

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES

- [1] Let Observation with extensive view,
 Survey mankind, from China to Peru;
 Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
 And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;
 Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate,
 O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate, *traps*
 Where wav'ring man, betray'd by vent'rous pride, *In danger of falling*
 To tread the dreary paths without a guide, *with arrogance*
 As treach'rous phantoms in the mist delude,
 Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good; *not solid* 10
 How rarely Reason guides the stubborn choice,
 Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice;
 How nations sink, by darling schemes oppress'd,
 When Vengeance listens to the fool's request.
 Fate wings with ev'ry wish th' afflictive dart,
 Each gift of nature, and each grace of art,
 With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,
 With fatal sweetness elocution flows,
 Impeachment stops the speaker's pow'ful breath,
 And restless fire precipitates on death. *hurts head on* 20
 But scarce observ'd, the knowing and the bold *wise & brave*
 Fall in the gen'ral massacre of gold;
 Wide-wasting pest! that rages unconfin'd,
 And crowds with crimes the records of mankind;
 For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,
 For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws;
 Wealth heap'd on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys,
 The dangers gather as the treasures rise.
 Let hist'ry tell where rival kings command,
 And dubious title shakes the madd'd land, *Tax laws destroy* 30
 When statutes glean the refuse of the sword, *people who've*
 How much more safe the vassal than the lord; *survived war*
 Low skulks the hind beneath the rage of pow'r,
 peasant

And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tow'r,
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,
Tho' confiscation's vulturs hover round.

The needy traveller, serene and gay,
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
Does envy seize thee? Crush th'upbraiding joy,
Increase his riches and his peace destroy; 40
New fears in dire vicissitude invade,
The rustling brake alarms, and quiv'ring shade,
Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,
One shews the plunder, and one hides the thief.

Yet still one gen'ral cry the skies assails,
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales;
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,
Th'insidious rival and the gaping heir.

Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,
With chearful wisdom and instructive mirth, 50
See motley life in modern trappings dress'd,
And feed with varied fools th'eternal jest:

Thou who couldst laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece; — *means & interest*
Where wealth unlov'd without a mourner dy'd,
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride;
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;
Where change of fav'rites made no change of laws,
And senates heard before they judg'd a cause; 60
How wouldst thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe!
Attentive truth and nature to descry,
And pierce each scene with philosophic eye.

To thee were solemn toys or empty shew,
The robes of pleasure and the veils of woe:
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,
Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.

Such was the scorn that fill'd the sage's mind,
Renew'd at ev'ry glance on humankind; 70
How just that scorn ere yet thy voice declare,
Search every state, and canvass ev'ry pray'r.

[54] Unnumber'd suppliants crowd Preferment's gate,
Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;

Delusive Fortune hears th' incessant call,
They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.
On ev'ry stage the foes of peace attend,
Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.
Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door
Pours in the morning worshiper no more; 80
For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,
To growing wealth the dedicator flies,
From every room descends the painted face,
That hung the bright Palladium of the place,
And smok'd in kitchens, or in auctions sold,
To better features yields the frame of gold;
For now no more we trace in ev'ry line
Heroic worth, benevolence divine:
The form distorted justifies the fall,
And detestation rids th' indignant wall. 90

But will not Britain hear the last appeal,
Sign her foe's doom, or guard her fav'rite's zeal?
Through Freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,
Degrading nobles and controuling kings;
Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,
And ask no questions but the price of votes;
With weekly libels and septennial ale,
Their wish is full to riot and to rail.

In full-blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand: 100
To him the church, the realm, their pow'rs consign,
Thro' him the rays of regal bounty shine;
Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r,
Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r;
Till conquest unresisted ceas'd to please,
And rights submitted left him none to seize.
At length his sov'reign frowns — the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate. 110
Where-e'er he turns he meets a stranger's eye,
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;
At once is lost the pride of awful state,
The golden canopy, the glitt'ring plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liv'ried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.

Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings. 120

Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine,
Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end be thine?
Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content,
The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?
For why did Wolsey near the steeps of fate,
On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight?
Why but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,
With louder ruin to the gulphs below?

What gave great Villiers to th' assassin's knife,
And fixed disease on Harley's closing life? 130
What murder'd Wentworth, and what exile'd Hyde,
By kings protected, and to kings ally'd?
What but their wish indulg'd in courts to shine,
And pow'r too great to keep, or to resign?

[114] When first the college rolls receive his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;
Through all his veins the fever of renown
Burns from the strong contagion of the gown;
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,
And Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head. 140
Are these thy views? Proceed, illustrious youth,
And Virtue guard thee to the throne of Truth!
Yet should thy soul indulge the gen'rous heat,
Till captive Science yields her last retreat;
Should Reason guide thee with her brightest ray,
And pour on misty Doubt resistless day;
Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,
Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;
Should tempting Novelty thy cell refrain,
And Sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain; 150
Should Beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,
Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd heart;
Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,
Nor Melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade;
Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,
Nor think the doom of man revers'd for thee:
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause awhile from letters, to be wise;

There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail. 160
See nations slowly wise, and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,
Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end.

Nor deem, when Learning her last prize bestows,
The glitt'ring eminence exempt from foes;
See when the vulgar 'scape, despis'd or aw'd,
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
From meaner minds, tho' smaller fines content, 170
The plunder'd palace or sequester'd rent;
Mark'd out by dangerous parts he meets the shock,
And fatal Learning leads him to the block:
Around his tomb let Art and Genius weep,
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.

[133] The festal blazes, the triumphal show,
The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,
The senate's thanks, the gazette's pompous tale,
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.
Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirl'd,
For such the steady Romans shook the world; 180
For such in distant lands the Britons shine,
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine;
This pow'r has praise, that virtue scarce can warm,
Till fame supplies the universal charm.
Yet Reason frowns on war's unequal game,
Where wasted nations raise a single name,
And mortgag'd states their grandsires' wreaths regret,
From age to age in everlasting debt;
Wreaths which at last the dear-bought right convey
To rust on medals, or on stones decay. 190

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes let Swedish Charles decide;
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
O'er love, o'er fear extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific scepters yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;

Behold surrounding kings their pow'r combine,
 And one capitulate, and one resign; 200
 Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
 Think nothing gain'd,' he cries, 'till nought remain,
 On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
 And all be mine beneath the polar sky.'
 The march begins in military state,
 And nations on his eye suspended wait;
 Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
 And Winter barricades the realms of Frost;
 He comes, not want and cold his course delay;
 Hide, blushing Glory, hide Pultowa's day: 210
 The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
 And shews his miseries in distant lands;
 Condemn'd a needy supplicant to wait,
 While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.
 But did not Chance at length her error mend?
 Did no subverted empire mark his end?
 Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?
 Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
 His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
 A petty fortress, and a dubious hand; 220
 He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
 To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,
 From Persia's tyrant to Bavaria's lord.
 In gay hostility, and barb'rous pride,
 With half mankind embattled at his side,
 Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
 And starves exhausted regions in his way;
 Attendant Flatt'ry counts his myriads o'er,
 Till counted myriads sooth his pride no more; 230
 Fresh praise is try'd till madness fires his mind,
 The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind;
 New pow'rs are claim'd, new pow'rs are still bestow'd,
 Till rude Resistance lops the spreading god;
 The daring Greeks deride the martial show,
 And heap their vallies with the gaudy foe;
 Th' insulted sea with humbler thoughts he gains,
 A single skiff to speed his flight remains;
 Th' incumber'd oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast

Through purple billows and a floating host. 240
 The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
 Tries the dread summits of Cesarean pow'r,
 With unexpected legions bursts away,
 And sees defenceless realms receive his sway;
 Short sway! Fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
 The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms;
 From hill to hill the beacons rousing blaze
 Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise;
 The fierce Croatian, and the wild Hussar, 250
 And all the sons of Ravage crowd the war;
 The baffled prince in honour's flatt'ring bloom
 Of hasty greatness finds the fatal doom,
 His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,
 And steals to death from anguish and from shame.

[188] Enlarge my life with multitude of days,
 In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays;
 Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know
 That life protracted is protracted woe.
 Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,
 And shuts up all the passages of joy: 260
 In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,
 The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flow'r,
 With listless eyes the dotard views the store,
 He views, and wonders that they please no more;
 Now pall the tasteless meats and joyless wines,
 And Luxury with sighs her slave resigns.
 Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,
 And yield the tuneful lenitives of pain:
 No sounds alas would touch th' impervious ear,
 Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus near; 270
 Nor lute nor lyre his feeble pow'rs attend,
 Nor sweeter musick of a virtuous friend,
 But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,
 Perversely grave, or positively wrong.
 The still returning tale, and ling'ring jest,
 Perplex the fawning niece and pamper'd guest,
 While growing hopes scarce awe the gath'ring sneer,
 And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear;
 The watchful guests still hint the last offence,

The daughter's petulance, the son's expence,
Improve his heady rage with treach'rous skill,
And mould his passions till they make his will.

Unnumber'd maladies his joints invade,
Lay siege to life and press the dire blockade;
But unextinguish'd Avarice still remains,
And dreaded losses aggravate his pains;
He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,
His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands;
Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,
Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.

But grant, the virtues of a temp'rate prime
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime;
An age that melts with unperceiv'd decay,
And glides in modest innocence away;
Whose peaceful day Benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating Conscience cheers;
The gen'ral fav'rite as the gen'ral friend:
Such age there is, and who could wish its end?

Yet ev'n on this her load Misfortune flings,
To press the weary minutes flagging wings:
New sorrow rises as the day returns,
A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.
Now kindred merit fills the sable bier,
Now lacerated friendship claims a tear.
Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy from with'ring life away;
New forms arise, and diff'rent views engage,
Superfluous lags the vet'ran on the stage,
Till pitying Nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.

But few there are whom hours like these await,
Who set unclouded in the gulphs of fate.
From Lydia's monarch should the search descend,
By Solon caution'd to regard his end,
In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise!
From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driv'ler and a show.

[289] The teeming mother, anxious for her race,
Begs for each birth the fortune of a face:
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring;
And Sedley curs'd the form that pleas'd a king.
Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes,
Whom pleasure keeps too busy to be wise,
Whom joys with soft varieties invite,
By day the frolick, and the dance by night,
Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,
And ask the latest fashion of the heart,
What care, what rules your heedless charms shall save,
Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave?
Against your fame with Fondness Hate combines,
The rival batters, and the lover mines.
With distant voice neglected Virtue calls,
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls;
Tir'd with contempt, she quits the slipp'ry reign,
And Pride and Prudence take her seat in vain.
In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,
The harmless freedom, and the private friend.
The guardians yield, by force superior ply'd;
By Int'rest, Prudence; and by Flatt'ry, Pride.
Now Beauty falls betray'd, despis'd, distress'd,
And hissing Infamy proclaims the rest.

[346] Where then shall hope and fear their objects find?
Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries attempt the mercies of the skies?
Enquirer, cease, petitions yet remain,
Which heav'n may hear, nor deem religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to heav'n the measure and the choice,
Safe in his pow'r, whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious pray'r.
Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
Secure whate'er he gives, he gives the best.

Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resign'd;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience sov'reign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, that panting for a happier seat,
Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat:
These goods for man the laws of heav'n ordain,
These goods he grants, who grants the pow'r to gain;
With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

NOTE (cont.)

295 *atque suam: atque suum* obelized

313 *exigit iratus: irati* (obelized) *debet*

365 *sed te: nos te*

At v. 365 Johnson was apparently more familiar with the reading *nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia* ('No divinity is lacking if prudence be there'). 'Though I do not agree with the proverb that *nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia*, yet we may very well say that *nullum numen adest, ni sit prudentia*' ('No divinity is present if prudence be not there'). Mrs Piozzi, *Anecdotes*, 218. See *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, ed. G. B. Hill, i, 295, and Hill's note on Boswell iv, 180.

NOTES ON *THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES*

1-2 Does this couplet say any more than 'Let Observation with extensive observation observe mankind extensively'? As Saintsbury pointed out, observation may be broad and sweeping or minute and concentrated, and it may be directed to men or things. J. has indicated which categories are intended and, for greater concreteness, has added geographical references (*Hist. of Criticism*, 1904, vol. iii, 223, n.1).

3 **Strife**: 'striving' rather than 'conflict'.

5-14 The construction is: let Observation say how hope etc. o'erspread . . . how rarely Reason guides . . . rules . . . or prompts . . . how nations sink. By adding 'hope' and 'fear' to 'desire' and 'hate' (see draft) J. gave his poem a greater unity; see 343.

6 **Snares**: traps for the feet; Lat. *laqueus*; cf. Juv. 13.244.

7 **Wav'ring**: to waver = 'to totter, to be in danger of falling', Dict.
Vent'rous pride: rash arrogance.

10 **Airy**: lacking solidity.

11 The alteration from 'hasty' to 'stubborn' brought in the old metaphor of Reason as a charioteer. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 246.

13 **Darling**: dearly cherished.

Schemes: see on *London* 244. One such scheme was the South Sea Bubble.

15-16 'With' governs 'gift' and 'grace' as well as 'wish'. As often, J. brings disparate elements into a unified syntactical structure: fate uses every wish (conceived by the person), each gift (conferred on him by nature) and each grace (developed by social training) to feather (i.e. direct the flight of) the arrow which brings affliction.

17-20 Note the chiasmic order: courage, elocution (eloquence), speaker, fire. Thus 'fire' refers back to 'courage' and its heat.

Impeachment: a procedure whereby an accused person was prosecuted by the House of Commons before the House of Lords.

Precipitates: hurls headlong.

21 **The knowing and the bold**: the wise and the brave.

22 **Massacre of gold**: the massacre which gold carries out. J. is reproducing in English the Latin subjective genitive.

29-32 The 'where' and 'when' clauses are adverbial, but 'how much' is an indirect question, i.e. 'Let hist'ry tell how much etc.'

30 **Dubious**: contested.

Madded: from the transitive verb 'to mad'.

- 31 Tax laws destroy people who have survived war.
- 33 **Skulks**: crouches in hiding.
Hind: peasant.
Beneath the rage of power: while powerful men are raging overhead.
- 34 'Bonny' was changed to 'wealthy' in 1755 because the Jacobite rising of 1745 was now receding into the past. Four Scots lords were brought to the Tower of London. One (Cromarty) was pardoned; the rest (Kilmarnock, Balmerino, and Lovat) were beheaded.
- 38 **Sings**: J. has altered the meaning of Juv.'s *cantabit* (22).
- 39-40 Are you envious of the poor man's happiness? Does his joy make you reproach yourself? Why then, get rid of your discomfort by making him rich and miserable. The classic instance is the story of Philippus and Volteius Mena in Horace, *Epist.* 1.7.46-95; cf. *Epist.* 1.18.31.
- 41 **New fears**: not 'in contrast to old fears' but 'fears not existing before'. According to Boswell the younger, this was corrected by J. to 'now', a reading which appeared in 1787.
Dire vicissitude: terrible succession.
- 42-3 **Brake**: thicket of brambles. Understand 'alarms' again after 'shade', which here means 'shadow'.
Bring: more properly 'brings'. The slip was probably due to inadvertence; for J. altered a similar instance in v.209 when it was brought to his attention.
- 44 **The plunder**: probably the rich traveller and his valuables rather than just his valuables. This gives a slightly better balance with 'thief'. The Lat. *praeda* is similarly used.
- 46 Prayers for gain and grandeur taint the breezes on which they are carried upwards. For a modern reader there is something to be said for putting 'gain' and 'grandeur' in inverted commas. Immoral prayers are the subject of Persius' second satire, a poem translated by Dryden.
- 48 The rival and the heir are the sources, respectively, of the rich man's fear and anxiety.
Gaping: in eagerness.
- 49 **Democritus**: see list.
- 51 **Motley**: 'mingled of various colours', Dict. The word has associations with clowning.
- 52 The different types of buffoon which appear on the scene are the fuel which keeps the joke going.
- 53 In a country where poverty restricted frivolous extravagance.
- 54 **Conceit**: silly ideas.
Man was of a piece: society and manners were uniform.
- 55 The implication is 'nowadays rich men are loved and mourned, but those who love and mourn them are primarily interested in their wills.'
- 56 Sycophants obtained dinners from the proud men whom they flattered.
- 57 **Form**: 'empty show', Dict.

- 58 **State**: 'solemn pomp', Dict.
- 62 **Dart**: 'to throw offensively', Dict.
- 64 **Philosophic**: having insight combined with a true sense of values.
- 67 The present tenses invite us to watch Democritus' reaction as if we were his contemporaries.
- 71-2 Before you say how justified Democritus was, consider everyone's condition and examine his prayers.
- 73 **Crowd Preferment's gate**: Swift had said 'crowd about Preferment's gate' (*To Doctor Delany*, 93). J. has given the phrase greater energy by making 'crowd' transitive. See C. B. Ricks, *Review of English Studies* 11 (1960) 413.
- 76 The image is probably that of a rocket rather than of a bubble.
- 77 **On ev'ry stage**: every successful man has a stage on which he enacts his life.
- 80 **Morning worshiper**: in London, as in Rome, men called on their patron in the morning.
- 81 J. is referring to political weeklies. The emphasis falls on 'growing'; the unstressed 'lies' implies that journalists' distortions are taken for granted.
- 84 **Palladium**: originally the statue of Pallas Athene on which the safety of Troy depended; hence a revered image of central importance.
- 86 **Yields**: the subject is 'face' (83).
- 87 **Line**: lineament, feature.
- 89 The man's features are now suddenly found to be ugly, and this ugliness is said to justify his fall; cf. Juv. 67-9. The original version had 'But find the form distorted by the fall', which though witty might have suggested that the picture had fallen off the wall.
- 90 In our hatred we relieve the indignant wall of its burden.
- 91-2 Will not the people either endorse the conviction of the man as an enemy or protect him as one who has devoted himself to their interests?
- 93 **Freedom's sons**: a sarcastic reference to those who have allowed a great tradition to decay.
Remonstrance: J. has in mind the Grand Remonstrance of Dec. 1641, a document cataloguing the wrongs inflicted on the people by Charles I and presenting proposals for reform.
- 95 **Tribes**: the voting units of the Roman people, here transferred to England.
- 97 **Libels**: pamphlets; Lat. *libellus*.
Septennial ale: parliaments were elected every seven years from 1716 to 1910. The Septennial Act was defended by Walpole against its opponents in 1734. Ale was liberally provided to obtain votes.
- 98 They have all they need to enable them to indulge in rowdy demonstrations and abuse.
- 99-120 Certain details of this section recall Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*, Act 3, Scene 2.

- 99 Full-blown**: like a flower; at the acme of his career. Cf. 353ff. of the Shakespearian passage cited above. Is 'full-blown dignity' a reminiscence of 'high-blown pride' in v.362 of the play?
- 100** His word was law; good fortune was his to bestow.
- 102** What image had J. in mind? Some think it was a stained glass window, which would, indeed, be striking if one visualizes the cardinal's red robes. But Wolsey must in some way *distribute* the rays of the king's bounty; so perhaps one should think rather of a concave lens, an instrument known to J.
- 103-4** The following couplet in the 1749 edition was omitted in 1755:
 Turn'd by his nod the stream of honour flows,
 His smile alone security bestows.
 It is printed by Nichol Smith and McAdam, and I have retained their line-numbers for the sake of uniformity. It might have been omitted accidentally by the printer because it came at the bottom of the page from which he was copying; but it is perhaps more likely that J. discarded it so as to obtain the same total of lines as Juvenal (viz. 366). Also the image (presenting Wolsey's nod as operating a system of sluice-gates?) might have struck J. as lacking in dignity. So I have continued, with some hesitation, to follow the 1755 text.
- 108 Rights submitted**: the submission of rights – a Latin construction, cf. *ab urbe condita*, 'from the foundation of the city'.
- 109 His sov'reign frowns**: cf. What should this mean?
 What sudden anger's this? how have I reap'd it?
 He parted frowning from me. (Henry VIII 3.2.204-6)
Train of state: retinue of courtiers.
- 113 At once is lost**: the 1st ed. had 'Now drops at once', which was altered in view of the unfortunate sequence 'Now drops at once . . . the glittering plate'.
Pride of awful state: the impressive appurtenances of awe-inspiring grandeur, which are enumerated in the lines that follow.
- 116 The menial lord**: the paradox indicates the height of Wolsey's position and how it might expose him to resentment.
- 118 Monastic rest**: after his fall, but before his arrest in 1530, Wolsey retired to Cawood Castle on the Ouse, about ten miles from York. It was the old palace of the Archbishops of York, not a monastery. Some scholars have thought that J. was referring to Leicester Abbey, where Wolsey died. But Wolsey did not seek the abbey as a place of retirement; he was merely staying there when on his way to stand trial.
- 120** George Cavendish (1500-61) gives the words thus: 'If I had served God as diligently as I have done the King, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs.' Cf. *Henry VIII* 3.2.456-8.
- 124 The wisest justice**: this was the original reading, which J. altered to 'The wealthiest landlord' and then to 'The richest landlord' before returning in 1755 to his first idea. Perhaps the decision hinged on J.'s interpretation of 'safer pride' (123). Was this grandeur safer merely because it was smaller in size (in which case 'richest landlord' would have suited well enough) or because it was different in kind (the prestige

of the judge depending on the fairness of his decisions rather than on his financial or political power)? In any case Juv.'s *ius dicere* (101) can hardly have been the deciding factor.

Banks of Trent: J. was thinking of Lichfield.

- 125-8** J. found the general shape of these lines in Dryden:
 What did the mighty Pompey's fall beget?

What else but his immoderate lust for power,
 Prayers made and granted in a luckless hour? (172-7)

- 125 Near the steeps of fate**: the 1st ed. had 'by the steps of fate', which probably meant 'by fatal degrees' (cf. Juv.'s tower of numerous storeys in 105-6). This, however, did not prepare the reader for 'the gulphs below', since no gulphs had been mentioned. 'Near the steeps (i.e. precipice)' removed this problem, but 'steeps of fate' remains rather obscure. Perhaps it is best taken as 'the precipice of destiny'. Such a danger always awaited Wolsey, but instead of avoiding it as long as he could, he actually courted it by building an eminent and precarious career.
- 127 Why but to sink**: as in Juv. (106) intention and result are confused – a device especially effective in a poem which maintains that our aspirations, when realised, are destructive; cf. 'wish fulfilled' in 133 below.
- 128 Ruin**: not 'destruction', but 'fall'; Lat. *ruina*.
- 129-31** For the names see list. Hyde is more usually known as Clarendon.
- 130** J. implies that the strains of Harley's public life led to the collapse of his health. This cannot, of course, be proved, but it was an opinion held by Harley's doctor. See A. McInnes, *Robert Harley, Puritan Politician*, London 1970, 158, and cf. 149 and 175.
- 132** Wentworth was protected by Charles I; Hyde's daughter married the Duke of York, later James II.
- 134** Pericles said 'You hold your empire now as a despotism. Some think that acquiring it was wrong; but it is perilous to let it go' (Thucydides 2.63).
- 136 Enthusiast**: the young man has 'exalted ideas' (Dict. sense 3) but is something of a hothead (Dict. sense 2 'one of a hot imagination').
- 137-8** The 1st ed. read
 Resistless burns the fever of renown
 Caught from the strong contagion of the gown.
 In 1755 'Resistless burns' was changed to 'Through all his veins', and 'Caught' to 'Spreads'. Of these changes the first was an improvement, but the second caused an awkward repetition in 139 ('spread'). When Boswell pointed this out, J. brought back 'burns'. See Boswell, iii, 357. In this exceptional case it seemed justifiable to depart from the 1755 reading.
 The lines allude with wry humour to the shirt of Nessus. Hercules killed the centaur Nessus with an arrow dipped in the Hydra's poison. Later Deianeira sent Nessus' blood-soaked shirt to her husband Hercules, believing it to be a love charm. But the poison burnt Hercules like a fire and he eventually died in agony.

- 139 **Bodley's dome**: the Bodleian Library in Oxford (not the Radcliffe Camera). 'Dome' = building. For Bodley see list.
Future labours: he sees the books which he hopes to write spreading through the library. Another allusion to the labours of Hercules.
- 140 **Bacon's mansion**: for Bacon see list. 'Mansion' = residence or living quarters; cf. 'In my Father's house are many mansions' (John 14.2). Bacon's residence was the gatehouse at the northern end of Folly Bridge, which spanned the Thames near Pembroke College. There was a tradition that the house would collapse when a man greater than Bacon passed beneath it.
- 142 For the idea of Virtue watching over the student's progress compare the Gate of Virtue, dating from 1567, in Caius College Cambridge.
- 143 **Indulge the gen'rous heat**: give full rein to that noble ardour.
- 144 **Science**: knowledge.
- 147 **False kindness**: counterfeit love.
- 149 **Novelty**: the spirit of frivolous innovation.
Cell: cf. *London* 49.
Refrain: keep away from.
- 150 The 1st ed. followed the draft. Note the effect of 'effuse . . . fumes'.
- 151 **On fops**: i.e. not on you.
- 152 **Triumph of a letter'd heart**: victory over a learned heart. (The Lat. objective genitive.)
- 153 **Torpid**: probably proleptic, 'so that they become torpid'.
- 154 **Melancholy**: not just sadness, but a condition of pathological depression which J. knew only too well.
Shade: place of seclusion.
- 158 **Letters**: learning. The 1st ed. in fact read 'learning', but this was altered in 1755, no doubt to avoid the undesirable sequence 'learning to be wise'. As often, the inferior reading was reinstated by Hawkins in 1787.
- 159 **There**: in 'the passing world' (157).
- 160 **Envy**: others envy the scholar his reputation. J. does not mean the scholar's envy of others.
Patron: 'Commonly a wretch who supports with insolence and is paid by flattery', Dict. Lord Chesterfield accepted the *Plan* of the Dictionary and paid J. £10. Seven years later, when he heard the work was about to appear, he wrote two anonymous essays in *The World* commending it to the public. J., who felt himself to have been snubbed and neglected, wrote his proud and indignant letter to Chesterfield on 7 Feb. 1755. About the same time he altered the text of this line, which in the 1st ed. had 'Toil, envy, want, the garret, and the jail'. 'Patron' remained the reading thereafter – unfortunately, as it seems to me; for although the thrust at Chesterfield and his kind was understandable as an expression of immediate resentment, it disturbed the rhetoric of the line. 'Garret' did not draw attention to itself by a sudden

flash of sardonic wit but led smoothly to the climax of 'jail', a word with which it formed a natural pair.

- 161.2 The adverbs carry the stress in 161 and the adjectives in 162. Milton's bust was placed in Westminster Abbey in 1737, over sixty years after his death, and Dryden 'lay long without distinction, till the Duke of Buckingham gave him a tablet' (*Lives*, ed. G. B. Hill, i, 393; cf. iii, 261). Other examples are mentioned by Nichol Smith and McAdam.
- 164 **Lydiat . . . Galileo**: see list.
- 165 **Last prize**: a bishopric or higher.
- 166 **Foes**: the reading 'woes' appeared in 1758.
- 167 **'scape**: according to Chalmers (1816) J. first had 'scaped', then changed it to 'scapes' to conform to the other present tenses in the paragraph, and finally settled on 'scape' because 'vulgar' was not used as a singular. 'scape' was, in fact, in his draft. The larger textual implications of this point are discussed by Moody (2) 25.
Aw'd: feared; *OED* sense 4, rare and by now obsolete; an example is given from 1632. For the idea that the common people are to be feared see Juv. 4.1.153f., where we are told that the tyrant Domitian was finished as soon as he antagonized the workers. No doubt rhyme was a factor in J.'s decision. In any case the usual meaning of awed (i.e. 'frightened') does not supply a proper antithesis to 'despis'd'; nor does it give a satisfactory sense.
- 168 **Rebellion**: i.e. the Puritans.
Laud: see list.
- 169-71 Though in the case of less distinguished minds smaller penalties are deemed sufficient (e.g. a man's house is plundered, or the rent to which he is entitled is confiscated) Laud's conspicuous abilities exposed him to the full force of his enemies' hatred.
- 172 It was not, strictly, Laud's scholarship that led to his death, but rather the role he played in the affairs of church and state.
- 174 **Blockheads**: somewhat tactless in view of 172. J. hesitated over it, as the draft shows, but decided to let it stand.
- 175 **Festal**: of joyful celebration.
Blazes: in this context, which has such a strong Roman element, J. seems to have in mind the fires on the altars. Sacrifices were conducted in honour of the victorious general.
- 177 **Gazette**: stressed on the first syllable.
- 179 **The rapid Greek**: see Alexander the Great in the list. Some of Alexander's most spectacular victories resulted from his speed of movement. In mentioning him J. has taken a hint from *Graius* ('Greek') in Juv. 138.
- 180 **Steady Romans**: note how 'steady' balances 'rapid' (179) and also, paradoxically, precedes 'shook'.

- 181 Shine**: win lustre.
- 182 Danube**: Blenheim on the Danube, 30 miles NE of Ulm, was the scene of Marlborough's victory (with the Austrians) over the French and Bavarians in 1704.
Rhine: Marlborough laid siege to Bonn in 1703.
- 183-4** Praise (i.e. glory) has this degree of power: that (Lat. *ut*) virtue on her own has difficulty in stirring men's eagerness; fame is needed to supply the magic enticement which always works. Cf. Juv. 140-42. A difficult couplet. It does not give satisfactory sense to take 'that' etc. as a relative clause, with 'pow'r' as its antecedent; for virtue does not warm power but men. The original reading in J.'s draft was 'Such power', which makes the construction clearer. One suspects that J. changed it because of the different 'such's' in 179-81 – notice his indecision in the draft.
- 185-6** War is unequal (i.e. *iniquus*, unjust) – a game in which whole countries are devastated to raise a single man to eminence.
- 187-90** 'Wreaths', like 'laurels', denote victory; so the sense of the second couplet is 'At the cost of many lives and ruinous sums of money victorious generals have their names and images put on medals and monuments, which invariably decay.'
Debt: both parties were worried about the National Debt (see Robertson's index). By 1749 it has risen to over £77 million (Williams 336).
- 191-2** 'On what foundation' and 'how just his hopes' are parallel constructions. So if they are construed as direct questions, each should have a question mark. In the 1749 ed. the first only had a question mark. In 1755 J. noticed this anomaly and ruled that both were *indirect* questions after 'decide'.
Decide: i.e. for us.
- 192 Swedish Charles**: see Charles XII in the list.
- 193** 'Frame' and 'soul' are objective case in apposition to 'him' (194).
Adamant: 'a stone, imagined by writers, of impenetrable hardness', Dict.
- 195-6** **Fear**: as in the draft. The 1st ed. had the inferior reading 'Force'.
Extends: intransitive.
Lord: since 'his' (195) is thought of as = 'of him', 'lord' stands in apposition to 'him'. For a rather easier case see 353.
- 197** Pacific rule gives him no pleasure.
- 199-200** **Combine . . . capitulate . . . resign**: infinitives in the accusative and infinitive construction after 'behold'. Frederick IV of Denmark gave up the fight in 1700 (Treaty of Travendal); Augustus II of Poland abdicated in 1706 (Treaty of Altranstädt).
- 201 Spreads**: displays.
- 202** **Till nought remain** (to be done): Juv.'s *actum nihil est* (155) reminded J. of Lucan's words about Julius Caesar:
nil actum credens, dum quid superesset agendum
De Bello Civili 2.657
Thinking nothing to have been done, as long as something remained to be done.

- 203-4** Contrast J.'s magnificence with the deliberate bathos of Juv. 156.
- 203 Gothic**: according to a very old tradition, represented by Jordanes' *De Rebus Geticis* (6th cent. A.D.), the Goths came originally from Sweden under the leadership of King Berig.
- 209** The earlier reading 'nor . . . nor' properly required 'delays', which would have destroyed the rhyme. When J. realised this he changed 'nor . . . nor' to the more awkward 'not . . . and'.
- 210 Pultowa**: in June 1709 Charles suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of Peter the Great at Pultowa in the Ukraine, about 80 miles WSW of Kharkov.
- 212ff.** Charles found refuge at Bender on the Dniester, about 40 miles SE of Kishinev. The area was at that time in Turkish hands. J. has telescoped events so as to dramatize the hero's fall; he has also exaggerated the helplessness and humiliation of Charles. In both respects he is following Juv.'s example.
- 214 Ladies interpose**: there is some evidence that Catherine the Great, Peter's wife, helped to formulate the terms of the Treaty of Prut (1711), by which Charles was allowed to return to Sweden without Russian opposition. He did not leave, however until 1714.
- 216** Was he not killed while overthrowing a great power? The unexpected answer is 'no'.
- 220 Fortress**: Frederiksten, above Frederickshald, in Norway, about 50 miles S of Oslo.
Dubious hand: there was a rumour that the bullet which killed Charles came from his own side. The matter is still debated by historians.
- 221f. He left the name . . . to point a moral**: another combination of purpose and result.
At which the world (once) grew pale.
- 222** He will be remembered only as an *exemplum* of reckless ambition. Hannibal's fate is even less dignified – see Juv. 167.
- 223 Pompous woes**: woes afflicting men in high and splendid positions. 'Pompous' (Lat. *pompa*, a ceremonial procession) did not have connotations of the ridiculous as it often has today.
- 224 Persia's tyrant**: Xerxes (see list). At several points in what follows J. draws, not on Juv., but on Herodotus.
Bavaria's lord: Charles Albert (see list).
- 225** The line has both a visual and an emotional force. Xerxes, like his army, is dressed in a colourful and ostentatious style, cf. 235-6. (Herodotus describes the various uniforms at some length in 7.61ff.) He is also in high good humour, bellicose and arrogant, as one would expect from an oriental tyrant.
- 226 Embattled**: arrayed for war.
- 228** Herodotus (7.118ff.) speaks of the ruinous cost of feeding Xerxes' army. J. is referring to this rather than to the story (repeated in Juv. 177) that his army drank various rivers dry (Herodotus 7.21, 43, 127 etc.).

- 229 **Myriads**: in general, vast numbers; more specifically, groups of 10,000; cf. Herodotus 7.81-3.
- 232 When Xerxes' bridge over the Hellespont was destroyed by a storm, he ordered the sea to be given three hundred lashes, and a pair of fetters to be thrown into the water (Herodotus 7.35). Unlike Juv., Herodotus says nothing about the punishment of the winds – a punishment which struck J. as an apt illustration of arrogant futility; see *Adventurer* 137 (26 Feb. 1754) and Preface to the Dict. para. 85.
- 234 **Rude**: the Greeks are represented as rough fellows, unimpressed by Xerxes' power and ostentation. Cf. Herodotus 7.102.
- 236 J. is thinking of Thermopylae, the pass so bravely defended by Leonidas. See Herodotus 7.206ff.
- 237 **Insulted**: see 232.
- 238-40 Xerxes' fleet was heavily defeated at Salamis in 480 B.C.; see Herodotus 8.83-96.
- 239f. According to Mrs Piozzi, as reported by Mrs Rose, J. once said that of all the poetry he had written this was his favourite couplet. See J. W. Croker's ed. of *Boswell's Life of Johnson* (1831) v.414.
Purple: Lat. *purpureus*, which was closer to crimson.
- 241 **The bold Bavarian**: see Charles Albert in list.
- 245-50 Queen Maria Theresa (see list) used her beauty and her histrionic powers to rally her peoples. She appeared in mourning before the Hungarian Diet in Pressburg on 11 Sept. 1741 and made an emotional speech ending in tears. Ten days later she had her infant son brought into the assembly. As a result the Hungarians voted a levy of 20,000 foot and over 14,000 cavalry.
- 245 **Spreads**: displays.
- 249f. The Croats and Hungarians formed part of the Habsburg empire.
Hussar: a Hungarian light cavalryman. Some detachments of the levy mentioned above were ill equipped and poorly disciplined; see G. E. Rothenburg, *Notes and Queries* 209 (1964) 296-8.
- 250 **And**: Hawkins read 'With' in 1787. The purpose of the change was, presumably, to avoid the repetition of 'and'. But we do not know what authority Hawkins had; and in any case the reading was no improvement, for it made it less clear that the Croatian and the Hussar were included in 'the sons of Ravage'.
- 251 **In honour's . . . bloom**: at the acme of his glory.
Flattering: concealing the precarious nature of that glory.
- 252 The doom which awaits power too quickly acquired.
- 253 'Derision' and 'blame' are in apposition to 'prince' (251).
- 255ff. 'I remember one day, in a conversation upon the miseries of old age, a gentleman in company observed he always thought Juvenal's description of them to be rather highly coloured, upon which the Doctor replied "No Sir – I believe not; they may not all belong to an individual, but they are collectively true of old age." Then, rolling about his head, as if snuffing up his recollection, he suddenly broke out

ille humero . . . senescant' (Juv. 227-45). G. Kearsley in *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, ed. G. B. Hill, Oxford 1897, vol. ii, 166-7.

- 260 **Passages of joy**: the senses.
- 263 **Store**: abundance.
- 266 **Luxury**: sensual pleasure (*luxuria*), personified in Persius 5.142 – a satire about moral slavery.
- 268 **And yield**: i.e. 'produce'. Hawkins (1787) and Boswell the younger have 'Diffuse'. Perhaps this is a case where later thoughts were better; cf. the sound sequence in v.150. *Contra* Moody (2)26.
Lenitives of pain: In Horace, *Odes* 1.32.14-15, the lyre is addressed as *laborum dulce lenimen* 'sweet balm of pain'; cf. 'lyre' in 271 below.
- 270 **Orpheus**: see list.
- 271 **Attend**: listen to.
- 273f. The old man lays down the law about everything. His assertions are grave when gravity is not called for, and he is dogmatic even when in the wrong.
- 276 **Perplex**: not 'puzzle', but 'vex'.
- 277 **Awe**: keep in check.
- 279 **Still hint**: continually mention.
- 280 **Petulance**: not 'ill temper', but 'wantonness' or 'immodesty'.
Expence: extravagance.
- 281 **Improve**: increase.
Heady: violent.
- 282 **Will**: the pun carries the point of the line.
- 283 **His joints**: the 1st ed. read 'each Joint'.
- 291-2 But grant that, as a result of living temperately in one's prime, one is blessed with a respected and secure old age. According to Mrs Piozzi, formerly Mrs Thrale, J. had his mother in mind; see *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, 1786, 8.
- 293 **In**: changed to 'with' by Hawkins, 1787.
- 295-6 The old person's kindness makes his days peaceful and pleasant; his clear conscience makes his nights serene.
- 298 **Could**: changed to 'shall' by Hawkins, 1787.
- 303 **Kindred merit**: worthy relatives. Contrast the tone of Juv.'s phrase *plenaequae sororibus urnae* (242): 'urns full of his sisters'. 'Kindred' was prompted by Dryden:
He numbers all his kindred in their urns (382).
- 304 **Lacerated**: torn asunder by death.

- 305-6** The immediate debt is to Pope's Imitation of Horace, *Epist.* 2.2.72-5:
 Years following years steal something ev'ry day,
 At last they steal us from ourselves away;
 In one our frolics, one amusements end,
 In one a mistress drops, in one a friend.
 But this in turn recalls *Odes* 4.13.20 and *Ars Poetica* 60-61.
- 307** We are to think of changes in the social and political as well as in the natural landscape.
- 312** The end of such a life is like a cloudless sunset seen from the shore. With 'set' cf. the Lat. *decidere* as used in Horace, *Odes* 4.7.14—a poem which J. translated in 1784:
 damna tamen celeres reparant caelestia lunae:
 nos ubi decidimus
 quo pater Aeneas, quo Tullus dives et Ancus,
 pulvis et umbra sumus.
 The moons, however, quickly recoup their losses in the sky; when we set (or go down) to where rich Tullus and Ancus have gone, we are dust and shadow.
Gulphs: depths.
- 313** **Lydia's monarch**: Croesus (see list).
Descend: from antiquity down to the present.
- 314** **Solon**: see list.
Caution'd to regard his end: when Croesus asked Solon 'Who is the happiest man you have ever seen?', he was given an unexpected answer. In some irritation he said 'What of *my* happiness?' Solon replied 'I cannot answer until I hear that you have ended your life well One must look to the end of every matter to see how it will turn out; for heaven has given many men a glimpse of happiness and then utterly overturned them.' Herodotus 1.30-33. The story is not in Juv.
- 315** **Prodigies**: phenomena contrary to natural expectation, illustrated in 316-18.
- 317** **Marlb'rough**: see list.
- 318** **Swift**: see list.
A driveller and a show: it was rumoured that Swift's servants admitted people for money to look at the great man in his dotage. This was denied by Swift's clergyman as early as 1749 (I. Ehrenpreis, *The Personality of Jonathan Swift*, New York and London 1958, repr. 1969, 127, n.2); J. does not refer to it in his *Life of Swift*, and one cannot be quite sure that he is referring to it here. He may simply mean that the helpless Swift was a sorry sight.
- 319** **Race**: family.
- 320** Cf. 'My face is my fortune, sir, she said' in the popular song 'Where are you going to, my pretty maid?' *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*, ed. I. and P. Opie, Oxford 1952, 282.
- 321** **Vane**: see list.
- 322** **Sedley**: see list.

- 323ff.** The bantering tone, reminiscent of *The Rape of the Lock*, grows more serious as the paragraph develops.
- 327** **With vanity**: there is no serious reason for their frowns; they merely desire to attract attention.
- 328** **The latest fashion of the heart**: something like 'the newest precept of coquetry'.
- 329** What care (bestowed by others), what rules (prescribed by moralists) will protect you, charming and negligent as you are? In view of 'heedless', 'care' can hardly mean 'carefulness'.
- 330-32** Hate (represented by each rival-nymph) combines with Fondness (represented by each youth-slave-lover) to overthrow her fame (i.e. her reputation).
- 330** After 330 the 1st ed. had
 An envious breast with certain mischief glows,
 And slaves, the maxim tells, are always foes.
 These lines were probably felt to be superfluous in view of the forceful 331-2.
- 332** Battering (with a battering ram) and mining (i.e. digging underneath) were methods of attacking the walls of a besieged town.
- 335** Tired of being ignored, Virtue leaves the kingdom which is slipping from her control. Cf. the departure of Astraea in Juv. 6.19f.
- 336** Pride and Prudence are not adequate substitutes for Virtue, as we find in 339-40.
- 338** Both phrases are ironical. 'The harmless freedom': the liberties which, she fancies, can be allowed without harm. 'The private friend': the intimate 'friend' who will contribute to her downfall.
- 340** **Int'rest**: self interest.
By . . . by: Hawkins read 'To . . . to'.
- 341** **Now**: the 1st ed. had 'Here', an inferior reading arising from the draft's 'Her'.
- 343-8** These words formulate the objection of an imaginary listener.
- 344** **Suspence**: not of judgement, but of hope, fear, and other emotions; cf. Locke: 'During this suspension of any desire . . .' (*OED* under 'suspension' sense 5). At one stage J. wrote 'becalm the stagnant mind'. The passage is reminiscent of Pope, *Eloisa to Abelard*:
 For thee the Fates, severely kind, ordain
 A cool suspence from pleasure and from pain;
 Thy life a long dead calm of fixed repose;
 No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows. (249-52)
- 345** **Sedate**: settled and resigned; it agrees, of course, with 'man'.
- 346** **Roll . . . torrent**: the draft and 1st ed. had 'Swim . . . current'. Perhaps 'swim' was felt to be too active a verb and 'current' less grand than 'torrent'.
Darkling: in the dark (adverb). J. apparently thought of it as a participle from 'to darkle', a verb which he admitted he had never found. See Dict.
- 348** **Attempt**: try to obtain. Hawkins (1787) read 'invoke'.

- 349 Enquirer, cease**: note the oracular tone.
- 350 Nor deem religion vain**: Epicurus denied that the gods were concerned with the world and so regarded religion (at least of the conventional kind) as vain. J. rejected this position altogether. He found much to admire in Stoicism, but could derive no comfort from it since it gave no assurance of personal survival. 'Real alleviation of the loss of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be received only from the promises of him in whose hands are life and death, and from the assurance of another and better state, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul shall be filled with joy' *The Idler*, 41 (quoted by Nichol Smith and McAdam). The contrast with Juv. has been drawn in the Introduction (p. xiii)
- 354 Secret ambush**: as often, J. is thinking in Latin terms. *Insidiae* meant both 'ambush' and 'crafty device'. It is the second meaning which J. has in mind, though he does not give it under 'ambush' in the Dict.
Of a . . . prayer: the prayer is the ambush; the Lat. genitive of definition, e.g. *ars regendi* 'the art of ruling'. For 'specious prayers' cf. Dryden's translation of Persius 2:
 'Give me good fame, ye Powers, and make me just.'
 Thus much the rogue to public ears will trust.
 In private then: 'When wilt thou, mighty Jove,
 My wealthy uncle from this world remove?' (15-18)
- 356 Secure**: calmly sure. The etymology is *se* 'apart from' and *cura* 'anxiety'.
- 357-8** The 1st ed. read:
 Yet with the sense of sacred presence prest,
 When strong devotion fills thy glowing breast.
 No doubt this was altered on account of the rhyme, which repeated that of the previous couplet. The revision supplies a transcendent as well as an immanent religious feeling.
- 361** Love whose embrace is so wide that the whole of mankind can barely fill it. This reading is indicated by the draft:
 For love whose grasp . . .
- 362** Endurance triumphs over sufferings, thereby transmuting them into blessings.
- 363 Seat**: abode.
- 364 Counts**: the 1st ed., like the draft, read 'thinks'.
- 366** A difficult line. The most likely sense seems to be: 'These goods are granted by God, who grants us the power to progress in spiritual happiness.' Cf. 'gain' intrans., sense 1: 'to have advantage', 'to be advanced in interest or happiness', Dict.
- 367-8 Celestial Wisdom**: a Christianized adaptation of Horace's *caelestis sapientia* (*Epist.* 1.3.27). Happiness is seldom just waiting to be found; it is made by an attitude of mind, viz. wisdom. The prospect of 'finding' happiness is regarded somewhat more optimistically in the lines which J. contributed to Goldsmith's *The Traveller*, published 1765:
 How small, of all that human hearts endure,
 That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!
 Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
 Our own felicity we make or find. (429-32)

**DRAFT OF
 THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES**

(For a note on the draft of *The Vanity of Human Wishes* see p. 41).

- f. 1: '1'
- Let Observation with extensive view
 O'erlook Mankind from China to Peru
 Explore each ^(eager) *restless* anxious toil each eager Strife
 And all the busy Scenes of Crouded Life
 Then say how ^{hot} *fierce* desire and raging Hate 5
 Oerspred with snares the clouded Maze of Fate
 Where wav'ring Man betray'd by vent'rous pride
 To tread the dang'rous paths without a Guide
 As treach'rous Phantoms in the mist delude 10
 Shuns fancied ills or chases airy Good
 How rarely Reason guides the hasty choice
 Rules the bold hand or prompts the Suppliant voice
 Nations sink
 How *Families* by darling Schemes opprest
 When Vengeance listens to the Fools Request
 Fate wings with ev'ry wish th' afflictive dart 15
 Each Gift of Nature and each ^{grace} *charm* of art
 With fatal Heat impetuous Courage glows
 With fatal Sweetness Elocution flows
 Impeachment Stops the Speaker's pow'rful breath
 [20] And restless Enterprize impells to death. 20
 unobserv'd
- f. 2: '2'
- But *unregarded* the Skilful and the bad
 Fall in
Amidst the gen'ral Massacre of Gold
 Widewasting Pest that rages unconfin'd
 And crouds with crimes the records of mankind
 his Sword
 For Gold *the Hireling* the hireling Ruffian draws 25
 For Gold the Hireling Judge distorts the Laws