
PRACTICAL PIECES FOR SPEAKING ;

CONSISTING OF

ORATIONS, ADDRESSES, EXHORTATIONS
FROM THE PULPIT, PLEADINGS AT THE
BAR, SUBLIME DESCRIPTIONS, DEBATES,
DECLAMATIONS, GRAVE AND HUMOR-
OUS DIALOGUES, POETRY, &c. VARIOUSLY
INTERSPERSED.

EXTRACT FROM AN ORATION ON ELOQUENCE,
PRONOUNCED AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY, ON COM-
MENCEMENT DAY, 1794.

THE excellence, utility, and importance of ELO-
QUENCE; its origin, progress, and present state;
and its superior claim to the particular attention of
Columbia's free born sons, will exercise for a few mo-
ments the patience of this learned, polite, and respected
assembly.

Speech and reason are the characteristics, the glory,
and the happiness of man. These are the pillars which
support the fair fabric of eloquence; the foundation,
upon which is erected the most magnificent edifice, that
genius could design, or art construct. To cultivate elo-
quence, then, is to improve the noblest faculties of our
nature, the richest talents with which we are entrusted.
A more convincing proof of the dignity and importance
of our subject need not, cannot be advanced.

The benevolent design and the beneficial effects of
eloquence, evince its great superiority over every other
art, which ever exercised the ingenuity of man. To
tract, to persuade to please; these are its objects.

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To scatter the clouds of ignorance and error from the
atmosphere of reason; to remove the film of prejudice
from the mental eye; and thus to irradiate the be-
nighted mind with the cheering beams of truth, is at
once the business and the glory of eloquence.

To promote the innocent and refined pleasures of the
fancy and intellect; to strip the monster vice of all his
borrowed charms, and expose to view his native deform-
ity; to display the resistless attractions of virtue;
and, in one word, to rouse to action all the latent ener-
gies of man, in the proper and ardent pursuit of the
great end of his existence, is the orator's pleasing, be-
nevolent, sublime employment.

Nor let it be objected, that eloquence sometimes im-
pedes the course of justice, and screens the guilty from
the punishment due to their crimes. Is there any
thing which is not obnoxious to abuse? Even the
benign religion of the Prince of Peace has been made
the unwilling instrument of the greatest calamities ever
experienced by man. The greater the benefits which
naturally result from any thing, the more pernicious are
its effects, when diverted from its proper course. This
objection to eloquence is therefore its highest eulogium.

The orator does not succeed, as some would insin-
uate, by dazzling the eye of reason with the illusive
glare of his rhetorical art, nor, by silencing her still
small voice in the thunder of his declamation; for to
her impartial tribunal he refers the truth and propriety
of whatever he asserts or proposes. After fairly con-
vincing the understanding, he may, without the impu-
tation of disingenuousness, proceed to address the fancy
and the passions. In this way he will more effectually
transfuse into his hearers his own sentiments, and make
every spring in the human machine co-operate in the
production of the desired effect.

The astonishing powers of eloquence are well known
at least to those who are conversant in ancient history
Like a resistless torrent, it bears down every obstacle
and turns even the current of opposing ignorance and
prejudice

prejudice into the desired channel of active and zealous compliance. It is indisputably the most potent art within the compass of human acquirement. An Alexander and a Cesar could conquer a world; but to overcome the passions, to subdue the will, and to command at pleasure the inclinations of men, can be effected only by the all-powerful charm of enrapturing eloquence.

Though it be more than probable, that oratory was known and cultivated in some degree in those eastern nations, where science first began to dawn upon the world; yet it was not till Greece became civilized and formed into distinct governments, that it made its appearance in its native, peerless majesty. Here we may fix the era of eloquence; here was its morn; here its meridian too; for here it shone with splendor never since surpassed.

It is a common and a just remark, that eloquence can flourish only in the soil of liberty. Athens was a republic, where the affairs of state were transacted in the assembly of the whole people. This afforded to eloquence a field too fertile to remain long uncultivated by the ingenious Athenians. Orators soon made their appearance, who did honor to language, to Greece, to humanity.

But though the names of many have been transmitted to us, whose genius and eloquence demand our veneration and applause; yet, like stars when the sun appears, they are lost in the superior blaze of the incomparable Demosthenes. His story is well known; and his example affords the greatest encouragement to students in eloquence; as it proves, that, by art, almost in defiance of nature, a man may attain such excellence in oratory, as shall stamp his name with the seal of immortality. Demosthenes and the liberty of Greece together expired; and from this period we hear very little more of Grecian eloquence.

Let us now direct our attention to that other garden of eloquence, the Roman commonwealth. Here, as in Greece, a free government opened the list to such as wished to dispute the palm in oratory. Numbers
advance,

advance and contend manfully for the prize. But their glory is soon to fade; for Cicero appears; Cicero, another name for eloquence itself. It is needless to enlarge on his character as an orator. Suffice it to say, that if we ransack the histories of the world to find a rival for Demosthenes, Cicero alone can be found capable of supporting a claim to that distinguished honor.

And when did Greece or Rome present a fairer field for eloquence than that which now invites the culture of the enlightened citizens of Columbia? We live in a republic, the orator's natal soil; we enjoy as much liberty, as is consistent with the nature of man; we possess as a nation all the advantages which climate, soil, and situation can bestow; and nothing but *real merit* is here required as a qualification for the most dignified offices of state. Never had eloquence more ample scope.

And shall we rest satisfied with only admiring, or at most with following at an awful distance, the most illustrious orators of Greece and Rome? Shall every other useful and ornamental art speed swiftly towards perfection, while oratory, that most sublime of all arts; that art, which could render one man more dreadful to a tyrant, than hostile fleets and armies, is almost forgotten? It must not, cannot be. That refinement of taste, that laudable ambition to excel in every thing which does honor to humanity, which distinguishes the Americans, and their free and popular government, are so many springs, which, though not instantaneous in their operation, cannot fail in time to raise Columbian eloquence "above all Greek, above all Roman fame."

With pleasure we descry the dawning of that bright day of eloquence, which we have anticipated. The grand council of our nation has already evinced, that in this respect, as in all others, our republic acknowledges no existing superior. And we trust, that, as our sacred teachers make it their constant endeavour

to imitate the great learning, the exemplary virtue, the exalted piety, and the extensive usefulness of the great apostle of the Gentiles, they will not fail to resemble him in that commanding, that heavenly eloquence, which made an avaricious, an unbelieving Felix, tremble.

May Columbia always afford more than one Demosthenes, to support the sacred cause of freedom, and to thunder terror in the ears of every transatlantic Philistia. May more than Ciceronean eloquence be ever ready to plead for injured innocence, and suffering virtue. Warned by the fate of her predecessors, may she escape those quicksands of vice, which have ever proved the bane of empires. May her glory and her felicity increase with each revolving year, till the last trump shall announce the catastrophe of nature, and time shall immerse in the ocean of eternity.

EXTRACT FROM PRESIDENT WASHINGTON'S FIRST
SPEECH IN CONGRESS, 1789.

FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE SENATE,
AND OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

AMONG the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the 14th day of the present month. On the one hand, I was summoned by my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years. A retreat which was rendered every day more necessary as well as more dear to me, by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health to the gradual waste committed on it by time.

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On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust, to which the voice of my country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens, a distrustful scrutiny into his qualifications, could not but overwhelm with despondence one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature, and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies.

In this conflict of emotions, all I dare aver is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance by which it might be affected. All I dare hope is, that if, in executing this task, I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof of the confidence of my fellow-citizens, and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cares before me, my error will be palliated by the motives which misled me; and its consequences be judged by my country, with some share of the partiality in which they originated.

Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station, it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being, who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States, a government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes; and may enable every instrument employed in its administration, to execute with success, the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own; nor those of my fellow-citizens at large, less than either.

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No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand, which conducts the affairs of men, more than the people of the United States. Every step, by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. And in the important revolution just accomplished in the system of their united government, the tranquil deliberations and voluntary consent of so many distinct communities, from which the event has resulted, cannot be compared with the means by which most governments have been established, without some return of pious gratitude, with a humble anticipation of the future blessings which the past seem to presage. These reflections, arising out of the present crisis, have forced themselves too strongly on my mind to be suppressed. You will join with me, I trust, in thinking that there are none, under the influence of which, the proceedings of a new and free government can more auspiciously commence.

SPEECH OF PAULUS EMILIUS TO THE ROMAN PEOPLE,
AS HE WAS ABOUT TAKING THE COMMAND OF
THEIR ARMY.

YOU seem to me, Romans, to have expressed more joy when Macedonia fell to my lot, than when I was elected consul, or entered upon that office. And to me your joy seemed to be occasioned by the hopes you conceived, that I should put an end, worthy of the grandeur and reputation of the Roman people, to a war, which, in your opinion, has already been of too long continuance. I have reason to believe, that the same gods, who have occasioned Macedonia to fall to my lot, will also assist me with their protection in conducting and terminating this war successfully. But of this, I may venture to assure you, that

I shall

I shall do my utmost not to fall short of your expectations.

The senate has wisely regulated every thing necessary in the expedition I am charged with; and, as I am ordered to set out immediately, I shall make no delay; and I know that my colleague Caius Licinius, out of his great zeal for the public service, will raise and march off the troops appointed for me, with as much ardor and expedition, as if they were for himself. I shall take care to transmit to you, as well as to the senate, an exact account of all that passes; and you may rely upon the certainty and truth of my letters. But I beg of you, as a great favour, that you will not give credit to, or lay any weight, out of credulity, upon the light reports, which are frequently spread abroad without any author.

I perceive well, that in this war, more than in any other, whatever resolution people may form to obviate these rumours, they will not fail to make impression, and inspire I know not what discouragement. There are those, who in company, and even at table, command armies, make dispositions, and prescribe all the operations of the campaign. They know better than we, where we should encamp, and what posts it is necessary for us to sieze; at what time, and by what defile we ought to enter Macedonia; where it is proper to have magazines; from whence, either by sea or land, we are to bring provisions; when we are to fight the enemy, and when lie still.

They not only prescribe what is best to do; but for deviating ever so little from their plans, they make it a crime in their consul, and cite him before their tribunal. But know, Romans, this is of very bad effect with your generals. All have not the resolution and constancy of Fabius, to despise impertinent reports. He could choose rather to suffer the people, upon such unhappy rumours, to invade his authority, than to ruin affairs in order to preserve their opinion, and an empty name.

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I am far from believing, that generals stand in no need of advice: I think, on the contrary, that whoever would conduct every thing alone, upon his own opinion, and without counsel, shows more presumption than prudence. But some may ask, How then shall we act reasonably? I answer, by not suffering any persons to obtrude their advice upon your generals, but such as are, in the first place, versed in the art of war, and have learned from experience what it is to command; and in the second place, who are upon the spot; who know the enemy; are witnesses in person to all that passes; and sharers with us in all dangers.

If there be any one, who conceives himself capable of assisting me with his counsels in the war you have charged me with, let him not refuse to do the republic that service; but let him go with me into Macedonia. Ships, horses, tents, provisions, shall all be provided for him at my charge. But if he will not take so much trouble, and prefers the tranquillity of the city to the dangers and fatigues of the field, let him not take upon him to hold the helm, and continue idle in the port. The city of itself supplies sufficient matter of discourse on other subjects; but as for these, let it be silent upon them; and know, that we shall pay no regard to any counsels, but such as shall be given us in the camp itself.

EXHORTATION ON TEMPERANCE IN
PLEASURE.

LET me particularly exhort youth to temperance in pleasure. Let me admonish them, to beware of that rock on which thousands, from race to race, continue to split. The love of pleasure, natural to man in every period of his life, glows at this age with excessive ardor. Novelty adds fresh charms, as yet, to every gratification. The world appears to spread

spread a continual feast; and health, vigor, and high spirits, invite them to partake of it without restraint. In vain we warn them of latent dangers. Religion is accused of insufferable severity, in prohibiting enjoyment: and the old, when they offer their admonitions, are upbraided with having forgotten that they once were young.

And yet, my friends, to what do the restraints of religion, and the counsels of age, with respect to pleasure, amount? They may all be comprised in few words, not to hurt yourselves, and not to hurt others, by your pursuit of pleasure. Within these bounds, pleasure is lawful; beyond them, it becomes criminal, because it is ruinous. Are these restraints any other, than what a wise man would choose to impose on himself? We call you not to renounce pleasure, but to enjoy it in safety. Instead of abridging it, we exhort you to pursue it on an extensive plan. We propose measures for securing its possession, and for prolonging its duration.

Consult your whole nature. Consider yourselves not only as sensitive, but as rational beings; not only as rational, but social; not only as social, but immortal. Whatever violates your nature, in any of these respects, cannot afford true pleasure; any more than that which undermines an essential part of the vital system can promote health. For the truth of this conclusion, we appeal, not merely to the authority of religion, nor to the testimony of the aged, but to yourselves and your own experience. We ask, whether you have not found, that in a course of criminal excess, your pleasure was more than compensated by succeeding pain? Whether, if not from every particular instance, yet from every habit, at least, of unlawful gratification, there did not spring some thorn to wound you; there did not arise some consequence to make you repent of it in the issue?

“How long then, ye simple ones! will ye love simplicity?” How long repeat the same round of pernicious

cious folly, and tamely expose yourselves to be caught in the same snare? If you have any consideration, or any firmness left, avoid temptations, for which you have found yourselves unequal, with as much care as you would shun pestilential infection. Break off all connexions with the loose and profligate. "When sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Look not on the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup; for at the last, it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Remove thy way from the strange woman, and come not near the door of her house. Let not thine heart decline to her ways; for her house is the way to hell. Thou goest after her as a bird hasteneth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life."

By these unhappy excesses of irregular pleasure in youth, how many amiable dispositions are corrupted or destroyed! How many rising capacities and powers are suppressed! How many flattering hopes of parents and friends are totally extinguished! Who but must drop a tear over human nature, when he beholds that morning which arose so bright, overcast with such untimely darkness; that good humour which once captivated all hearts; that vivacity which sparkled in every company; those abilities which were fitted for adorning the highest station, all sacrificed at the shrine of low sensuality; and one, who was formed for running the fair career of life in the midst of public esteem, cut off by his vices at the beginning of his course, or sunk for the whole of it, into insignificance and contempt! These, O sinful pleasure! are thy trophies. It is thus, that, co-operating with the foe of God and man, thou degradest human nature, and blastest the opening prospects of human felicity.

JUDAH'S

JUDAH'S PLEA FOR HIS BROTHER BENJAMIN, BEFORE JOSEPH IN EGYPT.

WHEN we appeared before you, Sir, the first time, we answered without reserve, and according to the strictest truth, all the questions which you were pleased to put to us concerning our family. We acquainted you, that we had a father, heavily laden with years, but still more heavily with misfortunes; a father, whose whole life had been one continued struggle with adversity. We added that we had a brother peculiarly dear to him, as the children born towards the end of their life generally are to old men, and who is the only one remaining of his mother; his brother having come in early youth to a most tragical end.

You commanded us, as the proof of our veracity and innocence, to bring that brother unto you; and your command was delivered with such threatenings, that the terror of them accompanied us all the way back to our country, and imbittered the remainder of our journey. We reported every thing minutely to our father, as you directed us. Resolutely and long, he refused to intrust us with the care of that child. Love suggested a thousand causes of apprehension upon his account. He loaded us with the bitterest reproaches for having declared that we had another brother.

Subdued by the famine, he at length reluctantly consented; and putting his beloved son, this unhappy youth, into our hands, conjured us by every dear, every awful name, to guard with tenderness his precious life; and as we would not see him expire before our eyes in anguish and despair, to bring him back in safety. He parted with him as with a limb torn from his own body; and in an agony of grief inexpressible, deplored the dreadful necessity which separated him from a son, on whom all the happiness of his life depended.

How then can we appear before a father of such delicate sensibility? With what eyes shall we dare to look upon him, unless we carry back with us this son of his right hand, this staff of his old age, whom, alas! you have condemned to slavery? The good old man will expire in horrors dreadful to nature, as soon as he shall find that his son is not with us. Our enemies will insult over us under these misfortunes, and treat us as the most infamous of parricides.

I must appear to the world, and to myself, as the perpetrator of that most horrid of crimes, the murder of a father; for it was I who most urgently pressed my father to yield. I engaged by the most solemn promises, and the most sacred pledges, to bring the child back. Me he intrusted with the sacred deposit, and of my hand he will require it. Have pity, I beseech you, on the deplorable condition of an old man, stripped of his last comfort; and whose misery will be aggravated by reflecting that he foresaw its approach, and yet wanted resolution to prevent it.

If your just indignation must needs have a sacrifice, here I am ready, at the price of my liberty or of my life, to expiate this young man's guilt, and to purchase his release! Grant this request, not so much for the sake of the youth himself, as of his absent father, who never offended you, but who venerates your person and esteems your virtues.

Suffer us not to plead in vain for a shelter under your right hand, to which we flee, as to an holy altar, consecrated as a refuge to the miserable. Pity an old man, who, during the whole course of a long life, has cultivated arts becoming a man of wisdom and probity, and who, on account of his amiable qualities, is almost adored by the inhabitants of Syria and Canaan, though he professes a religion, and follows a mode of living totally different from theirs.

EXTRACT

EXTRACT FROM THE PLEA OF THOMAS MUIR, Esq.
AT HIS CELEBRATED TRIAL IN SCOTLAND.

GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY,

THIS is now perhaps the last time that I shall address my country. I have explored the tenor of my past life. Nothing shall tear from me the record of my departed days. The enemies of reform have scrutinized, in a manner hitherto unexampled in Scotland, every action I may have performed, every word I may have uttered. Of crimes, most foul and horrible, have I been accused: of attempting to rear the standard of civil war; to plunge this land in blood, and to cover it with desolation. At every step, as the evidence of the crown advanced, my innocency has brightened. So far from inflaming the minds of men to sedition and outrage, all the witnesses have concurred, that my only anxiety was, to impress upon them the necessity of peace, of good order, and of good morals.

What then has been my crime? Not the lending to a relation a copy of Mr. Paine's Works; not the giving away to another a few numbers of an innocent and constitutional publication; but for having dared to be, according to the measure of my feeble abilities, a strenuous and active advocate for an equal representation of the PEOPLE, in the HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE; for having dared to attempt to accomplish a measure, by illegal means, which was to diminish the weight of their taxes, and to put an end to the effusion of their blood.

From my infancy to this moment, I have devoted myself to the cause of the PEOPLE. It is a good cause. It will ultimately prevail. It will finally triumph. Say then openly, in your verdict, if you do condemn me, which I presume you will not, that it is for my attachment to this cause alone, and not for those vain and wretched pretexts stated in the indictment, intended only to colour and disguise the real motives of my accusation.

tion. The time will come, when men must stand or fall by their actions; when all human pageantry shall cease; when the hearts of all shall be laid open to view.

If you regard your most important interests; if you wish that your consciences should whisper to you words of consolation, rather than speak to you in the terrible language of remorse, weigh well the verdict you are to pronounce.

As for me, I am careless and indifferent to my fate. I can look danger, and I can look death in the face; for I am shielded by the consciousness of my own rectitude. I may be condemned to languish in the recesses of a dungeon. I may be doomed to ascend the scaffold. Nothing can deprive me of the recollection of the past; nothing can destroy my inward peace of mind, arising from the remembrance of having discharged my duty.

ON THE STARRY HEAVENS.

TO us who dwell on its surface, the earth is by far the most extensive orb that our eyes can any where behold. It is also clothed with verdure; distinguished by trees; and adorned with a variety of beautiful decorations. Whereas, to a spectator placed on one of the planets, it wears a uniform aspect; looks all luminous, and no larger than a spot. To beings who dwell at still greater distances, it entirely disappears.

That which we call, alternately, the morning and evening star; as in one part of her orbit, she rides foremost in the procession of night; in the other, ushers in, and anticipates the dawn, is a planetary world; which, with the five others, that so wonderfully vary their mystic dance, are in themselves dark bodies, and shine only by reflection; have fields, and seas, and skies of their own; are furnished with all accommodations for

or animal subsistence, and are supposed to be abodes of intellectual life. All which, together with this our earthly habitation, are dependant on that grand dispenser of divine munificence, the sun; receive their light from the distribution of his rays; derive their comfort from his divine agency.

The sun is the great axle of heaven, about which, the globe we inhabit, and other more spacious orbs, wheel their stated courses. The sun, though seemingly smaller than the dial it illuminates, is abundantly larger than this whole earth; on which so many lofty mountains rise, and such vast oceans roll. A line, extending through the centre of that resplendent orb, would measure more than eight hundred thousand miles. A girdle, formed to surround it, would require a length of millions. Were its solid contents to be estimated, the account would overpower our understanding, and be almost beyond the power of language to express.

Are we startled at these reports of astronomy? Are we ready to cry out in a transport of surprise, How mighty is the Being, who kindled such a prodigious fire, and who keeps alive, from age to age, such an enormous mass of flame! Let us attend our philosophic guides, and we shall be brought acquainted with speculations more enlarged, and more amazing.

This sun, with all attendant planets, is but a very little part of the grand machine of the universe. Every star, though in appearance no bigger than the diamond that glitters on a lady's ring, is really a mighty globe; like the sun in size, and in glory; no less spacious; no less luminous than the radiant source of our day. So that every star is not barely a world, but the centre of a magnificent system; has a retinue of worlds, irradiated by its beams, and revolving round its attractive influence. All which are lost to our sight in unmeasurable wilds of ether.

That the stars appear like so many diminutive, and scarcely distinguishable points, is owing to their immense

mense and inconceivable distance. Such a distance, that a cannon ball, could it continue its impetuous flight, with unabating rapidity, would not reach the nearest of those twinkling luminaries for more than five hundred thousand years!

Can any thing be more wonderful than these observations? Yes; there are truths far more stupendous; there are scenes far more extensive. As there is no end of the Almighty Maker's greatness, so no imagination can set limits to his creating hand. Could you soar beyond the moon, and pass through all the planetary choir; could you wing your way to the highest apparent star, and take your stand on one of those lofty pinnacles of heaven, you would there see other skies expanded; another sun, distributing his inexhaustible beams by day; other stars which gild the horrors of the alternate night; and other, perhaps, nobler systems, established in unknown profusion, through the boundless dimensions of space. Nor do the dominions of the universal Sovereign terminate there. Even at the end of this vast tour, you would find yourself advanced no further than the suburbs of creation; arrived only at the frontiers of the great JEHOVAH's kingdom.

PAPER, A POEM.

SOME wit of old; such wits of old there were,
Whose hints show'd meaning, whose allusions, care,
By one brave stroke, to mark all human kind,
Call'd clear *blank paper* every infant mind;
When still, as opening sense her dictates wrote,
Fair virtue put a seal, or vice a blot.

The thought was happy, pertinent, and true,
Methinks a genius might the plan pursue.
I, (can you pardon my presumption?) I,
No wit, no genius, yet for once will try.

Various

Various the papers, various wants produce,
The wants of fashion, elegance, and use.
Men are as various: and, if right I scan,
Each sort of *paper* represents some *man*.

Pray note the fop; half powder and half lace;
Nice, as a band-box were his dwelling-place;
He's the *gilt paper*, which apart you store,
And lock from vulgar hands in the *scrutoire*.

Mechanics, servants, farmers, and so forth,
Are *copy paper* of inferior worth;
Less priz'd, more useful, for your desk decreed,
Free to all pens, and prompt at ev'ry need.

The wretch, whom avarice bids to pinch and spare,
Starve, cheat, and pilfer, to enrich an heir,
Is coarse *brown paper*, such as pedlars choose
To wrap up wares, which better men will use.

Take next the miser's contrast, who destroys
Health, fame, and fortune, in a round of joys.
Will any paper match him? Yes, throughout,
He's a true *sinking paper*, past all doubt.

The retail politician's anxious thought
Deems this side always right, and that stark naught;
He foams with censure; with applause he raves,
A dupe to rumours, and a tool of knaves;
He'll want no type his weakness to proclaim,
While such a thing as *fools-cap* has a name.

The hasty gentleman, whose blood runs high,
Who picks a quarrel if you step awry,
Who can't a jest, or hint, or look endure:
What's he? What? *Touch-paper* to be sure.

What are our poets, take them as they fall,
Good, bad, rich, poor, much read, not read at all?
Them and their works in the same class you'll find;
They are the mere *waste-paper* of mankind.

Observe