

CV. ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

It is not known with any degree of certainty what churchyard Gray had in mind when he composed the Elegy, and there is nothing in the poem itself that enables us to associate it with any particular place. Of the various places suggested, however, there is none whose claim is so generally admitted as that of Stoke-Pogis, a hamlet near Clough, in Buckinghamshire, about eighteen miles west of London. The poet often visited Stoke-Pogis, where his mother resided after his father's death, and it was in the "beautiful sequestered churchyard" of this place that he was buried, at his own request, beside his mother.

331. Curfew.—See note, p. 289. Here it means any bell ringing in the evening, fancifully supposed to announce the death of the day.

Tolls.—*To toll* is to ring slowly at regular intervals, as at funerals.

Knell.—See note, p. 240.

Parting.—See note, p. 80.

Lowing.—Is this word used as a mere general epithet of cattle, or is there a special fitness in its use under the circumstances the poet is describing?

Winds.—Another reading is "wind," which makes the line more melodious, but it is not so correct, grammatically, as "winds." The word may refer either to the slow, leisurely movements of the animals or to the winding course they follow; perhaps to both.

Lea.—See note, p. 98.

Plods—walks with slow, heavy tread, as a tired man does.

Weary way.—Transferred Epithet—a common figure in this poem. Notice that the words of this line may be placed in almost any order to give the same thought.

And . . . to me.—Explain, with special reference to the last two words.

Darkness.—Show from the two following stanzas that the poet does not mean *absolute darkness*.

Glimmering.—*To glimmer*, frequentative of *gleam*, is to give

forth feeble, unsteady rays of light.

Landscape.—That is, *land-shape*, the shape or aspect of that portion of land, with the various objects it contains, which the eye can take in at one view; hence often used for a picture of such a portion.

Solemn stillness.—Show the appropriateness of the epithet "solemn."

Holds.—Point out the subject and the object of this verb. Give reasons for your opinion.

Save.—Once a participle; now usually parsed as a preposition. See Mason's *Grammar*, art. 282.

Beetle.—Probably the May-bug, or cockchafer, which, on summer evenings, flies about in a clumsy, tumbling sort of flight, well described by "wheels," a word which Tennyson also uses to describe the motions of the bat.

Droning—giving forth a low, humming sound; perhaps, also, buzzing about in a useless manner, like a *drone*. An example of Onomatopœia.

Tinklings.—That is, of the sheep-bells. Show that the epithet "drowsy" and the verb "lull" are aptly used.

Ivy-mantled.—covered with ivy, as with a mantle or cloak. By