

**AN EPISTLE TO
FLORIO, AT
OXFORD; PP.6-24**

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An Epistle to Florio, at Oxford; pp.6-24 by Thomas Tyrwhitt

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THOMAS TYRWHITT

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A N
E P I S T L E
T O
F L O R I O,
A T
O X F O R D.

[Price One Shilling.]

Bad is the Cause, which *Florio* can't defend ;
 The Reas'ning weak, which can't convince a Friend.
 What is this Shame of Change, you bid me fear ?
 Is it the Knave's Reproach, or Coxcomb's Sneer,
 Or Lies, which Malice will repeat in vain,
 A Fear of Danger, and a Hope of Gain ?
 Such Hopes and Fears, mean Motives ! I disclame,
 And, conscious of no Guilt, can feel no Shame.

Too long these empty Phantoms have supprest
 Truth's sacred Dictates rising in my Breast ;
 When ev'n amidst our Joys, and wet with Wine,
 I felt the Glimm'ring of her Ray divine :
 Such as on *Thames's* Banks, in *Eton's* Shade,
 We both once heard the Heav'n-instructed Maid ;
 Pleas'd at her Call through Learning's Maze to stray,
 Where *Hallifax* and *Sandwich* led the Way ;

Now

Now dropt the tender Tear on *Brutus*' Herse,
 Now rais'd to *George* and Liberty the Verse.

The sad, the truly shameful Change you know,
 When first we bow'd to Freedom's exil'd Foe ;
 Led by false Teachers, by ourselves betray'd,
 By fancy'd Right, and weak Compassion sway'd,
 For oft' exploded Lies we quitted Truth,
 For Faction's guilty Cares the Joys of Youth.
 Say if thy conscious Mind unmov'd recalls
 Our Noonday Riots, and our Midnight Brawls ;
 How thy chaste Lips with foulest Slanders rung,
 How Treason thunder'd from thy tuneful Tongue.
 Inflam'd with Party Rage, and hot with Wine,
 What Ties restrain'd us, social or divine ?
 When did we spare to brand the spotless Name,
 The Statesman's Virtue, or the Warrior's Fame ;

Infult

Infult those Laws, which screen'd us from our Fate,
And curse the Godlike Father of our State?

Here would I stop---for sure thy gentle Heart ;
Repentant owns the vile unworthy Part :
But Truth and Friendship urge me to proceed,
And wound thy Memory with thy blackest Deed.
Alas! what Madness then my Soul possesseth,
What wild obdurate Phrenzy steel'd thy Breast,
When, in the Face of Heav'n's offended Pow'r,
By Him, by every Hope of Joy we swore,
What?--to support the Throne, we wish'd to shake,
And guard the Government, we strove to break.--
What then, what check'd the Thund'rer's vengeful
Hand,
His Pow'r despis'd, his Deity profan'd ;
While thus to Treason Perjury we join'd,
And prostituted God to cheat Mankind?

In

In vain you plead, with Guilt's evasive Art,
 " A different Language of the Tongue and Heart:"
 Or in a gayer Mood, and smiling, cry,
 " Our learned Doctors swear, and why not I?"
 Shall *Iſis* teach, in this enlighten'd Age,
 A Fraud exploded by a Heathen Stage?
 Shall Right and Wrong change with a Pedant's Whim,
 Or reverend Sinners sanctify a Crime?
 Tho' they, perhaps, pursue a safer Road,
 And hold Sin lawful in the Cause of God:
 Inspir'd by Romish Zeal, th'Apostate Train
 Can taste no Joy till *Rome's* weak Bigot reign:
 Mitres and Lawns their priestly Passions raise,
 While the good Pontiff feeds the pious Blaze;
 To each blind *Swiss* his blank Commissions gives,
 And sanctifies at once their past and future Lives.

Such are, perhaps, thy Guides; but O! beware;
 Small are thy Merits from the Papal Chair:
 Tho' factious Priests are fav'd by Mother Church,
 They leave th' unholy Layman in the Lurch.

What various Ill from blind Obedience springs,
 Th' unwarrantable Claim of Popes and Kings!
 'Tis this that checks the Soul's aspiring Aim,
 Unnerves her Strength, and damps her heav'nly Flame;
 'Tis this supports triumphant Falshood's Reign,
 While Truth subjected feels her galling Chain;
 'Twas this, my Friend, (or say what other Pow'r
 Subdu'd our Minds in that ill-omen'd Hour)
 This taught us first, with reverential Dread,
 To ask no Proof of what the Master said;
 His motley Systems blindly to receive,
 Unquestion'd hear, and unconvinc'd believe

All

All that before, in *Filmer's* hellish Page,
 To Slav'ry bent a loose degenerate Age ;
 Or what, from sacred Store of ancient Tales,
 Mysterious *Carte* in weekly Sheets retails ;
 Proves both the Druid and the King divine,
 And hymns the Wonders of the fav'rite Line,
 Where Heav'n's own Seal attests th'authentic Grant,
 Which join'd in one the Monarch and the Saint.
 Then grieve not, *Charles*, thy fruitless Labours crost ;
 A safe unshaken Throne you still may boast :
 To *Brunswick* leave a rescue'd Nation's Care ;
 Do thou with pious Craft, and Monkish Pray'r,
 Thy healing Virtues to the World make known,
 And for an earthly seek a heav'nly Crown.
 Thy *Rome* with Joy shall open the blest Abodes,
 And add one *Smart* to her Thousand Gods :
 Thy *Oxford* too shall rear the sainted Shrine,
 And ev'n the Martyr's Tomb be less rever'd than thine.