

**CHELCHED; OR, CHELSEA,
ANCIENT, MEDIAEVAL,
AND MODERN: A POEM**

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Chelched; Or, Chelsea, Ancient, Mediaeval, and Modern: A Poem by William Webbe

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WILLIAM WEBBE

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CHELCHED :

OR,

Chelsea, Ancient, Mediebal, and Modern.

A POEM

BY

WILLIAM WEBBE,

AUTHOR OF

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P R E F A C E .

It is natural that we should feel more interested in the prosperity of the place with which we are most intimately acquainted than with any other.

The persons by whom we are surrounded—those who are governed by the same laws, who speak the same language, and whose customs and habits of life are identical with our own—must necessarily interest us more than those living at a distance from us under contrary conditions of existence. The love of country has always been considered a virtue of the first magnitude, and one of our poets, in some well-known lines, denounces him who is destitute of it, in no measured terms. But this attachment to a particular locality does not exclude a more extended love: it is only the first step towards that love with which we ought to

regard all God's creatures. The working of this principle has been beautifully expressed by Pope :—

“ God loves from whole to parts, but human soul
 Must rise from individual to the whole ;
 Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
 As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;
 The centre moved a circle straight succeeds,
 Another still and still another spreads ;
 Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace ;
 His country next, and next all human race ;
 Wide, and more wide, the o'erflowings of the mind,
 Takes every creature in of every kind :
 Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
 And heaven beholds its image in his breast.”

The intense love of country which was displayed by the citizens of the great Roman empire may have been one of the causes of its wonderful expansion. This principle was exhibited in their history in numberless instances : some, perhaps, legendary, but all showing the powerful influence which it had upon their minds. The lives of the citizens illustrated it, and the writings of historians and poets celebrated it.

It seems to have been reserved for the present age to produce those philanthropists who endeavour to reverse the process, to begin by loving all mankind in general, before they have learned to love any of the

units of which the whole amount is composed. The love of such persons being so widely diffused, can necessarily possess but little strength; the stream of their affections being spread over so large a surface must be very shallow. However that may be, we have taken the natural order by writing in praise of our native place, and hope that our pleasing task will gain the approbation of those who, like ourselves, hold Chelsea in loving remembrance as the place of their birth.

I beg respectfully to return my hearty thanks to those who have assisted me by becoming subscribers, especially to those who have exerted themselves to procure other subscribers.

Those of my old pupils who are among the number deserve special notice. I pray that the blessing of God may be upon them through their future lives, that prosperity may attend their undertakings, that they may be useful and honourable members of society, happy in themselves and families, and an honour to their instructors. I will now take an affectionate leave of them with the hope that (while viewing with special interest their native place) they

will not stop there, but will pass on to the next step, and (in the same spirit as that which actuated him who wrote "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*") regard that great nation of which they form a part, with peculiar affection, and say from the heart, "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still."



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