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Thomas Purney, *A Full Enquiry into the True Nature of Pastoral* (1717)

With an Introduction by
Earl Wasserman

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INTRODUCTION

In the preface to each of his volumes of pastorals (*Pastorals. After the simple Manner of Theocritus, 1717*; *Pastorals. viz. The Bashful Swain: and Beauty and Simplicity, 1717*) Thomas Purney rushed into critical discussions with the breathlessness of one impatient to reveal his opinions, and, after touching on a variety of significant topics, cut himself short with the promise of a future extensive treatise on pastoral poetry. In 1933 Mr. H.O. White, unable to discover the treatise, was forced to conclude that it probably had never appeared (*The Works of Thomas Purney*, ed. H.O. White, Oxford, 1933, p. 111), although it had been advertised at the conclusion of Purney's second volume of poetry as shortly to be printed. A copy, probably unique, of *A Full Enquiry into the True Nature of Pastoral* (1717) was, however, recently purchased by the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library of the University of California, and is here reproduced. Despite the obvious failure of the essay to influence critical theory, it justifies attention because it is the most thorough and specific of the remarkably few studies of the pastoral in an age when many thought it necessary to imitate Virgil's poetic career, and because it is, in many respects, a contribution to the more liberal tendencies within neoclassic criticism. Essentially, the *Full Enquiry* is a coherent expansion of the random comments collected in the poet's earlier prefaces.

Purney belongs to the small group of early eighteenth-century critics who tended to reject the aesthetics based upon authority and pre-established definitions of the *genres*, and to evolve one logically from the nature of the human mind and the sources of its enjoyment; in other words, who turned attention from the objective work of art to the subjective response. These men, such as Dennis and Addison, were not searching for an aesthetics of safety, one that would produce unimpeachable correctness; Purney frequently underscored his preference for a faulty and irregular work that is alive to a meticulous but dull one. This is not to be understood as praise of the irregular: the rules of poetry must be established, but they must be founded rationally on the ends of poetry, pleasure and profit, and the psychological process by which they are received, and not solely on the practices and doctrines of the ancients. Taking his cue from the Hobbesian and Lockian methodology of Addison's papers of the pleasures of the imagination without delving into Addison's sensational philosophy, Purney outlined an extensive critical project to investigate (1) "the Nature and Constitution of the human Mind, and what Pleasures it is capable of receiving from Poetry"; (2) the best methods of exciting those pleasures; (3) the rules whereby these methods may be incorporated into literary form (*Works*, ed. White, p. 48). It is this pattern of thought that regulates the *Full Enquiry*. Perhaps more than any other poetic type, the pastoral of the Restoration and the early eighteenth century was dominated by classical tradition; the verse composed was largely imitative of the eclogues of Theocritus and Virgil, especially the latter, and criticism of the form was deduced from their practices or from an assumption that the true pastoral of antiquity was the product of the Golden Age. Of this mode of criticism Rapin and Pope were the leading exemplars. In opposition, Fontenelle, Tickell (if he was the author of the *Guardian* essays on the pastoral), and Purney developed their theories empirically and hence directed the pastoral away from the classical tradition. (On these two schools see J.E. Congleton, "Theories of Pastoral Poetry in England, 1684-1717," *SP*, XLI, 1944, pp. 544-575.) Although Purney adopted a modification of Aristotle's critical divisions into Fable, Character, Sentiment, and Diction, and took for granted the doctrine of the distinction of *genres*, he otherwise rejected traditional formulae and critical tenets, and began with the premise that man is most delighted by the imaginative perception of the states of life for which he would willingly exchange his own. These are "the busy, great, or pompous" (depicted in tragedy and the epic) and "the retir'd, soft, or easy" (depicted in the pastoral). From this analysis of "the Nature of the Human Mind," the characteristics of the true pastoral, such as the avoidance of the

hardships and vulgarities of rural life, follow logically. Similarly, since a minutely drawn description deprives the reader's fancy of its naturally pleasurable exercise, pastoral descriptions should only set "the Image in the finest Light." Rapin, on the other hand, had determined the proper length of descriptions by examining Virgil and Theocritus. For the association of the pleasure afforded by the pastoral with the natural human delight in ease, Purney was indebted to the essays on the pastoral in *The Guardian* (see no. 22), from which he borrowed extensively for many of his principles, and to Fontenelle, who constructed his theory of the pastoral upon the premise that all men are dominated "par une certaine paresse." By contrast, although Pope adopted Fontenelle's premise, he tested its validity by relating it to the accepted definition of the *genre*.

One of Purney's major purposes in the essay was to dignify the pastoral by demonstrating that it admits all the components generally reserved for tragedy and the epic. Most critics had considered the pastoral a minor form and consequently had narrowed their attention to a few frequently debated questions, mainly the state of rural life to be depicted and the level of the style to be adopted. All agreed that the poem should be brief and simple in its fable, characters, and style. But it was therefore a poetic exercise, no more significant, Purney complained, than a madrigal. He was intent upon investing the pastoral with all the major poetic elements—extended, worthy fable; moral; fully-drawn characters; and appropriate expression. For in his mind the poem best incorporates one of the only two true styles, the tender, and therefore warrants a literary status beneath only tragedy and the epic.

Like his critical method, Purney's decision that the pastoral should depict contemporary rural life divested of what is vulgar and painful in it, rather than either the life of the Golden Age or true rustic existence places him on the side of Addison, Tickell, Ambrose Philips, and Fontenelle (indeed, his statement is a paraphrase of Fontenelle's), and in opposition to the school of Rapin, Pope, and Gay, who argued for a portrait of the Golden Age. Both schools campaigned for a simplicity removed from realistic rusticity (which they detected in Spenser and Theocritus) and refinement (as in Virgil's eclogues); but to one group the term meant the innocence of those remote from academic learning and social sophistication, and to the other the refined simplicity of an age when all men—including kings and philosophers—were shepherds. With reservations, the first group tended to prefer Theocritus and Spenser; and the second, Virgil. Hence, too, the first group approved of Philips' efforts to create a fresh and simple pastoral manner. As a poet, Purney moved sharply away from the classical pastoral by curiously blending an entirely original subject matter with a sentimentalized realism and a naive, diffuse expression; and as a critic he pointed in the direction of Shenstone and Allan Ramsay by emphasizing the tender, admitting the use of earthy realism in the manner of Gay, and recommending for pastoral such "inimitably pretty and delightful" tales as *The Two Children in the Wood*. Had his contemporaries read the treatise, how they would have been amused to contemplate the serious literary treatment of chapbook narratives, despite Addison's praise of this ballad.

In his usual nervous manner, the critic did not confine himself to his topic, but touched on a number of significant peripheral subjects. He showed the virtue of concrete and specific imagery at a time when most poets sought the sanctuary of abstractions and universals; commented cogently on the styles of Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare; anticipated the later doctrine of the power of the incomplete and the obscure to suggest and therefore to compel the imagination to create; adopted and expanded Addison's distinction between the sublime and the beautiful; and, borrowing a suggestion that he probably found in Dennis (*Critical Works*, ed. Edward N. Hooker, Baltimore, 1919, I, 47), developed a profitable distinction between the sublime image and the sublime thought by examining their different psychological effects.

But, because they run counter to the accepted opinions of his age, it is Purney's comments on matters of style that are especially striking, although it must be remembered that most of them have to do with the pastoral alone and do not constitute a general theory of poetics. Perhaps his most original contribution is his attack upon the cautious contemporary styles of poetry: "strong lines," a term that originally defined the style of the metaphysical poets, but that now described the compact and pregnant manner of Dryden's satires, for example, and the "fine and agreeable," exemplified, let us say, by Pope's *Pastorals* or Prior's *vers de société*. To these Purney preferred the bolder though less popular styles, the sublime and the tender, corresponding to the two pure artistic manners that Addison had distinguished. How widely Purney intended to diverge from current poetry can be judged by his definition of the sublime image as one that puts the mind "upon the Stretch" as in Lady Macbeth's apostrophe to night; and by his praise of the simplicity of Desdemona's "Mine eyes do itch." Both passages were usually ridiculed by Purney's contemporaries as indecorous.

Equally original is Purney's concept of simplicity, which he insisted should appear in the style and the nature of the characters, not in denuding the fable and in divesting the poem of the ornaments of poetry, as Pope had argued in the preface of his *Pastorals*. It was this concept that also led Purney to his unusual theory of enervated diction. How unusual it was can be judged by comparing with the then-current practices and theories of poetic diction his recommendation of monosyllables, expletives, the

archaic language of Chaucer and Spenser, and current provincialisms—devices that Gay had used for burlesque—as means of producing the soft and the tender.

But it is hardly true that Purney's "true kinship is with the romantics," as Mr. White claims, for there is a wide chasm between a romantic and a daring and extravagant neoclassicist. Rather, Purney's search for a subjective psychological basis for criticism is one of the elements out of which the romantic aesthetics was eventually evolved, and it frequently led him to conclusions that reappear later in the eighteenth century.

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In addition to editing Purney's pastorals, Mr. H.O. White has published an exhaustive study of "Thomas Purney, a Forgotten Poet and Critic of the Eighteenth Century" in *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, XV (1929), 67-97. University of Illinois.

Earl. R. Wasserman

A FULL ENQUIRY INTO THE TRUE NATURE OF PASTORAL.

The PROEME or first Chapter of which contains a SUMMARY of all that the CRITICKS, ancient or modern, have hitherto deliver'd on that SUBJECT. After which follows what the Author has farther to advance, in order to carry the POEM on to its utmost Perfection.

* * * * *

Written by Mr. *PURNEY*.

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[Illustration]

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LONDON

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PROEME.

Cubbin (ye know the Kentish Swain) was basking in the Sun one Summer-Morn: His Limbs were stretch'd all soft upon the Sands, and his Eye on the Lasses feeding in the Shade. The gentle Paplet peep'd at Colly thro' a Hedge, and this he try'd to put in Rhime, when he saw a Person of unusual Air come tow'rd him. Yet neither the Novelty of his Dress, nor the fairness of his Mien could win the Mind of the Swain from his rural Amusement, till he accosted the thoughtful Shepherd thus.

If you are the *Cubbin*, said he, I enquire for, as by the Peculiarity of your Countenance, and the Firmness of your Look, you seem, young Boy, to be; I would hold some Discourse with you. The Pastorals of your Performance I have seen; and tho' I will not call 'em Perfect, I think they show a Genius not wholly to be overlookt. My Name, continued he, is Sophy, nor is it unknown in the World. In this Book (and here he pluckt it out of his Pocket) I have pen'd some Rules for your future Guidance.

Cubbin was strangely taken with the mild Address and Sweetness of Sophy. A thousand times he thanked him, as often smil'd upon him, and spread his Coat for him to set more soft upon the Sands.

Sophy was a true-born *Britton*, and admir'd a forward *Spirit*. The *French* he little loved; Their Poets dare not (said he) think without the Ancients, and their Criticks make use of their Eyes instead of their Understandings. 'Twas his way to pardon, nay admire a Critick, who for every fifty Errors would give him but one Remark of Use, or good Discovery. But always read one Sheet, then burnt those dull insipid Rogues, who thought that to write a good was to write a faultless Piece. By which means their whole Work becomes one general Fault.

This Censure, I fear, would fall pretty heavy on the [A]*Criticks* of *France*; if this were a proper Place to persue the Argument in. But Sophy thus resum'd his Talk.

[Footnote A: *In the Preface to the Second Part of our* Pastorals, *viz.* THE BASHFUL-SWAIN, *and* BEAUTY AND SIMPLICITY, *we have shown to what Perfection the whole Science of* CRITICISM *was brought by the Ancients, then what Progress the* French Criticks *have further made, and also what remains as yet untouch'd, and uncompleat.*]

In this, said he, I like your Temper, Cubbin. By those few Pieces we have seen of your's, and those I hear you have in Manuscript, you seem determin'd to engage in those Kinds of Poetry and those Subjects in Criticism, which the Ancients have left us most imperfect. Here, if you fail, you may be still some help to him who shall Attempt it next; and if all decline it, apprehensive of no fair success, how should it ever attain Perfection.

Then Cubbin told the *Critick*, that the reason of his entering upon Pastoral, where the Labour was excessive and the Honour gain'd minute, was this; He had unhappily reflected on that thing, we call a Name, so thoroughly, and weigh'd so closely what like Happiness it would afford, that he could now receive no pleasure from the Thoughts of growing famous; nor would write one Hour in any little kind of Poetry, which was not able to take up and possess his Mind with Pleasure, tho' it would procure him the most glaring Character in Christendom. This Temper was especially conspicuous while he tarried at the Fountain where he imbibed the little Knowledge he possesses. He seem'd as out of humour with Applause, and dafted aside the Wreath if ever any seem'd dispos'd to offer it.

I' faith, said *Cubbin*, I am nothing careful whether any Pastorals be cry'd up or not. Were I dispos'd to write for a Name, no whit would I engage in either the Sublime or Soft in Writing: For as the middle Way, made up of both, is vastly easiest to attain; so is it pleasant to the most Imaginations, and acquires the widest Character.

There are originally, answer'd Sophy, no perfect and real Kinds of Writing but them two. As for the Strong Lines, 'tis supplying the want of the Sublime with the Courtly and Florid Stile; as what we usually call the Fine and Agreeable is but bastard and degenerate from the truly Tender. But yet it must be added that this suits the Populace the best.

Here Cubbin answer'd Sophy, that these were pretty ways of making Verses, but his mind was of such a peculiar Turn, that it requir'd some greater Design, and more laborious to occupy it, or else it would not be sufficiently engag'd to be delighted. Twould not be taken off from reflecting on what a stupid Dream is Life; and what trifling and impertinent Creatures all Mankind. Unless, said He, I'm busy'd, and in a hurry, I can't impose upon my self the Thought that I am a Being of some little significance in the Creation; I can't help looking forward and discovering how little better I shall be if I write well, or ill, or not at all. I would fain perswade my self, continued he, that a *Shakespear* and a *Milton* see us now take their Works in hand with Pleasure and read with Applause.

Tis certain, answer'd Sophy, that the less we know of Nature and our Selves, the more is Life delightful. If we take all things as we see 'em, Life is a good simple kind of Dream enough, but if we awaken out of the dull Lethargy, we are so unhappy as to discover, that tis all and every thing Folly, and Nonsense and Stupidity.—But we walk in a vain Shadow and disquiet our selves in vain.

Here Cubbin fell with his Face to the Ground, and said, I prethee now no more of this; your Book you open'd but forgot to give me the Contents.

Sophy recollected him; and told the Swain, That Book contain'd some Rules for his Direction. But as I have not patience, added he, to make a Treatise of some hundred Pages, which consists of other Persons Hints, but flourish'd and dilated on; or the Rules and Observations of the Anciants set in a different Light; I shall first sum up the whole Discoverys the *French* or any other Criticks yet have made in Pastoral; and where they have left it I shall take the Subject, and try how far beyond I am able to carry it. For after that, every single Thought will be the free Sentiment of my own Mind. And I desire all to judge as freely as I write; and (if, after a strict Examination of the Rules, they see any Reason) to condemn as peremtorily; for we cannot get out of an Error too soon.

RUAEUS say's, The Pastoral Sentiments must have a Connection Plain and Easy. Affirming that tho' Incoherence, may add a neglegence and simple loosness to Pastoral, yet 'tis not such a Negligence or Simplicity as Pastoral delight's in.

DRYDEN observe's, that the Dialect proper for Pastoral, must have a Relish of the Fascion of speaking in the Country.

FONTENELL that most excellent *Frenchman* takes Notice, that no Passion is so proper for Pastoral as that of Love. He mean's as to what we are to describe in our Swains; not mentioning those Passions

that Poem is to raise in the Reader.

RAPIN observe's, The Fable should be One. The Swains not abusive, or full of Raillery. The Sence should not be extended or long. This Author has other Observations new, but you may guess of what a Nature, when he confesses He walk'd but as *Theocritus* and *Virgil* lead him. Therefore he cannot have carried the Poem to any Perfection beyond the Condition they left it in; and so much any Reader may see from the Authors themselves, without reading a large Volume to find it out.

Mr. *DRYDEN*, in another place, has an Observation which carrys the Knowledge of Pastoral still farther. Pastorals, says he, must contain an agreeable Variety after the manner of a Landscape.

But in the *GUARDIANS*, Vol. I. The Reader may see the Nature of Pastoral more explain'd and enter'd into, in a few Dissertations, than by all these Authors have deliver'd on the Subject. As these are Books in every Bodies Hands, I shall not trouble my self to extract the Summary of 'em. But he will find the Criticism on Phillips and the other Observations are extreamly Ingenious.

CHAP. I

Of the Parts of Pastoral; and of the several Sorts of that Poem.

PASTORAL, in it's Imitation of the Lives of Shepherds, makes use of FABLE, CHARACTERS, SENTIMENTS and LANGUAGE; and by these four Parts conjoyntly obtain's it's End; that is, excites our Pity, or our Joy, or both. For in FABLE I include the MORAL; in SENTIMENTS both IMAGE and THOUGHT; and in LANGUAGE I comprehend the HARMONY.

These four Parts of PASTORAL would lead us into an easy and natural enumeration of the several Kinds or Sorts of that Poem: According as they have more or fewer of those Parts; and as they do or do not excite the Pastoral passions. Not that all those Kinds are perfect Pastorals, or even Poems, but only such as Authors have given us Examples of, from *THEOCRITUS* and *VIRGIL*.

But I omit this Division for another more material. A Difference more fundamental, arises in the PASTORALS written by different AUTHORS, according to the Age which the Poet chuses to describe, or the different Descriptions which he gives us of the COUNTRY. For he may draw it as 'tis suppos'd to have been in the Golden Age; or be may describe his own COUNTRY, but touching only what is agreable in it; or lastly, may depaint the Life of Swains exactly as it is, their Fatigues and Pleasures being equally blended together. And this, last Kind most Writers have given into; for *Theocritus's* rude unmanner'd Muse (as many Criticks have stiled it, not much amiss) naturally led him into this Method; and then, tis easy to conceive why the latter Pastoral-Writers chose the same.

But as the second Method is plainly more delightful than the last, as it collect's the most beautiful Images and sweetest Thoughts the Country afford's; so I shall show that 'tis preferable on many other Accounts; and even finer for Pastoral than the Golden Age. But this when I speak of the Characters.

I would only settle now in short the most compleat Kind of Pastoral; And such, I think, is that which most beautifully draw's the present Life of Shepherds, and raises Pity or Joy, by the four Parts of Pastoral, Fable, Characters, Sentiments, and Language. And since 'tis these which constitute a perfect Pastoral, I shall crave leave to speak separately of 'em all. And first of the Fable.

CHAP. II.

Of the Fable; and the means of making a perfect One.

A Fable proper for Pastoral, and best adapted to delight, must have these following Qualities to render It compleat.

First, It must be one entire *Action*, having a Beginning, a Middle, and an End.

Secondly, A perfect *Fable* must have a due *Length*. And not consist of only a mournful Speech which a Shepherd find's occasion to make; or the like.

Thirdly, And since all Poetry is an Imitation of the most Considerable, or the most Delightful Actions in the Person's Life we undertake; not any trifling Action can be sufficient to constitute the *Fable*.

Fourthly, Another Quality which a Pastoral Fable should have to be the most compleat is a *Moral Result*.

I shall speak to all these Heads, except the first, concerning the *Unity*; for without that Quality, it's self-evident that 'tis no Fable. By *Unity* I mean the same with Aristotle.[A]

[Footnote A: *See his 6th Chapter*.]

SECT. 1.

What Length a perfect Pastoral should have.

All *Pastoral-Writers* have used the same *Length* which *Theocritus* at first happen'd into. I shall be therefore obliged, I doubt, to dwell longer, on this Head, than the Importance of it may seem to require; and must premise, that tho' a *Fable* would need, finely carry'd on, to be three or four Hundred Lines, yet let no Writer be under any Concern about this: If a *Fable* have Unity, shews a delightful story, paints proper Characters, and contains a Moral, I shall not doubt to call the Poem a perfect and compleat *Pastoral*, tho' the Length exceeds not fifty Lines. But my Reasons for extending it are these:

Some Author I have seen, ingeniously observes, that even in telling common Stories, 'twere best to give some short Account of the Persons first, to be heard with Delight and Attention; For, says he, 'tis not so much this being said, but its being said on such a particular Occasion, or by such a particular Person. As this is true in a common Story, so 'tis more so in a Poem. The strongest Pleasure that the Mind receives from Poetry, flows from its being engaged and concerned in the Progress and Event of the Story. We naturally side in Parties, and interest our selves in their Affairs of one side or the other. Then 'tis, our Care pursues our Favourite Character, where're he goes. We anticipate all his Successes, and make his Misfortunes our own. Were the Catastrophe in a Tragedy to appear in the first Act, but little should we be moved by it, not having as yet imbibed a favourable Opinion of the Hero, nor learn'd to be in Pain as often as he is in Danger.

Now, we may read, I fear, some Number of the *Pastorals* of the ordinary Length, before we shall meet with this Pleasure. The Truth is, we are commonly past a hundred Lines, the length of these Pieces, before the Mind and Attention is entirely fix'd, and has lost all its former and external Thoughts. All the Pleasure therefore which proceeds from the Story is lost in these short Pieces.

'Tis true Indeed, I think it possible for a Novel, or perhaps a Poem, to contain a Story in a hundred Lines which shall be able to engage the Mind so as to delight it from the *fable* it self, stript of all its Ornaments. But how few in a hundred Ages have had Genius's capable of this. And if 'tis difficult in a Novel or Poem, which may couch the Circumstances close together, how much more Difficult must it be in *Pastoral*. In the former Pieces nothing is to be observed but the Story itself, in the latter a thousand Beauties are to be adjoyn'd and as many Rules observ'd.

SECT 2.

The proper Length of Pastoral further collected from the Consideration of the Characters.

Another Pleasure which the brevity of these Pieces robs us of, is this. The Characters cannot finely and distinctly be depainted in so short a Compass. And 'tis observable, we are concern'd for the Personages in no Poetry so much as those of Pastoral. Simplicity and Innocence have Charms for every Mind, and we pity most, where most our Pity's wanted.

So that the two noblest Beauties, and which constitute the main Difference between Poetry and Versification, between a perfect Poem and a Madrigal, Epigram or Elegy, are entirely lost in those Pieces, and the only Pleasure they can raise, must proceed alone from Sentiment and Diction.

SECT 3.

The Length of Pastoral, yet further shown from the Passions it raises.

In every rational and consistent Piece, the Writer has some Aim in View; as, to work every thing up to one End and a Moral Result; or to excite some Passion, or the like. Otherwise it is but an Assay of Wit, a Flirt of the Imagination, and no more. Too trifling to detain the rational Mind. Now, that these short Pieces are not capable of having a Moral, or raising any Passion, I need trouble my self for no other Proof than there never having been such one produced.

But give me leave to instance in the usual Method of forming a Pastoral. One Shepherd meets another; tells him some body is dead; upon which, they begin the mournful Dialogue, or Elegy. But in such an Elegy, there is but one thing can raise a fine Pleasure; which can be the only solid Reason for the Writers performing such a Work; and that is the raising Pity, without which no End is obtain'd by such a Dialogue. And 'tis only a School-Boy tryal of Wit; like a single Description. Unless the Poet think's it enough that the Scene is laid in the Country, and the very Talk of Shepherds is enough to support a Piece. And the truth is, of a Nature so exceeding pleasant is Pastoral, that a Piece which has but Fields and Hedges repeated pretty often in it, is at least tolerable; whereas in any other Poetry, we see every day far better Poems cast out of the World as soon as they enter into it. But another reason of their Success proceeds from the little Knowledge most People have of Pastoral; all Poets having gone in exactly the same Track, without one endeavouring to raise the Poem to any greater Perfection than they found it in; whereas Epick Poetry, Tragedy, and Comedy, arriv'd by slow degrees to the Perfection they now bear; and this Writer still went beyond the last of an equal Genius.

But I was going to give an Instance how incapable these Pieces are of raising the Passions. A mournful Dialogue, or Elegy is formed upon the Death of some Person. But if this Elegy raises not our Pity, 'tis a Trifle, and only a childish Copy of Verses. But in order to raise that most delightful Passion, should not the Reader be first prepossess'd in favour of the Party dead? Can I pity a Person because deceas'd, without knowing any thing of his while alive?

'Tis the same in that other well-known way of drawing up a Pastoral. I mean, where two Shepherds sing alternately. *Theocritus* haply light upon this, and every Pastoral Writer since his time, (that I have seen) has been so unfortunate as to happen exactly upon the same. And I believe it has as often been indifferent to the Readers which of the Shepherds overcame. Our Joy in this Case is equal to our Grief in the other.

SECT. 4.

From the length by Nature prescribed to all Pieces, Epick, Tragick, &c. is shown, That Pastoral will, at least, admit of the Length of three or four hundred Lines.

Thus far of the Necessity of extending a Pastoral to the Length of three or four hundred Lines, if we would not deprive our selves of the Opportunities of being as delightful as Poetry will permit. But if any Commentator, who think's himself oblig'd to defend *Theocritus* and *Virgil* in every particular, should not only not allow this Length to be preferable, but even condemn it as faulty, it would oblige us to come more close to the Point, and to take the Question from the bottom. What is the Length by Nature fix'd for all Pieces? And why mayn't an Epick be as short as a Tragick Poem? Methink's a Poet should not be content to take these things on Trust, and tye himself down to Brevity or Length only because *Theocritus* wrote short and *Homer* long Pieces.

I have not Leisure to enter fully into this Question, but would recommend it to some Person who has, as a Subject that would prove as Entertaining to the Reader as the Writer. However, I shall speak just what I have at present in my Mind upon it.

Without considering Tragedy as drawn into Representation, it is plain it would not endure the Length of Epick Poetry, without being wearious in the Reading, for these Reasons among others: It's Nature is more heated and violent than the Epick Poem, and consists of only Dialogue; whereas the former has the Variety of Dialogue and Narration both. Besides, the under-actions which work up to the main Action in Heroick Poetry, are each as great and as different from each other, as the main Actions of different Tragedies.

Nor would Pastoral bear the Length of even Tragedy. For it admits not both those two kinds of Writing, the Sublime and the Beautiful, which are the most different of any in Nature, having only the last. But these two give so sweet a variety to the same Piece, when they are artfully blended together, that a good Tragedy or Epick Poem can never tire. Soon as we begin to be sated and cloy'd with Passion and Sublime Images, the Poet changes the Scene; all is, on a sudden soft and beautiful, and we seem in another World.

Yet is Pastoral by no means ty'd down by nature to the Length used by *Theocritus* and all his Followers. 'Tis only Example has introduc'd that Method. For, 'tis a Poem capable of raising two

Passions, and those tho' all consistent with one another, yet what raise Pleasures, the most widely different of any, in the Mind. When we have tir'd the Reader with a mournful and pitious Scene, we may relieve and divert his Mind with agreeable and joyous Images. And these the Poet may diversify and vary as often as he pleases. And so different are the Passions of Pity and Joy, that he may all thro' the Poem please in an equal Degree, yet all thro' the Poem in a different Manner.

Besides, this Poem changes the general Scene, which is more than even Tragedy does. A Poet who has form'd a perfect Notion of the Beautiful, and furnished his Mind with a sufficient number of delightful Images, before he set's down to write a Pastoral, will lead the Reader thro' so sweet a Variety of amusing scenes, and show so many beautiful Pictures to his Imagination, that he will never think the tenth Part of a Tragedy's Length too much for a Pastoral.

'Tis true indeed that they who make a Pastoral no more considerable than a Song or Ballad (as *Theocritus*, *Virgil*, &c.) without Passions, Characters, a delightful Fable, or any Moral, do well to make it of no greater Extent than a Song or Ballad. Where there is nought to delight but the Sentiments, (for they aim at neither the soft nor the sublime Language) a Reader cannot attend to more than a hundred Lines; but where the Mind is engag'd and concern'd for the Issue of the Story, and eager to know the Event, 'tis insensibly drawn on, and haveing some Aim in View, is much less weary'd, tho' led on to a greater Extent.

CHAP. III.

That the Pastoral Action must not be very little and minute; also that several Under-actions must run thro' the Poem.

A Third Quality, laid down as necessary to constitute a Fable wholly perfect, was this, That as there must be but one Action, that Action may not be any trifling, silly Circumstance of a Shepherd's Life. As one Swain's telling the other how poor and bare he is grown. Or one complaining to the other, that his Flock has had some Mischance, or the like; which is as much as can be gather'd out of the Pastorals form'd after the ordinary Way. For if you take the Actions of any of 'em, divested of the Ornaments of Poetry, and the constant Repetition of the pleasing Words, Grove, Breeze, Mead, &c. you will find nothing, even nothing at all in any of 'em.

So that, tho' these Pastorals mostly may have Actions, nay, and Unity of Action; yet are they Actions no more proper for a Poem, than a Proposition of Euclid, turn'd into Verse, would be. There is nothing, (not even the telling how the Sow and Pigs swallow'd their Wash, and fought the while,) but might be call'd one Action, with a Beginning, Middle and End. So that 'tis nothing to have unity of Fable, if the Fable be not proper.

Shepherds are indeed suppos'd to be happy, and devoid of Stir, and Noise, and Bustle; but does it follow, that there are no Actions or Incidents in a Shepherd's Life? If there are delightful Actions, 'tis plain we don't run counter to a Shepherd's Life in drawing 'em into Poetry; and Poetry imitates the Actions of Men. Which show's that these ordinary Pastorals are no more Poetry, than Lucretius is, or than any other Philosopher, if turn'd into Verse, would be. Sure I think, as we allow an Epick Writer to take his Hero in that Part or Character of his Life, where he will make the best Figure in Poetry, so we should allow a Pastoral-Writer the same Opportunity of pleasing.

'Tis necessary also that several lesser Actions work up to the main One;
that the whole Piece may be fill'd with Circumstances. 'Tis the very
Soul of Poetry to imitate Actions; to lead the Mind thro' a Variety of
Scenes; and to present a Number of Pictures before it.

'Tis plain a Shepherd's Life has as many Incidents, as other Person's; only one Kind are in low Life, the other not. The Simplicity of Pastoral is nothing touch'd by this, if these Incidents are Pastoral: For the difference between Epick or Tragick Poetry, and Pastoral, must not proceed from the One haveing many, the other no Under-Actions, but rather from the different Actions, which a Hero and a Swain are engag'd in. A Shepherd's leading his Lass to a Shade, and there sticking her Bosom with Flowers, is the same in Pastoral, as an Hero's hurling a Javelin, is in Epick Poetry. And a variety of Circumstances and Actions is equally necessary in both Pieces. Or perhaps in Pastoral most; since the Coolness and Sedateness of Pastoral is very apt to sate and tire the Reader, if he dwell's long on one Action; and we can bear a longer Description of a Battle than of two Shepherd's sitting together; because the first fill's

and actuate's the Mind the most; and where it is so much employ'd, it cannot so easily flag and grow dull.

SECT. 2.

Whether the Pastoral Fable should be simple or complex; and how it must differ from the Epick Fable.

The Implex Fables are to me, in all Poetry, the finest. And even Pastoral may receive an additional Beauty from a Change of Fortune in the chief Character, if manag'd with Discretion. 'Tis not easy to give direct Proofs for things of this Nature. But what little I have to offer for Pastoral's requiring an Implex Fable, is as follows.

Pastoral, like all Poetry, should aim at Pleasure and Profit. Pleasure is best produc'd, if the Poem raises Pity, or Joy, or both; and Profit by its having a Moral. Now the Implex Fable attain's it's End the easiest. For we pity Misfortunes no where so much as in one we saw but lately happy: Nor do we joy to see a Man flourish; but to see him rise from Ills to a flourishing Condition, rejoyces the Mind. And as for the other End of Poetry, which is Profit, every one may see that Implex Fables are greatly best for producing a Moral.

But great Care must be taken in this Way. Whereas the Catastrophe in Epick Poetry, is work'd up by violent Means, as Machines, and the like; In Pastoral it must be produced so easy and natural, as to seem to proceed from it self.

Nor must the Change of Fortune be produced by any sudden Contrast, as in most Tragedies it is; since Surprize (unless very weak) is a Fault in Pastoral, tho' a Beauty in other Poetry.

'Tis also evident that the Ills which a Shepherd falls into, from some slight, and almost inevitable Slip (from which the Moral is form'd) must be infinitely less than those which embarrass a Hero; because Ills must be proportion'd to the Fault; and 'tis plain, the Faults of a Swain are suppos'd to be very minute.

A hundred Observations, like this last, might be made, too inconsiderable to enumerate; but the Poet, when he form's his Fable, cannot avoid observing 'em. Otherwise, 'tis best he keep to the Simple Fable; which, tho' a better may, by Industry, be form'd, is far enough from being faulty.

SECT. 3.

What Circumstances or Actions of a Shepherd's Life are properest for the Poet to go upon.

We cannot be pleas'd with the Description of any State, or Life, which at that time we would not willingly exchange our present State for. Nor is it possible to be pleas'd with any thing that is very low and beggarly. Therefore, methinks, I would raise my Shepherd's Life to a Life of Pleasure; contrary to the usual Method. For when a Citizen or Person in Business divert's himself in the Country, 'tis not from seeing the Swains employ'd or at Labour; he visits the Country for the easy and agreeable Retiredness of it; and I believe the Pleasure of seeing a Shepherd folding his Sheep, proceeds from the Prospect of Evening, of the Woods and Fields, and from the Innocence we conceive in the Sheep, and the like; not from the Action of the Shepherd folding them. So of Reapers, we conceive 'em filling the following Year with Plenty; We have, while we see 'em, the Thought of Fulness, and the time when every thing is brought to Perfection; and these, and the like Thoughts, rather raise the Delight of seeing those particular Labours, than the Actions themselves. For we see, that if we behold Sheep, or the like, in a City, tho' Countrymen are ordering them, we have no such Delight; because there the Silence of Evening, the Prospect of Fields, &c. are not added.

I would therefore omit the Labour of Shepherds, if I could invent a Life more agreeable; but the latter must be form'd from a Man's Imagination, the former from Observation; and *Virgil* could draw that almost as well as *Theocritus*. I wonder the Writers of Pastoral should be so fond of showing their Shepherds Beating Their Ronts, or Scolding With each other, or the like; when they might describe 'em sleeping upon Violets; plaiting rosy Chaplets by a lovely Rivulet; getting *Strawberries* for a Lass, &c.

'Tis observable, that no Tragedy can be well constituted without a mixture of Love; and even *Shakespear*, (who seem's to have had so little of the Soft or Tender in his Genius) was obliged to have some recourse to that Passion, in forming his most regular Tragedy; I mean Othello. Not that an Hero should be soften'd, much less drawn in his most degenerate Hours, when he is in Love. For, methinks, the French seem a little too fond of introduceing Love, when they draw their greatest Hero's as amorous Love-Sops, and omit all that is truly Great in their Characters.

Now if Love, with Reason manag'd, appear so well in Tragedy, it must sure be extreamly proper for Pastoral. In the first we are to be rais'd and heated; in the latter sooth'd and soften'd: The one has to do with Personages, all gentle and tender; the Subject of the other is Fury and Bravery. I would therefore have, methinks, a Sprinkling of Love thro' all my Pastorals; and 'twill give the Writer an Opportunity of showing the Tenderness, and the Simplicity of his Characters in the finest Manner: Yet must it be so diversify'd and broken, by other Incidents interfering, as not to cloy and nauseate the Reader, with the Repetition of nothing but Love and Love.

The vulgar Notion is, that Wrestling, and such like Incidents are properest for Pastoral; but if a Writer introduces such, he'll find 'em so few, that 'twill be necessary to touch upon Love besides.

But methinks, I would not show my *CHARACTERS* in so low and clownish a degree of Life; For if I draw 'em so rough, and Porter-like, in one place, I cannot give 'em Tenderness and Simplicity in another; without breaking in upon the Manners.

So that if I was compell'd to put this Circumstance of Wrestling into a Pastoral, I would have recourse, even there, to Love, to render it Pleasurable to the Mind; as thus: A tender-hearted Lass should be plac'd Spectator of her Wrestling Lover: By this means the Poet might make it shine in Poetry; if he described her Behaviour, her soft Concern and joyous Smiles, occasioned by every little Failure, and every Prospect of Success.

But this is a Subject of so great Extent, that I have not time to go thro' with it. Take therefore this general Rule for all. Those Circumstances or Actions in the Fable, which show barely the Delightfulness of the Country, are good. Those which give us a Sight of also the Sprightliness and Vigour of it, are better; and those which comprehend further, the Simplicity and the Tenderness of the young Lasses, are best. And from hence a Writer or Reader will be able to make a Judgment of any Circumstance that may occur.

SECT. 4.

That this Variety of Actions does by no means impair the Simplicity of Pastoral.

There is nothing in Pastoral, of which Persons have a wronger Notion than of the word Simplicity. Because the Poem should be simple, they strip it of all Beauty and Delightfulness; that is, they lay the Simplicity where it should not so much be (in the Fable) and deprive it of all Simplicity, where 'twould be beautiful (in the Sentiments and Diction.)

If all the Incidents or Actions, that are truly simple and delightful, thro' the whole Number of *Theocritus*'s Idylls, were collected into one Pastoral, so as to follow naturally each other, and work up to one general End, I think that Pastoral would be more truly simple than any we have at present. 'Tis true, a Poet may thrust into Pastoral as great a multitude of Actions, and as surprizingly brought about, as we find in Tragedy, but there is no necessity, because he must use a Number sufficient to please, that therefore he must fall into that fault. Yet for mine own part, I had rather see too much, than too little Action, as I cannot help preferring a faulty Writer before a dull One.

But a Poet of Genius will diversify and adorn his Fable, as much as he lawfully may; and as for the Simple, he will draw such soft and tender Characters, as will furnish his Poem with enough of that, and of the most delightful Kind. The generality of Pastoral Writers seem to think they must make their Pieces simple, by divesting them of all the Ornaments of Poetry; and the less and more inconsiderable Sketches they are, the more Simple they are. A strange Conception sure of Simplicity. While their Sentiments are false almost in every Line; either in their own Nature; or with respect to Pastoral; or to the Person speaking; or some other foreign Cause. But I shall always wave the being particular in such Cases as these. To point at Faults directly, I think the Business of a Carper, not a Critick.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Moral; and what kind of Moral Pastoral require's.

The fourth Quality that a Fable ask's, to render it compleat, is a Moral Result. I need not trouble you with a Proof of a Moral's being necessary; 'tis plain that every Poem should be made as perfect as 'tis capable of being, and no one will ever affirm a Moral to be unnatural in Pastoral. But if any one should

demand a Proof, 'tis thus: Poetry aim's at two Ends, Pleasure and Profit; but Pastoral will not admit of direct Instructions; therefore it must contain a Moral, or lose one End, which is Profit. We might as easy show that the other End of Poetry, *viz*. Pleasure, is also impair'd, if the Moral be neglected; but the thing is plain.

To hasten therefore to enquire what kind of Moral is proper for Pastoral, we must look back into the Reasons prescribed by Nature for the Morals in all Sorts of Poetry.

Epick Poetry and Tragedy are conversant about Hero's, Kings, and Princes, therefore the Morals there, should be directed to Persons engaged in Affairs of State, and at the Helm, and be of such a Nature as these; *A Crown will not render a Person Happy, if he does not pursue his Duty towards God and Man; the best Method of Securing a Government, is to occasion Unity in it*, and the like.

Again, Comedy's Subject is to expose the Ill Habits in low Life. It's moral therefore should contain Instructions to the middle Sort of People: As, *What Ills attend on Covetousness*. Or, *On a Parent's being too Severe*, or the like.

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But so easy and gentle a kind of Poetry is Pastoral, that 'tis not very pleasant to the busy Part of the World. Men in the midst of Ambition, delight to be rais'd and heated by their Images and Sentiments. Pastoral therefore addresses it self to the Young, the Tender, and particularly those of the *SOFT-SEX*. The Characters also in Pastoral are of the same Nature; *An Innocent Swain*; or *Tender-Hearted Lass*. From such Characters therefore we must draw our Morals, and to such Persons must we direct them; and they should particularly aim at regulating the Lives of Virgins and all young Persons.

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What Nature I would have a Moral of, cannot so well be explain'd as by Examples; but I do not remember at present any such Pastoral. You are not widely deficient, Cubbin, I think, in this particular. Your first show's us, that the best Preservative a young Lass can have against Love and our deluding Sex, is, to be wholly unacquainted therewith. Little Paplet is eager of Listning to Soflin's Account of Men and Love; but that first set's her *Heart* on the Flutter; then she is taken with Soflin's *SWEET-HEART*; tho' all the while she is ignorant of the Cause of her Uneasiness.

The Moral to your second Pastoral, which contain's Instructions to *COQUETTS*, warning them not to take pleasure in giving Pain, is, I think, not worst than this.

But the Moral to your Third (call'd the Bashful Swain), methinks, is not so good. It is also directed to the *COQUETTS*; and instruct's 'em not to give a Lover any Hopes, whom they do not intend to make happy. If the young Lass there, had jilted Cuddlett, she had mist of her good Fortune; and her Unwillingness to encrease the Number of her Admirers, is the Cause of her Happiness. But, I know not how, this like's me not so well as the other Three; or, perhaps it is not produced so naturally by the Fable, and that may prevent it's pleasing.

SECT. 2.

How to form the most regular kind of Moral.

If a Writer's only Aim was the preserving Poetical Justice in his Moral, he would have nothing to do but to show a Person defective in some slight Particular, and from thence Unhappy; but as a Poet always reaches at Perfection, these following Rules are to be observ'd.

The Inadvertency or Fault which the Character commit's, must be such a Fault as is the natural or probable Consequence of his Temper. And his Misfortune such an one as is the natural or probable Consequence of his Fault. As in Othello: (For how can I instance in Pastoral.) I rather suppose the Moor's Fault, to be a too rash and ungrounded Jealousy; than that Fault, common to almost all our Tragedies, of marrying without the Parent's Consent. A rash *Jealousy* then, is the natural consequence of an open and impetuous Temper; and the Murder of his Wife is a probable Consequence of such a Jealousy, in such a Temper. So that the Hero's Temper naturally produces his Fault, and his Fault his Misfortunes.

If you allow that the fault should be the natural or probable Consequence of the Temper; let me ask you then, if those Tragedies or Pastorals can be so perfect, where the original natural Temper of the Hero or Heroine is not drawn into the Piece. I mean, where all that we see of the Mind of the Chief Character, is his Mind or Temper, as alter'd entirely, by some foreign or accidental Means. As, Who will tell me what Hamlet's natural Temper was? Throughout that admirable Tragedy, we see not his bare

Temper once; but before he appear's, he's in wild Distraction, which proceed's from former Accidents. This Method Mr. *Row* too has taken, especially in that ingenious Tragedy, call'd *JANE SHORE*. We do not see any thing of her Temper but Grief and Sorrow; but Grief cannot be natural to any Person's Mind, but must be accidental. However, I think, this Method may be, at least, very good; whether 'tis the best, I leave others to determine.

But as to the Fault, whether 'tis in the Action, or out of it, is of no moment to the Perfectness of a Pastoral. Tho' I must needs say, I am for what Aristotle call's the Peripatie, or change of Fortune in Pastoral; but I think the Action that produces the Change may be either in the Poem, or have happen'd some time before, but so that it's Influence does not reach the Persons till they have been a while engaged in the Actions of the Tragedy or Pastoral.

SECT. *Last*.

Here Sophy closed his Book; for the Heat of the Day came on, and an House or an Arbour began to be more agreeable than the open Fields. Sophy told the Swain he would meet him there agen in the Evening, and read him some more of the Minutes he had put down for his Direction, and withdrew; and the Shepherd drove his Lambs to the Covert of the Shades.

Accordingly, as the day began to decline, the Critick again appear'd; and opening his Book, pursued the Argument he had made some Progress in.

The End of the first Part.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Of the Pastoral CHARACTERS or MANNERS, in general.

I should but tire the Reader, if I endeavour'd to prove that Pastoral does require the Manners, or Characters to be preserved. If our Method of ordering Pastoral be admitted, the Necessity thereof will be easily perceived. But If any one prefer's the ordinary Method, I must tell him, that 'tis not proper to draw Characters in a Piece of an hundred Lines.

It is to be observ'd, that tho' a Fable and Moral are essential to every Poem; yet a Poem may subsist without the Manners. In Epick Poetry the Machinery, the sublime Descriptions, &c. are such strong and Poetical Ornaments, that a very fine Piece of the Heroick kind, might be form'd without the Ornament of Characters. But Pastoral is in it self, (if I may so speak) less Poetical; and therefore more want's the additional Ornaments of Art. 'Tis naturally low and mean, and therefore should be as much rais'd as possible. Whereas Epick-Poetry is of a Nature so warm and heated, that it's own proper Strength and Violence is able to support it. If this could want a Proof, I might say in short, That we can bear with Epick-Poetry, even without any kind of Verse, and *Cambray* has succeeded in such; but every one will judge that should a Pastoral appear in Prose, nay even without the Feminine Ornament of Jangle, 'twould not be born with; which show's that Epick Poetry can support it self with fewer foreign Assistances than Pastoral.

Another Observation I shall make, relating to the Manners or Characters in general, is this; and 'tis equally applicable to Epick Poetry, Tragedy, and Pastoral: There are three different ways of drawing Characters; which in Tragedy form the Poem, as 'twere, of three different Kinds or Natures.

The first, and finest is, where the Natural Temper of the Hero's Mind is drawn in the former Part of the Poem, but after the Peripatie alter's. As Timon of Athens is drawn at first all free and well-natur'd to a Fault; but after his change of Fortune, is described as a quite different Man; morose, and in hatred with himself and all the World. And so in other Tragedies.

The second Sort is, where the Temper of Mind is the same in the former and latter Part of the Play; but all along forced from it's Natural Bent. Every where inclin'd and leaning to a different Temper; yet is no where wholly carry'd off, or alter'd, as in *Venice-Preserv'd*; *Jaffeir's* Temper is generous, faithful, and tender, but thro' Want and Enticement being drawn into a Conspiracy, this Temper is half effac'd in him: But the Strugglings which the Poet has so fine an Opportunity of describing, between his present Actions and his natural Temper, are carry'd thro' the whole Piece; and he condemn's himself the same for ungenerously betraying his Friend at the End, as for entring into the Conspiracy against his Country, at the beginning of the Play.

The last kind of Character is, where the Natural Temper of the Mind is neither drawn in the latter Part of the Poem; nor retain'd thro' the whole, but clouded and broken; but instead thereof some casual and accidental Humour, which from some Misfortune, or the like, has quite changed the Natural Temper before the Person appear's on the Stage, or in the Poem. As in the Distress'd-Mother, the Character that give's name to the Tragedy, is all along in Tears and Grief for *Hector*; and what her Temper was before his Death, does not appear, that is, what her Natural Temper was.

I need not detain you to apply what I have here observ'd to Pastoral in particular; 'tis enough to affirm, that the Method which appears most beautiful in Tragedy, will be equally finest in Pastoral Poetry.

CHAP. II.

What Condition of Life our Shepherds should be supposed in. And whether the Golden-Age, *or the present state of the Country should be drawn*.

There are three different Methods, (as we hinted in the first Chap. of the first Book) of describing the Country. For it may be drawn, as 'tis suppos'd to have been in the Golden-Age; or, as 'tis now, but only the pleasant and delightful Images extracted, and touch'd upon; or, lastly, we may draw the Country in it's true and genuine Colours, the Deformities as well as the Beauties having admittance into our Poem.

This last sort run's upon the Labours and fatigues of the Rusticks; and gives us direct Clowns and Country-Folk. We alway see 'em sweating with a Sicle in their Hands; beating their Cows from the Corn; or else at Scolding. Yet doubtless a kind of Pastorals of this Nature might be made extreamly delightful, if the Writer would dare to write himself, and not be lead so much by *Theocritus* and *Virgil*.

But a Method preferable to this, I think, is a Description of the Golden-Age; and there is very little difference between this, and that which we hold the best. It draw's the Swains, all Innocent and tender. Show's us Shepherds, who are so, not for their Poverty, but their Pleasure; or the Custom of those unrefin'd Ages, when the Sons and Daughters of Kings were of that Employ, as we read in the Scripture of the Ladies of greatest Quality, drawing Water for their Flocks, and the like. I am therefore nothing averse to this kind of Pastoral. It draw's such a Life as we could easily wish our selves in; and such, and only such, can bear a pleasurable Description.

But all the Opportunities that the supposition of the Golden-Age gives the Reader of the Beautiful in his Descriptions, and being Entertaining in his Characters; In short, all the delightful Scenes, Arborets and Shades, as well as all the gentleness and simplicity of that Age, may be drawn into the other, namely the middle state, which we prefer; if the Characters be proper.

Besides, I should not be fond of describing the Golden-Age, because we are not so much interested and concern'd in what was only some thousand Years ago, and ne're will be again. If the Poet possesses us with agreeable Sentiments of our own Country (by describing it, but omitting all that is not delightful in it) we are doubly pleas'd with the Consideration that it may be in our own Power to enjoy the sweet Amusement: and we are apt to fancy while we are reading, that were we among those Swains, we could solace our selves in their easy Retirements, and on their tender Banks in the same manner that they do.

And since Poetry, the more naturally it deceives, the more fully it pleases; I should be very desirous, methinks, of giving my Pieces as great an Appearance of Probability, as possible. And in our way, the Poet may, to add yet more to the Probability, mention several Places in the Country, which actually are to be found there; and will have several Opportunities of giving his Stories an Air of Truth.

SECT. 2.

The Method of Theocritus, *and all his followers, shown to be inferiour, from the Nature of the Human Mind*.

But further, to shew that we should not describe the Country in it's Fatigues, it's Roughness, or it's Meanest, take these Few Considerations. For, as no Writer whom I have read (but that excellent Frenchman *FONTENEL*,) has raised his Shepherds and Shepherdesses above the vulgar and common sort of Neat-herds and Ploughers, I am oblig'd to dwell a little the longer on this Head.

It may be observ'd, I think, that there are but two States of Life which are particularly pleasant to the Mind of Man; the busy, great, or pompous; and the retir'd, soft, or easy. More are delighted with the former than with the latter kind, which affoard's a calm Pleasure, that does not strike so sensibly, but proceeds much from the Imagination. Perhaps this may be the reason why Epick and Tragick Poetry are more universally pleasing than Pastoral; for they describe the Actions of such Persons, as most Men are dazled and enamour'd with; and would willingly quit their own Stations in Life for.

But tho' this State of Life may perhaps be more generally engaging than the soft and retir'd; 'tis certain the soft is the next eligible, and consequently will shine the most next in Poetry. As no one would much desire to be one of Theocritus's Shepherds, so 'tis plain, no one can be much delighted with being concern'd, as 'twere, with such; of having their Actions take up our Minds, and their Manner of Life set before us.

As a love of Grandeur, Show and Pageantry is implanted naturally in our Minds, so we cannot be pleas'd with any thing that is mean, low and beggarly; and as we dislike what is mean and beggarly, How can we love to have our Minds conversant about, direct Ploughmen, *&c*? We love the Country for it's soft Retirements, it's Silence, and it's Shades, and can we love a Description of it that sets none of these before us? If I read a Pastoral, I would have it give me such a Prospect of the Country, and stop me upon those Objects, where I should myself stay, were I there; but would not that be (at least generally) upon the most beautiful Images. If the Toils of the Country-Folk took my Observance, 'twould only be for Variety, because those Images which a Poet can so plentifully raise out of his own Brain, can hardly be met with in Reality. But methinks were I determin'd to describe the Labours and Hardships of the Country, and not to collect the Beauties; I would e'en observe the Manner of the Fellows and Wenches in the Country, and put down every thing that I observ'd them act; as Mr. Gay has very well done; and than we shall have at least this Pleasure, of seeing how exactly the Copy and the Original agree; which is the same that we receive from such a Picture as show's us the face of a Man we know.

Again, 'tis natural to the Mind of Man to delight in the Happiness of it's Fellow-Creatures; and no Pleasure can be imbibed from the Prospect of another's Misery; unless it is so calculated as to excite Pity. The Pleasure, that comes the nearest such of any, is a Comick one, which delight's to see the human Form distorted and debased, and turn'd into that of a Beast.

And as for Pity, the most delightful Passion of all, it can't be excited by this Means. For those Swains are inured to Labour, and acquainted with Fatigue; but we pity those who fall from Greatness to a State of Hardships.

CHAP. III.

What Personages are most proper for Pastoral. And what Passions we may allot our Shepherds; and what degree of Knowledge.

Since Simplicity and Tenderness are universally allow'd to constitute the very Soul and Essence of Pastoral, there la nothing scarce in the Proceedings of Pastoral-Writers more surprizing to me, than that no one has allotted any Part of Characters in their Pieces to the *SOFT-SEX*: But have, to a Writer, introduc'd only Men, and even the roughest of that Sex.

I can no otherways account for that their Conduct, but that *Theocritus* happen'd not to make any true Female Characters, nor to introduce any such of the Fair-Sex, as would shine in Pastoral, and they pretend to nothing farther than the Copying after him.

This is the more strange, since even Epick-Poetry and Tragedy, whose

Nature is Violence and Warmth, cannot well subsist without the tender Characters. 'Tis they that sprinkle so sweet a Variety thro' those Pieces, and relax the Minds of the Readers, with the Beautiful and Soft, after it is sated with the Sublime.

Now if even the warmest Kinds of Poetry delight in Female Personages, How much more Pastoral, which is all Tenderness and Simplicity? Whose design is to sooth and spread a Calm over the Mind, as the higher Poems are to elevate and strike It.

But 'tis not enough that we introduce some Characters drawn from the *SOFT-SEX*: our Male Characters must be also of the same Nature, far from rough or unmanner'd. Every Character must also be of such a Kind as will be entertaining to the Mind. For there are some more, some less delightful, among those Female *Characters*, which at first sight seem equally proper to Pastoral. Of this kind is a Prudish *Character*, or excessively reserv'd. For, besides that frankness and Openness of Heart, is what we imagine natural to Shepherds, a Poet can never raise Delight from such a Character. Her fault is too hateful to excite Pity in her Punishment; and too small to raise Joy in beholding bar Unfortunate. Besides that such a Joy were not proper for Pastoral. Of the same Nature is a Finical, or Squeamish Character, and many others, at first sight agreeable to Pastoral.

SECT. 2

What Passions we may allot our Shepherds.

Although I am for raising the Characters in Pastoral somewhat above the degree of Boors and Clowns; yet no one is more for retaining the Pastoral Simplicity. Our Characters of young and tender Innocents, give, I think, a better Opportunity of introducing the true Pastoral Simplicity, than those very mean and low Personages, which rather lead us to an unmanner'd Clownishness, than an agreeable Simplicity.

To preserve this Simplicity, we must avoid attributing to our Swains, any of those Passions or Desires, which engage busy and active part of Mankind; as Ambition, and the like. *Theocritus* therefore, and *Virgil*, and the generality of his Followers, have rather made their Shepherds sing alternately for a Leathern Pouch, or a Goat, than for the Desire of Praise. And nothing, I believe, but his being unwilling to make his Swains sing for exactly the same Reward, that all since *Theocritus*, have done, could have made our excellent Phillips alter the Pouch and the Kid, for Praise, in his sixth Pastoral.

> *Let others meanly stake upon their Skill. Or Kid, or Lamb, or Goat, or what they will; for praise we sing, nor Wager ought beside; And, whose the Praise, let* Geron's, *Lips decide*.

There are few of even the most violent passions but may be introduc'd into Pastoral, if artfully manag'd and qualify'd by the Poet: As Hatred, if it be not carried to it's height; which is an Excess in Pastoral. And I observe, *Cubbin*, you make your Shepherd *Colly*, inconstant; and have an Aversion to his former Sweet-heart *Soflin*, on account of her Frankness, and too great Forwardness. But yet I think it is not faulty, because you make his Affections vary, against his Inclination, and he is angry with himself for his dislike to *Soflin*; but no Reason can stop unruly Love.

So Revenge, if admitted, must be very ingeniously manag'd, or 'twill be intolerable. There is a cunning Thought in *Tasso*, that may perhaps let the Reader something into the Manner in which I would have it order'd. A Female Warriour, opposed to her Lover in Aims, for his Inconstancy shoot's a Dart at him, yet wishes it may not strike him.

But what comes nigher to the explaining the manner of introducing Revenge into Pastoral, is what we find in the sixth Idyll of *Theocritus*. *Polyphemus's* Mistress had been unkind; and how do's he propose to take Revenge: Why, he will not take notice of her as she walk's before his Cave to be seen, and pelt's his flock. After which follow's the most simple, and I had almost said, finest Thought in any Pastoral-Writer. The whole Beauty of which no one will conceive, but who has a Soul as tender as *Theocritus* had, and could touch the *Soft* as well. Poliphemus threaten's several Punishments, after which, follows this. 'Tis as fine in *Creech's* Version as the Original.

> *Besides, my Dog, he is at my Command, Shall bark at her, and gently bite her Hand*.

What I have said of this, might be said of the other Passions; but I shall insist no longer on this Head. As for the Passions most proper for Pastoral, they are discuss'd elsewhere.

SECT. 3.

What degree of Knowledge we may attribute to our Swains.

The difference between the Knowledge of our Shepherds, and that of politer Persons, must not proceed in the least from any difference in their Natural Endowments, but entirely from the manner of their Educations. The Poet therefore, has nothing to do in this Case, but to consider what is most probable for Nature to effect, unassisted by Art.

As for a Shepherd's knowing what the ancient Poets have deliver'd, concerning the different Ages, and other things, I shall not determine whether 'tis natural or not: because not only *Theocritus*, whose Shepherds are as well vers'd in History as other Men, and *Virgil*, whose Shepherds are often Philosophers, have gone in this way, but our Countryman Mr. Phillips also, whose excellency is his Correctness.

(Lang.) *Thrice happy Shepherds now! for* Dorset *loves*
The Country Muse, and our delightful Groves.
While Anna *reigns. O ever may she reign!*
And bring on Earth a Golden-Age again.
Pastor. 6.

I shall leave the Reader also to determine concerning the following piece of Knowledge.

(Hob.) *Full fain, O blest* Eliza! *would I praise*
Thy Maiden Rule, and Albion's Golden Days.
Then gentle *Sidney* liv'd, the Shepherds Friend:
Eternal Blessings on his Shade descend!

The same is to be said of other the like Passages, but the most ordinary Capacity may judge what Knowledge is, or is not, consistent with the Banner of a Shepherd's Education.

CHAP. IV.

How to form the Pastoral Characters, and the great Difficulty of doing it.

A Poet, who would write up to the Perfection of Pastoral, will find nothing more difficult (unless the Dialect) than the inventing a sufficient Number of Pastoral Characters; such as are both faultless and beautiful. That difficulty proceeds from hence.

In Epick and Tragick Poetry we have the whole scope of all Men's Tempers and Passions to draw; which are widely various and different: As, the Savage and Wild; the Ambitious; the Simple and Tender-hearted; the Subtle, &c. Thus in the Epick and Tragick Poems, you draw the general Qualities of all Men's Minds. But in Pastoral, you are pinn'd down to one of these common qualities (which is Simplicity and Tenderness.) And laying that as a Foundation, from thence draw your particular Characters. In every Character still supposing that at the bottom of it, and to accompany it. But Rules of this Nature, are like Mathematical Assertions, not easily explain'd, but by Examples. Tho' I think, *Cubbin*, I need not insist long on this to you; for your Characters are not much faulty in this particular. If I remember aright; some of your Characters are these:

Paplet has Simplicity and Tenderness: But her distinguishing Character is, that she is a May, so young, as to be entirely ignorant of Love; but extreamly Curious to be let into the Nature of Men and Lovers.

Collikin has Simplicity and Tenderness: But withal a Tincture of Inconstancy in his Nature.

Soflin, with her Simplicity and Tenderness, is excessive Easy, and Complying, to a Fault; open and too free-hearted.

Florey has Simplicity; and Tenderness for his Lass; but he is almost out of Humour with himself for being so soft. He is suppos'd to be brought up in the lonely Cave with Paplet; and his natural Tamper is wild and excessive brisk; hating the House, and delighting in Hunting. But you show, I see, only a Glimpse of his Natural Temper, which breaks out at times; but he is drawn as tender, being all the Time

in Love with Poppit.

The rest of your Characters have the same Foundation; nor break in, I think, upon Simplicity and Tenderness.

'Tis true indeed, as to the Difficulty of forming Pastoral Characters, beyond those of Epick Poetry; That even there, one general Character should diffuse it self thro' all the rest, and that is Bravery. (For *Homer* might, I think, as well have brought in a Baboon, or a Hedge-hog, for Heroick Characters, as a *Vulcan* and a *Thirsites*.) But Bravery will coincide with greatly more Tempers than Pastoral Simplicity and Tenderness; nor does it lay the Poet under a Restraint comparably so great.

'Tis farther observable, as to the Difficulty of forming the Pastoral Characters, that if we wou'd write up to the Perfection of Pastoral, 'tis necessary that whatever habit or temper of Mind distinguishes any CHARACTER in the first Pastoral, wherever that CHARACTER afterwards appears, thro' the whole set of Pastorals, it must appear with the same Temper as before; that is, 'tis not enough to have the Characters uniform and just thro' one and the same Pastoral, but what is the Character of any Swain or Lass in the first and second Pastoral, that must be their Character in all the rest, if they are nam'd or introduc'd, tho' never so slightly. For by this means, not only every single Pastoral will make a regular Piece, but the whole set of Pastorals also constitute together one uniform and ample Poem; if the Reader delights to fill his Mind with a large and ample Scheme.

The set of Pastorals would be still more perfect, if the Characters were also all continued on from the first to the last Pastoral, and none drop'd, as 'twere, in silence; but in the Pastorals which draw towards the End, the Characters should be all disposed of in Pastoral, and after an entertaining Manner; so that the two or three last Pastorals will be like the fifth Act in a Tragedy, where the Catastrophe is drawn up. The reasonableness of this appear's from hence. I suppose the Poet to form his Story so, and so to draw his Characters, that the Reader's Mind may be engag'd and concern'd for the Personages. Now the Mind is uneasy if 'tis not let into the issue of the Affairs of the Person it has been long Intent upon, and given to know whether he is finally Unfortunate, or Happy.

SECT. *Last*.

Thus far proceeded Sophy, when Night drew on. He shut his Book; and Cubbin told him, he had not pass'd many days with so much Delight as that. If you have found my Discourse, said Sophy, entertaining, do not fail of being here again early to morrow Morning, and I will continue it to you. The Shepherd express'd his Satisfaction, and they hasted home together.

The following Morn was fair and inviting; they both appear'd when the
Lark began his Mattin Song; and Sophy thus proceeded.

The End of the Second Part.

P A R T III.

CHAP. I.

Of the Sentiments in general.

I must crave leave to extend the Signification of the Word Sentiment, to the including tooth IMAGE and THOUGHT. For I think the Criticks should by all means have, before now, made that Division, and the omission has occasion'd the greatest Obscurity and Confusion in the Writings of those who have discours'd on any particular Kind of Sentiment. But that the Reader may take the more Care to keep this Distinction in his Head, we will give one Instance of the Confusion it occasion'd in the Mind of *Longinus*, who treated the Sublime, and certainly ought to have had a clear Notion of the Subject he wrote so largely, and so floridly upon.

Now in his sixth *Section*, he make's it a Question, and discourses largely, whether Passion can go along with a Sublime SENTIMENT. But any one who has divided Sentiment into Image and Thought would laugh at this Question; it being so plain that passion is consistent with a Sublime Thought, and is not with a Sublime Image.

Would not any person who desired to acquire a true and thorough Notion of a sublime Sentiment, so as to know one, wherever met, be puzzled at *Longinus*'s telling him, *Homer*'s Sentiment is sublime, where he make's the *Giant*'s heap Ossa on Olympus, and on Ossa Wood-top'd Pelion; and a little after telling him that *Alexander*'s to *Parmeno* is a sublime Sentiment. *Parmeno* say's, *Were I Alexander, I would embrace these Proposals of Peace*. *Alexander* reply'd, *And I, by the Gods, were I Parmeno*. These Sentiments of *Homer* and *Alexander* (tho' equally sublime) are as different as a Bright and a Tender Sentiment. If then I have settled one in my Mind, as sublime, How shall I conceive the other as such?

But there is no other way of avoiding this Confusion, and of being equally certain of all sublime Sentiments, but by knowing that the first of these is a sublime Image, and the last a sublime Thought or Sentiment. And you will find, if you consider the Nature of *Homer*'s Image, all sublime Images are like it; and the same of *Alexander*'s sublime Thought. Altho' the sublime Sentiments in general are so different.

But since we are accidentally engag'd in considering the Sublime; I will endeavour to show you how to judge infallibly of a Sublime SENTIMENT. For I think it cannot be gotten from *Longinus*; or at least, I could never learn it from that most Florid and Ingenious author. And it may be shown in three Lines, as well as in so many Volumes.

A Sublime Image always dilate's and widen's the Mind, and put's it upon the Stretch. It comprehends somewhat almost too big for it's Reach; and where the Mind is most stretch'd, the Image is most Sublime; if we consider no foreign Assistances. As *Homer* say's, *The Horses of the Gods, sprung as far at every Stride, as a Man can see who sit's upon the Sea-shore*. But foreign Assistances, as a figurative Turn, &c. may raise a passage to an equal degree of Sublimity, which yet does not so largely dilate the Mind; as this of *Shakespear*'s is more Sublime than that of *Homer*'s.

—*Heaven*'s Cherubs, *hors'd Upon the sightless* Curriers *of the Air,*
Shall blow the horrid Deed in every Eye.

Macbeth. Act. 1. Scen. 7

The not having a perfect Idea of the Sentiment, make's us conceive something the greater of it.

A Sublime Thought always gives us a greater and more noble Conception of either the Person speaking; the Person spoken of; or, the Thing spoken of. I need not instance; but if you apply this to any of the Thoughts of *Homer*, or *Shakespear*, generally call'd Sublime, you'll find it will always square.

Here let me make one Observation: That you may never be mistaken in judging of a Sublime Passage, *Cubbin*, take notice; that there are some Thoughts so much imaged in the Turn that is given to 'em, by the figurative Expression, that they lose the name of Thoughts, and commence Images. I will mention one out of *Shakespear*, (who uses this Method the most of any Author, and 'tis almost the only thing that raises his Language) I will mention it, because, being in it self a low and common Sentiment, he has made it the most Sublime, I think, of any he has. *Macbeth*'s Lady say's, before the Murther of the King.

—*Come, thick Night.*
And pall thee in the dunnest Smoak of Hell,
That my keen Knife see not the Wound it makes
Nor Heav'n peep thro' the Blanket of the Dark,
To cry, Hold! Hold!

Macbeth Act. 1. Scen. 5.

But I run the Digression too far.

CHAP. II.

Of the Images. And which are proper for Pastoral, which not.

Let us proceed to consider what Images will shine most in PASTORAL. And here I shall not consider all kinds of Images, both good and vicious, but only those which are in their own nature good; and among those show which may, and which may not, be introduc'd into Pastoral.

Of Images, in their own Nature good, only the BEAUTIFUL, and the [A]GLOOMY are, properly speaking, fit for Pastoral. The Uncommon, the Terrible, and the Sublime, being improper.

[Footnote A: *The Division of the Images and Thoughts is made, and the nature of the* GLOOMY *consider'd, in the Critical Preface to the Second Part of our Pastorals*.]

If any other kinds of Images are introduced, they must be artfully qualify'd, or else be faulty; the Methods to be used in so qualifying them, are too numerous to recount. But give me leave to put down one, which relates to the Language.

Suppose you was to describe some LOVELADS and LASSES roving a little by the Sea-shore in a guilded Boat; when, on a sudden, the Wind arises, drives 'em into the middle of the Main at once, and dashes the *Gondola* on a Rock. Might you not describe such a boistrous Circumstance in an easy and Pastoral manner.

Sore raven the fell Sea (Oh sorry Sight!)
And strait (most wofull Word) the Boat doth split.

But these are things which are better left to the Writer's own Genius, than to Rule and Criticism.

As to the gloomy Images, I shall only caution the Pastoral Writer, that they must be of a very different Nature from those in Epick Poetry or Tragedy: That is, the gloomy must not be so strong; but the Images must rather contain a pleasing Amusement. And that they'll do, if they are drawn from the Country: As *Fairies*; *Will-o'-Wisps*; *the Evening*; *falling Stars*; and the like, will all furnish Images exactly agreeable to Pastoral.

Having made this Observation on the *Gloomy Images*, let us now proceed to the Consideration of the Beautiful, which will detain us somewhat longer.

SECT. 2.

Of Beautiful Images. And of those; which are more, which less fine.

In my usual way of considering Beautiful Images; for the greater Clearness, I rank 'em into three several Classes. This division I do not desire to impose on any one else; but the mentioning it, cannot be amiss.

Of the three sorts or kinds of Beautiful Images, the first, and least delightful is, where only a simple Image is exhibited to the Reader's Mind. As of a Fair Shepherdess.

The second Sort is, where there is the Addition of the Scene; as suppose we give the Picture of the fair Shepherdess, sitting on the Banks of a pleasant streamlet.

The third, and finest kind of Beautiful Images is, where the Picture contain's a still further Addition of action. As, the Image of a fair Shepherdess, on the Banks of a pleasant Stream asleep, and her innocent Lover harmlessly smoothing her Cloaths as flutter'd by the Wind. And the most beautiful Image in Phillips, or I think any Pastoral-Writer, is of this Nature.

Once Delia *lay, on easy Moss reclin'd;*
Her lovely Limbs half bare, and rude the Wind.
I smooth'd her Coats, and stole a silent Kiss;
Condemn me, Shepherds, if I did amiss.

Past. 5.

The last Line contains a Pastoral Thought, of the best Sort; as the three first a Pastoral Image.

The middle of this last Pastoral is full of beautiful Images, and has therefore proved so Entertaining to all Readers, that I wonder Mr. Phillips would not give us the Beautiful in his four first Pieces also.

Of all the Persons who have written in the English Language, no one ever had a Mind so well form'd by Nature for Pleasurable Writing, as Spencer. Yet as he wrote his Pastorals when very Young, this does not appear so much from them, as from his Fairy Queen; thro' which, (like Ovid, in his Metamorphoses) he has perpetually recourse to Pastoral. Especially in his Second Book; in which there

are more pleasurable Pastoral Images in every eight Lines, than in all his Pastorals. We have Knights basking in the Sun by a pleasant Stream, rambling among the Shepherdesses, entering delightful Groves surrounded with Trees, or the like, almost in every Stanza; but thro' all his Pastorals, we have not half a dozen beautiful Images. 'Tis therefore the Pastoral Language that support's 'em, which he took excessive pains about.

CHAP. III.

Of Pastoral Descriptions. And what Authors have the finest.

Of Images are form'd Descriptions, as by a Combination of Thoughts a Speech is composed. And a Description is good or bad, chiefly as the Images or Circumstances are judiciously, or otherwise, chosen; and artfully put together.

As to the putting them together, I shall only observe, that in Descriptions of the Heat of Love, not in Pastoral, but in such Pieces as Sapho's, or the like, the Circumstances should be couch'd extreamly close; in Epick Poetry the Circumstances should be somewhat less closely heap'd together; and that Pastoral requires 'em the most diffuse of any; being of a Nature extreamly calm and sedate.

Hence we may learn what Length Pastoral will admit of in it's Descriptions. And certain it is, that as we are easily wearied by a cold Speech, so are we by a cold Description, unless very concise.

But as those Poets whose Minds have delighted in Pastoral Images have always been Men of Pleasurable Fancies, and who never would bring their Minds under the Regulation of Art; all who have touch'd Pastoral the finest have egregiously offended in this Particular. The only Writers, I think, who have ever had Genius's form'd for Pastoral Images, are *Ovid* and *Spencer*; which appear's from the *Metamorphoses* of the first, and the *Fairy-Queen* of the latter. As for *Theocritus*, he seem's to me to be better in the Pastoral Thought than Image; and as I rank together *Ovid* and *Spencer*, so I put *Theocritus* in the same Class with *Otway*. And I think any one of these Four, if he had form'd his Mind aright by Art, (that is, had either thoroughly understood Criticism in all it's Branches, or else never vitiated his natural Genius by any Learning) was capable of giving the World a perfect Sett of Pastorals. The former two would have run most upon beautiful Images, and the latter two upon Agreeable Thoughts.

I need not instance in the tedious Descriptions of *Theocritus*, *Ovid* and *Spencer*. But certainly, if long Descriptions are faulty in Epick Poetry, as they prevent the Curiosity of the Reader, and leave him nothing to invent, or to imploy his own Mind upon, they are in Pastoral much more disagreeable. Tho' if any thing would excuse a long Description, there is in *Ovid* and *Spencer*, that inimitable Delightfulness, which would make 'em pass. Virgil has no Descriptions in his Pastorals so long as Spencer, and Heavens deliver us if he had; for as 'tis, I can better read the longest of *Spencer*'s, than the shortest of his, in his Pastorals.

SECT. 2.

The proper Length for Descriptions adjusted, from several Considerations.

What I have laid down seem's in its self plain and evident; but because *Rapin*, and some other Criticks, famous for the Niceness of their Judgments, have made it a considerable Question, and at last own'd themselves unable to decide it, I shall further consider the Matter.

'Tis best, I think, only just to exhibit the Picture of an Object to the Reader's Mind; for if 'tis rightly set and well given, he will himself supply the minute Particulars better to please himself than any Poet can do; as no different Fancies are equally delighted with one and the same thing, the Poet in an extended Description must needs hit upon many Circumstances not pleasant to every Fancy; even tho' he touches all the best Particulars. But if the Poet only set's the Image in the finest Light, by enumerating two or three Circumstances, the Reader's Mind in that very instant it sees the Image or Picture, fill's up all the Omissions with such Particulars, as are most suitable to it's own single Fancy. Which farther conceives something beyond, and something out of the way, if all is not told. Whereas

descending to Particulars cool's the Mind, which in those Cases ever finds less than it expected.

To instance in Painting, for that's the same. When I first cast my Eye on a beauteous Landscape, and take in a View of the whole and all it's parts at once, I am in Rapture, not knowing distinctly what it is that pleases me; but when I come to examine all the several Parts, they seem less delightful. Pleasure is greatest if we know not whence it proceeds. And such is the Nature of Man, that if he has all he desires he is no longer delighted; but if ought is with-held, he is still in Eagerness, and full of Curiosity.

Besides, Descriptions in Pastoral should be particularly short, because it draw's into Description nought but the most Common tho' the most Beautiful of Nature's Works: Whereas Epick Poetry, whose Business is to Astonish, represents Monsters and Things unheard of before, and a *Polyphemus* or a *Cyclops* will bear, nay require, a more particular Description, than a beauteous Grott, or falling Water; because the One is only calling up into our Mind what we knew before, the other is Creation. Besides that in Epick Poetry the Descriptions are generally more necessary than in Pastoral. To describe the fair Bank where your Lovers sate to talk does not help the *Fable*; but if *Homer* had not prepared us, by a particular Description of *Polyphemus*'s hugeness, he would not have been credited, when he afterwards said, *That he hurl'd such a Piece of a Rock after* Ulysses'*s Ship, as drove it back, tho' it touch'd it not, but only plung'd into the Waves, and made 'em roll with so great Violence*.

I shall only add one Observation on this Head, and proceed. Pastoral admits of *Narration* and *Dialogue*, but in *Narration* we may be greatly more diffuse in our Descriptions than in the *Dialogue* part of the Piece. For nothing in Poetry is to be preserv'd with more care than probability, especially in Pastoral. Now for a Shepherd to be relating an Accident of Concern, and to dwell on a Description of Place or Person for four or five Lines in the midst, does it not look as if 'twere only Verses written, and not a Tale actually told by the Swain, since in such a Case 'tis natural to hast to the main Point, and not to dwell so particularly on Matters of no Consideration.

I might give several other Reasons for the shortness of Pastoral Descriptions, as that 'tis the manner of Shepherds not to dwell on one Matter so precisely, but to run from one thing to another; Also, that the Reader's Mind is delighted when it has scope to employ it self; and the like. But the clearness of the Question prevents me.

SECT. 3.

What Pastoral Images will shine most in a Description.

We have just shown which Images are the finest; and 'tis evident that by an accumulation of the best Images is form'd the best Description. 'Tis not here my business particularly to show which Circumstances, in any Description, are best, which worst; 'tis enough, that in general We affirm the most Beautiful to be finest in Pastoral, and the most Sublime in Epick Poetry; which are most Beautiful, and which are most Sublime I have elsewhere shown.

Yet there are several foreign Assistances or Adjuncts, which do greatly add to a beautiful Circumstance; as for Instance; if along with a beautiful Image, we by any means show at once the Happiness and Innocence of the rural Inhabiters, it renders the Circumstance greatly more delightful. This can't so well be explain'd as by an Instance. *Ovid* describes *PROSERPINA*, as she is gathering Flowers in a Meadow among her Play-Fellows, hurried away by *PLUTO*, in order to her Ravishment. Among the Misfortunes, which that Violence brought upon the Innocent young Creature, this is one;

And oh, out Lap the pretty florets fell.

There is no Circumstance in any Author, nor any one will be ever invented, more proper for Pastoral than this Line: As it contains not only a most beautiful Image, but show's us at once the Simplicity, and Happiness of the Country, where even such Accidents are accounted Misfortunes.

But this is a Circumstance that would but just bear the touching upon; and *Ovid* by his two next Lines, has, I think, spoil'd it. In Mr. *SEWEL*'s Translation they run thus.

Oft on her Mates, *oft on her Mother call's,*
And from her Lap her fragrant Treasure fall's;
And she (such Innocence in Youth remains)
Of that small Loss, among the rest, complains.

If he had stopt with the second Line he had put himself, as 'twere, in the place of a Shepherd, and spoke of the Misfortune as if it came from his Heart, and he was interested for the Beauteous Innocent. But in the two last Lines he takes upon him the Author, is grave and reflecting; but nothing is so Beautiful in these kind of Descriptions, as for a Writer to put himself as 'twere in the Place of the

Person he speaks of; and unless a Writer delights to do this, and takes Pleasure in his Characters, and has, as 'twere, a Love and Kindness for 'em, he'll never excell in Pastoral. And I have been told, Cubbin, by some of your Acquaintance, that they can easily tell what sort of Characters you were fondest of when your wrote your Pastorals; for there is one you never mention but with an unusual Pleasure and Alacrity; and it appear's from your Description of her that your Heart was on the flutter when you drew it. And if you read it over now, so long after, you'll observe it. But it has made you excell your self.

SECT. 4.

Cautions for the avoiding some Faults which Theocritus, Ovid, Spencer, Tasso, &c. have fallen into in their Descriptions_.

The generality of our narrative Poets under their general Descriptions, bring in the Descriptions of particular and lesser Things. This is very faulty. I might Instance In *OVID*, *SPENCER*, *CHAUCER*, &c, but there is an Example of this so very flagrant in *TASSO*, that I can't forbear mentioning it, as I think 'tis the most monstrous one I ever saw, and these Observations relate alike to Epick Poetry and Pastoral. This Author has occasion in the Thirteenth Book of his Hierusalem to describe a Drought, which he does In Six and Fifty Lines, and then least we might mistake what he's describing tell's us in Eight Lines more, how the Soldiers panted and languished thro' excessive Heat, then in Eight more describes the Horses panting and languishing; then in Eight more gives us a Description of the Dogs, who lay before the Tents also panting and languishing, and so on.

This is what I mean by bringing one Description within another; and 'tis the greatest of Faults. We lose all thoughts of the general Description, and are so engaged in Under-ones, that we have forgot what he at first propos'd to describe.

Another Observation I would make, is, that a Pastoral Writer should be particularly careful not to proceed too far, or dwell too minutely on Circumstances, in his most pleasurable Descriptions, which we may term the Luscious. Such as *Spencer*'s, where he makes his Knight lye loll'd in Pleasures, and Damsels stripping themselves and dancing around for his Diversion. This, *SPENCER* methinks carries to an excess; for he describes 'em catching his Breath as it steam'd forth; distilling the Sugar'd Liquor between his Lips, and the like. Such Descriptions will grow fulsome if more than just touch'd, as the most delicious things the soonest cloy.

CHAP. IV.

That Pastoral should Image almost every thing.

There is nothing more recommends the Tragedys of Mr. *Row*, than his Language, which I think is (in it's own Nature) particularly Beautiful.

As I cannot forbear looking into the Springs and Means by which our best Poets attain their Excellence in the several Dialects they touch the finest, what 'tis that constitutes the Difference between the Language of one and that of another; and also what Rank or Class each Dialect belongs to; I have done the same as to the Writings of Mr. *Row*. And I observe that the chiefest Means he makes use of to render his Tragick Language at once Uncommon and Delightful, is the Figurative Way of considering Things as Persons. What I mean is this.

——*Comfort*
Dispels
the
sullen
Shades
with
her
sweet
Influence.

And again:

——*My wrongs will tear their Way, And rush at once upon thee*.

Jane Shore: *Act* 1.

And this is extreamly frequent, especially in Jane Shore. And nothing can be more Beautiful in Heroick Language; and this Author has some Sentiments dress'd, by this Figurative Way, as finely as most of *Shakespear*'s; As this

Care only wakes, and moping Pensiveness;
With Meagre, discontented Looks they sit,
And watch the wasting of the Mid-night Taper.

Now what is this but imaging almost every thing, or turning as many Thoughts as possible into Images?

Now if the Thoughts in strong Lines, (as they call 'em) appear best in Imagery, how much more will Pastoral Thoughts. The former have Passion and Heat to support 'em, the latter are entirely Simple. And If Heroick Writers are fond of Images, how much more should Pastoral Writers avoid a long Series of bare Thoughts, and endeavour to Address the Mind of the Reader with a constant Variety of Pictures.

What I have here delivered may seem trifling to the Reader. But if he looks into the modern Pastoral-Writers he'll observe that the Scarcity of Images goes a great way towards making their Pieces flat and insipid. And 'tis impossible indeed to have a sufficient Variety of Images in a Pastoral that is compos'd by nought but a mournful Speech or Complaint. Therefore a Writer who would not only write regular, but also delightful Pastorals, should doubtless run very much upon Description.

I need not make the Distinction between an Epick and a Pastoral Writer's manner of Imaging. They are widely different; nor can a Pastoral Image so many Things as an Epick Writer. For he cannot consider Things as Persons, nor use the other Methods that Heroick Poetry takes to effect it.

CHAP. V.

Of the Thoughts. And which are proper for Pastoral, which not.

I Shall not consider those Thoughts which are, in their own Nature, Vicious; as the Ambiguous, the Pointed, the Insipid, the Refined, the Bombast, and the rest. But of those Kind of Thoughts which are in themselves good, only these three do properly belong to Pastoral; namely, The Agreeable, or Joyous; The Mournful, or Piteous; And the Soft or Tender.

Yet the rest of those Thoughts which are in their own Nature good, may be so order'd as to bear a part in Pastoral. For as We may make a Shepherd false to his Mistress, if he be offended with the Levity of his Nature; so We may make a Lass Ill-natured and Satyrical, for Instance, if 'tis not in her Temper, but assumed only for a good Purpose.

SECT. 2.

Of those Thoughts which are proper for Pastoral, how to Judge which are finest.

I need only observe, that where is the greatest Combination of those things which make the best Figure in Pastoral, that is always the best Thought. As a Thought that is not only agreeable or Beautiful, but has also Simplicity. The two finest Passages that I remember in *THEOCRITUS* for their Simplicity, are these. Which are exceeding well Translated by *CREECH*; whose Language (next to some of *Spencer's*) is vastly the best we have, for pastoral. I will quote the whole Passage.

Daph.) *And as I drove my Herd, a lovely Maid*
Stood peeping from a Cave; she smil'd, and said,
Daphnis is lovely, ah! a lovely Youth;
What Smiles, what Graces sit upon his Mouth!
I made no sharp Returns, but hung my Head
And went my Way, yet pleas'd with what she said.

Idyll. 8.

Of the same Nature is what *COMATAS* says in another Place.

Com.) *I milk two Goats; a Maid in yonder Plain*
Lookt on, and Sigh'd, Dost milk thy self poor Swain!

And what follows soon after.

Com.) *The fair Calistria, as my Goats I drove,*
With Apples pelts me, and still murmurs Love.

Idyll. 5.

Tho' these Thoughts are so exceeding Beautiful thro' their Simplicity, I rather take 'em to be Agreeable Thoughts; and Simplicity to be only an Adjunct or Addition to 'em; as Passion is an Addition and Embellishment to the Sublime Thoughts.

The Mournful Thought, with the Addition of Simplicity, is as pleasing, I think, as the Agreeable with Simplicity. The finest of this kind that I remember in *THEOCRITUS*, are in his 22 *Idyll*. A Shepherd resolves to Hang himself, being scorn'd by the Fair he ador'd. For the more he was frown'd upon the more he loved.

But when o'recome, he could endure no more,
He came and wept before the hated Dora;
He wept and pin'd, he hung the sickly Head,
The Threshold kist, and thus at last he said.

Many Thoughts In the Complaint are as fine as this. As, of the following Lines, the 3d and 4th.

Unworthy of my Love, this Rope receive.
The last, most welcome Present I can give.
I'll never vex thee more. I'll cease to woe.
And whether you condemned, freely go;
Where dismal Shades and dark Oblivion *dwell*.

Of the same Nature also is what soon after follows.

Yet grant one Kindness and I ask no more;
When you shall see me hanging at the Door.
Do not go proudly by, forbear to smile.
But stay, Sweet Fair, *and gaze, and weep a while;*
Then take me down, and whilst some Tears are shed,
Thine own soft Garment o're my Body spread.
And grant One Kiss,—One Kiss when I am dead.
Then dig a Grave, there let my Love be laid;
And when you part, say thrice, My friend is Dead.

All these Thoughts contain Simplicity as an Addition to the Mournful. And 'tis impossible for any Thoughts to be more Natural.

'Twere endless to enumerate all the several kinds of Beautiful Pastoral Thoughts, but from these any one may discover the rest; and the general Rule we gave at the beginning of the Chapter will be a Direction for his ranging them into distinct Classes.

Yet give me leave to mention one Kind, which I think we may term the finest. 'Tis where the Agreeable Thought, and the Tender, meet together, and have besides, the Addition of Simplicity. I would explain my Meaning by a Quotation out of some Pastoral Writer, but I am at a loss how to do it; give me leave therefore to bring a Passage out of the Orphan. A Thought may contain the Tender, either with regard to some Person spoken of, or the Person speaking. The first is common, this Play is full of it. I will therefore Instance in the latter. And first where 'tis chiefly occasion'd by the turn that is given to it in the Expression. Chamont presses his Sister to tell him who has abused her.

Mon.) *But when I've told you, will you keep your Fury*
Within it's bound? Will you not do some rash
And horrid Mischief? for indeed, Shamont,
You would not think how hardly I've been used
From a near Friend.

Cham.) *I will be calm; but has* Castalio *wrong'd thee?*

Mon.) *Oh! could you think it!* (Cham.) *What?*

Mon.) *I fear he'll kill me*. (Cham.) *Hah!*

Mon.) *Indeed I do; he's strangely cruel too me.*
Which if it lasts, I'm sure must break my Heart.

Act. 4.

In the other passage the Tender lyes more in the Thought.

Mon.) *Alas my Brother!*
What have I done? And why do you abuse me?
My Heart quakes in me; in your settled Face
And clouded Brow methink's I see my Fate;
You will not kill me!

Cham.) *Prithee, why dost talk so?*

Mon.) *Look kindly on me then, I cannot bear*
Severity; it daunts and does amaze me.
My Heart's so tender, should you charge me rough.
I should but Weep, and Answer you with Sobing.
But use me gently, like a loving Brother,
And search thro' all the Secrets of my Soul.

CHAP. VI.

Of three Kind of Thoughts which seem to be false, yet are admitted and valued by Pastoral Writers.

Tho' I proposed not to consider those Thoughts which are false, either in their own Nature, or with Respect to Pastoral; yet there are some such, that yet are thought good, by the generality of Writers, which I shall therefore Just mention; since Pastoral-Writers are especially fond of 'em, and seem to look upon 'em as Beautys. Of these false Thoughts there are, I think, three sorts. The EMBLEMATICAL, the ALLEGORICAL, and the REFINED.

Of the first Sort, or the EMBLEMATICAL, *SPENCER* was so fond, that he makes it run all thro' his first and last Pastoral; which two come the nearest of any he has to true Pastorals; and contain Thoughts more pleasant than those in his other (especially his Allegorical) Pieces. But these pleasant Thoughts are mostly Emblematical, as this, which I think, is in SPENCER.

My Leaf is dry'd, my Summer Season's done,
And Winter, blasting Blossoms, hieth on.

Meaning that his happy time of Life was past, and Old Age drew on. I need not prove these Thoughts to be improper for Pastoral.

The Second Sort, or the ALLEGORICAL, is also what *SPENCER* delighted equally in. His every Pastoral almost has under the plain Meaning a hidden one. Let all judge of Allegorical Pastorals as they please, but in my Opinion, they are not consistent with the Simplicity of that Poem.

The Third Sort I mention'd was the *REFINED*. And of this our Modern Swains are as fond, as *SPENCER* was of the two first. But all the Difficulty is to show that their Thoughts are refin'd; for all allow a Refin'd Thought to be faulty. But those I am going to mention are not at present look't upon as such. As that Apostrophe, where the Shepherd calls upon the Works of Nature to assist him in his Grief. This Thought being us'd by all Pastoral-Writers show's how Beautiful they thought it: And the generality of them, 'tis plain, took delight in the Affectation of it, because they have put it as affected as they could.

If 'tis possible for any, the finest Turn, that can be given it, to prevent the Affectation, I think the

Ingenious Mr. *ROW* has done it, in his excellent Tragedy, call'd *JANE SHORE*.

Give me your Drops, Ye soft-descending Rains,
Give me your Streams, Ye never-ceasing Springs, &c.

But the very best Turn, methinks, that can possibly be given to this Thought, Mr. *PHILIPS*, in his Pastorals, has hit upon.

Teach me to grieve, with bleating Moan, my Sheep,
Teach me, thou ever-flowing Stream, to weep;
Teach me, ye faint, ye hollow Winds, to sigh,
And let my Sorrows teach me how to dye.

The Thought likewise of the Heavens and the Works of Nature wailing along with the Swain, is what Pastoral-Writers all aim at. I need not quote different Authors, for the different Turns that are given to this Thought; I remember Mr. *CONGREVE* has it in four several Places. The best express'd, I think, is this.

The Rocks can Melt, and Air in Mists can mourn, And Floods can weep, and winds to Sighs can turn, &c.

It seem's to be turn'd the best next in these Lines.

And now the Winds, which had so long been still,
Began the swelling Air, with Sighs to fill, &c.

The Affectation of the Thought show's it self rather more, I think, in the following Lines.

And see, the Heav'ns to weep in Dew prepare.
And heavy Mists obscure the burd'ned Air
On ev'ry Tree the Blossoms turn to Tears,
And every Bough a weeping Moisture bears.

But give me leave to quote the Thought once more and I have done.

The Marble Weep's, and with a silent Pace,
It's trickling Tears distil upon her Face.
Falsely ye weep, ye Rocks, and falsely Mourn!
For never will ye let the Nymph return!

If any should have a Curiosity to see these Thoughts at large, for we have not quoted the whole of 'em, he may find 'em in *Congreve*'s Pastoral, call'd *The Mourning Muse of* ALEXIS.

I shall trouble you with but one Thought more of those which we reduce under the Denomination of Refin'd, and that is the ANTITHESIS. I do not just now remember a Line of this Nature in any Author but Mr. *PHILIPS*; otherwise, I avoid hinting at particular Faults in a Writer who is generally regular and correct, in his Sentiments.

In vain thou seek'st the Cov'rings of the Grove, In the cool Shades to sing the Heats of Love.

SECT. 2.

Of SIMPLE THOUGHTS. *And the finest quoted out of* SHAKESPEAR *and* PHILIPS.

'Twould be well if Pastoral-Writers would leave aiming at such Thoughts as these, and endeavour to introduce the Simple Ones in their stead. But what is most surprizing, is, that their false Thoughts are as seldom their own, as their true ones, and they steal all indifferently from *THEOCRITUS* and *VIRGIL*. Which shows how necessary it is to be a thorough Critick, if you would be a good Poet.

Pastoral-Writers are sufficiently for Simplicity; nay so much, that they form their Storys or Fables so little and triffling as to afford no Pleasure; is it not strange then that they should be so averse to Simplicity in their Thoughts; where Simplicity would be the greatest Beauty in their Poetry? Pastoral-Writers have all sorts of false Thoughts but those which we may call the Too Simple. I do not indeed know any Author who has such a Thought unless it be our wide-thoughted *SHAKESPEAR*. And indeed 'tis scarce possible to rise to Simplicity enough, in Pastoral, much less to have a Thought too Simple. *SHAKESPEAR*'s is this.

Des.) *Mine Eyes do itch, doth that boad Weeping?*

Emil.) *'Tis neither here nor there*.

Des.) *I have heard it said so: O these Men, these Men!*
Dost thou in Conscience think, tell me Emilia,
That there be Women do abuse their Husbands,
In such gross kind? &c.

Othello. Act. 4. Sc. last.

But if this passage is too Simple, 'tis for Tragedy so, not for Pastoral; and because *DESDEMONA* was a Senators Daughter, and Educated in so polite a place as *VENICE*; but in Pastoral, I think, we may Introduce a Character so Young, Simple and Innocent, that there is no Thought so Simple but will square with it; at least, we have no Instance of any such one as yet. The Simplicity of this Scene would be inimitable for Pastoral; and I think, it shows as great if not a greater Genius, in the Writing it, than any one in *SHAKESPEAR*. But a Scene so truly Simple and Innocent cannot well be represented. Besides, what is best writ is most open to the Ridicule of little Genius's; And more, I doubt, look upon this Scene in *OTHELLO* as Comedy, than have a taste of that sweet Simplicity, that is in it, if we consider the Sentiments only in themselves.

Yet must we not carry the Reflection too far, of Pastoral-Writers having no such thing as the Simple in any of their Thoughts, for there are passages in Mr. *PHILIPS Pieces* truly Simple. And 'tis worthy Observation how beautiful a figure they make, tho' we don't consider 'em as being in a Pastoral. Such is the celebrated one, contain'd in the last of these Lines.

I smooth'd her Coats, and stole a silent Kiss: Condemn me Shepherds if I did amiss.

Phllips Past. 6.

But we have greatly more Simple Thoughts in other Pieces than in Pastorals. The finest of all which, is this famous one in *OTHELLO*.

Why I should fear I know not,
Since Guiltiness I know not: But yet I feel I fear.

Yet need we not much wonder at the scarcity of these Simple Thoughts; since there is nothing requires so great a Genius as finely to touch the SIMPLE; and the greatest Genius's never attempt Pastoral; it being a Form so mean, little and trifling, without the Ornaments of Poetry, FABLE, MANNERS, MORAL, &c. and of a confused Imperfect Nature.

CHAP. VII.

Of COMPARISONS in Pastoral. And how much our modern Pastoral-Writers have fail'd therein.

SIMILIES in Pastoral must be managed with an exceeding deal of Care, or they will be faulty. As a Poet may range Nature for Comparisons; this gives a Pastoral-Writer a very easy Opportunity of introducing rural Thoughts. *VIRGIL* therefore, and those Swains who have written Pastorals more by Art and Imitation than Genius, generally heap three or four SIMILIES together for the same thing; and which is of no Moment; nor wanted any Comparison.

As I have hinted that *Theocritus* had a Genius capable of writing a perfect Set of Pastorals, his Similies are infinitely the best of any Swain's. The chief Rule, I think, to be observ'd is (if Rules can be given for such Things as these) that SIMILIES be contain'd in three or four Words. As this of *PHILIPS*'s.

Whilon did I, all as this Pop'lar *fair,*
Up-raise my heedless Head devoid of Care, &c.

Or at most they ahould not exceed a Line. As this is a very Beautiful one In the same Author. And also in his 1st Pastoral.

A Girland, deck't with all the Pride of May, *Sweet as her Breath, and as her Beauty gay*, &c.

I shall not give my Opinion of the following Similies; yet I might say that I think 'em not altogether so fine as the foregoing two. Altho' they contain delightful Images

As Milk-white Swans on Silver Streams do show,
And Silver Streams to grace the Meadows flow;
As Corn the Vales and Trees the Hills adorn,
So thou to thine an Ornament was't born.

Past. 3.

The next relates to the Sweetness of *Colinet*'s Voice.

Not half so sweet are Midnight Winds, that move
In drowsy Murmurs o're the waving Grove;
Nor dropping Waters, that in Grotts distil,
And with a tinkling Sound their Caverns fill.

Past. 4.

Methinks thus dressing a Thought so pompous in SIMILIES, raises so our Expectation, that we are fit to smile when the last Line comes.

There are also another kind of Similies, which being heapt in the same manner, seem to be design'd by *VIRGIL*, and those who have taken their Thoughts from him, rather to fill up Space with somthing Pastoral, than to be the natural Talk of Shepherds. For Swains are not suppos'd to retard their Storys by many or long SIMILIES; their Talk comes from the Heart, Unornamental; but Similies, in Pastoral, are for Ornament. But I must show what kind of Thoughts I mean, which I also account SIMILIES, but they have a peculiar Turn given to 'em. I remember but two in Mr. *PHILIPS* Pastorals.

First then shall lightsome Birds forget to fly,
The briny Ocean turn to pastures dry,
And every rapid River cease to flow,
'Ere I unmindful of Menalcas *grow.*

The other is this.

While Mallow Kids; and Endive Lambs pursue; While Bees love Thyme; and Locusts sip the Dew;
While Birds delight in Woods their Notes to strain, Thy Name and sweet Memorial shall remain.

But now I have given Examples of those Similies which seem faulty; and quoted at the beginning of the Section, some that are good; I will bring an Instance of a SIMILIE, which is more delightful to the Fancy than all these put together; and which show's that *Theocritus* thought 'twas a small thing to put down Pastoral Thoughts or Images, if he did not cull the most pleasurable in Nature. *CREECH* has translated it very well. *DAPHNIS* had conquer'd *MENALCAS* in Singing.

The Boy rejoyc'd, he leap'd with youthful Heat,
As sucking Colts leap when they swig the Teat;
The other griev'd, he hung his bashful Head,
As marry'd Virgins when first laid in Bed.

CHAP. VIII.

Of imitation; or Stealing Sentiments from the ANTIENTS.

If a direct Imitation of the Thoughts of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, shows no great Richness of Genius, in any kind of Poetry, in Pastoral 'tis much more to be avoided. If a Hero does sometimes talk out *HOMER* and *VIRGIL*, 'tis not so shocking, because tis not dissonant to Reason to suppose such a Person acquainted with Letters and Authors; nor is an Heroick Poems Essence Simplicity; But if a Modern gives me the Talk of a Shepherd, and I have seen it almost all before in *THEOCRITUS*, *VIRGIL* and *SPENCER*, it cannot delight me. For that Poetry pleases the most, that deceives the most naturally. But how can I, while I am reading a pastoral, impose upon my self that I am among Swains and in the Country, if I remember all they say is in *Greek* and *Roman* Authors. And few read *Modern-Writers* but have read the *Antients* first. A Shepherd should speak from his Heart, as if he had no design of Pleasing, but is prompted to utter all he says: But if in all he says we see an Imitation, or a Thought stole from other Authors, it destroys all Simplicity, shows Design and Labour.

Besides, Epick Poetry warms and elevates the Mind, hurries it on with fury and Violence, which prevents our noting any slight Inacuracy, so as to be offended by it; but in so cool a Poem as Pastoral, whose design is to sooth and soften the Mind, we have leasure to consider every Unnaturalness and every Improbability.

SECT. 2.

Of Soloman'*s Allegorical pastorals; Entitled* The CANTICLES.

Yet I know not how, tho' 'tis so unnatural to find Thoughts in the Mouths of Shepherds, which we have observ'd in *THEOCRITUS* and *VIRGIL*, yet I am never better pleased than with those Thoughts which are taken out of the Scripture. Methinks the Thoughts in the CANTICLES are so exceeding fine for Pastoral that 'tis pity to give 'em any other Turn than what they have there; and if I did take any of those Pastoral Sentiments, I would translate the whole Passage as we there find it.

MILTON in his soft Passages has often imitated the Thoughts in the CANTICLES; and Mr. *PHILIPS* has taken from thence the hint of the finest Image but one he has in his Pastorals.

Breath soft ye Winds, ye Waters gently flow,
Shield her ye Trees, ye Flow'rs around her grow,
Ye Swains, I beg ye pass in silence by,
My Love in yonder Vale asleep doth lye.

My not disliking Thoughts taken from the CANTICLES, makes me think that 'tis not so much the Thoughts being stolen from *THEOCRITUS* or *VIRGIL* that makes me dislike 'em, as the poor and mean Figure they make in Poetry. Could Poets take as fine Pastoral Images from the Antients, as this of *Philips*, I believe no one but would be pleased by 'em, come from whence they would. But the Thoughts which our Writers take from the Antients are such, that would they trust their own Genius's, I am satisfied they would, at least, not have worse, nor more false ones.

I was a little surprized when I first read Mr. *Philips*'s *5th* Pastoral, (which has the most of a story or Fable of any) how he came to take the very story which *STRADA* tell's to show what a Genius *CLAUDIAN* had. *OVID*'s *Metamorphoses* is full of such Fairy and Romantick Tales, and he might well enough have given a Description of a Bird's contending with a Man for the Prize in Singing, but methinks 'tis not wholly probable enough for a Fable in Pastoral.

Now the Cause of my mentioning this in Mr. *PHILIPS*, is to persuade, if possible, those who shall hereafter engage in Pastoral-Writing to trust to their own Genius's. By that means we may hope Pastoral will, one Day, arrive at it's utmost Perfection, which if Writers pretend to go no farther than the first who undertook it (I mean *THEOCRITUS*) it never can do. For 'tis no one Genius that can bring any Kind of Poetry to it's greatest Compleatness. And all know by what slow Steps Epick Poetry, Tragedy, and Comedy arrived at the Perfection they now bear.

SECT. *Last*.

But now the time of Day drew on, when Cubbin must drive his Heifers to Water. Sophy therefore withdrew, but promised to be there in the Evening agen.

When the Heat of the Day was over, and the Evening Air began to breath in a delightful manner, Sophy accordingly appear'd, and setting him on the Rushes, that esprouted up by the River side, open'd his Book, and proceeded in the following Manner.

The End of the Third part.

PART IV.

CHAP. 1.

Of the Pastoral Language in general.

I must here premise, that I intend not here a full and compleat Discourse on the Pastoral Language; for that would take up a Volume. But I would recommend it to some other Hand; for I know nothing that would be more acceptable to the Letter'd World than an Enquiry into the Nature of the *English* Language.

But there is no Dialect or Part of our Language so little understood, as that which relates to Pastoral; nor none (not even the Sublime) so difficult to write. Of all who have attempted Pastoral in our Tongue, no one (but *SPENCER*) has gone so far as even the weakening and enervating their Dialect; yet after that is perform'd, a Pastoral-Writer has gone but half way; for after the Strength is taken away, a Tenderness and Simplicity of Expression must supply its Place, or else 'tis only bald and low, instead of Soft and Sweet.

Spencer's Language is what supports his Pastorals; for I can maintain, that he has not above one Sentiment in fifteen but is either false, or taken from the Antients, throughout his Pastorals. The greatest Defect in his Language is it's want of Softness. He has introduced a sufficient, or perhaps too great a Number, of Old-Words. But they are promiscuously used. He took not the Pains to form his Dialect before he wrote his Pastorals, by which means he has used more rough and harsh Old-Words, than Smooth and Agreeable Ones. They are used where our common Words were infinitely more Soft and Musical. As *What gar's thee Greet?* For, *What makes thee Grieve?* How Harsh and Grating is the Sound of *SPENCER*'s two Words, But Instances were endless. He is the more blamable, because there are full enough Old-Words to render a Dialect Rustick and Uncommon of the most sweet and delightful Sound imaginable. As *ween* or *weet*, for *think*; *yclepen*, for *call'd*, and the like. These being so tender and soft, render the Language of Pastoral infinitely more tender also, than any common Words, now in use, can do.

CHAP. II.

How to attain to the Soft *in Writing*.

That a Shepherd should talk in a different Dialect from other People, is allow'd by all. That the Pastoral Language should be soft and agreeable is equally past dispute. The only remaining Question then is, what it is that composes such a Dialect, and how to attain it.

In order to compose a Pastoral Dialect entirely perfect; the first thing, I think, a Writer has to do, is, as we said before, to enervate it and deprive it of all strength.

As for the manner of enervating a Language, it must be perform'd by the Genius of the Poet, and not shown by a Critick. However when the Thing is done, 'tis not difficult to see what chiefly effected it. There are, I think, *Cubbin*, two Things that principally enervate your Language.

First, 'Tis perform'd by throwing out all Words that are *Sonorous* and raise a *Verse*. Mr. *PHILIPS* comes the nearest to a Pastoral Language of any English Swain but *Spencer*. And he has truly enervated his Language in four several Lines. One of which is the last of these two.

Ye Swains, I beg ye pass in silence by; My Love in yonder Vale asleep doth lye.

The Word Doth, is what enervates the last Line. But 'twould be still better enervated if Mr. *Philips* had used only such Words as have very few Consonants in them. For by Consonants, joyn'd with the Vowel O, a Writer may render his Language, in Epick Poetry, just as Sonorous as he will; and by the want of Consonants and by delighting in the other soft Vowels he may render it weak. I cannot see that Mr. *PHILIPS* has any Line where the Language is wholly enervated. But see how *Spencer* has done this. Especially in the second of these Lines.

The gentle Shepherd sate beside a Spring. All in the Shadow of a Bushy Breer. &c.

In this last Line, there is but one Word end's with a Consonant, where the following Word begin's with one. But a Writer, who is perfectly Master of his Language, will be able to have every Line like this; and no Word more strong than Evening, Rivulet, and the like, will he be forc'd to use.

Secondly, The Language is by nothing more weaken'd, than by the use of Monisyllables. This no one ever had the least Notion of but *Spencer*. Which I wonder has not been observed, 'tis so very palpable in him. What makes the finess of these Lines else?

All as the Sheep such was the Shepherd's look,
For pale and wan he was (alas the while!)
May seem he lov'd, or also some Care he took,
Well could he tune his Pipe and form his Stile.

Past. 1.

Here is but two Words for four Lines, except Monosyllables.

The best Lines in *PHILIPS*, for the Language, are these, where Monosyllables reign.

…Fine gain at length, I trow,
To hoard up to my self such deal of Woe!

And the last of these; for the first is rough thro' too many Consonants.

A lewd Desire strange Lands and Swains to know: Ah Gad! that ever I should covet Woe! Past. 2.

There are other Methods, I see, Cubbin, you have taken to enervate your Language; too minute and too numerous to recite, but they are easily, I think, observ'd, if a Person peruses the Pastoral Writers with Care.

When our Dialect is thus render'd weak and low, we must then add to it, (in order to render it as pleasant as a Dialect that is not low and mean) Simplicity, Softness and Rusticity. This is perform'd principally by these three things. By Old-Terms; by Turns of Words, and Phrazes; and by Compound Words. Of all which I shall crave leave to treat distinctly. And first of Ancient Terms.

SECT. 2.

Of Old-Words.

When first I look'd into *Chaucer*. I thought him the most dry insipid Writer I ever saw. And there is indeed nothing very valuable in either his Images or Thoughts; but after a Person is accustom'd to his manner of Writing and his Stile, there is something of Simplicity in his Old Language, inimitably sweet and pleasing. If 'tis thus in *Chaucer*, in Pastoral such a Language is vastly more delightful. For we expect something very much out of the Way, when we come among Shepherds; and how can the Language of Shepherds be made to differ from that of other Persons, if they use not Old-Words?

'Tis very remarkable that all our greatest Poets whose Works will live to Eternity, have introduced into their Language Old-Words; as *Shakespear*, *Spencer*, *Milton*. *Dryden* also, whose Genius was much inferiour to those Writers; has used some few. And *Ben. Johnson* (tho' he lived at the same time with *Shakespear, Spencer, &c*.) whose Genius was yet meaner than *Dryden*, has not one Old-Word.

Ancient Terms were doubtless a great disadvantage, especially to *Spencer*, when his Works appear'd first in the World; but he had a Soul large enough to write rather for Posterity, than present Applause. He took so excessive a delight in the Old Language of his admired *Chaucer*, that he could not help, in some measure, imitating it.

Our greatest Writers having all given into an Ancient Dialect, would almost encline us of the present Age, to think of making their Language a standing Language; for Queen *Elizabeth*'s Age is to us what *Augustus*'s was to the *Latins*; we must never hope to have so many noble Genius's adorn any one Age for the future; I might have said, any twenty Ages. Therefore if any *English* Dialect survives to the World's End, 'twill certainly be theirs; and 'twill be prudence in any After-writer to draw his Language as near to theirs as possible; that if theirs are understood a thousand Years hence, his may too.

But to leave the Consideration of Old-Words in Epick Poetry and Tragedy, let us proceed to Pastoral. There are several Advantages flow from the Use of Old-Words, but I have time to mention but two or three.

There is a Spirit and a Liveliness of Expression to be preserv'd in Pastoral as well as other Poetry; now I affirm that 'tis impossible to perform this without Old-Words; unless a Writer make Shepherds talk Sublimely, and with Passion, as in Tragedies.

Again, if a Writer has a Genius for Pastoral he will have some Thoughts occur so inimitably Simple, that they would appear ridiculous in the Common Language; and 'tis necessary that the Language should answer to the Thought. These are the finest Thoughts of all for pastoral.

There are also several Thoughts which, tho' extreamly agreeable to the simple Innocence of young Country Girls, will appear too luscious, unless the Simplicity and Rusticity of the Speaker appear's, by the Old Language spoken. But we smile at a Thought in such simple Language, which perhaps we shall nauseate in a polite Dialect.

But one of the greatest Advantages of Old-Words, is, that they afford the Writer so fine an Opportunity of rendring his Language most inimitably soft and smooth. This cannot be done by any other Means; and how proper soft and simple Language is to Pastoral (at least where the Characters are Young, Tender, and Innocent) I need not say. As for VIRGIL and those Pastoral Writers who seem not to aim at Simplicity in either their Characters or Sentiments, the using of Old-Words is entirely different with regard to them. To see a Sentiment, which would as well become any other Person as a Shepherd, dress'd in the Simplicity of an Ancient Dialect, would appear nothing but Affectation. We are used to see such Sentiments in another Dress. Nay, were their Thoughts Simple, 'twould not be agreeable for them to use Old-Words, unless the whole Turn of their Language was answerable to it; to have a common, ordinary Language, with Old-Words scatter'd through it, is a mixt confused Language, and what is very expressively named by our Word Hodge-podge. 'Tis not enough therefore, for the forming a pastoral Language to use Old-Words; a Writer must set down, and by true Pains and Industry constitute a Language entirely of a piece and consistant; in performing which the choicest Old-Words will be of some little Assistance.

If I might advise you, Cubbin, I would have you always write Pastorals in either such a Language as this, entirely uniform and of a piece, or else to write in a strong polite Language. Never write any single thing in a low and mean Language. Polite Language is only faulty with respect to it's being in Pastoral; but low Language is in it's own Nature faulty. The first is only unnatural; the latter is stupid and dull. Therefore unless you resolve to go quite thro', never weaken or enervate your Pastoral Language at all. Unless you resolve to add Simplicity and Softness, to supply the place of Strength, never rob it of it's Strength. It had better have strength and Sprightliness and Politeness than Nothing.

The best Way is that which Sir *Philip Sidney* has taken, to suppose your Swains to live in the *Golden-Age*, and to be above the ordinary Degree of Shepherds, for Kings Sons and Daughters, were then of that Employ. And upon this Supposition to make 'em talk in a polite, delightful and refined Dialect. By this Means you will disable the Criticks at once.

But perhaps some may expect that I should vindicate the Use of Old-Words, on my own Account. But for that Reason I am the more careless in touching the Subject; because I would leave the World to a free and unbias'd Judgment of what I have done. Nor is this an Age, indeed, to begin to vindicate Old-Words in. The Method has been approv'd of in all Ages even in Epick Poetry and Tragedy, and should we go now to defend it in Pastoral? A Friend indeed of *SPENCER*'s wrote a Vindication of his Old-Words, but had *SPENCER* been living be would doubtless have been ashamed of it's appearing in the World. 'Tis the Opinion of the best Judges that the Old-Words used by Mr. *Row*, even In the Tragedy of *JANE SHORE* are a great Beauty to that Piece. And those who have objected against *SALLUST* for affecting Old-Words, have made nothing out. Tho' History is to deliver plainly Matters of Fact, and not to flourish, and beautify it's self with foreign Ornaments, as Poetry is. There are not so many disapprove of *SALLUST*'s Old-Words, as commend him for adding a Majesty and Solemness to his Writings thereby.

I might add (were there occasion for vindicating Old-Words) that we have render'd our *English* Language unexpressive and bare of Words, by throwing out several useful Old-Words; as *Freundina* a *She-Friend*; *Theowin* a *She-Servant*, &c. But as no one has shewn Old-Words to be faulty, for so many hundred Years, 'twould be folly to trouble the Reader with a Vindication of 'em, at this Day. The only Question is, whether an Author has chose the Softest and Finest; or has shown by his Choice the weakness of his Judgment.

SECT. 3.

Of Compound Words.

Another thing which occasions Softness in the Pastoral Language, if rightly managed, is the use of Compound Words. But there is nothing requires a greater Genius than to form Beautiful Compound Words in Epick Poetry, or more Exactness and Labour in Pastoral. In Epick Poetry 'tis absurd to make a Compound Word, unless it helps forward the Sence; and in Pastory, it must add to the Softness of the Dialect, and in some measure assist the Thought, yet it need not do it so much as in Epick Poetry;

where a Writer of Genius will form such Compound Words as will each contain as much as a whole Line. As may be seen in *Homer*, and the *Greek* Poets, especially. Among the *English*, *Milton*'s are often very fine.

Brandish'd aloft the horrid Edge came down, Wide-wasting.

The Compound Words, in Pastory, must be so easy and natural, as scarce to be observ'd from the other Language. They must run easy and smooth, and glide off the Tongue, and that will occasion their not being observ'd in the reading.

A Pastoral Writer will often be able, if he gives an Image in one Line, by a Compound Word in that Line to give another Image, or another Thought as full and as fine an one as that which the whole Line contains. But as this and the like Observations cannot be well understood without Instances quoted, I shall leave 'em to the Observation of those who intend to engage in Pastoral Writing; for that and nothing else, will put 'em upon a thorough Search into the Springs and Rules by which all former Pastoral Writers have excell'd.

SECT. 4.

Of Turns of Words and Phrazes.

Another help to Softness, and the very greatest Beauty of all in the Pastoral Language, is, a handsome use of Phrazes. This must depend entirely on the Genius of the Writers, for there is no one Rule can be given for the attaining thereto. A Person who writes now may imitate *Ovid* and *Spencer* in this particular (if he can submit his Fancy to Imitation) and that is all the Assistance he can have. As for rural Phrazes, there are not above half a dozen in all the Counties or Dialects that I am acquainted with.

All that we can do on this Head, is to leave the Reader to Observation. For I confess that I do not so much as know how I came by those few I myself have, farther than that by use and practising in an Uncommon Dialect, I happen'd on 'em at Unawares.

However I may quote those which are the very finest of any in *Spencer*. Who is the only Writer in our Language that ever attempted tender Phrazes or Turns of Words. Yet there are two such Passages in *Creech*'s *Theocritus*, which I will also quote.

All as the Sheep, such was the Shepherd's Look;
For pale and wan he was (alas the while!) &c.

And again.

Ye Gods of Love, who pity Lover's Pain. (If any Gods the Pain of Lovers pity) &c.

And again.

A simple Shepherd Born in Arcady, *Of gentlest Blood that ever Shepherd bore*, &c.

Such beautiful Turns of Words as these are extremely scarce in *Spencer*; but he has not one but what is inimitably fine and natural.

Let us now see the two Phrazes which *Creech* has happen'd upon. Whose Language I have observ'd to be infinitely the best of any of our Pastoral writers, next to Spencer. This is one of them. A Shepherdess says to a persuading Swain.

You will deceive, you Men are all Deceit;
And we so willing to believe the Cheat.

The other is this, to Diana; when she consents.

I liv'd your Vot'ry, but no more can live.

CHAP. III.

The Tender in Pastory distinguish'd from that in Epick poetry or Tragedy.

'Tis strange to me that our Pastoral Writers should make no Distinction between their SOFT when they write Pastories, and when they write Epick Poetry. This in *Philips* is the Epick Softness, or what we call the Beautiful sometimes in Epick Poetry in Opposition to the Sublime.

Breath soft ye Winds, ye Waters gently flow;
Shield her ye Trees, ye Flow'rs around her grow, &c.

And this which also is the Sixth Pastory.

Once Delia *lay, on easy Moss reclin'd, Her lovely Limbs half bare, and rude the Wind*, &c.

This also is of the same kind of SOFT.

A Girland deckt in all the Pride of May, Sweet as her Breath, and as her Beauty Gay, &c.

But Instances were endless. In Opposition to this kind of Soft, I shall quote out of *Spencer* some Passages which have the truest Softness. For such that Author has, beyond any in the World, tho' perhaps not very often. He begins his last Pastory thus.

A gentle Shepherd sate besides a Spring, All in the shadow of a bushy Breer, &c.

And his first he begins thus.

A Shepherd's Boy (no better do him call) &c.

His Pastoral named *Colin Clout's come home*, begins thus.

The Shepherd-boy (best known by that Name)
Who after TITYRUS first sang his Lay,
Lays of sweet Love, without Rebuke or Blow,
Sate, as his manner was, upon a Day, &c.

These Lines of *Spencer* and those of *Philips*, both contain agreeable Images and Thoughts, yet are they as different as *Milton* and *D'Urfey*.

I shall only make one Observation on this difference. Namely, that in the soft and beautiful Lines of *Philips*, each Word, only signifies a soft and beautiful Idea; As *Breath, Waters, Flow, Gently, Soft*, &c. but in *Spencer* the sound also is soft. Had such an Author dress'd this inimitable Thought of *Philips*, the Line would have glided as smooth and easy off the Tongue, as the Waters he mentions, do along the Meadows.

SECT. II.

That no Language is so fit for Pastoral as the English.

I have before observed, that this softness is effected, among other things by little Words; yet I cannot help observing here, that our Language is infinitely the finest of any in the World for Pastoral, and it's abounding so much in little Words is one Reason of it. The Pomps and Stateliness of the Latin Lines could not have been made proper for Pastoral, unless entirely alter'd, and 'tis not likely that a Genius daring enough to do that would engage in Pastoral.

The *Romans* had not a Particle, as we have, before their *Substantives*; As *A* and *The Tree*. Seldom used a Word before the Verbs; as *He goes*, *They go*. Nor had they our *Doth* and *Does*; without which no *Englishman* could form a Pastoral Language. As the sweet Simplicity of that Line, I have just quoted, is occasion'd by nothing else.

A Shepherd-boy (no better do him call.)

The *Greek* Language was greatly more fit for Pastoral than the *Latin*. Among other Reasons, because the former had so many Particles; and could render their Language uncommon, by their different Dialects, and by their various Methods of changing, and of compounding Words. Which no Language will admit of in an equal degree, besides the *English*. But then the *Greek* Language is too sonorous for Pastoral. Give me leave to show the inimitable softness and sweetness of the *English* Tongue, only by instancing in one Word. Which will also show how copious a Language ours is. I know but three Words the *Greeks* had to express the Word Lad or Swain by: [Greek: Agrikôs, Poimruos; and Bôkolos]; and

how sonorous are they all. We have six; Swain, Boy, Shepherd, Youth, Stripling, Lad; and how inimitably soft is the sound of 'em all.

Theocritus has more Turns of Words or Phrazes than *Spencer*; yet he could in none of 'em come up to *Spencer*'s smoothness and simplicity in his Numbers. As I quoted only the Phrazes of my Country-men In the Chapter on that Head; I will here put down the finest in Theocritus, tho' I cannot say indeed that he has any but in his first Pastoral.

[Greek: Archete boukolikas Moisai philai harchet haoithas. Thursis hod hôx Ahitnas, kai Thursidos adea phôna. Pa pok had êsth, oka Daphnis etaketo, pa poka Numphai;]

The finest of these Lines (and the softest but one that I remember thro' all his Pieces) is the middle one; it is most incorrigibly translated by *Creech*: tho' I blame him not for it, because of the difficulty of inventing fine Phrazes, much more of translating those of other Men, into Rhime; for which Reason *Creech* has not attempted to give us any of *Theocritus*'s Turns of Words.

CHAP. IV.

That there may be several sorts of Pastorals.

To conclude this Essay, as there are Tempers and Genius's of all sorts, so perhaps it may not be amiss to allow Writings of all sorts too. I think every Person's Aim should be to be subserving as much as possible, to the Delight and Amusement of his Fellow-Creatures. And if any can take pleasure in what is really not pleasant, 'tis pity, methinks, to rob 'em of it. Yet if there is in nature a Method which pursued will be still more delightful, the Critick is to be observed who points out the Way thereto.

If any of my Countrymen therefore can take delight from reading the Pastorals of *Theocritus* and *Virgil*, or any of those who have imitated those two Ancients, I shall be ready to allow that there may be several sorts of Pastorals. 'Tis certain that *Milton* and *Homer*, (thro' the Scene of the Former lying about the Sphere of Men) are as different as *East* from *West*, yet both excellent. Tragedy has as different sorts as Epick-Poetry; Nor are *Julius Caesar* and the *Orphan* of the same Nature. The same difference in Tragedy, is between all those, whose Chief CHARACTER is a Hero, and those that draw a Female, as *Jane Shore*, the Lady *Jane Gray, and the like*, are to me entirely different from *Shakespear's*, not respecting the Excellency of 'em. *Shakespear* having a Genius made for the Sublime, and perhaps Mr. *Row* rather for the Soft and Tender; as appears in two Passages at the End of *JANE SHORE*. Which in my Judgment are not much excell'd by even *Otway* himself.

Since I have mention'd that Author, I can't help remarking how difficult a thing it is for any Person to know what his own Genius is fittest for; and how great a Chance it is whether ever a Writer comes to know it. Tho' *Otway* had so fine a Genius for the TENDER, it never appear'd till a little before he dyed. Thro' all his Plays we cannot trace even the least Glimpse of it, till his two last, *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserv'd*. But we run the Digression too far.

SECT. 2.

What Kind of Pastorals would please most Universally; and delight the greatest Number of Readers.

For my own Part, as I said, I could be delighted with any Kind of Pastoral, if the Writer would but be at the Pains of selecting the most beautiful Images, and tenderest Thoughts. This is the first and principal Matter. Yet this might be perform'd by a moderate Capacity, without a Genius born for Tragedy.

Would a Person but form a delightful Story, invent new and uncommon and pleasing Characters, and furnish his Mind with a small Number of fine Images from the Country, before he sate down to write his Pieces, He would not fail of Success. But if Writers will only put down a parcel of common triffling Thoughts from *Theocritus* and *Virgil*, nor will so much as aim at any thing themselves, can you blame me Cubbin, if I throw 'em aside. Let 'em have a thousand Faults, I can be pleas'd by 'em, if they have but Beauties with 'em; nor will you ever hear me blame *Shakespear* for his Irregularity. And Pastoral is delightful to me in it's own Nature, that were these Authors to employ but my Mind in any manner, I should have Patience to peruse 'em.

But if these Authors were unwilling to be at the Pains of forming a pleasant Story themselves, they might go upon little Tales already known, such as, *The Two Children in the Wood*, and a thousand others inimitably pretty and delightful.

And had we a Set of such Pastorals as these, I am satisfied they would take extreamly. More Cubbin, perhaps than yours ever will; because perfect Pastories are directed only to Persons of Reading and Judgment. But you cannot I suppose satisfie your own Mind, unless you write up to what you judge the Standard of Perfection in every sort of Writing.

FINIS.

Notes on the Text.

It was impractical to issue Purney's *Enquiry* in facsimile because of the blurred condition of the photostats. This reprint follows the original text faithfully, with the following exceptions: the long "s" and the double "v" are modernized; small capitals, which appear frequently in the 1717 version, are reduced to lower-case letters; a few very slight typographical errors have been silently corrected. On page 40, line 1, *thoroughly* reads *throughly* in the original; and the three lines of Greek on p. 70, somewhat garbled in the original, are given in corrected form.

PUBLICATIONS FOR THE FIRST YEAR (1946-1947)

MAY, 1946: Series I, No. 1—Richard, Blackmore's *Essay upon Wit* (1716), and Addison's *Freeholder* No. 45 (1716).

JULY, 1946: Series II, No. 1—Samuel Cobb's *Of Poetry* and *Discourse on Criticism* (1707).

SEPT., 1946: Series III, No. 1—Anon., *Letter to A. H. Esq.; concerning the Stage* (1698), and Richard Willis' *Occasional Paper* No. IX (1698).

Nov., 1946: Series I, No. 2—Anon., *Essay on Wit* (1748), together with Characters by Flecknoe, and Joseph Warton's *Adventurer* Nos. 127 and 133.

JAN., 1947: Series II, No. 2—Samuel Wesley's *Epistle to a Friend Concerning Poetry* (1700) and *Essay on Heroic Poetry* (1693).

MARCH, 1947: Series III, No. 2—Anon., *Representation of the Impiety and Immorality of the Stage* (1704) and anon., Some *Thoughts Concerning the Stage* (1704).

PUBLICATIONS FOR THE SECOND YEAR (1947-1948)

MAY, 1947: Series I, No. 3—John Gay's *The Present State of Wit*; and a section on Wit from *The English Theophrastus*. With an Introduction by Donald Bond.

JULY, 1947: Series II, No. 3—Rapin's *De Carmine Pastorali*, translated by Creech. With an Introduction by J.E. Congleton.

SEPT., 1947: Series III, No. 3—T. Hanmer's (?) *Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet*. With an Introduction by Clarence D. Thorpe.

Nov., 1947: Series I, No. 4—Corbyn Morris' *Essay towards Fixing the True Standards of Wit, etc*. With an Introduction by James L. Clifford.

JAN., 1948: Series II, No. 4—Thomas Purney's *Discourse on the Pastoral*. With an Introduction by Earl Wasserman.

MARCH, 1948: Series III, No. 4—Essays on the Stage, selected, with an Introduction by Joseph Wood Krutch.

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