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**A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands**

**Dodsley, Robert**

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The Duty of Employing one's Self. An Epistle.

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## The Duty of Employing one's Self.

### AN EPISTLE.

**F**EW people know it, yet, dear fir, 'tis true,  
 Man should have somewhat evermore to do.  
 Hard labour's tedious, every one must own;  
 But surely better such by far, than none.  
 The perfect drone, the quite impertinent,  
 Whose life at nothing aims, but — to be spent;  
 Such heaven visits for some mighty ill:  
 'Tis sure the hardest labour, to sit still.  
 Hence that unhappy tribe who nought pursue:  
 Who sin, for want of something else to do.  
 Sir John is blest'd with riches, honour, love;  
 And to be blest'd indeed, needs only move.  
 For want of this, with pain he lives away,  
 A lump of hardly-animated clay:  
 Dull till his double bottle does him right:  
 He's easy, just at twelve o'clock at night.  
 Thus for one sparkling hour alone he's blest;  
 While spleen and head-ach seize on all the rest.

What

What numbers, stoth with gloomy humours fills!  
 Racking their brains with visionary ills.  
 Hence what loud outcries, and well-meaning rage,  
 What endless quarrels at the present age!  
 How many blame! how often may we hear,  
 "Such vice!—well, sure, the last day must be near!"  
 T' avoid such wild, imaginary pains,  
 The sad creation of distemper'd brains,  
 Dispatch, dear friend! move, labour, sweat, run, fly!  
 Do aught—but think the day of judgment nigh.

There are, who've lost all relish for delight:  
 With them no earthly thing is ever right.  
 T' expect to alter to their taste, were vain;  
 For who can mend so fast, as they complain?  
 Whate'er you do, shall be a crime with such;  
 One while you've lost your tongue, then talk too much:  
 Thus shall you meet their waspish censure still;  
 As hedge-hogs prick you, go which side you will.  
 Oh! pity these whene'er you see them swell!  
 Folks call 'em cross—poor men! they are not well.  
 How many such, in indolence grown old,  
 With vigour ne'er do any thing, but scold?  
 Who spirits only from ill-humour get;  
 Like wines that die, unless upon the fret.

Weary'd of flouncing to himself alone,  
 Acerbus keeps a man to fret upon.  
 The fellow's nothing in the earth to do,  
 But to sit quiet and be scolded to.



Piffes and oaths, whene'er the mafter's four'd,  
 All largely on the fcape-goat flave are pour'd.  
 This drains his rage ; and tho' to John fo rough,  
 Abroad you'd think him complaisant enough.

As for myfelf, whom poverty prevents  
 From being angry at fo great expence ;  
 Who, fhould I ever be inclin'd to rage,  
 For want of flaves, war with myfelf muft wage ;  
 Muft rail, and hear ; chaftifing, be chaftis'd ;  
 Be both the tyrant, and the tyranniz'd ;  
 I chufe to labour, rather than to fret :  
 What's rage in fome, in me goes off in fweat.  
 If times are ill, and things feem never worfe ;  
 Men, manners to reclaim, — I take my horfe.  
 One mile reforms 'em ; or if aught remain  
 Unpurg'd, — 'tis but to ride as far again.  
 Thus on myfelf in toils I fpend my rage :  
 I pay the fine ; and that abfolves the age.

Sometimes, ftill more to interrupt my eafe,  
 I take my pen, and write — fuch things as thefe :  
 Which tho' all other merit be deny'd,  
 Shew my devotion ftill to be employ'd.  
 Add too, tho' writing be itfelf a curfe,  
 Yet fome diftempers are a cure for worfe :  
 And fince 'midft indolence, spleen will prevail,  
 Since who do nothing elfe, are fure to rail ;  
 Man fhould be fuffer'd thus to play the fool,  
 To keep from hurt, as children go to fchool.