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Original Poems And Translations, By John Dryden, Esq; Now First Collected and Publish'd together, In Two Volumes

Containing Translations, Epistles, Prologues, Epilogues, Elegies, Epitaphs, And Songs

Dryden, John

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A Letter to Sir George Etheredge.

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How will ſweet *Ovid*'s Ghoſt be pleas'd to hear
His Fame augmented by an *Engliſh* Peer * ;
How he embelliſhes His *Helen*'s Loves,
Out-does his Softneſs, and his Senſe improves ?
When theſe tranſlate, and teach Tranſlators too,
Nor Firſtling Kid, nor any Vulgar Vow,
Shou'd at *Apollo*'s grateful Altar ſtand :
Roſcommon writes ; to that auſpicious Hand,
Muſe, feed the Bull that ſpurns the yellow Sand.
Roſcommon, whom both Court and Camps commend,
True to his Prince, and faithful to his Friend ;
Roſcommon firſt in Fields of Honour known,
Firſt in the peaceful Triumphs of the Gown ;
Who both *Minervas* juſtly makes his own.
Now let the few belov'd by *Jove*, and they
Whom infus'd *Titan* form'd of better Clay,
On equal Terms with ancient Wit engage,
Nor mighty *Homer* fear, nor ſacred *Virgil*'s Page :
Our *Engliſh* Palace opens wide in State ;
And without ſtooping they may paſs the Gate.

A Letter to Sir GEORGE ETHEREDGE.

TO you who live in chill Degree,
As Map informs, of Fifty three,
And do not much for Cold atone,
By bringing thither Fifty one,
Methinks all Climes ſhou'd be alike,
From Tropick e'en to Pole Artique ;
Since you have ſuch a Conſtitution
As no where ſuffers Diminution.
You can be old in grave Debate,
And young in Love-affairs of State ;

---

* *The Earl of* Mulgrave

And

And both to Wives and Husbands ſhow
The Vigour of a Plenipo.
Like mighty Miſſioner you come
Ad Partes Infidelium.
A Work of wondrous Merit ſure,
So far to go, ſo much t'endure;
And all to preach to *German* Dame,
Where Sound of *Cupid* never came.
Leſs had you done, had you been ſent
As far as *Drake* or *Pinto* went,
For Cloves or Nutmegs to the Line-a,
Or e'en for Oranges to *China*.
That had indeed been Charity;
Where Love-ſick Ladies helpleſs lie,
Chapt, and for want of Liquor dry.
But you have made your Zeal appear
Within the Circle of the *Bear*.
What Region of the Earth's ſo dull,
That is not of your Labours full?
Triptolemus (ſo ſung the Nine)
Strew'd Plenty from his Cart Divine.
But ſpite of all theſe Fable-Makers,
He never ſow'd on *Almain* Acres:
No, that was left by Fate's Decree,
To be perform'd and ſung by thee.
Thou break'ſt thro' Forms with as much eaſe
As the *French* King thro' Articles.
In grand Affairs thy Days are ſpent,
In waging weighty Compliment,
With ſuch as Monarchs repreſent.
They, whom ſuch vaſt Fatigues attend,
Want ſome ſoft Minutes to unbend,
To ſhew the World that now and then
Great Miniſters are mortal Men.

Then *Rhenish* Rummers walk the Round;
In Bumpers ev'ry King is crown'd;
Besides three Holy mitred Hectors,
And the whole College of Electors.
No Health of Potentate is sunk,
That pays to make his Envoy drunk.
These *Dutch* Delights, I mention'd last,
Suit not, I know, your *English* Taste:
For Wine to leave a Whore or Play
Was ne'er your Excellency's way.
Nor need this Title give Offence,
For here you were your Excellence,
For Gaming, Writing, Speaking, Keeping,
His Excellence for all but Sleeping.
Now if you tope in form, and treat,
'Tis the sour Sauce to the sweet Meat,
The Fine you pay for being great.
Nay, here's a harder Imposition,
Which is indeed the Court's Petition,
That setting worldly Pomp aside,
Which Poet has at Font deny'd,
You would be pleas'd in humble way
To write a Trifle call'd a Play.
This truly is a Degradation,
But wou'd oblige the Crown and Nation
Next to your wise Negotiation.
If you pretend, as well you may,
Your high Degree, your Friends will say,
The Duke *St. Aignon* made a Play.
If *Gallick* Wit convince you scarce,
His Grace of *Bucks* has made a Farce,
And you, whose Comick Wit is Terse all,
Can hardly fall below *Rehearsal.*

Then