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**TEXTUAL ANALYSIS ON THE MAIN FIGURES' IDEAS IN  
SAMUEL JOHNSON'S *THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES***

A thesis presented to the English Department, Faculty of Letters,  
University of Jember as one of the requirements to obtain  
the Award of Sarjana Sastra degree  
in English Studies



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2001**

Judul	Judul	Klas
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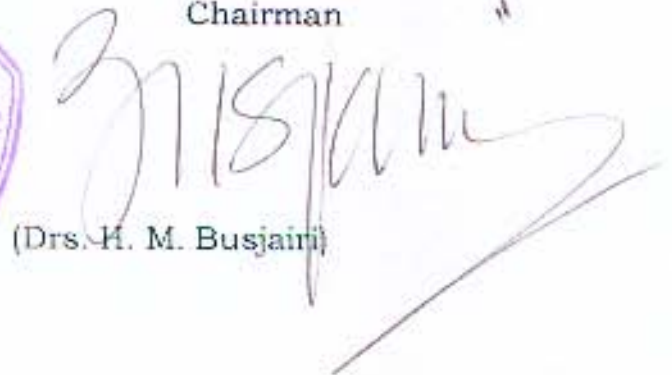
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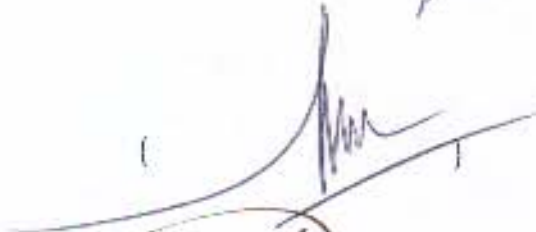
  
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***This thesis is dedicated to:***

- ❖ My beloved mother, **Marjunah Hidajati**  
*Her countless affection, attention, admonition, and guidance are so precious to make my life better.*
  
- ❖ My beloved the late father, **Sumari**  
*The happy memories with him will always remain in my heart for good.*
  
- ❖ My beloved sister **Irma Ariani**, *who never loose her times for fixing wonderful love to our family.*
  
- ❖ **Taqwan Umari** *whose presence means a lot to me.*
  
- ❖ My beloved Alma Mater.

*Motto:*

**NOBODY FEELS COMPASSION TO THE SUFFERING  
CAUSED BY VANITY**

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Praise to God, I thank Him for the blessing given to me so that I can finish my study to get Sarjana Sastra degree in the English Department, Faculty of Letters, University of Jember.

In this nice opportunity, my genuine gratitudes are aimed at all of the people who helped me to accomplish the thesis.

1. Drs. Marwoto, Dean of the Faculty of Letters, University of Jember.
2. Dr. Suparmin, M.A., Chief of the English Department, Faculty of Letters, University of Jember.
3. Drs. Joseph Supardjana, M.S., my first advisor and Drs. Albert Tallapessy, M.A., my second advisor, who have given me valuable suggestions and spent much time for correcting the draft of my thesis.
4. The lecturers who have provided me with worthwhile knowledge during my study in English Department, Faculty of Letters, University of Jember.
5. All librarians of the Faculty of Letters, Central library University of Jember, Gadjah Mada University, Petra University, who have lent me some necessary books.
6. All my friends on Jawa VI/19. I am very grateful for their care about my complaints.

7. All my friends in the Faculty of Letters, English Department '95 and all people whom I cannot mention one by one but I may never forget them. Thanks a lot for their support.

I expect that God will endow His blessing for their kindness.

Jember, November 2001

**RIAN AGUNG FREMINA**





## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Rationale

Literature cannot be separated from human life. It means that literature is representation of human life experiences. Literature is written by an author that concerns about happiness and human misery described through his imagination. They are presented in literary works and show human problems, activities, thoughts and description of society where and when they live as De Bonald states in Wellek and Warren (1964:95) that literature is an expression of society.

Hoeper and Pickering in *Poetry an Introduction* (1990:15) state that all imaginative literature is primarily concerned with human feelings and attitudes. Literature tries to create human experiences that involve the reader's emotion and intellectuality. It means that literature causes emotion to the reader's feeling. Besides, the reader is interested in the poet's idea as it is expressed in the poem.

Poetry is one of literary works that needs interpretation. It is different from other literary works. One thing that makes different is the expression of the truth through imagination more than prose does (Jones, 1968:100). In *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, Johnson tells about human vanity that happens in England at the transition period (a period from classical to early modern). It happened at 1700's up to 1800's. Literary works in transition period had double characteristics. Firstly, literary work based on the order of classicism especially in heroic couplet and poetic diction. Secondly, the search of the new

order of romanticism. It returned to the nature or the beauty of nature.

During transition period there were three historical events related with the development of literary works i.e. the effect of the development of knowledge especially exact sciences to "Intellectual Revolution", the rise of the man of letters such as Goldsmith and Johnson, and rationalism become main idea for philosophers and the authors of literary work. The last event provided deep influence to the English literature. The characteristic of Johnson's literary work is imitation of life (Selden,...:22). He wrote literary work as a moral criticism in order to criticize the bad condition that was dominant at the transition period. In 1688, England was under influence of Glorious Revolution. Johnson's literary work based on the allegiance to the old order of classicism (Albert, 1955:224). It means that he uses heroic couplet and poetic diction.

*The Vanity of Human Wishes* describes about the condition of people who is thinking that pride is important than others (materialism). It is a narrative poem. This poem consists of some events as Hoeper and Pickering (1995:26) point out,

In narrative poetry the story more prominent than other kinds of poetry. Even in narrative poetry the poet is interested primarily in selecting and arranging the events in detail so as to communicate his own feeling about them and thus determine or at list the reader' s reaction.

The poem consists of three parts. First, Johnson tells about general condition of people in England. Second, he turns to individual person as a means of expressing his idea and emotion. Third, his opinion about human vanity related with his stoicism. In the poem the figures

show the opinion represent several ideas relates to their field. The fields are social and ethics.

Johnson describes the figures which are taken from the names of noblemen, king, and educated or an intellectual, statement, and Greek philosopher. He uses the name of Greek philosopher because this poem is an imitation of the *Tenth of Juvenal Satire* (an old Roman satire is written by Decimus Junius Juvenalis, a famous Roman satirist and poet). *The Vanity of Human Wishes* is a means of expressing his own Christian Stoicism and sense of the tragic human life (Abrams, 1968:1797). The aim of the poet in writing the poem is showing the condition of London concerning its fame, position, and wealth. He gives warning to the people that pride can cause damage. These conditions happen in our daily life. Based on these conditions the writer is interested in writing a thesis entitled TEXTUAL ANALYSIS ON THE MAIN FIGURES' IDEAS IN SAMUEL JOHNSON'S *THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES*.

## 1.2 The Problem to Discuss

*The Vanity of Human Wishes* tells about human greed with position, fame, and wealth. The poet wrote this poem in order to express his imagination and feeling about the condition in England. He combines his emotion, experiences, and knowledge in the form of literary work. Johnson uses some main figures to represents several ideas that have correlation with the ambition and desire with the examples of disasters in the poem. The poem consists of two main ideas as topic of discussion. There are social and ethics. From this condition the writer is interested in analyzing this poem. There are some problems revealed as following

1. What kinds of problems of life in *The Vanity of Human Wishes*?
2. Who are the figures in this poem and what are their ideas?
3. What messages that the poet sent to the reader?

### **1.3 The Scope of The Study**

The scope of the study in this thesis is the textual analysis of the main figures' ideas in relation with the problems of life in England.

### **1.4 The Approach to Use**

The central discussion in the poem is the figures and their ideas in narrative poem. The suitable approach is demanded in this analysis in order to get clear description and detailed explanation the figures' ideas. This thesis uses structural approach to solve the problem. Teeuw in *Sastra dan Ilmu Sastra*. (1984:135) points out, "Structural approach is an approach that elaborated the interrelated aspect of literary work which altogether produce the whole meaning". He asserts that structural approach emphasizes on the structure of literary work itself. It is appropriate for analyzing the textual analysis of the main figures' ideas in this thesis. The figures are a part of intrinsic aspect in narrative poem. There are some steps to analyze this thesis. The first step is to apply the structural approach in looking for the problems of life in the poem. The second is to seek the figures and their ideas. The last is to show the poet's message for the reader.

### **1.5 The Method of Analysis**

The method of analysis in this thesis is deductive method. It means the discussion that is started from general idea to particular.

In this analysis deductive method means, " A method of logical reasoning that obtain or discovers specific conclusion from general facts or examples" (Hadi, 1990:36). This method is applied in the discussion about the kinds of problems of life in *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, the main figures' ideas, and the poet's messages to the reader. It is hoped that the textual analysis about problems of life as supporting factors of the main figures' ideas in several matters. They are social and ethics.

### **1.6 Data Collection**

The data in this thesis will be collected by using library research. It means that the data are collected from book and references. Russeffendi in *Dasar-Dasar Penelitian Pendidikan* (1994:16) states, "Library Research is an activity that consist of collecting data that relates with the topic will be discussed". The data is found in Samuel Johnson's poem entitled *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. The data relates to the figures' ideas as the representation of the poet's ideas.

### **1.7 The Goals of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to apply theory of literature. The purpose of the study is to enlarge the knowledge of the elements of poetry, especially about the figures' ideas in order to support the idea of the poet in the narrative poem. Finally, it is hoped that the study will be a useful contribution to develop a comprehension in studying literature and increasing an interest in studying poetry especially about narrative poem.

### **1.8 The Organization of The Thesis**

This thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter one presents the introduction of the thesis. The biography of Samuel Johnson and a brief note of *The Vanity of Human Wishes* are described in chapter two. Literary Review is presented in chapter three. The next, chapter four presents The Meaning of the Terms. Textual Analysis on The Main Figures' Ideas is described in chapter five. The last chapter, chapter six is the conclusion of the whole discussion.



## CHAPTER II

### THE BIOGRAPHY OF SAMUEL JOHNSON AND A BRIEF NOTE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON'S *THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES*

#### 2.1 Biography of the Poet

According to Benton in *Encyclopedia Britanica volume 13* (1973:44), Johnson was an English poet, essayist, lexicographer, and greatest clubman of 18<sup>th</sup> century. He was born at Lichfield, Staffordshire on September 18, 1709. His father, Michael Johnson, was a bookseller. As a bookseller, he conducted that business without any profitable orientation. Sarah, his wife, was a devout woman; she had a tendency toward Calvinism. She taught his son to learn between heaven and hell. Samuel Johnson was not a healthy child. His eyes were weak. He was the victim of a tubercular infection in the glands of the neck. In the hope to cure from his disease, Mrs. Johnson traveled to London in March 1712 and Queen Anne touched Johnson.

Boswell in his book entitled *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (1992:21-24) tells about his primary education. He entered Lichfield Grammar School in 1717. In this school, he began to study Latin under Humrey Howkins. After graduated from Lichfield Grammar School, he moved to Grammar school at Stourbridge. In Stourbridge, he worked under John Wentworth and took part in teaching the younger boys. The other activities, he helped his father at the bookshop. Johnson spent two years at home before he went to Pembroke College in Oxford on October 1728. In the college, he was familiar with many works. He had a chance to introduce to a tutor. In December 1731, he left Oxford without degree. At the same year, his father passed away. His

college exercise, a translation in Latin of Pope's *Messiah*, was published in an anthology of college poems.

Mc Adam in *Johnson and Boswell, A Survey of Their Writing* (1969:4-5) writes about Johnson's friend and their relationship. The following year, 1731, Edmund Hector invited him to spend a winter in Birmingham. He was Johnson's school friend. Hector introduced Johnson to Thomas Warrant. Thomas Warrant was the publisher of the *Birmingham Journal*. Warrant gave support to Johnson in writing a series of essays. Under Hector's support, Johnson wrote proposal for an edition of the Latin poems of the Italian Humanist Politian. The proposal was added by biography and history of Latin poetry from the time of Petrarch to that of Politian.

In *Johnson and Boswell A Survey of Their Writings* (1969:3) Mc Adam tells that the talents of Johnson appeared early at four. He composed verse but the quality was poor. His parents knew his talents very well. They sent Johnson to an excellent local grammar school at Lichfield. He learnt Latin and some Greek, translating Latin verse and prose into English, English into Latin, and doing original exercise. In other school at Stourbridge, he exercised a translation into English of Addison's *Latin Battle of the Pygmies* and *the Cranes*.

On July 9, 1735 Johnson got married with Elizabeth Jervish, a widow of Henry Porter, a Birmingham mercer (Benton, 1973:45). She was 20 years older than Johnson. It is not easy to determine the grounds of mutual attachment. Besides Latin poem, he wrote his first book and published them in London. Johnson's first book was entitled *Voyage to Abyssinia* (Jefferson, 1998:145). This event was the beginning of his professional career. Johnson's style in *Voyage to Abyssinia* consists of three elements. These three elements are:



describing things as he sees, copying the nature of life, and the last, consulting his senses not his imagination. This statement is taken from Mc Adam's *Johnson and Boswell A Survey of Their Writing* (1969:5). Benton in *Encyclopedia Britannica volume 13* (1973:45) writes about Johnson's career as a teacher. In 1735, he set up a school at Edial near Lichfield. This school taught Latin and Greek languages but it only had few pupils. One of the pupils was David Garrick. His school survived only for two years. After that, he went to London.

In 1735, his tragedy entitled *Irine* was published. He settled in London with his wife. There were two events happened in 1738. The first, he met Roberts Dodsley (a wellknown publisher). The second, Robert Dodsley issued Johnson's first major poem, *London*, an imitation of *Third Juvenal Satire*. At the same time, he was unsuccessfully obtained MA degree from Oxford University. In the political context, he became 'Sole Composer' of the parliamentary debates in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (Benton, 1973:46). Through 1744, he worked as an editor in *The Gentleman's Magazine*. In 1745, Johnson issued proposal for a new edition of Shakespeare but the project failed. In 1746 his elaborate *Plan of the Dictionary* appeared. In order to express his sense, perception, and thought about tragic of human life, he wrote a narrative poem entitled *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749) (Collier, 1994:613). The poem describes clearly his character as a great moralist (Jefferson, 1998:142). He tells about a man's ambition to reach wealth, fame, and position.

In 1750 he began to write periodical essays entitled *The Rambler*. In *Collier Encyclopedia* (1994:613) Johnson states about the condition of social life of Johnson's family. The poor lodgings made Mrs. Johnson's life be unattractive. She became ill and addicted to alcohol

and opium. On March 17, 1752 his wife passed away. At the same year, he received the degree of MA from Oxford University (Boswell, 1992:77-78). On March 20, 1758 his second essays entitled *The Idler* was published. Several essayists gave comments on Johnson's works. The majority were much more abstract, serious and sombre expression. Johnson is the author of Christian Stoicism and prevailing sense of "The Vanity of Human Wishes" (Jefferson, 1998:142). Boswell in *The Live Of Samuel Johnson* (1992:312-314) states that in 1765 Johnson wrote *An Edition of Shakespeare*. In this edition, he wrote critical notes with long preface. Although he was busy, he had a conversation with George III in Buckingham palace. They talked about the king's biography that occupies several pages (Wain, 1974:244-245).

Johnson and Boswell have a good relationship. In 1773, they accompanied expedition to Scotland. The expedition gave many advantages to Johnson especially to improve his knowledge about life. He knew the customs, religion, education, trade and agriculture in the society. After the expedition from Scotland, he visited North Wales and France. In that expedition, he commented about the gap between the rich and the poor. There was no provision for the maintenance of the poor and there was no comfortable situation for middle class (Benton, 1973:50). In 1777, he wrote *Lives of the English Poets*. This book consists of biographical and critical prefaces about the major figure i.e. Milton, Cowley etc. (Mc Adam, 1969:92-184).

Samuel Johnson wrote literary works that based on his experience. He lived in poverty. It gave deep influence in the development of his personality. He was conservative in political and moral opinions. Therefore, he wrote literary works in the satiric form.

It expresses his feeling to criticize the condition of the society. In order to improve his ability, he made a discussion with his friends. They discussed everything especially about politic and moral opinion. His friends were Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, David Garrick, and Oliver Goldsmith (Jefferson, 1974:179).

In 1782, his health became weaker and weaker. He had a stroke of paralysis. Although he was sick, he set up a discussion club near his house in Boltcourt. On November 16, 1784 he returned to London. His health became worse and he died on December 13, 1784. A week later, he was buried in Westminster Abbey (Benton, 1973:51).

## **2.2 A Brief Note of Johnson's *The Vanity of Human Wishes***

Mc Adam (1969) explains that *The Vanity of Human Wishes* was written in January 1749. In this period, Johnson criticized the problem of life related to human desires. The problem is based on three points: position, wealth, and fame. These points gave deep influence to the aspects of life, i.e. social and ethics. In the poem he begins by announcing the universality of his survey ("from China to Peru"), stating that man is betrayed by pride into seeking the common goals of position, wealth, and fame: "How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice ..." (line 11). The first verse paragraph describes the paths of life, clouded and mazelike, as confused by man's hopes, fears, and desires, which lure him into seeking satisfaction for his pride. All of this carries bad effect overtone of fatality: "fate...fate...fatal...fatal" (line 17-18), all occur within just thirteen lines. The next paragraph is built around one of the fatal temptations, "gold". The word occurs three times in five lines, having strong positions, once as a rime and twice as the first foot.

From this, in the next two paragraphs, Johnson derives his first moral: about civil war between "rival kings" and "bonny traitors" (the Scottish Lord in 1746). Only the poor man is safe, "Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sounds..." (Line 35). In addition, the poor traveler suffers no fears of highwaymen as he walks across the wild heath. The specific character of the imagery, the barren ground and the rustling bracken, adds much vividness to the passage, and indeed is noticeable throughout the poem.

Johnson turns to Democritus the laughing philosopher of classical Greece. He comments, "with cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth" (line 50) on the foolishness of modern life. The use of "motley" in the passage suggests the clown's clothing that perhaps they ought to wear. In addition, if Democritus laughed at the ills of his relatively unsophisticated era, how much more they will ridicule "modish tribe" of the present. Juvenal in the reign of Nero is used in imagined golden age of Rome. It is a contrast with his degenerate times. Johnson makes a contrast between the ages of George II with a supposedly simple period of Greek life, where "scarce a sycophant was fed by pride" (line 56).

However, in modern times, those who were thirsty for wealth and fortune happen everywhere. The condition represented by the medieval symbol, the wheel, is inexorable: "They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall" (line 76). Eighteenth century is symbol of the thirst for wealth are the "weekly scribbler" and the "dedicator" (Johnson had recently addressed the Plan of the *Dictionary* to Chesterfield), and, in politics, the average voter, whose greatest wish to abuse the government and who gets his usual bribe every seven years to make voting in an election worth his trouble.

From general types, Johnson turns to individuals. The portrait of Cardinal Wolsey is famous as "Law in his voice and fortune in his hand" (line 100). The eminence of his political career brought him so close to the pinnacle of the power that he inevitably incurred the displeasure of the king, Henry VIII. Wolsey had not learned much about the general vanity of human wishes: "his last sighs reproach the faith of kings" (line 120).

Johnson reiterates his moral: those who are dissatisfied their humble position should study Wolsey's fate and be content with their saver lives. The Duke of Buckingham (George Villiers) who was assassinated in the reign of Charles I. There are some of English statements that have the same fate with Wolsey. They are Robert Harley (Earl of Oxford under of Queen Anne in 1710-1714), Thomas Wentworth Earl of Stafford), and Edward Hyde (Earl of Clarendon). The English statements are the victims of the king's policy. Most of their lives were ended by impeached and imprisoned. As the example, Harley impeached and imprisoned by the Whigs in 1715, Wentworth impeached by long parliament and executed in 1641, the last Hayde impeached in 1667 and fled to the continent. Really, they had many sacrifice to their king but many people were jealousy to their position. Besides, the king was boring to them and there are new people were better than they that replace to their position. The king ordered to the executioner to murder.

In the next paragraph, Johnson expresses his own experience. It relates with his education. The college student leaves his easy life at home in order to seek fame. Oxford, with its great library and its recollections of great scholars like Roger Bacon, receives him. With the grade of virtue, he may arrive at the truth, "And pour on misty

doubt resistless day" (line 146). The reader is caught up in Johnson's enthusiasm, as looking back on his own youth. He recalls the freshness and the excitement of the search for learning. Meanwhile there are dangers such as praise that lose strength, a beautiful woman who may capture him and worst of all melancholy, Johnson's own disease. If he survives these problems, along with the temptations of novelty and the opiate of sloth, he has, at the end, lack of recognition to face: "Toil, envy, want, the garret, and the jail" (line 160).

After a brief glance at Archbishop Laud who reached a pinnacle of political and ecclesiastical power under Charles I. Besides, Johnson describes about the parliament in England in reign of Charles I. Charles I gives advice to William Laud (Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633). He promoted Laud becomes a head of parliament. Because of his deviation related with religious values. He deviates from religious teaching for getting advantages in power. The puritans executed Laud.

Johnson considers the warriors Alexander, who devastated nations, and Charles XII of Sweden whose armies swept across Europe into Russia was destroyed and met an obscure death in Norway. It is expressed in "He left the name, at which the world grew pale. To point a moral, or adorn a tale" (line 221-222). This couplet is the only one in Johnson's poetry to achieve independent fame. It is an ironic antithesis between contemporary terror and trivial after-fame giving more explanation to the vanity of military pride and of the desire to make war in order to achieve fame and power. The hope of praise has a motivating power uncomparable with that mere virtue.

Another ancient and modern pair is in the next. Xerxes, the only example Johnson used from Juvenal, and Charles Albert, Elector of Bavaria, illustrate the same revolutions of fortune shown by Alexander and Charles XII. There is the same kind of vanity, in desiring short-lived power, which they achieved through military victories.

Johnson describes about human wishes in order to enrich philosophy of life. As we know human vanity cause high, opinion or too confident that appears in the attitude and saying. It means that the experience of life is better for surviving of life. It is related with the elderly who once wished for long life, find that "life protracted is protracted woe" (line 258). The sorrowful of life is a way to become happiness. The paragraph tells about how to avoid and preparing the way of thinking when the problem is happened. Johnson said that the lost family and friend and the dreaded knowledge make up a chilling variety of possibilities are bad experience. He gives advice how to survive of life related to his philosophy of life. His philosophy of life is "life is everywhere, a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed" and "The cure for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative".

Johnson's final paragraph contains his most striking difference from Juvenal. Johnson gives the stoic answer to the seeming helplessness of man, the victim of fate: remove desires to avoid disappointment. Johnson solution is something expected. It relates with Christian value such as seek divine guidance and ask only for those things that are compatible with religion and human happiness—love, patience, and faith, "with these celestial wisdom calms the mind, And makes happiness she does not find" (lines 368).

### CHAPTER III

#### LITERARY REVIEW

Albert in *History of English Literature* (1923:50) says that the transition period has double tendency characteristics related to the conventional literary technique. Those characteristics are, first, the allegiance to the old order Classicism. It means that literary work of this period relates with literary technique from classical technique. Second, the search to the new order of Romanticism. It means the literary work of this period against the classical conventional literary technique, such as the heroic couplet. On the other hand, the author of this period usually has a desire for strength, simplicity, and sincerity in the expression of the new literary ideas.

There is a fresh treatment of Romantic themes. The phenomena can be seen on three main ideas, those are, return to nature, a fresh interest in man's position in the world of nature, and an enlightened sympathy for the poor and the oppressed.

Poetry is one of literary works that needs interpretation. The idea that involves the poem tells the condition of the society. It tells the emotional reaction of the poet when witnesses a certain condition. Arnold in Shaw (1972:292) says, "Poetry is a criticism of life under the condition fixed for such a criticism by the laws poetic truth and beauty". One of the English poets who write about criticism is Samuel Johnson.

*The Vanity of Human Wishes* tells either about the urban life condition or the urban life problems. The poem is interesting, because it represents Johnson's sense about the tragic of human life. There are some comments about this poem. Garrick in Mc Adam (1969:227)



states, "When Johnson become more retired, he gave in his 'Vanity of Human Wishes', which is as hard as Greek. Had he gone on to imitate another satire, it would have been as hard as Hebrew". It means that in his poem, Johnson tries to reproduce *Juvenal Tenth Satire* in English verse as a means of expressing his own Christian Stoicism (Abrams, 1968:1797). He wants to show that he cares to others (humane). Johnson gives advices that based on his experience and knowledge from other books. He writes some matters (social and ethics) as the examples to describe the condition of people in England.

The other opinion about the poem is pointed out by Sampson in *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* (1959:527). He states, "London is good, but easily surpassed by *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. It is written in imitation of Juvenal's tenth satire". It means that as an imitation of Juvenal Tenth Satire, *The Vanity of Human Wishes* is written better than the other one of his long poem entitled *London*. That statement proves that Johnson is not a pessimist. He believes that there is more to be endured than enjoyed in human life. Johnson does not write *The Vanity of Human Wishes* as a statement but as the expression of his genuine.

Calderwood and Tulliver in *Form of Poetry* (1968:437) point out that *The Vanity of Human Wishes* is the example of direct satire. It means that in direct satire, the poet writes 'a real person' who is voicing his opinion and feeling. Johnson uses real figures. They are Democritus, Cardinal Wolsey, George Villiers, Charles XII of Sweden, Samuel Johnson, William Laud, and Alexander the Great. They represent several ideas; there are social and ethics.

Pope in Jefferson (1974:176), states, "*The Vanity of Human Wishes* is Johnson's major work in verse. *London* and *The Vanity of Human*

*Wishes* are similar in manner and tone as well as in form". Both poems are imitation of *Juvenal*. The themes of both poems are about the evils of life and the vanity of human companionship. In style, the poems are strong with individual characteristics. Johnson uses sombre expressions to express the tragic of human life. His fundamental attitudes as a Christian Stoicism represents his great self-control. He has discomfort experience or misfortune without complaining or showing signs of feeling it.

Krutch in *Encyclopedia of Americana volume 16* (1998:176) states that Johnson is known as a great moralist. This opinion relates with his personality. He is well known by his tenderness and curiosity to the poor. Johnson spends a part of his income on the support of the need. He maintains a group of homeless in his own house. He takes care the blind Miss Anna Williams, and the slum physician Robert Levet. About religious convictions, he is an orthodox. It means he puts religion more than reason. He does not want to dominate his thinking. His Christian Stoicism can be taken as an evidence that he is a great moralist. He convinces that "life is everywhere a state in which much to be endured, and little to be enjoyed", and "the care for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative".

Smith in Krutch (1974:178) says that *The Vanity of Human Wishes* is "one of the great poems of the language". He also adds that "nowhere else in all our poetry is the theme that 'all is vanity' given so majestic expression". It means that *The Vanity of Human Wishes* is an imitation of *Juvenal's Tenth Satire X*. Although it closely follows the order and the ideas of the Latin poem, but it remains a very personal work. Johnson uses the Roman stoic's satire as a means of expressing his own Christian Stoicism and his sense of tragic in human life. He

reproduces *Tenth Satire* in English verse. He imitates the Juvenalians especially in stateliness, pointed sentences, declamatory grandeur. The poem is difficult because of the extreme compactness of the style; every verse is forced to convey the greatest possible amount of meaning. As the result the syntax is occasionally obscure. At first, the language seems too general; the frequent personifications are mere abstractions. Although Johnson's poetic theory demanded that the poet should deal in the general rather than the particular (c.f. his phrase "the grandeur of generality") he certainly did not intend that the general should become the merely abstract, observe, for example, how he makes abstract and concrete nouns, active, and dramatic by using them as subject of active and dramatic verbs: "Hate *dogs* their flight, and insult *mocks* their end" (line 78) (Abrams, 1968:1797).

The other comment about Samuel Johnson comes from Strachev. He says, "Johnson aesthetic judgments are almost invariably subtle, or solid or bold; they have always some good quality to recommend them except one: they never right". (Jefferson, 1974:178). Johnson is popular with his imagination, the gruff, burly, and dictatorial conversationalist. There is not enough that his experiences were the inspiration of his literary works. Therefore, he needed knowledge from other sources. He took from other books or the result of the discussion with his friends. Samekto in *Ikhtisar Sejarah Kesusasteraan Inggris* (1998:50) says, "Johnson is a literary dictator". This quotation relates with his life, words, and his attitude. It represented in his literary works in the period. He is famous as an author and a literary spectator. Johnson is very conventional to the rule of literary work.

## CHAPTER V

### TEXTUAL ANALYSIS ON THE MAIN FIGURES' IDEAS IN SAMUEL JOHNSON'S *THE VANTY OF HUMAN WISHES*

In chapter V the writer concentrates on two main points of study based on the idea of social and ethics that are related in Johnson's era. The theme of the poem is expressed in the title of the poem. It describes about wisdom of life that the poet has. Through his poem, he wants the readers know that wisdom. In fact, the poem itself is an imitation of *Tenth Juvenal Satire*. Johnson shows the ideas about the vanity of human life in the poem. Referring to *Tenth Juvenal Satire*, he takes the teaching on the wisdom of life especially in social and ethics. The analysis in the poem consists of three topic of discussion. The first is about the teaching on social life that is divided into education and political matters. The second is about ethics that is divided into philosophy and religious matters. The last is the poet's messages to the reader.

In *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, Johnson expresses his idea to the people who life in the society. The moral decadence of people in England had influenced johnson to create the poem. People deviated from good guidance in life. The deviation drove people to seek hard for fame, richness, and civil status. In his poem, Johnson expresses the way to repair the condition of the society. Therefore, he mentions several names as the main figures in the poem.

In Johnson's mind, Democritus is a name to be mentioned. His theory and teaching about society is worthwhile for people to learn. Alexander the Great according to Johnson was a great and powerful leader. The poet mention as well Cardinal Wolsey and William Laud

who deviated from religious teaching for getting advantages in power. George Villiers is an example of the figure creates social disturbance. His position, as a man who was close to the king created political dispute, and the victim of the dispute was the society. Charles XII of Sweden was an example of an agitator who created war in the society.

### **5.1 The Teaching on Social Life in The Vanity of Human Wishes**

In *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, Johnson describes his teaching on social life to readers. In order to understand Johnson's teaching, the writer of the thesis divides into education and political matters. It means that there are two ideas about the teaching on social life. The first is about the teaching on social life based on education matters. The second is about the teaching of social life based on political matters.

The teaching on social life the poet describes in the poem is related to social problems which are effected one's treatment to others, deviation from rules, and the ambition to be rich. This condition causes social problems that influence to people's life. They must survive in hard life condition and try to solve their own problems. Beside that, many crimes happen in the society. The source of the crimes is men's ambition and their disobedient to the rules. It means that people's thinking is influenced by ambition in order to reach fame, position, and wealth.

Johnson let readers observe life in general, to "Survey mankind, from China to Peru". In his idea, life is full of problems. It also happens to people who live in England. They have to struggle in their lives. The problems of life is found in the hope, the desire of people that cannot overcome their problems as they have no "reason"

to be their "guides", indicating their being "stubborn". The general condition in England is expressed in line 1-14 as follows:

Let observation, with extensive view,  
Survey mankind, from China to Peru;  
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,  
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;  
Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate  
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,  
Where wavering man, betrayed by venturous pride  
To tread the clearly paths without a guide,  
As treacherous phantoms in the mist delude,  
Shun fancied ills, or chases airy good;  
How rarely reason guides to stubborn choice,  
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice;  
How nations since, by darling schemes oppressed,  
When vengeance listens to the fool's request.

The quotation above explains clearly the problems of life in England. Therefore, they will be careful with their behavior in the society. The general condition above describes about men that is betrayed by pride. In their opinion, pride is more important and there is not any harmonious situation in the society. Unharmonious situation causes people are not comfortable in their society.

#### **5.1.1 Education Matters**

The hard condition in England influences all aspect of life, includes education. Johnson teaches about the effect of education in social life that has impact on scholars' personality. In the transition period, few people have chance to get good education. They cannot study in the college. At that time, only the haves have chance to get higher education. It causes discrimination between scholars and common people. The explanation is found in lines 135-140

"When first the college rolls receive his name,  
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;

Resistless burns the fever of renown  
 Caught from the strong contagion of the gown:  
 O'er Bodley's dome his future labors spread,  
 And Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head".

The quotation above tells about the effect of education to the scholar's personality. They make their own group. Usually the gap happens to young scholars. The scholars are arrogant and they have a better status than common people. They are famous since they have been well known in the college. Common people think that the scholars' ability is something rare in the society. It is represented in their attitude, in the way to speak, and in their identity as scholars. Thus, the scholar's motivation is to seek fame. They do not think how to enrich their knowledge and ability that are useful for their future. There is any limitation for getting the chance to get education in the college. They only think about a famous alma mater and well-known people who are graduated from the college.

In education Johnson also teaches about discrimination between men and women as only "men" get chance in good education. Lines 141-152 explain about the discrimination between men and women in education.

" Are these thy views? Proceed, illustrious youth,  
 And virtue guard thee to the throne of Truth!  
 Yet should thy soul indulge the generous heat,  
 Till captive science yields her last retreat;  
 Should reason guide thee with her brightest ray,  
 And pour on misty Doubt resistless day:  
 Should no false kindness line to loose delight,  
 Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;  
 Should tempting Novelty thy cell refrain,  
 And sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain;  
 Should Beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,  
 Nor claim the triumph of lettered heart;"

Johnson describes that in his era the discrimination in education is clearly identified. In fact, women have the same chance in education such as men. The women have ability to enrich their education. Johnson hopes that women do not only work in the household, symbolize beauty. Women must have try hard to be active in developing education. There is no any doubt about their ability.

The other Johnson teaching is the effect of education development to society. He hopes that education must increase people's life so that they can get experience in better lives. The explanation of Johnson teaching about education is found in lines 153-160

Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,  
Not Melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade;  
Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,  
Nor think the doom of man reversed for thee:  
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,  
And pause a while from letters, to be wise;  
There mark what ill the scholar's life assail,  
Toil, envy, want the patron, and the jail.

Johnson explains that the weakness and the worst of melancholy is the motivation to get better life. Education is important to people in order to increase their philosophy of life, broaden their idea so that they are easy to solve their problems in their lives. He explains that the education only for the haves but also for the common people, so that there is not any discrimination in education.

The last education problem is the condition that the government does not have attention in creating education for people. The explanation of the last problem is found in lines 161-164

"See nations slowly wise, and meanly just,  
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.



If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,  
Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end".

In Johnson's era the authority was slow to solve education's problem. The authority was busy to strengthen the king's power. There was limitation for people to get education in the college. Johnson hopes that the authority paid much attention in creating education. In the poem, it is indicated that he is worry if there are not any successful people such as Lydiat and Galileo.

### 5.1.2 Political Matters

In political matters, the thesis analyzes about some deviation in political affairs and some ideas from some political figures. Some deviation in political affairs are the effect of civil war to social lives and people's tempere; bribery in the election of the members of parliament. The figures in the political matters are George Villiers, Cardinal Wolsey, William laud, Alexander the Great and Charles XII of Sweden. George Villiers represents of the figure that creates the disturbance in the society. Cardinal Wolsey and William Laud represent the figures who deviate from religious teaching for getting advantages in power so there is not clear job description. Alexander the Great and Charles XII of Sweden are the example of figures that created war in the society and powerful figure and leader.

Civil war provides deep effect to the citizen. The effect of civil war is that they have to live in hard condition. The explanation of the effect of civil war is expressed in lines 37-41.

The needy traveler, serene and gay,  
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.  
Does envy seize thee? Crush the upbraiding joy,  
Increase his reaches and his peace destroy;  
New fears in dire vicisstude invade,

The rustling brake alarms, and quivering shade,  
 Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,  
 One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.

The effect of civil war is began by people who feel afraid to realize their fate. They do not know what will happen in their future. The civil war makes the poor become poorer. The hard condition makes them steal goods in order to fulfill their needs. They build many camps to protect themselves from danger. The government does not pay attention to the poor. The authority is too busy to enrich itself. They use every chance to be wealthier and wealthier, to get position and fame. Their attitudes deviate from their former aim that is to be good people. The poor suffer in their daily lives. The effect of civil war influences the people's tempers. They become hot tempered and have to do more struggles in their lives. The result of social conflict is the existence of the poor and the haves. There is a wide gap between the haves and the poor. The haves become richer and the poor become poorer.

There were many problems related with politic affairs in England in Johnson's era. Johnson teaches about the civil war between bonny traitor (the Scottish Lord 1746) and the king's rival. About the situation of the civil war, Johnson describes in lines 29-36

Let history tell where the rival kings command,  
 And dubious title shakes the madded land,  
 When the statutes glean the refuse of the sword,  
 How much more safe the vassal than the lord,  
 Low skulks the hind beneath the rage of power,  
 And leaves the wealthy traitor in the tower,  
 Untouched his cottage, and his slumber sound,  
 Though confiscation's vultures hover round.

In the war the victims was not only common people but also the lords. People move to a save place and try to fulfill their needs. They

lost their family and property. The rival of the king and Bonny traitor were fight in order to get the new colony and to strengthen king's power. According to Johnson, people were in fight in the civil war as they disobeyed the law. The lord sacrificed their lives for the king. The rich people were even free from the punishment. People exploited the situation of war to take the profit from the others' misfortune. They robbed others' property.

In *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, Johnson shows the king's policy about the votes in an election. The explanation of the election is described in lines 91-98

But will not Britain hear the last appeal,  
 Sign her foes' doom, or guard her favorites' zeal?  
 Through freedom's son no more remonstrance,  
 Degrading nobles and controlling kings;  
 Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,  
 And ask no questions but the price of votes,  
 With weekly libels and septennial ale.  
 Their wish is full to riot and to rail.

At that time, a king has an absolute authority in the kingdom. It made the king have no protest and have sympathy from the people. People did not pay attention to criticize and to control the noblemen and the king's policy. In fact, every people had chance to express his/her opinion through their representatives but they did not use the chance. People want the king listen their voice but the king does not do what people want. The king gets the support by bribing the members of the parliament. The candidate of an election uses the weekly newspaper to attack and ridicule the rival. The political lampoon consists of their "rail and the riot". In England the election of the parliament holds every seven years.

The next turn is discuss the ideas from the figures. The first is William Laud. The figure is close with Charles I. He uses the position to enrich himself. Lines 165-174 explains the idea about William Laud.

Nor deem, when learning her last prize bestows,  
The glittering eminence exempt from foes;  
See when the vulgar' scapes, despised or awed,  
Rebellion vengeful talons seize on Laud.  
From manner minds though smaller fines,  
The plundered palace, or sequestered rent;  
Marked out by dangerous parts he meets the shock,  
And fatal learning leads him to the block:  
Around his tomb let art and genius weep,  
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.

To strengthen his, power Charles I appointed William Laud Archbishop of Canterbury as well as the head of parliament. In this way Charles I succeeded in changing Puritanism from religious movement to political movement. It was proved on the focus of the parliament works on tax policy. William Laud abused his power by deviating the kingdom's rule. People did the revolt against this deviation. He got the misfortune. He was executed in the tower. Really as the head of the church, he should give advice to the king about king's policy or help the people to solve their problems. As the head of the church, he must be wise in the attitude and saying. The quotation above is to criticise the political movement of the church's member. It means that he should strict in moral and religion.

Alexander the Great is the figure that is related with military matters. This figure is the Roman military's leader. In his era there are many deviation related with human vanity especially in military forces. Lines 175-190 explains the idea about Alexander the Great:

The festal blazes, the triumphal show,

The ravished standard, and the captive foe,  
 The senates thank, the gazette's pompous tale,  
 With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.  
 Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirled,  
 For such the steady Romans shook the world shine,  
 For such in distant lands the Britons land;  
 And stain with blood the Danube and the Rhine;  
 This power has praise that virtue scarce can warm,  
 Till fame supplies the universal charm.  
 Yet reason frowns on war's unequal game,  
 Where wasted nations raise a single a name,  
 And mortgages states their grandsires' wreaths regret  
 From age to in everlasting debt;  
 Wreaths which at least the dear-bought right convey  
 To trust on medals, or on stones decay.

The idea from Alexander the Great focused on human's vanity in military force. He has high self-confident in the battle. It makes him too proud with himself. Besides, he has high self-confidence to make the world in his hand. There are some positive effects from his attitude in order to reach the imagination. In the history, his powerful brought the kingdom in glorious' era. The era is supported by his motivation to become powerful people in the world. In the lines also tells about revolution, in fact, damaged both sides, either government or the people. Johnson also teaches that human's vanity could be learned from the wars that happened in Greek and Roman's war. Human's vanity about militarism was found in Greek. From the Roman war people could learn the ways Rome conquered European countries included Britain. The war to get power sacrificed people with their bloodsheds. When power got more appreciation, the virtue of life was put aside.

The next figure is Cardinal Wolsey. He is the head of the church in England. The figure deviates from religious teachings for getting

advantages in power for himself. Wolsey was the member of senates in the government.

In full blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,  
 Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand:  
 Top him the church, the realm, their power consign,  
 Through him the rays of regal bounty shine;  
 Turned by his nod the steam of honour flows  
 His smile alone security bestow:  
 Still to new heights his restless wishes tower,  
 Claims leads to claim, and power advances power;  
 Till conquest unresisted ceased to please,  
 And rights submitted, left him none to seize.  
 At length his sovereign frowns-the strain of state  
 Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.  
 Where'er he turns, he meets a stranger's eye  
 His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;  
 At once is lost the pride of awful state,  
 The golden canopy, the glittering plate,  
 The regal palace, the luxurious board,  
 The liveried army, and the menial lord.  
 With age, with cares, with maladies oppressed,  
 He seek the refuge of monastic rest.  
 Grief aids disease, remembered folly stings,  
 And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.

(Lines 99-120)

The explanation above tells that he abuses the power to enrich himself. Wolsey was the head of the church and government. He is close with the king. It makes him is easy to become the members of parliament. Besides, he has authority in law. Wolsey has many advantages and facilities in the situation. He becomes famous and rich. In the other side, other people do not agree with his policy. The condition makes the king does not like with his work. People are not sympathy to him. In the quotation above Johnson criticises about there is not any clear job description in the church. It means that the head of the church as the head of government.

The quotation below tells about George Villiers. He is close with Charles I and James I. Both of the kings are opposite. Lines 129-134 discusses about the idea from George Villiers:

What gave great Villiers to assassin's knife,  
 And fixed disease on Harley's closing life?  
 What murdered Wentworth, and what exiled Hyde,  
 By kings protected and to kings allied?  
 What but their wish indulged in courts to shine,  
 And power to great to keep or to resign?

The quotation above tells that Villiers is an example of the figure that creates disturbance. His position, as a man who close to the king created political dispute, and the victim of the dispute was the society. It means that he was close to the king but both of the kings were opposite. He is the victim of the king policy. In the kings' opinions Villiers is the source of the disaster in the kingdom.

The last figure is Charles Sweden. He is the military's leader as well as Alexander the Great. The idea about Charles Sweden is found in lines 192-222

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,  
 How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide;  
 A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,  
 No danger fright him, and no labors tire;  
 O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,  
 Unconquered lord of pleasure of pain;  
 No joys to him pacific scepters yield,  
 War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;  
 Behold surrounding kings their powers combines,  
 And one capitulate, and one resign;  
 Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;  
 "think nothing gained", he cries, "till naught remain,  
 On Moskow walls till Gothic standart fly  
 And all be mine beneath the polar sky".  
 The march begins in military state,  
 And nations on his eye suspended wait;  
 Stern famine guards the solitary coast,

And winter barricades the realms of frost,  
 He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay  
 Hide, blushing Glory, Hide Pultowa's day:  
 The vanguard hero leaves his broken bands,  
 And shoes his miseries in distant lands,  
 Condemned a needy supplicant to wait,  
 While ladies interpose, and slave debate.  
 But did not chance at length her error mend?  
 Did no subverted empire mark his end?  
 Did rival monarch give the fatal wound?  
 Or hostile millions press him to the ground?  
 His fall was destined to a barren strand,  
 A pretty fortress, and a dubious hand;  
 He left the name at which the world grew pale  
 To point a moral, or to adorn a tale.

The quotation above focused on Charles Sweden as man the example of agitator who created war in the society. It means that he uses his ability (military) to create the battle in the society. His life is focused on the show of force. There is not balance between creating peace and show of power. Johnson uses the figure of Charles Sweden to criticize the English's authority. The critic is about the military activities in order to show of force. There were many civil war happened in England in order to strengthen the king's power.

## 5.2 The Teaching on Ethics

*The Vanity of Human Wishes* describes the pride of English society. They are proud for their being rich, for being famous people. Some of them are proud for having high political status, gaining certain position in the Government's beaurocracy. The pride of the English people as Johnson describes in *The Vanity of Human Wishes* has relation with human attitude as well as human behavior. Both of them, that are human attitude and human behavior, are under the control of ethics. The study in this sub chapter deals with several



examples that Johnson reveals in *The Vanity of Human Wishes* concerning ethical deviation. Several people do the ethical deviation itself. Johnson thinks that there are ethical deviations in people's morality. They do the practice of breaking the convention found in the English society.

Johnson criticizes several English people in the transition period. Those people do great efforts to gain their ambition. In their deeds sometimes they deviate from the common rules that they have. They do their deed which deviate either from moral values or ethical value. Lines 25 and 26 of *The Vanity of human wishes* underscore the deviation that the English people make.

For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws  
For gold hireling judge distort the laws

The two lines above describe the way of the people in getting richness. They often break the law. They sometime victimize and sacrifice other people to reach their goal, that is, to be rich.

Several people deviated the rule of the law to reach the position as parliament members' senators. They wanted to be famous and rich by being senators. Meanwhile they did the wrong deeds in getting high political status. In fact, only a few people had good quality. Johnson describes those ambitious people in lines 73-76

Unnumbered of suppliants crowd preferment's gate  
Athirst for wealth and burning to be great;  
Delusive fortune hears the incessant call,  
They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.

The difficult situation that England faced influenced people's behavior. They tried hard fulfilling their needs even though they had to deviate the rule of law, that creates conflicts in the society, and causes low class society experienced bitter life. The poor people were

jealous toward the rich people. Lines 3-14 of the poem describe the social condition of the society:

Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,  
 And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;  
 Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate  
 O'er spread with snares the clouded maze of fate,  
 Where wavering man, betrayed by venturous pride  
 To tread the dreary paths without a guide,  
 As treacherous phantoms in the must delude,  
 Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good;  
 How rarely reason guides the suppliant's voice,  
 How nations sink by darling schemes oppress'd,  
 Rules of the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice,  
 When vengeance listens to the folly's request.

Honesty is an important aspect in ethics. At Johnson's lifetimes, English people were morally weak. People were afraid to criticize the wrong deeds committed by others. They thought that the best way in life was to "Keep silent". Thus, the weak morality made the social condition become worse. It is described in the following lines of *The Vanity of Human Wishes*,

Fate wings with the afflictive dart,  
 Each give of nature, and each grace of art;  
 With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,  
 With fatal sweetness elocution flows,  
 Impeachment stops the speaker's powerful breath,  
 And restless fire precipitates on death.

(Lines 15-20)

In their behavior, people tend to be greedy. They were greedy for being rich as well as for getting certain position. This condition is controversial to ethics. People became so proud of themselves, as well as individualistic. They did not pay attention to the life of the poor. They loved to live in worldly life, to think about richness. They did not care spiritual life any more. The condition of this kind of life can be found in lines 283-290 of the poem

Unnumbered maladies his join invade,  
 Lay siege to life and press the dire blockade;  
 But unextinguished avarice still remains,  
 And dreaded losses aggravate his pains ;  
 He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,  
 His bond of debt, and mortgages of lands;  
 Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,  
 Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.

Seeing the condition of the life of English society, Johnson thought that the English people themselves had to be able to solve their own problems. In *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, Johnson expresses two kinds of specific topics to advice the English society in overcoming their problems that are philosophical and religious view. In philosophical view Johnson refers to the ideas of Democritus while in his religious view, the most important thing that people have to do is the way of practicing their religion.

### 5.2.1 Philosophical Ideas

In this subchapter the dicusssion is focused on philosophical idea expressed by Democritus which, according to Johnson, important for the life of the English people. Firstly, Johnson quotes an idea that in life there is a picture of sorrow. In the poem, Johnson expresses the sorrow life that happens in the English society.

To make the life of English people better Johnson expresses Democritus idea about society. In the society, people life in any kind of manners, characteristics and background that based on their culture. The culture here is related to many aspect of life that can influence people's behavior, performance as well as their habit. In order to be able to avoid people's bad conduct society provides rules.

Regarding this idea, Democritus who ever lived earlier as a Greek philosopher provided Johnson quoted advices in lines 49-52.

Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,  
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth,  
See motley life in modern trapping dressed,  
And feed with varied fools the eternal jest:

The quotation above indicates Johnson's opinion about Democritus idea related to the English society of Johnson's time. He invited people to "See motley life in modern trapping dressed, and feed with varied tools the eternal jest" (lines 51-52). According to Johnson, many people were trapped by their personal ambition. People loved to live in "modern" life.

In Johnson view, when people could not control their ambition, they would be trapped into a dangerous situation. They even faced many problems and difficulties. That is why, understanding Democritus teaching was important. One of the important things that people have to consider in life is their perception on moral.

At that time, people had moral degradation. It was common that people deviated from the rule they made. They were selfish and proud. Johnson expressed the condition in lines 53-56:

Thou who couldst laugh where want enchained caprice,  
Toil crushed conceit, and man a piece:  
Where wealth unloved without a mourner died:  
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride;

The above quotation expresses that people could not control their lives in gaining their ambition. The ambition makes people be blind to see the truth. Moreover, one of the ambitions that they want to get is to be rich. Becoming rich, people become more and more proud. They tended to humiliate others.

The next idea that Johnson exposes in the poem is the way to solve the problems on conflicts. The following quotation is about Johnson idea.

Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,  
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;  
When change of favorites made no change of laws,  
Heard before they judged a cause;

(Lines 57-60)

In the above quotation, Johnson shows his way in criticizing George II. The quotation above was taken from *Juvenal Tenth Satire*. It was an Italian poem used in imagined of the golden age of Rome.

According to Johnson in George II's time's politicians were in conflict. Those politicians could not overcome their conflict in wisdom. They did not overcome the conflicts reasonably.

In the next line Johnson quoted Democritus idea about pluralistic life in the society.

How wouldst thou shake at Britain's modish tribe  
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe  
Attentive truth and nature to descry,  
And pierce each scene with philosophic eye,  
To thee were solemn toys or empty show  
The robes of pleasures and the veils of woe:  
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,  
Such was the scorn that filled the sage's mind,  
Renewed at every glance on human kind;  
How just that scorn eye thy voice declare,  
Search every state, and canvass every prayer.

(Lines 61-72)

Many kinds of people lived in England. Conflict sometime happened in the society. The conflicts were difficult to be solved as their leaders were not wise. According to Johnson, referring to Democritus advises to solve the conflicts people had to be wise,

tolerance and faithful in religion. If they lived in good tolerance, Johnson believes the condition would be better.

Johnson criticized on old idea that life was a picture of sorrow. The sorrow life that people experienced was related to their pride. People tried hard to be rich, to be famous, to get a good position. The idea is found in lines 255-258

Enlarge my life with multitude of days!  
In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays;  
Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know,  
That life protracted is protracted woe.

The quotation tells that life is the picture of sorrow. People had not to run away from sorrow; even they had to face it. They had to get advantage from the sorrow experience. England at that time was in the transition period. In that difficult situation, Johnson taught that people had not to be optimistic. They had to learn how to come out from sorrow life. Philosophically according to Johnson, "Life is every where, a state in which much is to be endured and little to be enjoyed", and his other idea saying "The cure for the greatest part of human miseries not is radical but palliative". (Encyclopedia Americana-volume 16.1988:176)

In the following quotation, Johnson expresses about people who faced hard life in solving their problems.

Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,  
And shuts up all the passages of joy:  
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,  
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flower;  
With listless eyes the dotard views the store  
He views, and wonder that they please no more;  
Now pall the tasteless meats, and joyless wines,  
And luxury with sighs her slave resigns.

(Lines 259-266)

In the beginning, sorrow life brought people into a difficult situation. It was hard for them to face the reality. The lines above show that people were in a very crucial problem. They did not have any hope for a better life. They had a dark future. Johnson advised people to have bravery in facing the difficulties. The main purpose was getting their happiness. Johnson described that life was like the season. Life was not monotonous. It was full of variations. With their hard efforts, Johnson believes that people could go out from any problems.

Johnson also describes causes of the sorrow life that people experienced. Among those causes was the way men thought about life, bad influences from the surroundings, and the loss of someone he loved.

In the poem, Johnson describes that men had to have a correct idea in his life. Men had to listen to his consciousness. In their conduct and behavior, they had to their own self-consciousness. The following quotation indicates those ideas:

Approach, ye minstrel, try the soothing strain,  
 Diffuse the tuneful lenitives of pain:  
 No sound, alas! would touch the impervious ear,  
 Though dancing mountains witnessed Orpheus near,  
 Nor lute nor lyre his feeble powers attend,  
 Nor sweeter music of a virtuous friend,  
 But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,  
 Perversely grave, or positively wrong.  
 The still returning tale, and lingering jest,  
 Perplex the fawning niece and pampered guest,  
 While growing hopes scarce awe the gathering sneer,  
 And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear;  
 The watchful guest still hint the last offence,  
 The daughter's, the son's expense,  
 Improve his heady rage with treacherous skill,  
 And mold his passions till they make his will.

(Lines 267-282)

The above lines tell that men can express his thought through literary works. Literary works can be the expression of the oppressed feeling. A poet for instance write a ballad, sung it accompanied by a lyre to express his feeling. At that time, it was difficult to launch criticism. That is why the poet wrote poems on satire. In short, through literary works a poet could make the life of the society better.

The next thing, that Johnson discusses, is the bad influence that happened in the society. The following lines prove about that situation.

Unnumbered maladies his joint invade,  
Lay siege to life and press the dire blockade;  
But unextinguished avarice still remains,  
And dreaded losses aggravate his pains,  
He returns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,  
His bounds of debt, and mortgages of lands;  
Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,  
Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.  
But grant, the virtuous of temperate prime  
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime;  
An age that melts with Unperchieved decay,  
And glides in modest innocence away,  
Whose peaceful day benevolence enders,  
Whose night congratulating Conscience cheers,  
The general favorite as the general friend:  
Such age there is, who shall with it end?

(Lines 283-298)

In the society, there were many greedy people. The greediness made their behavior so bad. They were dishonest. Johnson advised people to change from bad behavior to be good behavior before death comes to them. This condition was very important for a better life in the society.



The next thing that Johnson discusses is the lost of someone people love, either the member of the family or friends. The lost of someone people love show had bad influence. The following lines show the proofs.

Yet even on this her loud Misfortune flings,  
 To press the weary minutes' flagging wings;  
 New sorrow rises as the day returns,  
 A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.  
 Now kindred merit fills the sable bier,  
 Now lacerated Friendship claims a tear;  
 Year chases year, decay pursues decay,  
 Still drops some joy from withering life away;  
 New forms arise, and different views engage,  
 Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage:  
 Till pitying nature signs the last release,  
 And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.

(Lines 299-310)

The above quotation tells about the nightmare of one who lost someone that he loved the most. In the transition period, there were conflicts among the members of the society. Conflicts also happened between the members of families. The inharmonious situation made unhappy relation among the members of the family. Jealousy happened everywhere.

The final thing that Johnson discusses in the poem is the bad characteristic of men. People tended to hide the truth. They behaved unwisely. Among the example was having concubines-that happened to honorable men. People needed to be careful in their lives.

The topic that Johnson discusses in the way of people to hide the truth and to behave without wisdom. The three people that Johnson mentioned as the example are John Churchil, Jonathan Swift and Crouseaus. The following lines tell about that situation.

But few there are whom hours like these await,

Who set unclouded in the gulfs of fate,  
 From Lydia's monarch should the search descend,  
 By Solon cautioned to regard his end,  
 In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,  
 Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise,  
 From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,  
 And Swift expires a driveler and show.

(Lines 311-318)

The lines above tell about Croeseus, Jonathan Swift, and John Churchill (Duke of Marlborough). Those three people experienced bad condition in their position. They never told the truth about the true things. They did not control their deed. Johnson wants that people were able to do the best choice when they faced crucial problems. The wrong choice that they made would bring them into a crucial problem.

Johnson criticizes Prince of Wales namely Frederick who had a concubine, Anne Vane and James II who had Chaterine Sedley as his concubine. The fact proved that the noblemen did not give good examples in their behavior. They even did immoral deed. The following lines show Johnson expresses the idea of men who exploited physical beauty.

The teeming mother, anxious for her race,  
 Begs for each birth the fortune of face:  
 Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring;  
 And Sedley cured the form that pleased a king.  
 Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes,  
 Whom pleasure keeps too busy to be wise,  
 Whom joys with soft varieties invite,  
 By day the frolic, and the dance by night;  
 Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,  
 And ask the latest fashion of the heart;  
 What care, what rules your heed less charms shall save,  
 Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave?  
 Against your fame with Fondness Hate combines  
 The rival batters, and the lozer mines.

With distant voice neglected virtue calls,  
 Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls,  
 Tired with contempt, she quits the slippery reign,  
 And pride and Prudence take her seat in vain.  
 In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,  
 The harmless freedom, and the private friend.  
 The guardians yield, by force superior plied:  
 To interest, Prudence; and to flattery, Pride.  
 Now beauty falls betrayed, despised, distressed,  
 And hissing infamy proclaims the rest.

(Lines 319-342)

The quotation above describe clearly about men who cannot resist physical beauty. The men means the noblemen who have concubine. In the society they become public figure. It means that they usually as the centre of current issues or person who have good image in the society. Johnson also tells that they have other effect of men who have concubine is the men cannot control their attitude. They abuse their responsibility and relation among people.

### 5.2.2 Religious Matters

In religious matters, Johnson expresses his idea that based on Stoicism. Stoicism taught that to gain a happy life people have to practice Christian values. The important things that people have to do in their lives must refer to the teaching on love, patience and honesty.

Johnson says that to face the fortune of the future life people have to realize their own fate. Lines 343-350 of the poem tells about the ideas related to religious matters:

Inquirer, cease; petitions yet remains,  
 Which Heaven may hear, nor deem religion vain.

The quotation above is Johnson expression related to mankind who are afraid in facing their hope for the future life. In Johnson mind, people hopeless to face their future, as they do not practice

religious teachings. Practicing religious teaching will make people live in peace. One of the teachings is that they have to lay their lives in God's hands. When people have trouble in their lives, they have to come to God.

It is common that people face dissatisfaction. To make people come out from dissatisfaction, Johnson expresses his idea in lines 351-356.

Still raise for good the supplicating  
But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice.  
Safe in His power, whose eyes discern afar  
The secret ambush of a suspicious prayer.  
Implore His aid, in His decisions rest,  
Secure, whate'er He gives the best.

The lines above express Johnson's idea that men must be hopeless when they face dissatisfaction. Men even have to change dissatisfaction to be a life spirit. This life spirit is a means of to gain success. In the God's hand, Johnson believes, men will find happiness. The reason is that is God who destinate men's fate. Meanwhile, men sometimes forget God's role in their lives. They think that they can destinate their own lives. They forget that they have to focalize their lives in love. There will be no crucial problems in society when the society members love each other. Mutual understandings of the society members make their lives in peace. This idea is expressed in lines 361 saying "For love, which scarce collective man can fill".

The second aspect is about patience. In solving the problems of life, people have to hard to find out the solution. The lines clarifying that idea is "For patience sovereign o'er transmuted ill" (line 362).

The last aspect for vices and virtue is honesty. When people always refer to honesty in their lives, they will meet a way to choose the best choice. They can live in common rule. They can do every

thing with their own responsibility. People will always refer their deed on good morality. Line 363, "For faith, that painting for happier seat" strengthen the idea on honesty.

Fulfilling those three important aspects, Johnson believes that people can live in a happy life. A happy life is not found only in richness. The real happiness is found in heaven. Johnson expresses in line 367-368 "With these celestial wisdom calms the main" and "And makes the happiness she does not find".

### **5.3 The Poet's Message in *The Vanity of Human Wishes***

From the earlier subchapter, readers can catch the message that the poet wants to express in the poem. The two important advices that Johnson wants to express are, social teachings and the ethics. In the social teaching the poet expresses his ideas on education and politics. While in the ethics he expresses his idea on religious and philosophical matters.

According to Johnson education is important for everybody. Education is important to increase people's lives. People who have good education will be able to solve their problems when they use their thought. Every body has chance to get education. There must be no restriction for everyone to be educated. Those people who have education chance are the rich and the poor, men and women, the honorable and common people. Everybody has the same rights in education. In human communication there must not be discrimination.

In political affairs, According to Johnson, the politicians must not concentrate on his party. Wisdom is needed to handle political affairs. All people have rights in political matters. Every people have

duty to participate in the development of the country. A man of good capability has his rights for getting a position in the government.

About philosophical idea, firstly Johnson refers to Democritus' idea. Johnson quotes Democritus' idea in handling problems of life in the society. Several aspects in the society which enrich its plurality must work hand in hand to develop the society. The way to handle the problems caused by the pluralistics in the society are, for instance, appreciating the difference of others, maintaining everyone's ambition, and avoiding the conflicts found in the society.

In Johnson's idea, people must be patient in facing their sorrow. They have to have good spirit to develop the country. The sorrow in life may create people to be mature.

The lost thing is about the practice of religious life. According to Johnson, people must life in love, honesty, patience to let God themselves work on men. Those things are the important lesson for English people in Johnson's time.



## CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION

In *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, Johnson combines his experience and knowledge to tell the condition in England. The poem narrates the kinds of problem of life; the main figures' ideas represent several fields, and the message to the reader. In addition, the poem is narrative. The main source of the problems of life in England is man's vanity. The vanity is related to the wealth, fame, and position. The effect of vanity causes sorrowful life of low class people. They move to a safe place and lives in poverty. The hard condition build hard tempers and makes the crimes increased. There is not any control to the king's attitude and policy. People cannot express their ideas. The condition makes Johnson uses his stoic as a means of expressing his opinion. He uses the figures as the example of the problems so the reader can understand the idea from the case. The figures are not only as the example of the problem but also as Johnson's means to represent his idea and opinion related with the figures' fields.

In the beginning of the story, Johnson describes general condition in England. He describes detail explanation about man's vanity. The kinds of problems in the poem are classified into two kinds. They are social and ethical problems. Johnson also tells the Greek philosopher's opinion to comment and advise about the condition in England. Democritus gives advise about the motley of life in the society. He gives useful information and judgment as a wise thought. Johnson also tells Cardinal Wolsey and William Laud represent the figures who deviate from religious teaching for getting advantages in power and there is not any clear job description.

Besides, political matters Johnson tells about revolution in order to get military victories. The illustration is shown by Alexander and Charles XII. Johnson also reiterates his morality about inconsistent in political position. It represents in the fate of George Villiers (The 1st Duke of Buckingham) who assassinated in the reign of Charles I. The poem also tells Johnson's own experience when he was in the college. It represents his life in order to seek fame. There is much wise advice that show in the poem. It is hoped that useful to enrich the philosophy of life. Johnson's final paragraph contains the stoic answer to the seeming helpless of man, the victim of fate: remove desires to avoid disappointment. Johnson's solution about human vanity relates to the Christianity values.

This thesis is important for readers. There are many benefits to enrich philosophy of life. It can be concluded that the ambition and pride causes man's vanity. This is proved by the real events and figures's ideas in the poem.



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The Vanity of Human Wishes<sup>1</sup>

IN IMITATION OF THE TENTH SATIRE OF JUVENAL

Let Observation, with extensive view,  
 Survey mankind, from China to Peru;  
 Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,  
 And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;  
 Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate  
 O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,  
 Where wavering man, betrayed by venturous pride  
 To tread the dreary paths without a guide,  
 As treacherous phantoms in the mist delude,  
 Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good;  
 How rarely Reason guides the stubborn choice,  
 Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice;  
 How nations sink, by darling schemes oppressed,  
 When Vengeance listens to the fool's request.  
 Fate wings with every wish the afflictive dart,  
 Each gift of nature, and each grace of art;  
 With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,  
 With fatal sweetness elocution flows,  
 Impeachment stops the speaker's powerful breath,  
 And restless fire precipitates on death.

1. *The Vanity of Human Wishes* is an imitation of Juvenal's *Satire X*. Although it closely follows the order and the ideas of the Latin poem, it remains a very personal work, for Johnson has used the Roman Stoic's satire as a means of expressing his own Christian stoicism and his sense of the tragic in human life. He has tried to reproduce in English verse the qualities he thought especially Juvenalian: stateliness, pointed sentences, declamatory grandeur. The poem is difficult because of the extreme compactness of the style: every verse is forced to convey the greatest possible amount of meaning, and as a result the syntax is occasionally obscure. At first the language may seem too general, the frequent personifications mere abstractions. But although Johnson's poetic theory demanded that the poet should deal in the general rather than the particular (cf. his phrase "the grandeur of generality") he certainly did not intend that the general should become the merely abstract: observe, for example, how he makes ab-

stract nouns concrete, active, and dramatic by using them as subjects of active and dramatic verbs: "Hate dogs their flight, and Insult mocks their end" (line 78). And when the more usual 18th-century combination of general adjective modifying general noun is used, the adjectives are carefully chosen for foreseen effects, as in lines 113-16 (in the first three lines they are used to create a cumulative effect of regal splendor, and in the last line a witty and intellectual impression of Cardinal Wolsey's pride and power): "At once is lost the pride of awful state, / The golden canopy, the glittering plate, / The regal palace, the luxurious board, / The liveried army, and the menial lord." The personified abstractions of Collins and Gray, however, are essentially pictorial, grouped in expressive attitudes as they would be in an allegorical painting. A comparison of their method of personification with Johnson's can be readily made by studying Gray's *Eton* ode, stanzas 5-8, along with lines 135-164 of the *Vanity*.

But scarce observed, the knowing and the bold  
Fall in the general massacre of gold;  
Wide-wasting pest! that rages unconfined,  
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind;  
For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,  
For gold the hiring judge distorts the laws;  
Wealth heaped on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys,  
The dangers gather as the treasures rise.

Let History tell where rival kings command,  
And dubious title shakes the maddened land,  
When statutes glean the refuse of the sword,  
How much more safe the vassal than the lord,  
Low skulks the hind beneath the rage of power,  
And leaves the wealthy traitor<sup>2</sup> in the Tower,  
Untouched his cottage, and his slumbers sound,  
Though Confiscation's vultures hover round.

The needy traveler, serene and gay,  
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.  
Does envy seize thee? crush the upbraiding joy,  
Increase his riches and his peace destroy;  
New fears in dire vicissitude invade,  
The rustling brake<sup>3</sup> alarms, and quivering shade,  
Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,  
One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.

Yet still one general cry the skies assails,  
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales;  
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,  
The insidious rival and the gaping heir.

Once more, Democritus,<sup>4</sup> arise on earth,  
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth,  
See motley life in modern trappings dressed,  
And feed with varied fools the eternal jest:  
Thou who couldst laugh where Want enchained Caprice,  
Toil crushed Conceit, and man was of a piece;  
Where Wealth unloved without a mourner died;  
And scarce a sycophant was fed by Pride;  
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,  
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;  
Where change of favorites made no change of laws,  
And senates heard before they judged a cause;  
How wouldst thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,  
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe?  
Attentive truth and nature to descry,  
And pierce each scene with philosophic eye,  
To thee were solemn toys or empty show  
The robes of pleasures and the veils of woe:  
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,  
Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson first wrote "bonny traitor," recalling the Jacobite uprising of 1745 and the execution of four of its Scot leaders.

<sup>3</sup> Thicket.

<sup>4</sup> A Greek philosopher of the late 5th century B.C., remembered as the "laughing philosopher" because men's follies only moved him to mirth.

Such was the scorn that filled the sage's mind,  
Renewed at every glance on human kind;  
How just that scorn ere yet thy voice declare,  
Search every state, and canvass every prayer.

Unnumbered suppliants crowd Preferment's gate,  
Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;  
Delusive Fortune hears the incessant call.  
They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.  
On every stage the foes of peace attend,  
Hate dogs their flight, and Insult mocks their end.  
Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door  
Pours in the morning worshiper no more;<sup>5</sup>  
For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,  
To growing wealth the dedicator flies;  
From every room descends the painted face,  
That hung the bright palladium<sup>6</sup> of the place;  
And smoked in kitchens, or in auctions sold,  
To better features yields the frame of gold;  
For now no more we trace in every line  
Heroic worth, benevolence divine;  
The form distorted justifies the fall,  
And Detestation rids the indignant wall.

But will not Britain hear the last appeal,  
Sign her foes' doom, or guard her favorites' zeal?  
Through Freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,  
Degrading nobles and controlling kings;  
Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,  
And ask no questions but the price of votes,  
With weekly libels and septennial ale,<sup>7</sup>  
Their wish is full to riot and to rail.

In full-blown dignity, see Wolsey<sup>8</sup> stand,  
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand:  
To him the church, the realm, their powers consign,  
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine:  
Turned by his nod the stream of honor flows,  
His smile alone security bestows:  
Still to new heights his restless wishes tower,  
Claim leads to claim, and power advances power;  
Till conquest unresisted ceased to please,  
And rights submitted, left him none to seize.  
At length his sovereign frowns—the train of state  
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.  
Where'er he turns, he meets a stranger's eye,  
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;

5. Statesmen gave interviews and received friends and petitioners at levees, or morning receptions.

6. An image of Pallas Athena, which fell from heaven and was preserved at Troy. Not until it was stolen by Diomedes could the city fall to the Greeks.

7. Ministers and even the king freely bought support by bribing members of Parliament, who in turn won elections

by buying votes. "Weekly libels": politically motivated lampoons published in the weekly newspapers; "septennial ale": the ale given away by candidates at parliamentary elections, held at least every seven years.

8. Thomas Cardinal Wolsey (ca. 1475–1530), Lord Chancellor and favorite of Henry VIII. Shakespeare dramatized his fall in *Henry VIII*.

At once is lost the pride of awful state,  
The golden canopy, the glittering plate,  
The regal palace, the luxurious board, 115  
The liveried army, and the menial lord.

With age, with cares, with maladies oppressed,  
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.  
Grief aids disease, remembered folly stings,  
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings. 120

Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine,  
Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end be thine?  
Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content,  
The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?

For why did Wolsey, near the steep of fate, 125  
On weak foundations raise the enormous weight?  
Why but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,  
With louder ruin to the gulfs below?

What gave great Villiers<sup>9</sup> to the assassin's knife,  
And fixed disease on Harley's closing life? 130  
What murdered Wentworth, and what exiled Hyde,  
By kings protected and to kings allied?

What but their wish indulged in courts to shine,  
And power too great to keep or to resign?

When first the college rolls receive his name, 135  
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;  
Resistless burns the fever of renown

Caught from the strong contagion of the gown:  
O'er Bodley's dome his future labors spread,  
And Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head.<sup>1</sup> 140

Are these thy views? proceed, illustrious youth,  
And Virtue guard thee to the throne of Truth!  
Yet should thy soul indulge the generous heat,  
Till captive Science yields her last retreat;

Should Reason guide thee with her brightest ray, 145  
And pour on misty Doubt resistless day;

Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,  
Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;  
Should tempting Novelty thy cell refrain,

And Sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain; 150  
Should Beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,

Nor claim the triumph of a lettered heart;  
Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,

Nor Melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade;

9. George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, favorite of James I and Charles I, was assassinated in 1628. Mentioned in the following lines are: Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, Chancellor of the Exchequer and later Lord Treasurer under Queen Anne (1710-14), impeached and imprisoned by the Whigs in 1715; Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, intimate and adviser of Charles I, impeached by the Long Parliament and executed 1641; Ed-

ward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon ("to kings allied" because his daughter married James, Duke of York), Lord Chancellor under Charles II; impeached in 1667, he fled to the Continent.

1. "Bodley's dome" is the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Roger Bacon (ca. 1214-94), scientist and philosopher, taught at Oxford, where his study, according to tradition, would collapse when a man greater than he should appear at Oxford.

Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,  
Nor think the doom of man reversed for thee;  
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,  
And pause a while from letters, to be wise;  
There mark what ills' the scholar's life assail,  
Toil, envy, want, the patron,<sup>2</sup> and the jail.  
See nations slowly wise, and meanly just,  
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.  
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,  
Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end.<sup>3</sup>

Nor deem, when Learning her last prize bestows,  
The glittering eminence exempt from foes;  
See when the vulgar 'scapes, despised or awed,  
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.<sup>4</sup>  
From meaner minds though smaller fines content,  
The plundered palace, or sequestered rent;<sup>5</sup>  
Marked out by dangerous parts he meets the shock,  
And fatal Learning leads him to the block:  
Around his tomb let Art and Genius weep,  
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.

The festal blazes, the triumphal show,  
The ravished standard, and the captive foe,  
The senate's thanks, the gazette's pompous tale,  
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.  
Such bribes the rapid Greek<sup>6</sup> o'er Asia whirled,  
For such the steady Romans shook the world;  
For such in distant lands the Britons shine,  
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine;  
This power has praise that virtue scarce can warm,  
Till fame supplies the universal charm.  
Yet Reason frowns on War's unequal game,  
Where wasted nations raise a single name,  
And mortgaged states their grandsires' wreaths regret  
From age to age in everlasting debt;  
Wreaths which at last the dear-bought right convey  
To rust on medals, or on stones decay.

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,  
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles<sup>7</sup> decide;  
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,  
No dangers fright him, and no labors tire;  
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,  
Unconquered lord of pleasure and of pain;

2. In the first edition, "garret." For the reason of the change see Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.

3. Thomas Lydiat (1572-1646), Oxford scholar, died impoverished because of his Royalist sympathies. Galileo (1564-1642), the famous astronomer, was imprisoned as a heretic by the Inquisition in 1633; he died blind.

4. Appointed Archbishop of Canterbury by Charles I, William Laud followed rigorously high-church policies and was executed by order of the Long Parlia-

ment in 1645.

5. During the Commonwealth, the estates of many Royalists were pillaged and their incomes confiscated ("sequestered") by the state.

6. Alexander the Great.

7. Charles XII of Sweden (1682-1718). Defeated by the Russians at Poltava (1709), he escaped to Turkey and tried to form an alliance against Russia with the sultan. Returning to Sweden, he attacked Norway and was killed in the attack on Fredrikshald.



No joys to him pacific scepters yield,  
 War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;  
 Behold surrounding kings their powers combine,  
 And one capitulate, and one resign;<sup>8</sup> 200  
 Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;  
 "Think nothing gained," he cries, "till naught remain,  
 On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,  
 And all be mine beneath the polar sky."  
 The march begins in military state, 205  
 And nations on his eye suspended wait;  
 Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,  
 And Winter barricades the realms of Frost;  
 He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay—  
 Hide, blushing Glory, hide Pultowa's day: 210  
 The vanquished hero leaves his broken bands,  
 And shows his miseries in distant lands;  
 Condemned a needy supplicant to wait,  
 While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.  
 But did not Chance at length her error mend? 215  
 Did no subverted empire mark his end?  
 Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?  
 Or hostile millions press him to the ground?  
 His fall was destined to a barren strand,  
 A petty fortress, and a dubious hand; 220  
 He left the name at which the world grew pale,  
 To point a moral, or adorn a tale.  
 All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,  
 From Persia's tyrant to Bavaria's lord.<sup>9</sup>  
 In gay hostility, and barbarous pride, 225  
 With half mankind embattled at his side,  
 Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,  
 And starves exhausted regions in his way;  
 Attendant Flattery counts his myriads o'er,  
 Till counted myriads soothe his pride no more; 230  
 Fresh praise is tried till madness fires his mind,  
 The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind;  
 New powers are claimed, new powers are still bestowed,  
 Till rude resistance lops the spreading god;  
 The daring Greeks deride the martial show, 235  
 And heap their valleys with the gaudy foe;  
 The insulted sea with humbler thought he gains,  
 A single skiff to speed his flight remains;  
 The encumbered oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast  
 Through purple billows and a floating host. 240  
 The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,  
 Tries the dread summits of Caesarean power,

8. Frederick IV of Denmark capitulated to Charles in 1700; Augustus II of Poland resigned his throne to Charles in 1704.

9. Xerxes ("Persia's tyrant") invaded Greece and was totally defeated in the sea battle off Salamis, 480 B.C.; the

Electoral Charles Albert ("Bavaria's Lord") caused the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) when he contested the crown of the Empire with Maria Theresa ("Fair Austria" in line 245).

With unexpected legions bursts away,  
 And sees defenseless realms receive his sway;  
 Short sway! fair Austria spreads her mournful charms, 245  
 The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms;  
 From hill to hill the beacon's rousing blaze  
 Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise;  
 The fierce Croatian, and the wild Hussar,<sup>1</sup>  
 With all the sons of savage crowd the war; 250  
 The baffled prince, in honor's flattering bloom  
 Of hasty greatness finds the fatal doom;  
 His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,  
 And steals to death from anguish and from shame.  
 Enlarge my life with multitude of days!  
 In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays; 255  
 Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know,  
 That life protracted is protracted woe.  
 Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,  
 And shuts up all the passages of joy; 260  
 In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,  
 The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flower;  
 With listless eyes the dotard views the store,  
 He views, and wonders that they please no more;  
 Now pall the tasteless meats, and joyless wines, 265  
 And Luxury with sighs her slave resigns.  
 Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,  
 Diffuse the tuneful lenitives<sup>2</sup> of pain:  
 No sounds, alas! would touch the impervious ear,  
 Though dancing mountains witnessed Orpheus<sup>2a</sup> near; 270  
 Nor lute nor lyre his feeble powers attend,  
 Nor sweeter music of a virtuous friend,  
 But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,  
 Perversely grave, or positively wrong.  
 The still returning tale, and lingering jest, 275  
 Perplex the fawning niece and pampered guest,  
 While growing hopes scarce awe the gathering sneer,  
 And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear;  
 The watchful guests still hint the last offense;  
 The daughter's petulance, the son's expense, 280  
 Improve his heady rage with treacherous skill,  
 And mold his passions till they make his will.  
 Unnumbered maladies his joints invade,  
 Lay siege to life and press the dire blockade;  
 But unextinguished avarice still remains, 285  
 And dreaded losses aggravate his pains;  
 He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,  
 His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands;  
 Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,  
 Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies. 290

1. Hungarian light cavalry.

2. Medicines that relieve pain.

2a. A legendary poet who played on the

lyre so beautifully that wild beasts were spellbound.

But grant, the virtues of a temperate prime  
 Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime;  
 An age that melts with unperceived decay,  
 And glides in modest innocence away;  
 Whose peaceful day Benevolence endears, 295  
 Whose night congratulating Conscience cheers;  
 The general favorite as the general friend:  
 Such age there is, and who shall wish its end?  
 Yet even on this her load Misfortune flings,  
 To press the weary minutes' flagging wings; 300  
 New sorrow rises as the day returns,  
 A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.  
 Now kindred Merit fills the sable bier,  
 Now lacerated Friendship claims a tear;  
 Year chases year, decay pursues decay, 305  
 Still drops some joy from withering life away;  
 New forms arise, and different views engage,  
 Superfluous lags the veteran<sup>3</sup> on the stage,  
 Till pitying Nature signs the last release,  
 And bids afflicted Worth retire to peace. 310  
 But few there are whom hours like these await,  
 Who set unclouded in the gulfs of Fate.  
 From Lydia's monarch<sup>4</sup> should the search descend,  
 By Solon cautioned to regard his end,  
 In life's last scene what prodigies surprise, 315  
 Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise!  
 From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,  
 And Swift expires a driveler and a show.<sup>5</sup>  
 The teeming mother, anxious for her race,  
 Begs for each birth the fortune of a face: 320  
 Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring;<sup>6</sup>  
 And Sedley cursed the form that pleased a king.  
 Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes,  
 Whom Pleasure keeps too busy to be wise,  
 Whom Joys with soft varieties invite, 325  
 By day the frolic, and the dance by night;  
 Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,  
 And ask the latest fashion of the heart;  
 What care, what rules your heedless charms shall save,  
 Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave? 330  
 Against your fame with Fondness Hate combines,  
 The rival batters, and the lover mines.  
 With distant voice neglected Virtue calls,  
 Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls;  
 Tired with contempt, she quits the slippery reign, 335

3. A veteran of life, not of war.

4. Croesus, the wealthy and fortunate king, was warned by Solon not to count himself happy till he ceased to live. He lost his crown to Cyrus the Great of Persia.

5. John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, England's brilliant general

during most of the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-13); Jonathan Swift, who passed the last four years of his life in utter senility.

6. Anne Vane, mistress of Frederick, Prince of Wales (son of George II). Catherine Sedley, mistress of James II.



And Pride and Prudence take her seat in vain,  
In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,  
The harmless freedom, and the private friend.  
The guardians yield, by force superior plied:  
To Interest, Prudence; and to Flattery, Pride. 310  
Now Beauty falls betrayed, despised, distressed,  
And hissing Infamy proclaims the rest.

Where then shall Hope and Fear their objects find?  
Must dull Suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?  
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate, 315  
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?  
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,  
No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?  
Inquirer, cease; petitions yet remain,  
Which Heaven may hear, nor deem religion vain. 350  
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,  
But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice.  
Safe in His power, whose eyes discern afar  
The secret ambush of a specious prayer.  
Implore His aid, in His decisions rest, 355  
Secure, whate'er He gives, He gives the best.  
Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires,  
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,  
Pour forth thy fervors for a healthful mind,  
Obedient passions, and a will resigned; 360  
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;  
For patience sovereign o'er transmuted ill;  
For faith, that panting for a happier seat,  
Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat:  
These goods for man the laws of Heaven ordain, 365  
These goods He grants, who grants the power to gain;  
With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,  
And makes the happiness she does not find.