The EMBARGO,

or

SKETCHES OF THE TIMES.

SATIRE.

BY A YOUTH OF THIRTEEN.

William Cullen Bryant.

BOSTON:

PRINTED FOR THE PURCHASERS.

1808.
"WHEN private faith and public trust are sold,
And traitors barter liberty for gold,
When fell corruption, dark, and deep, like fate,
Saps the foundation of a sinking state;
Then warmer numbers glow through Satire's page,
And all her smiles are darken'd into rage;
Then keener indignation fires her eye,
Then flash her lightnings and her thunders fly."

*Essay on Satire.*

LOOK where we will, and in whatever land,
Europe's rich foil, or Afric's burning sand;
Where the wild savage hunts his wilder prey,
Or art and science pour their brightest day;
The monster vice appears before our eyes,
In naked impudence or gay disguise.

But quit the lessor game, indignant Mufe,
And to thy country turn thy nobler views.
Ill-fated clime! condemn'd to feel th' extremes
Of a weak ruler's philosophic dreams;
Driv'n headlong on to ruin's fateful brink,
When will thy Country feel, when will the think?

Wake Mufe of Satire, in the cause of trade,
Thou scourge of miscreants who the laws evade!
Dart thy keen glances, knit thy threat'ning brows,
And hurl thine arrows at fair Commerce's foes!

Much injur'd Commerce! 'tis thy falling cause,
Which, from obscurity, a stripling draws;
And were his powers but equal to his zeal,
Thy daftard foes his keen reproach should feel.
Curse of our Nation, source of countless woes,
From whose dark womb unreckon'd misery flows;
Th' embargo rages like a sweeping wind,
Fear low's before, and famine stalks behind.
What words, oh, Mufe! can paint the mournful scene,
The saddened street, the desolated green;
How hungry labourers leave their toil and sigh,
And sorrow droops in each desponding eye!

See the bold sailor from the ocean torn,
His element, sink friendless and forlorn!
His suffering spouse the tear of anguish shed,
His starving children cry in vain for bread!

The farmer, since supporting trade is fled,
Leaves the rude joke, and cheerless hangs his head;
Misfortunes fall, an unremitting shower,
Debts follow debts, on taxes, taxes pour.
See in his stores his hoarded produce rot,
Or sheriff sales his profits bring to naught;
Disheartening cares in thronging myriads flow,
Till down he sinks to poverty and woe!

Oh, ye bright pair, the blessing of mankind!
Whom time has sanction'd, and whom fate has join'd,
COMMERCe, that bears the trident of the main,
And AGRICulture, empress of the plain;
Who, hand in hand, and heav'n-directed, go
Diffusing gladness through the world below;
Whoe'er the wretch, would hurl the flaming brand,
Of dire disunion, palsied be his hand!
Like 'Cromwell damn'd to everlasting fame,'
Let unborn ages execrate his name!
Dark is the scene, yet darker prospects threat,
And ills may follow unexperienc'd yet!
Oh Heaven! defend, as future seasons roll,
This western world from Buonaparte's control,
Preserve our Freedom, and our rights secure,
While truth subsists, and virtue shall endure!

Lo, Austria crouches to the tyrant's stroke,
And Rome's proud states receive his galling yoke;
Kings fall before him, for his sway extends
Where'er his all-subduing course he bends.
See Lusitania's fate, and shall we, say,
Turn not our feet, that tread the self-same way?

MUST we with Belgia, and Helvetia mourn,
In vile subjection, abject, and forlorn?
Our laws laid prostrate, and our freedom fled,
Our independence, boasted valour dead?

We, who seven years erft brav’d Britannia’s power,
By Heaven supported in the gloomiest hour;
For whom our Sages plann’d, our Heroes bled,
Whom WASHINGTON, our pride and glory led;
Till Heaven, propitious did our efforts crown,
With freedom, commerce, plenty, and renown!

When shall this land, some courteous angel say,
Throw off a weak, and erring ruler’s sway?
Rife, injur’d people, vindicate your cause!
And prove your love of Liberty and laws;
Oh wret, sole refuge of a sinking land,
The sceptre from the slave’s imbecile hand!
Oh ne’er consent, obsequious, to advance
The willing vaflal of imperious France!
Correct that suffrage you misus’d before,
And lift your voice above a Congress’ roar!
And thou, the scorn of every patriot name,
Thy country’s ruin, and her council’s shame!
Poor servile thing! derision of the brave!
Who erft from Tarleton fled to Carter’s cave;
Thou, who, when menace’d by perfidious Gaul,
Didst prostrate to her whisker’d minion fall;
And when our cash her empty bags supplied,
Didst meanly strive the foul disgrace to hide;
Go, wretch, resign the presidential chair,
Disclose thy secret measures foul or fair,
Go, search, with curious eye, for horned frogs,
’Mongst the wild waftes of Louisianian bogs;
Or where Ohio rolls his turbid stream,
Dig for huge bones, thy glory and thy theme;
Go scan, Philosopher; thy ***** charms,
And sink supinely in her fable arms;
But quit to abler hands, the helm of state,
Nor image ruin on thy country's fate!

But vain are reason, eloquence and art,
And vain the warm effusions of the heart.
Ev'n while I sing, see, faddism urge her claim,
Mislead with falsehood, and with zeal inflame,
Lift her broad banner, spread her empire wide,
And stalk triumphant, with a fury's stride.
She blows her brazen trump, and at the sound,
A motley throng obedient flock around;
A mist of changing hue o'er all she flings,
And darkness perches on her dragon wings!

As Johnson deep, as Addison refin'd,
And skil'd to pour conviction o'er the mind,
Oh might some Patriot rise! the gloom dispel,
Chase errors mist, and break her magic spell!

But vain the wish, for hark! the murmuring meed,
Of hoarse applause, from yonder shed proceed;
Enter, and view the thronging concourse there,
Intent, with gaping mouth, and stupid stare,
While in the midst their supple leader stands,
Harangues aloud, and flourish's his hands;
To adulation tune his servile throat,
And fues, successful, for each blockhead's vote.
"Oh, were I made a ruler in the land?
Your rights, no man can better understand;
For the dear people, how my bowels yearn!
That such may govern, be your chief concern:
Then federal tyranny shall flee away,
And mild democracy confirm her sway."

The powerful influence of the knaves address,
In capers droll, the foolish dupes confess,
With horrid shouts the affrighted sky is rent,
And high in air their tattered hats are sent.

But should truth shine, distinguisishingly bright,
And lay his falsehoods naked to the sight;
He tries new arts to blind their willing eyes,
Feeds with new flatteries, hammers out new lies;
Exerts his influence, urges all his weight,
To blast the laurels of the good and great;
Till reconfirm'd the fools uphold him still,
Their creed, his dictum, and their law, his will.

Now morning rises, borne on golden wings,
And fresh to toil the waking postboy springs;
Lo, trudging on his rawbon'd steed, he hies,
Dispersing Suns, and Chronicles, and Spys;
Men uninform'd, ir rage for something new,
Howe' er unprincipled, Howe' er untrue,
Suck in with greedy throat, the gilded pill,
Whose fatal sweetness pleases but to kill.
Wide, and more wide, the dire contagion flies,
Till half the town is overwhelm'd with lies.
Hence that delusion, hence that furious zeal,
Which wrong heads cherish, and which he' heads feel.
In vain Italics boasts her genial clime,
Her Rome's proud towers, and palaces sublime;
In vain the hardy Swifs, inured to toil,
Draw scant subsistence from a stubborn soil;
Both doom'd alike, to feel, in evil hour,
The giant grasp of huge despotick power!
Touch not their shores, fair freedom is not there.
But far remote, she breathes Cyprian air;
Yet here her temple totters to its fall,
Our rulers bowing to audacious Gaul!

Oh, let not prating History proclaim
The foul disgrace, the scandal to our name!
Write not the deed, my hand! Oh may it lie,
Plung'd deep, and mantled in obscurity!
Forbid it Heaven! that while true honor reigns,
And ancient valour glows within our veins;
(Our standard justice, and our shield our God,)
We e'er should tremble at a despot's nod!

Oh, may the laurels of unrivall'd fame,
For ever flourish round your honour'd name!
Ye, who unthrall'd by prejudice or power,
Determin'd stood in that eventful hour;
Tore the dire secret from the womb of night,
And bar'd your country's infamy to light!
Go boldly on, the deep laid plot unfold,
Though much is known, yet much remains untold.
But chief to thee our gratitude belongs,
Oh Pickering! who haft scan'd thy country's wrongs,
Whose ardent mind, and keen discerning eye,
Pierc'd the peep veil of Gallic policy;
And in whose well-tim'd labours we admire,
The sage's wisdom and the patriot's fire!

Rise then, Columbians! heed not France's wiles,
Her bullying mandates, her seductive smiles;
Send home Napoleon's slave, and bid him say,
No arts to wrong us, and no threats dismay;
Determined yet to choose whom we will,
Choose our own allies or neutral still.

Ye merchants, arm! the pirate Gaul repeat,
Your prowess shall the naval triumph swell;
Send the marauders shatter'd, whence they came,
And Gallia's cheek suffuse with crimson shame.
But first select, our councils to direct,
One whose true worth entitles to respect;
In whom concentrates all that men admire,
The sage's prudence, and the soldier's fire;
Who scorns ambition, and the venal tribe,
And neither offers, nor receives a bribe;
Who firmly guards his country's every right,
And shines alike in council or in fight.

Then on safe seas the merchant's barque shall fly,
Our waving flag shall kiss the polar sky;
On canvas wings our thunders shall be borne,
Far to the west, or tow'r'd the rising morn;
Then may we dare a haughty tyrant's rage,
And gain the blessings of an unborn age.

'Tis done, behold the cheerful prospects rise!
And splendid scenes the startled eye surprise;
Lo! busy commerce courts the prosperous main;
And peace and plenty glads our shores again!
The industrious swain sees nature smile around.
His fields with fruit, with flocks, his pastures crown'd.

Thus in a fallen tree, from sprouting root,
With sudden growth, a tender shoot grows,
Improves from day to day, lights the eyes
With strength and beauty, stature and size,
Puts on its winter arms, and broader leaves,
And high in air, its branching head upheaves.

Turn now our views to Europe's ravag'd plains,
Where mur'd'rous war, with grim oppression reigns;
There long and loud the storm of battle roars,
With direful portent to our distant shores;
The regal robber, rages uncon'trol'd,
No law restrains him, and no faith can hold;
Before his steps, lo! cow'ring terror flies,
And pi'ed behind him heaps of carnage rife!
With fraud or force, he spreads his iron sway,
And blood and rapine mark his frightful way!

Thus some huge rock of ice, on Greenland's shore,
When bound in frost, the surges cease to roar,
Breaks loosen'd from its base, with mighty sweep,
And thunders horrid o'er the frozen deep!

While thus, all Europe rings with his alarms,
Say, shall we rush, unthinking, to his arms?
let us dauntless all his fury brave,
our fluttering flag, in freedom's gale shall wave,
our guardian Sachem's erie shall shall fly,
and territo lighten from our eagle's eye!

Hear, then I cease, rewarded, if my song,
Shall not a mind though guided wrong,
To pause from his country's state,
And lead his aid to the approaching fate!

THE END.
THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.

Harvard College Widener Library
Cambridge, MA 02138  (617) 495-2413