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Poems

Poems on several occasions

Gay, John

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T R I V I A.

B O O K II.

Of walking the Streets by Day.

THUS far the Muſe has trac'd in uſeful lays,
The proper implements for wint'ry ways;
Has taught the walker, with judicious eyes,
To read the various warnings of the ſkies.
Now venture, Muſe, from home to range the town,
And for the public ſafety riſk thy own.
For eaſe and for diſpatch, the morning's beſt;
No tides of paſſengers the ſtreet moleſt.
You'll ſee a draggled damſel here and there,
From Billingſgate her fiſhy traffic bear;
On doors the ſallow milkmaid chalks her gains;
Ah! how unlike the milkmaid of the plains!
Before proud gates attending aſſes bray,
Or arrogate with ſolemn pace the way;
Theſe grave phyſicians, with their milky chear,
The love-ſick maid and dwindling beau repair;
Here rows of drummers ſtand in martial file,
And with their vellum thunder ſhake the pile,
To greet the new-made bride. Are ſounds like theſe
The proper prelude to a ſtate of peace?

Now Induſtry awakes her buſy ſons,
Full charg'd with news the breathleſs hawker runs:
Shops open, coaches roll, carts ſhake the ground,
And all the ſtreets with paſſing cries reſound.
If cloath'd in black, you tread the buſy town,
Or if diſtinguiſh'd by the rev'rend gown,
Three trades avoid; oft in the mingling preſs,
The barbers apron ſoils the ſable dreſs;
Shun the perfumer's touch with cautious eye,
Nor let the baker's ſtep advance too nigh:
Ye walkers, too, that youthful colours wear,
Three ſullying trades avoid with equal care;
The little chimney-ſweeper ſkulks along,
And marks with ſooty ſtains the heedleſs throng;
When ſmall-coal murmurs in the hoarſer throat,
From ſmutty dangers guard thy threaten'd coat:
The duſt-man's cart offends thy cloaths and eyes,
When through the ſtreet a cloud of aſhes flies;
But whether black or lighter dyes are worn,
The chandler's baſket, on his ſhoulder borne,
With tallow ſpots thy coat; reſign the way,
To ſhun the ſurly butcher's greaſy tray;
Butchers, whoſe hands are dy'd with blood's foul ſtain,
And always foremoſt in the hangman's train.
Let due civilities be ſtrictly paid,
The wall ſurrender to the hooded maid;
Nor let thy ſturdy elbow's haſty rage
Juſtle the feeble ſteps of trembling age:
And when the porter bends beneath his load,
And pants for breath, clear thou the crouded road.
But, above all, the gropping blind direct,
And from the preſſing throng the lame protect.

You'll ſometimes meet a ſop, of niceſt tread,
Whoſe mantling peruke veils his empty head,
At ev'ry ſtep he dreads the wall to loſe,
And riſks, to ſave a coach, his red-heel'd ſhoes;
Him, like the miller, paſs with caution by,
Leſt from his ſhoulder clouds of powder fly.
But when the bully, with aſſuming pace,
Cocks his broad hat, edg'd round with tarniſh'd lace,
Yield not the way; defy his ſtrutting pride,
And thruſt him to the muddy kennel's ſide;
He never turns again, nor dares oppoſe,
But mutters coward curſes as he goes.

If drawn by bus'neſs to a ſtreet unknown,
Let the ſworn porter point thee through the town;
Be ſure obſerve the ſigns, for ſigns remain,
Like faithful land-marks to the walking train.
Seek not from 'prentices to learn the way,
Thoſe fabling boys will turn thy ſteps aſtray;
Aſk the grave tradeſman to direct thee right,
He ne'er deceives, but when he profits by't.

Where fam'd St Giles's ancient limits ſpread,
An inrail'd column rears its lofty head,
Here to ſev'n ſtreets ſev'n dials count the day,
And from each other catch the circling ray.
Here oft the peaſant, with inquiring face,
Bewilder'd, trudges on from place to place;
He dwells on ev'ry ſign with ſtupid gaze,
Enters the narrow alley's doubtful maze,
Tries ev'ry winding court and ſtreet in vain,
And doubles o'er his weary ſteps again.
Thus hardy Theſeus with intrepid feet,
Travers'd the dang'rous labyrinth of Crete;

But ſtill the wand'ring paſſes forc'd his ſtay,
Till Ariadne's clue unwinds the way.
But do not thou, like that bold chief, confide
Thy vent'rous footſteps to a female guide;
She'll lead thee with deluſive ſmiles along,
Dive in thy fob, and drop thee in the throng.
When waggiſh boys the ſtunted beſom ply
To rid the ſlabby pavement, paſs not by
Ere thou haſt held their hands; ſome heedleſs flirt
Will overſpread thy calves with ſpatt'ring dirt.
Where porters hogſheads roll from carts aſlope,
Or brewers down ſteep cellars ſtretch the rope,
Where counted billets are by carmen toſt,
Stay thy raſh ſtep, and walk without the poſt.
What though the gath'ring mire thy feet beſmear,
The voice of induſtry is always near.
Hark! the boy calls thee to his deſtin'd ſtand,
And the ſhoe ſhines beneath his oily hand.
Here let the Muſe, fatigu'd amid the throng,
Adorn her precepts with digreſſive ſong;
Of ſhirtleſs youths the ſecret riſe to trace,
And ſhew the parent of the ſable race.
Like mortal man, great Jove, (grown fond of change),
Of old was wont this nether world to range
To ſeek amours; the vice the monarch lov'd
Soon through the wide etherial court improv'd,
And ev'n the proudeſt goddeſs, now and then,
Would lodge a night among the ſons of men;
To vulgar deities deſcends the faſhion,
Each, like her betters, had her earthly paſſion.

Then Cloacina * (goddeſs of the tide
Whoſe ſable ſtreams beneath the city glide)
Indulg'd the modiſh flame; the town ſhe rov'd;
A mortal ſcavenger ſhe ſaw, ſhe lov'd;
The muddy ſpots that dry'd upon his face,
Like female patches, heighten'd ev'ry grace:
She gaz'd; ſhe ſigh'd. For love can beauties ſpy
In what ſeems faults to ev'ry common eye.

Now had the watchman walk'd his ſecond round;
When Cloacina hears the rumbling ſound
Of her brown lover's cart, for well ſhe knows
That pleaſing thunder: Swift the goddeſs roſe,
And through the ſtreets purſu'd the diſtant noiſe,
Her boſom panting with expected joys.
With the night-wand'ring harlot's airs ſhe paſt,
Bruſh'd near his ſide, and wanton glances caſt;
In the black form of cinder-wench ſhe came,
When love, the hour, the place, had baniſh'd ſhame;
To the dark alley arm in arm they move:
O may no link-boy interrupt their love!

When the pale moon had nine times fill'd her ſpace,
The pregnant goddeſs (cautious of diſgrace)
Deſcends to earth; but ſought no midwife's aid,
Nor 'midſt her anguiſh to Lucina pray'd;

* Cloacina was a goddeſs whoſe image Tatius (a king of the Sabines) found in the common-ſhore, and not knowing what goddeſs it was, he called it Cloacina, from the place in which it was found, and paid to it divine honours. *Lactant.* 1. 20. *Minut. Fel. Oct.* p. 232.

No chearful goſſip wiſh'd the mother joy;
Alone, beneath a bulk ſhe dropt the boy.
The child through various riſks in years improv'd,
At firſt a beggar's brat, compaſſion mov'd;
His infant tongue ſoon learnt the canting art,
Knew all the pray'rs and whines to touch the heart.
Oh happy unown'd youths, your limbs can bear
The ſcorching dog-ſtar, and the winter's air,
While the rich infant, nurs'd with care and pain,
Thirſts with each heat, and coughs with ev'ry rain
The goddeſs long had mark'd the child's diſtreſs,
And long had ſought his ſuff'rings to redreſs;
She prays the gods to take the foundling's part,
To teach his hands ſome beneficial art
Practis'd in ſtreets: The gods her ſuit allow'd,
And made him uſeful to the walking croud,
To cleanſe the miry feet, and o'er the ſhoe
With nimble ſkill the gloſſy black renew.
Each power contributes to relieve the poor:
With the ſtrong briſtles of the mighty boar
Diana forms his bruſh; the god of day
A tripod gives, amid the crouded way
To raiſe the dirty foot, and eaſe his toil;
Kind Neptune fills his vaſe with foetid oil
Preſs'd from th' enormous whale; the god of fire,
From whoſe dominions ſmoaky clouds aſpire,
Among theſe generous preſents joins his part,
And aids with ſoot the new japanning art.
Pleas'd ſhe receives the gifts; ſhe downward glides,
Lights in Fleet-ditch, and ſhoots beneath the tides.
Now dawns the morn, the ſturdy lad awakes,
Leaps from his ſtall, his tangled hair he ſhakes,

Then leaning o'er the rails, he muſing ſtood,
And view'd below the black canal of mud,
Where common ſhores a lulling murmur keep,
Whoſe torrents ruſh from Holborn's fatal ſteep:
Penſive through idleneſs, tears flow'd apace,
Which eas'd his loaded heart, and waſh'd his face;
At length he ſighing cry'd, That boy was bleſt,
Whoſe infant lips have drain'd a mother's breaſt;
But happier far are thoſe, (if ſuch be known)
Whom both a father and a mother own;
But I, alas! hard fortune's utmoſt ſcorn,
Who ne'er knew parent, was an orphan born!
Some boys are rich by birth beyond all wants,
Belov'd by uncles, and kind good old aunts;
When time comes round, a Chriſtmas-box they bear,
And one day makes them rich for all the year.
Had I the precepts of a father learn'd,
Perhaps I then the coachman's fare had earn'd,
For leſſer boys can drive; I thirſty ſtand,
And ſee the double flaggon charge their hand,
See them puff off the froth, and gulp amain,
While with dry tongue I lick my lips in vain.
While thus he fervent prays, the heaving tide,
In widen'd circles beats on either ſide;
The goddeſs roſe amid the inmoſt round,
With wither'd turnip-tops her temples crown'd;
Low reach'd her dripping treſſes, lank, and black
As the ſmooth jet, or gloſſy raven's back;
Around her waſte a circling eel was twin'd,
Which bound her robe that hung in rags behind.
Now beck'ning to the boy, ſhe thus begun,
Thy prayers are granted; weep no more, my ſon:

Go thrive. At ſome frequented corner ſtand,
This bruſh I give thee, graſp it in thy hand,
Temper the ſoot within this vaſe of oil,
And let the little tripod aid the toil;
On this methinks I ſee the walking crew
At thy requeſt ſupport the miry ſhoe,
The foot grows black that was with dirt imbrown'd,
And in thy pocket gingling halfpence ſound.
The goddeſs plunges ſwift beneath the flood,
And daſhes all around her ſhow'rs of mud:
The youth ſtrait choſe his poſt; the labour ply'd
Where branching ſtreets from Charing-croſs divide;
His treble voice reſounds along the Meuſe,
And White-hall echoes——*Clean your Honour's ſhoes.*
Like the ſweet-ballad, this amuſing lay
Too long detains the walker on his way;
While he attends, new dangers round him throng;
The buſy city aſks inſtructive ſong.
Where elevated o'er the gaping croud,
Claſp'd in the board the perjur'd head is bow'd,
Betimes retreat: Here, thick as hailſtones pour,
Turnips, and half hatch'd eggs, (a mingled ſhow'r)
Among the rabble rain: Some random throw
May with the trickling yolk thy cheek o'erflow.
Though expedition bids, yet never ſtray
Where no rang'd poſts defend the rugged way.
Here laden carts with thundring waggons meet,
Wheels claſh with wheels, and bar the narrow ſtreet;
The laſhing whip reſounds, the horſes ſtrain,
And blood in anguiſh burſts the ſwelling vein.
O barb'rous men, your cruel breaſts aſſuage,
Why vent ye on the gen'rous ſteed your rage?

Does not his ſervice earn your daily bread?
Your wives, your children, by his labours fed!
If, as the Samian taught, the ſoul revives,
And, ſhifting ſeats, in other bodies lives,
Severe ſhall be the brutal coachman's change,
Doom'd in a hackney-horſe the town to range:
Carmen, transform'd, the groaning load ſhall draw,
Whom other tyrants with the laſh ſhall awe.
Who would of Watling-ſtreet the dangers ſhare,
When the broad pavement of Cheapſide is near?
Or who * that rugged ſtreet would traverſe o'er,
That ſtretches, O Fleet-ditch, from thy black ſhore
To the Tower's moated walls? Here ſtreams aſcend
That, in mix'd fumes, the wrinkled noſe offend.
Where chandlers cauldrons boil; where fiſhy prey
Hide the wet ſtall, long abſent from the ſea;
And where the cleaver chops the heifer's ſpoil,
And where huge hogſheads ſweat with trainy oil,
Thy breathing noſtril hold: But how ſhall I
Paſs, where in piles † Cornavian cheeſes lie?
Cheeſe, that the table's cloſing rites denies,
And bids me with th' unwilling chaplain riſe.
O bear me to the paths of fair Pell-mell,
Safe are thy pavements, grateful is thy ſmell!
At diſtance rolls along the gilded coach,
Nor ſturdy carmen on thy walks encroach;
No lets would bar thy ways where chairs deny'd,
The ſoft ſupports of lazineſs and pride;
Shops breathe perfumes, thro' ſaſhes ribbons glow,
The mutual arms of ladies, and the beau.

* Thames-ſtreet, † Cheſhire, antiently ſo called.

Yet ſtill even here, when rains the paſſage hide,
Oft the looſe ſtone ſquirts up a muddy tide
Beneath thy careleſs foot; and from on high,
Where maſons mount the ladder, fragments fly;
Mortar, and crumbled lime in ſhow'rs deſcend,
And o'er thy head deſtructive tiles impend.
But ſometimes let me leave the noiſy roads,
And ſilent wander in the cloſe abodes
Where wheels ne'er ſhake the ground; there penſive ſtray,
In ſtudious thought, the long uncrouded way.
Here I remark each walker's diff'rent face,
And in their look their various bus'neſs trace.
The broker here his ſpacious beaver wears,
Upon his brow ſit jealouſies and cares;
Bent on ſome mortgage (to avoid reproach)
He ſeeks bye-ſtreets, and ſaves th' expenſive coach.
Soft, at low doors, old letchers tap their cane,
For fair recluſe, who travels Drury-lane;
Here roams uncomb'd the laviſh rake, to ſhun
His Fleet-ſtreet draper's everlaſting dun.
Careful obſervers, ſtudious of the town,
Shun the misfortunes that diſgrace the clown;
Untempted, they contemn the jugler's feats,
Paſs by the Meuſe, nor try the thimble's cheats †.
When drays bound high, they never croſs behind,
Where bubbling yeſt is blown by guſts of wind:
And when up Ludgate-hill huge carts move ſlow,
Far from the ſtraining ſteeds ſecurely go,

† A cheat commonly practiſed in the ſtreets with three thimbles and a little ball.

Whoſe daſhing hoofs behind them fling the mire,
And mark with muddy blots the gazing 'ſquire.
The Parthian thus his jav'lin backward throws,
And as he flies infeſts purſuing foes.
The thoughtleſs wits ſhall frequent forfeits pay,
Who 'gainſt the ſentry's box diſcharge their tea.
Do thou ſome court, or ſecret corner ſeek,
Nor fluſh with ſhame the paſſing virgin's cheek.
Yet let me not deſcend to trivial ſong,
Nor vulgar circumſtance my verſe prolong;
Why ſhould I teach the maid when torrents pour,
Her head to ſhelter from the ſudden ſhower?
Nature will beſt her ready hand inform,
With her ſpread petticoat to fence the ſtorm.
Does not each walker know the warning ſign,
When wiſps of ſtraw depend upon the twine
Croſs the cloſe ſtreet; that then the paver's art
Renews the ways, deny'd to coach and cart?
Who knows not that the coachman laſhing by,
Oft with his flouriſh cuts the heedleſs eye;
And when he takes his ſtand, to wait a fare,
His horſes foreheads ſhun the winter air?
Nor will I roam, when ſummer's ſultry rays
Parch the dry ground, and ſpread with duſt the ways;
With whirling guſts the rapid atoms riſe,
Smoke o'er the pavement, and involve the ſkies.
Winter my theme confines; whoſe nitry wind
Shall cruſt the ſlabby mire, and kennels bind;
She bids the ſnow deſcend in flaky ſheets,
And in her hoary mantle cloath the ſtreets.
Let not the virgin tread theſe ſlippery roads,
The gathering fleece the hollow patten loads;

But if thy footſtep ſlides with clotted froſt,
Strike off the breaking balls againſt the poſt.
On ſilent wheel the paſſing coaches roll;
Oft look behind, and ward the threatning pole.
In harden'd orbs the ſchool-boy moulds the ſnow,
To mark the coachman with a dextrous throw.
Why do ye, boys, the kennel's ſurface ſpread,
To tempt with faithleſs paſs the matron's tread?
How can ye laugh to ſee the damſel ſpurn,
Sink in your frauds, and her green ſtocking mourn?
At White's the harneſs'd chairman idly ſtands,
And ſwings around his waiſt his tingling hands:
The ſempſtreſs ſpeeds to Change with red-tipt noſe;
The Belgian ſtove beneath her footſtool glows;
In half whipt muſlin needles uſeleſs ly,
And ſhuttle-cocks acroſs the counter fly.
Theſe ſports warm harmleſs; why then will ye prove,
Deluded maids, the dang'rous flame of love?
Where Covent-Garden's famous temple ſtands,
That boaſts the work of Jones' immortal hands:
Columns with plain magnificence appear,
And graceful porches lead along the ſquare:
Here oft my courſe I bend, when lo! from far,
I ſpy the furies of the football war:
The 'prentice quits his ſhop, to join the crew,
Increaſing crouds the flying game purſue.
Thus, as you roll the ball o'er ſnowy ground,
The gath'ring globe augments with ev'ry round.
But whither ſhall I run? the throng draws nigh,
The ball now ſkims the ſtreet, now ſoars on high;
The dext'rous glazier ſtrong returns the bound,
And gingling ſaſhes on the pentheuſe ſound.

O roving Muſe, recal that wond'rous year,
When winter reign'd in bleak Britannia's air;
When hoary Thames, with froſted oziers crown'd,
Was three long moons in icy fetters bound.
The waterman, forlorn along the ſhore,
Penſive reclines upon his uſeleſs oar,
Sees harneſs'd ſteeds deſert the ſtony town;
And wander roads unſtable not their own:
Wheels o'er the harden'd waters ſmoothly glide,
And raiſe with whiten'd tracks the ſlipp'ry tide.
Here the fat cook piles high the blazing fire,
And ſcarce the ſpit can turn the ſteer entire.
Booths ſudden hide the Thames, long ſtreets appear,
And num'rous games proclaim the crouded fair.
So when a general bids the martial train
Spread their encampment o'er the ſpacious plain;
Thick riſing tents a canvas city build,
And the loud dice reſound through all the field.

'Twas here the matron found a doleful fate:
Let elegiac lay the woe relate,
Soft as the breath of diſtant flutes, at hours
When ſilent evening cloſes up the flowers;
Lulling as falling water's hollow noiſe;
Indulging grief, like Philomela's voice.

Doll every day had walk'd theſe treach'rous roads;
Her neck grew warpt beneath autumnal loads
Of various fruit; ſhe now a baſket bore,
That head, alas! ſhall baſket bear no more.
Each booth ſhe frequent paſt, in queſt of gain,
And boys with pleaſure heard her ſhrilling ſtrain.
Ah Doll! all mortals muſt reſign their breath,
And induſtry itſelf ſubmit to death!

The cracking cryſtal yields, ſhe ſinks, ſhe dies,
Her head chopt off, from her loſt ſhoulders flies;
Pippins ſhe cry'd, but death her voice confounds,
And pip-pip-pip along the ice reſounds.
So when the Thracian furies Orpheus tore,
And left his bleeding trunk deform'd with gore,
His ſever'd head floats down the ſilver tide,
His yet warm tongue for his loſt conſort cry'd;
Eurydice with quiv'ring voice he mourn'd,
And Heber's banks Eurydice return'd.
But now the weſtern gale the flood unbinds,
And black'ning clouds move on with warmer winds,
The wooden town its frail foundation leaves,
And Thames' full urn rolls down his plenteous waves;
From ev'ry penthouſe ſtreams the fleeting ſnow,
And with diſſolving froſt the pavements flow.
Experienc'd men, inur'd to city-ways,
Need not the calendar to count their days.
When through the town with ſlow and ſolemn air,
Led by the noſtril, walks the muzzled bear;
Behind him moves majeſtically dull,
The pride of Hockley-hole, the ſurly bull;
Learn hence the periods of the week to name,
Mondays and Thurſdays are the days of game.
When fiſhy ſtalls with double ſtore are laid;
The golden-belly'd carp, the broad-finn'd maid,
Red-ſpeckled trouts, the ſalmon's ſilver jowl,
The jointed lobſter, and unſcaly ſoale,
And luſcious 'ſcallops to allure the taſtes
Of rigid zealots to delicious feaſts;
Wedneſdays and Fridays you'll obſerve from hence,
Days, when our ſires were doom'd to abſtinence.

When dirty waters from balconies drop,
And dext'rous damſels twirl the ſprinkling mop,
And cleanſe the ſpatter'd ſaſh, and ſcrub the ſtairs;
Know Saturday's concluſive morn appears.
Succeſſive cries the ſeaſon's change declare,
And mark the monthly progreſs of the year.
Hark, how the ſtreets with treble voices ring,
To ſell the bounteous product of the ſpring!
Sweet-ſmelling flow'rs, and elder's early bud,
With nettle's tender ſhoots, to cleanſe the blood:
And when June's thunder cools the ſultry ſkies,
Ev'n Sundays are prophan'd by mackrel cries.
Walnuts the fruit'rer's hand in autumn ſtain,
Blue plums and juicy pears augment his gain;
Next oranges the longing boys entice,
To truſt their copper fortunes to the dice.
When roſemary, and bays, the poet's crown,
Are bawl'd, in frequent cries, through all the town,
Then judge the feſtival of Chriſtmas near,
Chriſtmas, the joyous period of the year.
Now with bright holly all your temples ſtrow,
With laurel green, and ſacred miſſetoe.
Now, heav'n-born Charity, thy bleſſings ſhed;
Bid meagre Want uprear her ſickly head:
Bid ſhiv'ring limbs be warm; let plenty's bowl
In humble roofs make glad the needy ſoul.
See, ſee, the heaven-born maid her bleſſings ſhed;
Lo! meagre Want uprears her ſickly head,
Cloath'd are the naked, and the needy glad,
While ſelfiſh Avarice alone is ſad.
Proud coaches paſs, regardleſs of the moan
Of infant orphans, and the widow's groan;

While charity ſtill moves the walker's mind,
His liberal purſe relieves the lame and blind.
Judiciouſly thy half-pence are beſtow'd,
Where the laborious beggar ſweeps the road.
Whate'er you give, give ever at demand,
Nor let old age long ſtretch his palſy'd hand.
Thoſe who give late, are importun'd each day,
And ſtill are teaz'd, becauſe they ſtill delay.
If e'er the miſer durſt his farthings ſpare,
He thinly ſpreads them through the public ſquare,
Where, all beſide the rail, rang'd beggars lie,
And from each other catch the doleful cry;
With heav'n, for twopence, cheaply wipes his ſcore,
Lifts up his eyes, and haſtes to beggar more.

Where the braſs knocker, wrapt in flannel band,
Forbids the thunder of the footman's hand;
Th' upholder, rueful harbinger of death,
Waits with impatience for the dying breath;
As vultures o'er a camp, with hov'ring flight,
Snuff up the future carnage of the fight.
Here canſt thou paſs, unmindful of a pray'r,
That heav'n in mercy may thy brother ſpare?

Come, F * * * ſincere, experienc'd friend,
Thy briefs, thy deeds, and ev'n thy fees ſuſpend;
Come let us leave the Temple's ſilent walls,
Me bus'neſs to my diſtant lodging calls:
Thro' the long Strand together let us ſtray:
With thee converſing I forget the way.
Behold that narrow ſtreet which ſteep deſcends,
Whoſe building to the ſlimy ſhore extends;
Here Arundel's fair ſtructure rear'd its frame,
The ſtreet alone retains an empty name:

Where Titian's glowing paint the canvas warm'd,
And Raphael's fair design, with judgment, charm'd,
Now hangs the bellman's song, and pasted here
The colour'd prints of Overton appear.
Where statues breath'd the works of Phidia's hands,
A wooden pump, or lonely watch-house stands.
There Essex' stately pile adorn'd the shore,
There Cecil's, Bedford's, Villiers' now no more.
Yet Burlington's fair palace still remains;
Beauty within, without proportion reigns.
Beneath his eye declining art revives,
The wall with animated picture lives;
There Handel strikes the strings, the melting strain
Transports the soul, and thrills thro' ev'ry vein;
There oft I enter, (but with cleaner shoes)
For Burlington's belov'd by ev'ry muse.

O ye associate walkers, O my friends,
Upon your state what happiness attends!
What though no coach to frequent visit rolls,
Nor for your shilling chairmen sling their poles;
Yet still your nerves rheumatic pains defy,
Nor lazy jaundice dulls your saffron eye;
No wasting cough discharges sounds of death,
Nor wheezing asthma heaves in vain for breath;
Nor from your restless couch is heard the groan
Of burning gout, or sedentary stone.
Let others in the jolting coach confide,
Or in the leaky boat the Thames divide;
Or, box'd within the chair, contemn the street,
And trust their safety to another's feet;
Still let me walk; for oft the sudden gale
Ruffles the tide, and shifts the dang'rous sail.

Then ſhall the paſſenger too late deplore,
The whelming billow, and the faithleſs oar;
The drunken chairman in the kennel ſpurns,
The glaſſes ſhatters, and his charge o'erturns.
Who can recount the coach's various harms,
The legs disjointed, and the broken arms?
I've ſeen a beau, in ſome ill-fated hour,
When o'er the ſtones choak'd kennels ſwell the ſhow'r,
In gilded chariot loll; he with diſdain
Views ſpatter'd paſſengers all drench'd in rain;
With mud fill'd high, the rumbling cart draws near,
Now rule thy prancing ſteeds, lac'd charioteer;
The duſtman laſhes on with ſpiteful rage,
His ponderous ſpokes thy painted wheel engage,
Cruſh'd is thy pride, down falls the ſhrieking beau,
The ſlabby pavement cryſtal fragments ſtrow,
Black floods of mire th' embroider'd coat diſgrace,
And mud enwraps the honours of his face.
So when dread Jove the ſon of Phoebus hurl'd,
Scar'd with dark thunder, to the nether world;
The headſtrong courſers tore the ſilver reins,
And the ſun's beamy ruin gilds the plains.
If the pale walker pant with weak'ning ills,
His ſickly hand is ſtor'd with friendly bills:
From hence he learns the ſeventh-born doctor's fame,
From hence he learns the cheapeſt tailor's name.
Shall the large mutton ſmoak upon your boards?
Such, Newgate's copious market beſt affords.
Would'ſt thou with mighty beef augment thy meal?
Seek Leadenhall; St James's ſends thee veal;

Thames-ſtreet gives cheeſes; Covent-garden fruits;
Moorfields old books, and Monmouth-ſtreet old ſuits.
Hence mayſt thou well ſupply the wants of life,
Support thy family, and cloath thy wife.
Volumes on ſhelter'd ſtalls expanded lie,
And various ſcience lures the learned eye;
The bending ſhelves with pond'rous ſcholiaſts groan,
And deep divines to modern ſhops unknown:
Here, like the bee, that on induſtrious wing
Collects the various odours of the ſpring,
Walkers, at leiſure, learning's flow'rs may ſpoil,
Nor watch the waſting of the midnight oil,
May morals ſnatch from Plutarch's tatter'd page,
A mildew'd Bacon, or Stagyra's ſage.
Here ſauntering 'prentices o'er Otway weep,
O'er Congreve ſmile, or over D** ſleep;
Pleas'd ſempſtreſſes the Lock's fam'd Rape unfold,
And Squirts * read Garth, till apozems grow cold.
O Lintot, let my labours obvious lie,
Rang'd on thy ſtall, for ev'ry curious eye;
So ſhall the poor theſe precepts gratis know,
And to my verſe their future ſafeties know.
What walker ſhall his mean ambition fix
On the falſe luſtre of a coach and ſix?
Let the vain virgin, lur'd by glaring ſhow,
Sigh for the liv'ries of th' embroider'd beau.
See yon bright chariot on its braces ſwing,
With Flanders mares, and on an arched ſpring.

* The name of an apothecary's boy in the poem of the Diſpenſary.

That wretch, to gain an equipage and place,
Betray'd his ſiſter to a lewd embrace.
This coach, that with the blazon'd 'ſcutcheon glows
Vain of his unknown race, the coxcomb ſhows.
Here the brib'd lawyer, ſunk in velvet, ſleeps;
The ſtarving orphan, as he paſſes, weeps;
There flames a fool, begirt with tinſel'd ſlaves,
Who waſtes the wealth of a whole race of knaves.
That other, with a cluſt'ring train behind,
Owes his new honours to a ſordid mind,
This next in court-fidelity excells,
The public rifles, and his country ſells.
May the proud chariot never be my fate,
If purchas'd at ſo mean, ſo dear a rate;
Or rather give me ſweet content on foot,
Wrapt in my virtue, and a good ſurtout!