



## LIFE OF VINCENT BOURNE.

BY THE REV. J. MITFORD.

**I**T has been the general complaint of the biographers of literary men, that the lives which they have to examine and record possess few circumstances that can sufficiently diversify their narrative, so as to make it engage the attention of the public mind. Of Vincent Bourne, however, it may be said, not that what is known of him is devoid of interest, for that is far from being the case, but that scarcely any remembrance of his life has been preserved. “*Qui bene latuit, bene vixit,*” seems to have been the motto of his easy and unambitious mind: and his scholars, eager perhaps to lose sight of the tutor, subsequently ceased to recollect the poet and the man. We might almost say, that we are better acquainted with the lives of Shakespeare and Spenser, than with that of a poet who lived in times so near to our own. A few meagre dates, which only mark some unimportant æras of his life, have alone been handed down to us, without any accompanying facts; as if the

enumeration of the milestones on a road were to form a satisfactory description of the features and scenery of a country. Subsequently, some casual and familiar touches, which dropped from the pen of Cowper, added to the resemblance; but the likeness, though pleasantly, was hastily and slightly sketched, and the portrait remains still unfinished. The present Editor has been perhaps a little more successful than those who have preceded him, in the materials he has collected; but they are so few, as to make him confess himself disappointed as to the success of his research. The late Rev. Mr. Nares, a diligent and accomplished scholar, was the only person who appeared publicly to evince much interest in the poetry of Vincent Bourne; but even he was too late in his inquiries to collect any information from the contemporaries of the Poet; and all other sources seem to have been examined in vain. We will now lay before our readers what we possess; and accompany, though on less familiar terms than we could have wished, the Poet in that path of life which he preferred and loved; the

*Secretum iter, et fallentis semita vitæ.*

The very scanty information which we possess of Vincent Bourne's parentage and birth-place is derived from the following entry in the book of Trinity College, Cambridge: "Maii 27,

1714. Vincentius Bourne, annos natus 19, filius Andreæ Bourne, Westmonasteriensis; electus in hoc Collegio, e scholâ Reg: Westmonasteriensis sub Preceptore, Doctore Freind.

Mr<sup>o</sup>. Baker, Tut<sup>e</sup>.

We find from the list of King's scholars, that he was admitted on the foundation at Westminster in the year 1710, at the age of fifteen; and from Mr. Welsh's list of Westminster scholars, we have the following Elections, in the year 1714, for the Universities:

## TO OXFORD.

John Wigan.\*  
William Davies.  
Salisbury Cade.  
George Toblett.  
David Gregory.†

## TO CAMBRIDGE.

Richard Cuthbert.  
Thomas Fitzgerald.‡  
*Vincent Bourne.*§  
Henry Geast.

\* John Wigan, a physician, editor of Aretæus, and of Dr. Freind's Works, died in Jamaica, 1739. (There are several copies of verses by J. and G. Wigan in the *Carmina Quadragesimalia*.) Ed.

† David Gregory, professor of modern history and languages, Canon of Christ Church, 1736, Canon of Carlisle, 1736, Dean 1756, Master of Sherborne Hospital, 1759, son-in-law to the late Duke of Kent; died 1767.

‡ T. Fitzgerald, usher of Westminster School, editor of Martial and Terence, used in Westminster School, and author of a volume of poems.

§ Vincent Bourne, usher of Westminster School, and an elegant Latin Poet.

Vincent Bourne succeeded to a fellowship of Trinity College in due time, took the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1717, and that of Master of Arts in 1721. In the same year he edited a collection of *Carmina Comitalia*, (*Triplos Verses*) in which some of his own Poems appeared at the end, under the title of "*Miscellanea.*" He afterwards became one of the ushers of Westminster School, in which situation he remained till the time of his death. In 1734, he printed a volume of his Poems, which he dedicated to the Duke of Newcastle;\* this edition was reprinted in 1735. A new edition appeared in 1743, with an appendix of a hundred and twelve pages. This was the last edition superintended by the Author, who died on the 2nd December, 1747. In his Will, he describes himself of St. Margaret's, Westminster; desires to be buried in privacy in some neighbouring church of England; and gives all his worldly goods to Lucia, his wife. His will is dated 52th December, 1727. In 1745 he makes a codicil, wherein he says that he then had two children by Lucia his wife, Thomas and Lucia, and he speaks of a farm near Bungay, in Suf-

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\* A contemporary notice, in the London Magazine, states that "Mr. Vincent Bourne, *one of the assistants of Westminster School*, was appointed to succeed Thomas Ward, esq. deceased, as housekeeper to the House of Commons, as also to be deputy Serjeant-at-arms to the said House." The appointment took place in Nov. 1734.

folk, and of a house which he had built in Westminster. In 1747, a second codicil is made, wherein he says, that his son was a second Lieutenant in the Marines, and going to India in the Government Service, to whom he gives the farm at his mother's decease: the widow proved the will the 22nd December, 1747.\* By declining to enter into holy orders, Vincent Bourne closed up the road which would have led to preferment and worldly advantage. It has been said that the Duke of Newcastle offered him very valuable ecclesiastical preferments.† It appears, however, from a passage in the following letter to his wife, written a few weeks before his death, that most conscientious motives, arising from the importance of the charge, and a mistrust of his own sufficiency, were the honourable causes of the resolution which he had formed:—

“ Being warned by the hand of God that my dissolution draweth nigh, I thank the Divine Goodness for giving me this timely notice, and not cutting me off suddenly in the midst of my sins: that he has granted me leisure, and a due

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\* For the above information, I am indebted to the very obliging researches of Charles George Young, Esq. York Herald.

† See Ed. 1826, p. xvi. By the late noble Duke, I presume that the Duke of Newcastle is intended, who gave all the preferments to *Freind*, viz: a stall at Westminster, and a canonry of Christ Church. Well might he call the Duke, in his Ode, “*Suo Patrono Amplissimo.*”—See *Poemata Anglorum*, p. 219.

sense of my follies and corruptions, and thereby enabled me to make my reconciliation with Him before that I am no more seen. I esteem it as a great instance of His mercy, that he has not afflicted me with any delirium or disease that would have deprived me of my memory or senses, but has visited me with a distemper, which, however otherwise grievous, has given me time and opportunity to look back into my past life, and with seriousness and attention to consider my latter end.

“ Upon recollection, I find the offences of my youth, and the transgressions of my riper years are so many, that, were not the mercy of God as infinite as His justice, I might despair of pardon. But, through the merits and intercession of a crucified Saviour, I humbly hope forgiveness. As the Almighty has himself declared that he delighteth not in the death of a sinner, I beseech Him that His extensive compassion may reach even unto me; and in dutiful confidence thereof, I submit myself to His holy will, with resignation, constancy, and cheerfulness.

“ For that part of my behaviour that relates to my fellow-creature, man; if that should happen to be less exceptionable; if I have not willingly and deliberately injured my neighbour by calumny, oppression, or extortion, not unto me, but unto God, be the praise. I hope it may in some measure compensate for my many

other misdeeds, and so far procure the favor and candour of all those who are so sensible of their own failings, as to overlook and forget mine.

“There is one thing which I have often heard myself charged with; and that is, my neglect of entering into holy orders, and a due preparation for that sacred office. Though I think myself in strictness answerable to none but God and my own conscience, yet for the satisfaction of the person that is dearest to me, I own and declare that the importance of so great a charge, joined with a mistrust of my own sufficiency, made me fearful of undertaking it: if I have not in that capacity assisted in the salvation of souls, I have not been the means of losing any; if I have not brought reputation to the function by any merit of mine, I have the comfort of this reflection, I have given no scandal to it by my meanness and unworthiness. It has been my sincere desire, though not my happiness, to be as useful in my little sphere of life as possible; my own inclinations would have led me to a more likely way of being serviceable, if I might have pursued them: however, as the method of education I have been brought up in was, I am satisfied, very kindly intended, I have nothing to find fault with, but a wrong choice, and the not knowing those disabilities I have since been truly conscious of: those difficulties I have endeavoured to get over, but found them insuperable. It has been the knowledge of these

discouragements that has given me the greatest uneasiness I have ever met with : that has been the chief subject of my sleeping as well as waking thoughts, a fear of reproach and contempt. To the question, what I now am?—I answer, an unhappy composition of weakness, folly, and sin ; but what I shall be hereafter, is that which startles and perplexes me. Here, I am lost in amazement and dread ! The most pleasing and the dearest engagements of this world, as having nothing in them solid, sincere, or lasting, I could readily forego ; but the looking-for of that unknown state into which I am to enter, when I put off this body of frailty and corruption, is confounding and terrible. The prospect into futurity is all darkness and uncertainty : nor can the nearest relative or friend who is gone before me repass the gulf that is fixed between us, to give me the least notice or intimation of it. 'Tis this thought that forbids me, polluted as I now am, though ever so much wearied with life, to wish for dissolution : this reminds me, that though the body be sleeping and mouldering in the grave, the soul dieth not, nor yet slumbereth : the place and condition of unbodied spirits, who of all mankind knoweth ? What thought can conceive that which the eye never saw, nor the ear heard of ? who shall inform me of that state from whence there is no return ?

“ Surely there is a reward for the righteous !

the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are undoubtedly in joy and felicity ; but then where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ? Where shall I, who have spent many years in idleness and vanity, and have no merit of my own to plead for me, where shall I, who have not treasured up one good work to bespeak the favour of the Almighty, and have only the sufferings of Jesus Christ, and those very sufferings often slighted, trampled upon, and rejected by me, to offer in my behalf ? But, oh ! may the goodness of God, if there be still mercy left for me, while it is yet called to-day, before the night cometh on, so assist me with his grace in working out my salvation, that neither the desire of life, nor the dread of death, may withdraw my thoughts from him : but that, in this my day, I may consider the things which make for my peace, before they are hid from my eyes. In humble confidence thereof, and in full assurance of his most gracious mercy to all returning sinners, I will endeavour to fortify and prepare myself against the terrors of death."

In adding to the few foregoing notices the following pleasing and elegant letter, which was addressed to a young lady, whose name is not given, I have, with a slight exception, hereafter to be mentioned, communicated to the reader all the slender stock of materials which I possess relating to the author.

\* “ I am just come from indulging a very pleasing melancholy in a country churchyard, and paying a respectful visit to the dead, of which I am one day to increase the number. As the solemnity and awfulness of the place does instantly affect the beholder, the solitude and silence of it does equally dispose him to attention and meditation, so that we nowhere find a more useful and improving retirement. Every monument has its instruction, and every hillock has its lesson of mortality. I have, by this means, in a short space of time read the history of the whole village; and could tell the names of its principal families for the last thirty or forty years. I might perhaps go a little higher; but here, by the injury of time and weather, the register begins to be interrupted, and the letters are generally so defaced, that if an inscription can be made out, it is not without much difficulty and conjecture. 'Tis not, however, without great compassion, I see the kind endeavour of the survivor to preserve the memory of a departed friend so soon frustrated and disappointed. To continue the remembrance of the deceased, though by a mound of earth, a turf of grass, or a rail of wood, is an instance of affection and humanity equal to the most costly monuments of brass and marble, in everything but expense and duration, and yet how perishable

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\* From the quarto edition, p. 315.

are even those ! how fruitless is the expense, and how short the duration.

“ The churchyard I look on as the rendezvous of the whole parish, whither people of all ages and conditions resort. It is the common dormitory where, after the labours of life are over, they all lie down and repose themselves together in the dust. The little cares and concerns they had when living are here entirely forgotten ; nor comes there hither any uneasiness or enmity to disquiet or interrupt their rest. The jealousies and fears, the discontents and suspicions, the animosities and misunderstandings, which embitter men one against another, are all determined. Here end all resentments and contentions. We have this satisfaction withal in death, that it is of perfect equality. The rich and the poor, the young and the aged, the wise and the foolish, all lie down together and are blended in the dust. Here it is that no one is greater or less than another ; for rottenness admits of no distinctions, and corruption has no superiority. The fairest shall be a stench, and the most beautiful shall be loathsome. Rejoice, then, thou that art despised : and be comforted, thou that art lightly esteemed. For the time cometh, when the haughtiest shall be made low, and the meanness of the great be as thine. The despitefulness of the proud, and the loftiness of the scornful, shall be humbled together, and the foot of the beggar shall trample on them.

“ I will allow that the pomp of a great man may adorn his funeral, and flattery may attend it with coronets, pedigrees, and banners. Whatever is beyond, is nuisance only, and abhorrence. The sepulchre too may be painted without, but within is full of filthiness and uncleanness; and the corpse may be wrapt in velvet and fine linen, yet in velvet and fine linen it shall rot. The leaden coffin and the arched vault may separate it from vulgar dust; but even here shall the worm find it, nor shall his hunger be satisfied till he strip it to the bones. In the meanwhile the laboured epitaph is mocking it with titles, and belying it with praises. The passenger must be stayed to lament its loss; and the reader is called upon to weep, that a person illustriously descended should be so like the rest of his fellow creatures, as to die.

“ The procession may be long, and set off with all the finery that pride can invent, or money can purchase; insomuch that women shall stand amazed, and children shall hold up their hands with astonishment. Yet all this midnight show, which has raised the curiosity of multitudes, and with purposed delays has increased it into impatience, can go no further with him than to his grave: here must all his state leave him, and the honours are his no longer.

“ Having thus amused myself in contemplating the vanity of human greatness,—What is it,

said I, that can thus make us startle, and shrink at the thoughts of death? The mighty and the rich of the world may tremble; but what is the sting of death to those whose life has been altogether misery? or what power has the grave over the unhappy? Is it not rather a refuge from violence and oppression, and a retreat from insolence and contempt? Is it not a protection to the defenceless, and a security to him who had no place to flee unto? Surely in death there is safety, and in the grave there is peace. This wipes off the sweat of the poor labouring man, and takes the load from the bended back of the weary traveller. This dries up the tears of the disconsolate, and maketh the heart of the sorrowful to forget its throbbing. 'Tis this eases the agonies of the diseased, and giveth a medicine to the hopeless incurable. This discharges the naked and hungry insolvent; it releases him from his confinement, who must not otherwise have come thence till he had paid the uttermost farthing. 'Tis this that rescues the slave from his heavy task-master; and frees the prisoner from the cruelties of him that cannot pity. This silences the clamours of the defamer, and hushes the virulence of the whisperer. The infirmities of age, and the unweariness of youth, the blemishes of the deformed, the frenzies of the lunatic, and the weaknesses of the idiot, are here all buried together, and who shall see them? Let the men

of gaiety and laughter be terrified with the scene of their departure, because their pleasure is no more: but let the sons of wretchedness and affliction smile, and be comforted, for their deliverance draweth nigh, and their pain ceaseth.

“ With these and many other reflections, which the compass of a letter cannot contain, I left the chambers of the dead. What first occurred to me after this solitary walk, I have communicated to you: at present, perhaps, you may think them little worthy your regard; or look on them, at best, as the product of a sickly and distempered brain. A lecture of mortality to a maiden in the prime of her health and beauty, you may suppose can come only from a gloomy and disturbed mind, to fortify and prepare the soul against the day when the face of the fairest shall gather blackness, the heart of the strongest shall fail, and the mirth of the most frolicsome shall depart from him. The prospect, I believe, may be unwelcome, but unseasonable it cannot be, while youth is subject to diseases, and while beauty is deceitful. I desire you to accept of this night-piece, drawn by an artless hand: and when that hand shall be mouldering in dust, to peruse the picture, and then be assured, that though it be artless,—’tis true.

“ It must be the frequent perusal of grave-stones and monuments, and the many walks I

have taken in a churchyard, that have given me so great a distaste for life: the usual sight of mortality, corruption, and nakedness, must inevitably lead one to a serious reflection on the vanity of all worldly greatness. The very pride of a man, considered in this view, is his reproach, and his haughtiness becomes his shame. From this representation of human meanness and frailty may be drawn excellent lessons of humility to the ambitious, and very comfortable instructions to the dejected and low spirited.

“ Amidst the various interruptions and diversions of life, and which take up by far the best and most valuable part of it, there is one thought still, ever and anon, arising in the mind: which is, What shall the end of these things be? This is a thought that will not be wholly stifled and suppressed; for the answer is ready, peremptory, and convincing—The end is death. If death then be, as it undeniably is, a cessation from vanity, for such is almost everything we call pleasure, what courage and constancy, what manliness and resolution, does it not require to be at once stripped of all these dear enjoyments which engage and destroy so considerable a part of our lives. There lives not that man of gaiety who would not be startled with the thought of being snatched away from his delights: yet what is more frequent? A prisoner, who has deluded himself with the expectation

of a reprieve, would be extremely shocked to be called away from the midst of his mirth to execution."\*

Cowper, who was placed at Westminster School in the year 1741, and who remained there till after Vincent Bourne's death, has given a few touches towards completing the faint portrait we possess, and which are valuable, both from the source from whence they come, and for the information, however casual and brief, which they impart. In a letter dated May 10, 1781, to the Rev. John Newton, he says, "I am much obliged for your offer to support me in a translation of Bourne. It is but seldom, however, and never except for my amusement, that I translate; because I find it disagreeable to work by another man's pattern. I should be sure at least to find it so in a business of any length. Again, *that* is epigrammatic and witty in Latin, which would be perfectly insipid in English, and a translator of Bourne would fre-

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\* The letter from Vincent Bourne to his wife, and the one addressed to a young lady, (which has much the appearance of having been intended for insertion in a periodical paper,) were both printed for the first time by the editor of the ed. 1772, 4to. who appears to have had access to some unpublished MSS. of Bourne, but who has impaired our confidence in the authenticity of the additional matter, by every method of concealment that he could use, neither giving his name, nor any account of the papers he possessed: he has also inserted poems written and acknowledged by other persons.

quently find himself obliged to supply what is called the *turn*, which is in fact the most difficult and the most expressive part of the whole composition: and could not perhaps in many instances be done with any tolerable success. If a Latin poem is neat, elegant, and musical, it is enough, but English readers are not so easily satisfied. To quote myself, you will find, on comparing the *Jackdaw* with the original, that I was obliged to sharpen a point, which, though smart enough in the Latin, would in English have appeared as plain, and as blunt, as the tag of a lace. I love the memory of Vinny Bourne. I think him a better Latin poet than Tibullus, Propertius, Ausonius, or any of the writers in *his* way, except Ovid, and not at all inferior to *him*. I love him too with a love of partiality, because he was Usher of the fifth form at Westminster when I passed through it. He was so good-natured, and so indolent, that I lost more than I got by him; for he made me as idle as himself. He was such a sloven, as if he had trusted to his genius, as a cloak for everything that could disgust you in his person, and indeed in his writings he has almost made amends for all. His humour is entirely original; he can speak of a magpie or a cat in terms so exquisitely appropriated to the character he draws, that one would suppose him animated by the spirit of the creature he describes. And with all his drollery, there is a mixture of ra-

tional and even religious reflection at times, and always an air of pleasantry, good-nature, and humanity,\* that makes him in my mind one of the most amiable writers in the world. It is not common to meet with an author who can make you smile, and yet at nobody's expense, who is always entertaining and always harmless, and who, though always elegant and classical, to a degree not always found in the classics themselves, charms more by the simplicity and playfulness of his ideas, than by the neatness and purity of his verse. Yet such was poor Vinny. I remember seeing the Duke of Richmond set fire to his gray locks, and box his ears to put it out again," &c. In a letter to Mr. Unwin, written August, 1783, Cowper says, "The ballads that Bourne has translated, beautiful in themselves, are still more beautiful in his version of them, infinitely surpassing, in my judgment, all that Ovid or Tibullus have left behind them. They are quite as elegant, and far more touching and pathetic than the tenderest strokes of either." To his friend Mr. Rose he writes, (Nov. 30, 1788,) "I shall

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\* "This amiable writer's (Vincent Bourne) classical taste was equalled by the goodness of his heart; from conscientious motives, he was induced to refuse a very valuable ecclesiastical preferment, offered him in the most liberal manner by a noble duke." See Nichols's Lit. Anecdotes of the 18th Century, vol. iii. p. 117, note.—"Vincent Bourne was usher to the fourth form at Westminster, and remarkably fond of me. I never heard much of the goodness of heart." (*signed*) T. F. vol. viii. p. 428.

have great pleasure in taking now and then a peep at my old friend Vincent Bourne, the neatest of all men in his versification, though, when I was under his ushership at Westminster, the most slovenly in his person. He was so inattentive to his boys, and so indifferent whether they brought him good or bad exercises, or none at all, that he seemed determined, as he was the best, so to be the last Latin poet of the Westminster line, a plot which I believe he executed very successfully, for I have not heard of any one who has at all deserved to be compared with him."

Cowper corroborated the above favourable opinion of Bourne's poetical talents, by translating above twenty of his poems, which are inserted in this Edition; nor is his praise, though somewhat overstrained, without an intrinsic value, not only as being the judgment of a poet, but of one who himself composed in Latin verse with elegance and facility.

To this we may add the opinion of Dr. Beattie, who, after noticing that Boileau did not know that there were any good poets in England, till Addison made him a present of the *Musæ Anglicanæ*, remarks that, "Those foreigners must entertain a high opinion of our pastoral poetry who have seen the Latin translations of Vincent Bourne, particularly those of the ballads of Tweed-side, William and Margaret, and Rowe's Despairing beside a clear Stream; of which, it is no compliment to say,

that in sweetness of numbers, and elegant expression, they are at least equal to the originals, and scarce inferior to anything in Ovid or Tibullus."

We now pass to the approbation of another person of no common taste or talents, and who found in parts of Bourne's poetry a spirit and feeling congenial to his own. "Since I saw you," says Mr. C. Lamb, in a letter to a friend, "I have had a treat in the reading way, which comes not every day:—the Latin poems of Vincent Bourne, which were quite new to me. What a heart that man had, all laid out upon town-scenes, a proper counterpart to some people's extravagancies. Why I mention him is, that your power of music reminded me of his poem of the Ballad-Singer in the Seven Dials. Do you remember his Epigram on the Old Woman who taught Newton the A, B, C, which after all, he says, he hesitates not to call Newton's *Principia*. I was lately fatiguing myself by going over a volume of fine words by ———, excellent words: and if the heart could live by words alone, it could desire no better regale: but what an aching vacuum of matter! I don't stick at the madness of it, for that is only in consequence of shutting his eyes, and thinking he is in the age of the old Elizabethan Poets. From them I turned to Vincent Bourne; what a sweet, unpretending, pretty-mannered, matter-full creature! Sucking from every flower,

making a flower of everything. His diction all Latin, and his thoughts all English. Bless him! Latin was not good enough for him; why was he not content with the language which Gay and Prior wrote in?"\*

Again, in one of the Essays of Elia (a complaint of the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis, vol. i. p. 268), Lamb touches on the same subject. "Well fare the soul of unfastidious Vincent Bourne, most classical, and at the same time most English, of the Latinists, who has treated of this human and quadrupedal alliance, this dog and man friendship in the sweetest of his poems; the Epitaphium in Canem, or Dog's Epitaph. Reader! peruse it, and say, if customary sights, which could call up such gentle poetry as this, were of a nature to do more harm or good to the moral sense of the passengers through the daily thoroughfares of a vast and busy metropolis."

The Edition of Vincent Bourne's Poems which appeared in 1772 was reviewed in the *Critical Review*, (vol. xxxiii. p. 318, April, 1772), and just and liberal praise was bestowed upon his talents. "Notwithstanding," says the Reviewer, "the remarkable diffidence of his own abilities, his writings will be an everlasting testimony of his refined taste and elevated genius. There is such a remarkable felicity, such a classical

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\* See *Memoirs of C. Lamb*, by Serjeant Talfourd, vol. ii. p. 16.

purity in his language, such ease and harmony in his versification, that he was, perhaps, at the time in which he wrote, the best Latin poet in Europe. He has translated some of the most elegant little poems in the English language with admirable grace and delicacy. The pieces we mean will be known to almost every reader by these initial lines, 'Despairing beside a clear stream,' 'When all was wrapt in dark midnight,' &c. No translator, perhaps, in any language, could have more easily imitated the ease and gaiety of Mr. Prior, than this exquisite poet. We might select a variety of passages in confirmation of this remark; but these few lines will be sufficient: 'Beneath a myrtle's verdant shade,' &c. In many of his compositions he has displayed a beautiful imagination; in some of them a vein of pleasantry and humour: of this latter kind, is the following description of the company with which he is supposed to have travelled in a stage-coach: 'Usus Quadrigarum.' At the conclusion of this volume, there are several Epitaphs, which have been occasionally written by Mr. Bourne, at the request of his friends, or those who were acquainted with his literary abilities. These have all that simplicity and elegant conciseness which is requisite in monumental inscriptions."\*

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\* The Monthly Review (August, 1772, vol. xlvii.) gave only the following short notice of the same edition: "These

We have now only to add a fragment or two to what has previously appeared, to complete, as far as we are able, the slight sketch of the character of one who appears to have more than usually interested all who were acquainted with his works; and as both the extracts which will be given are of some importance—one, as affording an additional testimony to the general modesty and gentle virtues of the poet's character; the other, for the singular and extraordinary attack (more extraordinary under the impression we have already received,) on a person of high and unblemished reputation—it is due to the public, to mention the circumstances under which the volume whence the extracts are transcribed came into the hands of the Editor, and the authority that seems to declare them to be authentic. My old friend and tutor, the late Rev. John Baynes, of Exton, near Droxford, Hants, was executor to the Rev. Dr. Chelsum, the well known antagonist of Gibbon, and rector of Droxford. At his death, Mr. Baynes purchased a copy of Vincent Bourne's poems, ed. 1750, in which was the following note in Dr. Chelsum's

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ingenious Latin Poems are well known by every schoolboy that can read the *Carmina Quadragesimalia*. There is a peculiar beauty and harmony in the structure of Mr. Bourne's versification, and we may say of it, what he says of the river Tweed, in his translation of the famous old song:—

' Non, quæ subrepens blando interlabitur agros  
Flumine, tam suavi Tueda decore nitet.' "

handwriting, and with his signature: "The above was transcribed from the handwriting of Mr. Bourne, by his son, into this book, which was given to me by Mrs. Bourne. J. Chelsum." The first manuscript passage occurs at p. 129, at the end of the translation of Dr. Arbuthnot's dedication of his work on Coins, &c. to the King in 1727, 4to. it is as follows:—

"I caused this to be printed, as an instance of Dr. Arbuthnot's gratitude. It is the dedication before his book of ancient coyns, &c. which he has published in his son's name. There is a piece of knavery throughout the whole book, and I have reason to think that he no more wrote it, than his son did the dedication. To the reputation of Dr. Arbuthnot, I never met with less honour and generosity than I have received from him; I scorn to charge that upon his country which he has been guilty of in his private character; he should have remembered his promise, and would have done it, if he had not been a courtier." Of this accusation against Arbuthnot, of disingenuous conduct towards the public, and of want of fidelity and honor to Bourne, what can be said? I confess, that I can throw no light at all upon it; but in justice to Arbuthnot, it must be said, that no person appears to have stood higher in the affection and estimation of his friends (and they were among the foremost in talent and worth), than he did, and no one seemed to have been more deeply

regretted in his death. Unless this passage can be more clearly decyphered, and more supported than it is at present, it cannot be permitted, though its authenticity is indisputable, to cast the slightest soil upon the reputation of one who was perhaps at once the most learned, and most amiable, among the friends of Pope.\*

The other note in manuscript, which I find in my copy alluded to above, relates to Vincent Bourne himself: and may be considered as an authentic addition to his biography. This portrait is sketched by his own hand. It is as follows:—

“ If any surviving friend will shew his love to my memory by a small tablet, I desire that this, and this only, may be the inscription :

PIETATIS SINCERÆ  
SUMMÆQUE HUMILITATIS,  
NEC DEI USQUAM IMMÉMOR  
NEC SUI,  
IN SILENTIUM QUOD AMAVIT  
DESCENDIT  
V. B.

Of Bourne's poetical powers, and of the somewhat exaggerated praise bestowed on them by Cowper, in the passage which has been given

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\* “ I beg leave (says Dr. Beattie speaking of Arbuthnot,) to quote a few lines from an excellent poem, written by an author *whose genius and virtue were an honour to his country, and to human nature.*”—*Essay on Truth*, Chap. ii. 3.

above, Mr. W. S. Landor thus expresses himself:—"Novimus quem Tibullo ac Propertio prætulit bonus Cuperus. Mirum est, perperam, ne dicam stolidè judicavit, Poeta pœne inter summos nominandus. *Vinnius* autem, ita appellebant eum familiares, nihil admodum habet suum, et quum aliena quam Latina faceret, frigida est plerumque concinnitatis affectatio, Propertii contra sincera saltem sunt omnia, &c."\*

I now conclude with a few observations or rather notes on Bourne's poetry; which at least will serve to show, that I have endeavoured to read the author, whose works are recommended to the public taste, with the diligence and attention he may justly command.

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Perhaps in the first poem, "Corydon Quereus," Vincent Bourne has not been able to attain to the simple ballad-strain of the original. "*Lassatum salices sustinere caput*," is not a very happy or very classical translation of "A willow supported his head." Let us take the second stanza, and we shall see how unequal the Latin language was to the vernacular ease, and to the graceful, yet colloquial expression of the English.

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\* See *Idyllia Heroica decem*, &c. edit. Sav. Landor, Pisæ, 1820, p. 212.

Alas ! silly swain that I was !  
 Thus sadly complaining, he cried ;  
 When first I beheld that fair face,  
 'Twere better by far I had died :  
 She talk'd, and I blest the dear tongue ;  
 When she smiled, 'twas a pleasure too great :  
 I listen'd, and cried, when she sung,  
 Was nightingale ever so sweet !

Ah ! miserum Corydonem ! et durum ante omnia fatum !  
 Tristibus his lachrymans ingemit ille modis ;  
 Adspexi vultum, lethoque (heu sidera iniqua !)  
 Ex illo intuitu quot graviora tuli !  
 Nusquam tutus eram ; Daphnæ mihi dulcis imago  
 Ridentis, dulcis sermo loquentis erat :  
 Seu caneret, blando captus modulamine, quando  
 Tam suave, exclamo, tu, philomela, canes !

and not less in the first part of the next :—

How foolish was I to believe  
 She could dote on so lowly a clown ;  
 Or that her fond heart would not grieve  
 To forsake the fine folk of the town.

Sæpe quidem dixi, miserebitur illa ; sed unde  
 Tam nostræ fieret rusticitatis amans ?  
 Unde urbis splendorem ea sciret, opesque superbas  
 Sordibus exiguæ posthabuisse casæ ?

In the eighth stanza of “ Gulielmus Susannæ  
 Valedicens,” (Sweet William’s Farewell to Black-  
 eyed Susan,) there is something ungraceful in  
 the structure of the second line :—

No longer must she stay aboard :  
 They kiss’d ; she sigh’d ; he hung his head.

Dixit uterque, Vale ; et lachrymis simul oscula miscens,  
 Addidit hæc gemitus, ille recline caput.

In the fifth stanza of Lucy and Colin, the expression of the Latin translation is too formal and redundant :

Ah, Colin ! give not her thy vows,  
Vows due to me alone.

Vota mihi, Juvenis, soli mihi credita, nullà  
Oh ! alienari conditione sinas.

P. 5. "Quid prodest, molles numeros *siquando* movebam ;" and so in p. 123, 245. The last syllable of "*siquando*" is elided by Virgil, *Eclog.* ii. ver. 23, or made long. See Burman's note on *Lotichii*, *Poem. Ecl.* ii. 11. Ovid always makes it long. Propertius generally, and Tibullus, and Flaccus always, except in one instance, *Lib.* viii. 213.

P. 13. "Dicere cur poteras? et *ego*, rudis, inscia Virgo." Here the last syllable of "*ego*" is made long against all good authority. See Voss. *Art. Gram.* ii. c. 27. Burman. ad *Ped. Albinov.* v. 193, ad *Propert.* viii. 31, and *Drakenb. ad Sil. Ital.* p. 865, 4to. see also my note on *Gray's Poems*, vol. i. p. 186, ed. 1836. (*Sapphic Ode to Mr. West*), v. 45.

P. 27. "*Caseus esto tuus, Parma, corona dapum.*" Vincent Bourne has made the last syllable short in other places, as p. 31, 35, 53, 61, 148, 155, 226, but its proper quantity is long : though Juvenal has made it short, *Sat.* viii. 79 : "*Estö bonus miles, tutor bonus,*" &c.

Bentley observes on Horace, (p. 395.) *Serm.* i. 3. v. 140 : "*Si quid peccavero stultus.*"

“ Perperam, neque enim O finale in verbis temere invenias correptum apud ejus Ævi scriptores.”

P. 29. “ Nec, canis ut caudam submittam et blandiar *instar* ;” is not *instar* too far disjoined from its substantive *canis* ?

P. 55. “ Quàm male persuades, experiendò scies.” Vincent Bourne has shortened the gerund in *do*, also p. 194, 222, 224, 243. On this license, consult Burman. on Antholog. Lat. v. i. p. 298, 466, 693, v. 11, p. 722, ad Ovid, Ep. xi. 126.

P. 57. The latter line in the translation of the following couplet is not neatly nor clearly turned :—

He's dropsical, she is sore-eyed,  
Yet they're ever uneasy asunder.

Blæsa illa est oculis, et crura hydropicus ille  
Vix trahit ; at letho majus abesse malum est.

P. 99. “ Quæ nullus æquat computus.” This word, which has, I believe, no better authority than that of Firmicus, ought scarcely to have been used.

P. 119. “ Innocuos fluctus *Britonum* devolvat ab oris.”

There is no authority for shortening the first syllable in ‘ Britones,’ though it is frequently done in modern Latin poetry. Juv. Sat. xv. v. 124, “ Quam nec terribiles Cimbri, nec *Britones* unquam.”

## P. 121.

At videt, mæstum tibi sæpe visum, in-  
 jurias, vim, furta, dolos, et inso-  
 lentiam, quo semper eunt, eodem

Ire tenore.

This division of the word at the end of the line in the Sapphic stanza ought to be avoided. Horace has *one* instance in the first line, Od. VI. ii. 1.

Pindarum quisquis studet æmulari, I-  
 ule———

two instances in the second line. Od. II. ii. 18.

Dissidens plebi, numero beato-  
 rum eximit virtus.

and Od. IV. ii. 22.

Plorat, et vires animumque moresque  
 Aureos, &c.

In the third line, the license is more common, as probably the last Sapphic line, and the Adonic were read as one continuously. See Od. lib. I. xxv. 11.—II. xvi. 7.—III. xxvii. 60. It may also be as well to remark, as some lines of this ode call for it, that Horace makes the division, or pause, after the fifth, sixth, or seventh foot, never after the third, as the moderns do.

P. 145. “Alterutra alterutram quæritque et decipit;” and so p. 135, 193.—On this position of the enclitic after the *third* word in the sentence, see Burman’s note on Virg. *Æn.* vi. 395.

(vol. i 205.) on Anthol. Lat. i. p. 607; on Ovid. Met. xiv. 30; but see Class. Journal, No. xxii. 22, and my note on Gray, vol. i. p. 176, and p. 206, ed. 1836.

P. 149. "Stat tacitus multumque screans." On the syllable being found short before sc. sp. &c. see Burman's note on the Poet. Lat. Minor. p. 571.

P. 159. "Thraïca." Is there authority for this word, as for 'Thracius, Threïcius, and Thracus?' or is it not meant to be Thracia?

P. 169. "Academia." On the penultimate syllable in this word being shortened, see Burman, on Anthol. Lat. v. i. p. 340. and Claudian. p. 248. Wernsdorf Poet. Lat. Minor. vol. vi. p. 1376.

P. 172. "In *Tamisis* tremulâ luce refulsit aquis." Vincent Bourne has used both the short and long quantity in the first syllable of *Tamisis*, v. p. 182, 207, 243. Milton used the long only. "Me tenet urbs refluâ quam *Tamisis* alluit undâ."

P. 230. "Popule Alme Virorum." "Populus statuarum," is used by Cassiodorus, Ep. vii. 13. "Martyrum Populus," by Cyprian.

P. 241. "Omnia mirari præsens, crinemque; coloremque." See on this final "que," Burman on Virg. i. 452.



## EDITIONS.

CARMINA Comititalia Cantabrigiensa. Edidit V. B. Coll. Trin. Socius. Londini Typis T. Redmayne, 1721. We shall give the advertisement to this edition :

“ Poeticas hasce exercitationes tibi, Lector benevole, in manus tradimus; perpaucas quidem, atque olim editas, sed Chartulis sparsim mandatas et in Libellum jam demum congestas. Quod ad paucitatem spectat, qui in opusculis hujusmodi collegendis versantur, satis norunt quam arduum editoribus obeundum sit munus, quæ in aliis rogitandis fuerint sollicitationes, quæ in aliis non rogitandis offensiones. Minus itaque, uti speramus, invidisse pauculas has Prolusiones in publicum de novo emitimus, quæ si quicquam tibi afferant voluptatis, optandum restat ut ea quæ desiderantur, Poemata, ad nos transmittantur, cum iis quæ nobis in manu sunt, in alterum hujusmodi fasciculum continuo colligenda. Hæc interim, amice Lector, benigne accipe et vale.”

This volume consists of 96 pages; at the 72nd, the Carmina Comititalia cease: and at p. 73 the title is Miscellanea: among which,

P. 77. Corydon Querens. Carmen Pastorale.

P. 87. Chloe Venatrix.

P. 88. Amor Inermis.

P. 95. Epitaphium in Canem.

are known as V. Bourne's by their being inserted in the

editions of his Poems published by himself. On the other poems in this volume we shall speak hereafter.

II. *Thyrsis et Chloe; Votum Dr. G. Pope, et Corydon Querens. Tres Cantilenæ Anglicæ Celebratoris Nominis Latine redditæ, Londini, sumpt. B. Barker, Bibl. Westmonast. 1728.* This edition also contained Epitaphium in Canem, iterum editum. These poems had separate title pages; and that of Corydon Querens was the third edition, and dated 1726, (part 3rd,) with the following dedication: "Honoratissimo Domino Gulielmo Domino Abergavenny Carmen hoc Pastorale Latine redditum, et quod adjicitur elegiacum, humillime offert, et dedicat, Vincentius Bourne." With these is the poem, *In obitum Roussæi. Ed. altera, 1726.* All these appear to have been printed and sold separately.

III. *Poematia Latinè partim reddita, partim scripta: a V. Bourne, Collegii Trinitatis apud Cantabrigiensis aliquando Socio. Londini, sumptibus Authoris. Typis J. Watts. Veneunt apud R. Barker, Bibliopolium Westmonaster. MDCXXXIV. 12mo. pp. 148. 1734. pp. 148.* This volume is dedicated to the Duke of Newcastle; it is printed in Italics.

IV. This edition was reprinted in 1735; the Latin poems are all printed in Italics, pp. 136.

V. The third edition, 1743, "adjectis ad Calcem quibusdam novis." The new poems begin at p. 140, and extend to the end; p. 252. This was the last edition printed in the lifetime of the author: the whole pp. 252; printed in Italics. The Appendix was printed separately for the advantage of those that had the previous editions. It has many typographical errors.

VI. The fourth edition was printed in 1750; and was a reprint of the last, printed in Roman characters.

VII. The fifth edition was in 1764, and was a reprint of the two former in Roman type, and is printed with correctness.

VIII. The sixth edition was in 1772, 4to. by subscription.\* The title, *Miscellaneous Poems*, consisting of *Originals and Translations* by Vincent Bourne, M. A. formerly Fellow of Trinity Coll. Cambridge, and Usher of Westminster School. This edition consisted of pp. 352. It was published without the name of the editor, and contained no preface or advertisement of any kind. In this edition many poems were introduced which had appeared in no previous one; none of them are sanctioned by any authority that are known; and some of them were written by other persons. We shall here give a list of the new poems :

1. *Canticum trium Israellitorum.*
2. *Ode ex initio Psalmi xix desumta.*
3. *On the Ascension.*
4. *On All-Saint's day.*
5. *In Festum Pentecostis.*
6. *In idem.*
7. *In Festum S. Michaelis.*
8. *In Festum S. Simonis.*
9. *In Nonas Novembris.*
10. *In Festum S. Andreæ.*
11. *In Festum Diis Thomæ.*
12. *In Calendas Januarii.*
13. *In Epiphaniam.*
14. *In Resurrectionem.*
15. *In Reditum Caroli 2di.*
16. *In Miltonum.* (Written by Peter Keith. See Nares's Letter, p. xl.)
17. *Iter per Tamesin.*
18. *Existentia Entium Incorporeorum colligi potest Lumine Naturæ.* This poem is to be found in Popham's *Poemata Anglorum*, 8vo. p. 314, without any author's name; and is in the *Carmina Comititalia*, p. 15.

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\* This edition was reviewed in the *Critical Review* April, 1772, Art. IX. p. 312.

19. Rationes Boni et Mali sunt eternæ et immutabiles. See *Carm. Comititalia*, p. 18. (This was written by Hill.)
20. Lockius non recte statuit de Particula Anglicana BVT. See *Carm. Comititalia*, p. 25.
21. Fluxus et Refluxus Maris pendent ab actionibus solis et Lunæ. See *Carm. Comit.* p. 27.
22. Mundus non fuit ab Æterno, p. 43.
23. ΕΞΑΗΜΕΡΟΝ. See *Carm. Comititalia*, p. 73. (Miscellanea.)
24. Ad Tempus. See *Carmina Comititalia*, p. 92. (Written by Jortin.) See *Lusus Poetici*, pt. vii.
25. Planetæ sunt habitabiles. See *Carm. Comititalia*, p. 31.
26. Camera Obscura. See *Carm. Comititalia*, p. 35; (written by Dr. George, and) inserted in *Musæ Etonienses*, t. ii. p. 140, translated by Soame Jenyns, v. *Poems*, p. 176, ed. 1752.
27. Deus est cognoscibilis Lumine Naturæ. See *Carm. Comit.* p. 39.
28. Laterna Megalographica. See *Carm. Comit.* p. 47. (Written by Walter Tisby.)
29. Sonus propagatur per Aërem. See *Carm. Comit.* p. 51. (Written by Dr. C. Harding.)
30. E Turribus altis dat Campana Sonum.
31. In obitum Decani Aldrich. (Written by S. Wigan.)
32. Fallere credentem non res operosa. (In the *Lusus Westmonasteriensis*, p. 33.)
33. Epilogus Ethiopissæ ad Terentii Eunuchum.
34. Epilogue to Ignoramus by Antonius.
35. Epilogue to Andria by Simo.
36. Epilogus Lesbiæ Obstetricis.
37. Epilogue to Ignoramus.
38. Epilogue to Henry the 4th.
39. De Musto.
40. Inest sua gratia Parvis.
41. Sis quod vis, dummodo sis aliquid.

42. Magnas territat Urbes Rumor.  
 43. Poteris tutior esse domi.  
 44. Grande Doloris ingenium. (This poem is in the *Lusus Westmonasteriensis*, p. 41.)  
 45. Respue quod non es.  
 46. Dulce et decorum est pro Patriâ mori. (This poem is in the *Lusus Westmonasteriensis*, p. 26.)  
 47. Suave est ex magno tollere acervo.  
 48. Eutrapelus cuicumque nocere volebat vestimenta dabat pretiosa.  
 49. Dant animos Socii.  
 50. Vos non Vobis.  
 51. Pares cum Paribus facillimè congregantur.  
 52. Dicite defectus Solis.  
 53. Plus ultra.  
 54. Aliorum obsequere studiis.  
 55. Amica silentia.  
 56. Votum. (Written by Jortin.) See *Lusus Poetici*, No. iii.  
 57. On an open grave.  
 58. In effossum sepulchrum.  
 59. In obitum Magistri Hanbury.  
 60. In obitum Magistri Cotes.  
 61. In statuam sepulchralem Infantis dormientis.  
 62. Memorix sacrum Benjamini Ferrers.  
 63. Carmen Lapidarium.  
 64. Epitaphia.

Upon what principle the author of this edition made his Selections, or what authority he had for them, I am unable to say: some of these poems, as we have seen, are taken from other writers; and none in the *Carmina Comititalia* have any mark to distinguish them as *V. Bourne's*. In the absence therefore of any explanation on the part of the editor, it will be hardly uncharitable to presume that he inserted this mass of new and unauthorized poems to swell out the volume for the satis-

faction of his subscribers. Where many of the poems, which did not come from the *Carm. Comitalia*, are to be found, the editor is unable to say ; but some he has traced to the *Lusus Westmonasteriensis*, printed in 1730.

IX. The seventh edition, 1808, Oxon.

X. The eighth edition, 1825, Ox. follows that of 1772, 4to.

In the *Gent. Mag.* 1748, is an advertisement. "Three Songs by Vincent Bourne, 8vo. price 6*d*, Roberts."

In March, 1826, the Rev. Dr. Nares wrote to the editor of the *Gents. Magazine* :

MR. URBAN,                      Bloomsbury, March 30th, 1826.

A VERY neat edition (being the sixth) of the exquisite "Poemata" of Vinny Bourne, as Cowper affectionately calls him, has very recently issued from an Oxford press ; concerning which, I only regret that I had not known the editor and his intentions before the book appeared. I could have pointed out a few of the poems which were inadvertently inserted in the quarto edition of 1772, though not productions of Bourne ; and I could have assigned them to the real authors. These notices I obtained on the authority of the venerable Dr. Lloyd, so long under-master of Westminster School, communicated to me by the late excellent Dean of Westminster, Dr. Vincent. I could also have furnished from the same intelligence an Epilogue to "Terence's Eunuch,"\* spoken at Westminster in 1746 ; and pointed out another Epilogue, spoken after the "Phormio," which is printed in Popham's "Selecta Poemata Anglorum," (Vol. 3. p. 9.), but there erroneously called a Prologue. Either or both of these, I will take an opportunity of sending to you, if you should wish to have them. They will then be ready for any future edition, or may be added to this,

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\* See p. 276 of this edition.



on an additional half sheet; which, as there is already an Appendix of two leaves, may very easily be done.

One of the poems, entitled "Ad Tempus," (p. 196.) is the property of Dr. Jortin, and appears in his "Tracts," Vol. I. p. 14. The first stanza is different, and there are some omissions, but the composition in general is Jortin's. This was not in the original editions of Bourne, but introduced by the editor of the quarto (whoever he was,) as well as the other erroneous insertions. Another poem entitled "Votum," (p. 275,) is also the property of Jortin, and is printed in his "Tracts," vol. i. p. 9. This and the former were both published by Jortin, in his "Lusus Poetici." These things, therefore, should be set right: Bourne is rich enough in his own compositions to have no need of borrowing. The few others falsely attributed to him were written, I think, by contemporary Westminsters, whose names are noted in my copy, from Dr. Lloyd's information.

The new edition seems to be copied exactly from the quarto, except that two very admirable letters, which there stand at the end, are here very properly prefixed, preceded only by such a sketch of the author's life, as the very scanty materials now to be obtained, enabled the editor to supply. Yours, &c. R. N[ARES].

*Gent. Mag. Sept. 1826.*

MR. URBAN,

Aug. 20th.

To conclude my communications on Vincent Bourne, I send you this epilogue. (Vide p. 278 of this Edition.)

I am, however, inclined to think that a great part of this Epilogue is wanting; and that we have here only the beginning, and the final couplet. It was never the custom to have epilogues so very short: and there is little in this as it stands here worthy the pen of Bourne.

Of the poems falsely ascribed to Bourne, in the 4to.

of 1772, that *In Miltonum*, p. 46, was written by Peter Keith, who acted Dorothea in *Ignoramus*, at Westminster in 1730.

*Rationes Boni et Mali*, &c. p. 209, were by Hill, probably Joshua Hill, elected to Oxford in 1738, with Abp. Markham.

*Ad Tempus*, p. 224, by Jortin.

*Camera obscura*, p. 246, by — George, of whom I know nothing more.

*Laterna Megalographica*, p. 270, by Walter Titley, who afterwards left exhibitions to the school.

*Sonus propagatur per Aera*, p. 274, by Dr. Caleb Hardinge, younger brother of Nicholas Hardinge, of whom see Nichols, *Lit. Anec. V.* p. 338.

*In obitum Decani Aldrich*, p. 286, by John Wigan, elected to Oxford in 1714; the same year that V. Bourne went to Cambridge.

*Votum*, p. 314, by Jortin.

Yours, &c.

R. N[ARES].

The two poems mentioned above are added to this edition on Mr. Nares's authority. What various readings occur in the different editions are given for the first time; and the translations by Cowper will be considered as an acceptable addition to the work.

It would appear by the signature that Vincent Bourne was the Editor of the fifth edition of the *Musæ Anglicanæ*.

“*Præmonendus es, Lector Quintæ hujusce Editionis, priorum Quatuor retineri omnia, locis transponi quædam, mutari verò perpauca. Adjici Cantabrigiensium invenies multa: novi pleraque, nec ingrati fortasse, Argumenti; exercitationes scilicet Academicas, de Quæstionibus præcipue Philosophicis; Juvenilium Studiorum Testimonia simul et Ornamenta. V. B.*”