

115 *Lay*. Used, *metri gratia*, for 'verse.' 'Lay' is probably a Celtic word, and means properly 'a ballad, or song recited to music.'

Before the *Epitaph* Gray originally inserted this stanza—

"There scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen, are showers of violets found;
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground."

Gray afterwards omitted the lines, as forming too long a parenthesis; but they are in themselves as exquisite as anything he ever wrote.

119 Cf. Horace, *Odes*, iv. 3, 1—

"Quem tu Melpomene semel
Nascentem placido lumine videris."

[In what sense did *science* smile on Gray's birth?]

124 *A friend*. An editor annotates: "The friend whom Gray gained from heaven was Mason." Correct him.

[How far is the *Epitaph* true to Gray's character, as you know it from his life?]