Satyr, which is most useful, and gives the least Offence; which, instead of lashing, laughs Men out of their Follies, and Vices...And, although some Things are too serious, solemn, or sacred to be turned into Ridicule, yet the Abuses of them are certainly not; since it is allowed, that Corruptions in Religion, Politicks, and Law, may be proper Topicks for this Kind of Satyr.' 'There are two Ends that Men propose

in writing Satyr; one of them less noble than the other, as regarding nothing further than the private Satisfaction, and Pleasure of the Writer; but without any View towards personal Malice: The other is a publick Spirit, prompting Men of Genius and Virtue, to mend the World as far as they are able.' J.Swift, *The Intelligencer* III (1728).  
'Satyr is a sort of Glass, wherein Beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their Own; which is the chief Reason for that kind Reception it meets with in the world, and that so very few are offended with it'. Swift, Preface to *The Battle of the Books* (1697).

**Pope** took the satirist's reformatory rôle more seriously than Swift, the most pessimistic of the Augustan satirists. Pope believed that writers had a social responsibility to urge reform and viewed himself as having Juvenalian authority to expose and criticise vice, a process analagous but often superior to the courts.

**Fielding** distinguishes between the satirist and the libeller in *Joseph Andrews* (1742); see Bk III, ch 1, pp.168-9.

### **Scriblerian satire**

The Scriblerus Club was formed about 1713; members included Swift, Pope, Gay and Congreve. The name came from Martinus Scriblerus, a character they invented (a pedantic hack). The club included Tory intellectuals and writers who met in London to discuss contemporary topics. They satirised bad taste and irrationality eg in legal or political system.

### **Drama**

The Elizabethan and Jacobean periods are generally regarded as the 'golden age' of English theatre, partly because of dramatists such as Shakespeare but also because theatre was accessible to all social classes (Alfred Harbage refers to it as 'the theatre of a nation'). Harbage distinguishes the development at the beginning of the seventeenth century of 'the theatre of a coterie' ie private indoor playhouses which challenged public playhouses such as Shakespeare's Globe and which specialised in drama for upper class audiences.

In 1642 playhouses were closed by order of Parliament.

1660 (Restoration) Charles II authorised two theatres (Drury Lane and Dorset Gardens) to perform plays. These indoor theatres (candle-lit) were effectively private monopolies for those who owned the patents (very different to the nine public theatres of Shakespeare's time). These theatres were what Harbage refers to as 'coterie' theatres, under Charles II's patronage and designed to serve the court.

Restoration dramatists such as Dryden, Wycherley and Etherege (all gentlemen or associated with the court) created new kinds of drama which were clearly intended for a sophisticated upper class (and upper middle class) audience.

1662 Women were allowed to act on the public stage.

1737 The Licensing Act required that the Lord Chamberlain should approve all plays before they were performed. This effectively ended Fielding's career as a dramatist since his works were often satirical and had attacked Walpole.

### **Heroic Tragedy**

Spectacular, concerned with heroic qualities such as courage and honour and the conflict with personal values of love; love versus duty was often debated eg should the hero follow public duty or love.

### **Comedy of Manners**

Concerned with sex, gender conflicts and money, privileging the clever and sophisticated over the virtuous ie men who planned seduction cleverly and women who wittily challenged men. The focus was on wit, not morality, with stereotypical characters providing opportunities for the exercising of wit. Popular characters included the rake, the country bumpkin, the fop, the older husband (target for cuckolding), the witty heroine, the naive young woman.

### **1680s and Drama**

Political crises (eg the Revolution of 1688) led to contemporary drama being regarded as frivolous. Stuart monarchs (especially William III) showed little interest in theatre.

Theatrical quarrels led to the end of the monopoly of the two theatres; the growth of new playhouses increased opportunities for dramatists.

The audience was changing to one of mixed classes and genders. Restoration audiences were primarily the privileged classes and did not attract 'respectable' women; women who attended were usually prostitutes or upper class ladies revelling in the possibilities for sexual intrigue. By the end of the seventeenth century, dramatists were

openly declaring that their works were suitable for 'the Ladies' or the 'Fair Sex' ie that they had restrained the bawdiness of the drama of the preceding decades.

In 1698 Jeremy Collier wrote *A Short View of the Immorality, and Profaneness of the English Stage*, in which he criticised courtly Restoration drama which made 'its top characters libertines, and [gave] them success in their debauchery' (he was referring in particular to Wycherley and Vanbrugh). He argued that 'the business of plays is to recommend virtue, and discountenance vice'.

Dr Johnson provided a similar view of Restoration comedy in 1747:

'The Wits of Charles found easier Ways to Fame,  
Nor wish'd for Johnson's Art, or Shakespear's Flame;  
Themselves they studied, as they felt, they writ,  
Intrigue was Plot, Obscenity was Wit,  
Vice always found a sympathetick Friend;  
They pleas'd their Age, and did not aim to mend.  
Yet Bards like these aspir'd to lasting Praise,  
And proudly hop'd to pimp in future Days.  
Their Cause was gen'ral, their Supports were strong,  
Their Slaves were willing, and their Reign was long;  
Till Shame regain'd the Post that Sense betray'd,  
And Virtue call'd Oblivion to her aid.'

Dr Johnson, *Prologue Spoken by Mr Garrick at the Opening of the Theatre in Drury-Lane, 1747, II, 17-28.*

See full version of this speech at the end of the course pack.

Dramatists such as Congreve and Vanbrugh responded by arguing that their comedies did recommend virtue, by ridiculing immoral behaviour (by holding people's actual behaviour up to ridicule, they argued that they showed them how they ought to behave). The 'Collier Controversy' continued until the 1720s, by which time theatre had changed again, with the development of **sentimental theatre**, which sought to inculcate morality through the emotional engagement of the audience (to provoke 'good' emotion in the audience which would encourage moral behaviour).

Larger audiences inevitably led to larger playhouses and so the relative intimacy of Restoration theatre was lost. In Restoration theatre, members of the audience sat on stage, even using the stage for promenading between the acts. Garrick banished the audience from the stage by the late 1740s. Audiences became less riotous and paid more attention to the plays than their Restoration counterparts had done. This is possibly due to changing styles of acting. Restoration acting techniques relied on heavily stylised technique and declamation; by the mid eighteenth century the newer style associated with the highly popular and respected actor Garrick was concerned with communicating emotion, particularly through physical gestures and facial expressions (the focus was on gesture and physical attitude rather than on the flow of speech).

## Literary Traditions and the Novel

### Romance

Romance tradition originated in 12thc France. Characteristically, it recounts the story of a knight and his adventures and is concerned with courtly values in all aspects of society, love and battle; it may include the supernatural and a love interest. It is not fundamentally concerned with individual characterisation, although some romances explore the psychological development of the hero through his adventures and offer a critique of society. Romance elements include: long lost relatives, the rise to gentility, incest (often only implied in romance due to confused identities eg Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* thinks at one point that Fanny is his sister - disaster is averted and we find out that she is not).

### Picaresque

The picaresque originated in 16thc Spain. It provided a realistic account of the life of a rogue (the *picaro*) who survived various adventures by his wits, often satirising society. The term came to be applied to anyone at odds with society, for eg Fielding's *Tom Jones* (an outsider because he is illegitimate). Picaresque elements include: a low born rogue, a variety of adventures, sexual freedom, a panorama of life reflected in the travels of the protagonist, eg Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and Fielding's *Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews*.

### Puritan Tradition

Puritan tradition derives from written meditations and spiritual diaries. To avoid condemnation as frivolous, early novels often claimed to be transcripts of real diaries, memoirs or letters to give an impression of truth. Life was

understood in biblical terms of sin, repentance and redemption. In Puritan tradition man faces a series of trials and moral choices eg Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), or Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), where a self-reliant, rather proud man, comes to recognise his sin and submit to Providence.

### **Crime Narratives**

Crime narratives also functioned as confession; they were related to popular criminal biographies such as the accounts of criminals' confessions and repentance which were collected and published by Ordinaries (chaplains who attended condemned prisoners, particularly associated with Newgate). The *Newgate Calendar* is perhaps the most famous collection of 'criminal lives'.

## **Literature 1660-1740**

This literary period has been defined in different ways:

**The Age of Reason** because of the focus on the mind's rational faculties. Contemporary culture was grounded in rationality, claiming 'enlightenment' due to scientific ways of viewing man and the universe, believing they could be explained by underlying rational principles. The foundation of the Royal Society in 1662 to increase scientific knowledge captured the popular imagination, as did technical advances such as the telescope and the microscope. The development of science led to an increasingly secular society. Newton was particularly influential in the increase in confidence in scientific method, which led to a fundamental change from an essentially religious to an essentially secular view of the world and man's place in it.

**The Neo-Classical Age** because of the desire to recreate the qualities of classical literature in the English language eg Pope and Dryden. Writers sought not to challenge literary traditions but to learn to write well within them.

**The Augustan Age**, referring to Goldsmith's essay, 'Account of the Augustan Age in England' in *The Bee* (1759), which defined the era of Congreve, Addison and their contemporaries as 'Augustan'. The term 'Augustan' is much used by twentieth-century commentators eg A.R.Humphreys, *The Augustan World*, P.Rogers, *The Augustan Vision*. In theory, Augustan writers were not concerned with a personal, private vision but with communicating public known truths; Augustan concerns may be summed up as 'man in society'. Pope sums up the Augustan approach in *Essay On Criticism* (1711):

'True wit is Nature to advantage dressed,  
What oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed' (l.297-8).

### **Augustan Historical Background**

English Civil War (1642-1648); the execution of Charles I (1649) put an end to the belief in the 'Divine Right' of kings.

Restoration of Charles II (1660): seen as bringing order and stability after the turmoil of civil war.

'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 led to the deposition of James II (fled to France) by Parliament, following the invasion (invited) of William of Orange (later William III).

The 'Revolution Settlement' established the basis of Augustan politics ie the notion of a limited constitutional monarchy.

Hanoverian succession (1714): after the death of Queen Anne (last Stuart monarch), George I and II ensured the Protestant succession; hence the Jacobite (supporters of James II and his descendants) rebellions of 1715 and 1745.

### **Literature of Sentiment and Sensibility (roughly 1740-70)**

**Sentimentalism** - a philosophical and political as well as a literary construct, predicated on the belief that human nature is essentially good and expressing itself in humanitarian concern for others. A 'sentiment' is both moral and rational, eg an assessment of the rights and wrongs of society. Early eighteenth-century novels are full of such reflections on life. Sentimentalism is usually by definition refined and informed by emotional response; this emotional influence brings it close to sensibility. After Sterne's novels the term sentimental often refers to refined and elevated emotion but it still carries the implication of moral reflection.

**Sensibility** - the term really came into its own in the middle of the eighteenth century. It focused on the individual's emotional state and encouraged an idealised view of emotional response, focusing on spontaneity and virtuous feeling and developed its own language or use of existing language. Key words include: pity, sympathy, benevolence, openness of heart; in addition to this a parallel system of body language developed, with blushes, crying, stammering, shaking and of course fainting all indicating varying degrees of feeling. More specific

sentimental vocabulary evolved to express emotional responses particular to the sentimental mind, eg 'sublime', 'transported', 'exquisite', 'luxury'. It was believed that women in particular expressed emotions physically; hence their propensity for crying and fainting; hysteria, perhaps the ultimate expression, was seen as a female disease but later so-called masculine versions such as melancholia or hypochondria developed.

Sensibility was associated with 'sensations', which were in turn associated with sexual excitement, which rendered it suspect in the minds of many writers, particularly later in the century.

Mrs Barbauld commented on the sentimental process of reading: 'This sentiment is love, esteem, the complacency we take in the contemplation of beauty, of mental or moral excellence, called forth and rendered more interesting by circumstances of pain and danger' (*Inquiry into those kinds of distress which excite agreeable sensations*, 1773).

Hannah Moore argued that such works 'teach, that chastity is only individual attachment; that no duty exists which is not prompted by feeling; that impulse is the main spring of virtuous actions, while laws and religion are only unjust restraints' (*Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, 1799).

**Historical perspective:** the novel of sentiment was popular in the 1740s and 50s, the novel of sensibility became popular in the 1760s but already by the 1770s the term 'sentimentality' had come to be associated with affected and self-indulgent, possibly improper feeling.

### **Novels bad for your health!**

A writer in *The Gazette Salulaire* complained in 1768, 'perhaps of all cases that have harmed women's health, the principal one has been the unfortunate multiplication of novels in the last hundred years'.

### **Novelists defending novels**

Austen argued famously: 'Although our productions have afforded more extensive and unaffected pleasure than those of any other literary corporation in the world, no species of composition has been so much decried. From pride, ignorance, or fashion, our foes are almost as many as our readers. And while the abilities of the nine-hundredth abridger of the History of England, or of the man who collects and publishes in a volume some dozen lines of Milton, Pope, and Prior, with a paper from the Spectator, and a chapter from Sterne, are eulogized by a thousand pens, -- there seems almost a general wish of decrying the capacity and undervaluing the labour of the novelist, and of slighting the performances which have only genius, wit, and taste to recommend them. "I am no novel reader -- I seldom look into novels -- Do not imagine that I often read novels -- It is really very well for a novel." -- Such is the common cant. -- "And what are you reading, Miss @@@ @@@?" "Oh! it is only a novel!" replies the young lady; while she lays down her book with affected indifference or momentary shame. -- "It is only Cecilia, or Camilla, or Belinda;" or, in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour are conveyed to the world in the best chosen language'. *Northanger Abbey* (1818), chapter 5. Text courtesy of the Electronic Text Centre.

See also the Preface to Burney's *Evelina* (1778).

## **Cultural Background**

### **Philosophers' Views of Human Nature**

#### **Thomas Hobbes**

Hobbes was a materialist, who argued that man is simply a physical being and so thought and emotion are physical processes. His was a mechanistic, atheistic view of the world, denying freedom of will and arguing that our behaviour is determined solely by our reactions to pleasure and pain. He argued that human beings are essentially selfish and defined morality as conforming to social restraint out of self interest as a means of avoiding anarchy. Hobbes explained his theories of human nature in *Leviathan* (1651), where he distinguished between man in society and man as he would be in a state of nature, described as 'a war of all against all', a perpetual state of savagery, where 'every man is enemy to every man' and life is 'nasty, brutish and short'. Hobbes felt that England had come close to this during the Civil War of 1642-8.

#### **John Locke**

Locke argued that the human mind was a blank sheet (or *tabula rasa*) at birth and that the mind learns through sense impressions being imprinted upon it. His *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) was very influential.

## **Shaftesbury**

The philosophical basis of Shaftesbury's thought is found in his influential *Characteristics of Men, Manners and Morals* (1711). Shaftesbury had been a pupil of John Locke but disagreed with Locke's idea that the mind was a blank sheet, to be written on by the experiences of the senses. Shaftesbury suggested that we are born with an innate moral sense or conscience which prompts us to right action. This was in stark contrast to Hobbes's thesis, expressed in *Leviathan* (1651), that humanity was basically corrupt, driven by selfishness, greed and a lust for power.

## **Eighteenth-century culture**

English society was based on rights of property; power was in the hands of the aristocracy and landed gentry by virtue of land ownership.

England was predominantly agricultural in economic terms ie pre-industrial. However, London was growing in importance: the centre of fashionable life was shifting from the Court to the 'town'. Commercial institutions such as the Bank of England and trading companies led to commercial growth; colonial enterprises linked England economically with the rest of the world.

Austen's Henry Tilney re 'Englishness': 'Remember the country and the age in which we live. Remember that we are English, that we are Christians. Consult your own understanding, your own sense of the probable, your own observation of what is passing around you -- Does our education prepare us for such atrocities? Do our laws connive at them? Could they be perpetrated without being known, in a country like this, where social and literary intercourse is on such a footing; where every man is surrounded by a neighbourhood of voluntary spies, and where roads and newspapers lay every thing open?' . *Northanger Abbey* (1818), chapter 24. Text courtesy of the Electronic Text Centre.

## **Politics**

Swift: 'Politics, as the word is commonly understood, are nothing but corruptions.' *Thoughts on Various Subjects* (1706).

The eighteenth-century political system was very different to our own. Women of course could not vote; not until 1929 were women given the vote, provided they were over twenty one. In the eighteenth century, every male freeholder with 40 shillings a year was allowed to vote. Freeholders were usually tenants and voting was done openly so squires could check that their tenants had voted according to their landlord's wishes - most did, particularly when given quantities of free beef and beer!

There were two main political parties: Tories and Whigs.

### **Tories**

The Tories supported the divine right of the monarchy and opposed religious toleration for dissenters and Catholics. They were supported particularly by the country squirearchy and most sections of the Anglican church. The party developed into Conservatism under Peel in the early nineteenth century.

### **Whigs**

The Whigs wanted limited monarchy and a strong parliament. They were supported by many in the monied and commercial classes and by nonconformists, who looked for religious toleration; most of its leaders were great land owners who used the system of patronage to create groups in parliament based on family and friends. Political offices were in the gift of influential men so there was inevitably a complex system of bargaining and blackmail. Hence the parallel in the popular consciousness between thieves and statesmen, a view exploited by Gay in *The Beggar's Opera* (1728) and Fielding in *Jonathan Wild* (1743). Both Gay and Fielding comically present politicians as more harmful than thieves because their power is more far reaching.

### **Walpole**

Walpole was a leading Whig minister from 1721-42, widely recognised as 'prime minister', although that title did not exist at the time. He supported the interests of the monied classes by avoiding war and working for low taxation to ensure stability and prosperity. He had a great appetite for power and immense skill in dealing with people, flattering and rewarding or eliminating as necessary.

## Gender Rôles

'The science of legislation, or jurisprudence, of political economy; the conduct of government in all its executive function; the abstruse researches of erudition; the inexhaustible depths of philosophy...the knowledge indispensable in the wide field of commercial enterprise; the arts of defence, and of attack by land and by sea...these, and other studies, pursuits and occupations, assigned chiefly or entirely to men, demand the effort of a mind endued with the powers of close and comprehensive reasoning, and of intense and continued application, in a degree to which they are not requisite for the discharge of the customary offices of female duty. It would therefore seem natural to expect, and experience, I think...that the Giver of all good, after bestowing those powers on men with a liberality proportionate to the subsisting necessity, would impart them to the female mind with a more sparing hand...

Were we called upon to produce examples of the most amiable tendencies and affections implanted in human nature, of modesty, of delicacy, of sympathising sensibility, of prompt and active benevolence, of warmth and tenderness of attachment; whither should we at once turn our eyes? To the sister, to the daughter, to the wife. These endowments form the glory of the female sex.' Thomas Gisborne, *An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex* (1797).

## Marriage

In the latter part of the eighteenth century 20% of men (some elder sons as well as younger) were still unmarried at 50. The average age for men of the upper and professional classes marrying had risen to 28. By the end of the century 25% of upper class women remained unmarried. See Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*.

### Marriage laws

The law regarded the family as an economic unit, with the father responsible for providing the necessities of life. To help defray the cost, common law decreed that a man gained absolute ownership or control of his wife's property in marriage.

Blackstone explains: 'By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law'. Thus 'the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband'. Sir William Blackstone, *Commentaries On the Laws Of England* (1753), I,p.442.

In 1737 Chancery declared that a wife's earnings should be safe from her husband if a separation agreement existed. Yet if a woman was separated but not protected by a separation deed, all income from her real estate and any future legacies, went to the husband. By law, a woman's business stock, savings and earnings could be seized by her husband at any time.

In her autobiography Charlotte Charke explains that when she began trading, she was worried how to secure her 'Effects from the Power of [her] Husband; who, though he did not live with [her], [she] knew had a Right to make bold with' her possessions because 'there was no formal Article of Separation'. C.Charke, *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs Charlotte Charke* (1755).

Only in 1857 were women's earnings protected from deserting husbands, with the advent of the Divorce Act; women were not able to have their own savings accounts until 1881; they did not effectively have property of their own until the Married Women's Property Act in 1882 and were not granted the right to manage their property separately from their husbands until 1893; they were not allowed complete control over their wages until 1907.

**Desertion and remarriage:** divorce was almost impossible and very expensive. Communication was difficult, especially if one's partner went overseas as a sailor or merchant; it was quite possible not to know if they were dead or alive. It was popularly believed that desertion was grounds for remarriage but in law, desertion did not constitute legal grounds for remarriage because it did not invalidate the existing marriage. Defoe explores such problems in *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Roxana* (1724).

**Defoe on marrying for money:** 'Will you live with a man, and lie with a man you don't love?...'tis but a kind of legal prostitution'( *Conjugal Lewdness*, 1727).

## Chronology

History is far more than a collection of dates; the following aims simply to provide a general context for the literature you're studying.

- 1649-1660 Interregnum - monarchy suspended, Britain run by Parliament and Cromwell, the 'Protector'. Many Royalists in exile, estates seized by Parliament.  
Play acting banned.
- 1660 Charles II restored to throne; opened two new playhouses.
- 1662 Women allowed to act on public stage.
- 1665 Great Plague.
- 1666 Great Fire of London.
- 1685 Death of Charles II. Accession of James II.
- 1688 'The Glorious Revolution': William of Orange invaded; James II fled.
- 1689 James II abdicated; William III and Mary II came to throne (William's mother was a Stuart but he was a member of the House of Orange).
- 1694 Bank of England established.
- 1702 William III died; Anne came to throne.
- 1707 Act of Union (England and Scotland).
- 1714 Anne Stuart died. George I (Hanover) came to throne because the other Stuarts were Catholic and the British wanted a Protestant.
- 1715 Stuart supporters of James resented Hanoverian rule - led to Jacobite rebellions (crushed initially).
- 1718 Transportation Act - enabled Judges to transport convicts if whipping seemed too lenient and hanging too harsh.
- 1723 Poor Law Act, empowered overseers of the poor to establish workhouses and to deny relief to those refusing to enter them.
- 1727 George I died; George II came to throne.
- 1737 Licensing Act (ended Fielding's dramatic career).
- 1745 Bonnie Prince Charlie (last of Stuarts), landed in Scotland to claim throne in second Jacobite rising; Scottish clans brutally beaten by British army.
- 1746 Battle of Culloden ended Jacobite rising, the '45'.
- 1750 Bow Street Runners - first organised police force in London (organised by Fielding and his brother).
- 1753 Hardwicke's Act, designed to regulate marriage laws and end clandestine marriage.
- 1760 George III became King.
- 1770 Captain Cook claimed Australia for Britain (without discussing it with the Aborigines).
- 1772 Written exams introduced at Cambridge University.
- 1774 Louis XVI crowned King of France.
- 1775 American War of Independence began.
- 1776 American Declaration of Independence.
- 1780 Gordon Riots (anti-government).
- 1783 Treaty of Versailles ended American War of Independence.
- 1787 Anti Slavery Committee established in England.
- 1788 First English convicts sent to Australia - penal colonies.
- 1789 Storming of Bastille.
- 1789-1792 French Revolution.
- 1790 Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.
- 1791-2 Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man* (response to Burke).
- 1792 Trial of Louis XVI.  
First gas lighting in English houses.  
1793 Booksellers prosecuted in England for selling Paine's *Rights of Man*.  
'The Terror'. Louis XVI guillotined; beginning of 20 years of Napoleonic Wars.
- 1794 Habeas corpus suspended.
- 1798 Steam-powered spinning mill opened in Bradford. Spinners working from home were replaced by machines so needed to take jobs in factories.
- 1799 Combination Laws against workers' associations (Trade Unions).



1801	Ireland joined Great Britain.
1804	First steam railway locomotive, invented by Richard Trevithick.
1807	Act forbidding British participation in slave trading. Between 1790 and 1810 there were 500 riots protesting about the price of bread.
1811 - 1813	Luddite risings (unemployed weavers smashed knitting frames).
1815	Britain defeated Napoleon at Waterloo. Napoleonic wars ended - increased unemployment problems in England.
1816	Corn Laws caused widespread hardship in England.
1819	'Peterloo Massacre' - yeomanry killed Corn Law protesters in Manchester.
1829	Robert Peel established Metropolitan Police in London.
1831	Reform Bill debated - fear that revolution was inevitable if Reform Bill failed (the working classes rioted each time the House of Commons voted against the Reform Bill).
1832	Reform Bill - enfranchised sections of middle (but not working) classes. Before 1832, voting was restricted to men of property - out of a population of 8.5 million, only 11,000 men could vote.
1833	Slavery abolished in British Empire. Factory Act (Children's Charter) - forbade employment of under 9s, limited 9-13s to 9 hour day and 13-18s to 12 hour day. Under 13s were supposed to attend school - problematic in that there weren't enough schools.
1836	Marriage Act, allowing marriages to be solemnised in registered places of worship or register offices.
1840	1st Act passed forbidding employment of boy chimney-sweeps (ineffective).
1842	Report revealed that half of all children died before their fifth birthday. Mines Act: law passed to ban women and boys under 13 from working underground. Chartist riots. American surgeon first to use anaesthetic in operations.
1852	First men's flushing public toilet opens in London!
1857	Transportation (as punishment for crime) ended. Matrimonial Causes Act allowed divorce (in modern sense) for adultery and protected married women's earnings from deserting husbands.
1863	Abolition of slavery in USA.
1868	Public executions abolished (previously popular form of public entertainment).
1869	Imprisonment for debt ended.
1870	Education Act - school available for everyone but it cost a penny a day.
1871	Trade Unions legalised.
1874	Factory Act forbade employment of children under 10 (raised to 12 in 1901 and 14 in 1920).
1875	Strikes and peaceful picketing legalised. Public Health Act compelled water companies to provide constant supply of water to houses in towns; town councils given task of maintaining sewerage and drainage and refuse collection. Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone; first exchange opened in London in 1879.
1881	Women allowed their own savings accounts.
1882	Married Women's Property Act gave married women the same right of acquiring and disposing of property as unmarried women eg by will.
1891	Education became free for every child.
1893	Women allowed to manage their property separately from their husbands.
1907	Women allowed control over their own wages.
1918	Men over 21 and women over 30 gained the vote.
1920	Women admitted to degrees at Oxford University.
1929	Women aged 21-30 gained the vote. Age of Marriage Act changed age of consent from 12 for girls and 14 for boys to 16 for both (with parental consent).
1947	Women admitted to full undergraduate status at Cambridge University.

Genesis 2

7: then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.  
8: And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed.  
9: And out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.  
15: The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.  
16: And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden;  
17: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."  
18: Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."  
19: So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.  
20: The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him.  
21: So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh;  
22: and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.  
23: Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."  
24: Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.  
25: And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

Genesis 3

1: Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?'"  
2: And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden;  
3: but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"  
4: But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die.  
5: For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."  
6: So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate.  
7: Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.  
8: And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.  
9: But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"  
10: And he said, "I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."  
11: He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"  
12: The man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."  
13: Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate."  
14: The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.  
15: I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."  
16: To the woman he said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."  
17: And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;  
18: thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.  
19: In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return."  
20: The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.  
21: And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.  
22: Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" --  
23: therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken.

24: He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Galatians chapter 3

28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

**Milton, Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce** (extracts courtesy of Alasdair Bradley, all copyright rights reserved. All sections of Interactive EMLS (iEMLS) and EMLS as a whole are copyright (c) 1995 by Early Modern Literary Studies).

### **Preface**

What thing more instituted to the solace and delight of man than Marriage? And yet the misinterpreting of some Scripture directed mainly against the abusers of the Law for Divorce given by Moses, hath chang'd the blessing of Matrimony not seldom into a familiar and co-inhabiting mischief; at least into a drooping and disconsolate household Captivity, without refuge or redemption. So ungovern'd and so wild a race doth Superstition run us, from one extreme of abused Liberty into the other of unmerciful Restraint. For although God in the first ordaining of Marriage, taught us to what end he did it, in words expressly implying the apt and chearful Conversation of Man with Woman, to comfort and refresh him against the evil of solitary life, not mentioning the purpose of Generation till afterwards, as being but a secondary end in dignity, tho' not in necessity; yet now, if any two be but once handed in the Church, and have tasted in any sort the nuptial Bed, let them find themselves never so mistaken in their dispositions through any Error, Concealment, or Misadventure, that through their different Tempers, Thoughts, and Constitutions, they can neither be to one another a remedy against Loneliness, nor live in any Union or Contentment all their days, yet they shall, so they be but found suitably weapon'd to the least possibility of sensual Enjoyment, be made, spight of Antipathy, to fadge [to agree] together, and combine as they may to their unspeakable wearisomeness, and despair of all sociable delight in the Ordinance which God establish'd to that very end. What a calamity is this, and as the Wise-man, if he were alive, would sigh out in his own Phrase, what a sore evil is this under the Sun! All which we can refer justly to no other Author than the Canon Law and her Adherents, not consulting with Charity, the Interpreter and Guide of our Faith, but resting in the meer element of the Text; doubtless by the policy of the Devil to make that gracious Ordinance become unsupportable, that what with men not daring to venture upon Wedloc, and what with men wearied out of it, all inordinate Licence might abound. It was for many Ages that Marriage lay in disgrace with most of the ancient Doctors, as a work of the flesh, almost a defilement, wholly deny'd to Priests, and the second time dissuaded to all, as he that reads Tertullian or Jerom may see at large. Afterwards it was thought so Sacramental, that no Adultery or Desertion could dissolve it; and this is the sense of our Canon Courts in England to this day, but in no other reformed Church else.

**Chapter 1** That indisposition, unfitness, or contrariety of mind, arising from a cause in nature unchangeable, hindering, and ever likely to hinder the main benefits of conjugal Society, which are Solace and Peace, is a greater reason of Divorce than natural Frigidity, especially if there be no Children, and that there be mutual consent.

**Chapter 4** The second Reason of this Law, because without it, Marriage as it happens oft is not a remedy of that which it promises, as any rational creature would expect. That Marriage, if we pattern from the beginning, as our Saviour bids, was not properly the remedy of Lust, but the fulfilling of conjugal Love and Helpfulness. And that we may further see what a violent cruel thing it is to force the continuing of those together, whom God and Nature in the gentlest end of Marriage never join'd, divers evils and extremities that follow upon such a compulsion, shall here be set in view.

**Chapter 6** God regards Love and Peace in the Family, more than a compulsive performance of Marriage, which is more broke by a grievous Continuance, than by a needful Divorce. Fourthly, marriage is a Covenant, the very being wherof consists not in a forc'd cohabitation, and counterfeit performances of duties, but in unfeigned love and peace...Love in Marriage cannot live nor subsist unless it be mutual; and where Love cannot be, there can be left of Wedloc nothing but the empty husk of an outside Matrimony, as undelightful and displeasing to God, as any other kind of hypocrisy.

**Chapter 12** The eighth Reason, It is probable or rather certain, that every one who happens to marry, hath not the calling; and therefore upon unfitness found and consider'd, force ought not to be us'd. Eighthly, It is most sure that some even of those who are not plainly defective in body, yet are destitute of all other marriageable gifts, and consequently have not the calling to marry, unless nothing be requisite therto but a meer instrumental body; which to affirm, is to that unanimous Covenant a reproach: yet it is as sure that many such, not of their own desire, but by the perswasion of friends, or not knowing themselves, do often enter into Wedloc; where finding the difference at length between the duties of a married life, and the gifts of a single life, what unfitness of mind, what wearisomness, what scruples and doubts to an incredible offence, and displeasure are like to follow between, may be soon imagin'd; whom thus to shut up, and immure, and shut up together, the one with a mischosen Mate, the other in a mistaken Calling, is not a course that Christian wisdom and tenderness ought to use. As for the custom that some Parents and Guardians have of forcing Marriages, it will be better to say nothing of such a savage inhumanity, but only thus, that the Law which gives not all freedom of Divorce to any creature endued with reason, so assassinated, is next in cruelty.

**Chapter 18** [Milton debating the definition of fornication] But because we know that Christ never gave a Judicial Law, and that the word Fornication is variously significant in Scripture, it will be much right done to our Saviour's words, to consider diligently whether it be meant here that nothing but actual fornication prov'd by witness can warrant a Divorce, for so our Canon Law judges. Nevertheless...Men of high Wisdom and reputed Piety, decreed it to be a divorcive Fornication, if the Wife attempted either against the knowledge, or obstinately against the will of her Husband, such things as gave open suspicion of adulterizing, as the wilful haunting of Feasts, and Invitations with men not of her near Kindred, the lying forth of her House, without probable cause, the frequenting of Theatres against her Husband's mind, her endeavour to prevent or destroy Conception...Fornication...in this place of the Judges is understood for stubborn Disobedience against the Husband, and not for Adultery.

**Chapter 21** . Hate is of all things the mightiest divider, nay is division it self. To couple hatred therefore, though wedlock try all her golden links, and borrow to her aid all the iron manacles and fetters of Law, it does but seek to twist a rope of sand, which was a task they say that pos'd the Devil... for even the freedom and eminence of Man's creation gives him to be a Law in this matter to himself, being the head of the other sex which was made for him; whom therefore though he ought not to injure, yet neither should he be forc'd to retain in society to his own overthrow, nor to hear any Judge therein above himself.

**Rochester.** Poems courtesy of Mark Ynys-Mon at <http://www.druidic.isles.net/roc-bio.htm>

### **A Satyre on Charles II (extract)**

*Rochester had to flee the court for several months after handing this to the King by mistake*  
In th' isle of Britain, long since famous grown  
For breeding the best cunts in Christendom,  
There reigns, and oh! long may he reign and thrive,  
The easiest King and best bred man alive.  
Him no ambition moves to get reknown  
Like the French fool, that wanders up and down  
Starving his people, hazarding his crown.  
Peace is his aim, his gentleness is such,  
And love he loves, for he loves fucking much.  
Nor are his high desires above his strength:  
His scepter and his prick are of a length;  
And she may sway the one who plays with th' other,  
And make him little wiser than his brother.  
Poor Prince! thy prick, like thy buffoons at court,  
Will govern thee because it makes thee sport.  
'Tis sure the sauciest prick that e'er did swive,  
The proudest, peremptoriest prick alive...  
Restless he rolls about from whore to whore,  
A merry monarch, scandalous and poor...  
All monarchs I hate, and the thrones they sit on,  
From the hector of France to the cully of Britain.

### **A Song...**

To this moment a rebel I throw down my arms,  
Great Love, at first sight of Olinda's bright charms.  
Make proud and secure by such forces as these,  
You may now play the tyrant as soon as you please.  
When Innocence, Beauty, and Wit do conspire  
To betray, and engage, and inflame my Desire,  
Why should I decline what I cannot avoid?  
And let pleasing Hope by base Fear be destroyed?  
Her innocence cannot contrive to undo me,  
Her beauty's inclined, or why should it pursue me?  
And Wit has to Pleasure been ever a friend,  
Then what room for Despair, since Delight is Love's end?  
There can be no danger in sweetness and youth,  
Where Love is secured by good nature and truth;  
On her beauty I'll gaze and of pleasure complain  
While every kind look adds a link to my chain.  
'Tis more to maintain than it was to surprise,  
But her Wit leads in triumph the slave of her eyes;

I beheld, with the loss of my freedom before,  
But hearing, forever must serve and adore.  
Too bright is my Goddess, her temple too weak:  
Retire, divine image! I feel my heart break.  
Help, Love! I dissolve in a rapture of charms  
At the thought of those joys I should meet in her arms.

### **A Woman's Honour: A Song**

Love bade me hope, and I obeyed;  
Phyllis continued still unkind:  
Then you may e'en despair, he said,  
In vain I strive to change her mind.  
Honour's got in, and keeps her heart,  
Durst he but venture once abroad,  
In my own right I'd take your part,  
And show myself the mightier God.  
This huffing Honour domineers  
In breasts alone where he has place:  
But if true generous Love appears,  
The hector dares not show his face.  
Let me still languish and complain,  
Be most unhumanly denied:  
I have some pleasure in my pain,  
She can have none with all her pride.  
I fall a sacrifice to Love,  
She lives a wretch for Honour's sake;  
Whose tyrant does most cruel prove,  
The difference is not hard to make.  
Consider real Honour then,  
You'll find hers cannot be the same;  
'Tis noble confidence in men,  
In women, mean, mistrustful shame.

### **All My Past Life...**

All my past life is mine no more,  
The flying hours are gone,  
Like transitory dreams given o'er,  
Whose images are kept in store  
By memory alone.  
What ever is to come is not,  
How can it then be mine?  
The present moment's all my lot,  
And that as fast as it is got,  
Phyllis, is wholly thine.  
Then talk not of inconstancy,  
False hearts, and broken vows,  
If I, by miracle, can be,  
This live-long minute true to thee,  
'Tis all that heaven allows.

### **A Satyre Against Mankind**

Were I - who to my cost already am  
One of those strange, prodigious creatures, man -  
A spirit free to choose for my own share  
What sort of flesh and blood I pleased to wear,  
I'd be a dog, a monkey, or a bear,  
Or anything but that vain animal,  
Who is so proud of being rational.  
His senses are too gross; and he'll contrive  
A sixth, to contradict the other five;  
And before certain instinct will prefer  
Reason, which fifty times for one does err.  
Reason, an ignis fatuus of the mind,

Which leaving light of nature, sense, behind,  
 Pathless and dangerous wand'ring ways it takes,  
 Through Error's fenny bogs and thorny brakes;  
 Whilst the misguided follower climbs with pain  
 Mountains of whimseys, heaped in his own brain;  
 Stumbling from thought to thought, falls headlong down,  
 Into Doubt's boundless sea where, like to drown,  
 Books bear him up awhile, and make him try  
 To swim with bladders of Philosophy;  
 In hopes still to o'ertake the escaping light;  
 The vapour dances, in his dancing sight,  
 Till spent, it leaves him to eternal night.  
 Then old age and experience, hand in hand,  
 Lead him to death, make him to understand,  
 After a search so painful, and so long,  
 That all his life he has been in the wrong:  
 Huddled In dirt the reasoning engine lies,  
 Who was so proud, so witty, and so wise.  
 Pride drew him in, as cheats their bubbles catch,  
 And made him venture; to be made a wretch.  
 His wisdom did his happiness destroy,  
 Aiming to know that world he should enjoy;  
 And Wit was his vain, frivolous pretence  
 Of pleasing others, at his own expense.  
 For wits are treated just like common whores,  
 First they're enjoyed, and then kicked out of doors;  
 The pleasure past, a threatening doubt remains,  
 That frights th' enjoyer with succeeding pains:  
 Women and men of wit are dangerous tools,  
 And ever fatal to admiring fools.  
 Pleasure allures, and when the fops escape,  
 'Tis not that they're beloved, but fortunate,  
 And therefore what they fear, at heart they hate:  
 But now, methinks some formal band and beard  
 Takes me to task; come on sir, I'm prepared:  
*"Then by your Favour, anything that's writ  
 Against this jibing, jingling knack called Wit  
 Likes me abundantly: but you take care  
 Upon this point not to be too severe.  
 Perhaps my Muse were fitter for this part,  
 For I profess I can be very smart  
 On Wit, which I abhor with all my heart;  
 I long to lash it in some sharp essay,  
 But your grand indiscretion bids me stay,  
 And turns my tide of ink another way.  
 What rage Torments in your degenerate mind,  
 To make you rail at reason, and mankind  
 Blessed glorious man! To whom alone kind heaven  
 An everlasting soul hath freely given;  
 Whom his great maker took such care to make,  
 That from himself he did the image take;  
 And this fair frame in shining reason dressed,  
 To dignify his nature above beast.  
 Reason, by whose aspiring influence  
 We take a flight beyond material sense,  
 Dive into mysteries, then soaring pierce  
 The flaming limits of the universe,  
 Search heaven and hell, Find out what's acted there,  
 And give the world true grounds of hope and fear."*  
 Hold mighty man, I cry, all this we know,  
 From the pathetic pen of Ingelo;  
 From Patrck's Pilgrim, Sibbes' Soliloquies,  
 And 'tis this very reason I despise,

This supernatural gift that makes a mite  
 Think he's an image of the infinite;  
 Comparing his short life, void of all rest,  
 To the eternal, and the ever-blessed.  
 This busy, pushing stirrer-up of doubt,  
 That frames deep mysteries, then finds them out;  
 Filling with frantic crowds of thinking fools  
 The reverend bedlam's, colleges and schools;  
 Borne on whose wings each heavy sot can pierce  
 The limits of the boundless universe;  
 So charming ointments make an old witch fly,  
 And bear a crippled carcass through the sky.  
 'Tis the exalted power whose business lies  
 In nonsense and impossibilities.  
 This made a whimsical philosopher  
 Before the spacious world his tub prefer,  
 And we have modern cloistered coxcombs, who  
 Retire to think 'cause they have nought to do.  
 But thoughts are given for action's government;  
 Where action ceases, thought's impertinent:  
 Our sphere of action is life's happiness,  
 And he that thinks beyond thinks like an ass.  
 Thus, whilst against false reasoning I inveigh.  
 I own right reason, which I would obey:  
 That reason which distinguishes by sense,  
 And gives us rules of good and ill from thence;  
 That bounds desires. with a reforming will  
 To keep 'em more in vigour, not to kill. -  
 Your reason hinders, mine helps to enjoy,  
 Renewing appetites yours would destroy.  
 My reason is my friend, yours is a cheat,  
 Hunger calls out, my reason bids me eat;  
 Perversely. yours your appetite does mock:  
 This asks for food, that answers, 'what's o'clock'  
 This plain distinction, sir, your doubt secures,  
 'Tis not true reason I despise, but yours.  
 Thus I think reason righted, but for man,  
 I'll ne'er recant, defend him if you can:  
 For all his pride, and his philosophy,  
 'Tis evident: beasts are in their own degree  
 As wise at least, and better far than he.  
 Those creatures are the wisest who attain. -  
 By surest means. the ends at which they aim.  
 If therefore Jowler finds and kills the hares,  
 Better than Meres supplies committee chairs;  
 Though one's a statesman, th' other but a hound,  
 Jowler in justice would be wiser found.  
 You see how far man's wisdom here extends.  
 Look next if human nature makes amends;  
 Whose principles are most generous and just,  
 - And to whose morals you would sooner trust:  
 Be judge yourself, I'll bring it to the test,  
 Which is the basest creature, man or beast  
 Birds feed on birds, beasts on each other prey,  
 But savage man alone does man betray:  
 Pressed by necessity; they kill for food,  
 Man undoes man, to do himself no good.  
 With teeth and claws, by nature armed, they hunt  
 Nature's allowance, to supply their want.  
 But man, with smiles, embraces. friendships. Praise,  
 Inhumanely his fellow's life betrays;  
 With voluntary pains works his distress,  
 Not through necessity, but wantonness.

For hunger or for love they bite, or tear,  
 Whilst wretched man is still in arms for fear.  
 For fear he arms, and is of arms afraid:  
 From fear, to fear, successively betrayed.  
 Base fear, the source whence his best passions came.  
 His boasted honour, and his dear-bought fame.  
 The lust of power, to whom he's such a slave,  
 And for the which alone he dares be brave;  
 To which his various projects are designed,  
 Which makes him generous, affable, and kind.  
 For which he takes such pains to be thought wise,  
 And screws his actions, in a forced disguise;  
 Leads a most tedious life in misery,  
 Under laborious, mean hypocrisy.  
 Look to the bottom of his vast design,  
 Wherein man's wisdom, power, and glory join:  
 The good he acts. the ill he does endure.  
 'Tis all from fear, to make himself secure.  
 Merely for safety after fame they thirst,  
 For all men would be cowards if they durst.  
 And honesty's against all common sense,  
 Men must be knaves, 'tis in their own defence.  
 Mankind's dishonest: if you think it fair  
 Among known cheats to play upon the square,  
 You'll be undone.  
 Nor can weak truth your reputation save,  
 The knaves will all agree to call you knave.  
 Wronged shall he live, insulted o'er, oppressed,  
 Who dares be less a villain than the rest.  
 Thus sir, you see what human nature craves,  
 Most men are cowards, all men should be knaves;  
 The difference lies, as far as I can see.  
 Not in the thing itself, but the degree;  
 And all the subject matter of debate  
 Is only, who's a knave of the first rate  
 All this with indignation have I hurled  
 At the pretending part of the proud world,  
 Who, swollen with selfish vanity, devise,  
 False freedoms, holy cheats, and formal lies,  
 Over their fellow slaves to tyrannise.  
 But if in Court so just a man there be,  
 (In Court, a just man - yet unknown to me)  
 Who does his needful flattery direct  
 Not to oppress and ruin, but protect:  
 Since flattery, which way soever laid,  
 Is still a tax: on that unhappy trade.  
 If so upright a statesman you can find,  
 Whose passions bend to his unbiased mind,  
 Who does his arts and policies apply  
 To raise his country, not his family;  
 Nor while his pride owned avarice withstands,  
 Receives close bribes, from friends corrupted hands.  
 Is there a churchman who on God relies  
 Whose life, his faith and doctrine justifies  
 Not one blown up, with vain prelatic pride,  
 Who for reproofs of sins does man deride;  
 Whose envious heart makes preaching a pretence  
 With his obstreperous, saucy eloquence,  
 To chide at kings, and rail at men of sense;  
 Who from his pulpit vents more peevish lies,  
 More bitter railings, scandals, calumnies,  
 Than at a gossiping are thrown about  
 When the good wives get drunk, and then fall out.



None of that sensual tribe, whose talents lie  
 In avarice, pride, sloth, and gluttony.  
 Who hunt good livings; but abhor good lives,  
 Whose lust exalted, to that height arrives,  
 They act adultery with their own wives.  
 And ere a score of years completed be,  
 Can from the loftiest pulpit proudly see,  
 Half a large parish their own progeny.  
 Nor doting bishop, who would be adored  
 For domineering at the Council board;  
 A greater fop, in business at fourscore,  
 Fonder of serious toys, affected more,  
 Than the gay, glittering fool at twenty proves,  
 With all his noise, his tawdry clothes and loves.  
 But a meek, humble man, of honest sense,  
 Who preaching peace does practise continence;  
 Whose pious life's a proof he does believe  
 Mysterious truths which no man can conceive.  
 If upon Earth there dwell such god-like men,  
 I'll here recant my paradox to them,  
 Adores those shrines of virtue, homage pay,  
 And with the rabble world their laws obey.  
 If such there are, yet grant me this at least,  
 Man differs more from man than man from beast.

**Aphra Behn (1640-1689) The Disappointment** (courtesy of Representative Poetry Online)

ONE Day the Amorous Lisander,  
 By an impatient Passion sway'd,  
 Surpris'd fair Cloris, that lov'd Maid,  
 Who cou'd defend her self no longer ;  
 All things did with his Love conspire,  
 The gilded Planet of the Day,  
 In his gay Chariot, drawn by Fire,  
 War now descending to the Sea,  
 And left no Light to guide the World,  
 But what from Cloris brighter Eves was hurl'd.

In alone Thicket, made for Love,  
 Silent as yielding Maids Consent,  
 She with a charming Languishment  
 Permits his force, yet gently strove ?  
 Her Hands his Bosom softly meet,  
 But not to put him back design'd,  
 Rather to draw him on inclin'd,  
 Whilst he lay trembling at her feet;  
 Resistance 'tis to late to shew,  
 She wants the pow'r to sav -- Ah! what do you do?

Her bright Eyes sweat, and yet Severe,  
 Where Love and Shame confus'dly strive,  
 Fresh Vigor to Lisander give :  
 And whispering softly in his Ear,  
 She Cry'd -- Cease -- cease -- your vain desire,  
 Or I'll call out -- What wou'd you do ?  
 My dearer Honour, ev'n to you,  
 I cannot -- must not give -- retire,  
 Or take that Life whose chiefest part  
 I gave you with the Conquest of my Heart.

But he as much unus'd to fear,  
 As he was capable of Love,  
 The blessed Minutes to improve,

Kisses her Lips, her Neck, her Hair !  
Each touch her new Desires alarms !  
His burning trembling Hand he prest  
Upon her melting Snowy Breast,  
While she lay panting in his Arms !  
All her unguarded Beauties lie  
The Spoils and Trophies of the Enemy.

And now, without Respect or Fear,  
He seeks the Objects of his Vows ;  
His Love no Modesty allows :  
By swift degrees advancing where  
His daring Hand that Alter seiz'd,  
Where Gods of Love do Sacrifice ;  
That awful Throne, that Paradise,  
Where Rage is tam'd, and Anger pleas'd ;  
That Living Fountain, from whose Trills  
The melted Soul in liquid Drops distils.

Her balmy Lips encountering his,  
Their Bodies as their Souls are joyn'd,  
Where both in Transports were confin'd,  
Extend themselves upon the Moss.  
Cloris half dead and breathless lay,  
Her Eyes appear'd like humid Light,  
Such as divides the Day and Night;  
Or falling Stars, whose Fires decay ;  
And now no signs of Life she shows,  
But what in short-breath-sighs returns and goes.

He saw how at her length she lay,  
He saw her rising Bosom bare,  
Her loose thin Robes, through which appear  
A Shape design'd for Love and Play;  
Abandon'd by her Pride and Shame,  
She do's her softest Sweets dispence,  
Offring her Virgin-Innocence  
A Victim to Loves Sacred Flame ;  
Whilst th' or'e ravish'd Shepherd lies,  
Unable to perform the Sacrifice.  
Ready to taste a Thousand Joys,  
Thee too transported hapless Swain,  
Found the vast Pleasure turn'd to Pain :  
Pleasure, which too much Love destroys !  
The willing Garments by he laid,  
And Heav'n all open to his view ;  
Mad to possess, himself he threw  
On the defenceless lovely Maid.  
But oh ! what envious Gods conspire  
To snatch his Pow'r, yet leave him the Desire !

Natures support, without whose Aid  
She can no humane Being give,  
It self now wants the Art to live,  
Faintness it slacken'd Nerves invade :  
In vain th' enraged Youth assaid  
To call his fleeting Vigour back,  
No Motion 'twill from Motion take,  
Excess of Love his Love betray'd ;  
In vain he Toils, in vain Commands,  
Th' Insensible fell weeping in his Hands.

In this so Am'rous cruel strife,  
Where Love and Fate were too severe,  
The poor Lisander in Despair,  
Renounc'd his Reason with his Life.  
Now all the Brisk and Active Fire  
That should the Nobler Part inflame,  
Unactive Frigid, Dull became,  
And left no Spark for new Desire ;  
Not all her Naked Charms cou'd move,  
Or calm that Rage that had debauch'd his Love.

Cloris returning from the Trance  
Which Love and soft Desire had bred,  
Her tim'rous Hand she gently laid,  
Or guided by Design or Chance,  
Upon that Fabulous Priapus,  
That Potent God (as Poets feign.)  
But never did young Shepherdess  
(Garth'ring of Fern upon the Plain)  
More nimbly draw her Fingers back,  
Finding beneath the Verdant Leaves a Snake.

Then Cloris her fair Hand withdrew,  
Finding that God of her Desires  
Disarm'd of all his pow'rful Fires,  
And cold as Flow'rs bath'd in the Morning-dew.  
Who can the Nymphs Confusion guess ?  
The Blood forsook the kinder place,  
And strew'd with Blushes all her Face,  
Which both Disdain and Shame express ;  
And from Lisanders Arms she fled,  
Leaving him fainting on the gloomy Bed.

Like Lightning through the Grove she hies,  
Or Daphne from the Delphick God ;  
No Print upon the Grassie Road  
She leaves, t' instruct pursuing Eyes.  
The Wind that wanton'd in her Hair,  
And with her ruffled Garments plaid,  
Discover'd in the flying Maid  
All that the Gods e're made of Fair.  
So Venus, when her Love was Slain,  
With fear and haste flew o're the fatal Plain.

The Nymphs resentments, none but I  
Can well imagin, and Condole ;  
But none can guess Lisander's Soul,  
But those who sway'd his Destiny :  
His silent Griefs, swell up to Storms,  
And not one God, his Fury spares,  
He Curst his Birth, his Fate, his Stars,  
But more the Shepherdesses Charms ;  
Whose soft bewitching influence,  
Had Damn'd him to the Hell of Impotence.

**Aphra Behn, A Thousand Martyrs I Have Made** (courtesy of emule.com)

A thousand Martyrs I have made,  
All sacrific'd to my desire;  
A thousand Beauties have betray'd,  
That languish in resistless Fire.  
The untam'd Heart to hand I brought,  
And fixt the wild and wandring Thought.

I never vow'd nor sigh'd in vain  
But both, thô false, were well receiv'd.  
The Fair are pleas'd to give us pain,  
And what they wish is soon believ'd.  
And thô I talked of Wounds and Smart,  
Loves Pleasures only toucht my Heart.

Alone the Glory and the Spoil  
I always Laughing bore away;  
The Triumphs, without Pain or Toil,  
Without the Hell, the Heav'n of Joy.  
And while I thus at random rove  
Despise the Fools that whine for Love.

**Andrew Marvell (1621-1678) On Mr Milton's *Paradise Lost*** (courtesy of emule.com)

When I beheld the Poet blind, yet bold,  
In slender Book his vast Design unfold,  
Messiah Crown'd, Gods Reconcil'd Decree,  
Rebelling Angels, the Forbidden Tree,  
Heav'n, Hell, Earth, Chaos, All; the Argument  
Held me a while misdoubting his Intent,  
That he would ruine (for I saw him strong)  
The sacred Truths to Fable and old Song,  
(So Sampson groap'd the Temples Posts in spight)  
The World o'rewelming to revenge his Sight.  
Yet as I read, soon growing less severe,  
I lik'd his Project, the success did fear;  
Through that wide Field how he his way should find  
O're which lame Faith leads Understanding blind;  
Lest he perplex the things he would explain,  
And what was easie he should render vain.  
Or if a Work so infinite he spann'd,  
Jealous I was that some less skilful hand  
(Such as disquiet alwayes what is well,  
And by ill imitating would excell)  
Might hence presume the whole Creations day  
To change in Scenes, and show it in a Play.  
Pardon me, Mighty Poet, nor despise  
My causeless, yet not impious, surmise.  
But I am now convinc'd, and none will dare  
Within thy Labours to pretend a Share.  
Thou hast not miss'd one thought that could be fit,  
And all that was improper dost omit:  
So that no room is here for Writers left,  
But to detect their Ignorance or Theft.  
That Majesty which through thy Work doth Reign  
Draws the Devout, deterring the Profane.  
And things divine thou treats of in such state  
As them preserves, and Thee in violate.  
At once delight and horrour on us seize,  
Thou singst with so much gravity and ease;  
And above humane flight dost soar aloft,  
With Plume so strong, so equal, and so soft.  
The Bird nam'd from that Paradise you sing  
So never Flaps, but alwaies keeps on Wing.  
Where couldst thou Words of such a compass find?  
Whence furnish such a vast expense of Mind?  
Just Heav'n Thee, like Tiresias, to requite,  
Rewards with Prophesie thy loss of Sight.  
Well might thou scorn thy Readers to allure  
With tinkling Rhime, of thy own Sense secure;  
While the Town-Bays writes all the while and spells,  
And like a Pack-Horse tires without his Bells.

Their Fancies like our bushy Points appear,  
The Poets tag them; we for fashion wear.  
I too transported by the Mode offend,  
And while I meant to Praise thee, must Commend.  
Thy verse created like thy Theme sublime,  
In Number, Weight, and Measure, needs not Rhime.

**Jonathan Swift, The Lady's Dressing Room (1734)** (courtesy of Jack Lynch).

Five hours, (and who can do it less in?)  
By haughty Celia spent in dressing;  
The goddess from her chamber issues,  
Arrayed in lace, brocades, and tissues.

    Strephon, who found the room was void  
And Betty otherwise employed,  
Stole in and took a strict survey  
Of all the litter as it lay;  
Whereof, to make the matter clear,  
An inventory follows here.

    And first a dirty smock appeared,  
Beneath the arm-pits well besmeared.  
Strephon, the rogue, displayed it wide  
And turned it round on every side.  
On such a point few words are best,  
And Strephon bids us guess the rest;  
And swears how damnably the men lie  
    In calling Celia sweet and cleanly.  
Now listen while he next produces  
The various combs for various uses,  
    Filled up with dirt so closely fixt,  
No brush could force a way betwixt.  
A paste of composition rare,  
Sweat, dandruff, powder, lead and hair;  
A forehead cloth with oil upon't  
To smooth the wrinkles on her front.  
Here alum flower to stop the steams  
Exhaled from sour unsavory streams;  
There night-gloves made of Tripsy's hide,  
Bequeath'd by Tripsy when she died,  
With puppy water, beauty's help,  
Distilled from Tripsy's darling whelp;  
Here gallypots and vials placed,  
Some filled with washes, some with paste,  
Some with pomatum, paints and slops,  
And ointments good for scabby chops.  
Hard by a filthy basin stands,  
Fouled with the scouring of her hands;  
The basin takes whatever comes,  
The scrapings of her teeth and gums,  
A nasty compound of all hues,  
For here she spits, and here she spews.  
But oh! it turned poor Strephon's bowels,  
When he beheld and smelt the towels,  
Begummed, besmattered, and beslimed  
With dirt, and sweat, and ear-wax grimed.  
No object Strephon's eye escapes:  
Here petticoats in frowzy heaps;  
Nor be the handkerchiefs forgot  
All varnished o'er with snuff and snot.  
The stockings, why should I expose,  
Stained with the marks of stinking toes;  
Or greasy coifs and pinnars reeking,  
Which Celia slept at least a week in?

A pair of tweezers next he found  
To pluck her brows in arches round,  
Or hairs that sink the forehead low,  
Or on her chin like bristles grow.

The virtues we must not let pass,  
Of Celia's magnifying glass.  
When frightened Strephon cast his eye on't  
It shewed the visage of a giant.  
A glass that can to sight disclose  
The smallest worm in Celia's nose,  
And faithfully direct her nail  
To squeeze it out from head to tail;  
(For catch it nicely by the head,  
It must come out alive or dead.)

Why Strephon will you tell the rest?  
And must you needs describe the chest?  
That careless wench! no creature warn her  
To move it out from yonder corner;  
But leave it standing full in sight  
For you to exercise your spite.  
In vain, the workman shewed his wit  
With rings and hinges counterfeit  
To make it seem in this disguise  
A cabinet to vulgar eyes;  
For Strephon ventured to look in,  
Resolved to go through thick and thin;  
He lifts the lid, there needs no more:  
He smelt it all the time before.  
As from within Pandora's box,  
When Epimetheus oped the locks,  
A sudden universal crew  
Of humane evils upwards flew,  
He still was comforted to find  
That Hope at last remained behind;  
So Strephon lifting up the lid  
To view what in the chest was hid,  
The vapours flew from out the vent.  
But Strephon cautious never meant  
The bottom of the pan to grope  
And foul his hands in search of Hope.  
O never may such vile machine  
Be once in Celia's chamber seen!  
O may she better learn to keep  
"Those secrets of the hoary deep"!

As mutton cutlets, prime of meat,  
Which, though with art you salt and beat  
As laws of cookery require  
And toast them at the clearest fire,  
If from adown the hopeful chops  
The fat upon the cinder drops,  
To stinking smoke it turns the flame  
Poisoning the flesh from whence it came;  
And up exhales a greasy stench  
For which you curse the careless wench;  
So things which must not be exprest,  
When plumpt into the reeking chest,  
Send up an excremental smell  
To taint the parts from whence they fell,  
The petticoats and gown perfume,  
Which waft a stink round every room.

Thus finishing his grand survey,  
Disgusted Strephon stole away  
Repeating in his amorous fits,

Oh! Celia, Celia, Celia shits!

But vengeance, Goddess never sleeping,  
Soon punished Strephon for his peeping:  
His foul Imagination links  
Each dame he see with all her stinks;  
And, if unsavory odors fly,  
Conceives a lady standing by.  
All women his description fits,  
And both ideas jump like wits  
By vicious fancy coupled fast,  
And still appearing in contrast.

I pity wretched Strephon blind  
To all the charms of female kind.  
Should I the Queen of Love refuse  
Because she rose from stinking ooze?  
To him that looks behind the scene  
Satira's but some pocky queen.  
When Celia in her glory shows,  
If Strephon would but stop his nose  
(Who now so impiously blasphemes  
Her ointments, daubs, and paints and creams,  
Her washes, slops, and every clout  
With which he makes so foul a rout),  
He soon would learn to think like me  
And bless his ravished sight to see  
Such order from confusion sprung,  
Such gaudy tulips raised from dung.

**Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Account of the Court of George the First at his Accession** (Text courtesy of Richard Bear, University of Oregon)

When King George ascended the throne, he was surrounded by all his German ministers and playfellows male and female...The King's character may be comprised in very few words. In private life he would have been called an honest blockhead; and Fortune, that made him a king, added nothing to his happiness, only prejudiced his honesty, and shortened his days. No man was ever more free from ambition; he loved money, but loved to keep his own, without being rapacious of other men's. He would have grown rich by saving, but was incapable of laying schemes for getting; he was more properly dull than lazy, and would have been so well contented to have remained in his little town of Hanover, that if the ambition of those about him had not been greater than his own, we should never have seen him in England: and the natural honesty of his temper, joined with the narrow notions of a low education, made him look upon his acceptance of the crown as an act of usurpation, which was always uneasy to him. But he was carried by the stream of the people about him, in that, as in every other action of his life. He could speak no English, and was past the age of learning it. Our customs and laws were all mysteries to him, which he neither tried to understand, nor was capable of understanding if he had endeavoured it. He was passively good-natured, and wished all mankind enjoyed quiet, if they would let him do so. The mistress that followed him hither was so much of his own temper, that I do not wonder at the engagement between them. She was duller than himself, and consequently did not find out that he was so, and had lived in that figure at Hanover almost forty years (for she came hither at threescore), without meddling in any affairs of the electorate; content with the small pension he allowed her, and the honour of his visits when he had nothing else to do, which happened very often. She even refused coming hither at first, fearing that the people of England, who, she thought, were accustomed to use their kings barbarously, might chop off his head in the first fortnight; and had not love or gratitude enough to venture being involved in his ruin. And the poor man was in peril of coming hither without knowing where to pass his evenings; which he was accustomed to do in the apartments of women, free from business. But Madame Kilmansegg saved him from this misfortune. She was told that Mademoiselle Schulemberg scrupled this terrible journey; and took that opportunity of offering her service to his Majesty, who willingly accepted of it, though he did not offer to facilitate it to her by the payment of her debts, which made it very difficult for her to leave Hanover without the permission of her creditors. But she was a woman of wit and spirit, and knew very well of what importance this step was to her fortune. She got out of town in a disguise, and made the best of her way in a post-chaise to Holland, from which she embarked with the King, and arrived at the same time with him in England; which was enough to make her called his mistress; or at least so great a favourite that the whole court began to pay her uncommon respect...

She was both luxurious and generous, devoted to her pleasures, and seemed to have taken Lord Rochester's resolution of avoiding all sorts of self-denial...Her unlimited expenses had left her very little remaining, and she made what haste she could to make advantages of the opinion the English had of her power with the King, by receiving the presents that were made her from all quarters, and which she knew very well must cease when it was known that the King's idleness carried him to her lodgings without either regard for her advice, or affection for her person, which time and very bad paint had left without any of the charms that had once attracted him...

## Court of James II

I have not yet given the character of the Prince [of Wales, who became George II]. The fire of his temper appeared in every look and gesture; which, being unhappily under the direction of a small understanding, was every day throwing him upon some indiscretion. He was naturally sincere, and his pride told him that he was placed above constraint; not reflecting that a high rank carries along with it a necessity of a more decent and regular behaviour than is expected from those who are not set in so conspicuous a light. He was so far from being of that opinion, that he looked on all the men and women he saw as creatures he might kick or kiss for his diversion; and whenever he met with any opposition in those designs, he thought his opposers impudent rebels to the will of God, who created them for his use, and judged of the merit of all people by their ready submission to his orders, or the relation they had to his person. And in this view he looked upon the Princess as the most meritorious of her sex; and she took care to keep him in that sentiment by all the arts she was mistress of. He had married her by inclination; his good-natured father had been so complaisant to let him choose a wife for himself. She was of the house of Anspach, and brought him no great addition either of money or alliance; but was at that time esteemed a German beauty, and had that genius which qualified her for the government of a fool, and made her despicable in the eyes of all men of sense; I mean a low cunning, which gave her an inclination to cheat all the people she conversed with, and often cheated herself in the first place, by showing her the wrong side of her interest, not having understanding enough to observe that falsehood in conversation, like red on the face, should be used very seldom and very sparingly, or they destroy that interest and beauty they are designed to heighten.

Her first thought on her marriage was to secure to herself the sole and whole direction of her spouse; and to that purpose counterfeited the most extravagant fondness for his person; yet, at the same time, so devoted to his pleasures (which she often told him were the rule of all her thoughts and actions), that whenever he thought proper to find them with other women, she even loved whoever was instrumental to his entertainment, and never resented anything but what appeared to her a want of respect for him; and in this light she really could not help taking notice that the presents made to her on her wedding were not worthy of his bride, and at least she ought to have had all his mother's jewels. This was enough to make him lose all respect to his indulgent father. He downright abused his ministers, and talked impertinently to his old grandmother the Princess Sophia; which ended in such a coldness towards all his family as left him entirely under the government of his wife.

### **Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley. From Six Town Eclogues. SATURDAY. -- THE SMALL-POX. FLAVIA. 1715** (courtesy of the Electronic Text Centre, University of Virginia Library)

The wretched Flavia, on her couch reclined,  
Thus breath'd the anguish of a wounded mind,  
A glass revers'd in her right hand she bore,  
For now she shunn'd the face she sought before.  
"How am I chang'd! alas! how am I grown  
A frightful spectre to myself unknown!  
Where's my complexion? where my radiant bloom,  
That promis'd happiness for years to come?  
Then with what pleasure I this face survey'd!  
To look once more, my visits oft delay'd!  
Charm'd with the view, a fresher red would rise,  
And a new life shot sparkling from my eyes!  
"Ah! Faithless glass, my wonted bloom restore;  
Alas! I rave, that bloom is now no more!  
The greatest good the gods on men bestow,  
Ev'n youth itself, to me is useless now.  
There was a time (oh! that I could forget!)  
When opera-tickets pour'd before my feet;  
And at the Ring, where brightest beauties shine,  
The earliest cherries of the spring were mine.  
Witness, O Lilly; and thou, Motteux, tell,  
How much japan these eyes have made ye sell.  
With what contempt ye saw me oft despise  
The humble offer of the raffled prize;  
For at each raffle still each prize I bore,  
With scorn rejected, or with triumph wore!  
Now beauty's fled, and presents are no more!  
"For me the patriot has the House forsook,  
And left debates to catch a passing look:  
For me the soldier has soft verses writ:  
For me the beau has aim'd to be a wit.  
For me the wit to nonsense was betray'd;



The gamester has for me his dun delay'd,  
 And overseen the card he would have play'd.  
 The bold and haughty, by success made vain,  
 Aw'd by my eyes have trembled to complain:  
 The bashful 'squire, touch'd by a wish unknown,  
 Has dar'd to speak with spirit not his own:  
 Fir'd by one wish, all did alike adore;  
 Now beauty's fled, and lovers are no more!  
 "As round the room I turn my weeping eyes,  
 New unaffected scenes of sorrow rise.  
 Far from my sight that killing picture bear,  
 The face disfigure, and the canvas tear:  
 That picture which with pride I us'd to show,  
 The lost resemblance that upbraids me now.  
 And thou, my toilette! where I oft have sat,  
 While hours unheeded pass'd in deep debate  
 How curls should fall, or where a patch to place;  
 If blue on scarlet best became my face:  
 Now on some happier nymph your aid bestow;  
 On fairer heads, ye useless jewels, glow!  
 No borrow'd lustre can my charms restore;  
 Beauty is fled, and dress is now no more!  
 "Ye meaner beauties, I permit ye shine;  
 Go, triumph in the hearts that once were mine:  
 But, 'midst your triumphs with confusion know,  
 'Tis to my ruin all your charms ye owe.  
 Would pitying Heav'n restore my wonted mien,  
 Ye still might move unthought of and unseen:  
 But oh, how vain, how wretched is the boast  
 Of beauty faded, and of empire lost!  
 What now is left but, weeping, to deplore  
 My beauty fled, and empire now no more!  
 "Ye cruel chemists, what withheld your aid?  
 Could no pomatum save a trembling maid?  
 How false and trifling is that art ye boast!  
 No art can give me back my beauty lost.  
 In tears, surrounded by my friends, I lay  
 Mask'd o'er, and trembled at the sight of day;  
 Mirmillio came my fortune to deplore  
 (A golden-headed cane well carv'd he bore),  
 Cordials, he cried, my spirits must restore!  
 Beauty is fled, and spirit is no more!  
 "Galen, the grave officious Squirt was there.  
 With fruitless grief and unavailing care;  
 Machaon too, the great Machaon, known  
 By his red cloak and his superior frown;  
 And why, he cried, this grief and this despair?  
 You shall again be well, again be fair;  
 Believe my oath (with that an oath he swore);  
 False was his oath; my beauty was no more!  
 "Cease, hapless maid, no more thy tale pursue,  
 Forsake mankind, and bid the world adieu!  
 Monarchs and beauties rule with equal sway:  
 All strive to serve, and glory to obey:  
 Alike unpitied when depos'd they grow,  
 Men mock the idol of their former vow.  
 "Adieu! ye parks -- in some obscure recess,  
 Where gentle streams will weep at my distress,  
 Where no false friend will in my grief take part,  
 And mourn my ruin with a joyful heart;  
 There let me live in some deserted place,  
 There hide in shades this lost inglorious face.  
 Plays, operas, circles, I no more must view!

My toilette, patches, all the world adieu!"

**Lady Mary Chudleigh, To The Ladies.**

Ed. (text): Ian Lancashire. Text courtesy of Representative Poetry Online.

WIFE and servant are the same,  
But only differ in the name :  
For when that fatal knot is ty'd,  
Which nothing, nothing can divide :  
When she the word *obey* has said,  
And man by law supreme has made,  
Then all that's kind is laid aside,  
And nothing left but state and pride :  
Fierce as an eastern prince he grows,  
And all his innate rigour shows :  
Then but to look, to laugh, or speak,  
Will the nuptial contract break.  
Like mutes, she signs alone must make,  
And never any freedom take :  
But still be govern'd by a nod,  
And fear her husband as a God :  
Him still must serve, him still obey,  
And nothing act, and nothing say,  
But what her haughty lord thinks fit,  
Who with the power, has all the wit.  
Then shun, oh ! shun that wretched state,  
And all the fawning flatt'ers hate :  
Value yourselves, and men despise :  
You must be proud, if you'll be wise.

**Anna Laetitia Barbauld (1743-1825) The Rights of Women** (courtesy of Representative Poetry Online)

Yes, injured Woman! rise, assert thy right!  
Woman! too long degraded, scorned, opprest;  
O born to rule in partial Law's despite,  
Resume thy native empire o'er the breast!  
Go forth arrayed in panoply divine;  
That angel pureness which admits no stain;  
Go, bid proud Man his boasted rule resign,  
And kiss the golden sceptre of thy reign.  
Go, gird thyself with grace; collect thy store  
Of bright artillery glancing from afar;  
Soft melting tones thy thundering cannon's roar,  
Blushes and fears thy magazine of war.  
Thy rights are empire: urge no meaner claim,  
Felt, not defined, and if debated, lost;  
Like sacred mysteries, which withheld from fame,  
Shunning discussion, are revered the most.  
Try all that wit and art suggest to bend  
Of thy imperial foe the stubborn knee;  
Make treacherous Man thy subject, not thy friend;  
Thou mayst command, but never canst be free.  
Awe the licentious, and restrain the rude;  
Soften the sullen, clear the cloudy brow:  
Be, more than princes' gifts, thy favours sued;  
She hazards all, who will the least allow.  
But hope not, courted idol of mankind,  
On this proud eminence secure to stay;  
Subduing and subdued, thou soon shalt find  
Thy coldness soften, and thy pride give way.  
Then, then, abandon each ambitious thought,  
Conquest or rule thy heart shall feebly move,  
In Nature's school, by her soft maxims taught,

That separate rights are lost in mutual love.

**Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) Drury-lane Prologue Spoken by Mr. Garrick** (courtesy of Representative Poetry online)

When Learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes  
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakespear rose;  
Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,  
Exhausted worlds, and then imagin'd new:  
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,  
And panting Time toil'd after him in vain:  
His pow'rful strokes presiding Truth impress'd,  
And unresisted Passion storm'd the breast.

Then Jonson came, instructed from the school,  
To please in method, and invent by rule;  
His studious patience, and laborious art,  
By regular approach essay'd the heart;  
Cold Approbation gave the ling'ring bays,  
For those who durst not censure, scarce could praise.  
A mortal born he met the general doom,  
But left, like Egypt's kings, a lasting tomb.

The Wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,  
Nor wish'd for Jonson's art, or Shakespear's flame,  
Themselves they studied, as they felt, they writ,  
Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit.  
Vice always found a sympathetic friend;  
They pleas'd their age, and did not aim to mend.  
Yet bards like these aspir'd to lasting praise,  
And proudly hop'd to pimp in future days.  
Their cause was gen'ral, their supports were strong,  
Their slaves were willing, and their reign was long;  
Till Shame regain'd the post that Sense betray'd,  
And Virtue call'd Oblivion to her aid.

Then crush'd by rules, and weaken'd as refin'd,  
For years the pow'r of tragedy declin'd;  
From bard, to bard, the frigid caution crept,  
Till Declamation roar'd, while Passion slept.  
Yet still did Virtue deign the stage to tread,  
Philosophy remain'd, though Nature fled.  
But forc'd at length her ancient reign to quit,  
She saw great Faustus lay the ghost of wit:  
Exulting Folly hail'd the joyful day,  
And pantomime, and song, confirm'd her sway.

But who the coming changes can presage,  
And mark the future periods of the stage?  
Perhaps if skill could distant times explore,  
New Behns, new Durfoys, yet remain in store.  
Perhaps, where Lear has rav'd, and Hamlet died,  
On flying cars new sorcerers may ride.  
Perhaps, for who can guess th' effects of chance?  
Here Hunt may box, or Mahomet may dance.

Hard is his lot, that here by Fortune plac'd,  
Must watch the wild vicissitudes of taste;  
With ev'ry meteor of caprice must play,  
And chase the new-blown bubbles of the day.  
Ah! let not censure term our fate our choice,  
The stage but echoes back the public voice.  
The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,  
For we that live to please, must please to live.

Then prompt no more the follies you decry,  
As tyrants doom their tools of guilt to die;  
'Tis yours this night to bid the reign commence  
Of rescu'd Nature, and reviving Sense;

To chase the charms of Sound, the pomp of Show,  
For useful Mirth, and salutary Woe;  
Bid scenic Virtue form the rising age,  
And Truth diffuse her radiance from the stage.

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