Addresed to
George, Duke of Marlborough,
On seeing him surrounded by Fidlers, near the Statue of
John, Duke of Marlborough.

Had this statue a feeling as poignant and deep
As its prototype proved on fair Ramilies' ground,
Where the dead lay in thousands, oh, how would it weep
To see thee, thou Fool, with thy Fidlers around.

But the statue's like you, both heartless and cold,
From its tears and reproaches you're always exempt;
In your ancestor's face you may look full and bold,
Without even fearing one smile of contempt.

Then this is the place for your up and down stride,
Here cheerfully glide the dull hours away;
For here, and here only—your Grace is denied
That smile the world willingly gives you each day.

Oh, it writes us a lesson which each man may take,
And con over with profit—the giddiest elf
May grow wise, when he thinks that Nature could make
A Duke of a trifle so mean as yourself.

Oh, when thou shalt die—for every man dies,
The vilest of vile from their labours must rest,
Who think ye will weep, when Truth writes—"Here lies
"What was but a Fool, or a Fidler at best."

If wreaths, or if emblems must shine through the gloom
Of the vault you inhabit, we'll get cut out neat,
A fool's cap and bells to hang over your tomb,
And a basket of foul weeds shall lie at your feet.

There, there may they linger, oh there may they lie,
Till Time shall have wither'd the littlest part,
For none will be madmen enough to deny,
That they're emblems complete of your head and your heart.

Adieu, now adieu, since your Family's curst,
With the thing call'd a Fool,—when your gross life is pass'd,
Oh, may we not hope, that as you've been the First
Of a name so inspiring—you'll be also the Last!

* In this battle eight thousand of the enemy were left dead upon the field; the English also lost severely; and it is recorded of the Great Duke of Marlborough, that he shed tears. The battle was fought on Whitsunday, May 13, 1706.