

{ornament}

OEDIPVS:
THREE 📖 3 📖
CANTOES.

Wherein is contained:

- 1 *His vnfortunate Infancy.*
- 2 *His execrable Actions.*
- 3 *His lamentable End.*

By *T. E. Bach:Art.Cantab.*

Oedipus fum,non Davus.

LONDON,
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1615.

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{ornament}

TO THE RIGHT
WORSHIPFUL THE
PATRON AND PATERNE
OF GOOD ARTS, MR. Iohn

CLAPHAM, Esquire, one of
the fixe Clarkes of the
Chauncerie.
D. D.

SIR, the multitude of Writers in our
age hath begotten a scarcitie of Pa-
trons. And Poësie is growne so fre-
quent, that it may say with *Niobe, inopem fe*
5 *copia fecit* : when it owne communitie hath
brought it into contempt. Infomuch that
being about to publish these flight Com-
posures, which haue so far ore-leaven'd my
disposition, addicted to nothing lesse then
10 popularitie ; that notwithstanding my desire
to suppress it, yet *rupto iecore exire caprificus*,
I was compelled with *Catullus, Quoi dono no-*
A 3<r> vum

The Epistle Dedicatory.

15 *vum at illepidum libellum*, when I could not
 thinke of any that would be so partiall as to
 think *has nugas esse aliquid*:feeling that now-
 adaies *Theſpis* cannot act without the repre-
 henſion of *Solon*: And moſt men, like ſuper-
 cilious *Cato's*,ever cenſure verſe to be looſe,
 though it be never ſo ſtrictly refrain'd with-
 20 in the limits of vntainted numbers : Till at
 laſt,through the happy knowledge of your
 ſelfe,I reſolu'd to make intrusion ambitious
 to you, from whom I could not chooſe but
 conceiue encouragement, when your ela-
 25 borate lines doe promiſe you to fauour
 that in others, which others admire in you.I
 could here enter into a diſcourſe of your de-
 ſerued praifes,but that I know it cannot bee
 acceptable to an ingenuous diſpoſition; and
 30 I finde it a burthen intolerable for an vnable
 quill.Neither can *Alexander* diſgeſt the ſoo-
 things of *Ariſtobulus*,neither will he ſuffer a-
 ny to portray out his ſtature but *Policletus*.
 Sith then I cannot like *Protogenes*,iudge tru-
 35 ly *de lineis Apellæis*,I wil paſſe ouer that in fi-
 lence which wold ſurpaſſe all my indeuours.
 It is all I ſeeke, if the aboundance of your
 <A3r> worth

The Epistle Dedicatory.

worth may take away any thing from the vn-
worthineffe of my imperfect labors. And if
40 that laurell,*doctæ frontis præmia*, which sha-
dowes your temples, fhall proue to me as
Naturalifts report to all, φυτον αλεξικακον, I will
not feare the tyrannies of our cenfuring
times ; but whileft other Nightingales boaft
45 the fufficiency of their Mufick to coment it
felfe ; this onely fhall excufe her fcratching
by being the bird of *Pallas*. To whose prote-
ction in you, I commit both it and my felfe.

THO. EVANS.

A 4<r>

To

{ornament}

To the Ingenious and Ingenu-
ous Readers.

G *Entlemen, for the best of you I desire
to be no more, and the worst, I hope,
will proue no lesse, To you onely I offer
the perusing of my labours. If any immo-*

5 *dest Thalassius require mouing Epigrams, and
lascivious Odes , able to corrupt a Vestall , and
make Priapus blush at his owne rites, I pray
him to abstaine his frustrated expectation. I*

10 *loue not to set before my Reader, the head of
Polypus , Nor do I account it a sufficient ex-*

15 *cuse for Poets to say; Lasciuia est nobis pagi-
na, vita proba. I would haue Carmina Ithi-
phallica, and Fescinina banisht from their
Writings,and not onely themselues to liue well,*

*I cannot satisfie neither those greedy pursuers
of humours , that would haue lests broken
against Gentlemen Vfhers little legs, euery Che-*

<A5r> ualieres

To the Reader.

ualieres bald pate vncovered, and the deformities of a hooded dame decipher'd through her Maske. Nothing but Satyrs, Whips, and Scourges, to fuch, I fay: I will not defile my selfe with others pitch, iudging him alwaies a notorious corrupted person, that best expresse the guilt in others, which hee findes liueliest characterized in himselfe. Yet if any of them shall tempt me, they shall finde me an Archilochus, whose Standish can swarm with wasps as well as his Sepulcher. I request also those, that come as Cato into the Theater, tantum vt exirent, who seeing the Title of my booke take it vp, where

Lectis vix paginis duabus

Spectant defcatholicon feuere;

35 *Either not to begin to reade, or not to shew
their dislike in their discontinuance. But as for
you, whose squeamish niceneffe condemnes Poe-
fy, because it is so, be as far from me, as I ende-
uour to be from your ignorance. 'Tis not to you,*
40 *But, Ad facra vatum carmen affero nostrum.
Now a greater scarcity then you haue of wit
befall you. What meane you to moue in a Spheare
aboue your knowledge , and censure exquisite*
<A5v> numbers,

To the Reader.

numbers, which your capacity cannot reach to?

45 *Know Poesy is Diuine: no maruaile if it fute
not the humor of earthly clods ; Grouell with
your deieted cogitations , while they breath
heauenly raptures.*

---- Quos Cantor Apollo

50 *Non patitur verfare lutum.*

*'Tis not your scandalous imputations can
fully the lustre of a Poet : the Arch-builder of
this Vniuerse is so stiled; whom therefore they
call ποιητὴν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς. No lesse are those,*

55 *whom that Diuinity with Cœlestiall inspirati-
ons abstracts from the society of men. As for
my selfe so far am I from the flighted opinion
of such, that it is my wish*

--- Me primùm ante omnia Mufae.

60 *Quarum facra fero,ardenti perculsus amore
Accipiant, cœliq; vias, & fidera monftrent.*

*And (oh you) that are Castalidum decus
fororum, That haue beene rockt in the laps of
the Nurfing Mufes, fuffer me to tast of your*

65 *Milke; as for your Hony I will not presume to
touch. Though my want of industry denies mee
your Crownes of Iuy, yet, Non fum adeo de-
formis, but that I deeme my selfe worthy of a*

<A6r>

/////

To the Reader.

70 *spring of Laurell. But I feare my iust spleene,*
and zealous affection hath transported mee too
far. I will therefore returne to you (ingenious
Readers) whom I earnestly request, that it may
be lawfull for me to liue, Occipiti cœco, fe
 75 *cur'd in your approbations from all the dislikes*
which I almost desire may be sprinkled vpon me
to kindle my more earnest flame. As for the
Story I treat of, I will not vrge your faith, nei-
ther in the thing it selfe, nor the relation: for
being a matter so diuersly spoken of amongst
 80 *diuers Writers, I was vtterly ignorant, as Sa-*
bellicus saith vpon the same, In re tam anti-
qua, & fabulosa, quid certi dicerem. I
thought it as good therefore to follow my owne
fancy, as the vncertainty of others: hoping my
 85 *authority will passe currant ; when Omnibus*
hoc licitum est Poetis. If at any time, the
frequency of reading about the History hath be-
got imitation, impute it to the obuious aptnesse
of the Authour; so copious, that scarce no in-
 90 *uention liues from his lines, that another can*
imagine fit for the same matter. Howsoever
community may excuse a bad custome. Few there
are which are onely supposititiij to themselues:
 <A6v> and

To the Reader.

95 *and for my felfe I am not often faulty in that
kind. For I proteft I haue many times tooke
paines to fhun his almoft ineuitable sentences:
But I will not make a fault by excufing. Accept
it as it is; it is my firft child, but not the heyre of
all the fathers wit. There is fome laid vp to
100 inrich a fecond brother , to keepe it from ac-
customed difhonefty, when I fhall put it to fhift
into the world: yet if this proue a griefe to the
parent, I will instantly be diuorc't from Tha-
lia, and make my felfe happy in the progeny
105 from a better stocke: Farewell.*

Thine:

T. E.

<A7r>

{ornament}

OEDIPVS:

CANTO.I.

{ornament}

THE ARGVMENT.

O *Racles counceld to preferue, a sonne
Exposed is to death, referu'd by chance
Doth all that to him's destin'd to be done.
In Fathers bloud he steepes his impious lance,
Partakes incestuous sweetes through ignorance :
Vntill truth knowne, he teares out both his eyes,
So killes his mother, and by lightning dyes.*

{ornament}

E Re gloomy *Cinthy*a pallid queene of night,
Had feuen times pac'd through each cœle-
ftial Signe,
Somtimes a niggard, shutting vp her light,
5 Sometimes more free bestowing all her shine,
Since *Thebes*, the stage of fearefull Tragedies,
With wanton Odes, Rites that vnholly are,

B<1r> And

C A N T O. I .

- And ceremonious vse did folomnize
The royall nuptials of a royall paire,
10 Loue was not barren: but *locafta's* wombe
Gaued certaine notice of enfuing fruits,
That not a graue all *Laius* might intombe,
Iffue fo well obliuions force confutes.
Wherefore the hopefull father ftrait decrees
15 To fearch the fate of yet his vnborne heire:
For man, vnpatient of vncertainties, (are.
Loues to know truths, though known they grieuous
To *Delphos* then his brother *Creon* hyes,
Where great *Apollo* from his fecret Cell
20 Declares events in myftick prophefies,
Anfweres darke questions, and mens fate foretelles.
Here all obfequious duties done and pafte,
His prayers intreating what his gifts enforc't:
The Heauenly Prieft this anfwere made at laft,
25 And for their beft indeauours told the worft,
The Child that but an Embrio is as yet
By Nature rarely good, by Fortune bad,
Shall wed his mother, brothers fhall beget,
And worke his death, of whom his life he had.
30 No fooner ended was the dire prefage,
But as a man transform'd poore *Creon* flood:
Feare fuch a warre with hofte of doubts did wage,
That teares fupply'd the office of his blood.
Not any tincture of Vermilion red,
35 Did keepe poffeffion on his liueleffe cheek,

B<1v>

But

C A N T O. I .

But leauing that with falt deaw coloured
The fainting heart to cherifh out did feeke.
A fudden palfie quiver'd euey lim,
So great an earth-quake fhooke that little world;
40 His tongue grew infant, and his fight waxt dim:
His haire (by nature foft) diftraction curl'd :
Great fignes of grieffe did fhew a grieffe too great
To bound it felfe, or be exprest in fignes ;
As little Tablets do in briefe repeat
45 The ample fumme contain'd in larger lines.
No fooner reafon was recouered,
But finding grieffe fhould not be long prolong'd,
Ere more made light, what one ore-burthened,
He parts the weight to whō the weight belong'd.
50 For time not many wafted fands had fpent,
Ere Haft, the Herald of too ill fucceffe,
Inforc'd Sufpition doubt fome ill event :
That knew delay ftill vther'd happineffe.
The longing King ficke in this fhort returne,
55 Feeles many fits of cold defpairing fires,
As often freezing as he oft doth burne,
Defires to know, yet feares what he defires.
Tell me (quoth he) yet prethee do not tell :
If cloudes foretell a tempefts violence,
60 If looks not right cote fomethings that's not well,
Keep forrow there, which hurts proceeding thence.
If thy tongues language harfhly iarres on chance,
Conceale the Story of vnhappy newes,

B 2<r>

I

CANTO. I.

I can endure a patient ignorance,
65 And rather this, then to repent, do chuse.
Farre better is't for me to liue in hope,
Then knowing truths, to haue my hopes despaire :
Expected mischiefes haue an endlesse scope,
And still are present, ere they present are.
70 But if that Fortune will so much forget,
To be herselfe, as to be fortunate,
Bet not vnwilling to discharge the debt
That may enrich all my ensuing state.
Here did he stay, though still he might haue spoke,
75 Had not Suspence, too covetous of reply,
Longing to be resolu'd, more speeches broke,
When Silence yet gaue words more libertie.
But speechlesse *Creon* prisons vp his tongue,
And will not take occasion to reueale ;
80 But with fixt eye-balles, and a head downe hung,
Declares the message which he would conceale.
By this the King coniectures, that 'tis ill,
Yet could not gather what that ill should be :
He saw too much a fainting heart to kill,
85 But not enough to cleare vncertaintie.
Therefore afresh he doth renew his suite,
More earnest now to haue him tell the worst,
Then earst desirous that he should be mute ;
Intreating now, what he refusd at first.
90 Although (quoth he) by this I know too much
To make me wretched, though the rest vnknown ;

 $\langle B2v \rangle$

Yet

C A N T O. I .

Yet loe, the fondneffe of our nature's fuch,
As much to grieue at doubted ills, as fhowne.
Suspition euer doth farre more torment,
95 Then can the mifchiefe that we doe fufpect,
When neuer certaine of the hid event,
After one ill, we ftill a worfe expect.
The ominous blaze of heauens fantaftick fire,
That never fhines, but for prodigious end,
100 Affrights th'vnfkilfull gaze's that admire,
When knowing not what, they know they do por-
Hadft thou with offrings nere folicited (tend.
The *Delian* Altars, for vnhappy truth,
With hope my felfe I might haue flattered :
105 Mine age fhould nere haue envy'd at my youth.
But fith the Gods do otherwife confent,
Adde not more mifchiefe to the facred doome,
Tel what thou know'ft, that told, we may prevent,
Or arm'd with patience, beare what ere fhall come.
110 Here refts againe the yet vncertaine king,
And here againe doth *Creon* hold his peace,
A while deferring what his haft did bring;
That grieve late told, might fomewhat grieve releafe.
Fain would he fpeak fome cōfort that was faign'd,
115 Faine would he place the words in other fence :
But feare of what might happen, him conftrain'd,
To be offenfiue, for to fhun offence :
Who being heard, looke how ---- alaffe I erre,
If I compare what is beyond compare ;

B 3<r> Too

C A N T O. I .

- 120 Too flight are words, too weake are Characters
T'expresse the passions that vn-vttred are.
Well may we draw soft-natur'd men that melt
At others forrowes with drownd cheekes & eyes:
But as for him that hath the forrow felt,
- 125 The cunning'ft penfill, with a vaile descries.
Suffice it that he grieues, and spends his houres
In folitary loneneffe; casts what muft be done,
Whether to yeeld vnto the higher powers,
Or by preuention their intents to fhun.
- 130 When through times fwiftnesse now the time w///
That this vnhappy iffue muft be borne, (come,
The fecret forrowes of a labouring wombe
Seifes the queene, of all faue grieve forlorne.
Vnto whose fuccour people more deuout,
- 135 Inuoke P/l///// for an eafie birth:
Saturnia's Al/// decked all about,
Inuite their goddeffe to behold the earth.
And oh *Lucina* thou their prayers heard'ft,
Though th'other office of thy Deitie
- 140 Had better fhewne, how much that thou regard'ft
The fared vowes that then were made to thee,
When with thy nymphs thou rangeft in the wood,
In fteady hand clafping an I/ory bow,
The N///// monfters, and the Tygers blood
- 145 Make thy darts blufh to foe thee murther fo.
And do'ft thou now to pitie here begin?
Or want'ft thou Arrowes for to tyra/ni/e?

<B3v>

Loe

C A N T O. I .

Loe fuch a Monfter nere before hath bin,
Prey to thy force, grace to thy victories.
150 But now I fee, what the eternall Fate
Decrees, fhall happen, all you reft decree :
Your heauenly willes differ from ours eftate,
Which through our weakneffe ftill contrary be.
But, you do all confpire in one confent,
155 To make vnhappy that which muft be fo :
More cruell, when your crueltie might preuent,
What mifchiefes fall after you pitie fhew.
Wherefore a fafe deliuerance thou gau'ft
And now a goodly iffue fprings at laft.
160 Hadft thou deftroy'd what thou vnkindly fau'dft,
My prefent quill had not told forrowes paft.
For now no fooner was the tidings brought
To *Laius* hearing of what's come to paffe,
But that frefh cares, and contradicting thoughts
165 Arife to trouble what not fetled was.
But taking truce a while, he goes to fee
After what fort a child fo ill might looke,
Whether not monftrous as his manners bee,
Seeing the face is the foules reckoning booke.
170 Yet he not found what reafon thought he fhould,
A fwarthy vifage, clouded vp in frownes,
Sunke eies, that buried in their houfes ftood,
Or torted fhadowe which his temples crowne;
But there as in a glaffe himfelfe he faw,
175 And in his cheek markt how his cheeke was dy'd,

B 4<r>

Where

C A N T O. I .

Where cunning Nature beds of flowers did draw,
Whose head to crop, hard harts would have deny'd.
Long in this mirror he himselfe beheld,
Till like *Narcissus* selfe-enamored,
180 He seem'd transform'd; & when his peace he held,
His owne perfections he in silence read,
In those faire eyes, that seem'd to mocke his eyes,
Imagination from her duty swer'd,
Attentive wondring, a selfe-love descends,
185 Being not himselfe, when he himselfe observed.
Pigmalion-like, with many a melting kisse,
He dotes vpon this picture he had made,
Onely desire in him contrari'd, his,
Who for his liuelesse Image motion pray'd:
190 This grieving, that his workmanship exprest
Vnto the life, a creature so diuine;
Wist those pure beauties were in Iuorie drest,
Whose white, nor sin might spot, nor time decline.
What reason is't, that reason should collect
195 (Says he, when wonder to his words gave place)
Our disposition in our eyes aspect,
Reading our mindes imprinted in our face?
Were that an axiome: who't that should admire
This apt proportion of well-orderd parts?
200 This breath perfum'd to kindle *Cupid's* fire,
These precious chaines to prison captiu'd hearts:
And would not grant this were the decent bower,
Where comely Graces had set downe to dwell,

<B4v>

Where

C A N T O. I .

Where Vertue, of herselfe an ample dower,
205 Wedded her felfe, diuorc'd from other Cell.
If glorious Temples with their pride declare
Th'inhabited greatnesse of the Deity :
Oh then what precious Iewels lodged are
In such a gorgeous well built Treasury!
210 Surely at least it can but empty be
Of the expected riches, and not fraught
With the suspected masse of iniury:
Nought sure can heere be harbor'd that is naught,
Sin would haue //ofe a more vnpolish't den
215 Whose vgly building it could not defile,
More barbarous lookes for direfull agents, when
These seeme not rude, and steed of frowning smile.
Vnlesse, perchance, Vice, weary of contempt,
Would borrow count'nance of this countenance,
220 Hauing no other beauty, but what's lent
It's owne vnseene misfeature to aduance:
For had it beene truly apparelled
In't owne natieue garments, as soone I should
Haue loath'd the forme, as that it harboured;
225 As soone haue hated, as now lou'd it good.
Oh could our eyes carry a stronger sight
Then mans compacted out-side could reflect;
Or were his breft transparant as the light,
To let weake beames his inward parts detect.
230 This gay attire of beauty would no more
Bewitch our fancies, then a golden chaine

<B5r>

Worne

C A N T O. I .

Worne from it's place, or *Thetis* Paramour:
Divining blufh before a showre of raine.
But when the face, is all we can perceiue,
235 And as that pleafes we affected are,
How eafie is't for beauty to deceiue,
When finne ftill hides it felfe by feeming faire ?
And it may be, 'twas for fome greater end,
That fubtil Nature fram'd this feature thus,
240 Namely, to further what the Gods pretend,
Which nere fhe could, were this not glorious.
Now fuch a precious fanguine keepes his tide
In th'azure conduits of well-branched vaines,
As to let out were worfe then patricide,
245 In other veffell,then what it containes.
So rare this forme,as fure 'tis worfer farre
For me to offer violence, then for it
T'attempt the crimes that to it deftin'd are,
When It of force,I a free fault commit.
250 I loue thee, fonne,too well thofe powers know
The hearts of parents, and how much a child
In barren'ft pitie makes affection grow.
Oh that thou wer't leffe comely,or leffe vild.
Yet howfoere;fhall my kinde fondneffe adde
255 More power to Fortune, ouer fubiect man ?
Who well may triumph if we warning had,
Yet doe not fhunne her frailtie when we can.
Shall I, to faue thy life, go loofe mine owne?
Procure the name of Inceft to my bed?

<B5v>

And

C A N T O. I .

- 260 And what hath more in ages past beene knowne,
Suffer a brother in a Fathers stead.
First, let me better manifest my loue
To thee my sonne, first let this beautie dye
Unspotted, as such beautie doth behooue :
265 Flowers are pluck't, when fresh, not being drye.
Neuer shall Writers blot thy memorie,
Or from thy life fetch argument to their song;
But for thee bl/e deaths hasty crueltie,
Deem'd vertues hope, hadst thou not dy'd so yong.
270 Oh you depriued fathers, that with teares,
Behold your childrens time lesse Funerall,
Dry, dry your eyes, with them are fled your feares,
In their deepe graues your cares lye tombed all.
Call not to minde their forme, their wantonneffe
275 They wearied time with ; neuer (alas) recount
The hopes you had, that they your age shold blesse:
Such reckonings oft fall short of our account.
Oft haue I seene a curious Gardiner
Cherish an imp with the kind'ft art he had, (beare;
280 Whose youth gay flowers & goodly bloomes did
But the best fruit his age could shew was bad:
Then he repents his cares, and labours lost,
Wishing it then had perisht when it pleased,
Or that he nere had hop'd, since hopes are croft,
285 Then a fau'd labour might haue sorrow ead.
Many faire Sun-shines doe our youth adorne:
But when as age giues libertie to sinne,

<B6r>

A

C A N T O . I .

A cloudy euening doth eclipse our morne,
Weedes ouergrow the hearbes before hath bin.
290 And far more pleasing do we find it then,
If being vertuous we had perished
That our kind parents might lament vs, when
Liuing we wring more teares then being dead,
Here forcing pittie somewhat to retire
295 A yet-ne're-guilty weapon forth he drawes,
Which lifting vp t'accomplish his desire
Affection staies his hand, and makes him pause.
The child, with apprehension, innocent
Smiles at his image in his fathers eyes:
300 The soone-moo'd father herewithall relents
And in distracted passion thus he cries.
Can nature be so farre vnnaturall,
As that a father should a Butcher bee?
Can the least drop, that a childs eye lets fall
305 Passe vnregarded without efficacy?
Or if there could; can heauen forget to speake,
In the loud language of confus'd Thunder?
Can such an act be, and the clouds not breake?
Not *Ioues* artillery cleaue the earth in funder?
310 Or if example might the fact admit,
And heauen not punish vs for doing ill:
Can I, whose heart was ne're so brazen yet,
As the mean't bloudlesse creatures blood to spill,
First on my sonne my cruelty expresse?
315 A father more inhumane then a man,

To

C A N T O. I .

To others kind, to mine owne pittileffe,
The fanguine fpill, that with my fanguine ran.
Rather it fhould be one, thine enemy
Fram'd of a harder mould, then could be found
320 Amongft th'obdurate vulgar tyranny,
One that would ground a mifchiefe on no ground.
I neuer fhould thy Funerals bewaile
In the fad habite of a weeping blacke,
Thy purple ftill would make my fable pale,
325 Mourning my fault, thy death would mourning
Thofe hands muft be more irreligious far (lacke,
Then mine, and challenge a leffe intereft
In this fame life, that muft this life debar.
A heart that's prifon'd in an iron breft.
330 Hereafter when thy Epitaph worne out
In letters old, reuiues thy ftory new,
The weeping readers, that do ftand about
And throgh their tears the crime do greater view,
Will wrong my foftneffe thus, and thus exclaime:
335 What flinty matter did the man compofe?
How rocky was the womb from whence he came?
That could relentleffe a fonnes life depofe?
When we, that but fpectators, abfent bee
And no beholders of what we behold,
340 Thaw into water, when we thinke we fee
The mercileffe murder which he did of old.
The ftone that now weepes ore this Monument
Was for compaffionate teares firft made a ftone:

<B7r>

If

C A N T O. I .

If Pitty then attir'd in marble went,
345 What garment did such Cruelty put ///
Our Writers surely do past times belye,
And tell but tales for vs to emulate.
Where in our age can we such acts espye?
Such deeds beyond our reach to imitate.
350 The seasons are but nick-nam'd, and we trye
Theirs were the Iron, ours the golden times:
Onely we want their plenty, the reason why,
Our age is punished for their ages crimes.
Ere thus a scandal do prevent my death,
355 Thy hand, oh child, my scandal shall prevent,
Finish thy mischiefs with unworthy breath.
Be worse then thou art able to repent,
Before that I, in whom compassion fits,
My unstain'd hands in guiltless blood pollutes
360 Some wretch for such a villanie's more fit,
I cannot heare thy cries and persecute.
Here tears from their stopt fountains gan to break,
Whereat he hoves vp the fatal knife:
And hauing nothing more that he could speake,
365 Seeks 'mongst his Swains one to attempt his life.
Poore men, alas, they all were pittifull,
Whose onely practise euer was to faue:
Yet one there was amongst the rest more dull,
Whose looks of crabbed members notice gaue.
370 This from his fellows being cal'd apart,
The King thinks ap't // act a Tragedy;

<B7v>

To

C A N T O. I .

To him he opes the hid griefes of his heart,
And ftrictly charges that his sonne do die.
Do not I pray (quoth he) expostulate,
375 Or blame me being thus vnnaturall;
Know onely this, Repentance comes too late,
When either this, or a worſe ill muſt fall.
And oh deere child, when thy pure foule is freed
From this corps priſon, let it reſt in peace
380 In pleaſant fields, and on *Ambroſia* feede;
Let not my act thy happineſſe decreaſe.
'Tis not the baſe deſire I haue to liue (firſt
Makes me thus cruell: by my cleere thoughts I'd/
My ſecond breath, that fame affoords me, giue,
385 Dye twiſe, then by thy death once liue accurſt.
Could Deſtinies but alter their intent,
Or *Delphos* contradict it owne preſage,
I'de let an immortality be ſpent,
Ere thou ſhouldſt periſh in vnripen'd age.
390 Now for thy ſelfe 'tis, that thy ſelfe muſt die:
Who elſe muſt liue the monſter of the earth:
No offering elſe the Gods can pacifie,
Dye then new borne, ere liue to curſe thy birth.
Eu'n as a froward child affected ſtands,
395 Playing the wanton, with ſome ſha/pe delight,
Whoſe ſport though pleaſing , yet will hurt his
Cries being had, or taken from his fights (hand,
The like inconstant paſſions hold this King,
Griewing to looſe what grieues him being had,
<B8r> And

C A N T O. I .

- 400 And more, alas! he forrowes in this thing, (glad.
That that shold grieue him which shold make him
Now doth he print his last departing kiffe
When now affection coines some new delay:
Onely (quoth he) I will but vtter this,
405 Then strives to speake when he had nought to say.
The mother, not so manly in her woe,
Speakes all her sorrowes in a female eye ;
Like weeping *Rhea*, when she should forgoe
Her first borne sonne, through *Saturnes* crueltye.
410 After her griefe struggling for greater vent,
Had figh'd a fare-well from her big-swoln heart,
With briny Mirrh, that stead of Odors went,
She balmes the Hearfe, & now the Hearfe departs.
Now had the Sunne, with blushing modesty
415 Tooke his vnwilling leaue on *Thetis* cheeke,
And other Tapers of the golden sky
Put out their lights, elsewhere the night to seeke;
When earely rife *Phorbas*, iollieft fwaine
That on *Cithæron* tunes an oaten quill,
420 Display'd his siluer-flockes vpon the plaine,
Himselfe to be inspir'd, fate on the Hill.
Where many morning Madrigals he sang
In praise of *Pan*, with many amorous laies
Of Shepherds loues, that all the Medowes rang,
425 And *Phæbus* seem'd attentive with his raies.
There fell he to compassion Maiefty
And great mens cares in such a blithsome straine
<B8v> And

C A N T O. I .

As well his Muficke did his minde defcry
His fong, & thoughts did the fame notes cõtaine.
430 When on the fuddē fome neer neighboring fhriks
Not ftrong enough to fillable it's woes,
Breakes off his paftime, and doth wonder ftrike
In him a ftranger to fuch cries as thofe.
And liftning ftill, hee heard a fecond voyce
435 That breath'd together Pitty, Cruelty:
Both life and death in one confused noyfe
Relenting, that it muft perfifting be.
You Powers, faid it, that guid thefe things below,
Vnman me quite from this fame fhape of man:
440 Let all my limbes to Oaken branches grow,
Obdure my heart, e'ne harder, if you can:
That as I am, I don't fo much digrefle
From being my felfe, as yet alas I muft
Be too difloyall, or too pittileffe,
445 Hazard my vertues, or deceiue my truft.
Authority commands, I do obey,
And reafon 'tis command fhould be refpected:
And yet remorfe Authority gaine-faies;
Either do threat, if either be neglected.
450 Whither, oh then, fhall I my felfe conuert,
On either fide I am attacht with guilt,
Shunning a fault, I can't a fault diuert,
But finne as much in bloud, that's fau'd, as fpilt.
Oh *Laius*, and in him you earthly Kings,
455 That print your waxen Vaffails as you lift,

C<1r> Obferue

C A N T O. I .

Obferue in me what your iniuftice brings,
How much our wils do oft your wils refift.
Thinke you, that you can ere your felues acquit,
In the affittant doers of your plots?
460 The /////'s more h/inous fure you do commit,
Doubled difhonour doth your honour blot.
When not content, with your owne vertues waft,
To the foule acts you might haue done alone,
More are corrupted, more in mifchiefe plac't,
465 By others crimes to amplyfie your owne.
That we beholding in your vices face
Looks fo deform'd, deeme that our faults are faire:
And if a King, no dire attempts difgrace,
Surely in vs they but befeeming are.
470 Yet, why do I moue in too high a Spheare?
Cenfure Kings actions? they haue Eagles eyes,
And in their matters further infight beare
Then the mifconftruing common fearch defcryes.
They weigh not Rumours breath, but ftill direct
475 Their not rafh doings to fome fecond end:
Which 'tis not for the vulgar to detect,
Sith Kings endenour's oft their fight offend.
Well, howfoere, I know there nothing is,
From good, though falſely ftiled, fo remote,
480 Which circumſtance, yea in an act as this,
Cannot of vertue giue fome feeming note.
Yet greatneffe know, though fortune blinde hath
In our eftates fome inequality, (put
<C1v> Our

C A N T O. I .

Our minds yet Nature in one mould hath shut,
485 And meannesse cannot alter quality.
The same affections that do moue in you,
As well in vs, do claime their intereft,
We do not blushleffe, what you blush to doe.
Our crimes accuse vs in like guilty breft.
490 Then to discharge me of so bad a charge
Yet keepe a conscience free, immaculate,
I'll not performe, what I'll performe at large,
Taught to vse others, vnd for others hate.
You goodly Poplars, that do frindge this Brooke
495 With a faire bordure of an euen greene,
To you the guilt I leaue, which I forfooke,
You shall be faultlesse, when no fault you weene.
You hearing want, by which should be conuaid
Feeling relentance at an infants moane,
500 Vnlesse your griefes in amber wet array'd
Seeme to weepe others sorrowes in your owne.
Take you the businesse of this Tragicke deed,
Forget your Female passions were of yore,
Let not, alas see you of this take heed,
505 New griefes the forme, your old griefs chang'd, re-
For so your female softnesse may forbear (further:
To worke a story, which when one shall tell,
Renues your late left shape in them that heare:
Be then still secret, senselesse, and farewell.
510 Here ends the voyce, and here fresh cries begin,
When the vncertaine Swaine to be resolu'd

C 3<r>

Pryes

C A N T O. I .

Pryes throgh the glade, where he obfcur'd had bin,
And veiw'd a fight that all his ioints diffolu'd.
A childe earft vnacquainted with the Aire,
515 Till now brought forth to bid the Aire adeiw,
Whofe feete with plyant ofiers peirced were,
Hung vp as fruit, that on the Poplar grew.
Not far his fellow keeper of the folds,
Purfu'd with his owne guilty fteps did run,
520 Whofe flight, with his retired neereneffe told
His eyes abhor'd the fact his hands had done.
A while conceal'd he ftaid, till he efpied
By his fights failing, all difcouery
Abfent, and vanifht, then eft-foones him he hyed
525 T'exprefse his goodnes, there, wher none could fee.
Soone from the willing branchef he vnloads
The harmeleffe burthen, which retiring backe,
A quiuering Ditty with their leaues beftow'd
For the deliuerance from a fin fo blacke.
530 Th'amazed Shepheard ouer-gone with wonder,
Coniectures firft, then doubts to gather more.
Yet the King's vertues keepes fufpicion vnder,
But ftill the fact approues his thoughts before.
When, now ahlas! the Swaine is more perplext,
535 Becaufe he fau'd, then earft he was to faue;
Compaffion now Repentance had annex:
Thus fecond thoughts not the firft motions haue.
Feare forc'd him fomwhat from his vertues shrink.
So much doth danger goodneffe violate,

<C2v>

That

C A N T O. I .

- 540 That now he makes a question, and bethinkes
How ill it was to be compaffionate.
Not long in thefe contrary fits he ftood,
E're looking vp, he chanc'd to fpy not farre
A man, whose age gaue notice he was good,
545 Sith liuers ill, feldome, long liuers are.
To him drawne neere, this fpectacle he fhewes,
And all the manner, how the child was found,
Onely keepes in, what he ftill doubts he knowes,
Miftrufing mifchiefe that might once redound.
550 The eafy natur'd old man, that had now
Almoft forgot, vnpractis'd, how to weepe,
Let's fall a fhowre, a watring to beftow
On his parch'd beauties, buried in wrinckles deep.
Who fo had feene thofe luke-warme drops diftill,
555 For euer would the prodigy remember,
That tepid Springs fhould rife from frozen Hill
Or Aprill raine in midft of cold December.
Teares foone diffolu'd, he fals into complaints;
But with flow fpeech, and a dull tardy tongue:
560 His breath he fpent, although for breath he faiuts,
As well you'd iudge it was a fwan that fung.
At laft, as poore in words, as in his wet,
His mourning ceaft, when through compaffion,
That in his bofome limitleffe was fet,
565 He begs the child of *Phorbas* for his owne.
He yeelds as willing, as the other afkes.
So after fome inquiring chat, they part:

C 2<r>

The

C A N T O. I .

The oneto tend his Flockes, his daily ta^ske,
The other home, burthen'd, but light in heart.
570 Where come; To *Corinths* childleffe king & queen
He giues the infant, which *Polybius*
With care brought vp, as it his owne had been,
And from his fwolne feete nam'd him *Oedipus*.
His after-fortunes, and finifter fate
575 That mifchiefes, that vnknowne to him befell,
It skills not with continuance to relate
Another *Canto* fhall it plainly tell.

{ornament}

<C3v>

{ornament}

O E D I P V S.

C A N T O. I I.

C Othurnall Writers as a rule propofe,
Th'vnhappy iffue of a Tragedy
Proceeds from mifchiefes not fo great, and thofe
Haue blith beginnings in their Infancy.
5 Oh then! how blacke may we expect the fcœne
Arifing from a protafy fo fad,
Sorrow that welcomes, is an vnwelcome meanes
To Horrors Cell in frightfull darkeneffe clad.
Mifchiefe before was yong, and could not go
10 But as a learner practis'd how fhe might,
As in her age, fo in perfection grow,
At laft to powre downe all her ripend fpight:
Whom therefore late we as an infant left,
Now thinke him fully come to mans eftate,
15 Enioying friends, although of friends bereft,
On whom to all mens thinking fortune waites.
Inricht with gifts of Nature, gifts of Art,
Happy in his fupposed parents loue:
C 4<r> The

C A N T O. 2.

The hope of *Corinth*, and the very heart
20 Which *Greece* defir'd, once by the fame to moue,
In midft of all this earthly iollity,
Knowledge which he through induftry had got
More then was trite, prou'd curiofity,
And 'tis more dangerous fo to know, then not,
25 For hauing now attain'd to all he could
By vfe or precept: as mans nature is
Infatiate, refolu'd that 'tis more good
Rather then to referue, to fearch and miffe,
So in th'aboundance of quick fight he winkes,
30 And wanton'd with too much, himfelfe perfwades
He yet wants fomewhat, and ftill of that he thinks
But finds, that it from finding, vp was laid,
Namely, his comming fortune, good, or ill,
Conceal'd within the God of Natures breft,
35 In vaine for man, t'attempt to know, or will,
Till Times commiffion be too manifeft.
But no impoffibility withftands
Defire, as earneft, as ambitious.
Sith then his owne fearch not fo much commands
40 *Delphos* he hopes, will proue propitious.
Thither he hafts: What fondneffe is't that man
Should burne in fo inquitieue a fire
To know what is Predefinate, and whan,
Enquiring what's moft hurtfull to enquire.
45 For fay the Augurs do fore-tell content,
*ho alwaies prefuppofe our induftry,

<C4v>

We

C A N T O. 2.

We in predictions euer confident,
Neglectfull proue,to proue at laft they lye.
If ill, Miffortune is no Cockatrice,
50 Whofe fight infections,if firft feene,is fhun.
Bad lucke admits no counfell, no advice,
We fall into it by prevention:
Witneffe thefe rafh proceedings : for now come
To *Phæbus* Temple, he with fuppliant vowes
55 Implores the Deities determin'd doome,
Who with prophetick fires his Priests endowes.
Soone the *Caftalian* Nymph inspir'd, replies,
Dare Mortals dally with Immortalitie ?
Thinke they the *Delian* Oracle telles lies?,
60 That for ones fate, they twife folicit me?
Do I ere vfe my felfe to contradict?
Or am I not at euery time the fame?
Am I benigne fometimes, and fometimes ftrict ?
Change I decrees, as you do change your flame ?
65 If not: why then, what diffidence is this
In our truths power,that what once anfwer'd was,
As 'twere to pofe vs,now propounded is ?
Hope you for better things to come to paffe?
Know,thou that hadft thy fentence yet vnborne,
70 Which heretofore thy hapleffe Sire receiu'd,
Though now what wee foretold, thou laughft to
That our prophetick laurel's not deceiu'd. (fcorn,
Quickly begone, our doome to verifie,
That by thy fate our credit may bee wonne ;

<C5r>

Yet

C A N T O. 2.

- 75 Yet liues thy father,by thy hand to dye.
Thy mother yet,to beare her sonne a sonne.
Furie and madnesse now possesse him first,
That superstition should inforce beliefe,
Gainst all assurance in his bosome nurst,
80 Which in our iudgment should perswade vs chiefe.
Anon with *Phœbus* he the cause debates,
I wonder not(faies he) that thou dost erre,
Nor do I credit what thou dost relate,
Thy licence's knowne, thou art a traveller.
85 Tell me,*Apollo*, if thou canst me tell,
To whom is mans corrupted infide knowne ?
Doth not himselfe, himselfe perceiue, as well
As you,and best determines of his owne?
If not : how vaine is't that thy Temple doore
90 Commands selfe-knowledge,when doe all hee can
To know himselfe,man knowes himselfe no more,
Then I beleue thou know'st thy selfe of man ?
And if we doe,oh why shouldst thou perswade
Vs to be such,whereof we nothing know,
95 But that 'tis false ? Never is that gain-faid,
Which in our felues we are assur'd is so.
See,if cœlestiall eyes, that power haue
To view our intrailles, ranfacke every nooke,
Where cogitation wanders in her caue,
100 Obserue me throghly with one searching looke,
Marke strictly,and declare if thou canst finde
One thought,one little motion, whereby

<C5v>

To

C A N T O. 2.

To be confirm'd, nay if thou scan't my minde,
There nothing dwels, which giues thee not the lie.
105 I know thus much, I am not ignorant,
So farre in my soft-natur'd disposition,
Though to diseases apt it health may want,
Yet I perfume Im'e still mine owne Phyfition.
And but I finde mine innocence gainfayes,
110 Eu'n with my life Id'e finish that intent.
And yet there are evasions many wayes,
Death fet apart, to hinder the event,
Before those rayes, wherewith thou seest me now,
Twife maske their glories in the clouded West,
115 Ere twife *Aurora* with a bathfull brow,
Asham'd of *Tithon*, blvshes in the East,
Il'e ease this ground whereon I now do tread,
Of my loath'd burthen : all the world Il'e range,
Wherfoere I am by fame or fancy led,
120 That changing climates, I my fate may change.
Corinth fare-wel, and all my household Lares,
Thy pleasures, your protection I forfake,
For sorrow, dangers, povertie and cares :
'Tis vertue onely me an exile makes.
125 Nere will I take repentant step to turne,
Where my mischance is natie as my foile:
And first Il'e see thy loved buildings burne,
Before thy smoke shall tempt me from my toyle.
Parents fare-well. Thus I, your haplesse sonne,
130 Turne hence m'vnwilling lights : for why I feare

<C6r>

I

C A N T O. 2.

I am t//n'd ////////// like, whose infection
/// /// in the eye-b/lles ; else I know not where.
Inhospitable, regions stay for me,
Wildes vnfrequented,shores vnman'd, vnknowne,
135 Nights pitchy birth-right, where no Sun they see,
Each countrey's mine to breath in, fame mine own.
Thus in diftemper'd bloud he *Delphos* leaues,
With some few private friends, and as a man
Desperate, himfelfe of all forecaft bereaues,
140 Dares all the worft that now miſfortune can :
Eu'n as a Pinnace by a Pirat chac'd,
Steeres her indifferent keele for any coaft,
Harbors with any danger met in haft,
Rather then try the danger feared moſt :
145 So he, vntraueld in the ſeas of chance,
To *Scilla* from ſuppoſd *Charybdis* hies :
Miſchiefe once known,and ſhun'd, with ignorance
Is met : the fame he followes, which he flyes.
Turne, turne to *Corinth*, fond miſdeeming youth,
150 Keepe thy ſelfe there, and keepe thy ſelfe ſecure,
Our fortune, vs, as we the world purſueth;
And ſure ſhe is; but in a place vnfure.
Then be not thou degenerate from good,
So farre,as to take paines in doing ill,
155 If thou muſt quench thy Eagles thirſt wth blood,
Shun tediousneſſe,and drinke with eaſe thy fill.
Change the white liuery of *Polybius* head
With his effuſed gore; and that being done,

<C6v>

Deface

C A N T O. 2.

Deface the print of *Meropes* chaft bed :

- 160 Think thou doft all, that now this thinkft to fhun,
And fo perchance thou mayft prevent with doing
What thou muft do in feeking to prevent.
Thy warineffe workes now thine owne vndoing,
And by refifting, furthers Fates intent.
- 165 But thou muft on to act, and I to tell
Thy deeds of horror, that without thine ayd,
Learnings great armed Goddeffe on me dwell,
I fhall //////(recite, be) leffe heynous being afraid.
From *Thebes* there lies a narrow beaten way,
- 170 Made rudely pleafant with vneven thorne,
Which wandring long through coole *Caftalia*,
Loofes it felfe vpon a plaine vnworne.
There Nature portraid *Flora's* counterfet
In youthfull beauties, on a ground of greene,
- 175 Which fhe with fuch skild workmanfhip had fet,
As well how much fhe fcorned Art was feene.
Neere whose embroydred margent *Elea* glides,
With crooked turnings winding in and out,
That fhe might longer in the meade abide,
- 180 And finde the readieft way in going about.
Hither oft *Laius* came, as was his vfe,
With foluce to fpurre on the tardy time,
Reposing his wilde thoughts, and taking truce
With confcience, ftill accusing him of crime.
- 185 And now (alas) 'twas his vnhappy hap,
As he from *Thebes* to *Phocis* iournied,

<C7r>

A

C A N T O. 2.

A litle towne, within whose purple lap
Tipfie *Lyaus* layes his drowfie head.
Here on this greene to meet his thought-dead son
190 Pofting to *Thebes*, whose indigested rage,
In him had all humanitie vndone,
Left no respect, neither of state nor age :
For growne to choler, after melancholly,
Hee rudely rushes through the peacefull traine,
195 And passing forth with more irreverent folly,
Ore-turnes his fathers Chariot on the plaine.
The Kingly old man all possessed with spleene,
Thirfts after a revengefull recompence :
And as the flies haue stings, the Ant her teene,
200 He drawes the sword he wore for shew, not sense.
His readinesse doth prompt his company
To the like valorous opposition :
But *Oedipus* as ready as was he,
Askes pardon with maintaining, not contrition.
205 Now the inconstant Goddesse 'gins to smile,
Triumphing in her selfe-lou'd policie,
How quaintly she can mans intents beguile,
And blinder then herselfe make those that see.
You Furies too, th'obseruant slaues of chance,
210 Though discords nurses, yet you now conspire,
Where Death sounds Iron harmony, to dance,
To crowne *Erinnis* with your brands of ///.
But Nature, where art thou? Where Sympathy
That Elmes and Vines espouseth? vanished? gone?

<C7v>

'Twixt

C A N T O. 2.

- 215 'Twixt whom,or where should Inclination be,
If here abandon'd in the Sire and Sonne?
Or you neglectfull *Genij*,that attend
On our directed actions,where are you,
That now you loyter? Is't to be contemn'd
- 220 We are indulgent,or a debt we owe?
Me thinkes the liberall expence bestow'd
On your vnnecessary feasts, might charme
From you some succour,that some power bestow'd
To hinder purpofes that tend to harme.
- 225 But you oft-blamed fliters in my verfe,
That do determine mans vncertaine yeares,
'Tis you : but thou of all the three most fierce,
That a sonnes sword mistakeft for thy sheares,
By which poore *Laius* threed being cut, he falles.
- 230 Eu'n as an antique edifice of ftone,
Struck with a thundring peale of shot, whose wals
If not by force, would haue decay'd alone.
No fooner fell he; but the *Thebans* fled,
Some for affistant succor,some for feare.
- 235 Some washt their bloody cheeks in tears they fhed
Others with out-cries forced others teare.
The murderers, not knowing whom th'had flaine,
Howfeuer would not trust their innocence,
Their guilt affures them that they shall be tane,
- 240 If long they stay : fo they depart from thence,
Leaving the busie multitude imploy'd
In vaine enquiry of they know not whom,

<C8r>

A:

C A N T O. 2.

All the whole cheerefulneffe of *Thebes* deftroyd,
And *Cadmus* race quite forrow ouercome :
245 Amongft the reft,the but halfe-living queene
Comes where her other beft-lou'd halfe lay dead :
Whofe mangled body, when fhe once had feene,
Her heart his wounds receiu'd,but fafter bled.
Anone herfelfe on his ftiffe trunke fhe throwes,
250 Kiffes his bloud-left cheekes : oh thus (quoth fhe)
The all fhe hath of thine,thy wife beftowes,
Eu'n till fhe hath no breath, fhee'l breath on thee.
And being dead,thus on thy graue ll'e lye,
Tombing thee in an Alablafter fhrine,
255 With open bofome, that the paffer by
May fee what thy heart was,by feeing mine.
And now I thinke thee happy *Niobe*,
Whofe marble breaft yeeld to no fence of woes,
After thou twife feven funerals didft fee,
260 Twife didft thy children in thy wombe inclofe.
Oh wold my fortune now like thine might proue,
Im'e fure the grieve is greateft I abide.
Thou but for children mourned'ft, I for a Loue
Might haue made me a mother ere I dy'd.
265 Remembrance now at this fad name of Mother,
Doth old mifhaps to be wept ore,bring out.
A greene wounds anguifh oft vnskinnes another,
Sorrow's a circle,and ftill turnes about.
Now comes to minde her child-births bitterneffe,
270 Made heavier with the burden that fhe bore,
<C8v> Which

C A N T O. 2.

Which had he liu'd yet, wold haue grieu'd her leffe
Though he had triumph'd in his fathers gore.
In vaine,oh *Laius*, didft thou kill thy fonne,
When from a ftranger thou haft death receau'd:
275 If needs thy threed muft haue bin cut,ere fpunne,
Would he had liu'd,thy life to haue bereau'd.
He might haue beft bin authour of thy death,
In whom thou liu'dft : through him perpetuall
Succeffion might haue lengthend thy fhort breath,
280 Built from thefe ruins towers that nere fhould fall,
Now both are perift with your memory,
Of whom no age-withftanding record's left ;
Onely my breaft retaines what none can fee,
What foone will faile, fo foone of you bereft.
285 Oh ill betide thee cruell hearted man,
If man thou be'ft,that had a heart fo cruell,
Vncivill monfter I thinke rather,than
Compofd of heauenly fire,and earthly fuell.
The fauage tyrant of the forreft would
290 Haue loath'd the fact to do ; and being done,
Flints wold haue wept,& rocks,if here they ftood,
Would melt as wax at prefence of the funne.
Oh rockes, and fnaggy flints, when we compare
Hard men with you, we do you iniury :
295 Men are themfelues,I moft like men they are,
When they are furtheft from humanitie.
Here from the bounds of charitie tranfported,
She on the murdrer bitterly exclames,

D <1r> Wifhing

C A N T O. 2.

Wifhing him woes not to be comforted,
300 To proue his fathers ruines,mothers flame.
Till what her fad attendants could affoord,
She taftes of comfort, if there comfort liue
'Mongft thofe that in one miferie accord,
Wanting that moft, which they defire to giue.
305 Reafon at laft eftablifht patience ;
So taking vp the reliques of their King,
With flow proceffion they depart from thence
Towards *Thebes*,& with thẽ their fad *load* do bring
Where long it was not,ere with Funerall Rites,
310 The corpes were brought vnto the Funerall pile.
Mufick founds harfh,though it elfewhere delights
What mirth did vfe; now vfd, doth mirth exile.
Performed are the Obfequies at laft,
The people cloath'd in cuftomary black,
315 To giue more ftate vnto their forrow pafte,
Mou'd to prefent it by their looking back.
Scarce were their Cyprefse garlands withered,
Scarce of their fpent tears had they took their leaue
Ere Mifchiefe, *Hydra*-like, exalts her head,
320 Which by the formerf loffe ſhe doth receiue.
For angry *Iuno*,neuer reconcil'd,
To her corriuals brothers progeny,
Burning in rage,fo oft to be beguil'd,
Thus wreakes her felfe on them with tyranny,
325 Hard by the Citie in *Crenaa's* fight,
A hill there is, whofe fpired top commands

<D1v>

A

C A N T /. /.

A fpacious prospect, which *Phycaeos* hight,
Wafhing his graueld feet in *Dirces* sands.
Here the too much intraged Goddeffe plac'd
330 *Echidna's* daughter, triple featur'd *Sphinx*,
Of rare compofure 'boue the doubtfull waft,
Which bafer growes, as neerer earth it finkes.
A virgins face fhe had, where might be read
Perfection printed in each gracefull part :
335 And from her head a golden curtaine fspread,
Hangs as the couer to fome curious Art.
As for her voyce, no Princes wronged Lad,
No *Syren* fweeter, or more cunning fings,
Plump moving breaft, fsmooth fkin, white arms fhe
340 Fanning a feather'd paire of painted wings. (had,
But as an Artift leanes his carved worke
On formes deform'd : or as each wife man telles,
Worft Serpents vnder gayeft flowers lurke,
Or pleafures welcomes haue but harfh farewellles:
345 So Nature in a Lyons halfe had put,
That other halfe; but totally Divine;
Whofe meaning, fith from moft it vp be fhut,
Difdaine not this moralitie of mine.
Learning & Knowledge by our *Sphinx* is meant,
350 As hid, as her *Ænigma's*, pofing wits
In Hieroglyphicks, and to this intent
On armed *Pallas* helmets top fhe fits.
On hill fhee keepes, and fo the Mufes doe,
Hard are the numbers of a Poets rime,

D 2<r> Nature,

C A N T O . 2.

- 355 Nature, Art, Vfe, are the thr/ fteps thereto :
Care muft be had,that we directly clime.
Nature doth rudely our dull maffe prepare,
And if not helpt,contemplates but with fence,
Her groueling lookes downwards deieted are,
360 And can deriue but earthly knowledge thence.
But Art erects it felfe with Reafon ; fcans
Things aboue reach : then taking Vfes wings,
Mans fpirit foares vp higher then a mans,
Houering aboue heauens Chrifall Orbe, he fings.
365 Beaft,Maid,and Bird,is Nature, Art, and Vfe,
Ioyn'd in one knowledge,as thofe three in one,
If you admit not this, admit excufe.
Learning's a *Sphinx*, her riddles are vnknowne :
Well,here fhe held long her dominion,
370 Propounding queftions vnto paffers by,
Given by the Mufes to her,on condition,
If anfwer'd,fhe ; elfe,the not-anfwerers dye.
To many loe,her riddles fhe propounds,
Whofe hidden meaning was fo intricate,
375 That to her none the myftery expounds,
So all by her tooke the laft ftroke of Fate.
Thebes long with thefe iniurious wrongs was vext
Almoft vnpeopled : the remainder mewd
Vp in the Citie walles,that all perplext,
380 They fall to counfell, where they thus conclude;
That forthwith it abroad be publifhed,
That who the queftion of darke *Sphinx* vnfoldes,
<D2v> Shall

C A N T O. 2.

Shall to the widow Queene be married,
And th'vnfwaide Scepter of the Kingdome hold,
385 Soone the shrill Trumpet of disperfed Fame,
Reported the adventure farre and neare :
Amongft the reft to *Oedipus* it came,
Purfuing Rumors with an open eare.
Retiring ftraight himfelfe into his minde,
390 He weighes the prize, cafts what the dangers be :
Then vrg'd with exile, and his fate affign'd,
Refolues to go; if not to fpeed, to dye.
With winged haft to *Theban* gates he hies,
Craues his admittance to the Gouvernor :
395 Obtain'd, he manifests his enterprife,
So he may haue what he adventures for.
Confirm'd more fully, he is welcom'd thither,
Fairely intreated, with the beft obferuance,
Anon with *Creon* he goes forth together
400 To fhew *Iocasta* his allegiance.
Her Maiefty deiects him on his knee,
So much of mother-ignorance perceiu'd,
Well did that formall reverence agree,
Had not obedience bin therein deceiu'd.
405 She takes him vp foone from the humble ground,
When each of other taking ftricter view,
Their harts gan throb, portētuous fires they found
Blaze in their brefts, threatning what wold enfue.
She loues, he likes, both doting on their owne,
410 Such correfpondence had affection bred.

D 3<r> Hadft

C A N T O. 2.

Hadst thou, ô Nature, earst thy selfe thus showne,
The sonne had nere the father butchered.
The modest queene cald by the instant night,
Commits them to a wisht vntroubled rest,
415 Herselfe with-drawing from attendant sight,
Enters the privy chamber of her breast.
Where with a troop of traitrous thoughts surpriz'd
She findes herselfe tane prisoner by desire,
With *Protean* variety so disguiz'd,
420 That she at first could not detect the fire:
Till scorcht, she both found out, & lou'd the flame,
Grew iealous of it, whisper'd by her feare,
The meanes to get, was but to loose the same,
But shame commands prevention to forbear.
425 Loue against shame disputes, and bashfull lawes,
Shame 'gainst the lawlesse libertie of loue:
Both do object, both answere in their cause,
Till sleep breaks vp the Court, and cause remoues.
Early when *Phœbe* couch't her siluer horne,
430 Drowfie *Endimion* with a kisse to wake,
The Rosie horses of the red-cheek't Morne
To their fresh iourney do themselues betake.
The longing multitude betimes await
Their Champions comming, who when hee arose,
435 Condemn'd himselfe for sleeping over-late,
Deferring blisse, or adding time to woes.
Hee's ready, and of all things furnisht is,
Onely he staves to bid the queene fare-well,

<D3v> When

C A N T O. 2.

When he bestowed /// (his) first incestuous kiffe,
440 That after opened the black way to Hell.
Away he goes, and after him she sent
Her earnest looks : oft did she goe about
To call him back ; but ever that intent
Was croft with blufhing, nor could words come
445 So with her praies for him, she retires: (out .
When now the Monster, as her manner was,
Vnto her mountaines narrow top aspires,
Watching for strangers, which that way should
Anon she sees one coming all alone, (paffe.
450 Saue that with cries he was accompanied
Of those, which further off did make their moane,
Lamenting for his death ere he was dead.
Approach't within the limits of their words,
Vaine man, said she, what rashneffe bids thee come
455 Hither too me, thus of thine owne accord,
Whither with paines I scarce can hale in some ?
Thinkst to prevaile? or seek'st thou death out here?
Attend me then: What is't, I faine would know,
Which in the morne it selfe on foure doth beare,
460 At noone on two, at night on three feete goes?
Now all his wits together he collects,
Thinkes of a thousand *species* of things,
Of Sun-observing plants, and those infects,
To whom one day, life and corruption brings.
465 But he whose starres maliciously referu'd
For firmer fastning, their flow influence,

D 4<r> Muft

CANTO. 2.

Muſt from this little danger b/ preferu'd,
 That it not leſſen Ruines eminence.
 Therefore with too quicke readineſſe inſpir'd,
 470 That helpt but for advantage, he replies ;
 If this be all, ſtrict poſer, that's requir'd:
 Danger doth eaſily teach me to be wiſe.
 The creature thou inquireſt for, is Man,
 Who from the manſion where he dwels, doth bor-
 475 His mutability : who nothing can (row
 But by degrees, never the ſame to morrow.
 View firſt his child-hood, when his heavenly fire
 Proportion'd to his ſtature, ſcarcely warmes
 The earthen houſe, where Nature it inſpires,
 480 He puts no difference 'twixt his legges and armes,
 But as a ſluggard, looking vp eſpies
 The mornings cleereneſſe, and againe doth ſleepe :
 So hee new-borne, falles whence hee firſt did riſe,
 Still his acquaintance with the earth to keepe.
 485 When grown to man, with countenance more erect
 Having his weary pilgrimage halfe ſpent,
 He viewes his iourneys end with ſtrict aſpect,
 Contemplates heauen, frō whence his ſoule was lent
 As for the earth, with a diſdainfull heele
 490 He treads vpon't, and makes this orb'd baſe
 The weight of two faire ſinewy columnes feele.
 And of what elſe leanes on their arched ſpace.
 At laſt, though as a building he ſtill weares
 The ſame firſt ſtrengthning, the ſame timber, wals,
 <D4v> Yet

C A N T O. 2.

- 495 Yet craz'd with batteries of tempeftuous yeares
His weakenesse craues more props,more pedestals.
For after Sunne-fet,when the spotted night
Puts on a roabe of Starres, though now we see
More Tapers burning,yet if we'd haue more light
500 An artificiall noone must added bee. (grow,
Thus men growne old, perchance they wife may
Yet if their age put one foote in the graue,
Necessity inforces when he goes
That he another to supply it haue;
505 And that's a staffe, to free his wither'd hand
From th'vnsteddy Palfie: Behold him than
He as *Apollo's* tripos right doth stand,
And thus what thou inquirest for is man.
At this such anger, as a man inflames
510 E'ne to the height of madnesse,and transports
Confideratiue reuenge,from whence wrong came,
Thither where felt, selfe hindred to retort,
Possesses *Typhons* of-spring, who beholding
Her date expir'd,flutters her balefull wings,
515 Beares talents 'gainst her selfe,her haire infolding
To comb the curl'd locks,from their rooted springs.
Anon she digs wels on her cheeks which bleed
Torrents of gore: when now this prologue past
The act infues, in which as 'twas decreed
520 From her steepe hill, her selfe she head-long casts.
Against whose flinty bottome she beates out
Her subtle braines, being so of breath bereau'd,
<D5r> Which

C A N T O. 2.

Which apprehended by the distant rout,
Was with no common shouts, and claps receau'd:
525 Some flung their caps vp, others cheerely fung
Peans of triumph; others strew'd the waies,
Whilst some depart from the confused thrung
To gather Garlands of victoriouf Bayes.
In briefe, themfelues they carefully employ
530 To gratulate their Countries greed Redeemer:
The Queene expreffes in her lookes fuch ioy
As modefty doth counfell best befeemes her.
There with a publicke, but discreet embrace,
Her armes do take poffeffion of their owne,
535 And hauing giu'n all the respectfull grace,
That with fo short acquaintance could be shew'n,
Backe they returne, vsher'd with musickes voyce,
Whofe curious running defcant, and choice strain
Would haue mou'd Marble, & made Flints reioice,
540 Able t'haue built *Thebes* Towers once again.
The monster laid vpon a filly Affe,
If by each feareleffe vulgar eye discern'd,
Her talents toutcht, as she along doth passe,
For Learning's knot's vndone, who is not learn'd?
545 Come to *Amphions* wondrous architect,
Whofe Wafte a feuen-clafpt girdle doth containe;
The Conquerour, in conscience yet vncheckt,
Claimes his reward, Danger requires gaine.
The honeft State denies not, but inuefts
550 His Temples in the *Theban* Royalty:

<D5v>

The

C A N T O. 2.

The Queene and he foone tooke their interests
The each of other, whereto all agree.
Appointed is the Nuptiall day, and come
Whisper'd for fatall by the mourning Doues,
555 Nor was the Scritch-owle, nor the Rauē dumbe,
In signes prepofterous of prepofterous loue.
Hymens vncheerely flame doth fadly burne
And fparely drinks the fullen wax that fryes
Lefte then giues food, not furfets;hid powers turne
560 *Thalaffios* Ballads into Elegies.
O Midwife-Goddeffe, Loue-betrothing Queene
Shew fome misliking wonder to forbid :
Thou frown'ft when harlots in thy porch are feen:
Can inceft then be in thy Temple hid?
565 Borrow fome fury of thy brother fell
And riue thy guilty Manfion, fane profane.
Better haue no place where thy Rites may dwell,
Then haue it blemifht with fo foule a ftaine:
'Tis no difmembred facrifice of beafts
570 Can an incenft Diuinity appeafe.
Gods trafique not with men, nor to our feafts
Bring gueft-like palats, for a meale to pleafe.
They laugh our fcorn'd endeuors, and though now
Thefe from permiffion gather thy confent,
575 Yet fhall they find, that a long wrinckled brow
If neuer leuel'd with fond blandifhment.
In vaine exempt they from thy hoftiall flame
To teach the *Paphian* Turtles loue, the gall,
<D6r> When

C A N T O. 2.

When in their kisses they shall finde the fame,
580 And bitterneffe e'ne from their sweetes shall fall.
For take imaginations wings, and flye,
Ouer ten Summers crown'd with ripen'd corne,
Let ruddy grapes,ten luscious Autumnes die,
And from their surfets fee an issue borne:
585 Two manly Twinnes, to call their father, brother,
This *Eteocles*, *Polynices* hee,
Antigone the fift to her mother,
Too faire a blossome from so foule a Tree.
Mischiefe is come to age,and pleasure muft
590 Refigne here birthright, what's suppoed cleere
Vnknown, with knowledge manifests the rust.
Bad men are guiltlesse,till their guilt appeare.
Vnyoake thy Teame yet, weary Waggoner,
Phæbus hath tane his horses from the Car.
595 Rough are the waies throgh which thou haft to er,
And daylight askes no Pilots Arctick Star.
The Milch-cow with full Vdder bellows home,
And rich *Menalchas* folds his fleecy Sheepe:
When *Pyrois* next, on champ'd bit doth fome,
600 Forwards proceed, Night cals thee now to sleepe.

<D6v>

OEDIPVS.

{ornament}

OEDIPVS.

CANTO. III.

V P fluggish fury, fee thy Mufes friend
Solicites matter for thy numerous verfe:
With morn begin, thou, that thy work woldft end,
Though night were thy fit't hearer, yet rehearse.
5 Hereto with hafty fteps, thou haft orerun
An Infants fate, by whom a Sire did die,
A mothers chang'd relation with her fonne,
And riddles made in confanguinity.
Now with as much celerity fet downe
10 The iuftice of reuengefull *Nemefis*,
The fickneffes of an abufed Crowne,
How fin is punifht, though vnknowne it is.
Oh! faddeft fifter of the facred nine ,
That fhroud't thy felfe in cabin hung with black,
15 Lend me thy *Ebon* quill, or guide thou mine:
Endow me now, with what I moft would lacke.
Time wearing out, which ignorance made fweete
With execrable pleafures vertuous thought

<D7r>

New

C A N T O. 3.

New ills *Pandoras* box, new open'd Fleete
20 By whō worfe things, thē by the first are wrought.
No soft *Etefiæ*, with coole blafts doth fan
The sweaty drops from the leaft labouring brow,
And frustrate is the vse of breathing, whan
The Aire is suckt, as from a scalding stow.
25 *Phœbus* bestriding the fierce Lyons backe
Stirs vp the fury of th'vnloofed Dog, (blacke,
Drinkes vp the Brookes, burnes the Earths vesture
Wants diving vapours from the fenny Bog.
Dirce commands no further then her head,
30 No watry reliques shew the stranger prooffe
How far *Ifmenos* liquid greatnesse spread;
The Oxen passe the Foord with vnwasht hoofs.
Sickely *Diana* keepes her Cloudy Chamber,
Lookes not abroad, but with a Countenance pale,
35 No healthfull Planet spreads his lockes of amber,
But from the earth a counterfet exhales.
Abortiue *Ceres* doth her fruit deny
Addes fuell to her selfe-consuming fire,
Which when the patient Husbandman doth see
40 He weeps perhaps to quench his scorch'd desire.
There is no place in *Thebes* stretcht Territories
Free from some plague or other, no age, no sex:
Here paraleld, were all examples, Stories
That euer did this Vniuerse perplex.
45 Both old and yong, fathers and children fall,
Wiues with their husbands, & what's moft vnkind
<D7v> Friends

C A N T O. 3.

Friends are not left to weepe friends funerals,
Death,iuft in this, lets none to ftay behind.
Ere fcarce the fon be rakt vp in the pyre,
50 The flame's againe renewed by the mother,
Oft are they burned in the felfe-fame fire
Which earft they ki ndled to confume another.
No Art preuailes:Phyfitions cannot giue
Themfelues affurance,fhewing their skill they die,
55 Promifing life to others, they not liue: (denie.
The earth more Toombes , the woods more piles
In thefe afflictions, the fad King diftreft
Powres out himfelfe in prayer, but vnheard,
He doth intreate to haue thofe ills redrest,
60 Or that death onely ben't from him debar'd.
Ioue had his Offrings burnt to him with Oake
Iuno her Lambe, *Ifis* her Calfe did fmell:
The Hyacinth *Apollo* did inuoke,
Poppy on *Ceres* fafforn'd Altars fell.
65 *Pan* knew his Pine-tree, & the *Lars* their whelps,
Venus her Pigeons, deckt with crimfon Rofes,
But none are willing to employ their helpes.
No God of *Thebes* yet otherwife difpofes,
Therefore to neighbouring *Delphos* they repaire,
70 Where they do fupplyant afke what muft be done
For *Thebes* deliuerance, what offering, pray'r,
The Gods require for fatisfaction.
To them an anfwere vther'd was with Thunder,
No Star fhall looke on *Thebes* but with a frowne:

<D8r>

No

C A N T O. 3.

- 75 No plague vnheard of, till 'tis felt with wonder,
Shall cease it's siege 'gainst your vnpeopled Town,
Till he that was the murdrer of your King
Be from the Aire you breath in banished,
His wretched prefence doth these mischiefes bring
80 Which liue in him, and shall pursue him fled.
The King, great thanks vpon the Gods bestowes,
Commanding that which to performe behoues,
The fame which iustice to oppreffion owes,
No more they may establish Subiects loues.
85 Soone shall my Countries plague be cured now;
Oh eafy Gods, that with compassionate eyes
Behold *Thebes* defolate buildings, marke my vow,
And be auspicious to my enterprife.
Be present too oh daylights greater guide,
90 Empal'd with Crownets of Maiefticke rayes,
That in twelue Empires doft thy Orbe diuide,
Varioufly treading heauens diftinguifht maze.
Night-wandring Goddeffe be not absent neither,
Nor thou that doft in iron fetters bind
95 Blasting *Prænefter*, that with a word canst either
Call home, or fend abroad thy struggling winde.
And thou lasciuious *Neptune* that doft cast
Thy amorous armes, thy Trident laid aside,
Almost about my Monarchies small Wafte
100 As thou by both her water'd fides doft ride.
Attend me all: By whose hand *Laius* fell
Let him no harbour, no abroad enioy,

<D8v>

No

C A N T O. 3.

No not himfelfe, wherein himfelfe may dwell,
But when none elfe, let he himfelfe annoy.
105 May his owne houfhold Gods vnfaithfull proue,
And the vnnaturall *Lars* in exile worfe,
Reap he moft fhame, from what he moft doth loue,
And may his wife an impious off-fpring nurfe.
Kill he his father, as he kild his King,
110 And let his acts my wifhes power out-goe,
If a worfe fate then mine can torment bring
Heap't vp, yet doe he, what I fhun to doe.
And for my felfe, as I with prayers desire
My vntoucht parents may proclaime me good,
115 No cooling intermiffion fhall retire,
Reuenge, till bloud be wafht away with bloud.
But play not with vs, true Propheticke fpirit,
Thus by denyed grants to make vs long:
Search is ambitious, and would all inherit,
120 Secrets with-held make inquisition ftrong.
A tafte but whets the licorifh appetite
For fatisfactions earnefter p//f//it.
Vnto a prifoner, the fp//e-fcanted light
A bondage is, to want it, and to view't.
125 Then do thou (heauenly goodnes) whom it pleas'd
To fhew the meanes, further the meanes vnfold :
Point forth the man, that foone we may be eas'd,
Or teach vs to forget what thou haft told.
Elfe as impatient patients we fare,
130 To whom the Ch///k hath prefcrib'd receits

E<1r>

Of

C A N T O. 3.

Of fuch ingredients as fo hidden are,
That they are doubted to be skild deceits.
Vrge Gods no more, replies the sacred Priest:
Man muft worke fomewhat for his better being,
135 Yet if with this thou not contented bee'ft,
Blinded *Tirefias* eyes muft helpe thy feeing.
Forthwith the faithfull *Creon* is difmift
To *Phæbus* fecond Oracle, who late
Loft fight, yet gain'd a better then he mift,
140 As he Cœleftiall matters did debate.
Far from the Citty lies a nighted Groue
Downe in the Valley where fleete *Dirce* glides,
Where th'vntoucht Ciprefse fpreads his boughs a-
And frō the Sun the fubiect Bramble hides. (boue
145 The aged Oake his rotten branches tends,
From whose corrupted fide thicke ielly drops,
And ftooping vnder many yeares he bends
To reft his crippled truncke on yonger props:
There bitter-berried *Daphne*, *Mirrha* ftood,
150 The trembling Apfe, the Birch, with fmooth thin
Th'eternall Cedar for my lines too good, (rine:
The vpright Alder, and Sunne-guilded Pine.
In midft of this is fitude a Tree
Of wondrous greatneffe, whose extended armes
155 Mete the large confines of it's Empery,
And fenfe the weake inhabitants from harmes.
Within the hollow compaffe of whose trunke
Nature had cut out an vnciuill den,

<E1v>

Which

C A N T O. 3.

Which a cold fountaine, without ceasing drunke
160 Vp of the earth, moats with a miry fen.
Heere, by his daughter *Manto* led he meets,
Reuerenc'd *Tirefias*, And from the King
Him, all humanity obseru'd, he greets;
And further vtters what him thither brings.
165 Then as the neuer-erring Prophet wild,
A hostiall fire vpon the Altar's made
Which they before of Turffs of earth did build,
And there two cole-blacke Heifers on were laid.
The sacred *Vates* standing by the fire
170 In direfull roabs yclad, with box-tree crown'd,
Oft waues his powerfull wand, and then enquires
What Omens in the beafts or flames are found.
Anon he sings the hideous magicke verfe,
Cals on the names of dutious Spirits thrice,
175 Thrice doth he fmite the shooke earth, thrice re-
What deuils may compell, or deuils tice. (hearse,
A bloody shower from his right hand fals,
And from his left drops bloud with *Bacchus* mixt:
Then with more earnest voice againe he cals
180 With steady countenance, on the center fixt.
Now difmall *Hecats* Dogs began to barke,
Which to repeat, the wood by *Eccho's* taught
A night comes now there answering day so darke.
A blinder *Chaos* seene, then th'old was thought.
185 Vp rife the subiects of infernall *Dis*,
At which each Tree his frighted branches heaues,

E 2<r>

Many

C A N T O. 3.

Many an Oake in splinters shiuer'd is,
Many an Elme shrinkes vp his blasted leaues.
Earth suffers violence, and open rends
190 Her feal'd vp wombe, to shew her tombed dead,
The subtle spirits, penetrating fiends
Out of her cauernes lift their crisped heads:
There might one see the griesly God of Hell
Put his num hand out of his frozen Lake;
195 Nights very felfe, three sifter'd furies fell,
Picking quaint morfels, on a speckled fnake.
The viperous brood of strange produced brothers.
Blinde Fury running carelesse of a guide,
Horror with vpriht haire, And all the others
200 Eternall Darkeneffe doth create or hide.
Griefe 'gainst it felfe that exercises rage,
Sickeneffe that droopes a lither-head down hung,
Feare neuer certaine, felfe-despising age,
Detraction laft with her backe-biting tong,
205 That euen *Manto* custome'd to these Rites
Aftonight stood: onely her vnmou'd Sire
Doth more the ghosts, thē ghosts can mē affright,
That trembling Fiends closely themfelues retire.
When he afresh effectuell charmes infers
210 Graue-bedrid corps out of Deaths sleepe to wake,
Who breaking ope their Marble Sepulchers,
Their liuing formes vnto their foules retake.
So many leaues doth not *Oeta* fhed,
So many Swallowes doth not Winter chace,

<E2v>

So

C A N T O. 3.

- 215 So many Bees are not in *Hybla* fed,
So many billowes wafh not *Neptunes* face,
As there of fundry Nations ghofts appear'd,
Some with difmembred bodies, fome with fcarres
Doubly diffigur'd, and were doubly fear'd:
220 Others vntoucht, flaine by loues ftroke, not wars.
Amongft the reft, *Laiu*/ his head erects (wounds,
With meager lookes , gor'd through with ghaftly
That almoft none him by his forme detects,
While thus he fpeakes, while he in tearef abounds.
225 Oh houfe of *Cadmus* neuer fatisfied
With blood of kindred , once my Country deare,
Whofe firft bad off-fpring by each other dyed,
And ftill that enmity the laft doth beare:
'Tis not heauens anger, but thy wickednes (brings.
230 Thou labour'ft with , no South-wind peftilence
The thirfty earth vnquencht with rain, hurts leffe,
Then th'abhominable action of thy Kings.
'Tis he not yet corrected paricide
My murderer, that for fatiffaction
235 Of a Sires death, a Mother makes his Bride,
A worfer father, though too bad a fon.
'Tis he, to one wombe twife a diuers load,
Curft with prodigious iffue, who, ahlas!
Vpon himfelfe two brothers hath beftow'd:
240 Darker *Ænigmaes*, then ere *Sphinxes* was.
He, He, it is, that now my Scepter fwayes:
Whom I, with all your Citty profecute,

E 3<r>

Onely

C A N T O. 3.

Onely his exile misery allaies,
And till reueng'd I ftill will perfecute.
245 He gone,the painted fpring fhall foone repaire
Your wither'd Arbors with their wonted greene;
No poifonous vapour fhall infect your Aire,
But all fhall be, as it before hath beene.
This done, and the infernall crew difmift,
250 *Creon* departs with fundry thoughts perplext,
Who in no fteady counfell can perfift,
Approuing what's difproued by the next.
Anon the King is infant for the newes,
And after wanton preparation ended,
255 The meffenger would faine himfelfe excufe
From telling it, by telling where it tended.
But he more earneft through denyall, threats
By torment to extort it from his tong,
And mixes with his anger faire entreates,
260 Till both preuail'd: he heares it,and was ftung.
A while with cogitations much diftract,
He paufes on it, and begins to doubt
Some fubtle ftratageme, contriu'd compact,
Which *Creon* forg'd his Crowne to go about.
265 This he augments by his vnwillingneffe
And pollitick deferrings, common trickes
In thofe neare Crownes to tempt Kings eafineffe,
When in the State, themfelues, they'd furer fix.
And fo concludes of this, for he that knowes
270 His innocence, cęn't without preiudice

<E3v>

Of

C A N T O. 3.

Of Reafon, credit fuch reports as thofe:
The Gods perfwade not what's known otherwife.
Polybius that yet liues, and yet enioyes
Meropes kifles, which I neuer tride
275 But as a fonne, all argument deftroies
Either of inceft, or of paricide.
And as for *Laius* death, you Gods can tell
I'me ignorant of 't, my memory
Recordf but one that ere by my hand fell:
280 Hard is my fortune if that one were he.
Yet to be further fatisfied, he hies,
Coniures a true narration from his wife
Of *Laius* fortunes; fhe with teares defcries
Each circumftance both of his death, and life.
285 The perfons age, the manner, time, and place,
How, when, and where, he flaughterd was, agree,
Proue him an homicide vnto his face,
By demonftration, not by fallacy.
Long he debates the matter in his mind,
290 Wherein no refolution can be found;
Kings wreaths about their headf are fafter twin'd
Then flightly may be from their heads vnbound.
He ballances in euen poized fcales
A Kingdomes glories, with a Kingdomes woes:
295 Feare holds when one, loue when the other, failes,
The eye both heauieft, both doth light'ft fuppoze.
Pils wrapt in fugar, honnyed bitterneffe,
The licorifh taft perfwafiuely diffwades,

E 4<r>

Infected

C A N T O. 3.

Infected beauty, gorgeous wretchednesse
300 With tempting frights, emboldning makes afraid,
Ene as the Loadstones Northerne Pole doth hold
Th'attracted Iron, with an amorous kiffe:
But turning thence her wanton lips, behold
Strange loue for stranger hatred changed is.
305 Such is the nature of a Crowne distrest,
View onely outside, and we're captiues tane:
But if we turne our eyes, to see the rest,
It frights more powerfully, then it can detaine.
Faine would the King, our subiect, still command,
310 And would as faine his Country had reliefe.
Thoughts undetermin'd, yet are at a stand,
Whether to keepe with care, or leaue with griefe.
Fixt thus in wauering, loe a gray-hair'd man
Feebled with age and wearinesse, who first
315 Ere *Oedipus* was a *Corinthian*,
Out of *Cithaeron* brought him to be nurs't,
From *Corinths* Confines to *Bæotia* comes,
With newes of craz'd *Polybius* mellow'd fall
Also from forraine rule to fetch him home
320 To order his Sires Crowne, and Funerall.
His message done, still *Oedipus* enquires
About his death: and much distempered,
Was it not I (saies he) that built the fire
That was ordain'd to be his funerall bed?
325 Marke if thou know'st me, prethee, don't I looke
Like to a paricide, forfeited with death?

<E4v>

Say

C A N T O. 3.

Say, was he patient when he life forfooke?
Breath'd he not *Oedipus* when he scarfe had breath?
What difeafe had he?was't not some vnkind thoght
330 Of my mifconfter'd difobedience ?
Which, whilst within to fmother it he fought,
Festerd and burft like to an vlcer thence.
I, I, 'tis fo, the wily Gods beguile
Me in my fortunes, when their dread intent
335 Could haue no way bin brought about, but while
My niceneffe was too wary to prevent :
Il'e try your cunning further:you that made
My power aboue it felfe,ther's yet another,
And a worfe mifchiefe you to me haue layd,
340 See if my abfence can defile my mother.
Never will I her lou'd loath'd prefence grant
To my witcht eyes, I muft I know not whither,
Corinth and *Thebes* liue happy in my want,
Sith without mifchiefe I can liue in neither.
345 Dif-ioynted words end their diftracted found
In as difcordant gefture, giuing note
What troubled dregges did in his braine abound
When on his lookes Frenzy herfelfe did quote.
Compaffion,with patheticke letters prints
350 A feeling feeing in fpectators by:
No flame of womanifh imputation ftints
The helpleffe fluxure of th'affected eye.
Mou'd with the reft,the aged meffenger, (rife,
Learn'd in the grounds from whence his griefe did
<E5r> Shewes

C A N T O. 3.

- 355 Shewes him how farre his woes & feares did erre,
And cleares his doubts with worfe vncertainties.
Feare not (fayes he) *Meropes* wrongfull bed,
She's but a foftring ftranger to thy bloud,
Thefe hands to her firft thee delivered ;
360 But to fupply defects in woman-hood.
Polybius claim'd no intereft of a fonne
In thee ; but of what he beftow'd on thee,
Being his by nothing but adoption :
Thou nothing owd'ft but thanks for charitie.
365 As a miftruftfull patient long difeafd,
His med'cines doubts, millikes his vncoth drinkes,
Wherewith his queazie ftomacke is difpleafd,
His fickneffe better then his potion thinkes :
So fares the King, who in this remedy
370 Collects more dangerous plots to be included,
Feares that this knowledge will worfe ill's defcry,
Wifhes he ftill were, as at firft, deluded.
But fith begun, hee's minded to goe on,
Fall out what will, he all will haue reveal'd,
375 Charging a true and full narration
Of all his fortunes hitherto conceal'd ;
Which thus the old man vtter'd .At what time
The Sunne attended by the heavenly Twinnes,
Smil'd on the wanton Springs enamel'd prime,
380 Look't on cleere *Strymons* fifhes gilded finnes:
When firft the daizies op't their painted lids,
To wait on *Tytan* without flumbring home:

<E5v>

I

C A N T O. 3.

I followed my lascivious wandring kids ,
Whither *Cithæron* fwels her fertile wombe.
385 There of a *Theban* Shepheard I receiu'd
Thy felfe a child,bor'd through the feet with plants,
Almost of life,through cruelty bereau'd.
By what chance done,to tel my knowledge wants,
Your Parents likewife are vnknowne to me :
390 Nor can I tell what of the Swaine became,
And if my fight helps not my memory,
Defcribe I cannot, nor vnfold his name.
Herewith the king,eager to sift out all,
Himfelfe will wretched absolutely make;
395 And *Phorbas* with his fellow fwaines home calles,
Of whom the old man new acquaintance takes.
The rest difmift, of him it is demanded,
What child it was,that he away did giue :
At which he blufhes;and againe commanded,
400 A poore found child, he faies, that could not liue.
That anfwere though will not enough fuffife,
The infants parents, and mifchance are vrg'd
On him, which he with timoroufneffe denies,
And oft himfelfe with proteftations purg'd.
405 Till wrinch't awhile vpon the torturing racke,
His conftancy turnes coward,and bewrayes
Collected fecrets, that no prooffe did lacke:
Thy wife was mother to that childe he fayes.
Eu'n as a Lyon on the *Lybian* plaine,
410 Struck with an Arrow from the hunters Bow,

<E6r>

Shakes

C A N T O. 3.

Shakes the flag'd order of his golden maine,
Doth wrathfull fires from his nostrils blow,
Spits seas of foame from his incensed iawes,
Shoots sparkles from his ruddy eye-balles,rends
415 The earths greene mantle with revengeful clawes;
And gainst himfelfe lastly his fury bends:
So rages *Oedipus* ,and spurnes the ground,
To call vp Furies; lifts his eyes to heaven,
To see if bright *Atræa* there fate crown'd
420 With wreathes of stars about the wandring feve//.
Oft doth he shake his head, as if he meant
Again to fettle his distracted braines,
Many a groane from his grip't heart is sent,
Many a trembling Earth-quake he sustaines.
425 Till (as extremities never long endure)
Sleep binds his senses in a gale of iet :
Yet horror here is not enough secure,
Dreams catch his swimming fancies in a net.
His slumbers broken with illusive fights,
430 Raife sudden starts,mutter out words abrupt,
His haire on tip-toe, heaves with vaine affrights :
Left do minds troubled,left doth interrupt.
Anon he wakes, calls for his horse to flye.
He is pursu'd : 'tis true, but whither wilt?
435 Thou hear'ft about thee thine owne enemy,
And flye thy countrey mayst, but not thy guilt.
Perceiving then how he did erre,he smiles
Eu'n out of griefes Antiperistafie.

<E6v>

Alas

C A N T O. 3.

Alas thou er'ft not,nor thy dreame beguiles,
440 Purfu'd thou art, Crimes the purfuers be.
But Griefe and he growne more familiar,
Strange welcomes,Artfull gratulations ceaft,
Which more in Innes then Manfions vfed are,
Not to a daily,but a feldome gueft.
445 Yet when acquaintance would vn-nurtur'd grow,
And too much on a wearied friend relye,
Vnmannerly,till it be bidden goe,
He lookes vpon it with difliking eye.
And to be rid of cumberfome intrufion,
450 Cuts kindneffe fhorter,and directly chides
His trouble from him;when ingrate confufion
Claimes it as due,and curtefie derides:
And hauing got the vpper hand,infults
Ore his deieted owner,rebelle-like :
455 As when Ambition gathring head, revolts,
And at a crownes forbidden luftre ftrikes.
When as the King fees that fubmit he muft,
Impatience thus in fillables breakes out.
Blaft me fome powerfull vapour into duft,
460 Circle me Furies with your brands about.
Oh let the weight of my impietie
Preffe downe the center,dig it felfe a graue,
Or from two poles crack the warpt Axletree,
That Nature may a fecond labour haue.
465 Earth fhrinke thou vnder me : and thou to whom
Divided Chaos pitchy darkneffe fent,

<E7r>

Let

C A N T O. 3.

Let me inhabit in some vaulted roome
Where no light is through guiltie crannies lent.
You Citizens of *Thebes*, for me distrest, (thers,
470 Tombe me aliue with stones : you childleffe mo-
Striping the milke out from your vnfuckt breasts,
You that haue lost the names of sons & brothers :
You widowed Matrons, loue-deprived Maids,
Pierce me at once with clamors loud and thick :
475 'Tis I whom Gods do hate, and Man vpbraideth,
The very But where Fate her Arrowes stick.
Why doe I stay? why doth not heauen ordaine
Some punishing Iron? or some strangling rope ?
Or why descends not some consuming raine ?
480 Is vengeance layd vp for a further scope?
I haue fin'd all I can; but I mistake,
A punishment cannot be thought on fit :
There's some vnheard-of creature yet to make,
That ioyn'd to cruelty, may haue Art and wit.
485 Me thinkes I feele a Vulture peck my liver,
My intrailes by some Tyger eaten vp,
Or in the muddy bottome of a river,
The nibbling Fry vpon my carcasse sup.
Oh my fad foule, do not looke pale on death,
490 Feare not thy period vnto all thy feares :
Delights but Comma's are to gather breath,
Left we should tire ere the full poynts appeares.
See heere (for now he had vnheath'd his sword)
How easie is it for a man to dye?

<E7v>

One

C A N T O. 3.

495 One little touch, yea oftentimes a word,
Mans great bulk falles, eu'n conquer'd with a flye.
There is but one, and that a narrow way
To enter life ; but if we would go out,
Of many thousand beaten paths we may
500 Take our owne choyce, we need not goe about.
And this is all that man can call his owne,
What else he hath, Nature or Fortune lends:
Many can life deny, but death can none.
Onely to dye, vpon mans will depends.
505 Dye then : fo setting to his naked breast
His weapons poynt, ready thereon to fall ,
Somewhat detaines him to performe the rest ;
Not that he thought death grievous, but too small.
Death is a Felons sentence: and fhall I
510 For parricide and inceft feele no more?
Some men do count it happineffe to dye,
A cure esteeme it rather then a fore.
Yet fay, the violent separation
Of the acquainted body from the foule,
515 Chiefly to fuch, who no relation
Haue but to earth, doth manlineffe controule;
What then? thy Fathers death, thy death requires :
Thy death for inceft muft the God appeafe :
Thy death muft quench thy countries funeral fires:
520 And with one death can't fatiffie all thefe?
Couldft thou dye often , could thy corpes renewd
Change tenants oft, couldft thou be borne againe,

<E8r>

D/

C A N T O. 3.

Dye againe faultleffe , could viciffitude
Of life and death draw out an endleffe paine,
525 Revenge might fomewhat be fuffid; but now
Life is thy greateft torment, death efpying
As more remote,fo with more frightful brow,
Sith thou but once,oh bee thou long in dying,
'Tis now growne vulgar to be Stoicall,
530 Peafants redeeme with eafie deathf their feares:
Who would be manly,or heroicall,
What Cowards thinke intolerable, beares.
Linger my hafty foule, be not bankerout
Meerely in policie,breake not fo foone,
535 Some fighes thou ftill haft left to furnifh out
Thy trade with breath ; hold out till they be done.
A fudden fhower from his eyes doth raine,
Haue I teares yet? faies he:alas vaine wet,
Thou canft not wafh away one fpot,one ftaine
540 That my leaft guilt vpon my fame hath fet.
'Tis not enough to weepe,I oft haue vfd
Teares in my mirth ; let them not looke out heere,
Yet powre it downe,if there be bloud infufd,
And fee the eye drop after it's fhed teare;
545 You fhall weep bloud(mine eyes:) & fets his nailes
Where fight had built her azure monument :
Thus fhed your felues,no moifture elfe prevailes.
Then from their crakt ftrings he his eye-bals rent.
Now,now 'tis finifht : I am cleare,no light
550 Betrayes me to my felfe, I'me living dead,

<E8v>

Exempt

C A N T O. 3.

Exempt from those that liue, by wanting fight;
From those are dead, because vnburied.
So having all the office of his eye
Discharg'd by th'other foure, his guidleffe feet
555 Are vsher'd by his hands, when suddenly
His wife, his mother, both in one him meets.
Son, husband (cries she) would not both, or neither,
My wombes *Primitiæ*, my beds second Lord!
Why turnst thou hence thy hollow circles? whither
560 Those rings without their iewels? hold this sword,
Looke on my bosome with the eyes of thought,
Lend thou the hand, and I will lend the fight:
My death thou mayst, that hast a fathers wrought.
Strike thou but home, thou canst not but strike
565 Why dost thou stay? Am I not guilty too? (right
Then beare not all the punishment alone,
Some of't is mine; on me mine owne bestow:
A heavy burthen parted seemeth none.
Oh I coniure thee by these lampes extinguisht,
570 By all the wrongs and rights that we haue done,
By this wombe lastly that hath not distinguisht
Her loue betwixt a husband, and a sonne.
Ore-come at length, he strikes with one full blow /
Her life it selfe to a long flight betakes:
575 He wanders thence, secur'd in dangers now,
Made leffe already, then fate leffe can make.
Long liu'd he so, till heaven compassion tooke:
Reuenge herselfe saw too much satisfied,

F<1r> Ioue

C A N T O. 3.

580 *Ioue* with vnwonted thunder-bolt him ftrooke
Into a heape of peacefull afhes dried.
His fonnes both killing warres, his daughters fate,
To following bufkind Writers I commit :
My Popiniay is leffon'd not to prate,
Where many words may argue little wit.

FINIS.

{ornament}

<F1v>