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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

Dodsley, Robert

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Ode to the Right Honourable Francis Earl of Huntingdon. MDCCXLVII. By the Same.

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In thoſe unfading iſlands of the bleſt,
Where ſacred bards abide. Hail, honour'd Nymphs;
Thrice hail. for you the Cyrenaïc ſhell,
Behold, I touch, revering. To my ſongs
Be preſent ye with favourable feet,
And all profaner audience far remove.

O D E

To the Right Honourable

FRANCIS Earl of HUNTINGDON.

M DCC XLVII.

By the Same.

I. 1.

THE wiſe and great of every clime,
Through all the ſpacious walks of Time,
Where'er the Muſe her power diſplay'd,
With joy have liſten'd and obey'd.
For, taught of heaven, the ſacred Nine
Perſuaſive numbers, forms divine,
To mortal ſenſe impart:
They beſt the ſoul with glory fire;
They nobleſt counſels, boldeſt deeds inſpire;
And high o'er Fortune's rage inthrone the fixed heart.

I. 2. Nor

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I. 2.

Nor leſs prevailing is their charm
The vengeful boſom to diſarm ;
To melt the proud with human woe,
And prompt unwilling tears to flow.
Can wealth a power like this afford ?
Can Cromwell's arts, or Marlborough's ſword,
An equal empire claim ?
No, HASTINGS. Thou my words wilt own :
Thy breaſt the gifts of every Muſe hath known ;
Nor ſhall the giver's love diſgrace thy noble name:

I. 3.

The Muſe's awful art,
And the fair function of the poet's tongue,
Ne'er ſhalt thou bluſh to honour ; to aſſert
From all that ſcorned vice or ſlaviſh fear hath ſung:
Nor ſhall the blandiſhment of Tuſcan ſtrings
Warbling at will in pleaſure's myrtle bower ;
Nor ſhall the baſer notes to Celtic kings
By lying minſtrels paid in evil hour,
Move Thee to ſpurn the heavenly Muſe's reign:
A different ſtrain,
And other themes
From her prophetic ſhades and hallow'd ſtreams
(Thou well can'ſt witneſs) meet the purged ear :
Such, as when Greece to her immortal ſhell
Rejoicing liſten'd, godlike ſounds to hear ;
To hear the ſweet inſtructreſs tell

(While

(While men and heroes throng'd around)
How life its nobleſt uſe may find,
How beſt for freedom be reſign'd;
And how, by glory, virtue ſhall be crown'd.

II. 1.

Such was the * Chian father's ſtrain
To many a kind domeſtic train,
Whoſe pious hearth and genial bowl
Had chear'd the reverend pilgrim's ſoul:
When, every hoſpitable rite
With equal bounty to requite,
He ſtruck his magic ſtrings;
And pour'd ſpontaneous numbers forth,
And ſeiz'd their ears with tales of ancient worth,
And fill'd their muſing hearts with vaſt heroic things.

II. 2.

Now oft, where happy ſpirits dwell,
Where yet he tunes his charming ſhell,
Oft near him, with applauding hands,
The genius of his country ſtands.
To liſtening gods he makes him known,
That man divine, by whom were ſown
The ſeeds of Græcian fame:
Who firſt the race with freedom fir'd;
From whom Lycurgus Sparta's ſons inſpir'd;
From whom Platæan palms and Cyprian trophies came.

* *Homer.*

II. 3.

O nobleſt, happieſt age!
When Ariſtides rul'd, and Cimon fought;
When all the generous fruits of Homer's page
Exulting Pindar ſaw to full perfection brought.
O Pindar, oft ſhalt thou be hail'd of me:
Not that Apollo fed thee from his ſhrine;
Not that thy lips drank ſweetneſs from the bee;
Nor yet that, ſtudious of thy notes divine,
Pan danc'd their meaſure with the ſylvan throng:
But that thy ſong,
Was proud to unfold
What thy baſe rulers trembled to behold;
Amid corrupted Thebes was proud to tell
The deeds of Athens and the Perſian ſhame:
Hence on thy head their impious vengeance fell.
But thou, O faithful to thy fame,
The Muſe's law did'ſt rightly know;
That who would animate his lays,
And other minds to virtue raiſe,
Muſt feel his own with all her ſpirit glow.

III. 1.

Are there, approv'd of later times,
Whoſe verſe adorn'd a * tyrant's crimes?
Who ſaw majeſtic Rome betray'd,
And lent the imperial ruffian aid?

* *Octavius Cæſar.*

Alas

Alas! not one polluted bard,
No, not the ſtrains that Mincius heard,
Or Tibur's hills reply'd,
Dare to the Muſe's ear aſpire;
Save that, inſtructed by the Græcian lyre,
With freedom's ancient notes their ſhameful taſk they hide.

III. 2.

Mark, how the dread Pantheon ſtands,
Amid the domes of modern hands:
Amid the toys of idle ſtate,
How ſimply, how ſeverely great!
Then turn, and, while each weſtern clime
Preſents her tuneful ſons to Time,
So mark thou Milton's name;
And add, "Thus differs from the throng
"The ſpirit which inform'd thy awful ſong,
"Which bade thy potent voice protect thy country's fame."

III. 3.

Yet hence barbaric zeal
His memory with unholy rage purſues;
While from theſe arduous cares of public weal
She bids each bard begone, and reſt him with his Muſe.
O fool! to think the man, whoſe ample mind
Muſt graſp at all that yonder ſtars ſurvey;
Muſt join the nobleſt forms of every kind,
The world's moſt perfect image to diſplay,
Can e'er his country's majeſty behold,
Unmov'd or cold!

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O fool ! to deem
That He, whoſe thought muſt viſit every theme,
Whoſe heart muſt every ſtrong emotion know
By nature planted, or by fortune taught ;
That He, if haply ſome preſumptuous foe,
With falſe ignoble ſcience fraught,
Shall ſpurn at freedom's faithful band ;
That He their dear defence will ſhun,
Or hide their glories from the ſun,
Or deal their vengeance with a woman's hand !

IV. 1.

I care not that in Arno's plain,
Or on the ſportive banks of Seine,
From public themes the Muſe's quire
Content with poliſh'd eaſe retire.
Where prieſts the ſtudious head command,
Where tyrants bow the warlike hand
To vile ambition's aim,
Say, what can public themes afford,
Save venal honours to an hateful lord,
Reſerv'd for angry heaven and ſcorn'd of honeſt fame ?

IV. 2.

But here, where freedom's equal throne
To all her valiant ſons is known ;
Where all are conſcious of her cares,
And each the power, that rules him, ſhares ;
Here let the bard, whoſe daſtard tongue
Leaves public arguments unſung,

Bid

Bid public praiſe farewell:
Let him to fitter climes remove,
Far from the heroe's and the patriot's love,
And lull myſterious monks to ſlumber in their cell.

IV. 3.

O HASTINGS, not to all
Can ruling heav'n the ſame endowments lend:
Yet ſtill doth nature to her offspring call,
That to one general weal their different powers they bend,
Unenvious. Thus alone, though ſtrains divine
Inform the boſom of the Muſe's ſon;
Though with new honours the patrician's line
Advance from age to age; yet thus alone
They win the ſuffrage of impartial fame.
The poet's name
He beſt ſhall prove,
Whoſe lays the ſoul with nobleſt paſſions move.
But thee, O progeny of heroes old,
Thee to ſeverer toils thy fate requires:
The fate which form'd thee in a choſen mould,
The grateful country of thy ſires,
Thee to ſublimer paths demand;
Sublimer than thy ſires could trace,
Or thy own EDWARD teach his race,
Though Gaul's proud genius ſank beneath his hand.

V. 1.

From rich domains and ſubject farms,
They led the ruſtic youth to arms;

And kings their ſtern atchievements fear'd ;
While private ſtriſe their banners rear'd.
But loſtier ſcenes to thee are ſhown,
Where empire's wide-eſtabliſh'd throne
No private maſter fills :
Where, long foretold, The People reigns :
Where each a vaſſal's humble heart diſdains ;
And judgeth what he ſees ; and, as he judgeth, wills.

V. 2.

Here be it thine to calm and guide
The ſwelling democratic tide ;
To watch the ſtate's uncertain frame,
And baffle faction's partial aim :
But chiefly, with determin'd zeal,
To quell that ſervile band, who kneel
To freedom's baniſh'd foes ;
That monſter, which is daily found
Expert and bold thy country's peace to wound ;
Yet dreads to handle arms, nor manly counſel knows.

V. 3.

'Tis higheſt heaven's command,
That guilty aims ſhould ſordid paths purſue ;
That what enſnares the heart ſhould curb the hand,
And virtue's worthleſs foes be falſe to glory too.
But look on freedom. ſee, through every age,
What labours, perils, griefs, hath ſhe diſdain'd !
What arms, what regal pride, what prieſtly rage,
Have her dread offspring conquer'd or ſuſtain'd !

For

For Albion well have conquer'd. Let the ſtrains
Of happy ſwains,
Which now reſound
Where Scarſdale's cliffs the ſwelling paſtures bound,
Bear witneſs. there, oft let the farmer hail
The ſacred orchard which imbowers his gate,
And ſhew to ſtrangers paſſing down the vale,
Where Candiſh, Booth, and Oſborne ſate;
When burſting from their country's chain,
Even in the midſt of deadly harms,
Of papal ſnares and lawleſs arms,
They plann'd for freedom this her awful reign.

VI. 1.

This reign, theſe laws, this public care,
Which Naſſau gave us all to ſhare,
Had ne'er adorn'd the Engliſh name,
Could fear have ſilenc'd freedom's claim.
But fear in vain attempts to bind
Thoſe lofty efforts of the mind
Which ſocial good inſpires;
Where men, for this, aſſault a throne,
Each adds the common welfare to his own;
And each unconquer'd heart the ſtrength of all acquires.

VI. 2.

Say, was it thus, when late we view'd
Our fields in civil blood imbrued?
When fortune crown'd the barbarous hoſt,
And half the aſtoniſh'd iſle was loſt?

Did one of all that vaunting train,
Who dare affront a peaceful reign,
Durſt one in arms appear ?
Durſt one in counſels pledge his life ?
Stake his luxurious fortunes in the ſtrife ?
Or lend his boaſted name his vagrant friends to chear ?

VI. 3.

Yet, HASTINGS, theſe are they
Who challenge to themſelves thy country's love
The true ; the conſtant : who alone can weigh,
What glory ſhould demand, or liberty approve !
But let their works declare them. Thy free powers,
The generous powers of thy prevailing mind,
Not for the taſks of their confederate hours,
Lewd brawls and lurking ſlander, were deſign'd.
Be thou thy own approver. Honeſt praiſe
Oft nobly ſways
Ingenuous youth :
But, ſought from cowards and the lying mouth,
Praiſe is reproach. Eternal GOD alone
For mortals fixeth that ſublime award.
He, from the faithful records of his throne,
Bids the hiſtorian and the bard
Diſpoſe of honour and of ſcorn ;
Diſcern the patriot from the ſlave ;
And write the good, the wiſe, the brave,
For leſſons to the multitude unborn.