A PINDARIQUE ODE,
Humbly Offer'd to the QUEEN,
ON THE Victorious Progress of Her MAJESTY's Arms, under the Conduct of the Duke of MARLBOROUGH.

To which is prefix'd,
A DISCOURSE on the PINDARIQUE ODE.

By Mr. CONGREVE.

—Operosa parvus
Tuque dum procedis, Io triumphhe
Non semel dicemus, Io triumphhe
Civitas omnis; dabimusQ, Divis
Thura benignis. 1bid.

LONDON:
Printed for Jacob Tonson, within Grays-Inn Gate next Grays-Inn Lane. 1706.
A DISCOURSE ON THE PINDARIQUE ODE.

THE following Ode is an Attempt towards restoring the Regularity of the Ancient Lyrick Poetry, which seems to be altogether forgotten or unknown by our English Writers.

There is nothing more frequent among us, than a sort of Poems intituled Pindarique Odes; pretending to be written in imitation of the Manner and Stile of Pindar, and yet I do not know that there is to this Day extant in our Language, one Ode contriv’d after his Model. What Idea can an English Reader have of Pindar, (to whose Mouth, when a Child, the Bees (a) brought their Honey, in Omen of the future Sweetness and Melody of his Songs) when he shall see such rumbling and grating Papers of Verses, pretending to be Copies of his Works?

The Character of these late Pindariques, is a Bundle of rambling incoherent Thoughts, express’d in a like parcel of irregular Stanza’s, which also consist of such another Complication of disproportion’d, uncertain and perplex’d Verses and Rhimes. And I appeal to any Reader, if this is not the Condition in which these Titular Odes appear.

On the contrary, there is nothing more regular than the Odes of Pindar, both as to the exact Observation of the Measures and Numbers of his Stanza’s and Verses, and the perpetual Coherence of his Thoughts. For tho’ his Digressions are frequent, and his Transitions sudden, yet is there ever some secret Connexion, which tho’ not always appearing to the Eye, never fails to communicate it self to the Understanding of the Reader.

The Liberty which he took in his Numbers, and which has been so misunder-
stood and misapply’d by his pretended Imitators, was only in varying the Stanza’s in different Odes; but in each particular Ode they are ever correspondent one to another in their Turns, and according to the Order of the Ode.

All the Odes of Pindar are Songs of Triumph, Victory or Success in the Gre-
cian Games: They were sung by a Chorus, and adapted to the Lyre, and some-

(a) Paufan. Boeotic.
A Discourse on the
times to the Lyre and (b) Pipe; they consisted of the Three Stanza’s, the
first was call’d the Strophe, from the Version or circular Motion of the
Singers in that Stanza from the Right Hand to the Left. (c) The second Stanza
was call’d the Antistrophé, from the Contraversion of the Chorus; the Singers,
in performing that, turning from the Left Hand to the Right, contrary always
to their Motion in the Strophe. The third Stanza was call’d the Epode,
(it may be as being the After-song) which they sung in the middle, neither
turning to one Hand nor the other.

What the Origin was of these different Motions and Stations in singing their
Odes, is not our present business to enquire. Some have thought that by
the Contrariety of the Strophe and Antistrophé, they intended to represent the
Contrarotation of the Primum Mobile, in respect of the Secunda Mobilia; and
that by their standing still at the Epode, they meant to signify the Stability
of the Earth. (d) Others ascribe the Institution to Theseus, who thereby ex-
pressed the Windings and Turnings of the Labyrinth in celebrating his Return
from thence.

The Method observ’d in the Composition of these Odes, was therefore as fol-
lows. The Poet having made choice of a certain Number of Verses to con-
stitute his Strophe or first Stanza, was oblig’d to observe the same in his An-
tistrophé, or second Stanza; and which accordingly perpetually agreed
whenever repeated, both in number of Verses and quantity of Feet: He was then
again at liberty, to make a new choice for his third Stanza, or Epode; where,
accordingly, he diversify’d his Numbers as his Ear or Fancy led him; com-
posing that Stanza of more or fewer Verses than the former, and those Verses of
different Measures and Quantities, for the greater Variety of Harmony, and
Entertainment of the Ear.

But then this Epode being thus form’d, he was strictly oblig’d to the same
(c) Measure, as often as he should repeat it in the order of his Ode, so that
every Epode in the same Ode is eternally the same in Measure and Quantity, in
respect to itself; as is also every Strophe and Antistrophé, in respect to each other.

The Lyric Poet Stesichorus (whom (f) Longinus reckons amongst the
ablest Imitators of Homer, and of whom (g) Quintilian says, that if he could
have kept within bounds, he would have been nearest of any Body, in Merit,
to Homer) was, if not the Inventer of this Order in the Ode, yet so skilful an
Observer of it in his Compositions, that the Three Stanza’s of Stesichorus became a
common Proverb to express a thing universally known, (h) ne tria quidem
Stesichori nobile; so that when any one had a mind to reproach another with
excessive

(b) Pind. Olym. 10. (c) Or from the Left to the Right, for the Scholiasts differ in that, as
may be seen in Pind. Schol. Introd. ad Olym. And Alex. ab Alexandro, L. 4. C. 17, speaking
of the Ceremony of the Chorus, says, Corfum anspecti a Leva dexterum — max a dextra La-
verfam. But the Learned Schmidin takes part with the first Opinion, as more confident with the
Notions of the Ancients concerning the Motions of the Heavenly Spheres, and agreeable to Homer
(g) Quint. Inst. l. 10. c. 1. (h) της τα τρεις Στανσας τιμοῦτεν de vehementer indebilo & im-
perio dici felicem. Erasmi. Adag.
Pindarique O D E.

Excessive Ignorance, he could not do it more effectually than by telling him, he did not so much as know the Three Stanza's of Stesichorus; that is, did not know that an Ode ought to consist of a Strophe, an Antistrophe, and an Epode. If this was such a mark of Ignorance among them, I am sure we have been pretty long liable to the same Reproof; I mean, in respect of our Imitations of the Odes of Pindar.

My Intention is not to make a long Preface to a short Ode, nor to enter upon a Discourse of Lyric Poetry in general: But this much I thought proper to say, for the Information of those Readers whose Course of Study has not led 'em into such Enquiries.

I hope I shall not be so misunderstood, as to have it thought that I pretend to give an exact Copy of Pindar in this ensuing Ode; or that I look upon it as a Pattern for his Imitators for the future: Far from such Thoughts, I have only given an Instance of what is practicable, and am sensible that I am as distant from the Force and Elevation of Pindar, as others have hitherto been from the Harmony and Regularity of his Numbers.

Again, we having no Chorus to sing our Odes, the Titles, as well as Use of Strophe, Antistrophe, and Epode, are Obsolete and Impertinent: And certainly there may be very good English Odes, without the Distinction of Greek Appellations to their Stanza's. That I have mention'd 'em here, and observ'd the Order of 'em in the ensuing Ode, is therefore only the more intelligibly to explain the extraordinary Regularity of the Composition of those Odes, which have been represented to us hitherto, as the most confus'd Structures in Nature.

However, tho' there be no necessity that our Triumphal Odes should consist of the Three afore-mention'd Stanza's; yet if the Reader can observe that the great Variation of the Numbers in the Third Stanza (call it Epode, or what you please) has a pleasing Effect in the Ode, and makes him return to the First and Second Stanza's, with more Appetite, than he could do if always cloak'd with the same Quantities and Measures, I cannot see why some Use may not be made of Pindar's Example, to the great Improvement of the English Ode. There is certainly a Pleasure in beholding any Thing that has Art and Difficulty in the Contrivance; especially, if it appears so carefully executed, that the Difficulty does not show it self, 'till it is sought for; and that the seeming Easiness of the Work, first sets us upon the Enquiry. Nothing can be call'd Beautiful without Proportion. When Symmetry and Harmony are wanting, neither the Eye nor the Ear can be pleas'd. Therefore certainly Poetry, which includes Painting and Music, should not be defluft of 'em; and of all Poetry, especially the Ode, whose End and Essence is Harmony.

Mr. Cowley, in his Preface to his Pindarique Odes, speaking of the Music of Numbers, says, which sometimes (especially in Songs and Odes) almost without any thing else makes an Excellent Poet.

Having mention'd Mr. Cowley, it may very well be expected, that something should be said of him, at a time when the Imitation of Pindar is the Theme
A Discourse on the Pindarique O D E.

Theme of our Discourse. But there is that great Deference due to the Memory, great Parts, and Learning of that Gentleman, that I think nothing should be objected to the Latitude he has taken in his Pindarique Odes. The Beauty of his Verses, are an Attonement for the Irregularity of his Stanza's; and tho' he did not imitate Pindar in the Strictness of his Numbers, he has very often happily copy'd him in the Force of his Figures, and Sublimity of his Stile and Sentiments.

Yet I must beg leave to add, that I believe those irregular Odes of Mr. Cowley, may have been the principal, tho' innocent Occasion of so many deformed Poems since, which instead of being true Pictures of Pindar, have (to use the Italian Painter's Term) been only Caricatura's of him, Resemblances that for the most part have been either Horrid or Ridiculous.

For my own part I frankly own my Error, in having heretofore mis-call'd a few irregular Stanza's a Pindarique Ode; and possibly, if others, who have been under the same Mistake, would ingenuously confess the Truth, they might own, that never having consulted Pindar himself, they took all his Irregularity upon trust; and finding their Account in the great Ease with which they could produce Odes, without being oblig'd either to Measure or Design, remain'd satisfy'd; and it may be were not altogether unwilling to neglect being undeceive'd.

Tho' there be little (if any thing) left of Orpheus but his Name, yet if * Paulanias was well inform'd, we may be assur'd that Brevity was a Beauty which he most industriously labour'd to preserve in his Hymns, notwithstanding, as the same Author reports, that they were but few in Number.

The Shortness of the following Ode will, I hope, atone for the Length of the Preface, and in some measure for the Defects which may be found in it. It consists of the same Number of Stanza's with that beautiful Ode of Pindar, which is the fift of his Pythicks; and tho' I was unable to imitate him in any other Beauty, I resolve'd to endeavour to Copy his Brevity, and take the Advantage of a Remark he has made in the last Strophe of the same Ode, which take in the Paraphrase of Sudorius.

Qui multa paucis stringere Commode
Novere, morfuli his facile invidos
Spernunt, & auris mensq; pura
Omne supervacuum rejectat.

O D E.

* Baotic. pag. 588.
O D E.

I.

Daughter of Memory, Immortal Muse,
Calliope; what Poet wilt thou chuse
Of ANNA's Name to Sing?
To whom wilt thou thy Fire impart,
Thy Lyre, thy Voice, and tuneful Art;
Whom raise Sublime on thy Ætherial Wing,
And Consecrate with Dews of thy Cæstalian Spring?
H.

Without thy Aid, the most aspiring Mind
Must flag beneath, to narrow Flights confin’d,
Striving to rise in vain:
Nor e’er can hope with equal Lays
To celebrate bright Virtue’s Praise.
Thy Aid obtain’d, even I, the humblest Swain,
May climb Pierian Heights, and quit the lowly Plain.

III.

High in the Starry Orb is hung,
And next Alcides Guardian Arm,
That Harp to which thy Orpheus Sung,
Who Woods, and Rocks, and Winds cou’d Charm.

† Orpheus was said to be the Son of the Muse Calliope. The Poetical Fiction of the Harp of Orpheus is this. Mercury, the same Day that he was born of Maja in Cyllene, a Mountain of Arcadia, found a living Tortoise, which he carried home with him to his Cradle, and immediately compos’d a Harp of the Shell. A little after he stole the Oxen of Apollo; this caus’d some Difference between the Deities, but the Matter being referr’d to Jupiter, he order’d Mercury to return the Oxen to the right Owner; on this there follow’d not only a Reconciliation but Friendship, and Apollo expressing an extream Pleasure at the Invention of the Harp, Mercury bestow’d it on him as a Pledge of his future Friendship. Of this Homer, in his Hymn to Mercury, speaks at large. Afterwards Apollo inventing another Instrument call’d the Cithara, gave the Lyra to Orpheus. The Mufcs, after the Death of Orpheus, Translated his Harp into Heav’n, where it became a Constellation, and is plac’d between the Knee and Left Arm of Engonasis or Hercules.
[ 3 ]

That Harp which on *Cyllenes* shady Hill,
When first the Vocal Shell was found,
With more than Mortal Skill
Inventor *Hermes* taught to sound.

*Hermes* on bright *Latona's Son*,
By sweet Persuasion won,
The wondrous Work bestow'd;
*Latona's Son*, to thine

Indulgent, gave the Gift Divine:
A God the Gift, a God th' Invention show'd.

I.

To that high sounding Lyre I tune my Strains;
A lower Note his Lofty Song disdains

Who Sings of *ANNA's Name*.
The Lyre is struck! the Sounds I hear!

O Muse, propitious to my Pray'r!
O well known Sounds! O Melody, the fame

That kindled *Mantuan Fire*, and rais'd *Meonian Flame*!

II. Nor
II.

Nor are these Sounds to British Bard's unknown,
Or sparingly reveal'd to one alone:
Witness sweet Spencer's Lays,
And witness that Immortal Song,
As Spencer sweet, as Milton strong.
Which humble Boys o'er Tiber's Flood could raise,
And mighty William Sing, with well-proportion'd Praise.

III.

Rise, Fair Augusta, lift thy Head;
With Golden Towers thy Front adorn;
Come forth, as comes from Titbon's Bed
With cheerful Ray the ruddy Morn.
Thy lovely Form, and fresh reviving State,
In Crystal Flood of Thames survey;
Then bless thy better Fate,
Bless ANNA's most Auspicious Sway.
While distant Realms and neigh'ring Lands,
Arm'd Troops and hostile Bands
On ev'ry Side molest,
Thy
Thy happier Clime is Free,
Fair Capital of Liberty!
And Plenty knows, and Days of Halcyon Rest.

I.

As Britain's Isle, when old vex'd Ocean roars,
Unshaken fees against her Silver Shoars
   His foaming Billows beat;
So Britain's Queen, amidst the Jars
And Tumults of a World in Wars,
Fix'd on the Base of Her well-founded State,
Serene and safe looks down, nor feels the Shocks of Fate.

II.

But Greatest Souls, tho' blest with sweet Repose,
Are soonest touch'd with Sense of others Woes.
   Thus Anna's mighty Mind,
   To Mercy and soft Pity prone,
And mov'd with Sorrows not her own,
Has all her Peace and downy Rest resign'd,
To wake for Common Good, and succour Human-kind.

C Fly
Fly, Tyranny, no more be known
Within Europa's blissful Bound;
Far as th' unhabitable Zone
Fly ev'ry hospitable Ground.
To horrid + Zembla's Frozen Realms repair;
There with the baleful Beldam, Night,
Unpeopled Empire share,
And rob those Lands of Legal Right.
For now is come the promis'd Hour,
When Justice shall have Pow'r;
Justice to Earth restor'd!
Again Aethrea Reigns!
ANNA Her equal Scale maintains,
And Marlboro wields Her sure deciding Sword.

I.

Now could'st thou soar, my Muse, to Sing the Man
In Heights sublime; as when the Mantuan Swan

† Nova Zembla, a miserable Region in the Frigid Zone, where there is neither
Tree nor Herb, but perpetual Frost and Snow; and where, for one half of the Year,
it is continual Night.
Her tow'ring Pinions spread;
Thou shouldst of Marlbro Sing, whose Hand
Unerring from his Queen's Command,
Far as the Seven-mouth'd Ister's secret Head,
To save th' Imperial State, Her hardy Britons led.

II.

Nor there thy Song should end; tho' all the Nine
Might well their Harps and Heav'ly Voices join
To Sing that Glorious Day,
When Bold Bavaria fled the Field,
And Veteran Gauls unus'd to yield,
On Blenheim's Plain imploring Mercy lay;
And Spoils and Trophies won, perplex'd the Victors way.

III. But

† Lucan in his Third Book, V. 202. gives it the indefinite Epithete of Multifidi Istri. But Ovid, Trist. 2. Solus ad ingriessus mililes Septemplicis Istri. And Sidonius Apollinaris gives it the same Epithete, on the like Occasion. with this Ode, when in his Panegyric to Majorianus Cæsar, he tells him,

Illicet aggredieris, quod nullus tempore nostro
Auguftus potuit, rigidum Septemplicis Istri
Agmen in arma rapit——

The Ancient Geographers differ'd very much in their Account of the Rise of this River; so that on a double account the same Epithets may be appropriated to it as are usual to the Nile.
III.

But cou’d thy Voice of Blenheim Sing,
And with Success that Song pursue;
What Art cou’d Aid thy weary Wing
To keep the Victor still in view?
For as the Sun ne’er stops his radiant Flight,
Nor Sets, but with impartial Ray
To all who want his Light
Alternately transfers the Day:
So in the Glorious Round of Fame,
Great Marlbró, still the fame,
Incessant runs his Course;
To Climes remote, and near,
His Conq’ring Arms by turns appear,
And Universal is his Aid and Force.

I.

Attempt not to proceed, unwary Mufe,
For O! what Notes, what Numbers could’st thou chuse,

Tho’
[9]

Tho' in all Numbers skill'd;
To Sing the Hero's matchless Deed,
Which + Belgia Sav'd, and Brabant Free'd;
To Sing Ramillia's Day! to which must yield
* Canne's Illustrious Fight, and Fam'd Pharzalia's Field.

II.

In the short Course of a Diurnal Sun,
Behold the Work of many Ages done!

What Verse such Worth can Raise?

Luftre and Life, the Poet's Art

To middle Vertue may impart;

But Deeds sublime, exalted high like These,
Transcend his utmost Flight; and mock his distant Praise.

D III. Still

† Belgia need not only be strictly understood of the Seven Provinces, call'd Belgium Foederatum, by the Distinction made in the Time of Phil. 2. but may also be interpreted with respect to that which was anciently call'd Belgium, comprehending the lower Germany, in regard of the great Consequences attending such a Victory.

* Canne, as inconsiderable a Village as Blenheim, 'till in like manner made Memorable and Illustrious by the great and entire Victory which Hannibal obtain'd there over the Romans.

‡ Pharzalia, famous for the Overthrow of Pompey by Julius Caesar, a wonderful Victory, but may justly be said to yield to that of Ramillies: For the Design and End of the first was to enslave Mankind, the manifold Aim and Event of the latter has been to set 'em at Liberty.
III.

Still would the willing Muse aspire,
With Transport still her Strains prolong;
But Fear unstrings the trembling Lyre,
And Admiration stops her Song.

Go on, Great Chief, in ANNA's Cause proceed;
Nor sheath the Terrors of thy Sword,
'Till Europe thou hast freed,
And Universal Peace restor'd.

This mighty Work when thou shalt End,
Equal Rewards attend;
Of Value far above
Thy Trophies and thy Spoils;
Rewards even Worthy of thy Toils,
Thy QUEEN's just Favour, and thy COUNTRY's Love.

FINIS.