

# January, 1795

By Mary Robinson

Pavement slipp'ry, people sneezing,  
Lords in ermine, beggars freezing;  
Titled gluttons dainties carving,  
Genius in a garret starving.

Lofty mansions, warm and spacious;  
Courtiers cringing and voracious;  
Misers scarce the wretched heeding;  
Gallant soldiers fighting, bleeding.


Wives who laugh at passive spouses;  
Theatres, and meeting-houses;  
Balls, where simp'ring misses languish;  
Hospitals, and groans of anguish.

Arts and sciences bewailing;  
Commerce drooping, credit failing;  
Placemen mocking subjects loyal;  
Separations, weddings royal.

Authors who can't earn a dinner;  
Many a subtle rogue a winner;  
Fugitives for shelter seeking;  
Misers hoarding, tradesmen breaking.

Taste and talents quite deserted;  
All the laws of truth perverted;  
Arrogance o'er merit soaring;  
Merit silently deploring.

Ladies gambling night and morning;  
Fools the works of genius scorning;  
Ancient dames for girls mistaken,  
Youthful damsels quite forsaken.



Some in luxury delighting;  
More in talking than in fighting;  
Lovers old, and beaux decrepid;  
Lordlings empty and insipid.

Poets, painters, and musicians;  
Lawyers, doctors, politicians:  
Pamphlets, newspapers, and odes,  
Seeking fame by different roads.

Gallant souls with empty purses;  
Gen'ral's only fit for nurses;  
School-boys, smit with martial spirit,  
Taking place of vet'ran merit.

Honest men who can't get places,  
Knave's who shew unblushing faces;  
Ruin hasten'd, peace retarded;  
Candor spurn'd, and art rewarded.