

Irish Literature, 1750–1900

Thomas Sheridan (1719–1788)

Thomas Sheridan, probably born in Dublin but possibly in Co. Cavan, was the son of another Thomas Sheridan (clergyman and author) and the godson of Jonathan Swift (a close friend of the family). He may have been a descendant of Denis Sheridan (c.1610–83), a native Irish speaker who assisted in the translation of the Old Testament into Irish as part of Bishop Bedell's efforts to make the Church of Ireland accessible to Irish speakers. The younger Thomas Sheridan worked primarily in the theater, as actor, manager, playwright, and author of various tracts related to theater reform, but also published on other subjects, including *British Education: Or the Source of Disorders in Great Britain* (1755), *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* (1762), a dictionary (1780), and an edition of Swift's works (1784). Sheridan married Frances Chamberlaine in 1747, and they had a number of children. All those who survived into adulthood became published authors: playwrights Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Alicia Sheridan Lefanu, novelist (Anne) Elizabeth Lefanu, and essayist Charles Francis Sheridan (the sisters married Lefanu brothers).

Sheridan's career as a theater-manager in Dublin was generally successful, though notoriously marred by two riots spurred by political tensions. In 1747, Sheridan expelled a man named Kelly for assaulting an actress during a performance; Kelly's supporters rioted at Sheridan's theater two nights later on the grounds that Sheridan had exceeded his authority in disciplining a man of a higher social class. Another riot in 1754, after an actor failed to repeat a speech with political resonances, destroyed Sheridan's theater and left him financially ruined, a subject he deals with in his pamphlet, *An Humble Appeal to the Publick* (1758). His

Humble Appeal also included a proposal for a national theater in Dublin that would be publicly administered and ensure fair treatment of theater workers.

As a dramatist, Sheridan mostly adapted other authors' works, as was common in his day; he adapted, for instance, *Coriolanus* (1755) from texts by English authors William Shakespeare and James Thomson. His enduringly popular farce *The Brave Irishman: Or, Captain O'Blunder* was published and staged throughout the second half of the eighteenth century and compactly abbreviated in three double-columned pages for the *Cabinet of Irish Literature* a century later. Based on the English play *Squire Trelooby* (1704), itself an adaptation of Molière's *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* (1669), Sheridan's play differs from its predecessors in being concerned with challenging the pejorative theatrical figure of the "stage Irishman." The farce was reputedly written while Sheridan attended Trinity College Dublin in the mid-1730s, but it remained unpublished for some time. It also demonstrates Sheridan's continuing interest in language and dialect differences in the British Isles. Generally, O'Blunder's accent is represented by replacing "s" sounds with "sh," "wh" sounds with "ph," and sometimes by dropping "h's" or lengthening vowels: "shoul" for "soul," "phat" for "what," and "plaash" for "place." Sheridan detailed such variations in Irish pronunciation in his *Complete Dictionary of the English Language*, where he laments in general the lack of connection between spelling and sound in English.

Two distinct versions of the play appeared in print in the 1750s, reflecting regional adaptations of Sheridan's play: "as it is acted at the Theatre in Edinburgh" and "as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Smock-Alley" in Dublin.

The 1759 Dublin edition of the latter is the copy-text here; the Edinburgh version is available in *Ten English Farces* (Hughes and Scouten 1970). Among the significant differences are the inclusion of a prologue as well as a closing moral and epilogue in the Dublin version; the Edinburgh version ends on O'Blunder's song. In the Dublin version, Lucy has a more substantial and well-rounded role, and there is less emphasis on O'Blunder's Irish accent and idiom. The 1759 edition also corrects mistranscriptions of Irish in earlier editions, while contemporary British editions retain the error; a Belfast edition at the end of the century further improved the Irish-language content.

Further reading

- Burke, Helen M., *Riotous Performances: The Struggle for Hegemony in the Irish Theatre, 1712–1784*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003.
- Hughes, Leo and Scouten, A. H. eds., *Ten English Farces*. New York: University of Texas Press, 1970.
- Schneller, Beverly E., "No 'Brave Irishman' Need Apply: Thomas Sheridan, Shakespeare and the Smock-Alley Theater," in *Shakespeare and Ireland: History, Politics, Culture*, ed. Mark Thornton Burnett and Ramona Wray, 175–91. New York: Macmillan/St. Martin's Press, 1997.
- Sheldon, Esther, *Thomas Sheridan of Smock-Alley*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967.

A Proposal

From An Humble Appeal to the Publick (1758)

For saving the Stage in *Dublin* from the Ruin with which it is threatened, and establishing it on such a footing as may make it the Source of great Benefits to the Public.

N. B. Mr. Sheridan intended to have offered this Proposal to the Consideration of Parliament this Winter, but from his want of Knowledge of the Rules of the House, and thro' Hurry of Business, he delayed it till the Time was elapsed that any Money could be granted, but he makes no doubt of meeting with Success in his Application next Sessions.

After much Thought on the Subject, as well as much Experience, Mr. Sheridan thinks that he can lay down this as a Maxim.

That the Dublin Stage never will remain long in a flourishing Condition whilst it is the Property of a private Person.

The Constitution of the Stage of *Paris*, where the Theatre is the Property of the Public, and gives a certain Portion of the Profits to charitable Uses, seems to him the only one that would place that of *Dublin* on a good or durable Foundation.

The Actors there are divided into several Classes, according to their several Degrees of Merit. The Government is a kind of Commonwealth. And the Receipts are divided amongst the several Classes, according to their different Rates of Merit.

Upon a Vacancy in one Class, the best Actor in the next is elected to supply the Place.

Thus each Individual is interested in the Success of the Entertainment; their Incomes are larger or smaller in Proportion to the exerting or slackening of their united Endeavours to please. And their Advancement is the Reward of Merit, not Caprice.

In order to establish such a Theatre here, the following PROPOSAL was intended:

That Mr. *Sheridan's* Interest in the Theatres, during the Remainder of the Lease, be purchased by Parliamentary Bounty, upon such Terms as shall be judged reasonable; together with the Wardrobe, Scenes, and all other Properties whatsoever belonging to him, for the Use of the *Dublin Society*, whose Property they shall become.

That, in Consideration of such Purchase, Mr. *Sheridan* shall undertake, that the Sum of three Pounds *per* Night for every Play, or publick Representation whatsoever,

that shall be exhibited in the said Theatres, until the Expiration of said Lease, shall be paid in for the sole Use of the *Dublin Society*, to be by them employed in Premiums, for the Encouragement of the Liberal Arts, or for such other Purposes as they shall think meet. Which Sums of three Pounds *per* Night, according to the usual Number of times of performing, will probably produce an Income of near four hundred Pounds *per Annum*. He will farther undertake, that the Sum of one Pound *per* Night shall be laid aside for supplying the Wardrobe, whenever there may be any Deficiencies, and keeping the Scenery in repair, which, at a moderate Computation, may amount to one hundred and thirty Pounds *per Annum*: And considering the present State of the Scenery and Cloaths, that they are for the most Part new, will be a sufficient Provision to keep them to the Expiration of the Lease, in as good a Condition as they are at present.

Mr. *Sheridan* will farther undertake, that during that Term there shall be four Nights in each Season allotted for the sole Benefits and Advantage of four Publick Charities, viz. the Hospital of Incurables, the Lying-in Hospital, the Hospital in *Meath-Street*, and the Infirmary on the *Inns-quay*, without any Cost or Charge to them for the said Benefits. The Receipts of those four Nights will probably not fall short of five hundred Pounds; and thus the Theatre will yield a Fund of one thousand Pounds *per Annum*, to publick and charitable Uses.

If this Proposal is accepted, Mr. *Sheridan* will use his utmost Endeavours, and makes no doubt, but that he shall be able to execute some long-concerted Plans, whereby the Theatre of *Dublin* may be put upon a better footing than any in *Europe*; which may make it a pleasing School of Manners and Instruction to Youth; and a most rational Amusement to the Adult: Which may not only carry the Entertainments exhibited there to a much higher pitch of Perfection, than they can be brought to under the present Circumstances of the Stage, but also fix them upon a solid and durable Foundation.

The Brave Irishman: Or, Captain O'Blunder. *A Farce (1759)*

Prologue

Spoken by Capt. O'BLUNDER

*Oagh, brilliant Shircle, shease to vend your Spleen
On ush, poor Irish, 'till our Faults are sheen;
My Business here, I'd swear, you ne'er would guesh;
But come, – my Duty 'tish, first to confesh;
To keep you then no longer in Suspince,
To wed a fair One ish my whole Pretince.*

5

*Phoo, now d'ye hear – the Titter ne'er will shease,
I plainly see the Curl in each merry Faash.*

*Well then, 'tish strange phat 'Fronts we her reshave,
Ven tish by us the English Spalpeens¹ live.
Have we not fought your Battles – bravely too;
And yet, ungrateful Boors, all that wont do.*

10

Notes

THE BRAVE IRISHMAN

¹ *Spalpeen* (spailpín, Irish), rascal.

*Oagh, would the Heroes of Hibernia's Blood,
Who lately in her Caush uprightly stood,
But shay with me, they'll mix their noble Breed
With Britain's Daughters! then we should be freed.
Hark, the Bell rings – I therefore must obey,
So smooth your Brows, and calmly hear the Play.*

15

Dramatis Personae

Men
Capt. O'Blunder
Mr. Trader, a Merchant
Cheatwell
Sconce
Jerry, Captain's Sergeant
Dr. Clyster
Dr. Gallypot
Mons. Ragou

Women
Lucy, Daughter to Trader
Maid

SCENE LONDON
Mob, Keepers, &c.

ACT I, SCENE I
A Chamber
Lucy repeating

*'Tis not the Marriage, but the Man we hate;
'Tis there we reason and debate:
For give us but the Man we love,
We're sure the Marriage to approve.*

Well, this same barbarous Marriage-Act is a great Draw-back on the Inclinations of young People.²

MAID. Indeed and so it is, Mem; for my part I'm no Heiress, and therefore at my own Proposal! and if I was under the Restraint of the Act, and kept from Men, I wou'd run to Seed, so I wou'd – but, la! Mem, I had forgot to acquaint you, I verily believes that I saw your *Irish* Lover the Captain; and I conceits it was he and no other, so I do – and I saw him go into the Blue Postices,³ so I did.

LUCY. My *Irish* Lover, Miss Pert;⁴ I never so much as saw his Potato Face in all my born Days; but I hear he's a strange Animal of a Brute – Pray had he his Wings on? I suppose they saved him his Passage.

Notes

² The Marriage Act of 1753 required parental consent for marriage; it aimed to prevent elopements and secret marriages, particularly with heiresses. This reference was a late addition to the play.

³ The Blue Posts, a pub.

⁴ impertinent

MAID. Oh! Mem, you mistakes the *Irishmen*; they deny that they've *Wings*, but they all confess and boast of their *Tails*.

LUCY. Oh Tawdry! but see who's at the Door. [*Exit, and return with*

Cheatwell.

Miss! Your most humble and obedient – I came to acquaint you of our Danger: Our common Enemy is just imported hither, and is enquiring for your Father's House thro' every Street – The *Irish Captain*, in short, is come to *London*; such a Figure! and so attended by the Rabble –

LUCY. I long to see him – we love Variety; and *Irishmen*, I hear, are not so despicable; besides, the Captain may be misrepresented. [*Aside.*] Mr. *Cheatwell*, you know my Father's Design is to have as many Suitors as he can, in order to have a Choice of them all.

CHEAT. I have nothing but your Professions and Sincerity to depend on – Oh, here's my trusty Mercury.

Enter Sconce.

So – Well, have you dogg'd the Captain?

SCONCE. Yes, yes, I left him snug at the *Blue Posts*; he's just pat for our Purpose, easily humm'd: as simple and as undesigning as we would have him. Well, and what do you propose?

CHEAT. Propose! why, to drive him back to his native Bogs as fast as possible.

LUCY. Oh! Mr. *Cheatwell* – pray let's have a Sight of the *Creature* –

CHEAT. Oh! Female Curiosity – Why, Child, he'd frighten thee – he's above six Feet high –

LUCY. A fine Size – I like a tall Man. [*Aside.*

SCONCE. A great huge Back and Shoulders.

LUCY. We Women love Length and Breadth in Proportion. [*Aside.*

SCONCE. Wears a great long Sword, which he calls his *Andreferara*. –

LUCY. I hear the *Irish* are naturally brave –

SCONCE. And carries a large oaken Cudgel, which he calls his *Shillela*.

LUCY. Which he can make use of on Occasions, I suppose. [*Aside.*

SCONCE. Add to this a great Pair of Jackboots, a *Cumberland Pinch* to his Hat, an old red Coat, and a damn'd Potato Face.

LUCY. He must be worth seeing truly –

CHEAT. Well, my dear Girl, be constant, wish me Success; for I shall so hum, so roast, and so banter this same *Irish Captain*, that he'll scarce wish himself in *London* again these seven Years to come.

LUCY. About it – Adieu – I hear my Father. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II

A Street

Enter Captain O'Blunder and Jerry.

CAPT. And so you tells me, Chergeant, that *Terence M'Gloodtery* keeps a Goon?

SERJ. Yes, Sir.

CAPT. Monomundioul! but if I catches any of these Spalpeen Brats keeping a Goon to destroy the Game, but I will have 'em chot first, and phippt thorough the Regiment afterwards.⁵

SERJ. One wou'd think that they should be whipp'd first, and then shot.

CAPT. Well, isn't it the same Thing? Fat the Devil magnifies⁶ that? – 'Tis but phipping and shooting all the time – 'Tis the same Thing in the End, sure, after all your Cunning, but still you'll be a Wiseacre: But that *Terence M'Gloodtery* is an old Pocher, he shoots all the Rabbits in the Country to stock his own Burrough with 'em.

Enter a Mob who stare at him.

1ST MOB. Twig his Boots.

2D MOB. Smoke his Sword, &c. &c.

CAPT. Well, you Scoundrels, did you never see an *Irish* Shentleman before?

Enter Sconce.

SCONCE. O! fie! Gentlemen, are you not asham'd to mock a Stranger after this rude Manner.

CAPT. This is a shivil Short of a little Fellow enough. [*Aside.*]

SCONCE. If he is an *Irishman*; you may see by his Dress and Behaviour, that he is a Gentleman.

CAPT. Yesh, you Shons of Whores, don't you see by my Dress and Behaviour that I'm a Shentleman-Stranger – By my Shoul if I take *Shillela* to you, I'll make you all smoke. [*Mob runs off.*]

[*To Sconce*] Shir, your humble Sharvant; you seem to be a shivil mannerly Shentleman, and I shall be glad to be gratify'd with your nearer Acquaintance. [*Salute.*]

Enter Cheatwell.

CHEAT. Captain *O'Blunder*; Sir, you're extremely welcome to *London* – Sir, I'm your most sincere Friend and devoted humble Servant. –

CAPT. Yara! then how well every body knows me in *London* – to be sure they read of my Name in the Papers, and they know my Faash ever since. – Shir, your affected humble Sharvant. [*Salute.*]

CHEAT. Well, and Captain, tell us, how long are you arrived; I hope you had a good Passage?

CAPT. By my Shoul, my own Bones are shore after it – We were on the Devil's own Turnpike for eight and forty Hours – to be sure, we were all in a comical Pickle. – 'Twas Old Nick's Race Horse we rode: and tho' I bid the Landlord of the Ferry-boat to stop it, he took no more Notice of me, than if I was one of the Spalpeens that was going over to reap the Harvest.

CHEAT. No, Captain! – The unmannerly Fellow; and what brought you to *London*?

CAPT. Faith, my dear Jewel, I came in the Stage-Coach from *Chester*.

CHEAT. I mean, what Business?

Notes

⁵ *Monomundioul*, monumental; *goon*, gun.

⁶ signifies; see R. B. Sheridan's Malaprop in *The Rivals* (1775) for similar wordplay.

CAPT. How damn'd inquisitive they are here! [*Aside.*] but I'll be as cunning as no Man alive. By my Shoul, my Jewel, I am going over to *Whirginny*⁷ to beat the *Frinch* – They say they have driven our Countrymen out of their Plantaations; by my Shoul, my Jewel, if our Troops get vorse among them, we'll cut them all in Pieces, and then bring 'em over Prisoners of War besides.

CHEAT. Indeed, Captain, you are come upon an honourable Expedition – but pray, how is the old Gentleman your Father? I hope you left him in good Health?

CAPT. Oh! by my Shoul, he's very well, my Jewel; for he's dead these four Years.

CHEAT. And the old Gentleman, your Uncle.

CAPT. My Uncle! – You 'mean my Shister's Husband, you Fool you, that's my Brother-in-law –

CHEAT. Ay, a handsome Man –

CAPT. Ha, ha, a handsome Man? ay, for he's a damn'd crooked Fellow; he's crooked shoulder'd, and has a Hump upon his Nose, and a Pair of Huckle Backs upon his Shins, if you call that handsome – Ha, ha, ha.

CHEAT. And pray is that merry, joking Gentleman alive still – He that used to make us laugh so – Mr. – Mr. – a

CAPT. Phoo, I'll tell you who you mean – You mean *Sheela Shaghnessy's* Husband the Exshiseman.

CHEAT. The very same.

CAPT. Oh! my dear Jewel, he's as merry as my Lord Chief Joker in *Dublin*; tho' he's not very wise phin I'm by; for I took him down – Ara, my Jewel, I'll tell you the whole Story – We took a Walk together, and the Wind was very high, considering 'twas a fine calm Morning – 'Twas in our Back going, but, by my Shoul, as we return'd, it was in our Faash coming home – and yet I cou'd never persuade him that the Wind was turn'd.

CHEAT. Oh the Fool –

CAPT. Ara, so I told him, my Jewel; you great Oaf, says I – If the Wind blows in your Back going, and blows in your Faash coming, sure the Wind is turn'd – No, if I was to preach, and to preach, till last Year come Twelvemonth, I cou'd not dissuade him that the Wind was turn'd.

CHEAT. He had not common Sense – Well, and does the old Church stand where it did?

CAPT. The old Church – the Devil a Church within ten Mile of us. –

CHEAT. I'm sure there was a kind of an old Building like a Church or a Castle. –

CAPT. Phoo, my Jewel, I know what you call a Church – by my Shoul 'tis old lame *Will Hurley's* Mill you mean. [*Talk aside.*]

Enter Sconce with Monsieur Ragou.

SCONCE. Consider, Monsieur, he's your Rival, and is come purely, and with an Intent to rob you of your Mistress.

MONS. Is he – Le Fripon – Le grand Fripon!⁸ Parblieu, me no indure dat! icy l'Epée⁹ – vat you call – my Sword – Est bien assuré¹⁰ – he may take my Vord for dat. –

SCONCE. And he's the greatest of all Cowards – tho' he carries that great swaggering broad Sword – believe me, Monsieur, he wou'd not fight a Cat – he'd run away if you drew upon him. –

Notes

⁷ Virginia. Likely to be a reference to King George's War (1744–8), part of a series of conflicts between Britain and France that reached the American colonies in the 1740s and extended into the Seven Years' War.

⁸ The rogue – the great rogue.

⁹ Here is my sword.

¹⁰ Be well assured.

MONS. You be bien assuré that he be de grand Coward – Mon Ami – Eh bien – vel den – I'll have his Blood – my heart dancé de pit a-pat. [*Aside.*] Je n'avois pas le Courage. I have not de good Courage.¹¹

SCONCE. Tut, Man, only affront him – go up to him.

MONS. Me sal shew him de bon Adresse – Helas – [*goes up to the Captain*] Monsieur le Capitaine vous êtes le grand Fripon.¹² –

CAPT. *Wel gelun a gud*, have you any *Irish*?¹³

MONS. *Irelande!* me be no such outlandish Country: – You smell of de Potatoe. –

CAPT. Do I – by my Shoul I did not taasht a Praty since I left *Ireland*; may be he has a mind to put the Front upon me. [*To Cheatwell.*]

CHEAT. It looks like it, very like it, Captain.

CAPT. Faith, my Jewel, I don't know a more peaceable Companion than *Andreferara* here – [*shewing his Sword.*] but if he's provok'd – he's no Slouch at it – do you mean to front me, you *French Boogre* – Eh –

MONS. Affront – you be de Teague, de vild *Irishman* – de Potato Face – me no think it vorth my while to notice you. Otez-vous, je dis – go about your Business. –

CAPT. Oh, ho, are you there? – come out, my trusty *Andreferara* – here take *Shillela* – [*Gives his Cudgel to Cheatwell.*]

SCONCE. Draw, for he won't fight. [*To the Frenchman.*]

MONS. He be de terrible Countenance – he be fort enragé, dev'lish angry.

CAPT. Come on, you Soup Maigre.¹⁴ [*They fight – Monsieur falls.*]

CAPT. After that *you're* easy – who smells of Prats now? you Refugee Son of a Whore – Affront an *Irish Shentleman!*

SCONCE. The Man's dead.

CAPT. Is he? – what magnifies that; I kill'd him in the fair duelling Way.

CHEAT. But, Captain, 'tis Death by the Law to duel in *England* – and this Place is not so safe a Place for you – I'm heartily sorry for this Accident.

CAPT. Ara, my Jewel, they don't mind it in *Ireland* one Trawneen.

CHEAT. Come, come, Captain, safe's the Word – the Street will be soon alarmed – you can come to my House till the Danger's over – and I will get you Bail.

CAPT. By my Shoul, I believe 'tis the best Way, for fear of the Boners.

CHEAT. Here's my Friend will shew you the Way to my House; I'll be with you in a Minute. [*Exit Captain with Sconce.*]

CHEAT. Are you dead, Monsieur? Eveillez-vois – get up Man. [*Monsieur rises.*]

MONS. Parbleu – ille avoit de long Rapier¹⁵ – he be de terrible *Irishman* – 'tis well me fall in time, or he make me fall so dat me never resusciter¹⁶ – never get up again.

CHEAT. Well, I'm glad there's no more Mischief done –

Come, never mind the *Irishman* a Rush,

You and the Captain shall have t'other Brush.

MONS. Parblieu – me kiss de Book – me just have swore,

Never to fight an *Irishman*, no more. [*Exeunt.*]

Notes

¹¹ Ragou translates himself.

¹² Alas . . . Captain, you are a great rogue.

¹³ O'Blunder translates himself. Eighteenth-century English and Scottish editions, as well as pre-1759 Dublin editions, print this as "Well, gelun a gud," but "wel" is the Irish verb "bhfuil" not the English word "Well." Christopher Murray gives O'Blunder's phrase in modern Irish spelling: "an bhfuil

Gaelainn agat?" See Christopher Murray (ed.), "Drama, 1690–1800," in *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* (Derry: Field Day, 1991), 1: 535n.

¹⁴ weak soup

¹⁵ Of course! He has a long sword.

¹⁶ revive

SCENE III

*A Mad-house**Enter Captain and Sconce.*

SCONCE. Captain, this is your Cousin's House: I'll go and get proper Things for your Accommodation – Sir, your humble Servant for a Moment or so – give me your Things. [*Takes his Sword and Cudgel.*]

CAPT. Shir, your most humble Sharvant. [*Looks about*] Faith my Cousin's House is a brave large Place – tho' it is not so very well furnished – but I suppose the Maid was cleaning out the Rooms: So – who are these now – Some Acquaintance of my Cousin's, to be sure.

*Enter Dr. Clyster and Dr. Gallypot.*¹⁷

[*Both salute the Captain.*]

CAPT. Shentlemen, your most humble Sharvant – but where's my Cousin?

CLYST. His Cousin – what does he mean? [*To Dr. Gallypot.*]

GALLY. What shou'd a Madman mean? Sir, we come to treat you in a regular Manner.

CAPT. O, dear Shentlemen, 'tis too much Trouble – you need not be over regular, a single joint of Meat, and a good Glass of Ale, will be a very good Treat without any needless Expences.

CLYST. Do you mind that Symptom – the canine Appetite.

CAPT. Nine Appetites – no, my Jewel; I have an Appetite like other People; a Couple of Pounds will serve me if I was ever so hungry – phat the Devil do they talk of nine Appetites; do they think I'm a Cat, that have as many Stomachs as Lives.

GALLY. He looks a little wild, Brother.

CAPT. Fat! are you Brothers?

BOTH. Pray, Sir, be seated; we shall examine methodically into the Nature of your Case.

[*They sit – Captain in the Middle – they feel his Pulse – he stares at them.*]

CAPT. Fat de devil do they mean by taking me by the Wrists – may-be 'tis the Fashion of Compliment in *London*.

CLYST. Brother, you plainly perceive that the Systole and Diastole are obstructed.

CAPT. My Piss-hole and Arse-hole – Fat the Devil ails them? Eh! sure dey're mad.

GALLY. First, Brother, let us examine the Symptoms.

CAPT. By my Shoul, the Fellows are Fools.

CLYST. Pray, Sir, how do you rest?

CAPT. In a good Feather-bed, my Jewel – and sometimes I take a Nap in an Arm-chair.

CLYST. But do you sleep sound?

CAPT. Faith I sleep and snore all Night; and when I awake in the Morning, I find myself fast asleep.

GALLY. The *Cerebrum* or *Cerebellum* is affected.

CAPT. The Devil a Sir Abram, or Bell either, I mind.

GALLY. How do you eat, Sir?

Notes

¹⁷ *Clyster* means enema, and *gallypot* (or *gallipot*) is a pot for medicines.

- CAPT. Width my Mouth – how the Devil shou’d I eat, d’ye think.
- CLYST. Pray, Sir, have you a good Stomach, d’ye eat heartily?
- CAPT. Oh, my Jewel, I’m no Slouch at that, tho’ a clumsy Beef-stake, or the Leg and Arm of a Turkey, with a Griskin under the Oxter wou’d sharve my Turn.¹⁸
- GALLY. Do you generally drink much?
- CAPT. Oh, my Jewel, a Couple of Quarts of Ale and Porter wou’d not choke me; but fat the Devil magnifies so many Questions about eating and drinking – if you have a mind to order any thing, do it as soon as you can, for I am almost famish’d.
- CLYST. I am for treating him regularly, methodically, and secundum Artem.¹⁹
- CAPT. Secundum Fartem – I don’t see any Sign of treating at all – Ara, my Jewels, send for a Mutton Chop, and don’t trouble yourselves about my Stomach.
- CLYST. I shall give you my Opinion, concerning this Case, Brother – *Galen* says.²⁰
- CAPT. *Wel gelun a gud?*
- CLYST. I say that *Galen* is of Opinion, that in all adust Complexions.²¹
- CAPT. Well, and who has a dusty Complexion?
- CLYST. A little Patience, Sir.
- CAPT. I think I have a great deal of Patience; that People can’t eat a Morsel without so many impertinent Questions.
- CLYST. *Qui habet vultum Adustum,
Habet caninum Gustum.*²²
- CAPT. I’m sure ’tis an ugly Custom to keep a Man fasting so long after pretending to treat him.
- GALLY. Ay, Brother, but *Hippocrates* differs from *Galen* in this Case.²³
- CAPT. Well, but my Jewels, let there be no Difference, nor falling out between Brodthers about me, for a small Matter will sharve my Turn.
- CLYST. Sir, you break the Thread of our Discourse; I was observing that in gloomy opaque Habits, the Rigidity of the Solids causes a continual Friction in the Fluids, which, by being constantly impeded, grow thick and glutinous, by which Means they cannot enter the capillary Vessels, nor the other finer Ramifications of the Nerves.
- GALLY. Then, Brother, from your Position, it will be deducible that the *Primae Viae* are first to be cleared, which must be effected by frequent Emeticks.²⁴
- CLYST. Sudorificks.
- GALLY. Catharticks.
- CLYST. Pneumaticks.
- GALLY. Restoratives.
- CLYST. Corrosives.
- GALLY. Narcoticks.
- CLYST. Cephalicks.

Notes

¹⁸ *Clumsy* means cold, *griskin* is a cut of pork, and *oxter* is the underside of an arm.

¹⁹ “According to the rules of art,” here the skilled work of preparing medicines.

²⁰ Galen, second-century Greek physician whose ideas influenced European medicine until the Enlightenment. In this model, the human body is governed by humors – in Galen, they are choleric, melancholic, phlegmatic, and sanguine – which in excess cause disease. Cures purge excesses to restore balance, as in phlebotomy, the surgical opening of a vein to draw blood.

²¹ An *adust complexion* refers to a patient who is sick because of dryness, in Galenic terms.

²² These Latin lines suggest that someone with an *adust* humor will also have a dog’s appetite, perhaps implying that the Captain’s stomach is growling.

²³ Hippocrates (460–380 BCE), physician and early thinker on medical ethics.

²⁴ *Primae Viae* are “primary pathways.” The doctors then list a series of medicines, beginning with purgatives – *emeticks* and *sudorificks*.

GALLY. Pectorals.

CLYST. Stypticks.

GALLY. Specificks.

CLYST. Causticks.

CAPT. How naturally they answer one another, like the Parish Minister and the Clerk – by my Shoul, Jewels, this Gibberish will never fill a Man’s Belly.

CLYST. And thus to speak *Summatim*, and *Articulatim*, or categorically, to recapitulate the several Remedies in the Aggregate, the Emeticks will clear the first Passages, and restore the Viscera to their pristine Tone, and regulate their lost peristaltick or vermicular Motion; so that from the Oesepagus to the Rectum I am for potent Emeticks.

GALLY. And next for Sudorificks, as they open the Pores, or rather the porous Continuity of the cutaneous Dermis and Epidermis: thence to convey the noxious and melancholy Humours of the Blood.

CLYST. With Catharticks to purge him.

GALLY. Pneumaticks to scourge him.

CLYST. Narcoticks to doze him.

GALLY. Cephalicks to poze him.

CAPT. These are some of the Dishes they are to treat me with – Why, my Jewels, there’s no need for all this Cookery – upon my Shoul this is to be a grand Entertainment. Well, they’ll have their own Way.

CLYST. Suppose we use Phlebotomy, and take from him thirty Ounces of Blood.

CAPT. Flea my Bottom, d’ye say?

GALLY. His Eyes roll – call in the Keepers. [*Enter Keepers.*]

CAPT. Flea my Bottom – Oh, my *Andreferara* and *Shillela*, I want ye now – but here’s a Chair – Flea my Bottom – Ye Sons of Whores – ye Giberish Scoundrels. [*Drives them out.*]

Oh! this Son of a Whore of a Cousin of mine, to bring me to these Thieves to flea my Bottom – If I meet him, I’ll flea his Bottom. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV

The Street
Enter Serjeant.

I have been seeking my Master every where, and cannot find him; I hope nothing has happened to him – I think that was one of the Gentlemen I saw with him.

Enter Sconce.

Sir, Sir, pray did you see the Captain, my Master, Captain *O’Blunder*, the *Irish Gentleman*?

SCONCE. Not I, indeed, my Friend – I left him last with Mr. *Cheatwell* – I suppose they’re taking a Bottle together – Oh, No! here’s the Captain.

Enter Captain.

CAPT. Oh! my dear Friend, I had like to be lost, to be ruined by that Scoundrel my Cousin – Well, I’m so out of Breath, I ran away with my Life from the

Thieves – You know you left me at my Cousin's House – Well, I walk'd about for some Time, to be sure I thought it an odd sort of a House, when I saw no Furniture – There I expected my Cousin every Moment; and, dear Honey, there came in two Bird-lime Sons of Whores, with great Whigs – they look'd like Conjurors and Fortune-tellers – one takes hold of one of my Wrists, and the other catches hold of my other Wrist; I thought by way of Complement. I sat down betwixt them; did they chatter such Gibberish, like a Couple of old Baboons; and all this Discourse was conchaarning me – they talk'd at first of treating me, and ask'd me, Had I a good Stomach? – one of 'em said, I had nine Appetites; but at length, my Jewels, what shou'd come of the Treat, but they agreed before my Face to flea my Bottom – Oh! if I tell you a Word of Lie, I'm not here – My Dear, they calls in the Keepers to tie me; I up with the Chair; for I gave you my *Shillela* and *Andreferara*, and drove them out, and made my Escape.

SCONCE. I am sorry to see that your Cousin has behaved so rudely towards you; but any thing that lies in my Power –

CAPT. Oh! Sir, you're a very worthy Shentleman; but, Cherjeant, I must go to see Mr. *Trader* the Merchant, and his fair Daughter. – Has the Taylor brought home my Clothes?

SERJ. Yes, Sir, and the old Gentleman expects you immediately, and sent a Man in Livery for you. –

CAPT. Come, my good Friend, I won't part with you – I'll step to my Lodgings, and just slip on my Clothes, that I may pay my due Regards to my Mishdress. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V

The Madhouse Cheatwell, Clyster, and Gallypot.

CHEAT. I'm sorry for this Accident.

CLYST. In troth, Mr. *Cheatwell*, he was the most furious Madman that ever I met with during the whole Course of my Practice.

GALLY. I am now surpris'd how he sat so long quiet.

CHEAT. He'll run riot about the Streets; but I hope he'll be taken – Oh! here's *Sconce*.

Enter Sconce.

Well, what News of the Captain?

SCONCE. I just ran to let you know of his Motions; he is preparing to dress, in order to pay a Visit to Miss *Lucy*, and to pay his Respects to *Trader*; and worse News for you, 'tis whisper'd on *Change*,²⁵ that *Trader* is broke.

CHEAT. If that shou'd fall out so, I shall easily resign my Pretensions to the Captain. 'Twas *Lucy's* Purse, and not her Beauty, that I courted.

SCONCE. I must run back to the Captain, and keep in with him, to serve a Turn; do you at a Distance watch us, and proceed accordingly. [*Exit.*]

CHEAT. Well, Gentlemen, I shall take care to acknowledge your Trouble the first Time I see you again; so adieu. [*Exeunt.*]

Notes

²⁵ The stock exchange.

SCENE VI

The Captain's Lodgings

CAPT. Arrah but who the Divil do you think I met Yesterday full but in the Street but
Theady Shaghmassy?

SERJ. Well, and how is he?

CAPT. Arrah staay till I tell you; he wash at todther Side of the Way, and when I came
up, it wash not him. Tell me, dosh my new Regimentals become me?

SERJ. Yes indeed, Sir, I think they do.

CAPT. This Pocket is too high; I must be forced to stoop for my Snuff-box.

Enter Sconce.

Ha! upon my Word, Captain, you look as spruce as a young Bridegroom.

CAPT. All in good Time – and does it fit easy?

SCONCE. Easy! Sir, it fits like your Shirt.

CAPT. I think it's a little too wide here in the Sleeve: I'm afraid the Fellow hasn't left
Cloth enough to take it in; tho' I can't blame the Fellow neither; for I was not by
when he took Measure of me – Cherjeant, here, go, take this Sixpence Halfpenny,
and buy me a Pair of phite Gloves.

SCONCE. I don't think you can get a Pair for Sixpence.

CAPT. Why, how much will the Leatherman have?

SCONCE. Two Shillings.

CAPT. Two Thirteens!

SERJ. Indeed, Sir, you won't get them less in *London*.

CAPT. Not less than Two Thirteens! *Monomondioul!* but I'd rather my Hands shou'd go
barefoot all the Days of their Lives, than give Two Thirteens for a Pair of Gloves –
Come, come along, I'll go without 'em; my Mishtriss must excuse me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to Trader's House**Enter Trader and Lucy.*

TRA. Well, Daughter, I have been examining into the Circumstances of *Cheatwell*, and
find he is not worth a Six-pence; and, as for your *French Lover*, he is some run-away
Dancing-master or Hair-cutter from *Paris*; so that really, among them all, I cannot
find any one to come up to your *Irish Lover*, either for Birth, Fortune, or Character.

LUCY. Sir, you're the best Judge in the disposing of me; and indeed I have no real *Tendre*
for any one of them – As to the *Irish Captain*, I have not seen him as yet.

TRA. You'll see him presently; I sent to his Lodgings, and expect him every Moment –
Oh! here's Monsieur.

Enter Monsieur Ragou.

TRA. Well, Monsieur, I have been trying my Daughter's Affections in Regard to you,
and as she is willing to be guided by me in this Affair, I wou'd willingly know by

what visible Means you intend to maintain her like a Gentlewoman, as she is both by Birth and Education?

MONS. Me have de grand Acquaintance with the Beau Monde;²⁶ and, si vous plais,²⁷ to do me the Honour of making me your Son-in-Law, me transact your Negotiations with all possible Care and Belle Air.²⁸

Enter Captain O'Blunder, &c.

TRA. You're welcome to my House – Sir, this is my Daughter – this, Child, is Captain O'Blunder, whom I hope you will receive as he deserves.

CAPT. Fairest of Creatures, will you gratify me with a Taste of your sweet delicate Lips. [Kisses.] By my Shoul a neat Creature, and a good Bagooragh Girl – Oh, oh! I see my *Frenchman*! and, Faith, I have a Praty ready for him now.

MONS. Oh! Le Diable²⁹ – he espy me – me better go off while I am well.

CAPT. [*goes up to Monsieur.*] I thought, Monsieur *Ragou*, that you were dead – Do I smell of the Praty now, you Soupe Maigre Son of a *French* Boogre.

TRA. The Captain has a Mind to be merry with the *Frenchman*.

CAPT. By my Shoul, my Jewel, I have got a Praty for you now – here – eat it. Eat this – Oh oh, come forth. [*Draws.*] Eat that Praty this Minute. I'm sure 'tis better nor your Garlick nor Ingyons³⁰ in *France*. [*Frenchman eats it.*]

Enter a Servant to Trader.

SERV. Oh! Sir – there are certain Accounts come – but these Letters will better inform you.

TRA. [*reads*] Oh, Captain, I am ruin'd, undone – broke –

CAPT. Broke! what have you broke?

TRA. Oh! Sir, my Fortune's broke; I am not a Penny above a Beggar.

MONS. Oh! den me be off de Amour – me have no Dealings with Beggars; me have too many of de Beggar in my own Country; so me better slip away in good Time. [*Exit.*]

TRA. So now, Captain, I have not concealed my Misfortunes from you; you are at Liberty to choose a happier Wife, for my poor Child is miserable.

CAPT. I thought your Ribs was broke; I am no Surgeon; but if 'tis only a little Money that broke you, give me this sweet Lady's Lilly-white Hand, and, as far as a good Estate in Land and Stock will go, I'll share it with her, and with yourself – Ara, never mind the Thieves, my Jewel, I'll break their Necks before they shall break your little Finger. Come, I'll give you a Song of my own Composition.

*Wherever I'm going, and all the Day long,
Abroad and at Home, or alone in a Throng,
I find that my Passion's so lively and strong,
That your Name, when I'm silent, runs still in my Song,
Sing Balinamone oro, Balinamone oro, Balinamone oro,
A Kiss of your sweet Lips for me.*

5

Notes

²⁶ fashionable society

²⁷ if you please

²⁸ and good grace

²⁹ Oh, the devil!

³⁰ onions

Since the first time I saw you, I take no Repose,
 I sleep all the Day to forget half my Woes;
 So strong is the Flame in my Bosom which glows,
 By St. Patrick I'm afraid it would burn thro' my Cloaths:
 Sing Ballinamone oro, &c.
 Your pretty black Hair for me.

10

On that happy Day, when I make you my Bride,
 With a swinging long Sword, how I'll strut and I'll stride,
 In a Coach and six Horses with Honey I'll ride,
 As before you I walk to the Church by your Side,
 Sing Balinamone oro, &c.
 Your little white Fist for me.

15

Enter Cheatwell.

Gentlemen, I beg Pardon for this Intrusion.

CAPT. Oh, by my Shoul, this is my friendly Coushin that bid the old Conjurors flea my Bottom.

CHEAT. Sir, I beg your Pardon in particular, and hope you'll grant me it; nothing but Necessity was the Cause of my ungenteel Behaviour – This Lady I had an Esteem for; but since Things have turn'd out as they have, my Pretensions are without Foundation; and therefore rais'd the Report of your Ships being lost at Sea, in hopes that this Gentleman would decline his Addresses to your Daughter, when he found she had no Fortune.

CAPT. Oagh, my Dear, we play no such dirty Tricks in our Country.

CHEAT. And now, Captain, I hope you'll grant me your Pardon, and look upon me in the Light of an unfortunate Man, rather than of a bad Man.

CAPT. Faath, my dear Coushin, since Love is the Cause of your Mourning, I shall forgive you with all my Heart. [*Shakes hands.*]

CHEAT. Sir, I shall always look upon your Friendship as an Honour; and hope you'll look upon me as a poor unfortunate young Fellow, that has not a Shilling, nor the Means of getting one upon the Face of the Earth.

CAPT. Oh, upon my Shoul, then, cousin *Cheatwell*, I pitty your Condition with all my Heart; and since Things are so bad with you, if you'll take a Trip to my *Irish* Plantations with me and my dear Creature here, I'll give you 500 *l.* to stock a Farm upon my own Eshtate, at *Ballymascushlane*, in the County of *Monaghan*, and the Barony of *Coogafighy* – *Fait*, and here's *Betty*, a tight Girl; and since you cou'd not get the Mistress, if you'll take up with the Maid, my Dear here, shall give her a Couple of Hundred to fortune her off.

BETTY. Captain, I'm very much obliged to you, for getting me a Husband; if Mr. *Cheatwell* has any Tendre for me, I have a thousand Pound at his Service of my own saving.

CAPT. Oagh, dear Joy, a Servant-maid with a thousand Pound! Phy, in my Country, there is many a fine Lady has not half the Money, and goes to the Plays, and the Balls, and the Reddotts, and won't make her own Smock.

CHEAT. I should be blind to my own Interest not to accept of such valuable Proposals, and with Gratitude take your Hand, promising, for the future, to lead a Life which shall be a Credit both to myself and my Benefactor.

CAPT. Well then, without Compliments, I am glad to have made one poor Man happy; and since we have made a double Match of it, hey for *Ireland*, where we will all live like the Sons of *Irish* Kings.

LUCY. This Generosity amazes me, and greatly prejudices me in the Honesty and Goodness of the *Irish*.

CAPT. Oagh, my dear little Charmer, I've another Song just à propos.

*Of all the Husbands living an Irishman's the best,
With my fal, lal, &c.
No Nation on the Globe, oagh like him can stand the Test,
With my fal, lal, &c.
The English are all Drones, as you may plainly see,
But we're all brisk and airy, and lively as a Bee.
With my fal, lal, &c.*

LUCY. Sir, your generous Behaviour so frankly shewn on so melancholy an Accident, has entirely gained my Heart, nor do I value your Estate, when set in Composition with your noble Soul.

*Thus, let all Women judge and thus decide,
Be Beauty still to noble Worth ally'd;
Nor glittering Wealth shou'd blind the Fair-one's Eyes,
Which, not with Honour join'd, we shou'd despise. [Exeunt.*

FINIS

EPILOGUE

*Tut! tut! I was mistaken – ne'er believe me,
If any Scandal shall again deceive me:
For now I find, they made me but a Child,
To tell me that the Irish all were wild:
My Captain is as gentle as a Dove, 5
As innocent, and quite as full of Love –
Ye British Fair, if ye wou'd wed THE TRUTH,
You'll only find it in the IRISH Youth:
The Irish to our Hearts have found the Way,
I ne'er believ'd it till I saw – the Key. 10
Our dearest Secret best such Youth rewards,
Who find the Key-hole quick, and hit so true the Wards.*

Frances Sheridan (1724–1766)

Born Frances Chamberlaine in Dublin, Sheridan grew up in a household divided on the subject of women's education. Her father, a clergyman in the Church of Ireland, opposed women's education but her brothers thought differently. They helped her become not only literate but also

knowledgeable in such traditionally masculine subjects as Latin and botany. A prolific author, she wrote her first novel, *Eugenie and Adelaide*, at the age of fifteen. She married Thomas Sheridan in 1747 (see above), and helped to educate her sons and daughters, all of whom became authors.

It was in the 1760s, however, after she and her husband fled Ireland for debt, that her own literary career began in earnest. Her novel *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph* (1761) was an enormous critical success and was repeatedly republished. She also published two plays, *The Discovery* (1763) and *The Dupe* (1763), and began a third, *A Journey to Bath*. These were followed, posthumously, by a sequel to her first novel, *Continuation of the Memoirs* (1767), and an oriental romance, *The History of Nourjahad* (1767). Sheridan's granddaughter, novelist and poet Alicia Lefanu, wrote a biography of her that was published in 1824 and remains the primary source on her life. Whyte's *Miscellany* (1799), however, includes a number of Frances Sheridan's letters to Samuel Whyte, along with other family materials that were not included in Lefanu's biography.

Of Sheridan's plays, *The Discovery* was the most successful. It ran for seventeen nights on its introduction to the stage and was subsequently published; it enjoyed a number of reprints as well as revivals on the stage in subsequent decades. As late as 1924, Aldous Huxley adapted it for the modern stage. In *The Discovery*, as in *Memoirs*, Sheridan not only deals with the conventional subject of marriage comedies, namely children who wish to marry those they love instead of those their parents have selected for them, but also frankly with extra-marital affairs and acceptingly of the children that result from such affairs.

While Sheridan's literary energies were directed primarily at lengthy works such as five-act

dramas and novels, she also wrote a few short lyrics. One, "Ode to Patience," was included in Whyte's *Miscellany* (1799) as part of her letter to Samuel Whyte, dated May 12, 1764; the poem also appeared, with minor variations, in Lefanu's *Memoirs* (1824). Samuel Whyte was a family friend and ran a much-admired Dublin school that counted two of Sheridan's children, the future playwrights Richard and Alicia, among its students. After apologizing for not writing more frequently (a recurring theme in her letters to Whyte), Sheridan introduces her poem: "And now, Sam, by way of compensation, for that is not in my power to make you; but as a sort of little regale in your own way, for want of other matter, I will send you the result of a morning's meditation." The Whytes and Sheridan's granddaughter-biographer read the poem as a lament for trying difficulties in Sheridan's life, but Sheridan's introduction of the poem suggests a note of rebuke to Whyte as well for his apparently regular demands for more prompt replies to his letters.

Further reading

- Doody, Margaret Anne, "Frances Sheridan: Morality and Annihilated Time," in *Fetter'd or Free? British Women Novelists, 1670–1815*, ed. Mary Anne Schofield and Cecilia Macheski, 324–58. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1986.
- Kuti, Elizabeth, "Rewriting Frances Sheridan," *Eighteenth-century Ireland* 11 (1996): 120–8.
- Sheridan, Frances, *Plays of Frances Sheridan*, ed. Robert Hogan and Jerry C. Beasley. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984.

Prologue

From *The Discovery* (1763)

A Female culprit at your bar appears,
 Not destitute of hope, nor free from fears.
 Her utmost crime she's ready to confess,
 A simple trespass – neither more nor less;
 For, truant like, she rambled out of bounds,
 And dar'd to venture on poetic grounds.

The fault is deem'd high-treason by the men,
 Those lordly tyrants, who usurp the pen;

Then try the vile monopoly to hide
 With flattering Arts, “You ladies have beside 10
 So many ways to conquer – Sure ’tis fit
 You leave to us that dangerous weapon, wit!”
 For women, like state criminals, they think,
 Should be debarr’d the use of pen and ink.

Our author, who disclaims such partial laws, 15
 To her own sex appeals to judge her cause:
 She pleads old MAGNA CHARTA on her side,
 That BRITISH subjects by their peers be try’d.

Ladies, to you she dedicates her lays,
 Assert your right to censure or to praise; 20
 Nor doubt a sentence by such lips decreed,
 Firm as the laws of Persian or of Mede:¹
 Boldly your will in open court declare,
 And let the men dispute it if they dare.

Our humble scenes no charms of art can boast, 25
 But simple nature, and plain sense at most:
 Perhaps some character – a moral too –
 And what is stranger still – the story’s new:
 No borrow’d thoughts throughout the piece are shown,
 But what our author writes is ALL HER OWN. 30

By no sly hint, or incident she tries
 To bid on modest cheeks the blush arise:
 The loosest thoughts our decent scenes suggest,
 Virtue herself might harbour in her breast;
 And where our harmless satyr vents its spleen, 35
 The soberest prude may laugh without a screen.
 But not to mirth alone we claim your ear,
 Some tender scenes demand the melting tear;
 The comic dame, her different powers to prove,
 Gives you the dear variety you love; 40
 Sometimes assumes her graver sister’s art,
 Borrows her form, and tries to touch the heart.
 But fancy’s pictures float upon the brain,
 And short-liv’d o’er the heart is passion’s reign,
 Till judgement stamp her sanction on the whole, 45
 And sink th’impression deep into the soul.

Ode to Patience (1764)

Unaw’d by threats, unmov’d by force,
 My steady Soul pursues her course,
 Collected, calm, resign’d;

Notes

PROLOGUE

¹ Deioeces the Mede, a judge of note and later king of the Medes around 700 BCE.

Say, you who search with curious eyes
 The source whence human actions rise, 5
 Say, whence this turn of mind?
 'Tis Patience . . . Lenient Goddess, hail!
 Oh! let thy votary's vows prevail,
 Thy threaten'd flight to stay;
 Long hast thou been a welcome guest, 10
 Long reign'd an inmate in this breast,
 And rul'd with gentle sway.

Thro' all the various turns of fate,
 Ordain'd me in each several state,
 My wayward lot has known; 15
 What taught me silently to bear,
 To curb the sigh, to check the tear,
 When sorrow weigh'd me down?

'Twas Patience . . . Temperate Goddess, stay!
 For still thy dictates I obey, 20
 Nor yield to Passion's Power;
 Tho' by injurious foes borne down,
 My fame, my toil, my hopes o'erthrown,
 In one ill-fated hour.

When robb'd of what I held most dear, 25
 My hands adorn'd the mournful bier
 Of her I lov'd so well;
 What, when mute sorrow chain'd my tongue,
 As o'er the sable hearse I hung,
 Forbade the tide to swell? 30

'Twas Patience! . . . Goddess ever calm!
 Oh! pour into my breast thy balm,
 That antidote to pain;
 Which flowing from thy nectar'd urn,
 By chymistry divine can turn 35
 Our losses into gain.

When sick and languishing in bed,
 Sleep from my restless couch had fled,
 (Sleep, which even pain beguiles,) 40
 What taught me calmly to sustain
 A feverish being rack'd with pain,
 And dress'd my looks in smiles?

'Twas Patience! . . . Heaven-descended Maid!
 Implor'd, flew swiftly to my aid,
 And lent her fostering breast; 45
 Watch'd my sad hours with parent care,
 Repell'd the approaches of despair,
 And sooth'd my soul to rest.

Say, when dissever'd from his side,
 My friend, protector, and my guide, 50
 When my prophetic soul,

Anticipating all the storm,
Saw danger in its direst form,
What could my fears controul?

'Twas Patience! . . . Gentle goddess, hear!
Be ever to thy suppliant near, 55

Nor let one murmur rise;
Since still some mighty joys are given,
Dear to her soul, the gifts of Heaven,
The sweet domestic ties. 60

Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774)

Oliver Goldsmith was born in Co. Longford; his father was a Church of Ireland clergyman and a farmer. He completed a degree at Trinity College Dublin in the late 1740s and began medical studies at the University of Edinburgh in 1752, but did not complete them, spending much of the early 1750s touring Europe. In 1756, he arrived in London and, while trying his hand at various jobs, he began to work as a writer, starting with a position writing for the *Monthly Review*; among the books he reviewed was Edmund Burke's *Enquiry*. He continued to contribute to various periodicals, serially publishing some of his early works, such as a life of Voltaire and the letters later collected as *The Citizen of the World* (1762). He also briefly edited a periodical called *The Bee*. He socialized with many of the leading literary lights of his day, including Edmund Burke and English writers from Thomas Percy to Samuel Johnson.

In the *Citizen of the World*, originally a series of letters in *The Public Ledger* (1760–1) that drew heavily on earlier orientalist materials, Goldsmith depicts London from the perspective of "a Chinese Philosopher," Lien Chi Altangi. Goldsmith satirizes both English society and the misunderstandings of the traveler who is new to the vagaries of that society, while weaving in a larger narrative of the protagonist's social group in London. Using the letters of a foreign visitor

was an increasingly popular device for representing cultural difference, and intersects with the genre of the travelogue which was becoming increasingly important. Goldsmith's satire is also topical, dealing with the Seven Years' War and the fashion for orientalist literature. Over the next decade, he published *An History of England in a Series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son* (1764); the poems *The Traveller* (1764) and *The Deserted Village* (1770); the important sentimental novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766); and two plays, *The Good-Natur'd Man* (1767) and, more famously, *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773). He was also commissioned to write a number of histories and wrote on Irish subjects, including an essay on Carolan.

The Deserted Village is his best-known poetic work. It was republished frequently after its original appearance in 1770 and remains a canonical example of pastoral even as it blends satire and elements of the Graveyard School in viewing the countryside as the site of loss and social decline. Whether Goldsmith was nostalgically depicting his early life and locale in Ireland has been much debated. But Goldsmith's haunted view of an emptied landscape where the speaker's memory is the only surviving record of a vibrant community also anticipates much of the best topographical verse produced by Irish writers over the next century, including poems in this

anthology by Drennan, Mangan, and MacCarthy. "Retaliation" (1775) is in a quite different vein, following the conventions of Augustan verse satire to caricature famous friends, including the Burkes.

The copy-texts here are Irish editions. The 1770 Dublin edition of *The Deserted Village* used as a copy-text is one of two Dublin editions, and the one closest in many details, such as variant punctuation, to the 1770 London edition which Goldsmith may have proofread. The Dublin printer, however, uses apostrophes in place of letters more liberally. The 1775 Belfast edition of "Retaliation" is also substantially the same as

the first London edition except for the notes, which varied somewhat from edition to edition.

Further reading

Cole, Richard C., "Oliver Goldsmith's Reputation in Ireland, 1762–74," *Modern Philology* 68 (1970): 65–70.

Deane, Seamus, "Goldsmith's *The Citizen of the World*," in *The Art of Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. Andrew Swarbrick, 33–50. London: Vision Press, 1984.

Griffin, Michael, "Delicate Allegories, Deceitful Mazes: Goldsmith's Landscapes," *Eighteenth-century Ireland* 16 (2001): 104–17.

Watt, James, "Goldsmith's Cosmopolitanism," *Eighteenth-century Life* 30 (2006): 56–76.

Letter XVII¹

From *The Citizen of the World* (1762)

[From *Lien Chi Altangi . . . to Fum Hoam, first president of the ceremonial academy at Pekin in China*]

Were an Asiatic politician to read the treaties of peace and friendship that have been annually making for more than an hundred years among the inhabitants of Europe, he would probably be surpriz'd how it should ever happen that christian princes could quarrel among each other. Their compacts for peace are drawn up with the utmost precision, and ratified with the greatest solemnity; to these each party promises a sincere and inviolable obedience, and all wears the appearance of open friendship and unreserved reconciliation.

Yet, notwithstanding those treaties, the people of Europe are almost continually at war. There is nothing more easy than to break a treaty ratified in all the usual forms, and yet neither party be the aggressor. One side, for instance, breaks a trifling article by mistake; the opposite party upon this makes a small but premeditated reprisal; this brings on a return of greater from the other; both sides complain of injuries and infractions; war is declar'd; they beat, are beaten; some two or three hundred thousand men are killed, they grow tired, leave off just where they began; and so sit coolly down to make new treaties.

The English and French seem to place themselves foremost among the champion states of Europe. Though parted by a narrow sea, yet are they entirely of opposite characters; and from their vicinity are taught to fear and admire each other. They are at present engaged in a very destructive war, have already spilled much blood, are excessively irritated; and all upon account of one side's desiring to wear greater quantities of *furs* than the other.

Notes

LETTER XVII

¹ This letter deals with the Seven Years' War (1756–63), still being fought as Goldsmith is writing and publishing this work.

The pretext of the war is about some lands a thousand leagues off; a country cold, desolate, and hideous; a country belonging to a people who were in possession for time immemorial. The savages of Canada claim a property in the country in dispute; they have all the pretensions which long possession can confer. Here they had reigned for ages without rivals in dominion, and knew no enemies but the prowling bear or insidious tyger; their native forests produced all the necessaries of life, and they found ample luxury in the enjoyment. In this manner they might have continued to live to eternity, had not the English been informed that those countries produced furs in great abundance. From that moment the country became an object of desire; it was found that furs were things very much wanted in England; the ladies edged some of their cloaths with furs, and muffs were worn both by gentlemen and ladies. In short, furs were found indispensably necessary for the happiness of the state: and the king was consequently petitioned to grant not only the country of Canada, but all the savages belonging to it to the subjects of England, in order to have the people supplied with proper quantities of this necessary commodity.

So very reasonable a request was immediately complied with, and large colonies were sent abroad to procure furs, and take possession. The French who were equally in want of furs (for they were as fond of muffs and tippets as the English) made the very same request to their monarch, and met with the same gracious reception from their king, who generously granted what was not his to give. Wherever the French landed, they called the country their own; and the English took possession wherever they came upon the same equitable pretensions. The harmless savages made no opposition; and could the intruders have agreed together, they might peaceably have shared this desolate country between them. But they quarrelled about the boundaries of their settlements, about grounds and rivers to which neither side could shew any other right than that of power, and which neither could occupy but by usurpation. Such is the contest, that no honest man can heartily wish success to either party.

The war has continued for some time with various success. At first the French seemed victorious; but the English have of late dispossessed them of the whole country in dispute.² Think not, however, that success on one side is the harbinger of peace: on the contrary, both parties must be heartily tired to effect even a temporary reconciliation. It should seem the business of the victorious party to offer terms of peace; but there are many in England, who, encouraged by success, are still for protracting the war.

The best English politicians, however, are sensible, that to keep their present conquests, would be rather a burthen than an advantage to them, rather a diminution of their strength than an encrease of power. It is in the politic as in the human constitution; if the limbs grow too large for the body, their size, instead of improving, will diminish the vigour of the whole. The colonies should always bear an exact proportion to the mother country; when they grow populous, they grow powerful, and by becoming powerful, they become independent also; thus subordination is destroyed, and a country swallowed up in the extent of its own dominions. The Turkish empire would be more formidable, were it less extensive. Were it not for those countries, which it can neither command, nor give entirely away, which it is obliged to protect, but from which it has no power to exact obedience.

Yet, obvious as these truths are, there are many Englishmen who are for transplanting new colonies into this late acquisition, for peopling the desarts of America

Notes

² British forces defeated the French in Canada on the Plains of Abraham, near the city of Québec, in September 1759; the

next year they captured Montréal, effectively wresting “New France” from French control.

with the refuse of their countrymen, and (as they express it) with the waste of an exuberant nation. But who are those unhappy creatures who are to be thus drained away? Not the sickly, for they are unwelcome guests abroad as well as at home; nor the idle, for they would starve as well behind the Appalachian mountains as in the streets of London. This refuse is composed of the laborious and enterprising, of such men as can be serviceable to their country at home, of men who ought to be regarded as the sinews of the people, and cherished with every degree of political indulgence. And what are the commodities which this colony, when established, are to produce in return? Why raw silk, hemp, and tobacco. England, therefore, must make an exchange of her best and bravest subjects for raw silk, hemp, and tobacco; her hardy veterans and honest tradesmen, must be truck'd for a box of snuff or a silk petticoat. Strange absurdity! Sure the politics of the Daures are not more strange, who sell their religion, their wives, and their liberty for a glass bead, or a paltry penknife. Farewell.

From *Letter XXXII*

From *The Citizen of the World* (1762)

From the Same

I am disgusted, O Fum Hoam, even to sickness disgusted. Is it possible to bear the presumption of those islanders, when they pretend to instruct me in the ceremonies of China! They lay it down as a maxim, that every person who comes from thence must express himself in metaphor; swear by Alla, rail against wine, and behave, and talk and write like a Turk or Persian. They make no distinction between our elegant manners, and the voluptuous barbarities of our eastern neighbours. Where-ever I come, I raise either diffidence or astonishment; some fancy me no Chinese, because I am formed more like a man than a monster; and others wonder to find one born five thousand miles from England endued with common sense. Strange, say they, that a man who has received his education at such a distance from London, should have common sense; to be born out of England and yet have common sense! impossible! He must be some Englishman in disguise; his very visage has nothing of the true exotic barbarity.

I yesterday received an invitation from a lady of distinction, who it seems had collected all her knowledge of eastern manners from fictions every day propagated here, under the titles of eastern tales, and oriental histories: she received me very politely, but seemed to wonder that I neglected bringing opium and a tobacco-box; when chairs were drawn for the rest of the company, I was assigned my place on a cushion on the floor. It was in vain that I protested the Chinese used chairs as in Europe; she understood decorums too well to entertain me with the ordinary civilities . . .

I had no sooner begun to eat what was laid before me, than I found the whole company as much astonished as before; it seems I made no use of my chop-sticks. A grave gentleman, whom I take to be an author, harangued very learnedly (as the company seemed to think) upon the use which was made of them in China: he entered into a long argument with himself about their first introduction, without once appealing to me, who might be supposed best capable of silencing the enquiry. As the gentleman therefore took my silence for a mark of his own superior sagacity, he was resolved to pursue the triumph: he talked of our cities, mountains, and animals, as familiarly as if he had been born in Quamsi, but as erroneously as if a native of the moon; he attempted to prove that I had nothing of the true Chinese cut

in my visage; shewed that my cheek bones should have been higher, and my forehead broader; in short, he almost reasoned me out of my country, and effectually persuaded the rest of the company to be of his opinion.

I was going to expose his mistakes, when it was insisted that I had nothing of the true eastern manner in my delivery. This gentleman's conversation (says one of the ladies, who was a great reader) is like our own mere chit chat and common sense; there is nothing like sense in the true eastern style, where nothing more is required but sublimity . . . I have written many a sheet of eastern tale myself, interrupts the author, and I defy the severest critic to say but that I have stuck close to the true manner . . . I have used *thee* and *thou* upon all occasions, I have described fallen stars, and splitting mountains, not forgetting the little Houries who make a very pretty figure in every description. But you shall hear how I generally begin. "Eben-ben-bolo, who was the son of Ban, was born on the foggy summits of Benderabassi. His beard was whiter than the feathers which veil the breast of the Penguin; his eyes were like the eyes of doves, when washed by the dews of the morning; his hair, which hung like the willow weeping over the glassy stream, was so beautiful that it seemed to reflect its own brightness; and his feet were as the feet of a wild deer which fleeth to the tops of the mountains." There, there is the true eastern taste for you; every advance made towards sense, is only a deviation from sound. Eastern tales should always be sonorous, lofty, musical and unmeaning.

I could not avoid smiling to hear a native of England attempt to instruct me in the true eastern idiom, and after he had looked round some time for applause, I presumed to ask him whether he had ever travelled into the east; to which he replied in the negative: I demanded whether he understood Chinese or Arabic, to which also he answered as before. Then how, Sir, said I, can you pretend to determine upon the eastern stile, who are intirely unacquainted with the eastern writings? Take, Sir, the word of one who is *professedly* a Chinese, and who is actually acquainted with the Arabian writers, that what is palm'd upon you daily for an imitation of eastern writing, no ways resembles their manner, either in sentiment or diction. In the east, similes are seldom used, and metaphors almost wholly unknown; but in China particularly, the very reverse of what you allude to, takes place; a cool phlegmatic method of writing prevails there . . .

I was proceeding in my discourse, when, looking round, I perceived the company no way attentive to what I attempted, with so much earnestness to enforce. One lady was whispering her that sat next, another was studying the merits of a fan, a third began to yawn, and the author himself fell fast asleep: I thought it, therefore, high time to make a retreat, nor did the company seem to shew any regret at my preparations for departure; even the lady who had invited me, with the most mortifying insensibility, saw me seize my hat and rise from my cushion; nor was I invited to repeat my visit, because it was found that I aimed at appearing rather a reasonable creature, than an outlandish ideot. Adieu.

The Deserted Village (1770)

Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty chear'd the lab'ring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delay'd,
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,

How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
 Where humble happiness endear'd each scene;
 How often have I paus'd on every charm,
 The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm, 10
 The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
 The decent church that topt the neighb'ring hill,
 The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
 For talking age and whisp'ring lovers made.
 How often have I blest the coming day, 15
 When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
 And all the village train, from labour free,
 Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree,
 While many a pastime circled in the shade,
 The young contending as the old survey'd; 20
 And many a gambol frolick'd o'er the ground,
 And flights of art and feats of strength went round.
 And still as each repeated pleasure tir'd,
 Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspir'd;
 The dancing pair that simply sought renown, 25
 By holding out, to tire each other down,
 The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
 While secret laughter titter'd round the place,
 The bashful virgin's side-long looks of love,
 The matron's glance that would those looks reprove. 30
 These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
 With sweet succession, taught even toil to please;
 These round thy bowers their chearful influence shed,
 These were thy charms – But all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn, 35
 Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
 Amidst thy bow'rs the tyrant's hand is seen,
 And desolation saddens all thy green:
 One only master grasps the whole domain,
 And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain; 40
 No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
 But, choak'd with sedges, works its weedy way;
 Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
 The hollow sounding bittern guards its nest;
 Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies, 45
 And tires their echoes with unvary'd cries.
 Sunk are thy bow'rs in shapeless ruin all,
 And the long grass o'ertops the mould'ring wall,
 And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
 Far, far away thy children leave the land. 50

Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey,
 Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
 Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
 A breath can make them, as a breath has made:
 But a bold peasantry, their country's pride, 55
 When once destroy'd, can never be supply'd.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
 When every rood of ground maintain'd its man;
 For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
 Just gave what life requir'd but gave no more. 60
 His best companions, innocence and health;
 And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are alter'd; trade's unfeeling train
 Usurp the land and dispossess the swain;
 Along the lawn, where scatter'd hamlets rose, 65
 Unwieldy wealth, and cumb'rous pomp repose;
 And ev'ry want to luxury ally'd,
 And ev'ry pang that folly pays to pride.
 These gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
 Those calm desires that ask'd but little room, 70
 Those healthful sports that grac'd the peaceful scene,
 Liv'd in each look, and brighten'd all the green;
 These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
 And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet AUBURN! parent of the blissful hour, 75
 Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
 Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
 Amidst thy tangling walks, and ruin'd grounds,
 And, many a year elaps'd, return to view
 Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew, 80
 Here, as with doubtful, pensive steps I range,
 Trace ev'ry scene, and wonder at the change,
 Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
 Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wand'rings round this world of care, 85
 In all my griefs – and GOD has giv'n my share –
 I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
 Amidst these humble bow'rs to lay me down;
 My anxious day to husband near the close,
 And keep life's flame from wasting by repose. 90
 I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
 Amidst the swains to shew my book learn'd skill,
 Around my fire an ev'ning groupe to draw,
 And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
 And, as an hare whom hounds and horns pursue, 95
 Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
 I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
 Here to return – and die at home at last.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
 Retreats from care, that never must be mine, 100
 How blest is he who crowns in shades like these,
 A youth of labour with an age of ease;
 Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
 And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly.
 For him no wretches, born to work and weep, 105

Explore the mine, or tempt the dang'rous deep;
 No surly porter stands in guilty state,
 To spurn imploring famine from his gate;
 But on he moves to meet his latter end,
 Angels around befriending virtue's friend; 110
 Sinks to the grave with unperceiv'd decay,
 While resignation gently slopes the way;
 And, all his prospects bright'ning to the last,
 His Heav'n commences ere the world be past!

Sweet was the sound, when oft at ev'ning's close, 115
 Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
 There, as I past with careless steps and slow,
 The mingling notes came soften'd from below;
 The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
 The sober herd that low'd to meet their young; 120
 The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
 The playful children just let loose from school;
 The watch-dog's voice that bay'd the whisp'ring wind,
 And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;
 These all in soft confusion sought the shade, 125
 And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made.
 But now the sounds of population fail,
 No chearful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
 No busy steps the grass-grown foot-way tread,
 But all the bloomy flush of life is fled. 130
 All but yon widow'd, solitary thing
 That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
 She, wretched matron, forc'd, in age, for bread,
 To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
 To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn, 135
 To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
 She only left of all the harmless train,
 The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smil'd,
 And still where many a garden flow'r grows wild; 140
 There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
 The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
 A man he was, to all the country dear,
 And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
 Remote from towns he ran his godly race, 145
 Nor ere had chang'd, nor wish'd to change his place;
 Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,
 By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour;
 Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
 More bent to raise the wretched than to rise. 150
 His house was known to all the vagrant train,
 He chid their wand'rings, but reliev'd their pain;
 The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,
 Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
 The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud, 155

Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd;
 The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
 Sate by his fire, and talk'd the night away;
 Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
 Shoulder'd his crutch, and shew'd how fields were won. 160
 Pleas'd with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,
 And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
 Careless their merits, or their faults to scan,
 His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride, 165
 And even his failings lean'd to Virtue's side;
 But in his duty prompt at every call,
 He watched and wept, he pray'd and felt, for all.
 And, as a bird each fond endearment tries,
 To tempt its new fledged offspring to the skies; 170
 He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
 Allur'd to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was lay'd,
 And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismay'd,
 The reverend champion stood. At his control, 175
 Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
 Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
 And his last fault'ring accents whisper'd praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
 His looks adorn'd the venerable place; 180
 Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
 And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray.
 The service past, around the pious man,
 With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran;
 Ev'n children follow'd with endearing wile, 185
 And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile.
 His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,
 Their welfare pleas'd him, and their cares distrest;
 To them his heart, his love, his griefs were giv'n,
 But all his serious thoughts had rest in Heav'n. 190
 As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
 Tho' round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way, 195
 With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,
 There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
 The village master taught his little school;
 A man severe he was, and stern to view,
 I knew him well, and ev'ry truant knew; 200
 Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
 The day's disasters in his morning face;
 Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee,
 At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
 Full well the busy whisper circling round, 205

Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd;
 Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
 The love he bore to learning was in fault;
 The village all declar'd how much he knew;
 'Twas certain he could write, and cypher too; 210
 Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
 And ev'n the story ran that he could gauge:
 In arguing too, the parson own'd his skill,
 For e'en tho' vanquish'd, he could argue still;
 While words of learn'd length, and thund'ring sound, 215
 Amaz'd the gazing rustics rang'd around,
 And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder grew,
 That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
 Where many a time he triumph'd, is forgot. 220
 Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
 Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
 Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspir'd,
 Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retir'd,
 Where village statesmen talk'd with looks profound, 225
 And news much older than their ale went round.
 Imagination fondly stoops to trace
 The parlour splendours of that festive place;
 The white-wash'd wall, the nicely sanded floor,
 The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door; 230
 The chest contriv'd a double debt to pay,
 A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
 The pictures plac'd for ornament and use,
 The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
 The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day, 235
 With aspen boughs, and flow'rs and fennel gay,
 While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for shew,
 Rang'd o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a row.

Vain transitory splendour! Cou'd not all
 Relieve the tott'ring mansion from its fall! 240
 Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
 An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;
 Thither no more the peasant shall repair,
 To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
 No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale, 245
 No more the wood-man's ballad shall prevail;
 No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
 Relax his pond'rous strength, and lean to hear;
 The host himself no longer shall be found
 Careful to see the mantling bliss go round; 250
 Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
 Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
 These simple blessings of the lowly train,
 To me more dear, congenial to my heart, 255
 One native charm, than all the gloss of art;

Spontaneous joys, where Nature has its play,
 The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
 Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
 Unenvy'd, unmolested, unconfin'd. 260

But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
 With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd,
 In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
 The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
 And, even while fashion's brightest arts decoy, 265
 The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
 The rich man's joys encrease, the poor's decay,
 'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
 Between a splendid and an happy land. 270

Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
 And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
 Hoards, even beyond the miser's wish abound,
 And rich men flock from all the world around.
 Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name 275
 That leaves our useful product still the same.

Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride,
 Takes up a space that many poor supply'd;
 Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
 Space for his horses, equipage and hounds; 280

The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth,
 Has robb'd the neighb'ring fields of half their growth,
 His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
 Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
 Around the world each needful product flies, 285
 For all the luxuries the world supplies.

While thus the land adorn'd for pleasure all
 In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female unadorn'd and plain,
 Secure to please while youth confirms her reign, 290
 Slights ev'ry borrow'd charm that dress supplies,
 Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes.

But when those charms are past, for charms are frail,
 When time advances, and when lovers fail,
 She then shines forth, sollicitous to bless, 295
 In all the glaring impotence of dress.

Thus fares the land, by luxury betray'd,
 In nature's simplest charms at first array'd,
 But verging to decline, its splendours rise,
 Its vistas strike, its palaces surprize; 300

While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
 The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
 And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
 The country blooms – a garden, and a grave.

Where then, ah, where shall poverty reside, 305
 To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?

If to some common's fenceless limits stray'd,
 He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
 Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
 And even the bare-worn common is deny'd. 310

If to the city sped – What waits him there?
 To see profusion that he must not share;
 To see ten thousand baneful arts combin'd
 To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
 To see each joy the sons of pleasure know, 315
 Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
 Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
 There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
 Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
 There the black gibbet glooms beside the way. 320
 The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign,
 Here, richly deckt, admits the gorgeous train,
 Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
 The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare;
 Sure scenes like these no troubles ere annoy! 325
 Sure these denote one universal joy!
 Are these thy serious thoughts – Ah, turn thine eyes
 Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
 She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
 Has wept at tales of innocence distress; 330
 Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
 Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
 Now lost to all; her friends, her virtue fled,
 Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
 And, pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the show'r, 335
 With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
 When idly first, ambitious of the town,
 She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, sweet AUBURN, thine, the loveliest train,
 Do thy fair tribes participate her pain? 340
 Even now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
 At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!

Ah, no. To distant climes, a dreary scene,
 Where half the convex world intrudes between,
 To torrid tracts with fainting steps they go, 345
 Where wild Altama¹ murmurs to their woe.
 Far different there from all that charm'd before,
 The various terrors of that horrid shore.
 Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
 And fiercely shed intolerable day; 350
 Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
 But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling,

Notes

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

¹ Altamaha, a US river.

Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crown'd
 Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
 Where at each step the stranger fears to wake 355
 The rattling terrors of the 'vengeful snake;
 Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
 And savage men more murd'rous still than they;
 While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
 Mingling the ravag'd landscape with the skies. 360
 Far different these from every former scene,
 The cooling brook, the grassy vested green,
 The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
 That only shelter'd thefts of harmless love.
 Good Heaven! what sorrows gloom'd that parting day, 365
 That call'd them from their native walks away;
 When the poor exiles, ev'ry pleasure past,
 Hung round their bow'rs, and fondly look'd their last,
 And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
 For seats like these beyond the western main; 370
 And shudd'ring still to face the distant deep,
 Return'd and wept, and still return'd to weep.
 The good old sire, the first prepar'd to go
 To new found worlds, and wept for other's woe;
 But for himself, in conscious virtue brave, 375
 He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grave.
 His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
 The fond companion of his helpless years,
 Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
 And left a lover's for her father's arms. 380
 With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
 And blest the cot where ev'ry pleasure rose;
 And kist her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
 And claspt them close in sorrow doubly dear;
 Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief 385
 In all the decent manliness of grief.

O luxury! Thou curst by heaven's decree,
 How ill exchange'd are things like these for thee!
 How do thy potions with insidious joy,
 Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy! 390
 Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
 Boast of a florid vigour not their own.
 At every draught more large and large they grow,
 A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
 Till sapp'd their strength, and every part unsound, 395
 Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

Even now the devastation is begun,
 And half the business of destruction done;
 Ev'n now, methinks, as pond'ring here I stand,
 I see the rural virtues leave the land. 400
 Down where yon anch'ring vessel spreads the sail
 That idly waiting flaps with ev'ry gale,

Downward they move, a melancholy band,
 Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
 Contented toil, and hospitable care, 405
 And kind connubial tenderness, are there;
 And piety with wishes plac'd above,
 And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
 And, thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
 Still first to fly where sensual joys invade; 410
 Unfit in these degen'rate times of shame,
 To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
 Dear charming nymph, neglected and decry'd,
 My shame in crowds, my solitary pride.
 Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe, 415
 That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
 Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,
 Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well.
 Farewell, and O, where'er thy voice be try'd,
 On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,² 420
 Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
 Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
 Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
 Redress the rigours of th' inclement clime;
 Aid slighted truth, with thy persuasive strain; 425
 Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
 Teach him that states of native strength possess,
 Tho' very poor, may still be very blest;
 That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
 As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away; 430
 While self-dependent power can time defy,
 As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

Retaliation

From Poems (1775)

Of old, when Scarron¹ his companions invited,
 Each guest brought his dish, and the feast was united;
 If our landlord supplies us with beef, and with fish,
 Let each guest bring himself, and he brings the best dish:
 Our Dean² shall be venison, just fresh from the plains; 5
 Our Burke³ shall be tongue, with a garnish of brains;
 Our Will⁴ shall be wild fowl, of excellent flavour,

Notes

² In Italy and the Andes respectively.

RETALIATION

¹ Paul Scarron, seventeenth-century French writer.

² Dean of Derry (original). English-born clergyman Thomas Barnard (1727–1806), educated at Trinity College Dublin, like Goldsmith, in the 1740s.

³ Edmund Burke, Esq. (original).

⁴ William Burke, Esq. (original). English political writer (1728/30–98), claimed as a distant relation by Edmund Burke.

And Dick⁵ with his pepper shall heighten their savour:
 Our Cumberland's⁶ sweet-bread, its place shall obtain,
 And Douglas's⁷ pudding, substantial and plain: 10
 Our Garrick's⁸ a sallad, for in him we see
 Oil, vinegar, sugar, and saltness agree:
 To make out the dinner, full certain I am,
 That Ridge⁹ is anchovy, and Reynolds¹⁰ is lamb;
 That Hickey's¹¹ a capon, and by the same rule, 15
 Magnanimous Goldsmith, a goosberry fool:
 At a dinner so various, at such a repast,
 Who'd not be a glutton, and stick to the last:
 Here, waiter, more wine, let me sit while I'm able,
 'Till all my companions sink under the table; 20
 Then with chaos and blunders encircling my head,
 Let me ponder, and tell what I think of the dead.

Here lies the good Dean, re-united to earth,
 Who mixt reason with pleasure, and wisdom with mirth:
 If he had any faults, he has left us in doubt, 25
 At least, in six weeks, I could not find 'em out;
 Yet some have declar'd, and it can't be denied 'em,
 That Sly-boots was cursedly cunning to hide 'em.

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,
 We scarcely can praise it, or blame it too much; 30
 Who, born for the universe, narrow'd his mind,
 And to party gave up, what was meant for mankind.
 Tho' fraught with all learning, kept straining his throat,
 To persuade Tommy Townsend¹² to lend him a vote;
 Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining, 35
 And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining;
 Tho' equal to all things, for all things unfit,
 Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit:
 For a patriot too cool; for a drudge, disobedient,
 And too fond of the *right* to pursue the *expedient*. 40
 In short, 'twas his fate, unemploy'd, or in play, Sir,
 To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.

Here lies honest William, whose heart was a mint,
 While the owner ne'er knew half the good that was in't;
 The pupil of impulse, it forc'd him along, 45
 His conduct still right, with his argument wrong;
 Still aiming at honour, yet fearing to roam,
 The coachman was tipsy, the chariot drove home;

Notes

⁵ Richard Burke, Esq. (original). Edmund Burke's brother, lawyer, and political author (1733–94).

⁶ Author of the West Indian (original). English playwright Richard Cumberland (1732–1811).

⁷ John Douglas (1721–1807), Scottish clergyman and literary critic.

⁸ David Garrick (1717–79), English actor and playwright.

⁹ A later edition identifies Ridge as John Ridge, Irish lawyer.

¹⁰ Sir Joshua Reynolds (original). English artist (1723–92).

¹¹ Probably a lawyer, nationality unknown.

¹² Thomas Townshend (1733–1800), first Viscount Sydney, English politician.

Would you ask for his merits, alas! he had none,
What was good was spontaneous, his faults were his own. 50

Here lies honest Richard, whose fate I must sigh at,
Alas, that such frolic should now be so quiet!
What spirits were his, what wit and what whim,
Now breaking a jest, and now breaking a limb;
Now wrangling and grumbling to keep up the ball, 55
Now teasing and vexing, yet laughing at all?
In short so provoking a devil was Dick,
That we wish'd him full ten times a day at Old Nick.
But missing his mirth and agreeable vain,
As often we wish'd to have Dick back again. 60

Here Cumberland lies having acted his parts,
The Terence¹³ of England, the mender of hearts;
A flattering painter, who made it his care
To draw men as they ought to be, not as they are.
His gallants are all faultless, his women divine, 65
And comedy wonders at being so fine;
Like a tragedy queen he has dizen'd her out,
Or rather like tragedy giving a rout.
His fools have their follies so lost in a croud
Of virtues and feelings, that folly grows proud, 70
And coxcombs alike in their failings alone,
Adopting his portraits are pleas'd with their own.
Say, when has our poet this malady caught,
Or wherefore his characters thus without fault?
Say was it that vainly directing his view, 75
To find out men's virtues and finding them few,
Quite sick of pursuing each troublesome elf,
He grew lazy at last, and drew from himself?

Here Douglas retires from his toils to relax,
The scourge of impostors, the terror of quacks: 80
Come all ye quack bards, and ye quacking divines,
Come and dance on the spot where your tyrant reclines,
When satire and censure encircl'd his throne,
I fear'd for your safety, I fear'd for my own;
But now he is gone, and we want a detector, 85
Our Dodds shall be pious, our Kenricks shall lecture;
Macpherson write bombast, and call it a style,
Our Townshend make speeches, and I shall compile;
New Landers and Bowers the Tweed shall cross over,
No countryman living their tricks to discover; 90
Detection her taper shall quench to a spark,
And Scotchman meet Scotchman and cheat in the dark.¹⁴

Notes

¹³ Roman playwright (c.190–158 BCE).

¹⁴ Goldsmith here lists various minor British authors, including satirist William Kenrick (1729/30–79) and antiquarian

James “Ossian” Macpherson (1736–96). Douglas may be William Douglas (c.1710–?), a Scottish physician and satirist who published attacks on other medical men.

Here lies David Garrick, describe me who can,
 An abridgement of all that was pleasant in man;
 As an actor, confest without rival to shine, 95
 As a wit, if not first, in the very first line,
 Yet with talents like these, and an excellent heart,
 The man had his failings, a dupe to his art;
 Like an ill judge in beauty, his colours he spread,
 And beplaster'd, with rouge, his own natural red. 100
 On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting,
 'Twas only that, when he was off, he was acting:
 With no reason on earth to go out of his way,
 He turn'd and he varied full ten times a day;
 Tho' secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick, 105
 If they were not his own by finessing and trick,
 He cast off his friends, as a huntsman his pack;
 For he knew when he pleased he could whistle them back.
 Of praise, a mere glutton, he swallowed what came,
 And the puff of a dunce, he mistook it for fame; 110
 'Till his relish grown callous, almost to disease,
 Who pepper'd the highest, was surest to please.
 But let us be candid, and speak out our mind,
 If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.
 Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys, and Woodfalls¹⁵ so grave, 115
 What a commerce was yours, while you got and you gave?
 How did Grub-street re-echo the shouts that you rais'd,
 While he was berossia'd, and you were be prais'd?
 But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies,
 To act as an angel, and mix with the skies: 120
 Those poets, who owe their best fame to his skill,
 Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will.
 Old Shakespeare, receive him, with praise and with love,
 And Beaumonts and Bens¹⁶ be his Kellys above.

Here Hickey reclines a most blunt, pleasant creature, 125
 And Slander itself must allow him good-nature:
 He cherish'd his friend, and he relish'd a bumper;
 Yet one fault he had, and that one was a thumper:
 Perhaps you may ask if the man was a miser?
 I answer, no, no, for he always was wiser; 130
 Too courteous, perhaps, or obligingly flat;
 His very worst foe can't accuse him of that.
 Perhaps he confided in men as they go,
 And so was too foolishly honest; ah, no.
 Then what was his failing? come tell it, and burn ye, 135
 He was, could he help it? a special attorney.

Here Reynolds is laid, and to tell you my mind,
 He has not left a better or wiser behind;

Notes

¹⁵ Playwright Hugh Kelly (1739–77) and English printer Henry Sampson Woodfall (1739–1805).

¹⁶ English playwrights William Shakespeare (1564–1616), Francis Beaumont (1584/5–1616), and perhaps Ben Jonson (1572–1637).

His pencil was striking, resistless and grand,
 His manners were gentle, complying and bland; 140
 Still born to improve us in every part,
 His pencil our faces, his manners our heart:
 To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly staring,
 When they judged without skill he was still hard of hearing:
 When they talk'd of their Raphaels, Corregios¹⁷ and stuff, 145
 He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.

Edmund Burke (1729–1797)

Edmund Burke was born in Dublin, and spent parts of his childhood with his mother's family in Cork and at the Quaker school in Kildare run by Mary Shackleton Leadbeater's family. He then studied at Trinity College Dublin and, in 1750, moved to London to study law. His family illustrates the degree to which Catholic and various Protestant communities could mix in eighteenth-century Ireland, and shows the greater pressure on Irish men to accept the state-sanctioned religion: Burke's mother, sister, and wife were Catholic; Burke and his father, a solicitor, were officially Anglican.

Burke's publishing career began in 1756 with *A Vindication of Natural Society*, which was quickly followed the next year by *An Account of the European Settlements in North America* and one of his most enduring and influential essays, *A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. In 1758, he became editor of the *Annual Register*, and in 1759 became private secretary to a member of parliament, William Gerard Hamilton. When Hamilton entered the office of the chief secretary of Ireland in 1761, Burke went with him to Dublin, but, after moving together through other government appointments, they quarreled in 1764 and Burke ended their working

relationship. In 1765, he became secretary to the new prime minister, Lord Rockingham, and was elected as a member of parliament in 1766, beginning an influential political career.

In his parliamentary speeches, Burke was often vivid, eloquent, and tireless, addressing the House for hours at a time. On two subjects, his speeches were particularly significant: tensions with the American colonists around the time of the American Revolution; and the impeachment of Warren Hastings (1787–95), which he inaugurated, which charged Hastings with abusing his power and authority in India. Burke's "Opening Speech" on Hastings' trial in parliament took place over four days in 1788, and attempted to argue for a moral imperial project that would respect the indigenous aristocracy. His position on the American colonies was generally in favor of "conciliation" as he termed it in *Speech on Conciliation with America* (1775). Among his political writings, however, the best known is his anti-revolutionary tract, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). In *Reflections*, Burke's argument was conservative in the ordinary sense of the term, seeking to preserve the traditional forms of government, including aristocracy and monarchy, and was later deemed prescient for anticipating the violence of the

Notes

¹⁷ Raphael Sanzio (1483–1520) and Antonio Allegri (Il Correggio, c.1489–1534), Italian painters.

French Terror (1793–4). Burke continued to condemn the French Revolution in a number of works, including *Thoughts on French Affairs* (1791) and *Two Letters on a Regicide Peace* (1796).

Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry* influenced literature and aesthetic theory for decades throughout the English-speaking world, and is particularly important for the development of the gothic as a literary mode. Burke extends Longinus' work on the sublime through recent work on sensibility by such Scottish Enlightenment thinkers as David Hume and Adam Smith. Sensibility framed the capacity for sympathy as an imaginative reproduction of another's feelings, modified by the moral judgment of that person. Sympathy is more keenly aroused when the virtuous suffer than when the malicious suffer. Sublimity and accompanying concepts are thus defined in relation to social as well as aesthetic categories, allowing Burke to draw distinctions between real and fictional suffering as well as moral and immoral victims.

Burke's pamphlet on popular political protest, *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (1770), similarly extends absolute categories to more complex social dynamics. Burke's *Thoughts* responded to the crisis over popular radical politician John Wilkes (1725–97). A member of

parliament, Wilkes was prosecuted for seditious libel in 1763 because of his printed criticisms of the government. He fled to France to avoid arrest, returned in 1768, and stood again for parliament but was quickly arrested; thousands protested his incarceration, shouting "Wilkes and Liberty." Fearing a rescue attempt, troops opened fire on the protesters, killing seven. In spring 1769, Wilkes was elected to parliament three times, and denied his seat by parliament on each occasion; parliament instead declared the candidate he defeated to be elected. Wilkes was released in April 1770, the same month that Burke published his *Thoughts*. While his *Reflections* famously condemned the masses as a "swinish multitude," Burke's earlier *Thoughts* show some regard for popular political protest and the respect for individual choice that shaped much of his thought on religious toleration and other matters.

Further reading

- Boulton, James T., *The Language of Politics in the Age of Wilkes and Burke*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.
- Furniss, Tom, *Edmund Burke's Aesthetic Ideology: Language, Gender, and Political Economy in Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Gibbons, Luke, *Edmund Burke and Ireland: Aesthetics, Politics, and the Colonial Sublime*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

From *A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757)

From Part I

XI. SOCIETY and SOLITUDE

The second branch of the social passions, is that which administers to *society in general*.¹ With regard to this, I observe, that society, merely as society, without any particular heightnings, gives us no positive pleasure in the enjoyment; but absolute and entire *solitude*, that is, the total and perpetual exclusion from all society, is as

Notes

FROM A PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRY

¹ The first is sexual, creating what Burke terms "the society of the sexes, which answers the purposes of propagation" (part I, section VIII).

great a positive pain as can almost be conceived. Therefore in the balance between the pleasure of general *society*, and the pain of absolute solitude, *pain* is the predominant idea. But the pleasure of any particular social enjoyment, outweighs very considerably the uneasiness caused by the want of that particular enjoyment; so that the strongest sensations relative to the habitudes of *particular society*, are sensations of pleasure. Good company, lively conversation, and the endearments of friendship, fill the mind with great pleasure; a temporary solitude, on the other hand, is itself agreeable. This may perhaps prove, that we are creatures designed for contemplation as well as action; since solitude as well as society has its pleasures; as from the former observation we may discern, that an entire life of solitude contradicts the purposes of our being, since death itself is scarcely an idea of more terror.

XIII. SYMPATHY

It is by the first of these passions that we enter into the concerns of others; that we are moved as they are moved, and are never suffered to be indifferent spectators of almost any thing which men can do or suffer. For sympathy must be considered as a sort of substitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in a good measure as he is affected; so that this passion may either partake of the nature of those which regard self-preservation, and turning upon pain may be a source of the sublime; or it may turn upon ideas of pleasure, and then, whatever has been said of the social affections, whether they regard society in general, or only some particular modes of it, may be applicable here. It is by this principle chiefly that poetry, painting, and other affecting arts, transfuse their passions from one breast to another, and are often capable of grafting a delight on wretchedness, misery, and death itself. It is a common observation, that objects which in the reality would shock, are in tragical and such like representations the source of a very high species of pleasure. This taken as a fact, has been the cause of much reasoning. This satisfaction has been commonly attributed, first, to the comfort we receive in considering that so melancholy a story is no more than a fiction; and next, to the contemplation of our own freedom from the evils which we see represented. I am afraid it is a practice much too common in inquiries of this nature, to attribute the cause of feelings which merely arise from the mechanical structure of our bodies, or from the natural frame and constitution of our minds, to certain conclusions of the reasoning faculty on the objects presented to us; for I have some reason to apprehend, that the influence of reason in producing our passions is nothing near so extensive as is commonly believed.

XIV. The effects of SYMPATHY in the distresses of others

To examine this point concerning the effect of tragedy in a proper manner, we must previously consider, how we are affected by the feelings of our fellow creatures in circumstances of real distress. I am convinced we have a degree of delight, and that no small one, in the real misfortunes and pains of others; for let the affection be what it will in appearance, if it does not make us shun such objects, if on the contrary it induces us to approach them, if it makes us dwell upon them, in this case I conceive we must have a delight or pleasure of some species or other in contemplating objects of this kind. Do we not read the authentic histories of scenes of this nature with as much pleasure as romances or poems, where the incidents are fictitious? The prosperity of no empire, nor the grandeur of no king, can so agreeably affect in the reading, as the ruin of the state of Macedon, and the distress of its unhappy prince.

Such a catastrophe touches us in history as much as the destruction of Troy does in fable. Our delight in cases of this kind, is very greatly heightened, if the sufferer be some excellent person who sinks under an unworthy fortune. Scipio and Cato are both virtuous characters; but we are more deeply affected by the violent death of the one, and the ruin of the great cause he adhered to, than with the deserved triumphs and uninterrupted prosperity of the other; for terror is a passion which always produces delight when it does not press too close, and pity is a passion accompanied with pleasure, because it arises from love and social affection. Whenever we are formed by nature to any active purpose, the passion which animates us to it, is attended with delight, or a pleasure of some kind, let the subject matter be what it will; and as our Creator has designed we should be united together by so strong a bond as that of sympathy, he has therefore twisted along with it a proportionable quantity of this ingredient; and always in the greatest proportion where our sympathy is most wanted, in the distresses of others. If this passion was simply painful, we would shun with the greatest care all persons and places that could excite such a passion; as, some who are so far gone in indolence as not to endure any strong impression actually do. But the case is widely different with the greater part of mankind; there is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue, as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity; so that whether the misfortune is before our eyes, or whether they are turned back to it in history, it always touches with delight; but it is not an unmixed delight, but blended with no small uneasiness. The delight we have in such things, hinders us from shunning scenes of misery; and the pain we feel, prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer; and all this antecedent to any reasoning, by an instinct that works us to its own purposes, without our concurrence.

XV. Of the effects of TRAGEDY

It is thus in real calamities. In imitated distresses the only difference is the pleasure resulting from the effects of imitation; for it is never so perfect, but we can perceive it is an imitation, and on that principle are somewhat pleased with it. And indeed in some cases we derive as much or more pleasure from that source than from the thing itself. But then I imagine we shall be much mistaken if we attribute any considerable part of our satisfaction in tragedy to a consideration that tragedy is a deceit, and its representations no realities. The nearer it approaches the reality, and the further it removes us from all idea of fiction, the more perfect is its power. But be its power of what kind it will, it never approaches to what it represents. Chuse a day on which to represent the most sublime and affecting tragedy which we have; appoint the most favourite actors; spare no cost upon the scenes and decorations; unite the greatest efforts of poetry, painting and music; and when you have collected your audience, just at the moment when their minds are erect with expectation, let it be reported that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining square; in a moment the emptiness of the theatre would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real sympathy. I believe that this notion of our having a simple pain in the reality, yet a delight in the representation arises from hence, that we do not sufficiently distinguish what we would by no means chuse to do, from what we should be eager enough to see if it was once done. We delight in seeing things, which so far from doing, our heartiest wishes would be to see redressed. This noble capital, the pride of England and of Europe, I believe no man is so strangely wicked as to desire to see destroyed by a conflagration or an earthquake, though he should be removed himself to the

greatest distance from the danger. But suppose such a fatal accident to have happened, what numbers from all parts would crowd to behold the ruins, and amongst them many who would have been content never to have seen London in its glory? Nor is it either in real or fictitious distresses, our immunity from them which produces our delight; in my own mind I can discover nothing like it. I apprehend that this mistake is owing to a sort of sophism, by which we are frequently imposed upon; it arises from our not distinguishing between what is indeed a necessary condition to our doing or suffering any thing, and what is the *cause* of some particular act. If a man kills me with a sword; it is a necessary condition to this that we should have been both of us alive before the fact; and yet it would be absurd to say, that our being both living creatures was the cause of his crime and of my death. So it is certain, that it is absolutely necessary my life should be out of any imminent hazard before I can take a delight in the sufferings of others, real or imaginary, or indeed in any thing else from any cause whatsoever. But then it is a sophism to argue from thence, that this immunity is the cause of my delight either on these or on any occasions. No one can distinguish such a cause of satisfaction in his own mind I believe; nay when we do not suffer any very acute pain, nor are exposed to any imminent danger of our lives, we can feel for others, whilst we suffer ourselves; and often then most when we are softened by affliction; we see with pity even distresses which we would accept in the place of our own.

From Part II

I. Of the passion caused by the SUBLIME

The passion caused by the great and sublime in *nature*, when those causes operate most powerfully, is Astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror. In this case the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it. Hence arises the great power of the sublime, that far from being produced by them, it anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistible force. Astonishment, as I have said, is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree; the inferior effects are admiration, reverence and respect.

II. TERROR

No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear. For fear being an apprehension of pain or death, it operates in a manner that resembles actual pain. Whatever therefore is terrible, with regard to sight, is sublime too, whether this cause of terror, be endued with greatness of dimensions or not; for it is impossible to look on any thing as trifling, or contemptible, that may be dangerous. There are many animals, who though far from being large, are yet capable of raising ideas of the sublime, because they are considered as objects of terror. As serpents and poisonous animals of almost all kinds. Even to things of great dimensions, if we annex any adventitious idea of terror, they become without comparison greater. An even plain of a vast extent on land, is certainly no mean idea; the prospect of such a plain may be as extensive as a prospect of the ocean; but can it ever fill the mind with any thing so great as the ocean itself? This is owing to several causes, but it is owing to none more than to this, that the ocean is an object of no small terror.

III. OBSCURITY

To make any thing very terrible, obscurity seems in general to be necessary. When we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accustom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes. Every one will be sensible of this, who considers how greatly night adds to our dread, in all cases of danger, and how much the notions of ghosts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds, which give credit to the popular tales concerning such sorts of beings. Those despotic governments, which are founded on the passions of men, and principally upon the passion of fear, keep their chief as much as may be from the public eye. The policy has been the same in many cases of religion. Almost all the heathen temples were dark. Even in the barbarous temples of the Americans at this day, they keep their idol in a dark part of the hut, which is consecrated to his worship. For this purpose too the druids performed all their ceremonies in the bosom of the darkest woods, and in the shade of the oldest and most spreading oaks. No person seems [better] to have understood the secret of heightening, or of setting terrible things, if I may use the expression, in their strongest light by the force of a judicious obscurity, than Milton. His description of Death in the second book is admirably studied; it is astonishing with what a gloomy pomp, with what a significant and expressive uncertainty of strokes and colouring he has finished the portrait of the king of terrors.

*The other shape,
If shape it might be called that shape had none
Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
For each seemed either; black he stood as night;
Fierce as ten furies; terrible as hell;
And shook a deadly dart. What seemed his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.²*

5

In this description all is dark, uncertain, confused, terrible, and sublime to the last degree.

From Part III

I. OF BEAUTY

It is my design to consider beauty as distinguished from the sublime; and in the course of the enquiry, to examine how far it is consistent with it. But previous to this, we must take a short review of the opinions already entertained of this quality; which I think are hardly to be reduced to any fixed principles; because men are used to talk of beauty in a figurative manner, that is to say, in a manner extremely uncertain, and indeterminate. By beauty I mean, that quality or those qualities in bodies by which they cause love, or some passion similar to it.

Notes

² *Paradise Lost* (1674), II: 666–73, by English author John Milton.

XXVIII. The Sublime and Beautiful compared

On closing this general view of beauty, it naturally occurs, that we should compare it with the sublime; and in this comparison there appears a remarkable contrast. For sublime objects are vast in their dimensions, beautiful ones comparatively small; beauty should be smooth, and polished; the great, rugged and negligent; beauty should shun the right line, yet deviate from it insensibly; the great in many cases loves the right line, and when it deviates, it often makes a strong deviation; beauty should not be obscure; the great ought to be dark and gloomy; beauty should be light and delicate; the great ought to be solid, and even massive. They are indeed ideas of a very different nature, one being founded on pain, the other on pleasure; and however they may vary afterwards from the direct nature of their causes, yet these causes keep up an eternal distinction between them, a distinction never to be forgotten by any whose business it is to affect the passions.

From Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents (1770)

It is an undertaking of some degree of delicacy to examine into the cause of public disorders. If a man happens not to succeed in such an enquiry, he will be thought weak and visionary; if he touches the true grievance, there is a danger that he may come near to persons of weight and consequence, who will rather be exasperated at the discovery of their errors, than thankful for the occasion of correcting them. If he should be obliged to blame the favourites of the people, he will be considered as the tool of power; if he censures those in power, he will be looked on as an instrument of faction. But in all exertions of duty something is to be hazarded. In cases of tumult and disorder, our law has invested every man, in some sort, with the authority of a magistrate. When the affairs of the nation are distracted, private people are, by the spirit of that law, justified in stepping a little out of their ordinary sphere. They enjoy a privilege, of somewhat more dignity and effect, than that of idle lamentation over the calamities of their country. They may look into them narrowly; they may reason upon them liberally; and if they should be so fortunate as to discover the true source of the mischief, and to suggest any probable method of removing it, though they may displease the rulers for the day, they are certainly of service to the cause of Government. Government is deeply interested in every thing which, even through the medium of some temporary uneasiness, may tend finally to compose the minds of the subject, and to conciliate their affections. I have nothing to do here with the abstract value of the voice of the people. But as long as reputation, the most precious possession of every individual, and as long as opinion, the great support of the State, depend entirely upon that voice, it can never be considered as a thing of little consequence either to individuals or to Government. Nations are not primarily ruled by laws; less by violence. Whatever original energy may be supposed either in force or regulation; the operation of both is, in truth, merely instrumental. Nations are governed by the same methods, and on the same principles, by which an individual without authority is often able to govern those who are his equals or his superiours; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it; I mean when ever publick affairs are steadily and quietly conducted; not when Government is nothing but a continued scuffle between the magistrate and the multitude; in which sometimes the one and some times the other is uppermost; in which they alternately yield and prevail in a series of

contemptible victories and scandalous submissions. The temper of the people amongst whom he presides ought therefore to be the first study of a Statesman. And the knowledge of this temper it is by no means impossible for him to attain, if he has not an interest in being ignorant of what it is his duty to learn.

To complain of the age we live in, to murmur at the present possessors of power, to lament the past, to conceive extravagant hopes of the future, are the common dispositions of the greatest part of mankind; indeed the necessary effects of the ignorance and levity of the vulgar. Such complaints and humours have existed in all times; yet as all times have *not* been alike, true political sagacity manifests itself, in distinguishing that complaint, which only characterizes the general infirmity of human nature, from those which are symptoms of the particular distemperature of our own air and season.

Nobody, I believe, will consider it merely as the language of spleen or disappointment, if I say, that there is something particularly alarming in the present conjuncture. There is hardly a man in or out of power who holds any other language. That Government is at once dreaded and contemned; that the laws are despoiled of all their respected and salutary terrors; that their inaction is a subject of ridicule, and their exertion of abhorrence; that rank, and office, and title, and all the solemn plausibilities of the world, have lost their reverence and effect; that our foreign politicks are as much deranged as our domestic oeconomy; that our dependencies are slackened in their affection, and loosened from their obedience; that we know neither how to yield nor how to inforce; that hardly any thing above or below, abroad or at home, is sound and entire; but that disconnection and confusion, in offices, in parties, in families, in Parliament, in the nation, prevail beyond the disorders of any former time: these are facts universally admitted and lamented.

This state of things is the more extraordinary, because the great parties which formerly divided and agitated the kingdom are known to be in a manner entirely dissolved. No great external calamity has visited the nation; no pestilence or famine. We do not labour at present under any scheme of taxation new or oppressive in the quantity or in the mode. Nor are we engaged in unsuccessful war; in which, our misfortunes might easily pervert our judgement; and our minds, sore from the loss of national glory, might feel every blow of Fortune as a crime in Government.

It is impossible that the cause of this strange distemper should not sometimes become a subject of discourse. It is a compliment due, and which I willingly pay, to those who administer our affairs, to take notice in the first place of their speculation. Our Ministers are of opinion, that the encrease of our trade and manufactures, that our growth by colonization and by conquest, have concurred to accumulate immense wealth in the hands of some individuals; and this again being dispersed amongst the people, has rendered them universally proud, ferocious, and ungovernable; that the insolence of some from their enormous wealth, and the boldness of others from a guilty poverty, have rendered them capable of the most atrocious attempts; so that they have trampled upon all subordination, and violently borne down the unarmed laws of a free Government; barriers too feeble against the fury of a populace so fierce and licentious as ours. They contend, that no adequate provocation has been given for so spreading a discontent; our affairs having been conducted throughout with remarkable temper and consummate wisdom. The wicked industry of some libellers, joined to the intrigues of a few disappointed politicians, have, in their opinion, been able to produce this unnatural ferment in the nation.

Nothing indeed can be more unnatural than the present convulsions of this country, if the above account be a true one. I confess I shall assent to it with great reluctance, and only on the compulsion of the clearest and firmest proofs; because their account resolves itself into this short, but discouraging proposition, “That we have a very good Ministry, but that we are a very bad people”; that we set ourselves to bite the hand that feeds us; that with a malignant insanity we oppose the measures, and ungratefully vilify the persons of those, whose sole object is our own peace and prosperity. If a few puny libellers, acting under a knot of factious politicians, without virtue, parts, or character (such they are constantly represented by these gentlemen), are sufficient to excite this disturbance, very perverse must be the disposition of that people, amongst whom such a disturbance can be excited by such means. It is besides no small aggravation of the public misfortune, that the disease, on this hypothesis, appears to be without remedy. If the wealth of the nation be the cause of its turbulence, I imagine, it is not proposed to introduce poverty, as a constable to keep the peace. If our dominions abroad are the roots which feed all this rank luxuriance of sedition, it is not intended to cut them off in order to famish the fruit. If our liberty has enfeebled the executive power, there is no design, I hope, to call in the aid of despotism, to fill up the deficiencies of law. Whatever may be intended, these things are not yet professed. We seem therefore to be driven to absolute despair; for we have no other materials to work upon, but those out of which God has been pleased to form the inhabitants of this island. If these be radically and essentially vitious,¹ all that can be said is, that those men are very unhappy, to whose fortune or duty it falls to administer the affairs of this untoward people. I hear it indeed sometimes asserted, that a steady perseverance in the present measures, and a rigorous punishment of those who oppose them, will in course of time infallibly put an end to these disorders. But this in my opinion is said without much observation of our present disposition, and without any knowledge at all of the general nature of mankind. If the matter of which this nation is composed be so very fermentable as these gentlemen describe it, heaven never will be wanting to work it up, as long as discontent, revenge, and ambition, have existence in the world. Particular punishments are the cure for accidental distempers in the State; they inflame rather than allay those heats which arise from the settled mismanagement of the Government, or from a natural ill disposition in the people. It is of the utmost moment not to make mistakes in the use of strong measures; and firmness is then only a virtue when it accompanies the most perfect wisdom. In truth, inconstancy is a sort of natural corrective of folly and ignorance.

I am not one of those who think that the people are never in the wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say, that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of the people. Experience may perhaps justify me in going further. Where popular discontents have been very prevalent; it may well be affirmed and supported, that there has been generally something found amiss in the constitution, or in the conduct of Government. The people have no interest in disorder. When they do wrong, it is their error, and not their crime. But with the governing part of the State, it is far otherwise. They certainly may act ill by design, as well as by mistake.

Notes

FROM THOUGHTS ON THE CAUSE

¹ vicious

Isaac Bickerstaffe (1733–c.1812)

Isaac Bickerstaffe (or Bickerstaff) was born in Dublin and, at the age of eleven, became page to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He then spent a number of years in the military, roughly from 1745 to 1763. He began his literary career in 1756 and quickly became a prolific playwright and librettist. Well known for his comic operas and songs, he was a leading figure in the London theater for much of the 1760s. He penned over two dozen volumes, and his songs were often published independently of the plays and operas from which they were taken. Jonathan Swift used “Isaac Bickerstaff[e]” as a pen-name, but there is no known connection between Swift and the actual Isaac Bickerstaffe.

Love in a Village (1762) was the first opera to earn him significant notice. Like many of his contemporaries, Bickerstaffe primarily adapted other writers’ work, but he was particularly successful at adapting material into his form of choice – comedies with musical elements which aimed to have wide appeal. His theatrical career ended abruptly in 1771 when he had to flee England to escape charges of homosexuality (then punishable by death) and hide in France

under an alias; it is not clear how long or where Bickerstaffe lived, or whether he continued to write in the second half of his life, and even the evidence that he lived as late as 1812 is rather slight.

Bickerstaffe’s *The Captive* (1769) is based on English playwright John Dryden’s *Don Sebastian* (1690). *The Captive* provides a number of elements of the comic opera: a couple whose love is thwarted by interfering parents, exotic locales and dramatic adventures, mixed with songs and comedy. *The Captive* also refers extensively to the longstanding problem of piracy along the Barbary Coast (the northern coast of Africa). Tens of thousands of Europeans were captured and enslaved by Barbary pirates in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, threatening eighteenth-century British claims to maritime power.

Further reading

Gleckner, Robert F., “Blake, Bickerstaff, and Eighteenth-century Theater,” *Essays in Literature* 7 (1980): 247–53.

Tasch, Peter A., *The Dramatic Cobbler: The Life and Works of Isaac Bickerstaff*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1972.

The Captive: A Comic Opera (1769)

ADVERTISEMENT

MR. FOOTE’S¹ Situation rendering it impossible for him to perform the smaller Pieces of his own Writing as often as the PUBLIC would desire them, thought that a SINGING FARCE, though pretending to no other Merit than that of good MUSIC, would be more acceptable to his AUDITORS than others destitute of that ORNAMENT, which had been often performed at the Winter THEATRES.

The DIALOGUE of this Trifle is taken, with some Alterations, from a PLAY of DRYDEN’S: In that Part it is inoffensive; and the SONGS, which have been selected with great Care, will, it is hoped, afford Entertainment.

Notes

THE CAPTIVE

¹ Samuel Foote (c.1721–77), English playwright.

PERSONS

MEN
The Cadi
Ferdinand

WOMEN
Fatima
Zorayda

SCENE, a Garden belonging to the CADI, near ALGIERS.

ACT I, SCENE I

A Garden belonging to the CADI's house. On the curtain's rising the CADI appears, seated cross-legg'd, in a sort of pavilion. He is smoking a long pipe. On either side of him sit his wife FATIMA and his daughter ZORAYDA. Some men and women slaves appear at work in the garden. After the chorus the CADI and FATIMA rise, and are met by FERDINAND, who presents a letter.

CHORUS

Ah, how sweet the rural scene!
Circled by those charming groves,
Slavery its labour loves,
And the captive hugs his chain.

CADI. Come, Fatima, we'll rise and take a walk towards the house, honey-bird. You, daughter Zorayda, may stay in the garden longer if you like it.

FERD. Now love and fortune assist me! [*kneeling*] Most noble Cadi, your friend Uchali, admiral of the Dey's gallies at Algiers, commands me thus to prostrate myself –

CADI. What are you, Christian?

FERD. That letter will inform you.

FAT. A good personable fellow.

CADI. [*reading*] "The bearer, a Spaniard by birth, has been a slave of mine upwards of a year, during which time he has behaved himself well; yesterday he received money for his ransom; and being now free, only waits for a ship to carry him to his own country: 'till an opportunity offers he desires to remain among your slaves, many of whom are his countrymen. You may venture to trust him; and he will repay your kindness by discharging any office in your family you think proper to appoint him."

FAT. I like him prodigiously.

CADI. This letter is, indeed, from my friend Uchali. Well, Christian, I have no objection to your staying awhile among my slaves, if you will conduct yourself quietly, and be of use in my garden here.

FERD. I have been bred to gardening from my youth.

FAT. I'll bring him into that arbour, where a rose-tree and a myrtle are just falling for want of a prop; if they were bound together they would help to keep one another up.

CADI. Come into the house, I say; he does not want your help. To work, sirrah, if you'd stay with me –

FAT. Take this little alms to buy you tobacco.

Lord, my dear, why such ill-nature?
Heaven and earth at once demand
Pity for a wretched creature,
Captive in a foreign land.

Shall our mein of harshness favour?
No, 'twas never your intent:
Yet I hope my kind behaviour
Will be construed as 'twas meant.

5

SCENE II

During the former Scene a black slave brings a basket of flowers to ZORAYDA, from which she culls a nosegay. When the CADI and FATIMA go off, FERDINAND advances, but retires again, upon a motion from ZORAYDA, who rises afterwards, and comes forward.

FERD. They're gone. Now might I venture to speak to my dear Zorayda! – She makes signs to me with her hand to keep back. I must do so for a while, till her father has got at a greater distance.

ZOR. Cease, ye fountains, cease to murmur;
Leave, ye gentle gales, to blow;
Softly flowing,
Gently blowing,
Ye but wake my tender woe.

FERD. They are quite out of sight.

ZOR. Come near then.

FERD. My life! my angel!

ZOR. Have a care. My father has been but three days here in the country. I perceive you have disposed of the money I conveyed to you, in the manner I desired, to procure your ransom.

FERD. It is true. Owing to your bounty, I am at length a free man, and procured that letter from my former master, to be received among your father's slaves; which has answered to my wish, and I now only wait for your farther commands.

ZOR. Tho' this is the first time of our speaking together, my letters have sufficiently informed you who and what I am. You have not forgot the purport of my last?

FERD. No, sweet creature.

ZOR. You know my desire is to become of your religion, and to go with you from hence to Spain. What have you done about the directions I gave you with regard to that?

FERD. I have spoken to a fast friend of mine, a renegado, who has taken care to prepare a vessel for our departure. To-morrow night the galley will come to the point, west of your garden here, with a dozen Spaniards, all of them able-bodied rowers, and of approved fidelity.

ZOR. To-morrow night?

FERD. The sooner we can put our design in execution the better, lest some adverse accident should prevent us.

ZOR. 'Tis true: – stay hereabouts, and presently I will come down into the garden again and let you know whether I can be prepared against to-morrow night, or not.

Poor panting heart, ah! wilt thou ever
Throb within my troubled breast?
Shall I see the moment never
That is doom'd to give thee rest?

Cruel stars, that thus torment me!
Fortune smooths her front in vain;
Pleasure's self cannot content me,
But is turn'd with me to pain.

5

SCENE III

FERDINAND, *and then* FATIMA *in a veil.*

FERD. If this be captivity, who would not be a captive? What a lucky day was it for me when I was set to work upon my master's terras in Algiers, where I was seen from the windows of her father's house by this charming infidel, who singled me from the rest of my companions!

FAT. Thus far my love has carried me almost without my knowledge – Yonder he is – Shall I proceed – Shall I discover myself?

FERD. [*not seeing her*] Oh, sweet Zorayda!

FAT. What's that he says?

FERD. Where is my flute? I will sit down upon this stump of a tree, and whistle away the minutes till she comes back.

FAT. Zorayda!

FERD. What melancholy love-tune shall I play now? [*sits down and plays*]

FAT. I can hold no longer. [*slaps him upon the shoulder*]

FERD. My dear Zorayda! – so soon returned!

FAT. Again! – What's the meaning of this? Do you take me for the Cadi's daughter? [*unveiling*]

FERD. By all that's good, the nauseous wife!

FAT. You are confounded.

FERD. Somewhat nonplust, I confess, to hear you deny your name so positively. Why, are you not Zorayda, the Cadi's daughter? Did not I see you with him but just now? Nay, were you not so charitable as to give me money?

FAT. But I am neither Zorayda, nor the Cadi's daughter.

FERD. I know not that; but I am sure he is old enough to be your father.

FAT. But once again – How came you to name Zorayda?

FERD. Another mistake of mine; for asking one of your slaves, when I came into the garden, who were the chief ladies about the house, he answered me Zorayda and Fatima; but she, it seems, is his daughter, (with a plague to her) and you are his beloved wife.

FAT. Say your beloved mistress, if you please, for that's the title I desire.

FERD. Ay, but I have a qualm of conscience.

FAT. Your conscience was very quiet when you took me for Zorayda.

FERD. I must be plain with you – You are married to a reverend man, the head of your law. Go back to your chamber, madam; go back.

FAT. No, sirrah; but I'll teach you, to your cost, what vengeance is in store for refusing a lady who has offered you her love.

For vengeance dire, thou wretch! prepare,
Nought shall my resentment stay,
To a lion, to a bear,
My nature turns,
While my bosom burns
To seize my destin'd prey.

5

Oh, object to my soul how sweet!
To see you grovling at my feet,
While I no pity shew;
To spurn your tears,
To mock your fears,
And tread you to the shades below.

10

SCENE IV

FERDINAND, FATIMA, *and afterwards the CADI.*

FERD. What do you mean, madam? For Heaven's sake, peace.

FAT. Ungrateful wretch! What do I mean! Help, help, husband! my lord Cadi! I shall be undone; the villain will be too strong for me. Help, for pity of a poor distress'd creature.

FERD. Then I have nothing but impudence to assist me. I must drown the clamour, whate'er comes on it. [*he takes out his flute and plays as loud as he possibly can, and she continues crying out*]

CADI. What's here! What's here!

FAT. Oh, sweetest! I'm glad you're come; this Christian slave was going to be rude with me.

CADI. Oh, horrid! abominable! the villain – the monster – take him away, flay and impale him, rid the world of such a viper.

FERD. First hear me, worthy sir. What have you seen to provoke you?

CADI. I have heard the outcries of my wife, the bleatings of the poor innocent lamb. What have I seen, quotha! If I see the lamb lie expiring, and the wolf by her, is not that evidence sufficient of the murder?

FERD. Pray think in reason, Sir. Is a man to be put to death for a similitude? No violence has been committed; none intended. The lamb's alive; and, if I durst tell you so, no more a lamb than I am a wolf.

FAT. How's that, villain!

FERD. Be patient, madam, and speak but truth, I'll do any thing to serve you.

FAT. Well. – Hear him speak, husband; perhaps he may say something for himself I know not.

CADI. But did he mean no mischief? Was he endeavouring nothing?

FAT. In my conscience I begin to doubt he did not.

CADI. Then what meant all those outcries?

FAT. I heard music in the garden, and I stole softly down, imagining it might be he.

CADI. How's that! Imagining it might be he?

FAT. Yes, to be sure, my lord. Am not I the mistress of the family; and is it not my place to see good order kept in it? I thought he might have allured some of the she

slaves to him, and was resolved to prevent what might have been betwixt them; when on a sudden he rush'd out upon me, and caught me in his arms with such a fury –

CADI. I have heard enough, – away with him.

FAT. Mistaking me, no doubt, for one of the slaves that work in the garden. With that, affrighted as I was, I discovered myself, and cry'd aloud; but as soon as ever he knew me, the villain let me go; and, I must needs say, he started back as if I were a serpent, and was more afraid of me than I of him.

CADI. O, thou ungrateful villain! Did'st thou come to get footing in my family in order to corrupt it? That's cause enough of death. Once more, again, away with him.

FAT. Well, but, love –

CADI. Speak not for him.

FAT. I must speak, and you hear me.

CADI. Away with him, I say.

FAT. What! for an intended trespass? No harm has been done, whatever may be. Then consider he does not belong to you, and is recommended by a friend you would not chuse to disoblige.

CADI. Why that's true.

FERD. I see she'll bring me off if she can.

CADI. And are you sure, rascal, you meant no harm?

FERD. No harm, upon my reputation, – no more than the child unborn. I was playing here by myself, (such is my foolish custom) and took madam, as she says, for one of the female slaves employ'd in your garden.

CADI. Well, sirrah, to your kennel; mortify your flesh, and consider in whose family you are.

FERD. Yes, sir, I'll consider.

FAT. And learn another time to treat the Cadi's wife as she would have you.

CADI. What do you mean by that?

FAT. What do I mean! – I'll shew you what I mean – give the puppy a remembrancer. –

CADI. Come, come, – enough.

FAT. Do let me beat him a little, husband.

CADI. No wife – no: – Get in before me –

FAT. Why sure!

CADI. Get in I say.

FAT. I won't.

CADI. March. –

FAT. Well, I will march; – but if I am not revenged on you for this, you old tyrant, the Devil take me.

CADI. For all her art,
I see her heart;
She counterfeits too grosly:
And, Lady fair,
I shall take care
To watch your waters closely.

5

I'm us'd to keep
A rod in steep;
For long I've had suspicion:
And if I find
She's ill inclin'd,
I'll bring her to contrition.

10

SCENE V

FERDINAND *and then ZORAYDA behind him.*

ZOR. Christian where are you?

FERD. 'Tis her voice – I can't be mistaken again.

ZOR. Ferdinand! –

FERD. Zorayda! –

ZOR. Yes 'tis I.

FERD. Come nearer that I may be sure.

ZOR. There, there. –

FERD. Do you know what has happened to me since you went away?

ZOR. Yes, yes, I know it all. – “Any thing to serve you, Madam.” – Whose words were these, Gentleman?

FERD. Come don't make yourself worse natur'd than you are. – To save my life you would be content I should promise any thing.

ZOR. Yes, if I was sure you would perform nothing.

FERD. But is your mother-in-law such a virago?

ZOR. What do you think of her?

FERD. Hang me if I know what to think of her! but this I'm sure of, she had like to play the Devil with me.

ZOR. Well, I assure you these freaks are nothing with her. – I perceiv'd she took a fancy for you the moment she saw you: – However, beware of her. – You think that's her face you see; but 'tis only a dawb'd vizard: And for constancy, I can tell you for your comfort, she would love till death – I mean till yours; – for when she was tir'd of you, she would certainly dispatch you to another world, for fear of telling tales.

FERD. But why all this? – What's Fatima to me? – You cannot imagine I would exchange a diamond for a pebble stone.

ZOR. No; – But I think you might like to have the diamond and the pebble stone too by way of variety.

FERD. By this fair hand I swear –

ZOR. Well, come – What do you swear?

FERD. To resist temptation.

ZOR. To avoid it is better. And since you say your friends and your ship will be ready to-morrow night, to-morrow night I am determined to go off with you. – Meet me here about ten o'clock. – I'll slip down from my chamber, and bring my father in my hand.

FERD. Your father!

ZOR. I mean what he considers as the better part of him, – his pearls and jewels, – his whole contents, – his heart and soul – as much as ever I can carry.

FERD. I shall be gone this moment and inform my companions.

Thus low for all your favours,
Behold your servant bends;
Through life my best endeavours
Shall be to make amends.
Though life's too short to prove
My truth, my gratitude and love.

Dear liberty possessing,
 Can man more happy be?
 But what endears the blessing,
 Is that it comes from thee.

10

SCENE VII

ZORAYDA

Let me consider a little. – Am not I a mad wicked girl, going to forsake my father, and leave my country, to run into a strange one with a slave whose freedom I purchase, and I first saw, by accident, thro' a window in my father's house that look'd into the place where he work'd? – Why, on maturely weighing the matter, not so mad and wicked as I at first appear. I have long hated both our Mahometan laws and religion in my heart, and I have no means to get rid of them both but by putting myself in the hands of a Christian. – This is a handsome man I am sure, and I will believe him an honest one.

The wretch condemn'd with life to part,
 Yet, yet on hope relies;
 And the last sigh that rends his heart,
 Bids expectation rise.

Hope, like the glimm'ring taper light,
 Adorns and cheers our way;
 And still, as darker grows the night,
 Emits a brighter ray.

5

ACT II, SCENE I

Scene changes to another View of the Garden by Moonlight, with a Balcony and Portico belonging to the CADI'S House.

FERDINAND enters leading ZORAYDA.

FERD. I have been waiting here I know not how long! – Why, thou sweet delicious creature, why torture me with thy delay? – And art thou come at last! – But where hast thou been? – I was almost in despair.

ZOR. Don't be angry; it was well I could come at all. There has been a strange bustle this evening within.

FERD. As how! What has been the matter?

ZOR. Some cause which my father has lately decided, and, to tell you the truth, I believe not with the strictest attention to justice; however, the party has carried his complaint to the Dey, and he has been obliged to go to court about it; but he's come back again, and I fancy the storm is pretty well blown over.

FERD. And what are we to do now?

ZOR. Why, what we have already schemed; but, as I had outstay'd the time appointed, I just slipped down to see if you had patience to keep to your post.

FERD. Could you doubt it?

ZOR. Is the galley ready?

FERD. I'm but this moment come from it. It lies within a pistol shot of us, just without the little gate of your garden which leads to the sea.

ZOR. Well, I'll run up again and bring down what I told you; in the mean time, do you take another look towards the galley, and prepare the men for our reception.

FERD. I have entrusted a countryman of mine, one of your father's slaves, with our design. I left him on the watch; but I'll go myself.

ZOR. Heigho!

FERD. What's the matter!

ZOR. Something – I don't know what.

FERD. Nay my love –

ZOR. Let me lean upon your arm – It will away again – My courage is good for all this.

FERD. Zorayda! –

ZOR. Feel my heart.

FERD. Poor little thing how it throbs!

ZOR. Oh me!

Alas! 'tis in vain my distress to dissemble.

I wish, yet, with fear, I my wishes pursue;

I fain would be gone, yet in going I tremble;

No stay to support me, no pilot but you.

5

At once, friends, and father, and country, forsaking,

New faith, new companions, new climates to try;

Each step that I tread tender thoughts are awaking,

And still I look back, and withdraw with a sigh.

SCENE II

The CADI alone in a Slave's Habit like that of FERDINAND'S.

CADI. This it is to have a sound head-piece. – I have mewed up my suspected spouse in her chamber. – No more embassies to that lusty young Christian. Next, by this habit of a slave, I have made myself as like him as I can. Now walking under the windows of my Seraglio, if Fatima should look out, she will certainly take me for Ferdinand, and call to me, and by that I shall know what concupiscence is working in her. She cannot come down to commit iniquity, there's my safety; but if she peep, if she put her nose abroad, there's demonstration of her pious will, and let me alone to work her for it.

In emblem I am like a cat
That's watching for a mouse.
Close by his hole behold her squat,
While her heart goes pit-a-pat.

If a squeaking she hears,
She pricks up her ears,
And when he appears,
Leaps on him souse.

5

And so will I do with my wife.
Just so will I watch her,
And so if I catch her,
I'll worry her out of her life.

10

SCENE III

The CADI, ZORAYDA running to him with the Casket in her Hand.

ZOR. Now I can embrace you with a good conscience. – Here are the pearls and jewels – here's my father.

CADI. I am indeed thy father; but how the Devil didst thou know me in this disguise! – and what pearls and jewels dost thou mean?

ZOR. What have I done! and what will now become of me!

CADI. Ar't thou mad, Zorayda?

ZOR. I think you will make me so.

CADI. Why? – What have I done to you? – Recollect thyself, and speak sense to me.

ZOR. Then give me leave to tell you, that you are the worst of fathers.

CADI. Did I think I had got such a monster! – Proceed, my dutiful child, proceed, proceed.

ZOR. You have been raking together a mass of wealth, by indirect and wicked means. The spoils of orphans are in these jewels, and the tears of widows are in these pearls.

CADI. You amaze me!

ZOR. I would do so. – This casket is loaded with your sins. 'Tis the cargo of rapine and extortion, the iniquity of thirty years cadiship converted into diamonds.

CADI. Would some rich railing rogue dare say as much to me, that I might squeeze his purse for scandal.

ZOR. Here, Sir, don't think I'll be the receiver of your thefts. – I discharge my conscience of them. – Here, take again your filthy mammon, and restore it, you had best, to the true owners.

CADI. I am finely documented by my own daughter.

ZOR. And a great credit to me to be so. – Do but think how decent a habit you have on, and how becoming your function to be disguised like a slave, and eaves-dropping under the women's windows.

CADI. Pr'ythee, child, reproach me no more of human failings. – I am better at bottom than thou thinkest. – I am not the man you take me for.

ZOR. No, to my sorrow, Sir, you are not.

CADI. It was a very bad beginning; tho' methought to see you come running upon me with such a warm embrace – Pr'ythee, what was meaning of that violent hot hug?

ZOR. I'm sure I meant nothing but the zeal and affection which I bear to the man in the world whom I love best.

CADI. Why this is as it should be. – Take the treasure again – It will never be put into better hands.

But, pr'ythee, spare me, dearest daughter,
If ought that's past my conscience stings;
Down my old cheeks it forces water,
To hear your cruel taunts and flings.

You should consider, child, if I
Have in my office grip'd too nigh,
'Twas to the end that you might have
My wealth when I was in the grave.
My failings then no longer press;
We all have errors, more or less.

5

10

SCENE IV

The CADI, ZORAYDA, FERDINAND in a rich habit.

FERD. What do you mean, my dear, to stand talking in this suspicious place, just under Fatima's window? – You are well met, comrade; I know you are the friend of our flight.

CADI. Ferdinand in disguise! – Now I begin to smell a rat.

FERD. And I another that outstinks it. – False Zorayda! thus to betray me to your father.

ZOR. Alas! I was betrayed myself. – He was here in disguise like you; and I, poor innocent, ran into his hands.

CADI. In good time you did so. – I laid a trap for a she fox, and worse vermin has caught himself in it. You would fain break loose now, tho' you left a limb behind you; but I am yet in my territories, and in call of company, that's my comfort.

FERD. Know I have a trick yet to put you past your squeaking.

ZOR. What do you mean? – You will not throttle him! – Consider he's my father.

FERD. Pr'ythee let us provide first for our own safety. – If I do not consider him, he will consider us with a vengeance afterwards.

ZOR. You may threaten him from crying out; but, for my sake, give him back a little cranny of his windpipe, and some part of speech.

FERD. Not so much as one single interjection. – Come away, father-in-law; this is no place for dialogues. – When you are upon the bench you talk by hours, and there no man must interrupt you. – This is but like for like, good father-in-law. – Now I am on the bench, 'tis your turn to hold your tongue. [*He struggles.*] Nay, if you will be hanging back, I shall take care you shall hang forwards. [*Pulls him along the stage with a sword at his reins.*]

ZOR. T'other way to the arbour with him, and make haste before we are discovered.

FERD. If I only bind and gag him there, he may commend me hereafter for civil usage; he deserves not so much favour for any action of his life.

ZOR. Yes pray bate him one for begetting your mistress.

FERD. Once more, come along in silence my Pythagorian father-in-law.

ZOR. Oh! dear me! – dear me! – I wish it was well over – All I'm afraid of is that my courage or strength will fail me. – Well, is he safe?

FERD. Yes, yes – I have lodg'd him. – He won't trouble us within this half hour, I warrant you.

Now, now, my fairest, let us go;
Fortune, Fate can frown no more:
A gentle gale begins to blow
To waft us to a safer shore.

Let us the fav'ring minute seize,
Give all our canvas to the wind,
Take with us freedom, love and ease,
And leave remorse and pain behind.

5

SCENE V

ZORAYDA, FERDINAND, FATIMA in the Balcony, who afterwards comes down.

FAT. Oh! Heavens! what will become of us all! – Who's in the garden? – Ferdinand I say! – Ferdinand! – Help – assistance – the Dey's officers are in the house breaking open the doors of the women's apartments.

- FERD. Oh! that screech-owl in the balcony! – We shall be pursued immediately! – Which way shall we take?
- ZOR. She talks of the Emperor's officers! – It will be impossible to escape them, at least for me. – Here take these jewels – You may get off.
- FERD. And what will become of thee then, poor kind soul?
- ZOR. I must take my fortune. – When you have got safe into your own country, I hope you will sometime bestow a sigh to the memory of her who lov'd you.
- FERD. No, take back your jewels – It's an empty casket without thee. – Thou and it had been a bargain.
- ZOR. I hear them coming! – Shift for yourself at least.
- FERD. No, confound me if I budge from you now.
- FAT. Who's there? – Zorayda! – Ferdinand!
- FERD. O are you there, Madam! – You have ferritted me out.
- FAT. Come, come, this is no time for follies of any kind. The Cadi, her father, my husband, is undone, and we shall all be involved in his ruin. The court have had new informations of his extortion, and the wealth he has amassed by it. The last circumstance is enough to condemn him, and an order is issued to strangle him, and seize upon his effects. It is not a moment since the guards, thinking he was hid in my room, broke open the door where he had lock'd me up.
- FERD. And where are they now?
- FAT. I had the presence of mind to tell them that the Cadi was at a house he has twelve miles off, where they are gone to look for him, by which means we have an hour or two's respite to look about us.
- ZOR. Alas! what good can we derive from that?
- FERD. Hold! stay here – By Heaven I have a thought.
- FAT. Dear Zorayda give me your hand; if there was ever any jealousies between us, I hope they are now at an end.
- FAT. Hence with anger, hence with chiding;
From my breast the cause is gone.
- ZOR. Ev'ry harsher thought subsiding,
Henceforth shall our souls be one.
- FAT. Females, mean and envious creatures, 5
Seldom love for gen'rous ends:
- ZOR. But let us, of nobler natures,
Shew that women can be friends.
- A. 2. Come then, friendship, here unite us 10
In thy soft, thy sacred bands;
At thy shrine, behold we offer
Hearts conjoin'd as well as hands.
Envy, vanity and malice
Plague the bosoms where they reign:
She, who would herself be happy, 15
Ne'er will seek a sister's pain.

SCENE VI

ZORAYDA, FATIMA, FERDINAND, *the CADI*.

- FERD. Come, Sir, come out. – I have told you your condition, and, if there is any thing to be done for you, you see there's no time to be lost.

CADI. O dear! – O dear! – O dear! –

FAT. Well, you know I always told you what would be the consequence of your bribery and corruption. I said it would bring you to the mutes and the bowstring at last.

CADI. What will become of me!

FAT. Why you'll be strangled as soon as the officers come back.

CADI. Oh! that cursed strangling. – I can't bear the thoughts of it. – No, good bye to you all. – I'll go and drown myself.

FERD. Stop: since you're for taking to the water, I have a proposal to make to you. The galley is now waiting in which your daughter and I designed to make our escape; what say you, will you accompany us? – We have already got the chief part of your effects, which I promise to share with you when we get to Spain.

ZOR. Do, dear father.

FAT. Indeed, husband, 'tis the only thing left for us.

CADI. Well, dear wife, give me a kiss then.
With pleasure I this land forego:
My fame will sure be mangled;
But what care I, let it be so
If I escape being strangled.
Nay, pr'ythee, let's make haste away;

5

I really tremble while I stay.
Oh! dreadful thing!
In a bow string
To have one's neck intangled.

CHO. Nay, pr'ythee, &c.

FAT. Here, Sir, receive your willing wife;
Aboard you need but hand me:
From henceforth I am yours for life,
Confide in and command me.
To ancient husband's girls be good;
Remember jointer'd widowhood.
That time may come,
And then – but mum!
He – hem – You understand me.

10

15

CHO. To ancient husbands, &c.

ZOR. I have been naughty, I confess;
But now, you need not doubt it,
I mean my conduct to redress,
And straight will set about it.
Forgive me only, dear papa,
I'll be obedient as mama,
Contented still,
When I've my will,
And who is pleas'd without it?

20

25

CHO. Forgive me only, dear papa, &c.

FERD. And now our scenic task is done,
This comes of course, you know, Sirs,
We drop the mask of every one,
And stand in *statu quo*, Sirs;

Your ancient friends and servants we,
 Who humbly wait for your decree, 30
 One gracious smile,
 To crown our toil,
 And happy let us go, Sirs.
 CHO. Your ancient friends, &c.

John Leslie (fl. 1772)

Little is known of John Leslie. In *The Poets of Ireland* (1912), D. J. O'Donoghue suggests that he "was tutor to Lord Clanwilliam" and "Died September 5, 1778," but his source for this information is not clear and O'Donoghue can be unreliable. "John Leslie" is a common name in eighteenth-century Ireland, making attribution difficult. Leslie appears to have written two works, the topographical poems *Killarney* and *Phoenix Park*, both of which were published in 1772. *Killarney*, in particular, is a leading instance of Irish topographical poetry in the eighteenth century, in part because of the place of Killarney and its lakes in depictions of the Irish landscape. Leslie draws extensively on topographical conventions, including classical allusion, painterly reference, and the tension between nature and art. He also engages more contemporary concerns such as the picturesque and its touristic resonances, as well as recent historical events.

Killarney is implicitly organized into three sections. The first section details the lower lake and tells the story of Elizabethan wars and, in the more remote past, "Donoghoe, the great," a legendary Irish king who is praised for his virtues and who prophesies, in welcoming terms, English colonization. The second section, the shortest, offers a "Sylvan Tale," as the speaker crosses from the lower to the upper lake, in which the Maid of Killarney, Donoghoe's last descendant, meets and becomes betrothed to a tourist. The third section surveys the upper lake and engages

contemporary events. Much of this section deals with the Seven Years' War (1756–63), a conflict that included most of Europe and arose out of the French and Indian War (1754–63) in North America. Britain was eventually the military victor, and both wars were formally ended by the Treaty of Paris between Britain, Spain, and France in 1763; the treaty transferred both Spanish- and French-controlled territories in the American colonies and Canada to British control. When Leslie published *Killarney*, the British victory appeared to have established Britain as a major global power, and one with a firm grasp over the economically important transatlantic trade. In 1776, the American Revolution would contest this view, but in 1772 Britain's maritime power was nearly unchallenged.

Further reading

Foster, John Wilson, "The Topographical Tradition in Anglo-Irish Poetry," *Irish University Review* 4–5 (1974–5): 169–87. Reprinted in *Colonial Consequences: Essays in Irish Literature and Culture*. Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1991.

Gibbons, Luke, "Topographies of Terror: Killarney and the Politics of the Sublime," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 95 (1996): 23–44.

Waters, John, "Topographical Poetry and the Politics of Culture in Ireland, 1772–1820," in *Romantic Generations: Essays in Honor of Robert F. Gleckner*, ed. Ghislaine McDayter, Guinn Batten, and Barry Milligan, 221–44. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2001.

Killarney: A Poem (1772)

ADVERTISEMENT

There is a secret power in Nature, which captivates the heart of every attentive observer. Mankind in general seem to have an innate love of her charms; but this passion chiefly predominates in those of warm and susceptible minds. The Author having visited the celebrated scenes of KILLARNEY,¹ beheld them with wonder and delight, diversified, as they are, with all that can awaken the powers, and gratify the pleasures of imagination. Under these impressions, he was induced, as leisure permitted, and fancy prompted, to delineate, from a variety of the most picturesque and sublime objects, a landscape, representing select and distinct pieces of Imagery. For this purpose, he has taken a separate view of the two Lakes, and characterized each of them with its own peculiar beauties. The same method is observed with regard to the mountains, woods, shrubbery, and every other remarkable object. The description he has endeavoured to enliven with fable and episode. For the sentiment and moral, he makes no apology; having only to hope, that the Picture, drawn from his own feelings, may present some pleasing similitude of the great original.

The Author cannot conclude this short address to the Reader, without making his acknowledgments to the many respectable persons, who have interested themselves in the success of the following poem; and he takes this opportunity of expressing, how much he is indebted to the taste and friendship of the Reverend Doctor BOWDEN.

ARGUMENT

THE Introduction. – A view of the Mountains. – MANGERTON described. – A prospect from its summit to the influx of the SHANNON into the ATLANTICK. – Growsing. – A view of the Woods, Arbutus, and Shrubby. – Description of the Isle of INNISFALLEN. – Prospect from thence to the lower Lake, terminated by the castle of DUNLO on one hand, and by that of ROSS ISLAND on the other. – The mythology of O DONAGHOE. – A sudden storm. – View of MUCRUS. – Passage to the upper Lake. – A Sylvan Tale. – The principal objects of the Lake described; the Arbutus Island; the Oak Island; a Rock, representing the hull of a Man of War; a wild Landscape; a remarkable Waterfall. – The Stag Hunt. – Eagle's Aiery. – Echoes. – A late evening Scene, and other circumstances native to the subject. – The whole, the progress of a day.

Thy scenes, Killarney, scenes of pure delight,
Call forth my verse, and wing my daring flight.
O form'd to charm, new rapture to inspire,
To feed the Painter's, and the Poet's fire!
Far other pow'rs than mine, thy praises claim;
Yet, strongly glowing with the sacred flame,
May I, advent'rous, sing thy matchless pride,
Fair Nature's boast? Be Nature thou my guide.

5

Notes

KILLARNEY

¹ Situate in the province of Munster, and county of Kerry, 30 miles N. W. of Cork, and 125 computed miles from Dublin (author).

Teach me to think, my feeble voice to raise,
 Thou safest, best inspirer of my lays. 10
 Where-e'er we rove, thro' forest, lake, or wild,
 Bring with thee Fancy, thy creative child,
 And gay associate; aptest she to tell
 The haunt of Dryad, and the Echo's cell;
 Where dwells the mountain's Genius, where the wood's, 15
 And where the Naiads of the silver floods;
 Where, seldom seen, the rural Pow'rs retreat,
 The Friends and Guardians of thy sacred seat.

But lo! in sylvan majesty arise
 The green-wood Mountains, and salute the skies, 20
 Circling the deep, or shelt'ring yonder plains,
 Where Ceres smiles, and Kenmare chears the swains:²
 No Alpine horrors on their summits frown,
 Nor Pride, dark-low'ring, on the vale looks down:
 No massy fragments, pendant from on high, 25
 With hideous ruin strike the aching eye.
 The swelling Hills, in vernal bloom elate,
 Smile by their sides, th' attendants of their state.

High o'er the rest, our steps aspiring tread
 Exalted Mangerton's³ cerulean head; 30
 Parent of springs, where nurs'd the dews and rains
 Timely descend, to glad the thirsty plains:
 Where spreads the Lake diffusive o'er his crown,
 And, like another Caspian,⁴ all his own:
 While down his bounteous side the Torrent roars;⁵ 35
 A richer tide than huge Olympus⁶ pours:
 Lodg'd in the blue serene, supreme he stands,
 And all the region, far and wide, commands:
 The less'ning Mountains now no more aspire,
 Parnassus' rivals⁷ modestly retire. 40
 In guiltless times, perhaps, a Druid throng
 There strung Ierne's lyre,⁸ and wak'd the song;
 And still, tho' rude the note, a learned strain,
 The simple peasants of the West⁹ retain:
 The Lakes, the Isles, the Forests shrink below, 45
 And, but in miniature, their glory shew.

New objects rise from his stupendous height,
 Nor can the tow'ring region¹⁰ bound the sight.
 Prospect immense! our eyes excursive roam,
 To yon tall beach, where rushing surges foam; 50
 Where, ebbing from their shores, the waves retreat;
 One blue expanse of majesty sedate.

Notes

² Kenmare is the name of a river and a village near Killarney.

³ One of the highest mountains in Ireland (author).

⁴ A sea supposed not to communicate with any other (author).

⁵ A waterfall in view of Mucrus (author).

⁶ A mountain abounding with springs (author).

⁷ A remarkable double-top'd mountain (author).

⁸ Ierne is a poetic name for Ireland.

⁹ In allusion to many of them, who speak Latin (author).

¹⁰ A range of mountains, called the Reeks (author).

Now skirting wide, the happy plains are seen,
 Where vanquish'd Desmond¹¹ bow'd to freedom's Queen,¹²
 The first that gave them peace, in triumph led 55
 Their tyrant Lords, and crush'd Rebellion's head.
 Now Kenmare's¹³ harbours spreading from the main,
 Invite the passing mariner in vain.
 Hard fate! shall thousands on Ierne's coast,
 Be still to Commerce and to Britain lost? 60

Copious and calm, lo! Bantry's lordly tide,
 For all Britannia's fleets a station wide;
 A Port secure, long since well known to fame,
 And signaliz'd with gallant Herbert's¹⁴ name.
 To Dingle¹⁵ far we stretch, and o'er the main,¹⁶ 65
 Once fatal to the naval pride of Spain;
 And where, in fruitless war, conflicting tides
 Dash foamy round the Skellig's¹⁷ marble sides;
 On to the Capes,¹⁸ where haughty Shannon roars,
 And drives th' Atlantick backward from his shores. 70

Thou mighty Pharos of Ierne's isle,
 Round whom recountless charms, and graces smile;
 Whose ample breast the tempest's force restrains,
 A gracious bulwark to the distant plains;
 Th' astonish'd soul all fitted to inspire 75
 With silent wonder, and with holy fire.
 Let me, on wing'd devotion, ardent fly
 Tow'rd Him, who rear'd thy awful head on high.

Descending, now, from Aether's pure domain,
 By fancy borne to range the nether plain, 80
 Behold all-winning Novelty display'd
 Along the vale, the mountain, and the shade.
 The scenes but late diminutive, resume
 Their native grandeur, and their wonted bloom.
 The woods expand their umbrage o'er the deep, 85
 And with ambitious aim ascend the steep.
 Stage above stage, their vig'rous arms invade
 The tallest cliffs, and wrap them in the shade.
 Each in its own pre-eminence regains,
 The high dominion of the subject plains, 90
 Smiling beneath; such smiles the people wear,
 Happy in some paternal Monarch's care.

Notes

¹¹ An ancient lord of that country (author).

¹² Elizabeth (author). Elizabeth I, queen of England (1553–1603).

¹³ The river (author).

¹⁴ The bay of Bantry, memorable for the naval engagement between him and the French fleet, 1689 (author). Arthur Herbert (1648–1716), English admiral.

¹⁵ The most westerly port of Europe (author).

¹⁶ The Sound of the Blasquets, where some of the Spanish Armada were supposed to be lost, particularly, the Rosary of 1000 Tons (author).

¹⁷ Three remarkable islands on the S. W. of Kerry (author).

¹⁸ Loophead and Kerry-point (author).

Shall we the thicket, hill, or vale explore,
 To cull the healing God's¹⁹ salubrious store?
 Or climb th' empurpled summit, there to breathe
 Aethereal air, and view a world beneath; 95
 While o'er the steep, the Zephyr's early gale,
 And perfume wild, assist us to prevail.

Ye sportive Youth, it is your season now,
 At blush of morn, to range the mountain's brow. 100
 The russet cock,²⁰ forth from his heathy lawn,
 Defiance crows, and challenges the dawn.
 Behind, robust and proud, the well-plum'd pack,
 Rambling, pursue their parents mazy track.
 Here is the mark to win a sportsman's fame, 105
 The Partridge is a poor, domestick game;
 Here, train'd to distant toil, you learn to dare
 The roughest deeds, and steel your nerves for war;
 With thund'ring tube prepar'd, disdain to set
 The gen'rous brood, you murder with the net. 110
 Let nought insidious tempt your manly hearts;
 To poachers leave the circumventive arts.
 Now to the covert brown, all closely pent,
 The Pointer draws, and stiffens in the scent;
 Expectance beats, while each successive springs, 115
 And trusts his safety to the strength of wings;
 The well-aim'd gun arrests him as he flies,
 He wheels, he falls, he flutters, bounds and dies.

Chear'd by the rural sport, the active Mind
 Flies all abroad, and scorns to be confin'd, 120
 Sweeps o'er the forest, up the mountain springs,
 Where, to his pendant flock, the goat-herd sings;
 List'ning the while, Content that never wants,
 And rosy Health reclin'd on balmy plants.
 Whitening the verdant steep, the fountains play, 125
 In concert with the Sylvan warbler's lay.
 Autumn and Spring their diff'ring seasons join,
 And, social on the bough, together twine.

The Arbutus,²¹ array'd in flow'rs and fruits,
 The pride of all the shrubby natives shoots, 130
 Various their tints; (not more the Prism displays
 When show'ring on the eye light's parted rays)
 An union rare; and such the pleasing sight,
 When Youth and Manhood gracefully unite.
 Emblem of Him, whose heav'n-attemper'd mind 135
 Is form'd to profit, and delight mankind.
 Some proudly upward tend, some lowly creep,

Notes

¹⁹ Apollo (author). Greek god of medicine.

²¹ A shrub.

²⁰ The Grouse (author).

And some, inverted, stoop to kiss the deep,
Narcissus-like;²² and as the seasons glide,
Blossom, and bear with interchanging pride. 140
While other tribes, but transient charms assume,
These thro' Killarney's wilds perennial bloom.

Child of Marsh-elder, next the Guilder-rose
Of humble origin, yet gayly blows;
Silver'd by happy chance, how strange to see 145
An offspring,²³ so unlike the parent tree!
The splendid native of the mountain's side,
Now in the garden lifts its snowy²⁴ pride.
Graceful and rich, the Juniper appears,
Like the Arabian-tree, distilling tears; 150
Here spreading wide, magnificently dress'd,
In purple rob'd, and by Apollo²⁵ bless'd.
Deep blushing near, the Service-fruit²⁶ repays
The woodland warblers wild, and grateful lays;
Allur'd from far, they flock with eager wing, 155
They feast luxurious, and more tuneful sing.

From one kind stem,²⁷ behold with wond'ring eyes,
Curious and lordly proud, a forest rise.
No art instructs the various boughs to spread,
Nor from inoculation grows the shade; 160
The regal Oak, the hardy Ash ascend,
And their umbrageous arms together blend;
The gold-stain'd Holly lifts its prickly spears,
The Quicken-tree its sanguine cluster bears.
Their strength, their bloom, all grateful strive to shew, 165
And grace the parent stock, from whence they grow.
Rarely such ornament spontaneous springs,
Nor wave such honours on the heads of kings.
The stranger Vine a friendly mansion finds,
Lodg'd in the cliff, and o'er the summit winds 170
In purple pomp, while, like a bashful bride,
The Myrtle joins its fragrance and its pride.
Together twin'd, their native union prove
The God of vineyards, and the Queen of love.

Can Flora's self recount the shrubs and flow'rs, 175
That scent the shade, that clasp the rocky bow'rs?
From the hard veins of sapless marble rise
The fragrant race, and shoot into the skies.
Wond'rous the cause! can human search explore,
What vegetation lurks in ev'ry pore? 180
What in the womb of diff'rent strata breeds?

Notes

²² Narcissus, in classical myth, fell in love with his reflection in the water and attempted to kiss it.

²³ The difference supposed to be accidental (author).

²⁴ Commonly called the snowball tree (author).

²⁵ In allusion to its medicinal virtues (author).

²⁶ This tree is remarkable for its attraction of singing birds (author).

²⁷ A stem of yew, under the mountain Glenna (author).

What fills the universe with genial feeds?
 Wond'rous the cause! and fruitless to inquire,
 Our wiser part is humbly to admire.
 The fair expanse of yonder opening flood, 185
 Now calls us from the summit and the wood.
 The barks are trim'd, melodious musick waits,
 Impatient joy in ev'ry bosom beats,
 The Zephyrs lead, while new unfolding charms
 Steal on our course, as fancy works and warms. 190
 Some coyly, maiden-like, themselves reveal,
 And boldly some, our gliding passage heal.
 Isles, rocks, and shrubs, united now are seen,
 And now disjoin'd, the waters play between.
 Beauty, before in narrower circle pent, 195
 Spreads o'er the deep, and triumphs in extent.
 In mazy rounds of loveliest scenery lost,
 Fair Innisfallen²⁸ courts us to her coast,
 To climb her rocky barrier, and to stray
 Along the path of Kenmare's spiry way.²⁹ 200
 Vary'd with gentle mounts, descents, and plains,
 Rich, yet the forest-wild, it still retains.
 How green the carpet! while Sylvanus spreads
 His venerable arms around our heads.
 How proud the ruin!³⁰ once the ruthless home 205
 Of pale Austerity, and monkish gloom,
 The seat of Woe, now by its princely lord,
 To Mirth devoted, and the social board.

 Forming a checker'd scene, the pendant wood,
 By turns excludes, by turns admits the flood; 210
 The Sylvan's covert, Naiad's kind repose,
 When rude the Zephyr, or when Phoebus glows.
 New scenes of grandeur open to our eyes,
 Where graceful hills,³¹ and distant ruins rise;
 Where down the rugged steep of Tomes³² break 215
 The white cascades, and thund'ring seek the lake.
 Now stretching far and wide, the wat'ry waste
 Softly retires to Glena's bow'ry breast.

 Nature and Art their diff'rent claims maintain,
 Divide their empire, and alternate reign. 220
 The hamlet, villa, and the mountain-range,
 Water and wood, and islands interchange.
 By turns emboss'd, enamel'd they appear,
 And manly strength with female softness wear.
 Here Claude³³ had fail'd, unable to command 225

Notes

²⁸ An island toward the center of the lower lake (author).

²⁹ Formed round the island by that nobleman (author).

³⁰ Now a banquetting-house (author).

³¹ Those of Aghadoe (author).

³² A mountain contiguous to that of Glena (author).

³³ Of Lorrain (author). French landscape painter, Claude Lorrain (1600–82).

His ravish'd fancy, and his trembling hand.
 The eye all wonder, rests with rapture new,
 Where lofty Dunlo³⁴ terminates the view;
 His all-commanding aspect, rev'rend mien,
 Speak him the ruler of the happy scene. 230
 Fast by, the Laun's and Lo's³⁵ fair currents meet,
 Circle the Plain, and murmur at his feet;
 The rural Pow'rs rejoice, Pomona³⁶ laves
 Her glowing bosom in their lucid waves.
 Once more the charms of Paradise appear, 235
 And all, but Eden's innocence, are here.

In rival contrast, lo, th' expanded Isle
 Of Ross³⁷ displays her military pile!³⁸
 Long since illustrious, and the royal seat,
 As Fame informs, of Donaghoe, the great. 240
 Renown'd he was, and rank'd with earliest kings,
 Nor disbelieve what hoar Tradition sings.
 The tale no guise of partial story wears,
 Strengthen'd by faith, and sanctify'd by years.
 Killarney's Prince; his wife, his gentle sway, 245
 Shall stand rever'd thro' Time's eternal day.
 Religion taught his heart, that crowns are giv'n,
 To serve mankind, and as a trust from heav'n.
 Integrity his guide, he ne'er misus'd
 His pow'r, and happiness to all diffus'd. 250
 Impartial he dispens'd, (Law's surest guard)
 Disgraceful punishment, and bright reward.
 Lenient, yet just, he spar'd not even his own;
 The Prison-isle³⁹ records his rebel Son.
 There, during life, the factious were immur'd, 255
 And peace and order, without blood, secur'd.
 Plenty within his walls her table spread,
 And Hecatombs upon the mountains bled.⁴⁰
 Pure, as the Sun's bright beams, his justice shew'd;
 His bounty, like the lakes around him, flow'd. 260

Nor the imperial art alone he knew;
 He read, he search'd all Nature's volume thro',
 Unlock'd her springs, disclos'd the latent pow'r
 Of ev'ry medicinal herb, and flow'r.
 No marks he bore of all-consuming time, 265
 But, as immortal, ever held his prime.

Once, on a day distinguish'd from the rest,
 Surrounded by his subjects at the feast,

Notes

³⁴ The Seat of Mr. Crosbie (author).

³⁵ Two adjoining rivers (author).

³⁶ Alluding to the orchards (author).

³⁷ Anciently Russ (author).

³⁸ A barrack (author).

³⁹ Where, agreeable to O Donaghoe's polity, the disturbers of the State were confined, and particularly his rebellious Son (author).

⁴⁰ Alluding to his hospitality (author).

Cheerful he sat, and in prophetic rhymes,
 Darkling, rehears'd the fate of future times: 270
 When more refin'd, the wide extended globe,
 Should change her face, and wear a brighter robe:
 When, freed from Gothick gloom, a star should rise⁴¹
 To dissipate the mists in Western skies:
 When curious Guests should travel far from home 275
 To sail his lakes, and o'er his mountains roam:
 When Ocean's vacant bosom should be spread,
 With forests wing'd, and Commerce lift her head:
 Child of the North, when Industry should shine,⁴²
 All rob'd in white, and ope her golden mine; 280
 New charms diffusing o'er Ierne's face,
 The joys of plenty, and the arts of peace:
 When Freedom shou'd uprear her infant head,
 And on Britannia's realms her blessings shed:
 When, from a-far, shou'd come a mighty Friend⁴³ 285
 Her cause to second, and her rights defend;
 Thence, how transmitted to a kindred line
 Of royal chiefs,⁴⁴ triumphant, shou'd she shine,
 Immortal Queen; and find, whene'er distress'd,
 A fort impregnable in Albion's breast. 290

While from his tongue divine prediction flow'd,
 And firm belief, in ev'ry bosom glow'd,
 Sudden he rose, and, to the gazing throng,
 As some light vision, seem'd to skim along
 The neighb'ring lake; wide op'd his willing wave, 295
 And quick receiv'd him in a chrystal grave.
 But O! what plaintive numbers can express
 Their doubt, their wonder, and their wild distress?
 Fears without hope, and sorrows without end,
 At once bereav'd of Monarch, Father, Friend. 300
 Some years were pass'd, when as the usual day
 Of solemn mourning brought them forth to pay
 The tribute of their tears; with streaming eyes,
 They call'd on Donoghoe to hear their cries,
 Implor'd the dire abyss in piteous strain, 305
 To give them back their Donoghoe again;
 Unceasing, till their wild, and sore lament
 To silence shrunk, and grief itself was spent.

Soft, at the solemn interval, the sound
 Of airs celestial fill'd the scene around. 310
 The hills, the dales, the shores began to smile,

Notes

⁴¹ Learning (author).

⁴² The linen manufacture (author).

⁴³ K. William the Third (author). William III, also "William of Orange," was co-ruler of England with Mary II and defeated his father-in-law, the Catholic James II, at the Battle of the Boyne (1690).

⁴⁴ The Brunswick family (author). After the Stuart royal line died out in 1714, the British crown passed to the next Protestant in line: George I, the Elector of Hanover and Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg.

And tenfold brighter shone the royal Isle.⁴⁵
 The sylvan songsters warbled from each spray,
 The waters blush'd, as at the rising day.
 Thunder, at length, the awful signal gave; 315
 A Form all-glorious started from the wave,
 On graceful courser, by a princely train
 Of guards escorted o'er the glassy plain,
 'Twas Donaghoe; his soul, tho' rais'd above
 All earthly joy, yet glow'd with patriot-love, 320
 With ardor to review his dear abode,
 That felt, and own'd the presence of a God:
 His radiant visage, ravish'd to behold,
 His subjects bend their sovereign to enfold,
 Restor'd, they fondly deem him, as their own, 325
 Seated immortal on his native throne.
 Expectance vain! a happiness so great,
 So wish'd for, was deny'd by rigid Fate:
 Lamented, hail'd in gratulative strain,
 Sudden he fought the yawning deep again. 330
 Too long an absence, still the natives mourn,
 And annual supplicate his bless'd return.
 Oft as he deigns a visit, they behold
 Their flocks increase, their harvests wave with gold.

Thus far all happy, we serenely glide 335
 Along the windings of the glassy tide;
 Above, the clust'ring Isles their verdure join,
 Beneath, all lucid lies the pearly mine:⁴⁶
 A grateful, trembling variance wide display'd
 Streams from the mingl'd tints of light and shade. 340
 No breeze steals forth the mirror to deface;
 The Zephyrs sleep profound, and all is peace.
 Such the unruffled, the divine repose,
 Wrapp'd in itself, that conscious virtue knows.

But lo! the wary mariner descries 345
 Presages of a tempest in the skies.
 Blunted his beams, the King of day displays
 A paler visage, and a fainter blaze.
 Check'd in his course sublime, the eagle bends
 A downward flight, and to the plain descends. 350
 The prescient flocks their flow'ry herbage leave,
 And fearful peasants hie them to the cave.
 Rous'd by the brooding storm, we swiftly seek
 The friendly bosom of a neighb'ring creek;
 Such as the grateful port, that tempest-toss'd, 355
 The shatter'd Trojan⁴⁷ found on Lybia's coast.⁴⁸

Notes

⁴⁵ The seat of Donaghoe (author).

⁴⁶ Alluding to a pearl-fishery (author).

⁴⁷ Aeneas (author). See Virgil's *Aeneid*.

⁴⁸ Est in secessu longo. VIRG. (author). Roughly, "in a deep harbor" (Virgil, *Aeneid*, l.159). In this part of the poem, Aeneas and his companions, weary from a rough sea voyage, land in a safe and quiet harbor on the African coast.

Darkness extends a deeper shade around;
 The lab'ring mountains groan an hollow sound.
 Burst from their narrow caves, the whirlwinds sweep
 Thro' the wide concave of the airy deep; 360
 Down thro' the vales, their headlong fury urge,
 The forests rend, and lash the sounding surge.
 Torn from the bough, the fragrant leaf and flow'r
 Whirl in the blast, and mingle with the show'r.
 Wide o'er the waves, the beauteous ruins lie, 365
 And Desolation wounds the pitying eye.

But soon forgot, the short and sudden pain;
 Lo! lovely Nature looks herself again.
 The radiant Ruler of the world appears,
 Dispels the clouds, and dissipates our fears. 370
 Forth from the covert of the calm retreat,
 Joyous, he leads us to the charming seat
 Of Mucrus fair;⁴⁹ her elegance and dress,
 The hand of some superior Pow'r confess.
 From the pure azure of the brighter day, 375
 Her native beauties higher charms display.
 Like some selected treasure rarely seen,
 Her vistas open, and her alleys green,
 Her verdant terras, Meditation's bow'r,
 The yew-topp'd ruin,⁵⁰ and the sainted tow'r.⁵¹ 380

From her proud bourn, behold the distant Isles,
 And the rude masonry of rocky piles.⁵²
 Grotesque and various, from the deep they rise,
 And catch, by turns, new forms to mock our eyes.
 Wide as her bay's cerulean barriers stretch,⁵³ 385
 Naiads and Sylvans sport along the beach.
 There, the bold cliff for ample prospect made;
 Here, for repose the grotto and the shade.
 Nature and Art, in kind assemblage, shew
 The charms, that from their happy union flow. 390
 Hence beauteous Imitation wisely blends
 The borrow'd graces of her common friends,
 With kindred touch, she makes them all her own,
 Scarce is the offspring from the parent known.

As one lov'd Image parts with farewell sweet, 395
 Another, and another still we meet,
 At length the channel gain, which Lene⁵⁴ divides,
 And, winding, to his upper region guides.
 A-while resisted by the current's force,

Notes

⁴⁹ The seat of Mr. Herbert (author).

⁵⁰ Mucrus Abbey (author). Muckcross in current usage.

⁵¹ St. Finian (author).

⁵² One in particular represents a horse in the attitude of drinking (author).

⁵³ The bay of Mucrus (author).

⁵⁴ The name of the Lake (author).

We seek the shore, and intermit our course—⁵⁵ 400
 And here, ye Pow'rs, who range the silent grove,
 Watch o'er the haunt, and wild recess of love;
 Permit a rural Wand'rer to reveal
 The tender secrets of the sylvan tale.

Haply, a gen'rous Youth, that pensive stray'd, 405
 From gay Companions, thro' the winding shade,
 Unmindful of the vulgar scenes of art,
 The love of Nature pressing on his heart;
 Was bless'd in solitude; when gliding by,
 A beauteous female Figure drew his eye; 410
 Her looks primeval innocence express'd,
 The rural Loves sat smiling on her breast;
 Her auburn tresses to the breeze incline,
 Like the loose tendrils of the curling vine.
 He gaz'd with transport, ev'ry sense on fire, 415
 He felt the fierce extreme of wild desire.
 But Honour's feelings soon the flame repress'd,
 And check'd each ruder purpose of his breast.
 Love, virtuous love, the tim'rous silence broke,
 And thus restor'd, the Youth enamour'd spoke. 420

Say, fairest Maid, whose steps unguarded rove,
 And tempt the dangers of the lonely grove;
 Say, whence, and who thou art? thy form, thy grace,
 Proclaim thee far above the vulgar race,
 Above the glare of ornament, or art; 425
 Thy beauty beams resistless on my heart.

Abash'd she stood; but soon her fears subside,
 When, to his soft entreaty, she reply'd,
 Adding new blushes to the rose of youth,
 She breath'd the voice of purity, and truth. 430

Deep in these fav'rite woods I oft have been,
 And walk'd their glades, unseeing, and unseen;
 My chief delight, amidst their sweets to roam,
 Or lead the fleecy, bleating wand'rer home.

In yonder vale, my aged Parent dwells, 435
 Who, led by sad remembrance, often tells,
 How long our noble ancestors maintain'd
 Here regal sway, and o'er Killarney reign'd,
 A region fair; and happy was the state,
 The scepter borne by Donaghoe the great; 440
 A name invok'd on ev'ry circling year,
 For ever sacred, and for ever dear.

Notes

⁵⁵ In passing to the upper Lake, it is necessary to land, in order to force the boats against the stream, thro' the arches of an old bridge (author).

But, dire reverse! that best of Princes gone,
 A lawless, rebel Son usurp'd the throne,
 From Prison-isle unchain'd a ruffian Band, 450
 And scatter'd desolation thro' the land.
 Hence civil broil, hence kindred blood was spilt,
 And all involv'd in one promiscuous guilt.
 Nor sex, nor age, nor sacred home was spar'd,
 And Nature's beauties too, the havock shar'd. 455
 These shades, these mountains, ev'ry Isle can tell,
 What miseries our royal race befel.
 Their fortunes now no more, and all forgot,
 They left posterity an humbler lot.
 From these our fair descent; and with it came 460
 A small inheritance, and honest fame.
 Retir'd we live, yet live with decent pride,
 The sheep, and distaff for our wants provide.
 'Tis vain for lost possessions to repine,
 And with Content ev'n Poverty may shine. 465
 Whoe'er to Heav'n, when in a fall'n estate,
 Bravely submits, continues to be great.

Taught to resign, yet in these pleasing bow'rs,
 A private sorrow steals upon mine hours.
 When Nature feels, complaint is some relief, 470
 And Wisdom's self may yield a-while to grief.
 The feeble Friend, that watch'd my infant days,
 Like the ripe falling fruit, a-pace decays;
 Then aid me, Providence, or soon, or late
 To bear the trial of an orphan's fate. 475

As one amaz'd, whose all bewilder'd sense
 Delusion mocks, and holds in dumb suspence,
 He stood; 'till wond'ring in the wild to find
 Such native eloquence, and beauty join'd. 480
 Bless'd be thine haunts, he cry'd, exalted Maid,
 And bless'd the chance, that led me to the shade.
 Thou all divine, whose suff'ring merit shews,
 As thro' the rugged thorn, the bright'ning rose.
 Let not a Stranger's vows alarm thine ear,
 Vows lib'ral, earnest, open, and sincere. 485
 With courtly phrase, their suit let others move,
 Sincerity's my Advocate in love.
 You will, you must be kind; my all is thine,
 The holy hour awaits to make thee mine. 490

Silence can better paint the soft surprize, 490
 That flush'd her o'er, and melted in her eyes.
 Pride, duty, gratitude, perplexing, strove
 To rule her thought, and gave a pause to love.
 Won by his virtue, to the nuptial band,
 She look'd consent, and pledg'd it with her hand. 495
 All blushing from the shade, he led her forth,
 To higher scenes more suited to her worth.

Launch'd on the smoother flood, and brushing thro'
The bow'ry Streight,⁵⁶ new objects strike our view;
A wild, a rich Elysium they impart, 500
Play on the fancy, and dilate the heart.

Thy Isle, gay Green,⁵⁷ of never-fading dye,
Spreads Nature's comeliest wardrobe to the eye;
And when the honours of the groves are shed,
Midst the pale ruin lifts its blooming head; 505
Now o'er the glassy, and pellucid stream,
Throws the mild lustre of the em'rald's beam;
One everlasting smile of joy it wears,
And Winter's sickly, drear dominion cheers.

Dodona's rival,⁵⁸ tow'rs the Oaken-grove,⁵⁹ 510
Sacred to Britain's Genius, and to Jove.
But Jove no longer speaks; those awful woods
Pour only Britain's thunder on the floods:
And see, when Nature first to Britain gave
The green domain, and charter of the wave, 515
From yon rude coast, she took the marble block,
And sketch'd her future navy in the rock;⁶⁰
Chisel'd the prow, and hull; then o'er the tide,
Reclin'd its sable, adamantine side,
Bade her black bulwarks distant Empires shake, 520
And fix'd their glorious model on her lake.

Queen of the ocean, favour'd high of Heav'n,
To whom of late, all victory was giv'n,⁶¹
Great, and secure, unless too mighty grown,
Thy own oppressive grandeur bears thee down. 525
What tho' commotions for a-while prevail?
They purge, they purify the common weal.
Tho' with her wanton children Freedom strives,
She ne'er can perish, while a Briton lives:
On her own pile, she, Phoenix-like, expires, 530
Then rises all new burnish'd from her fires.

Blameless may I thus touch thine honour'd name?
While thy fair Sister's glories lead my theme,
Where, far from Art, unrival'd, and alone,
Nature, in solitude, erects her throne. 535
Awful Inspirer! shall we take the round
Of her romantick, and enchanting ground;
And thro' the wilderness of mountains trace
The line of order, dignity, and grace?
Shall we, embosom'd in their lonely scenes, 540

Notes

⁵⁶ Covered with Arbutus (author).

⁵⁷ The Arbutus Island (author).

⁵⁸ Where the oracles of Jupiter were delivered (author).

⁵⁹ The oak Island (author).

⁶⁰ Representing the hull of a man of war (author).

⁶¹ Alluding to the years 1758, and 59 (author). A reference to the Seven Years' War, probably the British defeat of French forces in Canada at Louisburg, Nova Scotia (1758) and the Plains of Abraham, Quebec (1759).

Forget the noise, and riot of the plains?
 And deep retir'd from busy man's abode,
 With rapture view this wond'rous work of God?
 Curious to mark, why so profusely strew'd,
 Contrasted lie the beautiful and rude; 545
 Why, midst the laughing Isles, and o'er the wave,
 All placid, rugged rocks uncoothly heave?
 Think not the seeming, inconsistent scene
 Was thrown at random, or dispos'd in vain;
 No, thou Instructress fair, in this we see, 550
 The natural, and moral world agree;
 Evil and good, pleasure and pain, at strife,
 Thus variegate the stream of human life.

High o'er the wild, and thro' the verdant bow'rs,
 Fast on the eye, the gleaming Torrent pours,⁶² 555
 Awful, as if within some God were hid,
 And all access to human step forbid.
 Bold, and beyond the reach of skill, we see
 Majestick Nature's artless symmetry,
 The mansion of the Sister-Graces, where 560
 Unite the Wonderful, Sublime, and Fair.

Fast by, Retirement holds her peaceful seat,
 And views the humble hermit at her gate.
 All rapt in fervent piety, he feels
 His Maker's presence, and adoring kneels. 565
 Let Tybur⁶³ boast her hill, her olive shade,
 Her Sybil's grot, her Annio's fam'd cascade.
 Let the vain Traveller the praise resound
 Of distant realms, and rave of Classick ground;
 Let him o'er Continents delighted run, 570
 Or search the Isles, the fav'rites of the Sun;⁶⁴
 Let him of foreign wonders take the round,
 Unrival'd still Killarney will be found:
 Here, brighter charms, superior blessings reign,
 And Law and Liberty protect the scene. 575

The restless Passions, which, like pilgrims, roam,
 Here pause a-while, and find a pleasing home.
 From the wild store, the tuneful and the sage
 Catch the warm image to illumine their page.
 To the fond Lover's ravish'd eyes appear, 580
 The lively transcripts of his Fair-one here.
 Th' ambitious, happy in exalted views,
 The glowing fervour of his breast renews.
 On deep research, the friend of Nature feeds,

Notes

⁶² A remarkable waterfall (author).

⁶³ The summer retreat of the old Roman Nobility (author).

⁶⁴ Those called the Fortunate (author). The Fortunate Isles of Roman mythology where diverse fruits grow plentifully

and without agricultural work by the virtuous dead who reside there.

Each in his fav'rite wish, and want succeeds. 585
 As the scene varies, varies ev'ry grace,
 And heart-felt pleasure smiles in ev'ry face.
 The Hunter's musick breaks upon the ear,
 Rouzing the savage tenant from his lair.
 The mellow horn, the deeper note of hound, 590
 The Foresters proclaim, the Stag is found;
 On Echo's wing, the joyful accents fly,
 The mountains round reverberate the cry.

Rejoicing in his strength and speed, he mocks
 Opposing thickets, and projecting rocks; 595
 The shatter'd oak, in vain, resists his force;
 The distant hills are swallow'd in his course:
 Dauntless as yet, he stops a-while to hear;
 List'ning he doubts, and doubt fore-runs his fear;
 His well known range he tries, now devious strays, 600
 Clamour pursues, the gale behind betrays;
 Unsafe the covert, all alarm'd he feels
 His foes instinctive, winding at his heels;
 He bounds the cavern's yawning jaws, and now,
 Darting, he gains the cliff's tremendous brow, 605
 There, like the haughty Persian, station'd high,⁶⁵
 Seems all approaching dangers to defy;
 He gazes on the deep, he snuffs from far
 The gath'ring tumult, and prepares for war.

A patient, active Band, Milesian blood, 610
 Long us'd to scale the steep, and hem the wood,
 Such as the Lord's own Hunter, fam'd of old,
 For mightiest chace, would glory to behold;
 Or such, by Wolfe inspir'd, that fearless strain'd
 Up Abram's heights, and Quebeck's ramparts gain'd;⁶⁶ 615
 Steel'd to extremest toil, and fit to bear
 Hunger and thirst, and Zembla's keenest air,
 Nay, time itself; a Race of old renown,
 And thro' successive ages handed down;
 Their brawny shoulders from incumbrance freed, 620
 Their nervous limbs, wing'd with Achilles' speed,
 Hotly pursue, and, with unweary'd pace,
 O'ertake the fugitive, and urge the chace.

Divided now 'twixt courage and dismay,
 To yield a captive, or to stand at bay; 625
 Maintaining in the pass the glorious strife,
 Like Sparta's King,⁶⁷ for liberty and life.

Notes

⁶⁵ Xerxes seated on Mount Athos (author). Xerxes I was a Persian king after c.485 BCE who invaded Greece.

⁶⁶ Another reference to the Battle of the Plains of Abraham (1759), where General James Wolfe led British forces in Canada to end the siege of Quebec in Britain's favor.

⁶⁷ Leonidas (author). Leonidas, king of Lacedaemon, died about 480 BCE leading his soldiers against the invading forces of Xerxes I, despite overwhelming odds.

With fury wild, he glares around, nor knows
 A refuge near, on ev'ry side his foes;
 Forc'd to a long adieu, his native wood, 630
 Determin'd, he forsakes, and braves the flood,
 Dash'd headlong down: his spirit what avails?
 Arrang'd below, a hostile fleet assails
 With wild uproar; he rides the liquid plain,
 And strives th' Asylum of the isles to gain. 635
 Bays far remote he tries, and lonely creeks,
 Steals to the shades, and moss-grown ruins seeks:
 His lab'ring foes his mazy course pursue,
 Like wand'ring Delos,⁶⁸ now he shifts the view;
 Now, as the smaller galliot, swift and light, 640
 Veering he shuns, or meets th' unequal fight;
 At length bewilder'd, all confus'd he roves,
 Catching a farewell prospect of his groves;
 All efforts vain, o'erwhelm'd, he now must yield,
 To die inglorious, in the wat'ry field: 645
 High o'er his back th' insulting billow rides,
 The prow and oar furrow his panting sides;
 Ungracious sport! His victors, yet in dread,
 Beat down th' emerging honours of his head:
 Ah! what resource the lordly prey to save? 650
 Driv'n from the wood, and hunted o'er the wave.
 Bleeding he fails, he floats, he faints, he dies;
 Ungen'rous shouts of triumph rend the skies.
 His hapless fate, the sighing forests tell,
 And all the ridgy regions sound his knell; 655
 The Naiads weep, Lene mourns his lucid flood,
 By wanton man usurp'd, and stain'd with blood.

Some pious rites the Rustick's pity move,
 Due to the fall'n, he lops the verdant grove:
 The Arbutus descends, the fav'rite shade 660
 He rang'd when living, now adorns him dead.⁶⁹

The hoary Peak,⁷⁰ with Heav'ns bright azure crown'd,
 And brow, with wreaths of ivy compass'd round,
 Leans o'er the deep; the base, and shaggy side,
 In sylvan beauty clad, and forest pride; 665
 Its form, unhurt by tempests, or by years,
 Still in fresh robes of majesty appears:
 The pile superb, as Nature careless threw,
 Grandeur and Order up the summit grew:
 Their easy steps tend gradual to the skies, 670
 And teach aspiring Genius how to rise.

Notes

⁶⁸ Supposed to have been a floating Island (author). Roman myth.

⁶⁹ Alluding to the ceremony of covering the carcass with green boughs (author).

⁷⁰ The Eagle's Aiery, and where the remarkable Echoes are produced (author).

Here his dread seat, the royal Bird hath made,
 To awe th' inferior subjects of the shade,
 Secure he built it for a length of days,
 Impervious, but to Phoebus' piercing rays; 675
 His young he trains to eye the solar light,
 And soar beyond the fam'd Icarian flight.

On Nature's fabrick, Builder, turn thine eye,
 Whose strength and beauty, storm and time defy.
 Build as thou may'st, still ruin makes a part, 680
 Creeps in unseen, and mixes with thine art:
 The pompous pile insensibly descends,
 And in the dust, thy boasted labour ends.

Awe-struck, and wrapt in meditation still,
 The sound of echoing horns around us trill, 685
 Divinely sweet; their melody like those
 That charm'd the croud, when Donaghoe arose:
 Various the notes, they warble thro' the woods,
 Talk in the cliffs, and murmur in the floods,
 While Harmony, unloos'd from all her chains, 690
 Free, and at large, pours forth her inmost strains;
 A deeper tone each promontory rings,
 And ev'ry rock, a Memnon's statue, sings⁷¹
 Enchanting airs, that rule, without controul,
 The captive sense, and steal away the soul! 695

Haply to tune her woes, the vocal Dame,
 For this retreat, had chang'd Cephisus' stream;⁷²
 Her slighted passion breathes pathetick strains,
 And of the coy Narcissus still complains.⁷³

Awake to bolder notes; the cannon's roar 700
 Bursts from the bosom of the hollow shore;
 The dire explosion the whole concave fills,
 And shakes the firm foundations of the hills,
 Now pausing deep, now bellowing from a-far,
 Now rages near the elemental war: 705
 Affrighted Echo opens all her cells,
 With gather'd strength, the posting clamour swells,
 Check'd, or impell'd, and varying in its course,
 It slumbers, now awakes with double force,
 Searching the strait, and crooked, hill and dale, 710
 Sinks in the breeze, or rises in the gale:
 Chorus of earth and sky! the mountains sing,
 And Heaven's own thunders thro' the valleys ring.

Notes

⁷¹ A Statue mentioned by Strabo, which, on being touched by the rays of the sun, emitted musical sounds (author). Roman historian and geographer, Strabo (c.64 BCE – AD 24).

⁷² The native residence of Echo, according to the Poets (author). Cephisus is a river in Greece; Echo is a Nymph who fell in love with Narcissus.

⁷³ Alluding to her ill requited love (author). Various versions of the myth end with Echo becoming a disembodied voice after Narcissus' rejection of her love.

Our progress o'er – day fading on the sight,
 Closes this scene of wonder and delight; 715
 What time the lakes, the shades, the grots unfold,
 And nightly Jubilee, the Genii hold.
 New dress'd by Flora's hand, the Nymphs are seen,
 Radiant with beaded pearl, and stoles of green,
 Airy they frolick, o'er the woodland sweep, 720
 They brush the flow'rs unhurt, and skim along the deep
 To softest musick; while the bright'ning moon,
 And all the starry host look smiling on.

The homeward Peasant stops, and hastes by turns,
 And his rude heart with strange emotion burns; 725
 His joyful, rosy offspring gather near,
 The wonders of his magick tale to hear,
 List'ning they glow; while each believes he sees
 More than he tells, and clings about his knees,
 'Till fir'd their little breasts, they break away, 730
 And round their Sire, in mimick gambols play.

Ye thoughtless Sons of Affluence and Ease,
 Bewilder'd oft in Pleasure's flow'ry maze;
 And Ye, who beat the rounds of Folly's fields,
 Try what Killarney's blissful region yields: 735
 'Tis Her's with lenient comfort to impart
 A balm congenial to the human heart;
 To fill the mind with sentiments divine,
 And all the social feelings to refine;
 To make the grateful tongue proclaim aloud, 740
 The praise of Nature, and of Nature's God.

Joseph Cooper Walker (1761–1810) and Turlough O'Carolan (1670–1738)

Antiquarian Joseph Cooper Walker was born into a Dublin family. He was educated and began his working life in Dublin, but traveled in Europe for health reasons, later returning to Wicklow where he lived until his death. His antiquarian scholarship began with "Anecdotes of Chess in Ireland" (1770) and he was a founding member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1785. He published volumes on Italian drama, *A Historical Essay*

on the Dress of the Ancient and Modern Irish (1788), *An Essay on the Origin of Romantic Fabling in Ireland* (1806), and various works on Ireland. *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (1786) was one of his earliest and without question his most influential work, helping to launch English-language scholarship on Irish-language culture.

Of special interest in Walker's volume was the poet Turlough O'Carolan (or Toirdhealb-hach Ó Cearbhalláin, and sometimes just "Carolan"). O'Carolan was born in Co. Meath in 1670, and was educated locally in Co. Roscommon. He was blinded by smallpox at the age of eighteen, and subsequently trained as a harper. He was celebrated in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as the last of the Irish bards, his poetry collected and translated in such volumes as Walker's *Historical Memoirs* and Charlotte Brooke's *Reliques of Irish Poetry* (1789). In ancient bardic tradition, he

toured Ireland with his harp, in the same decades that Jonathan Swift was publishing, visiting the wealthy who fed and sheltered him in return for his performances.

Further reading

Davis, Leith, *Music, Postcolonialism, Gender: The Construction of Irish National Identity, 1724–1874*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.

Welch, Robert, *A History of Verse Translation from the Irish*. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1988.

From Walker's *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (1786)

The feudal system which had prevailed from time immemorial in Ireland, received a severe stroke from Elizabeth, which was repeated by Cromwell, and fatally reiterated by William III. The pride of the Chieftains was humbled, and many of their castles razed. Some of those unfortunate men fled to the Continent; others patiently waited to receive the English yoke. In their halls which formerly resounded with the voice of Minstrelsey and Song, and glittered with barbarous magnificence, there reigned

A death-like silence and a dread repose:

naught, save the flapping of the drowsy Bat, or shrieking of the moping Owl, could now be heard within them. To the clumsy Dutch, or light Grecian, the gloomy style of Gothic Architecture gave place. The English Customs and Manners were universally adopted, Agriculture was introduced, and the face of the Country began to smile.

But these happy innovations came fraught with destruction to the Bards. Their properties were forfeited with the estates of which they composed a part. They were no longer entertained in the families of the Great, nor treated with wonted respect. They degenerated into itinerant Musicians, wandering from house to house, their Harp slung at their back, soliciting admission, and offering to play for hire. Sometimes they were to be found exciting the sprightly Dance at a Patron; sometimes raising the solemn Dirge at a Country Wake. The last of this Order of Men, whose Name deserves to be recorded, was Turlough O'Carolan, a fine natural Genius, who died in the year 1738. To this Man we owe several of our best airs. His melodies, though extremely simple, give pleasure even to the most refined taste; and his poetry is not always below mediocrity. The genial current of his soul, it is true, was not, like that of his brother Minstrels, "chill'd by penury:" like them, indeed, his life was erratic; but he neither played for hire, nor refused a reward when offered with delicacy.

Bumpers, 'Squire Jones (imitated from Carolan)¹*From Walker's Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (1786)

Ye Good-fellows all,
 Who love to be told where there's claret good store,
 Attend to the call
 Of one who's ne'er frightened,
 But greatly delighted, 5
 With six bottles more:
 Be sure you don't pass
 The good house Money-Glass,
 Which the jolly red god so peculiarly owns;
 'Twill well suit your humour, 10
 For pray what would you more,
 Than mirth, with good claret, and bumpers, 'Squire Jones.

Ye lovers who pine
 For lasses that oft prove as cruel as fair;
 Who whimper and whine 15
 For lillies and roses,
 With eyes, lips, and noses,
 Or tip of an ear:
 Come hither, I'll show you,
 How Phillis and Chloe, 20
 No more shall occasion such sighs and such groans;
 For what mortal so stupid
 As not to quit Cupid,
 When call'd by good claret, and bumpers, 'Squire Jones.

Ye Poets who write, 25
 And brag of your drinking fam'd Helicon's brook,
 Though all you get by 't
 Is a dinner oft-times,
 In reward of your rhimes
 With Humphry the duke: 30
 Learn Bacchus to follow
 And quit your Apollo,
 Forsake all the Muses, those senseless old crones:
 Our jingling of glasses
 Your rhiming surpasses, 35
 When crown'd with good claret, and bumpers, 'Squire Jones.

Notes

BUMPERS, 'SQUIRE JONES

¹ According to the Appendix in which this imitation appeared, Carolan enjoyed the hospitality of "— Jones, Esq.; of Money-Glass in the county of Leitrim . . . [H]e has enshrined his convivial character in one of his best PLANXTIES. Yet of this Planxty the air only is now

remembered; the poetry, though one of Carolan's most brilliant effusions, is lost in the splendour of the facetious Baron Dawson's paraphrase . . . This paraphrase is so excellent, that I cannot in justice to my readers, withhold it from them" (71).

Ye soldiers so stout,
 With plenty of oaths, tho' no plenty of coin,
 Who make such a rout
 Of all your commanders 40
 Who serv'd us in Flanders,
 And eke at the Boyne:
 Come leave off your rattling
 Of sieging and battling,
 And know you'd much better to sleep in whole bones; 45
 Were you sent to Gibraltar,
 Your notes you'd soon alter,
 And wish for good claret, and bumpers, 'Squire Jones.

Ye clergy so wise,
 Who myst'ries profound can demonstrate most clear, 50
 How worthy to rise!
 You preach once a week,
 But your tithes never seek
 Above once in a year:
 Come here without failing, 55
 And leave off your railing
 'Gainst bishops providing for dull stupid drones;
 Says the text so divine,
 What is life without wine?
 Then away with the claret, a bumper, 'Squire Jones. 60

Ye lawyers so just
 Be the cause what it will, who so learnedly plead,
 How worthy of trust!
 You know black from white
 Yet prefer wrong to right, 65
 As you chanc'd to be fee'd:
 Leave musty reports,
 And forsake the king's courts,
 Where dulness and discord have set up their thrones;
 Burn Salkeld and Ventris, 70
 With all your damn'd entries,
 And away with the claret, a bumper, 'Squire Jones.

Ye physical tribe,
 Whose knowledge consists in hard words and grimace,
 Whene'er you prescribe 75
 Have at your devotion,
 Pills, bolus, or potion,
 Be what will the case:
 Pray where is the need
 To purge, blister, and bleed? 80
 When ailing yourselves the whole faculty owns,
 That the forms of old Galen
 Are not so prevailing
 As mirth with good claret, and bumpers, 'Squire Jones.

Ye foxhunters eke, 85
 That follow the call of the horn and the hound,
 Who your ladies forsake,
 Before they're awake
 To beat up the brake
 Where the vermin is found: 90
 Leave Piper and Blueman,
 Shrill Duchess and Trueman;
 No music is found in such dissonant tones:
 Would you ravish your ears
 With the songs of the spheres, 95
 Hark away to the claret, a bumper, 'Squire Jones.

Carolan's Monody on the Death of Mary Mac Guire
 (translated by a Lady)¹

From Walker's Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards (1786)

Were mine the choice of intellectual fame,
 Of spelful song, and eloquence divine,
 Painting's sweet power, Philosophy's pure flame,
 And Homer's lyre, and Ossian's harp were mine;
 The splendid arts of Erin, Greece, and Rome, 5
 In MARY lost, would lose their wonted grace,
 All wou'd I give to snatch her from the tomb,
 Again to fold her in my fond embrace.
 Desponding, sick, exhausted with my grief,
 Awhile the founts of sorrow cease to flow, 10
 In vain! – I rest not – sleep brings no relief; –
 Cheerless, companionless, I wake to woe.
 Nor birth nor beauty shall again allure,
 Nor fortune win me to another Bride;
 Alone I'll wander, and alone endure, 15
 Till death restore me to my dear-one's side.
 Once every thought, and every scene was gay,
 Friends, mirth and music all my hours employ'd –
 Now doom'd to mourn my last sad years away,
 My life a solitude! – my heart a void! – 20
 Alas the change! – to change again no more!
 For every comfort is with MARY fled:

Notes

CAROLAN'S MONODY ON THE DEATH

¹ Mary MacGuire is identified in the editorial apparatus of *Historical Memoirs* as O'Carolan's wife; she died in 1733. The translator may be Charlotte Brooke, but she is only

identified as "a young Lady, whose name I am enjoined to conceal: – with the modesty ever attendant on true merit, and with the sweet timidity natural to her sex, she shrinks from the public eye" (92).

And ceaseless anguish shall her loss deplore,
Till age and sorrow join me with the dead.

Adieu each gift of nature and of art, 25

That erst adorn'd me in life's early prime! –

The cloudless temper, and the social heart,

The soul ethereal and the flights sublime!

Thy loss, my MARY, chac'd them from my breast!

Thy sweetness cheers, thy judgment aids no more: – 30

The muse deserts an heart with grief opprest –

And lost is every joy that charm'd before.

Charlotte Brooke (c.1740–1793)

Charlotte Brooke was born in Co. Cavan but lived in Kildare in her early years, one of the youngest children of author Henry Brooke. While her 1816 biographer paints her as a recluse devoted to her father and then her work, she socialized in Dublin literary circles in the late eighteenth century, particularly those that gathered around her distant relation, Alicia Sheridan Lefanu, daughter of Thomas and Frances Sheridan. Devoting most of her adult life to the care of her father, Brooke did not begin publishing until after his death in 1783.

Her most influential work remains *Reliques of Irish Poetry* (1789), a collection of translations of Irish verse, with transcriptions of the originals to verify their authenticity, intermixed with her essays on Irish-language poetry. She also included her own pseudo-antique poem, “Maón: An Irish Tale,” written from the perspective of a bard on the margins of heroic action and the central love story. *Reliques* influenced generations of Irish poets and novelists and was often cited in their writing. She also had a larger impact on the study of the Irish language. *Bolg an Tsolair: Or, Gaelic Magazine* (1795), a nationalist publication produced by *The Northern Star* office in Belfast, provided an Irish grammar, dictionary, and parallel translations of conversational dialogue and biblical passages to educate English speakers about the Irish language; the

small volume included “a collection of choice Irish songs, translated by Miss Brooke,” all taken from her *Reliques*. Her name also appears in discussions of translation in the early 1800s, such as letters between Lady Morgan and Alicia Sheridan Lefanu when Morgan was working on her own Irish translations.

Brooke's corpus includes non-Irish-language material as well. She edited, for instance, the four-volume *Poetical Works of Henry Brooke* (1792), which included her short biography of her father. She also published a children's volume, *The School for Christians* (1791), and may have written a tragedy, *Belisarius*, though evidence of the play's existence is slight: it was never published and, though her 1816 biographer asserts the play's existence, his account of the manuscript's disappearance is marred by inconsistencies.

Further reading

Davis, Leith, “Birth of the Nation: Gender and Writing in the Work of Henry and Charlotte Brooke,” *Eighteenth-century Life* 18 (1994): 27–47.

— *Music, Postcolonialism, Gender: The Construction of Irish National Identity, 1724–1874*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.

Welch, Robert, *A History of Verse Translation from the Irish*. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1988.

From Preface

From Reliques of Irish Poetry (1789)

In a preface to a translation of ancient Irish poetry, the reader will naturally expect to see the subject elucidated and enlarged upon, with the pen of learning and antiquity. I lament that the limited circle of my knowledge does not include the power of answering so just an expectation; but my regret at this circumstance is considerably lessened, when I reflect, that had I been possessed of all the learning requisite for such an undertaking, it would only have qualified me for an unnecessary foil to the names of O'CONNOR, O'HALLORAN and VALLANCEY.¹

My comparatively feeble hand aspires only (like the ladies of ancient Rome) to strew flowers in the paths of these laureled champions of my country. The flowers of earth, the *terrestrial* offspring of Phoebus, were scattered before the steps of victorious WAR; but, for triumphant GENIUS are reserved the *coelestial* children of his beams, the unfading flowers of the Muse. To pluck, and thus to bestow them, is mine, and I hold myself honoured in the task.

“The esteem (says Mr. O'HALLORAN) which mankind conceive of nations in general, is always in proportion to the figure they have made in arts and in arms. It is on this account that all civilized countries are eager to display their heroes, legislators, poets and philosophers – and with justice, since every individual participates in the glory of his illustrious countrymen.” – But where, alas, is this thirst for national glory? when a subject of such importance is permitted to a pen like mine! Why does not some *son of Anak*² in genius step forward, and boldly throw his gauntlet to Prejudice, the avowed and approved champion of his country's lovely muse?

It is impossible for imagination to conceive too highly of the pitch of excellence to which a science must have soared which was cherished with such enthusiastic regard and cultivation as that of poetry, in this country. It was absolutely, for ages, the vital soul of the nation;³ and shall we then have no curiosity respecting the productions of genius once so celebrated, and so prized?

True it is, indeed, and much to be lamented, that few of the compositions of those ages that were famed, in Irish annals, for the *light of song*, are now to be obtained by the most diligent research. The greater number of the poetical remains of our Bards, yet extant, were written during the middle ages; periods when the genius of Ireland was in its wane,

“— Yet still, not lost
All its original brightness —.”

On the contrary, many of the productions of those times breathe the true spirit of poetry, besides the merit they possess with the Historian and Antiquary, as so many faithful delineations of the manners and ideas of the periods in which they were composed.

Notes

FROM PREFACE

¹ Antiquarians Charles O'Connor (1710–91), Sylvester O'Halloran (1728–1807), and Charles Vallancey (1726–1812). Vallancey was not born in Ireland but lived there for most of his life.

² a giant

³ See the elegant and faithful O'CONNOR upon this subject (*Dissertations on the History of Ireland*, p. 66); and he is supported by the testimonies of the most authentic of antient and modern historians (author).

With a view to throw some light on the antiquities of this country, to vindicate, in part, its history, and prove its claim to scientific as well as to military fame, I have been induced to undertake the following work. Besides the four different species of composition which it contains, (the HEROIC POEM, the ODE, the ELEGY, and the SONG) others yet remain unattempted by translation: – the ROMANCE, in particular, which unites the fire of Homer with the enchanting wildness of Ariosto.⁴ But the limits of my present plan have necessarily excluded many beautiful productions of genius, as little more can be done, within the compass of a single volume, than merely to give a few specimens, in the hope of awakening a just and useful curiosity, on the subject of our poetical compositions.

Unacquainted with the rules of translation, I know not how far those rules may censure, or acquit me. I do not profess to give a merely literal version of my originals, for that I should have found an impossible undertaking. – Besides the spirit which they breathe, and which lifts the imagination far above the tameness, let me say, the *injustice*, of such a task, – there are many complex words that could not be translated literally, without great injury to the original, – without being “false to its sense, and falser to its fame.”

I am aware that in the following poems there will sometimes be found a sameness, and repetition of thought, appearing but too plainly in the English version, though scarcely perceivable in the original Irish, so great is the variety as well as beauty peculiar to that language. The number of synonyma⁵ in which it abounds, enables it, perhaps beyond any other, to repeat the same thought, without tiring the fancy or the ear.

It is really astonishing of what various and comprehensive powers this neglected language is possessed. In the pathetic, it breathes the most beautiful and affecting simplicity; and in the bolder species of composition, it is distinguished by a force of expression, a sublime dignity, and rapid energy, which it is scarcely possible for any translation fully to convey; as it sometimes fills the mind with ideas altogether new, and which, perhaps, no modern language is entirely prepared to express. One compound epithet must often be translated by two lines of English verse, and, on such occasions, much of the beauty is necessarily lost; the force and effect of the thought being weakened by too slow an introduction on the mind; just as that light which dazzles, when flashing swiftly on the eye, will be gazed at with indifference, if let in by degrees.

But, though I am conscious of having, in many instances, failed in my attempts to do all the justice I wished to my originals, yet still, some of their beauties are, I hope, preserved; and I trust I am doing an acceptable service to my country, while I endeavour to rescue from oblivion a few of the invaluable reliques of her ancient genius; and while I put it in the power of the public to form some idea of them, by clothing the thoughts of our Irish muse in a language with which they are familiar, at the same time that I give the originals, as vouchers for the fidelity of my translation, as far as two idioms so widely different would allow.

However deficient in the powers requisite to so important a task, I may yet be permitted to point out some of the good consequences which might result from it, if it were but performed to my wishes. The productions of our Irish Bards exhibit a glow of cultivated genius, – a spirit of elevated heroism, – sentiments of pure

Notes

⁴ Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533), Italian poet.

⁵ There are upwards of forty names to express a *Ship* in the Irish language, and nearly an equal number for a *House*, &c. (author).

honor, – instances of disinterested patriotism, – and manners of a degree of refinement, totally astonishing, at a period when the rest of Europe was nearly sunk in barbarism: And is not all this very honorable to our countrymen? Will they not be benefited, – will they not be gratified, at the lustre reflected on them by ancestors so very different from what modern prejudice has been studious to represent them? But this is not all. –

As yet, we are too little known to our noble neighbour of Britain; were we better acquainted, we should be better friends. The British muse is not yet informed that she has an elder sister in this isle; let us then introduce them to each other! together let them walk abroad from their bowers, sweet ambassadresses of cordial union between two countries that seem formed by nature to be joined by every bond of interest, and of amity. Let them entreat of Britain to cultivate a nearer acquaintance with her neighbouring isle. Let them conciliate for us her esteem, and her affection will follow of course. Let them tell her, that the portion of her blood which flows in our veins is rather ennobled than disgraced by the mingling tides that descended from our heroic ancestors. Let them come – but will they answer to a voice like mine? Will they not rather depute some favoured pen, to chide me back to the shade whence I have been allured, and where, perhaps, I ought to have remained, in respect to the memory, and superior genius of a Father⁶ – it avails not to say how dear! – But my feeble efforts presume not to emulate, – and they cannot injure his fame.

To guard against criticism I am no way prepared, nor do I suppose I shall escape it; nay, indeed, I do not wish to escape the pen of the *candid* critic: And I would willingly believe that an individual capable of no offence, and pretending to no pre-eminence, cannot possibly meet with any severity of criticism, but what the mistakes, or the deficiencies of this performance, may be justly deemed to merit; and what, indeed, could scarcely be avoided by one unskilled in composition, and now, with extreme diffidence, presenting, for the first time, her literary face to the world.

Elegy (by Edmond Ryan, or Edmond of the Hill)

From Reliques of Irish Poetry (1789)

Bright her locks of beauty grew,
 Curling fair, and sweetly flowing;
 And her eyes of smiling blue,
 Oh how soft! how heav'nly glowing!

Ah! poor plunder'd heart of pain! 5
 When wilt thou have end of mourning? –
 This long, long year, I look in vain
 To see my only hope returning.

Oh! would thy promise faithful prove,
 And to my fond, fond bosom give thee; 10

Notes

⁶ Henry Brooke (c.1703–83), author and Charlotte Brooke's father.

Lightly then my steps would move,
 Joyful should my arms receive thee.

Then, once more, at early morn,
 Hand in hand we should be straying,
 Where the dew-drop decks the thorn, 15
 With its pearls the woods arraying.

Cold and scornful as thou art,
 Love's fond vows and faith belying,
 Shame for thee now rends my heart,
 My pale cheek with blushes dying! 20

Why art thou false to me and Love?
 (While health and joy with thee are vanish'd)
 Is it because forlorn I rove,
 Without a crime, unjustly banish'd?

Safe thy charms with me should rest, 25
 Hither did thy pity send thee,
 Pure the love that fills my breast,
 From itself it would defend thee.

'Tis thy Edmond calls thee love,
 Come, O come and heal his anguish! 30
 Driv'n from his home, behold him rove,
 Condemn'd in exile here to languish!

O thou dear cause of all my pains!
 With thy charms each heart subduing,
 Come, – on Munster's lovely plains, 35
 Hear again fond passion suing.

Music, mirth, and sports are here,
 Cheerful friends the hours beguiling;
 Oh wouldst thou, my love! appear,
 To joy my bosom reconciling! 40

Sweet would seem the holly's shade,
 Bright the clust'ring berries glowing;
 And, in scented bloom array'd,
 Apple-blossoms round us blowing.

Cresses waving in the stream, 45
 Flowers its gentle banks perfuming;
 Sweet the verdant paths would seem,
 All in rich luxuriance blooming.

O bright in every grace of youth!
 Gentle charmer! – lovely wonder! 50
 Break not fond vows and tender truth!
 O rend not ties so dear asunder!

For thee all dangers would I brave,
 Life with joy, with pride exposing;
 Breast for thee the stormy wave, 55
 Winds and tides in vain opposing.

- O might I call thee now my own!
 No added rapture joy could borrow:
 'Twould be, like heav'n, when life is flown,
 To cheer the soul and heal its sorrow. 60
- See thy falsehood, cruel maid!
 See my cheek no longer glowing;
 Strength departed, health decay'd;
 Life in tears of sorrow flowing!
- Why do I thus my anguish tell? – 65
 Why pride in woe, and boast of ruin? –
 O lost treasure! – fare thee well! –
 Lov'd to madness – to undoing.
- Yet, O hear me fondly swear!
 Though thy heart to me is frozen, 70
 Thou alone, of thousands fair,
 Thou alone should'st be my chosen.
- Every scene with thee would please!
 Every care and fear would fly me!
 Wintery storms, and raging seas, 75
 Would lose their gloom, if thou wert nigh me!
- Speak in time, while yet I live;
 Leave not faithful love to languish!
 O soft breath to pity give,
 Ere my heart quite break with anguish. 80
- Pale, distracted, wild I rove,
 No soothing voice my woes allaying;
 Sad and devious, through each grove,
 My lone steps are weary straying.
- O sickness, past all med'cine's art! 85
 O sorrow, every grief exceeding!
 O wound that, in my breaking heart,
 Cureless, deep, to death art bleeding!
- Such, O Love! thy cruel power,
 Fond excess and fatal ruin! 90
 Such – O Beauty's fairest flower!
 Such thy charms, and my undoing!
- How the swan adorns that neck,
 There her down and whiteness growing;
 How its snow those tresses deck, 95
 Bright in fair luxuriance flowing.
- Mine, of right, are all those charms!
 Cease with coldness then to grieve me!
 Take – O take me to thy arms,
 Or those of death will soon receive me. 100

Song (by Patrick Linden)*From Reliques of Irish Poetry* (1789)

O fairer than the mountain snow,
 When o'er it north's pure breezes blow!
 In all its dazzling lustre drest,
 But purer, softer is thy breast!

Colla¹ the Great, whose ample sway 5
 Beheld two kingdoms homage pay,
 Now gives the happy bard to see
 Thy branch adorn the royal tree!

No foreign graft's inferior shoot 10
 Has dar'd insult the mighty root!
 Pure from its stem thy bloom ascends,
 And from its height in fragrance bends!

Hadst thou been present, on the day
 When beauty bore the prize away,
 Thy charms had won the royal swain, 15
 And Venus 'self had su'd in vain!

With soften'd fire, imperial blood
 Pours through thy frame its generous flood;
 Rich in thy azure veins it flows,
 Bright in thy blushing cheek it glows! 20
 That blood whence noble SAVAGE sprung,
 And he whose deeds the bards have sung,
 Great CONALL-CEARNACH, conquering name!
 The champion of heroic fame!

Fair offspring of the royal race! 25
 Mild fragrance! fascinating grace!
 Whose touch with magic can inspire
 The tender harp's melodious wire!

See how the swan presumptuous strives,
 Where glowing Majesty revives, 30
 With proud contention, to bespeak
 The soft dominion of that cheek!

Beneath it, sure, with subtle heed,
 Some rose by stealth its leaf convey'd;
 To shed its bright and beauteous dye, 35
 And still the varying bloom supply.

Notes

SONG (BY PATRICK LINDEN)

¹ He was monarch of Ireland in the beginning of the fourth century. By the second kingdom, we must suppose the poet means the Dal-Riadas of Scotland (author).

The tresses of thy silken hair
 As curling mists are soft and fair,
 Bright waving o'er thy graceful neck,
 Its pure and tender snow to deck! 40

But O! to speak the rapture found!
 In thy dear voice's magic sound!
 Its powers could death itself controul,
 And call back the expiring soul!

The tide that fill'd the veins of Kings, 45
 From whom thy noble lineage springs;
 The royal blood of Colla, see
 Renew'd, O charming maid! in thee.

Nor in thy bosom slacks its pace,
 Nor fades it in thy lovely face; 50
 But there with soft enchantment glows,
 And like the blossom's tint it shows.

How does thy needle's art pourtray
 Each pictur'd form, in bright array!
 With Nature's self maintaining strife, 55
 It gives its own creation life!

O perfect, all-accomplish'd maid!
 In beauty's every charm array'd:
 Thee ever shall my numbers hail,
 Fair lilly of the royal vale! 60

Elizabeth Ryves (1750–1797)

Elizabeth Ryves was born in Ireland, and little is known of her early life. If we take her poem "presented to the King, with a petition, in May 1775" as autobiographical, her father had a long military career and, with his death, she lost his friends' protection and fell into poverty. Isaac Disraeli's much-republished *Calamities of Authors* (1812) is a more conventional biographical source, though it is somewhat excessive in representing a sometimes-caustic political writer as a self-effacing paragon of feminine virtue. But it is clear that she lived in London for most of her adult life and that she did not have the financial security that most in her social class took for granted. She consequently made her living by the pen.

She published her poem to the king in her first volume of verse, *Poems on Several Occasions* (1777); *Poems* also included two dramatic works, *The Prude* and *The Triumph of Hymen*, which appear not to have been staged. She wrote a novel, *The Hermit of Snowden* (1789), and a devastating verse satire, *The Hastiniad* (1785), which mocked the British government and its imperial administration in India, depicting, for instance, the wife of a colonial administrator, Warren Hastings, wearing "Rich spoils of many a ransack'd clime." Other volumes include *Dialogue in the Elysian Fields*, *Between Caesar and Cato* (1784) and *Ode to the Right Honourable Lord Melton, Infant Son of Earl Fitzwilliam*

(1787). She often praises those who oppose tyranny, and warns those who would exercise it. Her *Dialogue in the Elysian Fields*, for instance, has an epigraph from French author François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon (1651–1715; also a favourite of Morgan's): "Despotic and tyrannic power is so far from securing the peace and authority of Princes, that, on the contrary, it makes them wretched, and draws inevitable destruction on them." Ryves also supplemented her income with other literary work, publishing translations and contributing political articles to the periodical press as well as working in an editorial capacity for the *Annual Register*.

Ryves participates in the literary culture of her time – neoclassicism, sensibility, and politics. Like Morgan a generation later, and Julia Kavanagh a generation after that, some of her writing celebrates prominent women in Western history. Two poems in her 1777 collection, for instance, focus on women monarchs – Elizabeth I of England (see "Ballad" below) and Christina of Sweden – and another, included here, addresses the classical Greek poet Sappho. Sappho, as a

number of recent scholars have noted, is a key figure in women's writing from the Renaissance forward, offering classical precedent and authority for women to write important poetry. Ryves's "Ode to Sensibility" participates in a late eighteenth-century literary concern with sympathy as the basis for moral virtue: R. W. Babcock (see Bibliography) records that two works with the title "Ode to Sensibility" appeared in British periodicals in the early 1770s, and poems on sensibility continued to appear in periodicals and books throughout the rest of the eighteenth century.

Further reading

Johns-Putra, Adeline, "Satirising the Courtly Woman and Defending the Domestic Woman: Mock Epics and Women Poets in the Romantic Age," *Romanticism on the Net* 15 (August 1999; <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~scat0385/courtly.html>).

Rainbolt, Martha, "Their Ancient Claim: Sappho and Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-century British Women's Poetry," *Seventeenth Century* 12 (1997): 111–34.

Ode to Sensibility

From Poems on Several Occasions (1777)

I

The sordid wretch who ne'er has known,
To feel for miseries not his own;
Whose lazy pulse serenely beats,
While injur'd worth her wrongs repeats;
Dead to each sense of joy or pain,
A useless link in nature's chain,
May boast the calm which I disdain.

5

II

Give me a generous soul, that glows
With others' transports, others' woes;
Whose noble nature scorns to bend,
Tho' Fate her iron scourge extend:
But bravely bears the galling yoke,
And smiles superior to the stroke,
With spirit free and mind unbroke.

10

III

Yet, by compassion touch'd, not fear, 15
 Sheds the soft sympathizing tear,
 In tribute to Affliction's claim,
 Or envy'd Merit's wounded fame.
 Let Stoics scoff! I'd rather be
 Thus curst with Sensibility, 20
 Than share their boasted Apathy.

*A Ballad, Written in June, 1775¹**From Poems on Several Occasions (1777)*

I

Ye subjects of Britain, attend to my song;
 For, to you both the Muse and her numbers belong:
 No courtier, no hireling, no pensioner she;
 By int'rest unsway'd, and from prejudice free.

II

A subject I chuse for the theme of my lays, 5
 Well known to this realm in Elizabeth's² days;
 That period of glory, that age of renown,
 When a female supported the rights of the crown.

III

A Cabal there was form'd by the foes of the state,
 Who like — and — could in senate debate: 10
 Foreign gold lin'd their pockets, and bulls from the Pope
 Remov'd all restraint, and gave conscience full scope.

IV

With manners and morals adapted to please,
 They flow'd with opinions, as waves with the breeze;
 For Rome grants indulgence for aiding her cause, 15
 And, to favour her int'rest, relaxes her laws.

V

Well vers'd in dissembling, 'midst Jesuits bred,
 And deep in each lecture of Machiavel³ read;
 With a latitude Truth must for ever detest,
 They censur'd the tenets their hearts still profess'd; 20

Notes

A BALLAD

¹ The Battle of Bunker Hill, an early skirmish in the War of American Independence, was fought in June 1775. In 1777, when this poem was published, the war was well underway.

² Elizabeth I, queen of England from 1558 to 1603.

³ Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527), Italian writer on politics.

VI

And loudly exclaim'd, that the nation again
 Wou'd sink to the level of Mary's⁴ weak reign;
 For that Burleigh,⁵ and those at the head of affairs,
 From the cries of her people, had turn'd the Queen's ears:

VII

That a debt justly due to the Spaniards (they said) 25
 Thro' the basest mismanagement, still lay unpaid:
 That Iberia was arming her right to demand,
 And had mann'd a huge fleet,⁶ which no pow'r cou'd withstand:

VIII

That myriads of treasure, and oceans of gore,
 Was the int'rest we soon with the loan must restore; 30
 And that nought cou'd avert it, or ward off the blow,
 But the Ministry's ruin and swift overthrow.

IX

Thus, with idle chimeras the people amus'd,
 Their judgment perverted, their reason abus'd,
 Obnoxious alike ev'ry statesman appear'd: 35
 They were censur'd, revil'd, and condemn'd tho' unheard.

X

For Prejudice suffers not Justice to sway;
 Caprice is the law that her subjects obey;
 And the culprit is either accus'd or commended,
 Not for what he has done, but what party offended. 40

XI

This point once attain'd, and the popular name
 Of Patriot assum'd, to establish their fame,
 They laugh'd at those gudgeons who swallow'd the bait,
 And plann'd (in its guardians) the fall of the state.

XII

For they knew them so firm, so attach'd to the laws, 45
 To religion, to truth, and Elizabeth's cause,
 That, ere they cou'd give these a final o'erthrow,
 They first at their bosoms must level the blow.

XIII

So away to Whitehall⁷ they determin'd to hie them,
 And see if her Majesty dar'd to deny them, 50

Notes

⁴ Mary I, queen of England from 1553 to 1558.

⁵ William Cecil (1521–98), Baron Burghley, English royal adviser during Elizabeth I's reign.

⁶ The Spanish Armada attempted an invasion of England in 1588.

⁷ The Privy Council, which advised the English monarch, met at Whitehall. When Benjamin Franklin pleaded the American colonists' case in 1774, he met the Council there.

When they shou'd demand the immediate disgrace
Of friends, fav'rites, ministers – all those in place.

XIV

Arriv'd at the palace, they soon gain'd admission,
As due to their rank, not their vaunted commission;
And boldly advanc'd to the foot of the throne, 55
Pretended abuses and wrongs to make known.

XV

The Queen, with a placid but resolute eye,
Prepar'd for a kind or an angry reply,
As their stile might deserve; most attentively heard them,
And shew'd that she neither neglected nor fear'd them. 60

XVI

With eloquence fram'd, their deep arts to disguise,
To fascinate reason by sudden surprize,
To lull the sound judgment to drowsy repose,
And win and insinuate still as it flows;

XVII

They talk'd of abuses, of rights unprotected, 65
Of the wrongs we endur'd, and of those we expected;
And, swell'd with importance, began to arraign
A conduct too partial, which made them complain.

XVIII

Said, our freedom hung pois'd in a wavering scale;
That the opposite balance must shortly prevail: 70
For they knew by that charm they shou'd strengthen the spell,
Which alone cou'd the schemes they concerted conceal.

XIX

But the Queen's penetration detected the snare;
No soft flowing words cou'd impose on her ear:
Yet, wisely dissembling, she mildly desir'd 75
They'd freely declare all her people requir'd.

XX

Encourag'd by this, opportunely they thought
The ministry's fall might be easily wrought;
And began to complain of their overgrown pow'r,
Which our freedom, our wealth, and our laws wou'd devour. 80

XXI

Said, their measures were wrong, and their administration
Obnoxious alike to all ranks in the nation;
Their disgrace they must therefore most humbly advise,
Lest the chiefs should revolt and the populace rise.

XXII

Unmov'd by the menace, Elizabeth frown'd 85
 So sternly, as might the most daring confound;
 And, enrag'd at their pride, struck the globe with her hand,
 That ensign of honour and regal command.

XXIII

“By the God that I worship (if rightly I ween)
 “They’re my friends, and I’ve prov’d them,” reply’d the fair Queen; 90
 “As such I regard them, as such I’ll defend;
 “So desist from complaining, and to me attend.

XXIV

“As long as the scepter of Britain I sway,
 “I’ll rule like a Queen, and ye all shall obey:
 “No laws I’ll infringe, and no insolent Peer 95
 “Shall presume to intrude on the Royal barrier.

XXV

“My servants I’ll chuse, and my friends I’ll reward;
 “To the good of my subjects shew proper regard:
 “But when traitors the peace of my crown would destroy,
 “Let Justice the sword of correction employ.” 100

XXVI

Repuls’d and abash’d, from the throne they retir’d,
 And ne’er, from that moment, ’gainst statesmen conspir’d,
 Whose wisdom and virtue secur’d them esteem,
 And still furnish the Muse with a favourite theme.

XXVII

Success crown’d the measures they wisely pursu’d; 105
 Our friendship was courted, our treaties renew’d,
 Our commerce extended; while peace reign’d at home,
 And Britain shook off the last shackle of Rome.

*Song**From Poems on Several Occasions (1777)*

I

Tho’ Love and each harmonious Maid
 To gentle Sappho lent their aid,
 Yet, deaf to her enchanting tongue,
 Proud Phaon scorn’d her melting song.¹

Notes

SONG

¹ The story that Sappho, a Greek poet of the sixth-century BCE, committed suicide after being spurned by the sailor

Phaon was the subject of a number of poems, including a sonnet sequence, *Sappho and Phaon* (1796), by English poet Mary Robinson (1758–1800).

II

Mistaken nymph! hadst thou ador'd
 Fair Fortune, and her smiles implor'd;
 Had she indulgent own'd thy claim,
 And given thee wealth instead of fame,

III

Tho' harsh thy voice, deform'd and old,
 Yet such th'omnipotence of gold,
 The youth had soon confess'd thy charms,
 And flown impatient to thy arms.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816)

Richard Brinsley Sheridan was born in Dublin to authors Thomas Sheridan and Frances Sheridan, and spent his early years in that city, attending Samuel Whyte's school for a brief period with his sister Alicia. In 1759, however, his parents moved permanently to England, and Richard Brinsley Sheridan left Ireland with them. He was briefly educated by both of his parents while in England, but entered Harrow for more formal schooling in 1762. By 1770, he had left school and begun to publish. He co-wrote a farce and a verse translation of *Aristaenetus* with his school friend, Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, as well as publishing a couple of poems in the early 1770s.

Sheridan's theatrical career began in earnest soon after his marriage to professional singer Eliza Linley. *The Rivals* opened in mid-January 1775 and, after a quick rewriting to address the misinterpretation of Sir Lucius O'Trigger as a "stage Irishman" by the first actor to perform the part, was extremely successful. Thereafter followed *The Duenna* (1775), *St. Patrick's Day* (first performed in 1775), *A Trip to Scarborough* (1777), *The School for Scandal* (1777), *The Camp* (1779), and, much later, *Pizarro* (1799). In 1776, he followed in his father's footsteps and became a theater manager, running Drury Lane Theatre in London, although by 1782 he had

largely left the theater to others' hands, mostly his wife and father, because of his developing political career. Drury Lane helped to catapult him into elite London circles, putting Sheridan into contact with such notable politicians as Charles James Fox and Edmund Burke in the late 1770s. When the theater burned down in 1809, however, he was left in severe financial straits that marred the final years of his life.

In 1780, Sheridan became a member of parliament as a Whig. During his years in parliament, Sheridan supported Burke on the impeachment of Warren Hastings for imperial abuses in India, and was a strong proponent of political reform. He joined the Society of Friends of the People, a group in favor of political reform which had some communication with the United Irishmen in the early 1790s. He was periodically under suspicion and even questioned about nationalist activities in Ireland, and testified at the trial of Arthur O'Connor, arrested in early 1798 for seeking French aid for an Irish uprising. In his speeches, Sheridan argued strenuously against the Act of Union which abolished the Irish parliament in 1800, in favor of the abolition of slavery, and for both Catholic Emancipation and reforms in Ireland that would alleviate poverty.

St. Patrick's Day, like his father's *Brave Irishman*, critiques the figure of the "stage Irishman" and mocks contemporary medicine. It was written for a benefit performance for Lawrence Clinch, the actor who recovered the figure of Sir Lucius O'Trigger from the stereotypical simplicities of the stage Irishman and so helped to launch the success of the revised *Rivals* in 1775 (benefit performances allowed the theater to direct a portion of ticket proceeds to particular individuals). Clinch played the part of Lieutenant O'Conner. In *St. Patrick's Day*, the rural English are depicted in terms that recall the stage Irishman, particularly in Sheridan's emphasis on their

accent and idiom, anticipating Boucicault's stage Englishman in *Arrah-na-Pogue* (below).

Further reading

Donoghue, Frank, "Avoiding the 'Cooler Tribunal of the Study': Richard Brinsley Sheridan's Writer's Block and Late Eighteenth-century Print Culture," *English Literary History* 68 (2001): 831–56.

Jones, Robert W., "Sheridan and the Theatre of Patriotism: Staging Dissent during the War for America," *Eighteenth-century Life* 26 (2002): 24–45.

Morwood, James, ed., *Sheridan Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

St. Patrick's Day; Or, the Scheming Lieutenant. A Comic Opera (1788)

Dramatis Personae

MEN

JUSTICE,
DOCTOR ROSY,
SERJEANT TROUNCE,
CORPORAL FLINT,
LIEUTENANT.
Soldiers, Countrymen, &c.

WOMEN

BRIDGET,
LAURETTA.

ACT I

Enter TROUNCE, FLINT, and Four SOLDIERS.

1st SOLDIER

I say you are wrong; we should all speak together, each for himself, and all at once, that we may be heard the better.

^{2D} SOL. Right Jack, we'll argue in Platoons.

^{3D} SOL. Ay, ay, let him have our grievances in a volly, and if we be to have a spokesman, there's the Corporal is the Lieutenant's countryman; and knows his humour.

COR. Let me alone for that, I serv'd three years within a bit, under his honour, in the Royal Inniskillions, and I never will see a sweeter tempered gentleman, nor one more free with his purse. I put a great shamrogue in his hat this morning, and I'll be bound for him, he'll wear it, was it as big as Steven's green.

^{4TH} SOL. I say again then you talk like youngsters, like Militia striplings, there is a discipline, look'ee, in all things, whereof the serjeant must be our guide, he's a

gentleman of words, he understands your foreign lingo, your figures, and such like auxiliaries in scoring. – Confess now for a reckoning, whether in chalk or writing, ben't he your only man.

COR. Why the serjeant is a scholar to be sure, and has the gift of reading.

SER. Good soldiers, and fellow gentlemen, if you make me your spokesman, you will shew the more judgment, and let me alone for the argument. I'll be as loud as a drum, and point blank from the purpose.

ALL. Agreed, agreed.

COR. O Fait here comes the Lieutenant, now Serjeant.

SER. So then, to order. – Put on your mutiny looks, every man grumble a little to himself, and some of you hum the deserter's march.

Enter Lieutenant.

LIEU. Well honest lads, what is it you have to complain of.

SOL. Ahem! hem!

SER. So please your honour, the very grievance of the matter is this; – ever since your honour differed with Justice Credulous, our Innkeepers use us most scurvily. – By my halbert, their treatment is such, that if your *spirit* was willing to put up with it, flesh and blood could by no means agree, so we humbly petition, that your honour would make an end of the matter at once, by running away with the Justice's daughter, or else get us fresh quarters, hem! hem!

LIEU. Indeed! – Pray which of the houses use you ill.

¹ST SOL. There's the Red Lion ha'n't half the civility of the old Red Lion.

²D SOL. There's the White Horse, if he was'n't case hardened, ought to be ashamed to shew his face.

LIEU. Very well, the Horse and the Lion shall answer for it, at the quarter sessions.

SER. The two Magpies are civil enough, but the Angel uses us like devils, and the rising sun refuses us light to go to bed by.

LIEU. Then upon my word, I'll have the rising sun put down, and the Angel shall give security for his good behaviour, but are you sure you do nothing to quit scores with them.

COR. Nothing at all your honour, unless now and then we happen to fling a cartridge into the kitchen fire, or put a spatterdash or so into the soup – and sometimes Ned drums up and down stairs a little of a night.

LIEU. Oh all that's fair, but hark'ee lads I must have no grumbling on St Patrick's day; so here take this and divide it amongst you. But observe me now, show yourselves men of spirit, and don't spend six pence of it in drink.

SER. Nay hang it your honour, soldiers should never bear malice, we must drink St Patrick's and your honour's health.

ALL. Oh damn malice. St Patrick's and his honour by all means.

COR. Come away then lads, and first we'll parade round the Market Cross, for the honour of King George.

¹ST SOL. Thank your honour. Come along; St Patrick's, his honour, and strong beer for ever. [*Exit Soldiers.*]

LIEU. Get along you thoughtless vagabonds, yet upon my conscience, 'tis very hard these poor fellows should scarcely have bread from the soil they would die to defend.

Enter Doctor Rosy.

Ah, my little Doctor Rosy, my galen¹ a-bridge, what's the news?

DOC. All things are as they were, my Alexander,² the Justice is as violent as ever, I felt his pulse on the matter again, and thinking his rage began to intermit, I wanted to throw in the bark of good advice, but it would not do. He says you and your cutthroats have a plot upon his life, and swears he had rather see his daughter in a scarlet fever, than in the arms of a soldier.

LIEU. Upon my word the army is very much obliged to him, well then, I must marry the girl first, and ask his consent afterwards.

DOC. So then, the case of her fortune is desperate, hey!

LIEU. O hang fortune, let that take its chance, there is a beauty in Lauretta's simplicity, so pure a bloom upon her charms.

DOC. So there is, so there is. – You are for beauty as nature made her, hey! No artificial graces, no cosmetic varnish, no beauty in grain, hey!

LIEU. Upon my word Doctor, you are right, the London ladies were always too handsome for me; – then they are so defended, such a circumvaluation of hoop, with a breast work of whale bone, that would turn a pistol bullet, much less Cupid's arrows, then turret on turret on top, with stores of concealed weapons, under pretence of black pins, and above all, a standard of feathers, that would do honour to a knight of the Bath. Upon my conscience I could as soon embrace an Amosen³ arm'd at all points.

DOC. Right, right my Alexander – my taste to a tittle.

LIEU. Then Doctor, though I admire modesty in women, I like to see their faces. I am for the changeable rose, but with one of these quality amazons, if their midnight dissipations had left them blood enough to raise a blush, they have not room enough in their cheeks to show it. – To be sure, bashfulness is a very pretty thing, but in my mind, there is nothing on earth, so impudent as an everlasting blush.

DOC. My taste, my taste – Well Lauretta is none of these – Ah! I never see her, but she puts me in mind of my poor dear wife.

LIEU. Ay faith, in my opinion she can't do a worse thing. – Now is he going to bother me about an old hag that has been dead these six years. [*Aside.*]

DOC. Oh poor Dolly! I never shall see her like again, such an arm for a bandage – Veins that seem'd to invite the lancet. Then her skin, smooth and white as a gallipot – her mouth as round and not larger than the mouth of a penny phial. Her lips conserve of roses – and then her teeth – none of your sturdy fixtures – aik as they wou'd – it was but a small pull and out they came. I believe I have drawn half a score of her poor dear pearls, [*weeps*] but what avails her beauty. Death has no consideration – one must die as well as another.

LIEU. O! if he begins to moralize [*takes out his snuff box*].

DOC. Fair or ugly, crooked or straight, rich or poor, flesh as grass flowers fade!

LIEU. Here Doctor, take a pinch, and keep up your spirits.

DOC. True, true my friend, grief can't mend the matter – all's for the best, but such a woman was a great loss, Lieutenant.

LIEU. To be sure, for doubtless she had mental accomplishments equal to her beauty.

Notes

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

¹ Galen, second-century Greek physician (see *The Brave Irishman*, above).

² Alexander the Great (355–323 BCE), king of Macedonia, known for his accomplishments as a military leader.

³ Amazon. In classical myth, the Amazons are women renowned for their skills as warriors.

DOC. Mental accomplishments! she would have stuffed an alligator, or pickled a lizard with any Apothecary's wife in the kingdom. Why she could decypher a prescription, and invent the ingredients, almost as well as myself; then she was such a hand at making foreign waters for Setzer, Pyrmont, Islington or Chaly beate she never had her equal – and her Bath and Bristol springs exceeded the originals – Ah! Poor Dolly, she fell a martyr to her own discoveries.

LIEU. How so, pray?

DOC. Poor soul, her illness was occasioned by her zeal in trying an improvement on the Spa water, by an infusion of rum and acid.

LIEU. Ay, ay, spirits never agree with water drinkers.

DOC. No, no, you mistake. – Rum agreed with her well enough, it was not the rum that killed the poor dear creature, for she died of a dropsy. Well, she is gone never to return, and has left no pledge of our loves behind – No little babe, to hang like a label round papa's neck: well, well, we are all mortal, – sooner or later flesh is grass – flowers fade.

LIEU. O the devil again!

DOC. Life's a shadow, the world a stage, – we strut an hour.⁴

LIEU. Here Doctor. [*Offers snuff*].

DOC. True, true my friend – well, high grief can't cure it. All's for the best, hey! my little Alexander.

LIEU. Right, right, an Apothecary should never be out of spirits. But come, faith 'tis time honest Humphrey should wait on the Justice, that must be our first scheme.

DOC. True, true, you should be ready, the cloaths are at my house, and I have given you such a character, that he is impatient to have you; he swears you shall be his body guard. Well I honour the army, or I should never do so much to serve you.

LIEU. Indeed I am bound to you for ever Doctor, and when once I'm possessed of my dear Lauretta, I will endeavour to make work for you as fast as possible.

DOC. Now you put me in mind of my poor wife again.

LIEU. Ah, pray forget her a little, we shall be too late.

DOC. Poor Dolly.

LIEU. 'Tis past twelve.

DOC. Inhuman dropsy.

LIEU. The Justice will wait.

DOC. Cropt in her prime.

LIEU. For heaven's sake come.

DOC. Well, flesh is grass.

LIEU. O the devil!

DOC. We must all die.

LIEU. Doctor.

DOC. Kings, Lords and common Whores. – [*Forces him off*].

SCENE

Enter LAURETTA and BRIDGET.

LAU. I repeat it again mama, officers are the prettiest men in the world, and Lieutenant O'Conner is the prettiest officer I ever saw.

Notes

⁴ While the Doctor's earlier laments use biblical phrases ("flesh is grass"), here he alludes to the English plays *As You Like It* and *Macbeth*, both by William Shakespeare.

BRI. For shame Laura, how can you talk so – or if you must have a military man, there's Lieutenant Plow or Captain Haycock, or Major Dray the Brewer; are all your admirers, and though they are peaceable good kind, of men they have as large cockades, and become scarlet as well as the fighting folks.

LAU. Psha! you know mama I hate militia officers, a set of dunghill cocks, with spurs on heroes scratch'd off a church door. Clowns in military masquerade, wearing the dress without supporting the character. No, give me the bold upright youth, who makes love to-day and his head shot off to-morrow. Dear to think how the sweet fellows sleep on the ground, and fight in silk stockings and lace ruffles.

BRI. Oh barbarous! to want a husband that may wed you to-day, and be sent the Lord knows where before night; then in a twelve month perhaps to have him come like a Colossus with one leg at New York, and the other at Chelsea Hospital.⁵

LAU. Then I'll be his crutch mama.

BRI. No, give me a husband that knows where his limbs are, though he want the use of them – and if he should take you with him – to sleep in a baggage cart, and stroll about the camp like a gipsy, with a knapsack and two children at your back – then by way of entertainment in the evening, to make a party with the Serjeant's wife, to drink bohea tea, and play at all fours on a drumhead, 'tis a precious life to be sure.⁶

LAU. Nay mama, you shou'dn't be against my Lieutenant, for I heard him say, you were the best natured and best looking woman in the world.

BRI. Why child, I never said but that Lieutenant O'Conner, was a very well bred and discerning young man, 'tis your papa is so violent against him.

LAU. Why cousin Sophy married an officer.

BRI. Ay Laury, an officer in the militia.

LAU. No indeed, mama, a marching regiment.

BRI. No child, I tell you he was a Major of militia.

LAU. Indeed mama it wasn't.

Enter Justice.

JUS. Bridget my love, I have had a message –

LAU. It was Cousin Sophy told me so.

JUS. I have had a message, love –

BRI. No child, she could say no such thing.

JUS. A message, I say.

LAU. How could he be in the militia, when he was ordered abroad.

BRI. Ay, girl hold your tongue – well my dear.

JUS. I have had a message from Doctor Rosy.

BRI. He ordered abroad! He went abroad for his health.

JUS. Why Bridget.

BRI. Well deare – Now hold your tongue miss.

JUS. A message from Dr Rosy, and Doctor Rosy says –

LAU. I'm sure mama his regimentals –

JUS. Damn his regimentals – Why don't you listen?

BRI. Ay girl, how durst you interrupt your papa?

LAU. Well papa.

Notes

⁵ A military hospital.

⁶ *Bohea* was one of the cheaper sorts of tea; *all fours* is a card game.

JUS. Doctor Rosy says he will bring –
 LAU. Were blue turn'd up with red, mama.
 JUS. Laury – says he will bring the young man.
 BRI. Red! yellow if you please, miss.
 JUS. Bridget – the young man that is to be hir'd.
 BRI. Besides miss, it is very unbecoming in you to want to have the last word with your
 mama, you should know –
 JUS. Why zounds! will you hear me or no?
 BRI. I am listening my love – I am listening – But what signifies my silence, what good
 is my not speaking a word, if this girl will interrupt and let nobody speak but
 herself – Ay, I don't wonder my life, at your impatience, your poor dear lips quiver
 to speak – but I suppose she'll run on and not let you put in a word – you may very
 well be angry – there is nothing sure so provoking, as a chattering, talking –
 LAU. Nay, I'm sure mama it is you will not let papa speak now.
 BRI. Why, you little provoking minx –
 JUS. Get out of the room directly, both of you, get out.
 BRI. Ay, go girl.
 JUS. Go Bridget, you are worse than she, you old hag, I wish you were both up to the
 neck in the canal to argue there till I took you out.

Enter Servant.

SERV. Doctor Rosy, sir.
 JUS. Shew him up. [*Exit Servant.*]
 LAU. Then you own mama, it was a marching regiment.
 BRI. You're an obstinate fool, I tell you, for if that had been the case –
 JUS. You won't go.
 BRI. We are going, Mr Surly – If that had been the case, I say, how could –
 LAU. Nay, mama, one proof.
 BRI. How could major –
 LAU. And a full proof. [*Justice drives them off.*]
 JUS. There they go, ding dong in for the day. – Good lack, a fluent tongue is the only
 thing a mother don't like her daughter should resemble her in.

Enter Doctor Rosy.

Well Doctor, where's the lad, where's trusty?
 DOC. At hand, he'll be here in a minute – I'll answer for't, he's such a one as you a'n't
 met with – brave as a lion, gentle as a saline draught.
 JUS. Ah, he comes in the place of a rogue – a dog that was corrupted by the Lieutenant.
 But this is a sturdy fellow, is he Doctor?
 DOC. As Hercules – and the best back sword in the country. Egad he'll make the red
 coats keep their distance.
 JUS. O the villains! this is St. Patrick's Day, and the rascals have been parading my
 house all the morning. I know they have a design upon me, but I have taken all
 precautions, I have magazines of arms, and if this fellow does but prove faithful,
 I shall be more at ease.
 DOC. Doubtless he'll be a comfort to you.

Enter a Servant.

SERV. There is a man below sir, enquires for Doctor Rosy.
 DOC. Shew him up.
 JUS. Hold – a little caution – how does he look?
 SERV. A country looking fellow, your worship.
 JUS. O, well well, for Doctor Rosy, these rascals try all ways to get in here.
 SERV. Yes please your worship, there was one here this morning wanted to speak to you – he said his name was Corporal Breakbones.
 JUS. Corporal Breakbones!
 SERV. And Drummer Crackskull came again.
 JUS. Ay! did you ever hear of such a damned confounded crew. Well, shew the lad in here! [*Exit Serv.*]
 DOC. Ay, he'll be your porter, he'll give the rogues an answer.

Enter Lieutenant disguised as Humphrey.

JUS. So a tall Efacts,⁷ what! has lost an eye.
 DOC. Only a bruise he got in taking seven or eight highwaymen.
 JUS. He has a damned wicked leer somehow with the other.
 DOC. O no, he's bashful – a sheepish look.
 JUS. Well my lad, what's your name?
 LIEU. Humphrey Hum.
 JUS. Hum – I don't like Hum.⁸
 LIEU. But I be mostly called honest Humphrey.
 DOC. There, I told you so – of noted honesty.
 JUS. Well honest Humphrey, the Doctor has told you my terms, and you are willing to serve, hey!
 LIEU. And please your worship, I shall be well content.
 JUS. Well then, hark'ye honest Humphrey, you are sure now you will never be a rogue – never take a bribe, hey! honest Humphrey.
 LIEU. A bribe! What's that?
 JUS. A very ignorant fellow indeed.
 DOC. His worship hopes you will never part with your honesty for money, Humphrey.
 LIEU. Noa, noa.
 JUS. Well said Humphrey – my chief business with you is to watch the motions of a rake helly fellow here, one Lieutenant O'Conner.
 DOC. Ay, you don't value the soldiers, do you Humphrey?
 LIEU. Not I – they are but zwaggerers, and you'll see they'll be as much affraid of me, as they wou'd of their captain.
 JUS. And I faith Humphrey, you have a pretty cudgel there.
 LIEU. Aye, the zwitch is better than nothing, but I should be glad of a stouter, ha' you got such a thing in the house as an old coach-pole, or a spare bed post.

Notes

⁷ *Efacts* and variants were used on the eighteenth-century stage for mild oaths.

⁸ To *hum* was eighteenth-century slang for to hoax.

JUS. Oon's what a Dragon it is – well Humphrey, come with me, I'll just shew him to Bridget, Doctor, and we'll agree, come along honest Humphrey. [*Exit.*]
 LIEU. My dear Doctor, now remember to bring the Justice presently to the walk, I have a scheme to get into his confidence at once.
 DOC. I will, I will. [*Shake hands, Justice enters and sees them.*]
 JUS. Why honest Humphrey, hey! what the devil are you at?
 DOC. I was just giving him a little advice – well I must go for the present – good morning to your worship – you need not fear the Lieutenant, while he is in your house.
 JUS. Well, get in Humphrey – good morning to you Doctor. [*Exit Doctor*] Come along Humphrey. Now I think I am a match for the Lieutenant and all his gang. [*Exit.*]

ACT II

Enter TROUNCE, DRUMMER *and* SOLDIERS.

SERJEANT

Come, silence your drum – there is no valour stirring to-day – I thought St. Patrick would have given us a Recruit or two to-day.
 SOL. Mark Serjeant.

Enter two Countrymen.

SER. Oh! these are the lads I was looking for, they have the looks of gentlemen. A'n't you single my lads.
 1ST COUN. Yes, an please you, I be quite single, my relations be all dead, thank heavens more or less. I have but one poor mother left in the world, and she's an helpless woman.
 SER. Indeed! a very extraordinary case – quite your own master then – the fitter to serve his Majesty – Can you read?
 1ST COUN. Noa, I was always too lively to take to learning but John here, is main clever at it.
 SER. So, what, you're a scholar friend.
 2D COUN. I was born so, measter. Feyther kept grammar school.
 SER. Lucky man, in a campaign or two put yourself down chaplain to the regiment. And I warrant, you have read of warriors and heroes.
 2D COUN. Yes that I have, I have read of jack the Giant killer, and the Dragon of Wantly, and the – noa, I believe that's all in the hero way, except once about a Comet.
 SER. Wonderful knowledge! well my heroes, I'll write word to the King of your good intentions, and meet me half an hour hence, at the two Magpies.
 COUN. We will, your honour, we will.
 SER. But stay, for fear I shou'dn't see you again in the croud, clap these little bits of ribbon into your hats.
 1ST COUN. Our hats are none of the best.
 SER. Well, meet me at the Magpies, and I'll give you money to buy new ones.
 COUN. Bless your honour, thank your honour. [*Exit.*]
 SER. [*Winking at Sol.*] Jack. [*Exit Soldiers.*]

Enter Lieutenant.

So, here comes one would make a grenadier. Stop friend, will you list?⁹

LIEU. Who shall I serve under?

SER. Under me to be sure.

LIEU. Isn't Lieutenant O'Conner your officer?

SER. He is, and I am Commander over him.

LIEU. What! be your Serjeants greater than your Captains?

SER. To be sure we are, 'tis our business to keep them in order. For instance now, the General writes to me, dear Serjeant, or dear Trounce, or dear Serjeant Trounce, according to his hurry, if your Lieutenant does not demean himself accordingly, let me know.

Yours,

GENERAL DELUGE.

LIEU. And do you complain of him often?

SER. No hang him, the lad is good-natur'd at bottom, so I pass over small things. But hark'ee, between ourselves, he is most confoundedly given to wenching.

Enter Corporal.

COR. Please your honour, the Doctor is coming this way with his worship – We are all ready and have our cues.

LIEU. Then my dear Trounce, or my dear Serjeant, or my dear Serjeant Trounce, take yourself away.

SER. Zounds! the Lieutenant, I smell of the black hole already.¹⁰ [*Exit.*]

Enter Justice and Doctor.

JUS. I thought I saw some of the cutthroats.

DOC. I fancy not, there's no one but honest Humphrey, ha! ods life, here comes some of them, we'll stay by these trees, and let them pass.

JUS. Oh the bloody looking dogs. [*Walks aside.*]

Enter Corporal and two Soldiers.

COR. Holloa, friend, do you serve Justice Credulous?

LIEU. I do.

COR. Are you rich?

Notes

⁹ enlist

¹⁰ *Black hole* was the term for a room in which British soldiers were occasionally locked for minor punishments. After a British fort was surrendered to the Nawab of Bengal

in 1756, over 140 men were crowded into a single *black hole* and held prisoner overnight. Fewer than twenty-five survived.

LIEU. Noa.

COR. Nor ever will with that old stingy booby, look here, take it. [*Gives him a purse.*]

LIEU. What must I do for this?

COR. Mark me, our Lieutenant is in love with the old rogue's daughter, help us to break his worship's bones, and carry off the girl, and you are a made man.

LIEU. I'll see you hang'd first, you pack of skurry villains. [*Throws away the purse.*]

COR. What sirrah, do you mutiny, lay hold of him.

LIEU. Nay then, I'll try your armour for you. [*Beats them.*]

ALL. Oh, oh! Quarter, quarter. [*Exit.*]

JUS. Trim them, trounce them, break their bones, honest Humphrey. What a spirit he has!

DOC. Aquafortis.

LIEU. Betray my master!

DOC. What a miracle of fidelity!

JUS. Ay, and it shall not go unrewarded – I'll give him sixpence on the spot. Here honest Humphrey, there's for yourself, as for this bribe [*takes up the purse*] such trash is best in the hands of justice. Now then Doctor, I think I may trust him to guard the women, while he is with them I may go out with safety.

DOC. Doubtless you may, I'll answer for the Lieutenant's behaviour while honest Humphrey is with your daughter.

JUS. Ay, ay, she shall go no where without him. Come along honest Humphrey. How rare it is to meet with such a servant. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, A Garden.

LAURETTA *discovered.*

Enter JUSTICE and LIEUTENANT.

JUS. Why you little Truant, how durst you wander so far from the house without my leave, do you want to invite that scoundrel Lieutenant to scale the walls and carry you off?

LAU. Lud papa, you are so apprehensive for nothing.

JUS. Why hussey –

LAU. Well then, I can't bear to be shut up all day so like a nun. I am sure it is enough to make one wish to be run away with – and I wish I was run away with – I do – and I wish the Lieutenant knew it.

JUS. You do, do you hussey? Well I think I'll take pretty good care of you. Here, Humphrey. I leave this lady in your care. Now you may walk about the garden Miss Pert, but Humphrey shall go with you wherever you go. So mind honest Humphrey, I am obliged to go abroad for a little while, let no one but yourself come near her, don't be shame faced you booby, but keep close to her. And now Miss, let your Lieutenant or any of his crew come near you if they can. [*Exit.*]

LAU. How this booby stares after him. [*Sits down and sings.*]

LIEU. Lauretta.

LAU. Not so free fellow. [*Sings.*]

LIEU. Lauretta, look on me.

LAU. Not so free fellow.

LIEU. No recollection!

LAU. Honest Humphrey be quiet.

LIEU. Have you forgot your faithful soldier?

LAU. Ah! O preserve me.

LIEU. 'Tis my soul your truest slave, passing on your father in this disguise.

LAU. Well now I declare this is charming – you are so disguised my dear Lieutenant, and you do look so delightfully ugly, I am sure no one will find you out, ha! ha! ha! you know I am under your protection, papa charg'd you to keep close to me.

LIEU. True my angel, and thus let me fulfil.

LAU. O pray now dear Humphrey.

LIEU. Nay, 'tis but what old Mitimus commanded. [*Offers to kiss her, Enter Justice.*]

JUS. Laury my – hey! what the devil's here?

LAU. Well, now one kiss and be quiet.

JUS. Your very humble servant, honest Humphrey – don't me – Pray don't let me interrupt you.

LAU. Lud papa – Now that's so good natur'd – Indeed there's no harm – you did not mean any rudeness, did you Humphrey?

LIEU. No indeed miss, his worship knows it is not in me.

JUS. I know that you are a lying canting hypocritical scoundrel and if you don't take yourself out of my sight.

LAU. Indeed papa now I'll tell you how it was, I was sometime taken with a sudden giddiness, and Humphrey seeing me begin to totter ran to my assistance quite frighten'd poor fellow, and took me in his arms.

JUS. Oh! was that all, nothing but a little giddiness, hey!

LIEU. That's all indeed your worship, for seeing miss change colour I ran up instantly.

JUS. O 'twas very kind in you.

LIEU. And luckily recovered her.

JUS. And who made you a doctor, you impudent rascal, hey! Get out of my sight I say this instant or by all the statutes.

LAU. O now papa you frighten me and I am giddy again – oh help.

LIEU. O dear lady – she'll fall. [*Takes her into his arms.*]

JUS. Zounds! what before my face – why then thou miracle of impudence [*lays hold of him and discovers him*]. Mercy on me who have we here, Murder – Robbery – Fire – Rape – Gun-powder – Soldiers – John – Susan – Bridget –

LIEU. Good sir, don't be alarm'd, I mean you no harm.

JUS. Thieves, Robbers, Soldiers.

LIEU. You know my love for your daughter.

JUS. Fire, Cutthroats.

LIEU. And that alone.

JUS. Treason, Gunpowder. [*Enter Servant with a Blunderbuss.*] Now Scoundrel let her go this instant.

LAU. O papa, you'll kill me.

JUS. Honest Humphrey, be advised – Ay miss this way if you please.

LIEU. Nay sir, but hear me.

JUS. I'll shoot.

LIEU. And you'll be convinc'd.

JUS. I'll shoot.

LIEU. How injurious.

JUS. I'll shoot, and so your very humble servant, Honest Humphrey Hum. [*Exit separately.*]

SCENE, A Walk.

Enter DOCTOR ROSY.

DOC. Well I think my friend is now in a fair way of succeeding. Ah! I warrant he is full of hope and fear, doubt and anxiety; truly he has the fever of love strong upon him; faint, peevish, languishing all day with burning restless nights – Ah! just my case when I pin'd for my poor dear Dolly – When she used to have her daily cholics, that her little Doctor be sent for – Then wou'd I interpret the language of her pulse – Declare my own sufferings in my receipt¹¹ for her, send her a pearl necklace in a pill box – or a cordial draught, with an acrostic on the label. – Well those days are over – no happiness lasting – all is vanity – now sun-shine – now cloudy – we are as it were, king and beggar – then what avails –

Enter Lieutenant.

LIEU. O Doctor, ruin'd and undone.

DOC. The pride of beauty.

LIEU. I am discovered and –

DOC. The gaudy palace.

LIEU. The justice is –

DOC. The pompous wig.

LIEU. Is more enraged than ever.

DOC. The gilded cane.

LIEU. Why Doctor [*Slapping him on the Shoulder.*]

DOC. Hey!

LIEU. Confound your morals, I tell you I am discovered, discomfited, disappointed, ruin'd.

DOC. Indeed! good lack, good lack, to think of the instability of human affairs – Nothing certain in this world – most deceived when most confident – fools of fortune all.

LIEU. My dear Doctor, I want at present a little practical wisdom – I am resolv'd this instant to try the scheme, we were going to put in execution last week – I have the letter ready, and only want your assistance to recover my ground.

DOC. With all my heart – I'll warrant you I'll bear a part in it – but how the deuce were you discovered?

LIEU. I'll tell you as we go, there's not a moment to be lost.

DOC. Heaven send we succeed better, but there's no knowing.

LIEU. Very true.

DOC. We may, and we may not.

LIEU. Right.

DOC. Time must show.

LIEU. Certainly.

DOC. We are but blind guessers.

*Notes*¹¹ prescription

LIEU. Nothing more.
 DOC. Thick sighted mortals.
 LIEU. Remarkably.
 DOC. Wandering in error.
 LIEU. Even so.
 DOC. Futurity is dark.
 LIEU. As a cellar.
 DOC. Men are moles. [*Lieut. forcing him out.*]

SCENE, JUSTICE'S HOUSE.

Enter JUSTICE and BRIDGET.

JUS. Odds Life Bridget, you are enough to make one mad, I tell you he would have deceived a chief justice, the dog seem'd as ignorant as my clerk, and talk'd of honesty as if he had been a church Warden.
 BRI. Po! Nonsense, honesty indeed! – What had you to do pray with honesty; – A fine business you have made of it with your Humphrey Hum, and Miss too, she must have been privy to it. – Lauretta, ay, you would have her called so, but for my part I never knew any good come of giving girls these heathen christian names; if you had called her Deborah, or Tabitha, or Ruth, or Rebecca, or Joan, nothing of this had ever happened; but I always knew Lauretta was a runaway name.
 JUS. Psha, you're a fool.
 BRI. No, Mr Credulous, it is you who are a fool, and no one but such a simpleton would be so imposed on.
 JUS. Why zounds! Madam, how durst you talk so, if you have no respect for your husband, I should think *unus quorum*¹² might command a little deference.
 BRI. Don't tell me – *Unus fiddlestick*, you ought to be asham'd to shew your face at the sessions, you'll be a laughing stock to the whole bench, and a byeword with all the pig-tail'd Lawyers, and bag-wig'd Attornies about town.
 JUS. Is this language for his Majesty's Representative, by the statutes, it's high treason, and petty treason both at once.

Enter Servant.

SERV. A letter for your worship.
 JUS. Who brought it?
 SERV. A soldier.
 JUS. Take it away and bury it.
 BRI. Stay – Now you're in such a hurry – it is some canting scrawl from the Lieutenant, I suppose, let me see – Ay, 'tis signed O'Conner.
 JUS. Well, come read it out.
 BRI. "Revenge is sweet"
 JUS. It begins so, does it? I'm glad of that, I'll let the dog know I'm of his opinion.
 BRI. "And though disappointed of my designs upon your daughter, I have still the satisfaction of knowing I'm revenged on her unnatural father, for this morning,

Notes

¹² *unus quorum* refers to his status as a justice.

in your chocolate, I had the pleasure to administer to you a doze of poison.” –
 Mercy on us!
 JUS. No tricks, Bridget, come you know it is not so, you know it is a lie.
 BRI. Read it yourself.
 JUS. “Pleasure to administer a doze of poison” – Oh horrible – Cutthroat villain –
 Bridget.
 BRI. Lovee, stay here’s a postscript. N.B. ’Tis not in the power of medicine to save you.
 JUS. Odds my life Bridget, why don’t you call for help? I’ve lost my voice – My brain is
 giddy – I shall burst and no assistance. – John – Laury – John.
 BRI. You see lovee what you have brought on yourself.

Enter Servant.

SERV. Your worship!
 JUS. Stay, John, did you perceive any thing in my chocolate cup this morning?
 SERV. Nothing your worship, unless it was a little grounds.
 JUS. What colour were they?
 SERV. Blackish, your worship.
 JUS. Ay, arsenac, black arsenac. Why don’t you run for Doctor Rosy, you rascal?
 SERV. Now sir.
 BRI. O lovee, you may be sure it is in vain, let him run for the Lawyer to witness your
 will, my life.
 JUS. Zounds! go for the Doctor, you scoundrel. You are all confederate murderers.
 SERV. O, here he is your worship. [*Exit.*]
 JUS. Now Bridget, hold your tongue, and let me see if my horrid situation be apparent.

Enter Doctor.

DOC. I have but just called to inform – hey! bless me, what’s the matter with your
 worship?
 JUS. There he sees it already – Poison in my face, in capitals. Yes, yes, I’m a sure job for
 the undertakers indeed.
 BRI. Oh! Oh! alas Doctor.
 JUS. Peace Bridget. Why Doctor, my dear old friend, do you really see any change
 in me?
 DOC. Change, Never was man so altered, how came these black spots on your nose?
 JUS. Spots on my nose!
 DOC. And that wild stare in your right eye.
 JUS. In my right eye!
 DOC. Aye, and alack, alack, how you are swelled!
 JUS. Swelled!
 DOC. Aye, don’t you think he is, madam?
 BRI. O, ’tis in vain to conceal it, indeed lovee, you are as big again as you was this
 morning.
 JUS. Yes, I feel it now – I’m poison’d – Doctor help me for the love of justice – Give me
 life to see my murderer hang’d.
 DOC. What!
 JUS. I’m poison’d I say.
 DOC. Speak out.

JUS. What! can't you hear me?
 DOC. Your voice is so low and hollow as it were, I can't hear a word you say.
 JUS. I'm gone then, *hic jacet*.¹³ Many years one of his Majesty's Justices.
 BRI. Read Doctor – Ah, lovee the will – Consider, my life, how soon you will be dead.
 JUS. No Bridget, I shall die by inches.
 DOC. I never heard such monstrous iniquity. Oh, you are gone indeed my friend, the mortgage of your little bit of clay is out, and the sexton has nothing to do but to close. We must all go sooner or later – High and low – Death's a debt, his mandamus binds all alike – No bail, no demurrer.
 JUS. Silence Doctor Croaker, will you cure me or will you not?
 DOC. Alas, my dear friend, it is not in my power, but I'll certainly see justice done on your murderer.
 JUS. I thank you, my dear friend, but I had rather see it myself.
 DOC. Ay, but if you recover the villain will escape.
 BRI. Will he? then indeed it would be a pity you shou'd recover, I am so enraged against the villain, I can't bear the thought of his escaping the halter.
 JUS. That's very kind in you, my dear, but if it's the same thing to you, my dear, I had as soon recover notwithstanding. What Doctor, no assistance!
 DOC. Efacks I can do nothing, but there's the German Quack whom you wanted to send from town, I met him at the next door, and I know he has antidotes for all poisons.
 JUS. Fetch him, my dear friend, fetch him, I'll get him a diploma if he cures me.
 DOC. Well, there's no time to be lost, you continue to swell immensely. [*Exit*.]
 BRI. What, my dear, will you submit to be cured by a Quack Nostrum¹⁴ monger? for my part as much as I love you, I had rather follow you to your grave, than see you owe your life to any but a regular bred physician.
 JUS. I'm sensible of your affection, dearest, and be assured nothing consoles me more in my melancholy situation, so much as the thoughts of leaving you behind me.

Enter Doctor and Lieutenant disguised.

DOC. Great luck, met him passing by the door.
 LIEU. *Metto dowsei pulsum*.¹⁵
 DOC. He desires to feel your pulse.
 JUS. Can't he speak English?
 DOC. Not a word.
 LIEU. *Palio vivem mortem soonem*.
 DOC. He says you have not six hours to live.
 JUS. O mercy! does he know my distemper?
 DOC. I believe not.
 JUS. Tell him 'tis black arsnick they have given me.
 DOC. *Geneable illi arsnecca*.
 LIEU. *Pisonatus*.
 JUS. What does he say?
 DOC. He says that you are poison'd.

Notes

¹³ *hic jacet* (here lies) conventionally begins Latin epitaphs.

¹⁴ medicine

¹⁵ The doctors speak a kind of mock-Latin.

JUS. We know that, but what will be the effect?
 DOC. Quid effectum?
 LIEU. Diable tutellum.
 DOC. He says you die presently.
 JUS. Oh horrible! What no antedote.
 LIEU. Curum benakeré bono fullum.
 JUS. What does he say, I must row in a boat to Fulham.
 DOC. He says he'll undertake to cure you for L. 3000.¹⁶
 BRI. L. 3000! 3000 halts, no lovee you shall never submit to such impositions, die at once and be a customer to none of them.
 JUS. I won't die Bridget – I don't like death.
 BRI. Psha, there is nothing in it, a moment and it is over.
 JUS. Ay, but it leaves a numbness behind that lasts for a plaguy long time.
 BRI. O my dear, pray do consider the will.

Enter Laupetta.

LAU. O my father, what is it I hear.
 LIEU. Quiddam seomriam deos tollam rosam.
 DOC. The doctor is astonish'd at the sight of your fair daughter.
 JUS. How so?
 LIEU. Damsellum livivum suvum rislibani.
 DOC. He says that he has lost his heart to her, and that if you will give him leave to pay his addresses to the young lady, and promise your consent to the union if he should gain her affections, he will on those conditions cure you instantly, without fee or reward.
 JUS. The devil! did he say all that in so few words – what a fine language it is. Well, I agree, if he can prevail on the girl – and that I am sure he never will. [*Aside.*]
 DOC. Greal.
 LIEU. Writhum bothum.
 DOC. He says you must give this under your hand, while he writes you a miraculous receipt. [*Both sit down to write.*]
 LAU. Do mama, tell me the meaning of this.
 BRI. Don't speak to me girl. – Unnatural parent.
 JUS. There doctor, there's what he requires.
 DOC. And here's your receipt, read it yourself.
 JUS. Hey! what's here! plain English.
 DOC. Read it out, a wondrous nostrum, I'll answer for it.
 JUS. "In reading this you are cured, by your affectionate son-in-law, O'Conner." Who in the name of Beelzebub sirrah, who are you?
 LIEU. Your affectionate son-in-law O'Conner, and your very humble servant, Humphrey Hum.
 JUS. 'Tis false you dog, you are not my son-in-law, for I'll be poison'd again, and you shall be hang'd – I'll die sirrah, and leave Bridget my Estate.
 BRI. Ay, Pray do my dear, leave me your Estate, I'm sure he deserves to be hang'd.

Notes

¹⁶ £3,000, a huge sum at the time, and comparable to a few years' income for many of the Justice's class.

JUS. He does you say – hark’ee Bridget, you shew’d such a tender concern for me when you thought me poison’d, that for the future I am resolv’d never to take your advice again in any thing. So, do you hear sir, you are an Irishman, and a soldier, ar’n’t you?

LIEU. I am sir, and proud of both.

JUS. The two things on earth I most hate, so I’ll tell you what, renounce your country, and sell your commission, and I’ll forgive you.

LIEU. Hark’ee, Mr Justice, if you were not the father of my Lauretta, I would pull your nose for asking the first, and break your bones for desiring the second.

DOC. Aye, aye, you’re right.

JUS. Is he, then I’m sure I must be wrong. Here sir, I give my daughter to you, who are the most impudent dog, I ever saw in my life.

LIEU. O sir, say what you please, with such a gift as Lauretta, every word is a compliment.

BRI. Well my lovee, I think this will be a good subject for us to quarrel about the rest of our lives.

JUS. Why truly, my dear, I think so, tho’ we are seldom at a loss for that.

DOC. This is all as it should be. My Alexander, I give you joy, and you my little god-daughter; and now my sincere wish is, that you may make just such a wife as my poor dear Dolly.

From Union of Ireland with Great Britain (parliamentary speech, January 23, 1799)¹

When I found it stated that it is the principal object of the message from the crown to invite the commons of Great Britain to the consideration of means of finally adjusting the interests in common between Great Britain and Ireland, I am naturally led to enquire how the terms of the final adjustment made and agreed to by the parliaments of the two countries, in 1782,² came to fail of their object. In that year there was an adjustment; and no man acquainted with the history of that period, no man whose study has not been confined to mere local occurrences, can have forgotten in what kind of circumstances that adjustment arose, and under what kind of auspices it was made final. Nothing can be more obvious than the propriety of inquiring at this time how that adjustment failed of its object . . .

Before ministers recommend to the house of commons to take measures that lead inevitably to the discussion of some plan of union, it was incumbent upon them to have shewn us that the last pledge of the English parliament to the people of Ireland, by which their independence was recognized and their rights acknowledged, has not produced that unanimity, that concord of sentiment, and earnest exertion to promote their own welfare, while they cordially and sincerely manifested their zeal for the happiness and prosperity of this country, which that people were expected to display, and which the parliaments of the two countries sought to cherish. – But more than the effect immediately upon the people, it is fit to inquire whether the final adjustment led to the measures of mutual confidence, and produced that unanimity of sentiment and object in the two parliaments, which, for the happiness and honor of

Notes

FROM UNION OF IRELAND

¹ Sheridan is speaking to the impending Act of Union which would abolish the Irish parliament and include Irish representation in the British parliament.

² In 1782, the Declaratory Act of 1720 which gave the British parliament some legislative control over Ireland was repealed, under pressure from the Irish Volunteers and, in the Irish parliament, Henry Grattan (1746–1820).

both kingdoms, every man wished might be its permanent effect. Sir, I think it impossible for any man clearly to shew that there has been any want of this unanimity on any important occasion. I am the more strongly impressed with this belief, because a solemn declaration of the Irish parliament, sanctioned by all Ireland, is now on record, wherein we have it emphatically stated that the independence of Ireland will be asserted by the people of Ireland, and that their parliament is an independent legislature. The recollection of this declaration brings to my mind the strong apprehension of the danger, the peril of agitating anew the question of Irish independence. What has that declaration stated? Sir, it is a manly, firm, and honorable testimony to all time, of the proud, noble spirit of a nation rising into distinction and mounting up to freedom. They there say, that “there is no power whatever competent to make laws for Ireland but the parliament of Ireland;” and among other things equally strong and just, we find them assert this as their birthright, and which they are determined in every situation to defend and maintain against whatever kind of enemy. When I find this declaration of the Irish parliament, and acquiesced in by the English, that they did come to a final adjustment is obvious; yet the words “a solid, permanent basis,” convey some reflections on the proceedings of the parliament since that period, and it might fairly be supposed, that only its delinquency would have instigated His Majesty’s ministers to adopt a course of conduct, by which, if they succeed in the enterprize, they shall accomplish for ever the subjugation of Ireland, and the slavery of its inhabitants. But, Sir, I must think the people in that country, who really cherish a love of rational liberty, who have dwelt with delight on the recollection of that, till now, auspicious period, when independence came upon them as it were by surprize, when the Genius of Freedom rested upon their island – the whole people, in short, will come to this second adjustment with a temper which I am afraid, Sir, will augur not tranquillity but disquietude; not prosperity but calamity; not the suppression of treason but the extension and increase of plots to multiply and ensanguine its horrors . . .

I feel that to be silent on the present occasion were to act from terror in a way unworthy of the majesty of truth; unbecoming a man enamored of free discussion; unlike the friend and supporter of general liberty, I cannot do this. My country has claims upon me which I am not more proud to acknowledge than ready to liquidate, to the full measure of my ability. Is there any man who can wish to do less – or have the whole system of human connection and the economy of human passions been changed and perverted with those changes in the political world, from which some derive rank and emolument by the prostitution of integrity and all the virtues? But, Sir, there was a time when I should have been told that to agitate any question in this house relative to the affairs of Ireland, were to retrench upon the rights of the Irish parliament. That the independence of one legislature was not to be infringed upon by the discussion of questions which belonged to it exclusively to discuss upon and decide. That we could not agitate the affairs of Ireland in any manner without grossly insulting the dignity, and making a question of the constitutional competence of the parliament of that country to legislate for themselves. That, in short, it would be to arouse and inflame that quick spirit of independence, which the sister kingdom knew how to express, and had ever appeared both able and ready to infuse into a system of ardent, intrepid opposition to every kind of ulterior domination . . . Sir, I can see the possible danger of adding to the discontents of the people of Ireland. An intriguing, ambitious enemy, may take advantage of the crisis, and desperate factious spirits at home may seize upon it as an opportunity favorable to the success of their wild and visionary projects. But these dangers are only to be apprehended from the innovation of the rights of the people of Ireland, as forming an independent

nation; and he who merely seeks to arrest the arm of the invader, to check his spirit of aggression and usurpation, so far from justly incurring reproach, is in fairness entitled to the praise of honorable and virtuous enterprize. I shall speak out manfully on an occasion which eminently invites every friend of constitutional liberty to the utmost exertion of his powers. The present moment is ours, the next may be the enemy's . . .

I do not, Sir, at all doubt that France³ now anxiously looks on, eager to come in for a share of the plunder of the liberties of Ireland. The enemy with whom we have to contend, is as vigilant as dextrous, and it is in the constitution of his system of universal pillage, and the indiscriminate abuse of every maxim of honorable policy, on all occasions to profit by the distresses or agitations of other powers. To invite and encourage France, it was enough that His Majesty's ministers should have brought forward the present measure. There have been nations, who after asserting by their arms their independence, have, by their improvident use of victory, sown the seeds of future degradation and ruin too deep and too diffusive ever to be able again to resist their enemies. So true is it, that external dangers will unite communities, while the moment of triumph ushers in all those recollections of jealousy, of distrust, of uneasiness at the measures of a government or a minister, which had laid dormant in the hour of united exertion . . . Sir, I do say, it is the conduct of ministers towards the Irish nation from which only we can have any reason to apprehend danger. By dividing the native and constitutional defenders of Ireland, they sow among them the seeds of treason, and encourage the attempts of the enemy on that unfortunate country . . . But I do not know how to admit, that not to adopt an Union, were to invite the separation of the two countries by a French force. Nay, my opinion is directly the reverse of this; and I must say, that situated as Ireland is, without having in one instance manifested a wish to unite, but, on the contrary, having unequivocally declared herself hostile to the proposition of a union, that if it be effected, it will be a union accomplished by surprise, fraud, and corruption; and which must place the people of Ireland in a worse situation than they were before. I think there are two propositions which I have now established: the first, that it is decidedly an infraction and violation of her acknowledged right of independent legislation; and second, that union cannot prevent the separation of Ireland from this country by France. The third proposition I have to offer to the consideration of the house is, that it is not possible that, in the present state of Ireland, the people can declare and act upon their genuine sentiments; and let any man who has a head to conceive, and a heart to feel for the miseries of Ireland, put this memorable question to himself – Is it possible that the free, fair, and unbiassed sense of the people of Ireland, can be collected at this time on this question? The English force in that country is at once an answer to this question. I am not to be told, that if even the people should be cheated and tricked into union, and out of independence, it is of no consequence, as the measure is intended solely for their good, and that we ought to adopt it now, and convince them afterwards. This will not be argued by any man; or if it is, let gentlemen look to union under all its circumstances, and strange indeed must be their mode of reasoning, if they do not agree with me, that in the present conjuncture of affairs, union will lead to separate and not to perpetuate the connection . . .

With respect to the enemies of the British government, it had two enemies in Ireland, "Poverty and Ignorance;" and unless it can be shewn that the present

Notes

³ Revolutionary France was a supporter of Irish nationalist aims, and attempted to help the United Irishmen during the

1798 Uprising; France was also at war with Britain (1793–1802).

measure will remove these – will prevent the repetition of those scenes of distress which passed in Ireland when there were in the city of Dublin alone 12,000 labourers, &c. out of employment, living on raspings of bread, or starving with their families – unless these evils can be ameliorated, if not wholly corrected by a Union, I must be unfriendly to the measure. If the people of Ireland be active and industrious in every country but their own, it must be the effect of their government. First remove the causes of their misery, and then invite them, if you will, to a closer union . . .

*Abolition of Slavery (parliamentary speech, March 17, 1807)*¹

Mr. SHERIDAN having anxiously expected that the bill passed the preceding night² was the preamble of the ultimate measure of emancipation, thought that he should be guilty of the grossest inconsistency in giving a silent vote on the present question. With these sentiments he need scarcely say, that the noble earl had his thanks for having directed the attention of the house to this important subject, even at that early period. The noble earl's statement had been misrepresented. He had never proposed to enfranchise the living negroes; his measure, as he understood him, was to commence with infants born after a period, which would remain a matter of future parliamentary discussion. The planters were entitled to fair dealing on this subject. If the house meant to say, that by abolishing the slave trade they had done all that duty demanded, and that they would leave the emancipation of the slaves to the hazard of fortuitous circumstances, let them be explicit, and say so; but if there lurked in any man's mind a secret desire to proceed in that business, a secret conviction that more ought to be done than had been done, it was unmanly, it was dishonorable, not to speak out. For one he would boldly declare that he had further views; he hoped that the young nobleman who had done his feelings so much credit, by the proposition which he had that evening made, would stand to his ground. If he persevered in the pursuit of his object with the same zeal as his right honorable friend opposite had done, he had no doubt that he would meet with the same success. An honorable baronet had talked of a cloven foot; he pleaded guilty to the cloven foot, but he would say that of the man who expressed pleasure at the hope of seeing so large a portion of the human race freed from the shackles of tyranny; it ought rather to be said, that he had displayed the pennon³ of an angel than the cloven foot of a demon. It was true no immediate connection existed between the abolition of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery, but the same feelings must be roused by the consideration of both questions; and he who detested the one practice must also detest the other. He did not like to hear the term property applied to the subjects of a free country. Could man become the property of man? A colony emancipating from the free constitution of England must carry with it the principles of that constitution, and could no more shake off its well known allegiance to the constitution than it could shake off its allegiance to its sovereign. He trusted that the planters might be induced to lead the way on the subject of emancipation; but he cautioned the house against being too sanguine on the subject. Were the planters themselves always resident on the islands, he should have greater hopes; but it was not probable that because cargoes

Notes

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

¹ This is the full text of the speech as it appears in an 1816 edition.

² According to Sheridan's 1816 editor, the bill proposed "the gradual abolition of slavery in the West Indies." Later in

March, the slave trade became illegal under the Abolition Act, but slavery itself continued in British colonies.

³ pinion or part of a wing.

of human misery were no longer to be landed on their shores, that because their eyes were to be no longer glutted with the sight of human suffering, or their ears pierced with the cries of human distraction in any further importation of negroes, that the slave-drivers would soon forget their fixed habits of brutality, and learn to treat the unhappy wretches in their charge with clemency and compassion. Slavery would not wear itself out; it would become more rigid, unless the legislature became more vigilant, and reminded the planters of the new duty that had fallen upon them, of rearing the young slaves in such a manner, that they might be worthy of freedom. Adverting to the quotation from Gibbon, he contended, that the slavery of the West Indies was unlike any other slavery; it was peculiarly unlike the slavery of antient days, when the slaves frequently attained to the highest dignities; Esop, Terence, and Seneca were slaves.⁴ Was there a possibility that any of the unfortunate negroes now in the West Indies should emulate such men? It might be dangerous to give freedom to the slaves in a mass, but that it was not dangerous to give it to them in detail, was sufficiently proved by a little pamphlet that had been put into his hands the preceding night, in which it was stated, that a Mr. David Barclay, to his eternal honor be it spoken, who had himself been a slave-owner in Jamaica, and who, regretting that he had been so, on a bequest of slaves being made to him, emancipated them, caused them to be conveyed to Pennsylvania, where they were properly instructed, and where their subsequent exemplary conduct was the general theme of admiration. With this fact before him, should he be told that he must give up all hope of abolishing slavery! No, he would never give it up. He would exclaim with the poet, in the words of the motto of the pamphlet which he had mentioned,

I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To fan me while I sleep, and tremble when
I wake, for all that human sinews bought
And sold, have ever earn'd.⁵

Mary O'Brien (fl. 1790)

Mary O'Brien's biographical details, like John Leslie's, are lost. The title page to *The Political Monitor* identified her as married to Patrick O'Brien Esq., "author of CHARLES HENLEY." Mary O'Brien is the author of at least three volumes, all of them political and satiric: a seven-canto poem *The Pious Incendiaries: Or, Fanaticism Display'd* (1785), a five-act play

entitled *The Fallen Patriot* (1790), and a collection of verse, *The Political Monitor* (1790). With her attacks on William Pitt, often familiarly called "Billy," and the English national stereotype of John Bull, her use of speakers based on the stock types of "Paddy" and "Teague," and occasional use of Irish idiom, O'Brien's *Political Monitor* provides some early instances of Irish

Notes

⁴ Edward Gibbon (1737–94), English historian and author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–88), often cited for its discussion of slavery in Rome and elsewhere. Aesop, Terence, and Seneca are all classical authors.

⁵ These lines are slightly altered from Book II of *The Task* (1784) by English poet William Cowper (1731–1800).

political verse satire in ballad form during this period; for further examples, see *Paddy's Resource* (below). Her "Ode, For the Prince of Wales's Birth Day" bears comparison to another address to the same Prince of Wales, Moore's

"The Prince's Day" (1811, below). Both poems are plaintive rather than satiric, inviting the Prince, a friend of R. B. Sheridan's, to follow his better nature, and his liberal leanings, in order to lead reform.

Ode, For the Prince of Wales's Birth Day

From The Political Monitor (1790)

Now nature bears imperial sway,
 O'er earth enrob'd profusely gay;
 Her swelling fruits, her golden wheat,
 The joyful rustic's wishes meet,
 Replete with harvest mirth. 5
 Great prince, in midst of all her pride,
 As th' bridegroom ushers in his bride,
 Pomona¹ hails thy birth.

Ambitious of the royal theme,
 Now Fancy seems to rise supreme, 10
 Soaring to heaven's majestic height,
 Gains power prophetic in her flight:
 And now the fair descends
 Freighted with celestial truth,
 Addresses thus the royal youth 15
 While Liberty attends:

"In thee, O prince, we Britons own,
 Those virtues that adorn a throne,
 Bold, gen'rous, gracefully refin'd,
 Mercy and truth united find 20
 A seat within thy breast;
 Judgment superior to thy years
 In wisdom's sable vest appears,
 To blazon round thy crest.

"As autumn gathers in her store 25
 From all seasons gone before;
 Her fruits to full perfection run
 Ripen'd by meridian sun,
 Maturer sweets display,
 So shall the rising hero smile, 30
 In glory on his native isle
 And ripen into day.

Notes

ODE

¹ Roman goddess of gardens and orchards, and particularly fruit.

“Wisdom shall then assume her power,
 And crop the weeds from virtue’s flower,
 While sweet benevolence shall shed
 Her meek-ey’d splendor round his head
 Like rays of blushing morn.
 Justice in her mildest sphere
 Shall govern each succeeding year,
 And all his acts adorn.”

Paddy’s Opinion: An Irish Ballad

From The Political Monitor (1790)

Since your fame, my dear Billy,
 Is burn’d to a snuff,
 And your wisdom looks silly,
 For want of a puff;
 Now, instead of a better,
 Take me for your minion,
 Without law or letter,
 I’ll state my opinion:

And to strengthen my case too,
 Thro’ the maze of my journey,
 By my *shoul* I’ll take Fraud
 To be my Attorney;

And just to a hair too,
 So keen is my wit,
 Without study or reas’ning
 The subject I’ve hit.

Thus stands my brief now,
 Of ev’ry gay light,
 That shines by the day,
 Or burns by the night,

From the bright fiery beam,
 That gilds up your windows,
 To the fat greasy taper,
 That’s burning within doors;

All receive without murmur,
 In humble devotion,
 (Except the late titles
 Made by your promotion,)

Without any cavil,
 The *badge* of taxation,¹

Notes

PADDY’S OPINION

¹ Candles were heavily taxed in this period.

- In compliment civil
It's worn thro' the nation.
- Since then, haughty Sol,²
But darts in his flashes
Thro' the casement, my jewel, 35
Of your silver sashes:
- Ergo, the argument
Sure will hold good,
All light, my dear joy,
Of coal, grease, or wood, 40
- From hay or from straw,
From rush or from thatch;
Or spark that rekindles
The sulphur of match,
- Or vapour that tends 45
By its lights to illumine
A crevice or cobweb,
That hangs in a room.
- For light is a Critic
No Premier can shun; 50
Your wit shines the brighter
By taxing the sun.
- Arrah, who then can blame you,
By way of a joke,
To tax, without scruple, 55
Tobacco and smoke.
- But beware now, dear *crature*,
Since wisdom may fail ye,
To smoke out our brains,
In the land of Shillelah; 60
- Lest Hibernia's high notions
To anger should rise,
And smoke out your taxes,
And blast your excise.
- Arrah, then, my dear Billy, 65
It might prove in the pull,
Paddy's not quite so silly
As your Jacky Bull.

Notes

² the sun

James Porter (1752–1798)

James Porter was born in Co. Donegal, the son of a farmer. After a few years as a schoolmaster in Co. Down, he went to Glasgow to study to become a Presbyterian minister. He began working as a minister in Greyabbey, Co. Down, in 1787. Porter was on the periphery of the nationalist movement in Ireland, joining the Irish Volunteers and then, as nationalist activity intensified in the early 1790s, becoming a regular contributor to the United Irishmen newspaper, *The Northern Star*, published in Belfast from 1792 to 1797. Porter's contributions included a number of songs and a series of satiric letters, *Billy Bluff* and *'Squire Firebrand* (1796). He also published further public, political letters, addressed to the Marquess of Downshire, and a sermon, *Wind and Weather* (1797), on the storm that prevented the landing of the French fleet in support of Irish independence. Whether because of *Billy Bluff* or more personal conflicts, Porter clearly had powerful enemies among the ruling regime. After the Uprising began, orders for his arrest were promptly distributed, and he was subsequently convicted on the uncorroborated testimony of a paid informer who asserted that Porter had illegally taken and read aloud the contents of a military note. Porter was sentenced to be hanged and quartered, though apparently his wife managed to solicit some mercy for her husband and he was not quartered.

Billy Bluff was popular in its day and for decades after. It appeared first as a series of letters in *The Northern Star* between May and December 1796. Nancy Curtin (see Further

reading below) notes that the United Irishmen collected the letters as a pamphlet and published "3,000 copies for free distribution among the peasantry" (185). The satire is a pointed response to the turmoil of the mid-1790s, mocking particular political figures of the day while disseminating the key principles of the United Irishmen. But it also aims its barbs more broadly at leaders who see, and strike out at, conspiracy everywhere, sowing distrust and perpetuating the very problems they fear. The old man's vision in Billy's dream, for instance, is straightforward national allegory which counters the Squire's paranoid fears of conspiracy. The satire also offers a detailed view of a standard villain in Irish literature of this period – the informer. See, for instance, Boucicault's *Arrah-na-Pogue* (below) for one of Billy's Victorian counterparts.

The first three letters are given here from the 1812 edition, as it has fewer typographical errors than the 1797 Belfast edition with which it is, apart from some punctuation changes, substantively identical.

Further reading

Curtin, Nancy, *The United Irishmen: Popular Politics in Ulster and Dublin, 1791–1798*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Thuente, Mary Helen, *The Harp Re-strung: The United Irishmen and the Rise of Literary Nationalism*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994.

Wright, Julia M., "Courting Public Opinion: Handling Informers in the 1790s," *Éire-Ireland* 33 (1997–8): 144–69.

From *Billy Bluff* and *'Squire Firebrand: Or, A Sample of the Times* (1796)

Northern Star, May 21, 1796

By your leave Mr. Editor – if you please, a corner in your paper for this my letter, the first that ever I wrote for print, and probably will be the last. I am in danger of being

hanged or put in gaol, perhaps both. I want your advice like an honest man. God help us, what is the world coming to at last? I'll tell you the whole affair, and the cause of it. – Billy Bluff, my neighbour, was up yesterday at the 'Squire's, with his duty hens. "Well, Billy, what news," says the 'Squire. Troth, sir, plenty of news, but none very good, says Billy. "What's your neighbour R— (meaning me) about now?" Why, please your honour, he's at the old cut; railing against the war, against the tythes, and against game laws, and he's still reading at the newspapers. "He is a d—n'd villain, and must be laid fast, by G—d; but what more do you know of him, Billy?" Why, bad enough, an' please your honour. Him and the Popish Priest drank together last market-day, till all was blue again with them; they shaked hands, so they did, drank toasts and sung songs. "Pretty work, by h—ns! did you over-hear them?" Ah, that I did so, and listened like a pig. "What were the toasts?" First, the Priest drank, *Prosperity to old Ireland*, and – "Stop, Billy! the toast is infamous; the world *Old* never was, and never ought to be applied to any country but England; and he who would apply it to Ireland is a rebel, and ought to be hanged." He ought, an' please your honour, as round as a hoop. "Well, what toast did the villain R— drink?" He drank, *Union and Peace to the People of Ireland*. "Worse and worse, Billy; a d—n'd deal worse: he who wishes union, wishes ruin to the country; I say ruin to the government, and that is ruin to the country. Union, forsooth! that is what never was, and what never must prevail in this country; and as to peace, 'tis flying in the face of government to speak of it; the d—l send the ruffians peace, till their betters chuse to give it to them."

Then, Sir, the Priest drank, here's *Every man his own road to Heaven*. "That, Billy, is a toast that no man would drink, but a Republican and a Sinner; for it supposes all men to be on an equality before God, and supposes that a man may go to heaven, without being of the established church, which is impossible." God bless your honour, I know that, and that is the reason I turned to church.

Then the toast R— gave, was *Liberty to those who dare contend for it*. "Impudent scoundrel! the signal of rebellion, anarchy, and confusion: to contend implies opposition; opposition implies resistance; resistance implies war: war against the established orders; war against man and the godhead, as the great Grattan expressed it; but tell me, what other toasts did they drink?" Several that I can't just mind now. "Did they drink success to the French?" No, an' please your honour, but they drank success to the righteous. "That's near as bad – did they drink *no more Kings*?" They did, and shook hands upon it: my neighbour R— gave that toast, no more Kings, said he, no more Kings – to France. "To France, Billy, the villains had another meaning; aye, aye, they had another meaning. I know what the hypocritical villains meant, I know it perfectly; d—mn—n to my s—l but they shall both be hanged." Certainly, please your honour, and the sooner the better. "What songs did they sing?" Why the Priest sang, *Patrick's Day in the Morning*, and then R— sang, *Paddy Thwack*, then the Priest sang, *Grawny Wail*, and then R— sang, *O for a Union of Parties*. "D—n Union, and d—n Grawny Wail, and Paddy Thwack, and Patrick's Day in the Morning; they are all impudent national seditious songs: what more did you hear?" Please your honour, after the songs they began to talk about religion, and so I came off and left them.

"You have done very well, Billy, very well; go to the kitchen, and I'll order you a drink of small beer: See and get me more news, and I'll give you a job at the roads next summer." G—d prosper your honour. "But, Billy, you'll take care and be ready to swear when called on." Egad a pretty story, an' please your honour, if I could not swear what I would say, or what your honour would please.

Now, Mr. Editor, all this I had from the Butler, who is an honest fellow, though a Catholic: he told me through friendship to the Priest, for fear of the worst, as he called it. And, although Bluff told some truth, he did not tell all the truth, for we drank

several loyal toasts – we drank the *King*, *Mr. Pitt*, *the Lord of the Manor*, and many others, and we sung several good loyal songs. But the religious conversation is what I must tell you myself. When we got a glass I thought of touching the Priest upon points: We had a tolerable bout on't; he made use of several hard words, not one of them did I understand, nor do I remember any of them but two, because he came over those two more than twenty times. What is the best religion, said I, *Bonus Homo*, said he; – What is your creed, said I, *Bonus Homo* said he again; – What is it to be one of the *elect*, said I, *Bonus Homo*, said he; – What is your opinion of the Pope, said I, can he send any body he pleases to Heaven; he neither can nor will, said he, send any body to Heaven but a *Bonus Homo*. O! then, said I, *Bonus Homo* means Popery, I suppose. He smiled and said, it means just *Bonus Homo*, and neither more nor less!

Off went I next day to our Minister, told him all the conversation, and how much I was puzzled about *Bonus Homo*. He said that the Priest was right in every thing he said, except that the creed was too short, quite too short to be adopted in any Christian country. Well, but if you please, what is the plain meaning of *Bonus Homo*? “Why the literal meaning of *Bonus Homo*, is a *Good Man*.” Ma-sha, fol-de-lol, said I, with a caper, if that be the case, *we are all one in the Latin*. So, Mr. Editor, good bye to you, *Bonus Homo* is the creed for me.

A PRESBYTERIAN.

N.B. Tell me whether you think I will be prosecuted for the company I kept with the Priest.

P.S. The 'Squire observed to Bluff, that the SHAKING HANDS between me and the priest was worse than all the rest put together.

Northern Star, July 18, 1796

Billy Bluff has been at the 'SQUIRE again, Mr. Editor, of which I wish to give you notice as formerly.

“Well, Billy, where's the list of what I gave you to spy out for me?” Here it is, an' please your honour – “Let me see; aye, well: –

1st, *To find out all in the parish who have not registered their arms.*

2d, *To find out how many United Irishmen there are in Ireland.*

3d, *To find out what those people say who will not register their freeholds.*

4th, *To find out the United Irishmen's word and sign.*

5th, *To find out what songs the people sing.*

6th, *To watch if R— and the Priest drink together at any time.*

7th, *To put notices on the Chapel, Church, and Meeting-house.*

“Well, have you managed all completely?” Egad, your honour, gif I have not done all like an *honest* man, never employ me again.

“Let us go through in order, Billy: –

“How many have not registered their arms?” Does your honour wish for the truth fairly? “To be sure I do, and be d—n'd to you for a fool; what did I send you through the parish for, these four weeks?” Why, then, there are just 41. “What reason do they give?” They say it's all a piece of stuff, and only to make them and the Catholics fall out, and that they have been too long at that already, and that they are getting more wit, and that – “Stop, Billy, enough, enough; we'll set out the search on Saturday; I'll secure both the scoundrels and their arms, I'll warrant you, by H—ns I will. Do you know them all?” Your honour, here's the list. “Very good. Have you found out how many United Irishmen are in Ireland?” I have, your honour, to a fraction. “But how?” Ah! let me alone at a push. I went, d'you see, to little Diagram the School-master,

he's the man, your honour knows, can tell things that nobody else can; I gave him half-a-pint, and promised him half-a-guinea; he instantly fell to work; he cast a horrid scope,¹ counted the Planets, and found the nativity of every man of them, to the number of, of, of; there it is, in black and white. "Let me see; units, tens, hundreds, thousands, millions, hundreds of millions. – Why he must be wrong, all wrong – this is 150,000,000." Aye, that's the very thing exactly. O! gif I could read figures, like your honour. "Why, you booby, he's a fool or a knave; there's not half that number of people in the whole world." For certain then he must be wrong, as your honour says. – O, what it is to have learning!

He told me he saw two men in it as old as Mathusalem. "He saw two devils as old as Mathusalem. I can't like that fellow since I got old M. hanged by his surmises, especially when I learnt last assizes that the poor deveil was perfectly innocent. But 'tis no great matter, Billy, one life is no great thing now-a-days. Now let me hear all you have heard against registering freeholds?" Why, an' please your honour, R. is the worst in the parish about that, and is filling their head full of notions, and setting them all a thinking. "D—n thinking, Billy, 'tis putting the world mad: O! what a happy country we had before men turned their thoughts to thinking: Catholics thought of nothing but just getting leave to live, and working for their meat: Presbyterians thought of nothing but wrangling about religion, and grumbling about tythes; and Protestants thought of nothing but doing and saying what their betters bid them: and the Gentlemen thought of nothing but drinking, hunting, and the game laws. O! how times are changed, and all for the worse. Your Catholic College – your Catholic Schools – your Catholic Emancipation – your Sunday Schools – your Charter Schools – your Book Societies – your Pamphlets and your Books; and your one h—I or another, are all turning the people's heads, and setting them a thinking about this, that and t'other. O! in my father's days, there was none of this work. No, no. He would put a fellow in jail, or in the stocks, just when he pleased – nobody said it was wrong. He would horse-whip a tradesman when he presented his bill – nobody said it was wrong. He would fancy a tenant's daughter – nobody said it was wrong. He shot dogs for barking; imprisoned Catholics for keeping arms in their houses; fined Quakers for not paying tythes; got a Presbyterian assassinated for voting against him at the Vestry; and kept a Farmer's Son in prison till he died for shooting a Partridge – nobody said – nobody dared to say this was wrong. But now, the impudence and conceit of the world is not to be borne. They think, and talk, and grumble, and prate, whenever they are offended. Go to H—I, you scoundrel, said I, yesterday to the Taylor, when I had no money to give him. The fellow had the impudence to look me straight in the face. 'I am no scoundrel, said he, and H—ll is a place for my betters.' Now, can flesh and blood bear such audacity? By H—ns I saw the day that I could have had interest enough with the Judge and Jury for to have got him hanged for a less fault." E'dad, it was a great impudence to a man like your honour, to be sure. "That it was, Billy: but go on with their talk about registering their freeholds."² I can't tell your honour the half of it: One says, 'tis all nonsense and folly; another says, we have been too long dupes and fools, but we are getting more wit; another says, can't they great folks buy us from our landlords *by the lump*, and not drive us to the market like swine; another says, there is more sin committed at every general election, than seven years prayers would atone for; another says, how can the Gentlemen expect that the country would thrive, when they sell their tenants – sell

Notes

FROM BILLY BLUFF

¹ horoscope

² The registry of freeholds was a voters' list, and included those who owned land worth 40 shillings or more.

themselves – encourage perjury – and share in the spoils of corruption? But, your honour, my neighbour R— is worse than them all. “I don’t doubt the villain. Let me hear what he says, Billy.”

“’Tis all humbug on the country, says he; there’s no fair play, *in* the parliament nor *out* of it. Squabbling in counties may serve the ambition of private families, but can do nothing for the nation at large; boroughs can bear the sway at any rate, even if we had honest men. But, says he, we have very few of them; our professed patriots, when once in, are all knaves, and the old knaves are every year growing worse; they tell lies and are not ashamed of it; they laugh in your faces if you talk of honour or truth – they say nobody but fools would look for any such thing from parliament-men. Then what mockery are elections, said he, I’ll never disgrace myself or my country by going near one of them. Then, your honour, he fell on Mr. Pitt, and railed for a quarter of an hour. Your namesake³ on the other side of the water, deserves a halter, said he – for what, said I – for all the mischief he has done. He has nothing in his mind but corruption; nothing in his tongue, but hypocrisy, and nothing at his heart but blood. His eloquence has deceived himself and his adherents – his plans have all failed – his country is nearly ruined, and for my part, I would vote for the devil sooner than for any man that would support him in his projects of ambition and wickedness.” Then he fell on the Empress of Russia, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of Germany,⁴ the – “Stop, Billy, stop, I have heard too much: I have heard too much. O! what will the world come to, when such villains get leave to talk at this rate? But I’ll form a plan to have him taken off, I’ll warrant you.” – Then your honour, some say, we have been twice registered already; others say, we have been three times registered; and others we have been four times. “The vagabonds! What is it to them how often they have registered; it is the last time only that is good in law. You have registered, Billy.” Gif your honour would not take it ill I would just mention that I am four times registered already; I voted three different days for your honour’s friend at the last election, and your honour knows that I have never got my lease yet.⁵ “Now, what a booby you are, to talk of such things when I have so much on hand; what matters it when you get your lease; ’tis ready for signing. I’ll deceive no man who does all I bid him.” – Then, e’dad, I’ll never be deceived.

“Well, go directly and register.” Your honour knows I never stood your word, I’ll do it to-morrow. “That’s right. O! if my tenants were all like you I would be a happy man; if the King’s subjects were all like you he would be a happy King; if the world were all like you, it would be a happy world. Now, Billy, we are come to the word and sign; that’s the point, that’s the secret; have you found out the real *word* and the real *sign* of the United Irishmen.” That I have, your honour, to a shaving. – “Well, the word first, Billy, let’s have the word first.” – ’Tis a short word, an’ please your honour, but has great meaning in it, as I do suppose. “Let’s have it, man, quickly!”

The word is, UP. “UP, Billy! – Stop; now I’ll make English of it, I would not turn my back on any man at riddles or conndrums; first, U. that means unit – that’s one – P. people – that is, the People is one.” E’gad, an’ please your honour, I’ll swear that is the very thing. “But let’s try again, Billy: U. stands for Up – P. stands for Pretender – that is, up with the Pretender – Treason, Billy.” That’s it, your honour, I’ll take my

Notes

³ William Pitt, prime minister of Britain, sometimes called “Billy” in *Northern Star* publications.

⁴ Catherine the Great (Russia), Frederick William II (Prussia), and Francis II, ruler of the Holy Roman Empire which then included much of Germany.

⁵ Billy is registered as a freeholder even though he does not have the land; the Squire, in effect, has created Billy’s vote for his own use. Since the property requirements kept voters’ lists small and voting did not yet use secret ballots, such practices made it possible to control elections.

oath of it – “But, let’s try again, Billy – the Pretender is dead, that won’t do. U. stands for Union, P. stands for Power – no, for Presbyterian – no, for Protestant – no, for Papist, Papist – Union with the Papists – now, I have it, Billy, as clear as the Sun.” Huzza, your honour – huzza, your honour – huzza, your honour!!

Northern Star, August 15, 1796

O, your honour for discovering every thing that no body else could understand. “Now, Billy, we clearly understand the United Irishmen’s word, have you got the sign?” Providence threw that in my way, your honour, by mere chance: there it is, arms across, just like an X. “Arms across just like an X. Let me see, X stands for ten – ten, that is tythe; now X is a cross, that is cross out the tythes:⁶ more wickedness, Billy: how could man’s salvation be secured without tythes. Bend your right arm, that’s V, that’s five, bend your other arm, another five; now, five and five are ten, that’s X, or two V’s joined together – now, 5 is the five points of knavery: I never had a schoolfellow could play that game with me; then ten, or X, is a double game. What think you of that, Billy?” Lord, your honour’s learning is far beyond me. “Aye, aye, ’tis ease getting at the bottom of things, if people would take pains and have penetration. But I still think, Billy, it must have some French meaning in it: let us try – I have it! Lord, man, I have it, ten means Decade, the French Decade.” Heavens! your honour, is the French *decayed*? I’ll go mad with joy: O, as I’ll laugh at R.; O, I’ll crow over all the parish, O! O! “Hold, Billy, you have no learning, you have no understanding; pay more respect to your betters before you go mad.” Your honour’s pleasure for me. “Then the word is Decade, and not decayed as you foolishly imagine.” Then, your honour, what does Decade mean? “Some damn’d contrivance of the republican scoundrels the French, by which they squeeze ten days into seven, and instead of 52 weeks, have nothing but 36 weeks and a half in the year, so that a man is as near his latter end at 40 years of age in France, as at 60 in any other country. Lord, Billy, if I had lived in France, I would have been dead long ago.” God forbid, your honour, I hope your honour has more compassion on the good of your country than to die this 100 years to come. Lord protect you from all your enemies. “Thank you, Billy, thank you, I’ll reward you for your kindness.”

“But tell me, man, how came you by so much knowledge?” Your honour, I made trial as you desired me, to have myself made a *United Irishman*. I applied to every body I could think of for 5 days running; some said one thing, and some said another, but nobody would give me the oath. Don’t be afraid, said I, *I am as honest as steel; I never deceived any man; I can keep a secret; I would die by my word if ever I said it, to the last drop.* “Well said, Billy.” But all would not do till I went to the boys of G—; they bid me meet them last Wednesday night at T— R—’s big barn; when I went there, in comes four men, I never saw before, with a candle. They shook my hand, and says, so you wish to be an *United Irishman*? Yes, says I. They then laid a long ladder to a beam that went across the barn: one of them went up and came down. UB, says one; UB, says another; UB, said they all; that’s the way I learned the word. “Very well, Billy, very well, go on.”

O! your honour, I tremble to tell you the rest. As I went up, one of them followed, and at the top he pulled a rope out of his pocket. Friend, says he, if you can – “Zounds, Billy, going to hang you.” Down I jumped, your honour, dropped on my bended

Notes

⁶ Tithes were required to be paid to the Church of Ireland, regardless of religion, creating resentment among

Dissenters (such as Presbyterians and Quakers) as well as Catholics.

knees, screamed, and cried murder, murder – I am no spy, gentlemen, I will swear I am no spy, *but as honest as steel; never deceived any man; can keep a secret; I would die by my word, if ever I said it, to the last drop.* – “L—d, Billy, how did you escape.” One of them gave me a kick on the backside. Out, says he, you scoundrel. Two of them put their arms across, clinched each other, and made a kind of carriage, over which I was thrown like a bag of bran. When they crossed their arms, I knew that it was their sign, for they understood each other directly. I was carried to the bottom of a garden – it was midnight, and as dark as pitch. Can you dig any, says one, putting a spade into my hand. A little, said I. Then said they all, fall to and dig a hole, the length and breadth of your own dear self. “H—v—nly G—d, Billy, going to bury you alive.” O, your honour, my knees smote against each other – my hat stood seven inches above my head, on the top of my hair – the spade fell from my hand – my breeches went all wrong – my heart plumped down to the bottom of my belly, like a black pudding in a broth pot, and I tumbled down as dead as a door nail. “I hope matters are at the worst – Zounds, what became of you afterwards?” Then I fell into a trance for 4 hours, for it was just day light as I awoke; they were all fled, and I never saw them more: but O, your honour, if you knew all I heard in my trance, you would think it stranger than any thing in all the world. “Let’s hear, Billy.” O! no tongue could tell; but for an ignorant man, like me, who is no scholar, to begin to it would be an arrant sin. “Well, well, Billy, you must give it me as well as you can.” I thought a man with grey hairs and pretty countenance, well dressed in fine clothes, took me by the arm and said, if I would harken to him, he would tell me wonderful things. I told him I would be glad to get news, and would listen with all my might. We sat down and he began. As I came hither, said he, I was taken up by some unknown being, and carried through the air a long way, till at length I was let down on the ground; it was dark, very dark: after some time, a light began gradually to appear, not from the *East*, but from the *West*.⁷ O! said I to myself, but this is strange – as the light became stronger, I could perceive nothing but a wide, wide extended plain: when the light grew still something stronger, I could perceive a beautiful green hill in the middle of the plain, when it grew bright as day: crowds of people, from all parts, appeared to walk into the plain towards the hill – I conversed with severals – some of them could speak English only, others could speak only in the Irish dialect, but the greatest number could speak both English and Irish.⁸ They told me that the town that I saw at a distance, to the left, was called Athlone, and that the spot on which the hill stood, was the centre of Ireland.

I was all at once almost struck blind with amazement. The sky seemed to open near the western side, out of which came sailing through the air, a beautiful Angel, clad in robes of white: In her left hand she held a large flag, on which I could see written in letters of gold:

“THE GENIUS OF IRELAND.”

In her right hand she held a branch of olive, which she waved round and round, at which all the people seemed filled with joy and began to smile: After hovering a little, she rested on the hill, and sat down on the verdant top that was covered with nothing

Notes

⁷ In *Northern Star* iconography, the east is often associated with Britain and abusive power, and the west with the post-revolutionary United States and political liberty; see William Drennan’s “Erin” (below) for another example.

⁸ Bilingualism was part of the United Irishmen project; they published a guide to the Irish language in 1795 that included material from Brooke’s *Reliques of Irish Poetry*.

but shamrocks. The crowds pressed forward, with their eyes fixed on the Genius; as they approached the base of the hill, the throng became greater; they took each other by the hand and began to ascend. The Genius beckoned with the olive branch, as if inviting them to come forward. They ascended but a little way, when they linked in each other's arms, and the circle narrowing as they proceeded, they pressed closer together and grasped each other around the waist. There seemed to be mixed all ranks, ages and professions. The old and infirm were assisted by the young and vigorous. The weak leaned upon the strong, and the rich smiled upon the poor! While this was going forward, I espied here and there, several stop at the verge of the plain, others in the middle, some halted at the foot of the hill, and several were thrown down who had been a good way up. A vast number of coaches, chariots, phaetons, &c. were driving in promiscuous confusion over the plain; some had lost their drivers, and others their owners, who had flown to join the multitudes that were ascending the hill. But the greater part still retained their ponderous load of the dignitaries of the church, the sages of the law, and the lords of the land; they were flying to the dark clouds that still hung over the East, which had now turned to the colour of clotted blood. Then I immediately saw, issuing from the opening of the sky, from whence the Angel came, a beautiful transparent azure cloud, bordered all round with alternate shades of crimson, white and yellow, which spreading round, involved the whole hill, and hid from my sight the vast multitudes which covered it, and left nothing to be seen, but the face, neck and breast of the beautiful Angel. At that instant the Genius spoke, with a voice exquisitely fine, that ravished my ears: "THERE, *said she*, ARE ALL MY CHILDREN – *This is the HILL of UNION. The result of this meeting will be —*" Then shewing the other side of the FLAG, I perceived in great letters of gold,

"LIBERTY AND PEACE."

The unknown being then carried me away. You are the first person, said he, I have seen, to whom I could tell these wonderful things. He then, your honour, after shewing me a fine painting which he carried along with him, disappeared. Immediately I thought a big black eagle lifted me up in his claws and held me over a deep pit, where a shocking monster with red eyes and long teeth was roaring like thunder, when – O! L—d, your honour, it dropt me into his very mouth! As I fell, I awoke, and saw a big mastiff dog barking within ten yards of me. – Home I ran, half dead with fear, and could hardly believe I was alive for two days afterwards.

"Zounds, Billy, that was a hell of an adventure all over; I don't like that damn'd trance. I'll swear that old grey-headed scoundrel you saw, was an impostor, and an impudent impostor, and told you nothing but a bundle of lies. By heavens, if he could be laid hold of, I would teach him how to circulate such stories, as all descriptions of people linking, and grasping, and uniting on shamrock hills, with the Genius of Ireland in shape of an Angel at their head; pretty stuff to sow sedition among the people. Then his damn'd bloody cloud hanging over the East, and his celestial cloud from the West, is a wicked contrivance. E'gad, 'tis well that part of the Vision is not easily understood. Then the dignitaries of the church, the sages of the law, and the lords of the land, driving there in chariots, coaches, and phaetons, looks as if they wished to hide themselves in darkness and in blood: O! Billy, it was a damnable dream! I should rather that you had slept for ever, than that you awoke to reveal such things." – Sure, your honour knows that the fault was not mine. – "I don't know who the Devil's fault it was, but I am sure he gave you a damn'd false account of the Genius of Ireland. – Had he told you that he saw an old haggard looking witch, with bristly hair and black eyes, spitting fire and brimstone, with a great scourge of snakes

in one hand, and a bunch of worm-wood in the other, he would have told you something like truth; he would have told you what the Irish rabble have seen, and what they deserve. Aye, aye, then you would have seen the emblem of good old times. But the old wizzard was an impostor, Billy.

Paddy's Resource (c.1800)

Paddy's Resource was a popular collection of nationalist ballads, many originally published in United Irishmen newspapers, particularly *The Northern Star*. Published surreptitiously in the late 1790s and early 1800s, there is no standard edition of *Paddy's Resource*; some versions included more lyrics than others, and the selection and sequence of songs varied. Known contributors include John Corry, James Porter, and William Drennan, whose "Erin" also appeared in *Paddy's Resource*. There were strong reasons for the publishers and contributors to remain anonymous: as Gillian O'Brien notes (see Further reading below), the first editor of *The Northern Star* was arrested in September 1796, and his replacements in February 1797; *The Northern Star's* printing presses were destroyed by pro-government militia in May 1797 (11–12, 21).

The ballads in *Paddy's Resource* were often set to traditional tunes and expected to circulate through oral as well as print culture. The lyrics drew on a richly hybridized vocabulary: "Erin"

as an anglicized form of the Irish-Gaelic word for "Ireland" appears along with Irish-language phrases that were translated for English-language readers; "Paddy" and "Teague" as Irish everyman figures appear in some lyrics, while others focus on historical personages; and key texts in radical politics, especially Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man* (1791–2), are frequently invoked alongside specifically Irish geographical, political, and cultural references. Some lyrics, such as "The United Real Reformer," explicitly addressed regional and sectarian divisions.

Further reading

Curtin, Nancy, *The United Irishmen: Popular Politics in Ulster and Dublin, 1791–1798*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

O'Brien, Gillian, "'Spirit, Impartiality, Independence': *The Northern Star, 1792–1797*," *Eighteenth-century Ireland* 13 (1998): 7–23.

Thuente, Mary Helen, *The Harp Re-strung: The United Irishmen and the Rise of Literary Nationalism*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994.

The Exiled Irishman's Lamentation

Tune: "Savourna Deelish"

GREEN were the fields where my forefathers dwelt, O;
 "Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!"¹
 Altho' our farm was small yet comforts we felt O.
 "Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!"
 At length came the day when our lease did expire,

5

Notes

THE EXILED IRISHMAN'S LAMENTATION

¹ Ireland, my darling! for ever adieu! (original).

And fain would I live where before lived my sire; But ah! well-a-day! I was forced to retire. “Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!” Tho’ the laws I obey’d no protection I found, O; “Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!”	10
With what grief I beheld my Cot ² burn’d to the ground, O! “Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!” Forc’d from my home; yea from where I was born, To range the wide world – poor helpless forlorn; I look back with regret – and my heart strings are torn. “Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!”	15
With principles pure, patriotic and firm, “Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!” To my country attached and a friend to reform, “Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!”	20
I supported old <i>Ireland</i> – was ready to die for it; If her foes e’er prevail’d I was well known to sigh for it; But my faith I preserv’d and am now forc’d to fly for it. “Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!”	
In the North I see friends – too long was I blind, O; “Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!” The cobwebs are broken and free is mind, O. “Erin ma vourneen! slan leat go brah!”	25
North and South here’s my hand – East and West here’s my heart, O; Let’s ne’er be divided by any base art, O, But love one another and never more part, O. “Boie yudh ma vourneen! Erin go brah!” ³	30
But hark! I hear sounds and my heart strong is beating, “Boie yudh ma vourneen! Erin go brah!” Frenchmen advancing – tyrants retreating. ⁴ “Boie yudh ma vourneen! Erin go brah!”	35
We have numbers, and numbers do constitute pow’r. Let’s WILL TO BE FREE – and we’re FREE from that hour: Of <i>Hibernia</i> ’s sons – yes – we’ll then be the flower. “Boie yudh ma vourneen! Erin go brah!”	40
Too long have we suffer’d and too long lamented; “Boie yudh ma vourneen! Erin go brah!” By courage undaunted it may be prevented. “Boie yudh ma vourneen! Erin go brah!”	45
No more by oppressors let us be affrighted, But with heart and with hand be firmly UNITED: For by ERIN GO BRAH! – ’tis thus we’ll be righted! “Boie yudh ma vourneen! Erin go brah!”	

Notes

² house

³ *Victory to you my darling! Ireland for ever* (original).

⁴ The French Revolution of 1789, as well as the American Revolution of 1776, were invoked as precedents for

nationalist agitation in 1790s’ Ireland. The United Irishmen cultivated an alliance with revolutionary France.

*The United Real Reformer**Tune: "The Jolly Tinker"*

I am a Patriotic Bard,
 That loves the constitution,
 This long time I have labour'd hard,
 Against each persecution:
 But still in Virtue's path I'll go, 5
 In spite of each alarmer,
 By actions, I intend to shew,
 That I'm a real REFORMER.

The PRESS is my *Artillery*,
 No hireling can debar me, 10
 To rouse each grand *Auxillary*,
 And thus arrange my *Army* –
 I've Reason drawn up in the van,
 And LIBERTY the stormer,
 My centre is the "Rights of Man,"¹ 15
 To prove I'm a REFORMER.

When th' Irish Roman Catholics
 (The Bulwark of the Nation,)
 Were chous'd by ministerial tricks,
 And lost Emancipation:² 20
 Belfast, that's fan'd by freedom's air,
 And soars above all clamours,
 Espous'd their cause, like gay, sincere
 Enlightned real REFORMERS.

How can the Sons of Ireland 25
 Endure this degradation?
 With England we in *Union* stand,
 By scheming machination;
 Our money constantly they squeeze,
 From Artisans and Farmers, 30
 With pain the pride of *Absentees*
 Is view'd by real REFORMERS.

Our rights are thus infring'd by Knaves,
 Who glory in oppression,
 And you all know that to be slaves, 35
 Was always a transgression:
 Ourselves we now should extricate,
 Pure Virtue is our armour,
 Each maid will then aloud repeat –
 "Success to my REFORMER." 40

Notes

THE UNITED REAL REFORMER

¹ English-born Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man* (1791–2).² Catholic Emancipation was included in the United Irishmen platform early in the organization's development.

We should find a stimulation,
 In ev'ry glowing feature,
 Of the amiable creation,
 The grandest work of nature:
 And now to gain the sweet embrace 45
 Of my dear matchless charmer,
 I'll ev'ry danger boldly face,
 And act a real REFORMER.

With every community,
 May HE who made – Unite us! 50
 Thus UP in honest unity,
 No danger can affright us –
 Our motto's "Death" – or – "Liberty,"³
 We'll free the Isle from swarmers,
 Our rights we'll gain – or boldly die 55
 United real REFORMERS.

I'm an United Irishman,
 And ne'er will act contrary,
 In Ninety-two, I join'd that plan,
 Of tyranny being weary; 60
 Old Erin's rights I'll still defend,
 And never will surrender;
 I am its persecuted friend,
 A dauntless bold DEFENDER.

Edward¹

Tune: "When bidden to the Wake or Fair"

What plaintive sounds strike on my ear!
 They're Erin's deep ton'd piteous groans,
 Her harp attun'd to sorrow drear,
 In broken numbers join her moans. 5
 In doleful groups around her stand,
 Her manly sons (her greatest pride,)
 In mourning deep, for by the hand
 Of ruthless villain, EDWARD died.
 Th' assassin horde had him beset,
 As slumb'ring on a bed he lay, 10
 Arise my Lord, *Swan* cries up get,
 My prisoner, you I make this day.
 Unaw'd our gallant CHIEF up steps,
 And in his vengeful hand he takes
 His dagger keen – quite hard it gripes, 15
 Then to the savage crew he speaks.

Notes

³ This may be a reference to American Patrick Henry who declared in 1775: "Give me liberty or give me death."

EDWARD

¹ This poem offers an account of the capture of United Irishmen leader Lord Edward Fitzgerald (son of the duke

of Leinster) by Henry Charles Sirr, Major Swan, and Captain Ryan in May 1798. Fitzgerald seriously wounded two of his captors and was himself injured; he died of his injuries in prison on June 4, 1798.

"Come on who dare – your courage shew,
 'Gainst Erin's steady children's CHIEF,
 Your burthen'd soul at single blow,
 I'll from your body soon relieve." 20
 Fear-stricken at his manly form,
 The blood-stain'd tribe, save *Swan*, back drew;
 Who from our Chieftain's potent arm,
 Receiv'd a stroke that made him rue.

Aloud he shriek'd, then *Ryan* came 25
 Unto his aid with trembling step;
 Mean Caitiff *Ryan*, lost to shame,
 With deeds most foul was full your cup.
 Like vivid light'ning at him flew
 With well-aim'd point, our Hero sweet, 30
 The dastard's blood he forthwith drew,
 And left his bowels at his feet.

So wide the gash, so great the gore,
 That tumbling out his entrails came:
 Poor grov'ling wretch! you'll never more 35
 Attempt to blast unsullied fame;
 A baser death should you await,
 The hangman's rope – not EDWARD's hand,
 The gallows-tree should be your fate,
 Your life deserv'd a shameful end. 40

Next came on *Sirr*, half dead with fear,
 Deep stain'd with crimes his guilty mind,
 He shook all through, (by EDWARD scared,)
 Like Aspin-leaf before the wind;
 With coward step, he advanc'd slow, 45
 Dreading to feel our EDWARD's might,
 Tho' eager for to strike a blow,
 Yet fearful to appear in sight.

Assassin-like, he took his stand,
 Behind the door – and there he stood, 50
 With pistol charg'd, in either hand,
 So great his thirst for EDWARD's blood;
 Upon his brows stood imp of hell,
 Within his heart a Devil foul,
 Dire murder dire, and slaughter fell, 55
 Had full possession of his soul.

His bosom-fiend suggested then,
 A bloody deed – a Devil's act –
 An hell-fram'd thought ***** ARISE YE MEN,
 Revenge, revenge the horrid fact. 60
 Sound, sound aloud the trump of war,
 Proclaim that EDWARD's blood is spill'd!
 By traitor's hand, by coward *Sirr*,
 Revenge! revenge! for EDWARD's kill'd.

William Drennan (1754–1820)

William Drennan was born in Belfast, the son of Presbyterian minister Thomas Drennan. He received his early education from his father and in the school of a local Anglican clergyman. He earned his medical degree in Edinburgh in the 1770s and began work as a physician, moving to Dublin in 1789 where he soon had a successful medical practice. A founding member of the Society of United Irishmen, he was charged with sedition in 1794 for his part in publishing the first proclamation of the Society. He was successfully defended by prominent lawyer and fellow-Unitedman John Philpot Curran and continued to be a leader in the Society until the 1798 Uprising. He returned to Belfast in 1807 and helped to found the Belfast Academical Institution as well as the short-lived *Belfast Monthly Magazine*. By way of preface to reprinting Drennan's "Wake" in 1843, *The Nation* declared: "Of the United Irishmen, none was so popular as William Drennan . . . His song ["Erin"] is one of the finest in the language, and is known everywhere. The following verses ["Wake"] are full of passion – very condensed and terse – the language simple, the imagery sublime."

His first political writings were a series of letters, collected as *Letters of Orellana, an Irish Helot, to the Seven Northern Counties not represented in the National Assembly of Delegates, held at Dublin, October, 1784, for obtaining a more equal representation of the People in the Parliament of Ireland* (1785). He contributed "Erin" to the immensely popular *Paddy's Resource*, and wrote "Wake" to commemorate the death of William Orr, executed, after a dubious trial, for administering the oath of the United Irishmen. After the Uprising, Drennan turned his pen to the debate over the impending Act of Union which would abolish the Irish parliament. He published at least three pamphlets arguing

against the Act, and later collected some of his political poetry and essays under his own name in *Fugitive Pieces in Verse and Prose* (1815). His translation of Sophocles' *Electra* appeared in 1817. Long after his death, many of his poems were republished in *Glendaloch, and Other Poems* (1859), a collection that included verse by his sons.

The importance of "Glendaloch" is signaled by the decision to name the 1859 volume after the poem. There is a substantial tradition of writing about the region, including Thomas Moore's "By That Lake Whose Gloomy Shore" (1811), Dion Boucicault's *Arrah-na-Pogue* (1864), and later works such as Dora Sigerson Shorter's *Legend of Glendalough* (1919). Drennan's poem also bears comparison to John Corry's *The Patriot* (1797) for the mingled associations of Irish history with repeated invasion, a landscape that has become a graveyard, and the ideals of the social affections, liberty, and progress. (Drennan was among Corry's subscribers and so had a copy of *The Patriot*.) Corry's poem, written before the failed 1798 Uprising, is optimistic, however, in imagining the successful defence of Irish liberty, while Drennan's "Glendaloch," which the poet dated 1802 and published as well in *The Poetical Register, and Repository of Fugitive Poetry, for 1804* (London, 1806), reveals a much bleaker perspective.

Further reading

- Larkin, Frances, ed., *The Trial of William Drennan*. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1991.
- Thunette, Mary Helen, *The Harp Re-strung: The United Irishmen and the Rise of Literary Nationalism*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994.
- Vance, Norman, *Irish Literature: A Social History; Tradition, Identity, and Difference*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1990.

*Erin**From Fugitive Pieces in Verse and Prose (1815)*

When Erin first rose from the dark-swelling flood,
 God bless'd the green island, He saw it was good:
 The Emerald of Europe, it sparkled, it shone,
 In the ring of this world the most precious stone!

In her sun, in her soil, in her station, thrice blest, 5
 With back turn'd to Britain, her face to the West,
 Erin stands proudly insular, on her steep shore,
 And strikes her high harp to the ocean's deep roar.

But when its soft tones seem to mourn and to weep,
 The dark chain of silence is cast o'er the deep; 10
 At the thought of the past, tears gush from her eyes,
 And the pulse of the heart makes her white bosom rise. –

“O, sons of green Erin! lament o'er the time
 When religion was – war, and our country – a crime;
 When men, in God's image, inverted his plan, 15
 And moulded their God in the image of man.

When the int'rest of state wrought the general woe;
 The stranger – a friend, and the native – a foe;
 While the mother rejoic'd o'er her children distress'd,
 And clasp'd the invader more close to her breast. 20

When with pale for the body, and pale for the soul,¹
 Church and state join'd in compact to conquer the whole;
 And while Shannon ran red with Milesian blood,
 Ey'd each other askance, and pronounc'd it was good!

By the groans that ascend from your forefathers' grave, 25
 For their country thus left to the brute and the slave,
 Drive the Demon of Bigotry home to his den,
 And where Britain made brutes, now let Erin make men!

Let my sons, like the leaves of their shamrock, unite,
 A partition of sects from one footstalk of right; 30
 Give each his full share of this earth, and yon sky,
 Nor fatten the slave, where the serpent would die!

Alas, for poor Erin! that some still are seen,
 Who would dye the grass red, in their hatred to green!
 Yet, oh! when you're up, and they down, let them live, 35
 Then, yield them that mercy which they did not give.

Notes

ERIN

¹ The word *pale* is Norman-French for fence, and originally referred to the portion of Ireland ruled by the English when Norman-French was the language of the English elite.

Arm of Erin! prove strong; but be gentle as brave,
 And, uplifted to strike, still be ready to save;
 Nor one feeling of vengeance presume to defile
 The cause, or the men, of the EMERALD ISLE.² 40

The cause it is good, and the men they are true;
 And the green shall outlive both the orange and blue;
 And the daughters of Erin her triumph shall share,
 With their full-swelling chest, and their fair-flowing hair.

Their bosoms heave high for the worthy and brave, 45
 But no coward shall rest on that soft swelling wave;
 Men of Erin! awake, and make haste to be blest!
 Rise, arch of the ocean! rise, queen of the West!”

Wake (1797)¹

From Fugitive Pieces in Verse and Prose (1815)

Here, our brother worthy lies,
 Wake not him with women's cries;
 Mourn the way that mankind ought;
 Sit, in silent trance of thought.

Write his merits on your mind, 5
 Morals pure, and manners kind;
 On his head, as on a hill,
 Virtue plac'd her citadel.

Why cut off in palmy youth?
 Truth he spoke, and acted truth; 10
 “Countrymen, Unite!” he cried,
 And died, for what his Saviour died!

God of Peace, and God of Love,
 Let it not thy vengeance move!
 Let it not thy lightnings draw, 15
 A nation guillotined by law!

Hapless nation! rent and torn,
 Early wert thou taught to mourn!
 Warfare of six hundred years!
 Epochs mark'd by blood and tears. 20

Hunted thro' thy native grounds,
 A flung reward to human hounds,

Notes

² In 1815, Drennan added a lengthy note that stakes his claim to coining the phrase *the emerald isle*: “in a party song, written without the rancour of party, in the year 1795. From the frequent use made of the term since that time, he fondly hopes that it will gradually become associated with the name of his country, as descriptive of its prime natural beauty, and its inestimable value.”

WAKE

¹ This poem was published under various titles, including “The Wake of William Orr.”

Each one pull'd, and tore his share,
Emblem of thy deep despair!

Hapless nation, hapless land, 25
Heap of uncementing sand!
Crumbled by a foreign weight,
Or by worse, domestic hate!

God of Mercy, God of Peace,
Make the mad confusion cease! 30
O'er the mental chaos move,
Through it speak the light of love!

Monstrous and unhappy sight!
Brothers' blood will not unite.
Holy oil, and holy water, 35
Mix – and fill the earth with slaughter.

Who is she, with aspect wild? –
The widow'd Mother, with her child;
Child, new stirring in the womb,
Husband, waiting for the tomb. 40

Angel of this holy place!
Calm her soul, and whisper, Peace!
Cord, nor axe, nor guillotine,
Make the sentence, not the sin.

Here we watch our brother's sleep; 45
Watch with us, but do not weep:
Watch with us, thro' dead of night –
But expect the morning light.

Conquer Fortune – persevere –
Lo! it breaks – the morning clear! 50
The chearful cock awakes the skies;
The day is come – Arise, arise!

*Lines, On Some Improvements in the Town of Belfast,
Superintended by the Marchioness of D— —*

From Fugitive Pieces in Verse and Prose (1815)

Dire was the magic, tho' the art was vain,
When Birnam wood march'd forth to Dunsinane.¹
But here delusion seems to cheat the view –
We look again, and find th' enchantment true.
With higher art our fair magician grac'd, 5
Wields at her will the potent spell of taste:
In the charm'd circle where she takes her stand,

Notes

LINES ON SOME IMPROVEMENTS

¹ See Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, especially Act V, scene v.

Ev'n rooted trees obey her beck'ning hand;
 Fast from their forest heights descend in file,
 And, waving, wait the sanction of her smile! 10
 Where the axe fell'd, nor slacken'd in its toil,
 Here a new wood adopts the grateful soil,
 Breathes health and fragrance through the ambient air,
 And makes the town reflect the country fair.
 Then wave again your branches, when you meet 15
 The fair enchantress, with a whisper sweet:
 Let ev'ry fibre strike a firmer root,
 Let the green blood in swifter eddies shoot;
 To shape her name strive ev'ry sportive spray,
 Prepare for her, ye flow'rs, your best bouquet, 20
 And ev'ry leaf announce the radiant MAY!

Glendalloch (1802)

From Fugitive Pieces in Verse and Prose (1815)

Th' enchantment of the place has bound
 All Nature in a sleep profound;
 And silence of the ev'ning hour
 Hangs o'er GLENDALLOCH's hallow'd tow'r;¹
 A mighty grave-stone, set by Time, 5
 That, 'midst these ruins, stands sublime,
 To point the else-forgotten heap,
 Where princes and where prelates sleep;
 Where Tuathal rests th' unnoted head,
 And Kevin finds a softer bed:² 10
 "Sods of the soil" that verdant springs
 Within the sepulchre of kings.
 HERE – in the circling mountain's shade,
 In this vast vault, by Nature made,
 Whose tow'ring roof excludes the skies 15
 With savage Kyle's stupendous size;

Notes

GLENDALLOCH

¹ GLENDALLOCH, or Glyn of the Double Lake, is situated in Wicklow, a County which presents an abridgement of all that is pleasing in Nature. This particular Glyn is surrounded on all sides, except to the East, by stupendous mountains, whose vast perpendicular height throws a gloom on the vale below, well suited to inspire religious dread and horror. It has, therefore, been, from the most distant times, haunted with those spectres of illusive fancy, which delight to hover in the gloom of ignorance and superstition. It is said to have been an asylum of the Druids, who fled from Roman tyranny. It was afterwards the refuge of the Monks, who established there a different religious rule, in which mind and body were bound to the same bondage of five years' silence, severe fasts, obedience unto death; and this lake became their dead sea. Here, however, was the school of the West, an ark that preserved

the remains of literature from the deluge of barbarism which overspread the rest of Europe. Here, the ancient Britons took refuge from the Saxons, and the native Irish from the incursions of the Danes. On the round tower of Glendalloch was often blown the horn of war. Amidst a silent and melancholy waste, it still raises its head above the surrounding fragments, as if moralizing on the ruins of our country, and the wreck of its legislative independence. We think of MARIUS, when he said to his lictor, "Go, and tell that you have seen Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage!" (author). Marius was a general and consul of Rome who, on the losing side of one of Rome's political conflicts, was sentenced to death. Those charged with his execution would not kill the elderly Marius, however, and Marius fled to Carthage, where he was refused entrance and made this remark.

² Tuathal, legendary Irish king; St. Kevin.

While Lugduff heaves his moory height,
 And giant Broccagh bars the light;³
 Here – when the British spirit, broke,
 Had fled from Nero’s iron yoke,⁴ 20
 And sought this dreary dark abode,
 To save their altars and their God,
 From cavern black, with mystic gloom,
 (Cradle of Science, and its tomb,
 Where Magic had its early birth, 25
 Which drew the Sun and Moon to earth,
 From hollow’d rock, and devious cell,
 Where Mystery was fond to dwell,
 And, in the dark and deep profound,
 To keep th’ eternal secret bound, 30
 (Recorded by no written art,
 The deep memorial of the heart,)
 In flowing robe, of spotless white,
 Th’ Arch-Druid issued forth to light;
 Brow-bound with leaf of holy oak, 35
 That never felt the woodman’s stroke.
 Behind his head a crescent shone,
 Like to the new-discover’d moon;
 While, flaming, from his snowy vest,
 The plate of judgment clasp’d his breast. 40
 Around him press’d the illumin’d throng,
 Above him rose the light of song;
 And from the rocks and woods around
 Return’d the fleet-wing’d sons of sound.

“MAKER OF TIME! we mortals wait 45
 To hail thee at thy Eastern gate;
 Where, these huge mountains thrown aside,
 Expands for thee a portal wide.
 Descend upon this altar, plac’d
 Amidst Glendalloch’s awful waste: 50
 So shall the paeon of thy praise
 Arise, to meet thy rising rays,
 From Elephanta’s sculptur’d cave,⁵
 To Eiren, of the Western wave;
 And the rejoicing earth prolong 55
 The orbit of successive song:
 For we by thy reflection shine –
 Who knows our God, becomes divine.

“But ah! what dim and dismal shade
 Casts this strange horror o’er the glade, 60
 Causes e’en hearts of brutes to quake,

Notes

³ Kyle Hill is in Leinster; Lugduff is a mountain in Wicklow, and Broccagh is near Lough Neath in Antrim.

⁴ Nero, first-century Roman emperor. Britain was conquered by Rome (under Claudius) in AD 43, and remained part of the Roman empire until 410.

⁵ The Elephanta Caves are in India; Drennan is charting the movement of the sun (the “maker of time”) from east (India) to west (Ireland).

And shudders o'er the stagnant lake?
 What demon, enemy of good,
 Rolls back on earth this night of blood?
 What dragon, of enormous size,
 Devours thee in thy native skies?
 O, save thy children from his breath,
 From chaos, and eternal death!"

The Druid mark'd the destin'd hour –
 He mounted slow yon sacred tow'r;
 Then stood upon its cap sublime,
 A hoary chronicler of time;
 His head, amidst the deathful gloom,
 Seem'd Hope, new-risen from the tomb;
 And, while he rais'd to Heav'n his hand,
 That minister of high command
 The terrors of the croud repress'd,
 And smooth'd their troubl'd wave to rest –
 Then spoke – and round the pillar'd stone
 Deep silence drank his silver tone.

“He, who, from elemental strife,
 Spoke all these worlds to light and life,
 Who guides them thro' th' abyss above
 In circles of celestial love,
 Has this vast panorame design'd
 A mirror of th' eternal mind.
 To view of superficial eyes,
 In broken points this mirror lies:
 And knowledge, to these points apply'd,
 Are lucid specks of human pride.
 From beams of truth distorted, cross'd,
 The image of our God is lost.
 Those, only those become divine,
 Who can the fractur'd parts combine:
 Nature to them, and them alone,
 Reflects from ev'ry part but ONE;
 Their eagle eye, around them cast,
 Descries the future from the past.
 Justice will not annihilate
 What Goodness did at first create.
 The mirror, sully'd with the breath,
 Suffers slight change – it is not death
 That shadows yon bright orb of day:
 See! while I speak, the orient ray
 Breaks, sudden, thro' the darksome scene,
 And Heav'n regains its blue serene.
 And soon the mild propitious pow'r
 Which consecrates this ev'ning hour,
 Shall bend again her silver bow,
 Again her softer day shall throw,
 Smooth the dark brow of savage Kyle,
 And grim Glendalloch teach to smile.

Now, Druids, hail the joyous light;
Fear God – be bold – and do the right.”

He ceas'd – their chorus, sweet and strong, 115
Roll'd its full stream of sainted song.

“O! fountain of our sacred fire,
To whom our kindred souls aspire,
(Struck from the vast chaotic dark,
As from these flints we strike the spark,) 120
Thou Lord of Life and Light and Joy,
Great to preserve, but not destroy,
On us, thy favor'd offspring, shine!
Who know their God must grow divine.
And when thy radiant course is done, 125
Thou, shadow of another sun,
Shalt fade into his brighter sky,
And time become eternity.”

But past, long past, the DRUID reign;
The CROSS o'ertopt the Pagan fane. 130
To this remote asylum flew
A priesthood of another hue;
More like the raven than the dove,
Tho' murm'ring much of faith and love.

A lazy sullen virtue slept 135
O'er the dull lake: around it crept
The self-tormenting anchorite,
And shunn'd th' approach of cheerful light;
Yet darkly long'd to hoard a name,
And in the cavern grop'd for fame. 140
Where Nature reign'd, in solemn state,
There Superstition chose her seat;
Her vot'ries knew, with subtle art,
Thro' wond'ring eyes to chain the heart;
By terrors of the scene, to draw 145
And tame the savage to their law,
Then seat themselves on Nature's throne,
And make her mighty spell their own.
The charming sorc'ry of the place
Gave Miracle a local grace; 150
And, from the mountain-top sublime,
The Genius of our changeful clime
A sort of pleasing panic threw,
Which felt each passing phantom true.

E'en at a more enlighten'd hour 155
We feel this visionary pow'r;
And, when the meanest of his trade,
The ragged minstrel of the glade,
With air uncouth, and visage pale,
Pours forth the legendary tale, 160
The Genius, from his rock-built pile,

Awful, looks down, and checks our smile.
 We listen – then a pleasing thrill
 Creeps thro' our frame, and charms our will,
 Till, fill'd with forms fantastic, wild, 165
 We feign – and then become the child.

We see the hooded fathers take
 Their silent circuit round the lake:
 Silent – except a wailful song,
 Extorted by the leathern thong. 170

Cronan, Cornloch, Lochaun, Doquain,
 Superiors of the servile train,
 Envelop'd in their cowls, they move,
 And shun the God of Light and Love.

Who leads the black procession on? 175
 St. Keivin's living skeleton,
 That travels through this vale of tears,
 Beneath the yoke of six score years;
 Sustains his step a crozier wand;
 Extended stiff one wither'd hand, 180
 To which the blackbird flew distress'd,
 And found a kind protecting nest;
 There dropt her eggs, while outstretch'd stood
 The hand – till she had hatch'd her brood!

Hark! what a peal, sonorous, clear, 185
 Strikes, from yon tow'r, the tingling ear!
 (No more of fire the worship'd tow'r;
 The holy water quench'd its pow'r.)
 And now, from every floor, a bell
 Tolls Father Martin's funeral knell, 190
 Who slipt his foot on holy ground,
 And plung'd into the lake profound;
 Or, by the load of life oppress'd,
 Sought refuge in its peaceful breast.

What! – Did not, peace-delighted, dwell 195
 The hermit of the mountain cell?

No – 'twas a cage of iron rule,
 Of pride and selfishness the school,
 Of dark desires, and doubts profane,
 And harsh repentings, late, but vain; 200
 To fast – to watch – to scourge – to praise
 The golden legend of their days;
 To idolize a stick or bone,
 And turn the bread of life to stone;
 Till, mock'd and marr'd by miracles, 205
 Great Nature from her laws rebels,
 And man becomes, by monkish art,
 A prodigy – without a heart.
 No friend sincere, no smiling wife,

The blessing and the balm of life; 210
 And Knowledge, by a forg'd decree,
 Still stands an interdicted tree.
 – Majestic tree! that proudly waves
 Thy branching words, thy letter leaves; –
 Whether, with strength that time commands, 215
 An oak of ages, Homer stands,
 Or Milton, high-topt mountain pine,
 Aspiring to the light divine;
 Or laurel of perennial green,
 The Shakespeare⁶ of the living scene, – 220
 Whate'er thy form – in prose sublime,
 Or train'd by art, and prun'd by rhyme,
 All hail, thou priest-forbidden tree!
 For God had bless'd, and made thee free.
 God did the foodful blessing give, 225
 That man might eat of it, and live;
 But they who have usurp'd his throne,
 To keep his Paradise their own,
 Have spread around a demon's breath,
 And nam'd thee Upas, tree of death. 230
 Thy root is Truth, thy stem is Pow'r,
 And Virtue thy consummate flow'r.
 Receive the circling nations' vows,
 And the world's garland deck thy boughs.

From the bleak Scandinavian shore 235
 The DANE his raven standard bore:
 It rose amidst the whit'ning foam,
 When the fierce robber hated home;
 And, as he plough'd the wat'ry way,
 The raven seem'd to scent its prey; 240
 Outstretch'd the gloomy om'nous wing,
 For feast of carnage war must bring.
 'Twas HERE the Christian savage stood,
 To seal his faith in flame and blood.
 The sword of midnight murder fell 245
 On the calm sleeper of the cell.
 Flash'd thro' the trees with horrid glare
 The flames – and poison'd all the air.
 Her song the lark began to raise,
 As she had seen the solar blaze; 250
 But, smote with terrifying sound,
 Forsook the death-polluted ground;
 And never since, these limits near,
 Was heard to hymn her vigil clear.

This periodic ravage fell, 255
 How oft our bloody annals tell!

Notes

⁶ Classical Greek epic poet, Homer, and English authors John Milton (1608–74) and William Shakespeare (1564–1616).

But, ah! how much of woe untold,
 How many groans of young and old,
 Has Hist'ry, in this early age,
 Sunk in the margin of her page, 260
 Which, at the best, but stamps a name
 On vice, and misery, and shame.

Thus flow'd in flames, and blood, and tears,
 A lava of two hundred years;
 And tho' some seeds of science seen, 265
 Shot forth, in heart-enliv'ning green,
 To clothe the gaps of civil strife,
 And smooth a savage-temper'd life,
 Yet soon new torrents black'ning came,
 Wrapt the young growth in rolling flame, 270
 And, as it blasted, left behind
 Dark desolation of the mind.

But now no more the rugged North
 Pours half its population forth;
 Nor more that iron-girded coast 275
 The sheath of many a sworded host,
 That rush'd abroad for bloody spoil,
 Still won on hapless Erin's soil,
 Where Discord wav'd her flaming brand,
 Sure guide to a devoted land; 280
 A land, by fav'ring Nature nurs'd,
 By human fraud and folly curs'd,
 Which never foreign friend shall know,
 While to herself the direst foe!

Is that a friend, who, sword in hand, 285
 Leaps, pond'rous, on the sinking strand,
 Full plum'd, with ANGLO-NORMAN pride –
 The base adult'rer by his side
 Pointing to Leinster's fertile plain,
 Where (wretch!) he thinks once more to reign? 290
 Yes, thou shalt reign, and live to know
 Thy own, amid thy country's woe!
 That country's curse upon thy head,
 Torments thee living, haunts thee dead;
 And, howling thro' the vaults of Time, 295
 E'en now proclaims and damns thy crime:
 Six cen'tries past, her curse still lives,
 Nor yet forgets, nor yet forgives
 DERMOT, who bade the Normans come
 To sack and spoil his native home.⁷ 300

Notes

⁷ In this verse and those following, Drennan refers to Dermot Mac Murchada, king of Leinster, who was deposed amidst various territorial wranglings in Ireland; he went to a former ally, Henry II of England, for help. England invaded

Ireland in support of Dermot in 1169, and then returned in 1171 with a papal bull from Pope Adrian IV (English by birth) granting Henry II sovereignty over Ireland, marking the beginning of English colonialism in Ireland.

Sown by this traitor's bloody hand,
 Dissension rooted in the land;
 Mix'd with the seed of springing years,
 Their hopeful blossoms steep'd in tears –
 And late posterity can tell 305
 The fruitage rotted as it fell.

Then Destiny was heard to wail,
 While on black stone of INISFAIL
 She mark'd this nation's dreadful doom,
 And character'd the woes to come. 310
 Battle, and plague, and famine, plac'd
 The epochs of th' historic waste;
 And, crowning every ill of life,
 Self-conquer'd by domestic strife.

Was this the scheme of mercy, plann'd 315
 In ADRIEN'S heart, thro' HENRY'S hand,
 To draw the savage from his den,
 And train the IRISHRY to men,
 To fertilize the human clay,
 And turn the stubborn soil to day? 320
 No – 'twas two Englishmen, who play'd
 The mast'ry of their sep'rate trade:
 Conquest was then, and ever since,
 The real design of priest and prince;
 And, while his flag the king unfurl'd, 325
 The father of the Christian world
 Bless'd it, and hail'd the hallow'd deed –
 For none but SAVAGES would bleed;
 Yet, when those savages began
 To turn upon their hunter, man – 330
 Rush'd from their forests, to assail
 Th' encroaching circuit of the pale –
 The cause of quarrel still was good;
 The ENEMY must be subdued.

Subdued! The nation still was gor'd 335
 By law more penal than the sword;
 Till Vengeance, with a tiger start,
 Sprang from the covert of the heart.
 Resistance took a blacker name,
 The scaffold's penalty and shame; 340
 There was the wretched REBEL led,
 Uplifted there the TRAITOR'S head.

Still there was hope th' avenging hand
 Of Heav'n would spare a hapless land;
 That days of ruin, havoc, spoil, 345
 Would cease to desolate the soil;
 Justice, tho' late, begin her course,
 – Subdued the lion law of force.
 There was a hope, that, civil hate

No more a policy of state, 350
 Religion not the tool of pow'r,
 Her only office, to adore –
 That Education, *HERE*, might stand,
 The harp of Orpheus⁸ in her hand,
 Of power t'infuse the social charm, 355
 With love of peace and order warm,
 The ruder passions all repress'd,
 And tam'd the tigers of the breast,
 By love of country and of kind,
 And magic of a master mind. 360

As from yon dull and stagnant lake
 The streams begin to live, and take
 Their course thro' Clara's wooded vale,
 Kiss'd by the health-inspiring gale,
 Heedless of wealth their banks may hold, 365
 They glide, neglectful of the gold,
 Yet seem to hope a Shakespeare's name
 To give *our* Avon deathless fame;
 So, from the savage barren heart,
 The streams of science and of art 370
 May spread their soft refreshing green,
 To vivify the moral scene.

O, vanish'd hope! – O, transient boast!
 O *COUNTRY*, gain'd but to be lost!
 Gain'd by a nation, rais'd, inspir'd, 375
 By eloquence and virtue fir'd,
 By trans-atlantic glory stung,
 By *GRATTAN*'s energetic tongue,⁹
 By Parliament that felt its trust,
 By Britain – terrify'd, and just. 380
 Lost – by thy chosen children sold;
 And conquer'd – not by steel, but gold:
 Lost – by a low and servile great,
 Who smile upon their country's fate,
 Crouching to gain the public choice, 385
 And sell it by their venal voice.
 Lost – to the world and future fame,
 Remember'd only in a name,
Once in the courts of Europe known
 To claim a self-dependent throne. 390
 Thy ancient records torn, and tost
 Upon the waves that beat thy coast;
 The mock'ry of a mongrel race,
 Sordid, illiterate, and base.

Notes

⁸ Mythical musician (Greek) who could tame animals with his music.

⁹ Henry Grattan, member of the Irish parliament, whose oratory helped secure some restoration of power to the Irish parliament in 1782 (see R. B. Sheridan's "Union of Ireland with Great Britain" above).

To science lost, and letter'd truth; 395
 The genius of thy native youth,
 To Cam or Isis glad to roam,¹⁰
 Nor keep a heart or hope for home:
 Thy spark of independence dead;
 Thy life of life, thy freedom, fled. 400

Where shall her sad remains be laid?
 Where invoke her solemn shade?

HERE be the mausoléum plac'd,
 In this vast vault, this silent waste; –
 Yon mould'ring pillar, 'midst the gloom, 405
 Finger of Time! shall point her tomb;
 While silence of the ev'ning hour
 Hangs o'er Glendaloch's ruin'd tow'r.

Mary Leadbeater (1758–1826)

Mary Leadbeater was born in Co. Kildare to the Quaker Shackleton family who ran a school there; her father, Richard Shackleton, attended the school at the same time as Edmund Burke, and subsequently ran the school. She lived in Ballitore her whole life, marrying William Leadbeater, a local farmer, in 1791, but she was an active letter-writer, corresponding with many of the leading authors of her day, including Edmund Burke and Maria Edgeworth. Like Edgeworth, she often wrote didactic literature which promoted domestic and religious virtues.

She published *Extracts and Original Anecdotes; For the Improvement of Youth* anonymously in 1794; a mix of short poems and prose pieces, many on biblical subjects and moral themes, this volume also included material on the history of the Quaker community and a number of short pieces opposed to slavery. The authorship of the pieces is often uncertain; the "extracts" of the title as well as the wording of

some of the pieces suggest that she is anthologizing edifying passages from other works. (There is no preface or editorial apparatus to identify her sources.) All of the selections here are from the final section, "Poetry," which appears to be her own work. Her next volume, *Poems* (1808), shares a number of themes with *Extracts*, but is more sophisticated in its versification than the earlier poems, although part of the difference may be due to the fact that *Extracts* was a book for young readers and *Poems* was not.

Leadbeater was also an early and significant contributor to what became a substantial nineteenth-century genre – writing on Irish rural life – though her aims were more pedagogical than ethnographic. Her writing in this vein began with the first and second series of *Cottage Dialogues among the Irish Peasantry* (1811, 1813), composed of brief dialogues, many on such moral themes as "Fidelity," "Cruelty (Wanton)," and "Snuff-taking." She then

Notes

¹⁰ The universities of Cambridge (on the river Cam) and Oxford (on a section of the Thames known as the Isis).

published *The Landlord's Friend* (1813), *Tales for Cottagers* (with Elizabeth Shackleton, 1814), and *Cottage Biography* (1822). Her other works included *The Pedlars: A Tale* (1824) and the posthumous publication of her account of local Ballitore history from 1766 to 1823 as *The Leadbeater Papers* (1862), a crucial work of local history that includes accounts of the 1798 Uprising.

Further reading

Gandy, Clara, "The Condition and Character of the Irish Peasantry as Seen in the *Annals* and *Cottage Dialogues* of Mary Leadbeater," *Women and Literature* 3 (1975): 28–38.

Rodgers, Nini, "Two Quakers and a Utilitarian: The Reaction of Three Irish Women Writers to the Problem of Slavery, 1789–1807," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 100 (2000): 137–57.

On Youth, Beauty, Wealth and Virtue (Address to a Child)

From Extracts and Original Anecdotes (1794)

Blossom of the opening spring,
Gentle Fair, one, hear me sing.
Youth's jocund, and blithe, and gay
Youth is fleet, and melts away.
Beauty's lovely, fragrant, fair: 5
Beauty was, and is not there.
Wealth's a glittering, pleasing toy:
Wealth's a fleeting, fading joy.
Virtue learn, be early wise;
Virtue only mounts the skies. 10

Divine Odes

From Extracts and Original Anecdotes (1794)

I. Supplication

When I survey the bright design
Of Heaven, in forming Man,
My labouring thoughts revere the cause,
Whence all effects began.
With silence oft and rising awe 5
I run the system o'er,
Unfit to write, unfit to speak,
Unworthy to adore.
Yet, Lord, to one that's weak and poor
A little light bestow, 10
Then will my soul with humble joy
To thee in praises flow.
And as the Sun diffuses light
Through blue immensity,

The love that now my bosom feels
Must surely flow from thee. 15

Though we the steeps of science scale,
To pleasure's fane descend,
All these and each terrestrial walk
With disappointments end. 20

But if according to thy will,
To know ourselves we seek,
Ourselves *thus* known, is knowing thee
Then knowledge is complete.

Thou by thy solemn, lasting word, 25
Thyself for ever binds',
That these thoul't teach, who wait thy will,
With pure and lowly minds.

Nor deem the attestation vain,
If thus my tongue declare 30
In feeble, broken, tender'd plight,
My God, I've felt thy care.

Then give me strength to carry on
What's oft and oft begun,
Give me still more and more to know 35
The mission of thy Son.

For oft with deep concern I fear
In speculative light;
The lowly Lord I but behold –
O help my feeble sight. 40

And oft I've thought with fervent mind
To make a league with thee
Still to obey – but, ah! I fear
My incapacity.

And he that violates his vows 45
With God, or man, must fall –
Oh make thy grace arise in me
Triumphant over all.

Thou knowest when pleasure oft has swell'd
My high-elated heart, 50
A secret sigh has stole to thee
Still to retain a part.

And well thou know'st, Supreme and Wise,
In all the gloom of thought,
My soul in weak humility 55
Thy comfort oft has sought.

Thus still when on the tide of joy,
I roll with prosperous gales,
Give me a sense of human want,
To curb the flowing sails. 60

And when amid the storm of life,
 My shatter'd bark is tost,
 Give me the anchor of thy hope
 To gain the promis'd coast.

II. Praise

How oft, my God, to sound thy praise The holy man of old, Judea's scepter would resign, And string the harp of gold!	65
And fain would I, though in the dust My trembling lips are laid, Once more resume the sacred theme I late in fear essay'd.	70
Lo from the dust 'tis thine to raise The pure mellifluent lay, To bid the very rocks break forth And vocal homage pay.	75
Creation speaks thy wonderous skill, All own thy power supreme, From yon bright orb, unto the mote That dances in its beam.	80
Through all thy works is heard a song, The beasts that graze the plain, The tenants of the verdant bough, The natives of the main.	
The waxing moon, the waning light, The sun with golden rays, The starry thousands of the sky, All mingle in thy praise.	85
Then can the human mind alone, A particle of thee, At due returns forbear to rise In hymns of extasy!	90
Beyond the bounds of night and day Extends thy sovereign power, Tho' Time's to thee a point thou cares For beings of an hour.	95
Tho' at thy feet heaven's golden works, In all their splendours rise, One humble act of good below, 'Scapes not thy gracious eyes,	100
Tho' throngs of Angels round thee stand, And tune their harps aloud, The feeble prayer that's scarce essay'd, Breaks through the warbling croud.	

The sigh that bursts from virtue's breast 105
 Is heard before thy throne,
 The pious tear in silence shed
 Falls not to thee unknown.

Even I a worm before thy sight 110
 Have felt thy mercy shine,
 And, tho' a wanderer, oft had cause
 To bless the beam divine.

When through affliction's deepening vale,
 My feet thou hast convey'd,
 Thy kind assistance would prevail, 115
 Thy wisdom cheer the shade.

When restless on the sickening couch
 My weary limbs have lain,
 Thou through the dark and toilsome hours
 Would still the nerve of pain. 120

Thou bring'st me through the perils of day,
 Safe to my humble shed,
 Thou smoothst my pillow, sweet with toil,
 Whereon to lay my head.

Oft as thy goodness to these eyes 125
 Renews the morning-light,
 Oft as thou draws around my head
 The closing shades of night.

Oft as thou bathes my walk with tears
 Then bids the moments glow, 130
 So oft O teach the willing theme
 Of gratitude to flow.

And when translated from these vales
 Where feeble mortals groan,
 Retain me in thy choir of love, 135
 Though humblest of thy throne.

*The Negro (Addressed to Edmund Burke)*¹

From Poems (1808)

O thou, this country's boast, this age's pride,
 Freedom's firm friend, and Pity's gen'rous guide,
 Great Burke! whose voice, when wretchedness complains,

Notes

THE NEGRO

¹ Leadbeater dated this poem 1789, soon after English politician William Wilberforce began his campaign in the

British parliament to abolish slavery; the Abolition Act, which ended the slave trade only, would not be passed until 1807 (see R. B. Sheridan's "Abolition of Slavery" above).

Humanity's invaded rights maintains.
 Hark! Nature speaks in injur'd Africk's right, 5
 And deeds of horror are disclos'd to light: –
 Thou wert not silent that important day,
 On such a theme thou couldst not silent stay.
 When such a voice arose in such debate,
 And Truth roll'd onward with impetuous weight, 10
 Who dar'd to vindicate the impious deed,
 And with unblushing front for slav'ry plead?

Britain, thy laws are gen'rous, wise and good,
 Did not stern Justice stain her sword with blood:
 Still prompt to curb the spoiler's cruel hand, 15
 And chase oppression from thy favour'd land.
 And shall these laws, to foster freedom made, –
 Shall these defend oppression's guilty trade?
 Shall rapine wild, shall murder, foul with gore,
 Ravage, unblam'd, affrighted Africk's shore; 20
 And vilest treach'ry basely bear away,
 From the lov'd native land, the human prey;
 And vent'rous man resolve, (more rash than brave)
 Resolve to make his fellow-man a slave? –

But that hard heart, which could not here relent, 25
 Soon finds the crime become the punishment:
 The gen'rous boast of liberty is flown,
 The seeds of vengeance, are by slav'ry sown;
 Ruling dejected men with sov'reign sway,
 The Tyrant looks that *all* mankind obey. 30
 With disappointed pride his haughty breast
 Burns, and tumultuous passions rack his rest:
 Or, in their wretched huts while captives weep, }
 See keen remorse, rous'd by the wailings deep, 35
 Stalk round his nightly couch, and murder sleep!
 What though wealth on thee pour her golden flood,
 (Ah, dearly purchas'd with thy brother's blood!)
 Wealth buys not peace: – the poor man pities thee: –
 Wouldst thou be happy? – set thy captives free. 40

How oft did Woolman's² tears these woes deplore,
 When that pure spirit mortal clothing wore!
 He stood a sign the wond'ring world among,
 Nor touch'd the product of oppressive wrong:
 He saw, he mourn'd the hapless Negro's fate, 45
 Bound in the horrors of a captive state;
 Saw torn asunder Nature's tend'rest ties,
 To bid th' unfeeling master's heaps arise,
 And deeds of deadly die and foulest shame
 Affix dishonour to the Christian name; 50

Notes

² John Woolman (1720–72), English Quaker abolitionist.

Heard the deep groans the sable bosoms rend:
 (Shall not these groans to pitying Heav'n ascend?)
 "And these are they," he cried, "whose lab'ring hands
 With ceaseless toil maintain these peopled lands;
 To them the means of life are scarce supplied, 55
 While their lords revel in luxurious pride:
 And yet the right of liberty is theirs;
 No duty dooms them to these servile cares;
 And though proud man has mercy's law denied,
 These are the souls for which a Saviour died, 60
 And how we act to these – we must reply
 To Him, who views mankind with equal eye."

So spoke the Sage; – and glad his heart had been,
 Had he this dawning day of freedom seen.
 O favour'd age! – the genial beams expand 65
 The feeling bosom, and the lib'ral hand;
 The poor are pitied, all are Nature's sons,
 And soften'd man his abject brother owns;
 The youth to learning and to labour trains,
 And smooths the couch where pale disease complains. 70
 E'en on the cell where guilt and mis'ry lie,
 Streams the sweet ray from Mercy's gracious eye;
 For, rank'd in Virtue's cause, her chiefs appear,
 Illustrious names to future ages dear!
 Not theirs the bloody pomp of martial meed, 75
 But brighter honours crown the nobler deed.

There princely Leopold³ his sway maintains,
 Mild as the breeze which fans his Tuscan plains;
 Though strictest Justice guards the favour'd shore,
 He bids the sword of Justice slay no more; 80
 He deem'd that Nature's laws no right could have
 To take that life the God of Nature gave.

Where the deserted babes protection find,
 Their little lives to strangers' hands consign'd,
 There noble Arabella's⁴ worth is tried, 85
 Her sex's glory and her nation's pride:
 While gen'rous Raikes⁵ bids idle sport give way,
 And useful lore defend the solemn day.

Lo! Howard,⁶ like a pitying angel, speeds
 From clime to clime, while mis'ry's cause he pleads, 90
 The dungeon's depth all resolute explores,
 Though putrid steams bedew the iron doors.

Notes

³ Likely to be Leopold I, grand duke of Tuscany from 1765 to 1790.

⁴ Arabella was a common name, so this reference cannot be definitively identified.

⁵ Robert Raikes (1736–1811), English member of the Sunday school movement which sought to educate the poor on Sundays, their only non-working day.

⁶ John Howard (1726–90), English prison reformer.

The sable vail see dauntless Clarkson⁷ rend,
 And bold avow himself the captive's friend;
 Invoking sacred Pity's heav'nly rain, 95
 To wash the blood which rusts upon his chain.

There, Burke, thy lov'd, thine honour'd name shall stand,
 And add new splendour to the godlike band.
 The gracious Father, universal Friend,
 To whom the cries of guiltless blood ascend, 100
 Has to thy charge superior gifts assign'd,
 And bless'd thee with the love of human kind: –
 O then continue still, thus doubly blest,
 Thy gen'rous zeal to succour the distress.
 Let proud Oppression from thy voice retire, 105
 While the rapt nations kindle at thy fire;
 Let either India echo back thy name,
 While conscious Virtue yields the dearest fame.

And when thy noble soul shall wing its flight
 To the pure realms of liberty and light; 110
 There, where the wicked shall no more molest,
 There, where the wounded, wearied spirits rest,
 There, where the captives meet, their sorrows o'er,
 And tremble at th' oppressor's voice no more;
 Amid the holy bands who glorious shine, 115
 For ever hymning forth their songs divine;
 The Patriarchs just, by early Nature blest
 With the first sweets of her maternal breast;
 Th' Apostles, who the sacred mandates bore
 Of universal love from shore to shore; 120
 And the meek Martyrs, with their precious blood
 Sealing those truths a blinded world withstood: –
 Amid these holy bands, that peaceful fold,
 Shalt thou the naked Negro-slave behold,
 Whose manly limbs the servile chain confin'd, 125
 While heathen darkness wrapp'd his fetter'd mind.
 This work of God, the spirit and the frame,
 His tyrant fellow-man depress'd with shame.
 What though his ear no social lip inform'd! –
 The heart He made, the gracious Maker warm'd: 130
 Though small his knowledge, yet his guide was true;
 He kept that guide, and practis'd what he knew.

The Triumph of Terror

From Poems (1808)

On the morning in which Ballitore was given up to the military, the life of an old man was attacked: he was rescued by his daughter: but epileptick fits were the consequence of the shock which she received, and which caused her untimely death.

Notes

⁷ Thomas Clarkson (1760–1846), English abolitionist.

The morning, unconscious of horrors, arose,
 The whispering Zephyr breath'd soft thro' the shade;
 And Nature, awaken'd from balmy repose,
 Her charms all bespangled with dew-drops display'd.

But hark! in the vale so secluded and sweet, 5
 The cries of destruction and misery blend;
 And 'mid the green boughs, once of peace the retreat,
 The pitiless flames, wing'd with vengeance, ascend.

Oh what wrought this change? 'twas a people misled
 In deeds of rebellion and strife to engage: – 10
 Yet listen to mercy; – the guilty are fled;
 Oh let not the guiltless fall victims to rage!

“Oh stay thy hand, soldier, – Oh pity my sire,
 And from his hoar head turn thy weapon aside:
 Or, if thou a sacrifice seek to thine ire, 15
 Then deep in my breast let thy weapon be died”!

Filial Piety pleaded; – the soldier withdrew;
 And Ferdinand rose, while his beating heart glow'd:
 Then swift to his daughter's fond bosom he flew,
 For now to each other existence they ow'd. 20

But ah! that fond bosom had agony seiz'd,
 With a gripe too severe e'en for Hope to unbind;
 And what though the tumults of war were appeas'd,
 The fatal impression still dwelt on her mind.

'Twas then that the triumph of Terror began, 25
 And youth's sprightly grace from that moment decay'd:
 Here eyes lost their lustre; and wither'd and wan
 Was that cheek on which Health once in dimples had play'd.

Her delicate nerves by convulsions were strain'd,
 Her eye-balls all haggard so wildly would rove; 30
 Yet Reason unshaken her empire maintain'd,
 Undiminish'd the duties of filial love.

To cheer the lone couch where her parent was laid,
 When sickness oppress'd him, each effort she tried;
 To cheer his lone cot, and his labours to aid, 35
 His food and his raiment her cares would provide.

In this pious act to the streamlet she came,
 To prepare the coarse viands which nature requir'd;
 When sudden distemper assail'd her worn frame,
 And 'mid stifling waters poor Polly expir'd! 40

Fair maids of the valley, ye mourn'd for her woes,
 To you may the wretched with confidence come:
 Down your cheek the soft current of tenderness flows,
 And Pity your bosoms has claim'd for her home.

*Dialogue XVIII: Chastisement**From Cottage Dialogues among the Irish Peasantry (1813)**Tim, Jem.*

JEM. My good neighbour Tim, I am sure you won't be angry for what I am going to say to you.

TIM. You know, Jem, you may say what you please to poor Tim.

JEM. I am sorry, then, to hear that you beat your wife.

TIM. What, then, she complained to you too, I suppose. It is well I did not kill a man, or rob on the high road, for she'd tell on me, and have me hanged. O, Jem, you have no notion what sort of woman she is!

JEM. Try what quietness will do for her. Poor Nancy is not a bad natured body; she would hear reason, I'm sure.

TIM. Not she! she'll hear no reason. I came home slaved and tired, and thought to sit down to my supper, but not a potatoe was washed – the fire was out – the door was hasped, and nobody within. I strove to rake out a coal of fire, and was washing the potatoes myself, when in came Nancy, laughing and tittering, with Peggy Donoghoe: and she never said "Tim, I'm sorry for serving you this way," or took the potatoes from me, to put them on, but flounced about, as if she had a right to be angry, and not I. I said nothing till Peggy was gone, and then I told her a bit of my mind, but she was on her high horse, and it don't signify talking, but she *aggravated* me so, that I beat her sure enough.

JEM. Well. Tim, it's a woman's duty to be sure to have her place comfortable for her husband, let him come home in a good humour, or a bad one. And it is a man's duty, too, to consider his wife, and make allowances for her, if she don't always do as he'd have her, and to come home pleasant; and if both of them are pleasant, they will long for the time of seeing each other again. Indeed I have no right to talk, for often I was cross to poor Rose, after spending most of my week's hire at the ale-house. I was so angry with myself for spending it so badly, that I used to come home in a wicked humour indeed: and sure I would have been worse, only she was so quiet, for though I'd see her wiping her eyes with her apron, not a cross word would she say. But I hope that is all over now.

TIM. O, indeed, Jem, you have no excuse to behave bad to Rose; she is no gossip, no idler, no lazy body, no tea drinker.

JEM. Why did you give Nancy so much of her way at the first, and promise her tea, when you knew in your heart you could not afford it?

TIM. Ay, Jem, there I was wrong; and, indeed, it was wrong to marry till I had something *to the fore*, especially when I had such bad help.

JEM. O, Tim, never get into the way of being sorry you are married. That once done, is for life; but strive to live together comfortably; and nothing makes poor people more comfortable than content, and good humour. You're a man, Tim, and should have more sense; when you are in a good humour together, then draw down these little things, and talk them over quietly.

TIM. Ah, Jem, when we are pleasant, I am loath to speak any thing that might unsettle us, though I know that is the best time; for I love Nancy, and she loves me; and I wonder we don't agree better.

JEM. Well, make a resolution never to both be angry at the same time, and then I'll give my word for it you will agree better.

John Corry (fl. 1797–1825)

Little is known of John Corry except that he was from the north of Ireland. He worked as a journalist in Dublin before moving to London in the 1790s, and later seems to have made his way north in England to become a member of the Philological Society of Manchester. He may have published his first volume of poetry in 1780, but the evidence for this is slight. He was, however, close to the United Irishmen movement: Corry contributed to the movement's publications and his early volume, *Odes and Elegies, Descriptive and Sentimental, with The Patriot* (1797), has a list of subscribers that includes a number of prominent United-men, including William Drennan, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Henry Joy McCracken, and Thomas Russell.

Corry's corpus is extremely diverse, including verse, moral tales, memoirs of prominent figures, and local histories. *The Patriot* includes three of "the four different species of composition" listed by Brooke in her Preface to *Reliques of Irish Poetry*, namely "the HEROIC POEM, the ODE, the ELEGY, and the SONG": the main narrative of *The Patriot* is written in the first genre, but it also frames two odes and a "dirge" in the elegaic tradition. *The Patriot* clearly invokes not only the remote past but also the heightening tensions of the 1790s, and should be read alongside other nationalist works out of the north at this time, including *Paddy's Resource* and James Porter's *Billy Bluff*. Like these other texts, Corry's poem repeats the leading principles of the United Irishmen, from freedom and liberty to "social virtues," as well as, more uniquely for the 1790s, drawing on an Irish heroic past to encourage heroic action in the present: rallying

them to fight, Cormac tells the Irish warriors of the poem, "think . . . Of our great ancestors, who Freedom lov'd," and Corry implies that his readers should do the same. Corry's *Patriot* also owes much to the Scottish poet, James Macpherson, whose Ossianic fragments, including *Fingal* (1762), also feature an Irish hero named Cormac. In 1798, Corry published *The Patriot* with a London press, but not under his name – the author was named only (nodding to Goldsmith) "A Citizen of the World."

In the Preface to *Odes and Elegies*, Corry writes that he aimed "to inculcate Benevolence, Piety, and the Love of Country." After the Union, the latter aim largely dropped from his corpus, but he continued to pursue the others in satires and moral tales. He was particularly vocal on women's morality and education, beginning with *The Gardener's Daughter of Worcester; Or the Miseries of Seduction* (1800), which concludes with "The Prostitute: An Elegy." His *Detector of Quackery*, which may have been published as early as 1798 but appeared in a number of editions after 1800, surveys a range of frauds and threats to public order, and was reissued in abbreviated form as *Quack Doctors Dissected* in 1810.

Further reading

Pitcher, E. W., "The Miscellaneous Works of John Corry (1760?–1825?)," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 80 (1986): 83–90.

Thuente, Mary Helen, *The Harp Re-strung: The United Irishmen and the Rise of Literary Nationalism*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994.

*Death: An Ode***From Odes and Elegies, Descriptive and Sentimental,
with The Patriot: A Poem (1797)**

How awful Death! yet Man, secure,
Lives here as if immortal made;
Th' approach of Death, unseen, tho' sure,
Doth seldom make his heart afraid.

Whence can this strange indiff'rence rise, 5
This fondness to forget our end?
To bus'ness, pleasure, or the noise
Of empty Fame, our wishes tend.

Hope lifts the lively spirit high, 10
And health invigorates the heart;
Yet this majestic frame must die –
This active soul must hence depart.

Unwelcome truth to Beauty's ear,
Elate with praise, the lively mind
Employs its fondest wishes here, 15
To gait and love inclin'd.

Ah! since His will who being gave,
Foredoom'd his creatures here to die,
Let us, ere buried in the grave,
In virtuous acts our time employ. 20

Let us our appetites restrain,
And crave Religion's pow'rful aid;
Then after Death, in Heav'n serene,
Our souls shall live, in light array'd.

*Peace: An Elegy***From Odes and Elegies, Descriptive and Sentimental,
with The Patriot: A Poem (1797)**

From the pure regions of eternal joy,
Thou friend of man, delightful Peace! descend;
Then shall ferocious War no more destroy,
But, nations into lasting friendship blend.

Ah! hear afflicted Nature's plaintive cries, 5
Who mourns the miseries her children feel;

Let thy lov'd presence cheer her bright'ning eyes,
 And sheath, for ever, Death's destructive steel.

Suppress vindictive Wrath and tyrant Pride,
 Those worst of fiends that haunt the human mind; 10
 O'er Europe, with thy olive wand, preside,
 And thy true blessings give to all mankind.

Then shall the drum unbrac'd and silent lie,
 And deathful arms, in sable rust, decay;
 The bolt of war no more shall, hissing, fly – 15
 No more sulphureous smoke obscure the day.

No more shall bombs burst with explosive roar,
 And with fierce flames the wealthy towns devour; –
 No more the hind his wasted farm deplore –
 Nor ghastly Famine o'er the landscape low'r. 20

Beneath thy guidance, shall the hand of Toil,
 With Agriculture's treasures fill the land;
 Rapine no more shall Nature's bloom despoil,
 Nor Men expire at Tyranny's command.

The Arts and Sciences, O, gracious Peace! 25
 Shall flourish, blest with thy inspiring smile;
 Wisdom and Wealth shall o'er the globe encrease,
 And Public Zeal take place of selfish Guile.

Then Justice shall her guardian arm extend,
 And equal laws preserve each social right; 30
 And Piety, from highest Heav'n, descend,
 To guide the human race to endless light.

Come, blissful Peace, our wishes realise,
 And over harass'd Europe joy dispense: –
 O, come! and with one glance of thy bright eyes, 35
 Chase all the demons of Destruction hence.

*The Patriot: A Poem, Descriptive of an Invasion of
 Ireland by the Danes, and their Expulsion by the Irish*

**From Odes and Elegies, Descriptive and Sentimental,
 with The Patriot: A Poem (1797)**

The ARGUMENT

Ireland described – amusements of the natives – Cormac – Ellen – Cormac ascends a mountain, and descries the Danish fleet – he descends – alarms the villagers, and dispatches couriers to the interior, to inform his countrymen of the invasion – terror and grief of the women – parting of Cormac and Ellen – speech of Brian to the warriors – they march to the shore – the fleet of the Danes – Orfar, their general – morning – the Danes land – speech of

Orfar – the Irish troops hasten from different parts of the country, and are arrayed by their chiefs – the bards – Ode, in which Connal animates his countrymen – ardour of the Irish army – the battle – bravery of Orfar – patriotism of Cormac, who rallies the routed Irish, and leads them again to battle – Cormac and Orfar engage – Orfar slain – the Danes fly, and are pursued to their boats by the Irish – Cormac is carried wounded from the field – Brian, from a hill, sees Cormac lie wounded, and hastens down – Cormac dies – the Irish army carry the wounded off the field of battle – the bards celebrate the victory – the women descend from the mountains – grief of Ellen – she dies – the army repose during the night, and next morning bury the dead – dirge at the grave of Cormac and Ellen – the poem concludes with Connal’s exhortation to the army.

Secure and happy, with the smiles of Peace,
 The sons of Erin saw their wealth encrease:
 The fertile fields gave plenteous crops of grain,
 And num’rous herds and flocks enrich’d the swain –
 Expansive lakes in wavy radiance flow’d, 5
 And to the vales unfailing brooks bestow’d –
 Extensive bogs, with heath and reeds o’erspread,
 Oft sunk, unfaithful to the wand’rer’s tread –
 Along the shore vast mountains rear’d their forms,
 By light’ning smote, and swept by roaring storms – 10
 Here swell’d high summits, tap’ring like a cone,
 There pond’rous cliffs, by Time’s strong hand o’erthrown,
 Hung o’er the precipice – the eagle there
 Built her rude nest, and breath’d the purer air –
 Green woods adorn’d the mountain’s sloping side, 15
 And sunny lawns were deck’d in Nature’s pride;
 There, harmless shepherds fed their useful flocks,
 And nibbling goats oft climb’d the pendent rocks,
 Where couchant wolves sprung on their help[less]-prey,
 And nimbly bore the bleeding prize away. 20
 Temp’rate, and tender as the guiltless dove,
 The beauteous women warm’d the heart with love;
 The men reliev’d, with hospitable hand,
 The shipwreck’d stranger, cast upon their land.
 But, if with hostile arms they sought the shore, 25
 Free Erin’s sand was moisten’d with their gore.
 In manly sports, along the level green,
 Each summer’s eve, the hardy youth were seen –
 They wrestle, leap, or throw the shining dart –
 In sportive fight, they learn the martial art, 30
 On their small shields receive the well-aim’d blow,
 Whilst in their hearts heroic ardours glow;
 Their swords, keen-edg’d, and pointed for the fight,
 Which their bold fathers oft, with conq’ring might,
 Aim’d, like descending light’ning, on the Dane, 35
 Now glitter’d, harmless o’er the glassy plain.

The chase the gen’rous CORMAC lov’d, whose art
 Sent, with unerring aim, the pointed dart,
 Oft on the plain he train’d the martial band –

The living bulwark of their native land – 40
 Careless and fearless, thus he pass'd his days,
 And from the hoary bards oft heard his praise.

Ellen, the sweetest of Ierne's maids,
 Smil'd like the Genius of her native shades;
 In perfect symmetry, her youthful form 45
 All-beauteous shone, with vital spirits warm;
 Her face, expressive of her blameless mind,
 Display'd the fairest tints of health combin'd;
 Her soft blue eyes where love and pity smil'd,
 In purest light, express'd her temper mild; 50
 Redundant flow'd her shining light-brown hair,
 Adown her shoulders and her bosom fair,
 And, thro' the veil, the living beauties rise.
 Thro' parting clouds, the moon thus cheers our eyes.
 Young Cormac the delightful virgin lov'd, 55
 And his fond vows her feeling heart approv'd;
 Four genial moons their varying light had shed,
 Since his fair consort grac'd the nuptial bed.

One morn, with spirits lively as the breeze,
 Bold Cormac climb'd the mountain, 'mid the trees, 60
 Light-arm'd, his polish'd darts the wolves arrest,
 And lively pleasure fills his throbbing breast,
 'Till, panting with fatigue and noontide heat,
 Beneath a cliff he finds a shady seat,
 Then to the glitt'ring sea he turns his eyes, 65
 And thinks he sees the air-borne clouds arise
 Along the dim horizon; but, more near,
 They soon a large approaching fleet appear;
 He views with stedfast look the coming storm,
 And gen'rous passions his bold bosom warm; 70
 His wife – his kindred – and his native land,
 His love and his solicitude demand.
 The lofty precipice he now descends,
 And, with commanding voice, collects his friends.
 "My countrymen! the Danes approach our coast; 75
 To arms! – repel the foe, or all is lost.
 Let swiftest messengers the tidings bear,
 To bid the distant villagers prepare;
 With active zeal, my fellow soldiers, arm,
 Whilst Erin's horns the villages alarm." 80
 Quick, at his word, the nimble couriers fly;
 His village brethren, with a martial cry,
 Express their ardour, and their leader hail:
 The women, with surprize and terror, pale,
 Alarm'd and trembling, hear the boist'rous sound, 85
 Which all the neigh'bring woods and hills resound;
 They clasp their children with a fond embrace,

And straight prepare to leave the dang'rous place.
 The aged men, and striplings immature,
 With eager haste, the flocks and herds secure; 90
 Together driven to a lonely glen,
 By mountains screen'd, and seldom trod by men;
 Thither the women, with their children, hie,
 With tearful eyes, and many a mournful sigh;
 Yet, ere they go, they bid a fond adieu 95
 To their defenders, who, arrang'd to view,
 In order stood, with helmets, spears, and shields,
 Whilst fading twilight glimmer'd o'er the fields;
 Sons – husbands – lovers, form'd the little train,
 Who heard, with sorrowing hearts, their friends complain; 100
 'Till Cormac, leader of the noble band,
 Repress'd their wailings, with a mild command,
 "Forbear these sounds of woe, the hero said,
 You know our brave forefathers often bled,
 To keep the lovely vales of Erin free, 105
 And guard our virtuous women's chastity:
 Then, why unman my fellow-soldiers here,
 With foolish sorrows, and the gushing tear?
 No, rather rouze your countrymen to arms,
 To guard from foreign violence your charms." 110
 He paus'd – then upwards turn'd his sparkling eyes,
 And thus address'd the Pow'r who rules the skies,
 "Guardian of Erin! to thy creatures lend
 Thy potent aid, by which we shall defend
 Our native island from a foreign foe, 115
 That comes our social comfort to o'erthrow."
 He ceas'd – and, from the village, now appears
 A mournful maiden, trembling with her fears:
 "Oh! Cormac, haste, she cries, thy Ellen fair
 Now tears, with frantic hand, her graceful hair; 120
 Haste, haste to comfort her afflicted mind,
 Nor leave thy wife in sad despair behind."
 The youthful warrior to his Ellen flies;
 The weeping women then renew their cries.

Now Cormac at his native cot arrives, 125
 His well-known voice his fainting spouse revives,
 Prone at his feet the weeping fair one fell,
 And clasp'd the knees of him she lov'd so well.
 "Ah! whither would'st thou go? my guardian, stay,
 Nor leave me here, to certain death a prey; 130
 Soul of my life, thou dearer than my breath,
 I never, never can survive thy death;
 And well I know, the ardour of thy mind,
 Intent on noble deeds, to danger blind,
 Will overwhelm thee in the gulf of Fate, 135
 And leave me here in a defenceless state."

Convulsive sobs her failing voice suppress'd,
 And dropping tears impearl'd her beauteous breast;
 In wild disorder flow'd her auburn hair,
 And cloudy grief o'er cast her aspect fair. 140
 Her husband slowly rais'd her in his arms,
 And to his sighing bosom clasp'd those charms,
 Which ne'er again shall bless his eager sight –
 No more her dulcet voice his ears delight –
 No more her eyes, mild-beaming purest love, 145
 With extasy his thrilling bosom move –
 No more her social virtues warm his heart;
 The moment's come they must for ever part.
 "My dearest Ellen, why this useless woe?
 Thy Cormac must repel th' invading foe; 150
 Our Island claims her sons' protecting care,
 For her the iron mail of War I wear,
 And, guarding her, my much-lov'd friends I free
 From slavish fears, and Danish tyranny.
 Remember, love! how, in our youthful state, 155
 I snatch'd my Ellen from the jaws of Fate,
 When the fell wolf my charming girl pursu'd,
 With glaring eyes, and tusks defil'd with blood,
 Whilst, on the wings of Fear, my darling fled,
 My rapid dart transfix'd his horrid head. 160
 Thus shall the cruel Danes before us fall,
 Nor by their prowess Erin's isle enthral.
 Adieu, my dearest love!" he sighing said;
 At the afflicting word her spirits fled,
 And fainting Life seem'd ready to depart, 165
 So much conflicting passions rent her heart.
 Recover'd by her kind attendant's care,
 She for her quick departure must prepare.

Now, Brian comes to view his native band,
 Where, on a little hill, in arms they stand; 170
 Oft had he labour'd in the fields of fight,
 And deeds of glory were his chief delight;
 Tho' Age had long relax'd his weaken'd arm,
 His animating eloquence could warm.
 And, whilst the moon ascends above the main, 175
 He thus harangues the patriotic train:
 "My countrymen! I hope you'll soon o'erthrow,
 By brave exertions, Ireland's ancient foe;
 Act like your fathers, and the Danes expel,
 Then Liberty and Peace with you shall dwell. 180
 This feeble arm of mine, once young and strong,
 Achiev'd bold deeds, that live in sacred song;
 The leader of your fathers I have been,
 And toil'd with them in many a dreadful scene;
 My Cormac's now your chief, by gen'ral choice; 185

In battles still obey his lofty voice.
 The martial art I taught my only son –
 In open field the ambuscade to shun,
 With steady valour to attack the foe,
 And strike a pow'rful and decisive blow. 190
 Act so, and may kind Heav'n with conquest crown
 Your arms, and sacred bards chaunt your renown."
 With chearful shouts, the youth their zeal express,
 Whilst Brian breathes a pray'r for their success.
 He then retires – and tow'rd's the hostile plain, 195
 The warriors march, despising Death and Pain;
 Beside the shore a spacious village rose,
 Thither they march, and whilst in deep repose,
 New spirits fill their hearts, two centries stand,
 With eyes attentive to the neighb'ring strand. 200

Two furlongs from the shore the fleet was moor'd,
 By the safe bay from sudden storms secur'd;
 Orfar, the leader of the hardy host,
 In war was frozen Denmark's fav'rite boast,
 Allur'd by Fame, to Erin's happy isle 205
 He came, her sons to conquer and despoil,
 And in the genial clime unrivall'd reign;
 He warms his soldiers with the hope of gain;
 The army soon embark'd, a fav'ring wind
 Bears to the shore, where grizzly Fate they find. 210
 Thirty large ships a dreadful line compose,
 O'er which the moon her pleasing radiance throws,
 In each one hundred chosen warriors lie
 Asleep, till vivid Morn illumines the sky.

Now rosy Dawn appears, encreasing light, 215
 Effulgent, rises o'er the mountain's height;
 To their dark dens the howling wolves retire,
 The glorious Morning's beams the birds inspire
 With joy, sweet-warbled from the leafy grove,
 And chearful larks, ascending, sing above, 220
 No early footsteps marks the dewy green –
 No playful lamb, or grazing ox, are seen;
 The flowing tide rolls on, with hollow roar
 The sparkling waves, that lash the rocky shore –
 The screaming sea-fowl skim the swelling tide, 225
 Where, near the land, the ships, at anchor, ride –
 The bold invaders in their boats descend,
 Row'd to the land where soon they must contend
 With Erin's sons – along the shelly strand,
 Form'd by the chiefs, in order'd ranks they stand. 230
 Proud Orfar views the lines, and waves his hand,
 The army's mute, attention to command:
 "Brave Danes!" he cries "behold the beauteous scene,

See, ev'n the highest mountains rob'd in green; 235
 Rich is the blissful isle, and mild the clime –
 The earth bestows its fruits in perfect prime;
 And shall yon timid bands the isle defend?
 Your vet'ran valour will their force transcend.
 Like a short blaze, their courage will expire –
 Like fearful deer the dastards will retire: 240
 Gain but this battle, and the Isle is ours,
 Its cultivated fields, and rose-deck'd bow'rs.
 We sail'd from Denmark's bleak and barren shore,
 Thro' stormy seas, Ierne to explore;
 And oft ye murmur'd at the kind decree 245
 That sent ye hither, o'er the spacious sea.
 Of all your toils behold the rich reward,
 Nor think the painful task of conflict hard;
 Ere yon bright sun bestows his noontide light,
 I hope, you'll be victorious in the fight; 250
 Then yon thin ranks shall, conquer'd vassals, bend,
 And their fair women at our feasts attend.
 Let the incautious foe attack, and then
 Repel their sudden force, like valiant men;
 They'll soon retreat, and Erin's fertile isle 255
 Reward my soldiers for their martial toil."
 With cheerful shouts the Danes their gen'ral hail,
 And the loud sounds fly on the morning gale.

The mountain warriors Cormac's voice obey,
 He rouzes them to arms with rising day; 260
 Whilst, from the distant hills, for many a mile,
 Erin's brave youth descend, to guard their Isle;
 Assembled near the shore, arrang'd they stand –
 The bands obedient to their chief's command;
 Two thousand men in arms, elate and brave, 265
 Resolv'd to march to conquest, or the grave;
 The chiefs, in silence on the bards await,
 Who, rob'd in white, approach in solemn state;
 In the left hand the tuneful harp they bear,
 And wave the right, the warriors to prepare, 270
 'Till Connal, chief of bards, prepares the strain,
 To animate with zeal the warlike train;
 He views the sparkling lustre of their eyes,
 And thus his voice bids ardent Valour rise:

ODE

Erin's hope! my soul's delight, 275
 Now attack your country's foe;
 Let them feel your conq'ring might –
 Lay the bold invaders low.

Oft your fathers met the Dane,
 With victorious grasp, in fight, 280
 And along the crimson'd plain,
 Clos'd their eyes in endless night.

Firmly face the pointed lance,
 Broken on the guarding shield;
 Like a torrent, still advance, 285
 And with slaughter fill the field.

If, like cowards, ye retreat,
 And your native Isle betray,
 Infamy and chains await
 Erin's hapless sons this day. 290

Think how the rapacious foe
 Will your women violate,
 And the happiness o'erthrow
 Of your peaceful social state.
 Think of Liberty enjoy'd, 295
 Now in danger to be lost.
 Rouze! O rouze your martial pride,
 As ye fight the Danish host.

Now! defend your children dear –
 Parents – brethren – native isle; 300
 Banish ev'ry trembling fear,
 Then shall Conquest on you smile.

In firm ranks repel the Dane –
 Charge them in old Erin's name,
 Where your sires have often slain 305
 Their selectest sons of Fame.

With shouts the warriors interrupt his song,
 And, dreadful, on the foe they pour along;
 The Danes await them, eager to engage,
 And the fierce ranks now close with cruel rage. 310

As some volcano, from its bursting side,
 Emits a fiery torrent on the tide,
 Down flames the burning flood, with horrid noise,
 Impell'd by Storm, the adverse surges rise,
 'Till, mix'd in conflict, on the quaking shore, 315
 Those elements contend with awful roar,
 Whilst o'er the dreadful scene dark vapours rise,
 And, with their gloom, conceal the lucid skies.
 So join the furious armies, fierce and loud,
 And o'er their heads ascends a dusty cloud. 320

The sons of Erin – ardent – valiant – fierce –
 The thickest ranks of their opponents pierce;
 The wary enemy, inur'd to fight,

Surround their scatter'd bands, gloomy as Night;
 Imperious Orfar, gen'ral of their host, 325
 Slays Erin's heroes on their native coast;
 High on the gilded helm that guards his head,
 Three sable plumes their waving beauty spread;
 His well-tried shield repels each hostile dart,
 And sanguine Vengeance fills his fearless heart. 330

New to the fight, the gallant Cormac views,
 Where War with mangled men the plain bestrews –
 He sees his countrymen by danger press'd,
 And all the PATRIOT rouzes in his breast;
 Swift as a whirlwind on the foe he flies – 335
 The hapless Dane who meets his weapon, dies.
 His wife – his country, nerve his manly arm –
 He life contemns, to guard them free from harm;
 With ev'ry blow he strikes new ardours rise,
 And warlike lustre fills his eager eyes. 340
 The sons of Erin, weak with breathless toil,
 Shrink, whilst their smoaking blood distains the soil –
 With frantic shouts they fly, and wild Dismay,
 With tenfold horror fills their disarray;
 The furious Danes their broken bands pursue, 345
 And in their gushing lives their hands imbrue.

Fierce Cormac, with indignant soul, retires,
 And, rallied on a hill, the troops inspires
 With love of Liberty – ‘Alas! my friends,
 This fatal day our country's freedom ends; 350
 Ne'er in our vales shall joyful sounds be heard,
 By our ferocious conquerors deterr'd.
 Tim'rous as deer, our youth their necks shall bend
 Beneath their yoke, and Erin's glory end.
 Now, rouze, my countrymen, your noble ire – 355
 Let your dear country's love your souls inspire.
 O! think how oft yon woody hills have rung,
 When tuneful bards the great achievements sung
 Of our great ancestors, who Freedom lov'd,
 And in the field of War their valour prov'd. 360
 And shall we fly? Ah! shall we tamely yield
 Our country's rights, nor our dear kindred shield
 From Rapine, Violation, Death, and chains?
 Shall our best friends be vassals to the Danes?
 Grasp firmly, now, your swords – one effort try – 365
 For our lov'd Isle we'll conquer or we'll die.’’
 Encourag'd thus, the hardy ranks again,
 Descend with rapid fury on the plain:
 Like the red light'ning, Cormac's blood-stain'd sword
 Destroy'd the Danes, and Erin's hopes restor'd; 370
 Impulsive might the daring van o'erthrows,
 Where, frantic with revenge, the armies close.

The Danish soldiers, long inur'd to fight,
 Condense their ranks, and, gloomy as the Night,
 Their sable shields before their ranks they bear, 375
 Of the fierce Irish energy aware.
 Ierne's sons impetuously assail
 This formidable phalanx, and prevail:
 The broken ranks before the victors fly,
 Whilst mingled shouts and groans ascend the sky, 380
 A forest, thus, resists a sudden blast,
 But the encreasing storm prevails at last,
 Uproots the strongest oaks, with dreadful noise,
 And all the beauty of the scene destroys.

Amid the carnage of the dreadful fight, 385
 Unconquer'd Orfar, fill'd with martial might,
 Repels the Irish, aided by his men,
 And seeming Conquest cheers their hearts again.
 Young Cormac, breathless, with incessant toil,
 Leans on a rock, and sees his native soil 390
 With mangled carcasses of men bestrew'd –
 Sees Orfar's hands in Irish blood embrew'd –
 Hears his majestic voice to Conquest call –
 And sees his native youth before him fall:
 Enrag'd, he rouzes all the ardent fire 395
 That Freedom, and his country's cause, inspire.
 He cheers the leaders of Ierne's bands,
 Who hear, with ready zeal, his wise commands.
 "My friends," the patriotic hero cries,
 "This hour brave Orfar or your gen'ral dies; 400
 Unconquer'd, still your native land defend –
 Destroy the Danes, and all your dangers end."
 Ardent he spoke – and, with undaunted mien,
 Seeks Orfar, glorious in the dreadful scene,
 Who his approaching foe, with joy, espies, 405
 And kindling vengeance sparkles in his eyes.
 With blood-stain'd swords the rival chiefs engage,
 Inspir'd with all the force of Valour's rage;
 Active and strong, their keen-edg'd blades they wield,
 And their warm blood flows plenteous on the field; 410
 Their helmets and their shields in pieces hewn,
 They fight, all-breathless, in the blaze of noon.
 At length the Dane, with a resistless blow,
 Lopt the left arm of his unconquer'd foe.
 Brave Cormac, warm with life, despising pain, 415
 Makes a last effort on his native plain –
 With one swift blow, he cleft fierce Orfar's head,
 And laid the pride of Denmark's army dead.
 So the red light'ning from the cloud descends,
 And the high cliff, with force tremendous, rends, 420
 The smoaking fragments on the summit lie,

And the loud crash ascends the echoing sky.
 Thus died proud Orfar – and his broken host,
 Impell'd by Terror, hasten to the coast;
 The shouting Irish their retreat pursue, 425
 And in the blood of Danes their hands imbrue.
 The Danes their num'rous boats, in haste, prepare –
 Their bravest troops defend the flying rear.
 Like raging fire, the Irish bands assail
 Their foes, and their resistless pow'rs prevail: 430
 Plung'd in the tide, the mingled warriors fight –
 Lost to the vanquish'd Danes the hope of flight;
 Wounded, and fainting with the loss of blood,
 They sink, expiring, in the rising flood.
 The eager front of their pursuing foes 435
 The rising waves in one dark grave enclose;
 Together they descend, with hostile grasp,
 And Hatred dies in their expiring gasp.
 Meantime the half-fraught boats float on the tide,
 To where the stately ships at anchor ride; 440
 The Danes their anchors weigh, and leave the coast,
 Where their best warriors lie, in battle lost.
 There Erin's sons, victorious in the fight,
 Their voices, in loud shouts of joy, unite.
 Meantime, brave Cormac's friends their gen'ral bear 445
 To where a hawthorn waves in Summer's air;
 There, shaded from the sun, his wounds they bind;
 He rests upon a mossy stone, reclin'd;
 Reviv'd, a momentary joy pervades
 His manly heart – he views the distant shades 450
 Beside his cot, but sees not Ellen, there,
 Walk graceful o'er the flow'ry summits fair.
 The distant shelt'ring glen his spouse conceals,
 And her fair breast the pang of Sorrow feels;
 Beneath a flow'ry thorn, beside a spring, 455
 Whilst o'er her head harmonious thrushes sing,
 She sits among her maids, in sad suspense,
 And ev'ry sudden sound affrights her sense.

Meantime, old Brian, from a hill surveys
 The field of battle, with attentive gaze; 460
 With martial ardour fill'd, he sees, below,
 His countrymen their enemies o'erthrow;
 Joy swells his thrilling bosom, and, elate,
 He sees bold Victory on Erin wait –
 Sees her brave sons triumphant on the plain, 465
 And Death, ev'n to their boats, pursue the Dane.
 A nearer object next attracts his sight –
 He views a wounded warrior, from the fight
 Borne by his friends. Now sudden fears arrest
 The rising transports of old Brian's breast;
 He calls a youth, "Haste downward, and enquire 470

His name who seems just ready to expire.
 Alas! I fear he is my noble son,
 And that his morning race of glory's run."
 The youth descends, the dying hero sees, 475
 Whose ebbing spirits sink by slow degrees.
 With frightened heart, the stripling climbs the hill,
 Whilst from his eyes the tears of Grief distil.
 "Your doubts, unhappy Brian, were too true,
 'Tis dying Cormac yonder lies in view." 480
 The venerable sire with speechless woe,
 Descends to the afflicted train below;
 The grateful soldiers, with respectful love,
 To aid the tott'ring father quickly move.
 The father's presence lights a gleam of joy 485
 In that pale visage Death shall soon destroy;
 And Cormac strives to rise, alas! in vain,
 He faints, o'ercome by weakness and by pain.
 Reviv'd – old Brian clasp'd his conq'ring hand,
 "Oh! thou defender of our native land," 490
 He cries, "For Erin's weal my hero dies –
 To guard her freedom, thou did'st Death despise."
 "Yes, worthy sire," the dying son reply'd,
 "To serve my country was my chiefest pride;
 Kind Heav'n with conquest bless'd our patriot bands, 495
 And Denmark's pride lies low, beneath their hands.
 Thy presence, father, cheers my fainting heart,
 But where did'st thou with my dear Ellen part?"
 "I left her safe," reply'd the mournful sire.
 "O! Heaven for ever bless my soul's desire! 500
 May my fair Ellen happiness enjoy,
 And no invader Erin's peace destroy.
 May Liberty, and Social Love, prevail
 For ever here." – His dying spirits fail;
 To scenes of peace and joy his spirit flies, 505
 And on the gory grass his body lies.
 Sad sounds of woe the woody hills resound,
 Whilst his brave friends their leader's corse surround;
 Of verdant branches soon they form a bier,
 And bear him to his cot, with grief sincere. 510
 Arriv'd, the customary rites, with care,
 To grace the noble warrior, they prepare.

Meantime, along the shore, Ierne's host
 See their defeated foe forsake the coast;
 The wounded to the villages they bear, 515
 And ease their anguish, with fraternal care.
 The wearied warriors lay their arms aside,
 'Till Nature's craving wants are satisfy'd;
 Nutritious food and drink their strength restore –
 With joyful looks, they view the spacious shore, 520

And flying foe, whose ships, at distance, glide
 O'er the soft swellings of the ev'ning tide.
 Now, from their green recess, the bards appear,
 Their presence the triumphant soldiers cheer;
 They rise respectfully, and loud acclaim 525
 Salutes old Connal, whose sweet song was Fame;
 In his bright eyes the light of Genius shone,
 And now his lofty voice sings Glory won: –

ODE

How silently, along the shore,
 The gory foes of Erin lie; 530
 Their threat'ning voices shall no more
 With foreign clamours fill the sky.

Lo! where the vanquish'd prowlers fly
 From happy Erin's dang'rous coast.
 Daughters of Denmark! loudly cry, 535
 And weep your dearest lovers lost.

Around me stand the noble throng
 Who Erin's liberty secure;
 Their valour claims my grateful song,
 Who for our Isle such toils endure. 540

Ye guardians of each peaceful joy,
 That rural Innocence bestows,
 Your valiant efforts did destroy
 The pride of our invading foes.

Now may our spritely maids again 545
 Their native villages adorn,
 And gracefully trip o'er the plain,
 With faces blooming as the Morn.

Yet, some there are that will deplore
 Their dearest friends, destroy'd in fight; 550
 But, wailing never can restore
 The spirits, who ascend to Light.

Again, ye glorious heroes, hail!
 Your acts shall grace my daily song,
 And the light pinions of the gale 555
 Shall bear your fame our vales along.

He ceas'd – the youthful bards, with pleasing skill,
 The echoing groves with martial music fill;
 Their harps they next attune to softer strains,
 And sing fair Freedom's reign on Erin's plains. 560
 The warriors hear the song, with silent joy,
 And no intrusive fears their peace annoy.
 The minstrels cease – and down the sloping dales,

The voice of Sorrow vibrates in the gales;
 And, lo! descending from the woody height, 565
 The wailing women haste, with pale affright;
 The mountain villagers, with joyful love,
 To meet their dearest friends, with ardour move.
 Immingling with the bands, the fearful fair
 Their sorrow, or their lively joy, declare – 570
 Some clasp their heroes with a fond embrace,
 And sudden happiness illumines the face –
 Whilst others their dear kindred's fall bewail,
 Who lie, beneath the hand of Slaughter, pale.

Now Ellen comes, with her attendant maids, 575
 Like a bright vision from the verdant shades,
 Her raiment white, and her expressive face,
 Tho' pale with grief, displays transcendent grace;
 For Cormac she enquires – but, silent, all,
 With grateful tears, weep his untimely fall. 580
 At length, old Connal, with a secret sigh,
 Began, "Fair Ellen, all mankind must die:
 Some in the dang'rous path of Honour tread,
 And early mingle with the peaceful dead;
 Whilst others find the grave by slow degrees, 585
 Oppress'd with Age, Misfortune, and Disease.
 Thy Cormac, warm in Liberty's defence,
 Repell'd our country's fell invaders hence;
 By his brave arm, the Danish gen'ral, slain,
 Lies, cold and pale, on Erin's glorious plain. 590
 Victorious Cormac, then, by wounds oppress'd,
 Like a tir'd labourer, sunk to silent Rest."
 Dim Anguish veils the lustre of her eyes –
 She faints, unconscious of her maidens' cries,
 'Till Nature's vital pow'r her life restores, 595
 Then thus impassion'd she her loss deploras:
 "Life of my dearest hopes! and art thou dead!
 Alas! my youthful happiness is fled.
 Oh! Cormac! Cormac! never shall thy voice,
 With sweetest sounds of love, my soul rejoice. 600
 Ah! what to me my country, now he's lost?
 Dear is the price our liberty hath cost.
 Alas! my boding heart too plainly told
 I ne'er again would my dear love behold;
 Blooming in manly grace, by Death destroy'd, 605
 Low lies my soul's desire, my bosom's pride,
 My lost, lost husband." – Here convulsive sighs
 Suppress'd her voice, and tears bedew'd her eyes,
 Fast flowing down, the lucid drops of Grief
 Afford her swelling heart a short relief. 610
 Then starting up, with an impatient bound,
 She darts her penetrating looks around,
 And begs they'll lead her to where Cormac, dead,
 Lies, with Spring's sweetest blossoms round him spread.

Arriv'd, she views him pale and mangled lie, 615
 And not a rising tear swells in her eye;
 Down sinks the tender Ellen, and her breath,
 In sudden gasps, foretels approaching Death,
 From her fond heart the warm arterial blood
 Burst forth, with sudden suffocating flood. 620
 She dies – her weeping maids behold her fall,
 But no kind aid her spirit can recal.
 Beside her husband plac'd her body lies,
 And mournful friends attend their obsequies.

Now, Ev'ning's solemn twilight ushers Night, 625
 And Darkness overwhelms the fading light,
 The martial bands, fatigu'd, retire to rest,
 With Victory, and Peace, and Freedom blest.
 The field of battle, strew'd with mangled slain,
 Exhibits now a melancholy train; 630
 In groups, the women search for slaughter'd friends,
 The feeble star-light small assistance lends;
 But soon fair Cynthia,¹ rising o'er the main,
 Pours light o'er all the mountains, vales, and plain;
 Then, some who find their friends, in sad despair, 635
 Fill, with terrific cries, the gusty air.
 The rising gales sigh in the waving grove,
 And gliding clouds conceal the moon above;
 Oft, thro' the parting gloom, the lunar light
 Gives all the various objects to the sight, 640
 And shews the women weeping o'er their dead,
 Where the fresh verdure is with gore o'erspread;
 All night they mourn, 'till chearful Morn removes
 Dull Darkness, and displays the vernal groves;
 The warriors, summon'd by the martial horn, 645
 March to the field, where, wet with dews of Morn,
 Cold, ghastly, pale, and horrid to the eye,
 The slain, in wide promiscuous ruin, lie.
 Commanded by their chiefs, the bands, with care,
 Now to the grave the mangled bodies bear; 650
 The Danes they bury in the gory plain,
 And no memorials of their death remain.
 In a deep trench they lay their native dead,
 Who nobly for their country's freedom bled,
 And o'er the grave a lofty trophy rear, 655
 Which shall their fame to future times declare.
 The bards attend, to grace their obsequies;
 Meantime, their friends, with mingled tears and sighs,
 Bear Cormac and his Ellen to the tomb,

Notes

THE PATRIOT

¹ the moon

Where, on a hill, unfading laurels bloom; 660
 There Connal goes, with sadly-solemn pace,
 Whilst tears bedew his venerable face,
 Descending o'er his hoary beard, they shine –
 The offspring of his feeling heart benign;
 With plaintive melody, above their grave 665
 He stands, and mourns the beautiful and brave.

DIRGE

Together, in this earthy tomb,
 In prime of Life, and Beauty's bloom,
 Brave Cormac and his Ellen, dead,
 Lie, with the grassy turf o'erspread. 670
 Alas! no more his voice shall warm
 Our youth to brave War's iron storm –
 No more shall Ellen grace the grove,
 Sacred to Friendship, Peace, and Love.

Below, in yonder trophied plain, 675
 Lie Erin's sons, in battle slain;
 With Life they purchas'd Victory,
 And left their native Island free.
 Dear, honour'd heroes! lost in fight,
 Behold us from the climes of Light, 680
 Our tutelary spirits be,
 And shield Ierne's liberty.

Ambitious Denmark, scourge of Earth,
 Thy soil gives cruel prowlers birth –
 Where'er they come, destructive Death 685
 Blast blooming Peace with baleful breath.
 But lately, yonder summits rung
 With strains of love, by Ellen sung;
 Now, lost in silence – and her charms
 No more her Cormac's bosom warms. 690

Alas! how many maids shall mourn
 Their lovers, who shall ne'er return;
 And widows shall, with tearful eyes,
 Express their grief, with plaintive cries.
 Ah! see where Brian, wrapt in woe, 695
 Beneath yon oak, feels Sorrow's throe –
 The hope and glory of his age
 Was lost, amid the battle's rage.

Adieu! unconscious dust! adieu!
 Our tears shall often fall for you; 700
 And oft the sorrow-breathing strain
 Shall of your sudden death complain;
 Your lov'd remembrance ne'er shall die

Whilst yonder sun illumes the sky –
 For you the bards, in future days,
 Shall chaunt traditionary lays. 705

Responsive to his voice, the bards around,
 With their sweet harps, make woods and rocks resound,
 On the soft breeze the mellow music flies,
 And mingling sounds melt in the distant skies. 710

Now, venerable Connal, on a height,
 Stands forth, conspicuous to the army's sight,
 Who stand arrang'd in ranks, and all attend
 To the wise counsel of their faithful friend:
 "My countrymen," the hoary bard began, 715
 "I see our fame ascend, like rising Dawn –
 I see progressive arts our Island grace,
 And Population, Wealth, and Love encrease.

Our liberty's secur'd by native might,
 Which put our sanguine enemies to flight. 720

Now, in fraternal love our rising youth
 Shall live, inspir'd by love of sacred Truth;
 But, if Ambition prompts a brother's mind,
 To violate the rights of human kind,
 Let love of Liberty, and Public Zeal, 725

Doom growing Tyranny your wrath to feel;
 But let the sapient sages, white with years,
 Direct your councils – dry the widow's tears –
 Preserve the orphan, to his country dear –
 And, by wise laws, bid Justice flourish here. 730

Oft let our hardy youth their weapons wield –
 To arms accustom'd in the peaceful field –
 Then, when the stormy horns of War shall sound,
 They'll pant to be, like you, with laurels crown'd;
 And will preserve their native Island free, 735
 Thus nurtur'd in the love of Liberty.

Now, to your homes, our Erin's guardians, go,
 And pleasure to your pensive friends bestow;
 Again ye shall behold your women's charms,
 Preserv'd unblemish'd, by your conq'ring arms; 740
 Your patrimony, by your risk, secur'd,
 Shall yield you Earth's refreshing fruits matur'd;
 Your flocks and kine the verdant hills shall graze,
 And rip'ning corn reflect the solar rays.

Again the shepherd's pipe, with simple strain,
 Shall, with the melody of Love, complain; 745
 Or, breathing spritely airs, the heart rejoice,
 Whilst blooming maids respond, with tuneful voice.

Adieu, ye chiefs – adieu, each noble band;
 Ye brave defenders of our happy land: 750
 Thus, join'd in love, our foreign foes, in vain,
 Shall, with their hostile thousands, load the main.

'Tis Concord gives you pow'r – the torrent's force,
 With feeble progress, murmurs near its source;
 But, join'd by many streams, adown the steep, 755
 It rolls impetuous, with resistless sweep.
 Still, when your foes invade, like brethren join,
 Then shall the light of Glory on you shine,
 And Erin, blooming 'mid the wavy sea,
 Shall be for ever safe – for ever free. 760

He ceas'd – and joyful shouts of loud acclaim
 Triumphant rise, and swell with Erin's name.
 The joyful conquerors return'd again,
 To cultivate the fertile hill and plain,
 Where, chear'd by Health – of Social Love possess'd, 765
 They flourish'd, with the smiles of Freedom bless'd.

From *Medical Empiricism*

From The Detector of Quackery; Or, Analyser of Medical, Philosophical, Political, Dramatic, and Literary Imposture (1802)

Credulity, which may be called the foible of a good heart, has in all ages rendered the worthy part of mankind dupes to the artifice of the knavish, who, unrestrained by principle, are ever eager to profit by the unsuspecting disposition of generous minds.

Among the various kinds of imposture practised in polished society, Quackery has been the most successful, in consequence of the extreme respect paid to the professors of the art of healing. Our ancestors, indeed, like the ancient Greeks, seem to have considered the knowledge of medicine as an immediate communication from Heaven; hence physicians were not accountable to man for any accident which might attend the administration of remedies.

Empirics profited by the superstition of mankind, and while the wretch who committed a robbery was condemned to an ignominious death, the dispensers of nostrums, which deprived many individuals of their property and their lives, were hailed as public benefactors!

Quack Doctors will ever be most successful in a wealthy commercial country like England; especially in the busy, populous, and luxurious capital, where the multitude have neither leisure nor inclination to detect imposture.¹ Accustomed to obtain every luxury and accommodation for money, most people imagine that gold can procure even health and longevity. Indeed, the principle of self-preservation is so strongly entwined with the fibres of the human heart, that cunning and unprincipled men, who assume the character of physicians, easily impose on the public credulity.

Notes

FROM MEDICAL EMPIRICISM

¹ Corry is more pointed in the book's Dedication: "To that most liberal Patron, the BRITISH PUBLIC, whose Munifi-

cence confers Riches on EMPIRICS and IMPOSTORS of every Description."

Even regular physicians often profit by the fears of mankind, and thus realize a fortune. Many persons, in other respects very sensible, are so much under the influence of *medical superstition*, that, alarmed at the slightest qualm, they hastily send for the physician, who, of course, prescribes something to relieve that agony which might have been prevented by temperance. – Hence the constitution of the valetudinarian is gradually worn out; a premature old age overwhelms him, and he expires surrounded by boluses and physicians.

Opulent persons pay their physician annually for keeping their constitution *in repair*; and from the irregularity of the debauchee, he seems determined that the physician's engagement shall not be a *sinecure*. – On the other hand, Quack Doctors seem to consider the human frame merely as a *subject* for experiments, which, if successful, will ensure the reputation of the practitioner. The acquisition of fame and fortune is, in the estimation of these philosophers, cheaply purchased by sacrificing the lives of a few of *the vulgar*. To such they prescribe *gratis*²; in other words, they require no fee for making an experiment upon some credulous being, which may cost him his life!

Indeed the health of the people would soon be in a hopeful state were they all equally credulous. Between the *internal* use of the *Nervous Cordial*, or the *Balm of Gilead*, and the *external* application of *Perkins's Metallic Tractors*, our *inside* and our *outside* would be completely medicated. By the way, the phrase *inside* is very expressive, and used as a general term by the common people when speaking of disease. Whatever be their internal complaint, they simply say that their *inside* is disordered; and when they recover, their *inside* is quite well again. This comes to just the same conclusion as all the learned phrases adopted by the empiric. While Dr. Brodum, Dr. Solomon, or some other *graduate* of the same fraternity, is, with a grave air, employed in feeling the patient's pulse and investigating symptoms; while his active imagination is like the mole pervading all the dark intricacies of the *viscera*, penetrating through every obstruction, to the *abdomen*, and eventually making its escape from the *anus* in a puff of *flatulency*, the patient contents himself with describing the sensations which he feels in his *inside*.

Notes

² Nothing can be more ridiculous than the slavish obedience of some patients to the dictates of the doctor. A convalescent lately wrote from Bath to his physician in

London, to know whether he might *eat sauce with his pork* (author).