

Thomas Gray's Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, and Other Poems, Oliver Goldsmith's the Deserted Village, the Traveller, and Other Poems (Classic Reprint)

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Gray and Goldsmith were contemporaries. Born in the so-called A ge of Pope, both lived well on into the period of English letters dominated by Samuel Johnson. The works of both give indications of the dawning romanticism v. hich was to result in the period of Wordsworth and Scott. Both were writers of fluent and admirable prose as well as poets. And there are some personal resemblances. Both found the prescribed work of college, especially mathematics, distasteful, and preferred to read at will; both travelled extensively on the continent; neither married. But the likenesses between the two are few and mainly superficial. In temperament, in experience, in kind and quantity of work, our authors were very different. Gray was a sober, retiring scholar, who lived by choice within college walls near the great libraries, shrinking from notoriety and cherishing a few friends with intellectual sympathies like his own. He was a painstaking student, devoted to knowledge for its own sake, keenly critical, and loth to publish his literary efforts to the world. Goldsmith, on the other hand, was convivial to a degree. He loved the society of his fellows, even the humblest and the rudest, and was warmly loved by them in return. His parents were poor.

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