

TO RICHARD BOYLE, EARL OF BURLINGTON:°

OF THE USE OF RICHES

(1731)

5 'Tis strange, the miser should his cares employ
To gain those riches he can ne'er enjoy:
Is it less strange, the prodigal should waste
His wealth, to purchase what he ne'er can taste?
Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats;
10 Artists must choose his pictures, music, meats:
He buys for Topham,° drawings and designs,
For Pembroke,° statues, dirty gods, and coins;
Rare monkish manuscripts for Hearne° alone,
And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane.°
15 Think we all these are for himself! no more
Than his fine wife, alas! or finer whore.

To . . . Burlington Richard Boyle, Third Earl of Burlington (1695-1753), studied architecture in Italy and upon his return designed buildings himself, commissioned works by others, and published the designs of Inigo Jones and Andrea Palladio. In opposition to the baroque of Wren and later Vanbrugh, he promoted a more severe Roman classicism and spent great sums on public buildings of such design. 7 Topham "A gentleman famous for a judicious collection of drawings" (Pope). 8 Pembroke The Earl of Pembroke had large collections at Wilton House. 9 Hearne an eminent medievalist and editor of early English chronicles. 10 Mead . . . Sloane "Two eminent physicians; the one had an excellent library, the other the finest collection in Europe of natural curiosities; both men of great learning and humanity" (Pope).

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For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?
Only to show, how many tastes he wanted.°
What brought Sir Visto's ill got wealth to waste?
15 Some demon whispered, "Visto! have a taste."
Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool,
And needs no rod° but Ripley° with a rule.°
See! sportive fate, to punish awkward pride,
Bids Bubo° build, and sends him such a guide:
A standing sermon, at each year's expense,
20 That never coxcomb° reached magnificence!°
You° show us, Rome was glorious, not profuse,
And pompous buildings once were things of use.
Yet shall (my Lord) your just, your noble rules
Fill half the land with imitating fools;
25 Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,
And of one beauty many blunders make;
Load some vain church with old theatric state,°
Turn arcs of triumph° to a garden gate;
Reverse your ornaments, and hang them all
30 On some patched dog-hole eked with ends of wall;
Then clap four slices of pilaster° on't,
That, laced with bits of rustic,° makes a front.°
Shall call the winds through long arcades to roar,

14 wanted lacked. 18 rod punishment. 18 Ripley Thomas Ripley, a mediocre but politically favored architect; as Pope put it, "a carpenter, employed by a first Minister who raised him into an architect, without any genius in the art." 18 rule (1) carpenter's rule, as a form of "rod" (2) misapplied principle, as in lines 25-6. 20 Bubo Latin for owl, also a reference to Bubb Doddington who spent £140,000 for a country house designed by Vanbrugh. 22 coxcomb fop, vain fool. 22 magnificence not merely splendor, but according to Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics*, IV, 2), expenditure on public objects rather than oneself; tasteful generosity. 23 Vox Burlington, then publishing the *Antiquities of Rome* by the great Italian architect, Palladio, and other architectural drawings, whose "sheets" (line 27) might be pillaged for decorative details by those without a sense of "use" (line 24). 29 theatric state (1) the inappropriate details of a Roman theatre (2) baroque theatricality based on classical details. 30 arcs of triumph Roman triumphal arches reduced in scale as pompous ornament. 33 pilaster columns attached to the wall. 34 rustic rustication, the sharp definition of massive building stones for an effect of rough strength. 34 front "frontispiece," the formal entrance to a building.

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Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door;^o
 Conscious they act a true Palladian part,
 And, if they starve,^o they starve by rules of art.
 Oft have you hinted to your brother peer,
 A certain truth, which many buy too dear:
 Something there is more needful than expense,
 And something previous even to taste—'tis sense;
 Good sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,
 And though no science, fairly worth the seven:
 A light, which in yourself you must perceive;
 Jones^o and Le Nôtre^o have it not to give.
 To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
 To rear the column, or the arch to bend,
 To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot;^o
 In all, let Nature never be forgot.
 But treat the goddess like a modest fair,
 Nor overdress, nor leave her wholly bare;
 Let not each beauty everywhere be spied,
 Where half the skill is decently^o to hide.
 He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,
 Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.^o
 Consult the genius of the place^o in all;
 That tells the waters or to rise, or fall;
 Or helps the ambitious hill the heavens to scale,
 Or scoops in circling theatres^o the vale;
 Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
 Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;
 Now breaks, or now directs, the intending lines;

36 Venetian door Palladio invented the Venetian window or door, an arched center opening with two smaller rectangular windows on either side. 38 starve because of (1) cost or (2) the great distances English architect of the late Renaissance. 46 Jones the great French designer of formal gardens, including those at Versailles. 49 grot grotto, artificial cave. 54 decently (1) modestly (2) appropriately. 56 bounds Pope was one of the earliest and most influential supporters of the so-called English garden, which sought to avoid formal symmetry and sharp geometrical pattern for the sake of greater naturalness. 57 genius of the place (1) the character of the natural landscape (2) the tutelary deity who traditionally inhabits each place and preserved it from violation. 60 circling theatres the graceful curves of classical amphitheatres.

Paints^o as you plant, and, as you work, designs.
 Still follow sense, of every art the soul,
 Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,
 Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
 Start even from difficulty, strike from chance;
 Nature shall join you; time shall make it grow
 A work to wonder at—perhaps a Stowe.^o
 Without it, proud Versailles! thy glory falls;
 And Nero's terraces^o desert their walls:
 The vast parterres^o a thousand hands shall make,
 Lo! Cobham^o comes, and floats^o them with a lake:
 Or cut wide views through mountains to the plains;^o
 You'll wish your hill or sheltered seat^o again.
 Even in an ornament its place remark,
 Nor in an Hermitage set Dr. Clarke.^o
 Behold Villario's ten years' toil complete;
 His quincunx^o darkens, his espaliers^o meet;
 The wood supports the plain, the parts unite,
 And strength of shade contends with strength of light;
 A waving glow the bloomy beds display,
 Blushing in bright diversities of day,
 With silver-quivering rills meandered o'er—
 Enjoy them, you! Villario can no more;
 Tired of the scene parterres and fountains yield,
 He finds at last he better likes a field.

64 paints (1) colors (2) shapes into picturesque composition, like that of landscape paintings. 70 Stowe the house and gardens of Lord Cobham, of which Pope wrote, "If anything under Paradise could set me beyond all earthly cogitations, Stowe might do it." 71 Versailles formal as opposed to natural gardens. 72 Nero's terraces the elaborate works of the Golden House of the Roman Emperor. 73 parterres formal terraces. 74 Cobham as at Stowe. 74 floats floods. 75 "This was done . . . by a wealthy citizen . . . by which means (merely to overlook a dead plain) he let in the north wind upon his house and parterre, which were before adorned and defended by beautiful woods" (Pope). 76 seat country house. 78 Hermitage . . . Dr. Clarke Samuel Clarke was a liberal theologian and philosopher, rationalistic and somewhat unorthodox; hence the impropriety of a "hermitage." But that is also the name of an ornamental building in Richmond Park, where Queen Caroline placed a bust of her favorite, Dr. Clarke, as well as of Locke, Newton, and others. 80 quincunx a planting of five trees, one in the center of the square formed by the others. 80 espaliers trees fastened to a garden wall.

- Through his young woods how pleased Sabinus strayed,
 Or sat delighted in the thickening shade,
 With annual joy the reddening shoots to greet,
 Or see the stretching branches long to meet!
 His son's fine taste an opener vista loves,
 Foe to the dryads' of his father's groves;
 One boundless green, or flourished carpet^o views,
 With all the mournful family of yews;^o
 The thriving plants ignoble broomsticks made,
 Now sweep those alleys they were born to shade.
 At Timon's Villa let us pass a day,
 Where all cry out, "What sums are thrown away!"
 So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air,
 Soft and agreeable come never there.
 Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a draught
 As brings all Brobdingnag^o before your thought.
 To compass this, his building is a town,
 His pond an ocean, his parterre a down;
 Who but must laugh, the master when he sees,
 A puny insect, shivering at a breeze!
 Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!
 The whole, a labored quarry above ground.
 Two cupids squirt before: a lake behind
 Improves the keenness of the northern wind.^o
 His gardens next your admiration call,
 On every side you look, behold the wall!
 No pleasing intricacies intervene,
 No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
 Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
 And half the platform just reflects the other.
 The suffering eye inverted Nature sees,
 Trees cut to statues, statues thick as trees;^o

94 dryads tree nymphs. 95 flourished carpet a terrace elaborated in scrolled beds as opposed to the opposite vice, the nakedness of the "boundless green." 96 family of yews the typical planting of cemetries, here forming "pyramids of dark green continually repeated, not unlike a funeral procession" (Pope). 104 Brobdingnag the land of giants in the second voyage of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. 112 of trimming trees or hedges into sculptural shapes and to the common overuse of statuary in gardens.

- With here a fountain, never to be played;
 And there a summerhouse, that knows no shade;
 Here Amphitrite^o sails through myrtle bowers;
 There gladiators fight, or die in flowers;
 Unwatered see the drooping sea-horse mourn,
 And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty urn.^o
 My Lord advances with majestic mien,
 Smit with the mighty pleasure, to be seen:
 But soft—by regular approach—not yet—
 First through the length of yon hot terrace sweat;
 And when up ten steep slopes you've dragged your
 thighs,
 Just at his study door he'll bless your eyes.
 His study! with what authors is it stored?
 In books, not authors, curious is my Lord;
 To all their dated backs^o he turns you round:
 These Aldus^o printed, those Du Sueil^o has bound.
 Lo, some are vellum, and the rest as good
 For all his Lordship knows, but they are wood.
 For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look,
 These shelves admit not any modern book.
 And now the chapel's silver bell you hear,
 That summons you to all the pride of prayer:
 Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,
 Make the soul dance upon a jig to Heaven.
 On painted ceilings you devoutly stare,
 Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,^o
 On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
 And bring all Paradise before your eye.
 To rest, the cushion and soft dean invite,^o

123 Amphitrite, a sea nymph, wife of Poseidon and mother of Triton. 126 Nilus' . . . urn For the river-god's urn, see Windsor Forest, line 332 and note. 135 dated backs early editions with dates stamped in gold on the binding: "many delight chiefly in the elegance of the print or the binding; some have carried it so far as to cause the upper shelves to be filled with painted books of wood" (Pope). 136 Aldus the great Venetian printer of the Renaissance. 136 Du Sueil Parisian binder of early 18th century. 146 Verrio or Laguerre fashionable court painters, here shown in a baroque vein. 149 Pope cites an actual Dean of Peterborough Cathedral who referred in a sermon to "a place which he did not think fit to name in that courtly audience."

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150 Who never mentions Hell to ears polite.
But hark! the chiming clocks to dinner call;
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall;
The rich buffet well-colored serpents grace,
And gaping tritons° spew to wash your face.
155 Is this a dinner? this a genial room?
No, 'tis a temple, and a hecatomb.
A solemn sacrifice, performed in state,
You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.
160 So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear
Sancho's dread Doctor and his wand° were there.
Between each act the trembling salvers ring,
From soup to sweet wine, and God bless the King.
In plenty starving, tantalized in state,
And complaisantly helped to all I hate,
165 Treated, caressed, and tired, I take my leave,
Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;
I curse such lavish cost, and little skill,
And swear no day was ever passed so ill.
170 Yet hence the poor are clothed, the hungry fed;
Health to himself, and to his infants bread
The laborer bears: what his hard heart denies,
His charitable vanity supplies.
Another age shall see the golden ear°
175 Embrown the slope, and nod on the paterre,
And laughing Ceres° reassume° the land.
Who then shall grace, or who improve the soil?

153-4 serpents . . . tritons "Taxes the incongruity of ornaments . . . where an open mouth ejects the water into a fountain, or where the shocking images of serpents, etc., are introduced in grottos or fountains" (Pope). 154 tritons sea deities, with a human form in but-slaughter of a hundred oxen. 160 Sancho's . . . wand Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Pt. II, Ch. 47, where Sancho's doctor forbids him all the food he ravenously contemplates and causes each dish to be whisked away as he touches it with a wand. 162 that is, from the beginning to the end of the meal, ending with a toast in port. 169-72 Cf. *Essay on Man*, II, 230-7, and *To a Lady*, lines 149-50. 173 ear fully bounteous (2) scornful of Timon's unnatural art. 176 reassume regain possession, as a monarch reassumes a kingdom.

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171 Who plants like Bathurst,° or who builds like Boyle.
Tis use alone that sanctifies expense.
And splendor borrows all her rays from sense.
180 His father's acres who enjoys in peace,
Or makes his neighbors glad, if he increase:
Whose cheerful tenants bless their yearly toil,
Yet to their Lord owe more than to the soil;
185 Whose ample lawns are not ashamed to feed
The milky heifer and deserving steed;
Whose rising forests, not for pride or show,
But future buildings, future navies, grow:
190 Let his plantations stretch from down to down,
First shade a country, and then raise a town.
You too proceed! make falling arts your care,
Erect new wonders, and the old repair;
Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,
And be whate'er Vitruvius° was before:
195 Till kings call forth the ideas of your mind,
Proud to accomplish what such hands designed,
Bid harbors open, public ways extend,
Bid temples,° worthier of the God, ascend;
Bid the broad arch° the dangerous flood contain,
The mole projected break the roaring main;
200 Back to his bounds their subject sea command,
And roll obedient rivers through the land:
These honors, peace to happy Britain brings,
These are imperial works, and worthy kings.

178 Bathurst a friend of Pope's and an enthusiastic landscape gardener. 178 Boyle Burlington. 194 Vitruvius the Roman author of the most influential ancient work on architecture. 198 temples Some of the new churches had been built on marshy ground and sank dangerously. 199 broad arch A proposal to build Westminster Bridge had been rejected, but it was later undertaken with Burlington as a commissioner.