

Landesbibliothek Oldenburg

Digitalisierung von Drucken

A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

Dodsley, Robert

London, 1758

Part I. Melpomene: or, the Melancholy.

urn:nbn:de:gbv:45:1-1978



T H E
ESTIMATE of LIFE,
IN THREE PARTS.
A P O E M.

By JOHN GILBERT COOPER, Esq;

P A R T I.

MELPOMENE : or, The Melancholy.

——— *Reason thus with Life ;
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing,
That none but fools would weep.*

SHAKESP. Meaf. for Meaf.

OFFSPRING of folly and of noise,
Fantastick train of airy joys,
Cease, cease your vain delusive lore,
And tempt my serious thoughts no more.

O 4

Ye



Ye horrid forms, ye gloomy throng,
 Who hear the bird of midnight's song;
 Thou too, DESPAIR, pale spectre, come,
 From the self-murd'rer's haunted tomb,
 While sad MELPOMENE relates,
 How we're afflicted by the fates.

What's all this wish'd-for empire, Life?
 A scene of mis'ry, care, and strife;
 And make the most, that's all we have,
 Betwixt the cradle and the grave.
 The being is not worth the charge,
 Behold the estimate at large.
 Our youth is silly, idle, vain;
 Our age is full of care and pain;
 From wealth accrues anxiety;
 Contempt and want from poverty;
 What trouble business has in store!
 How idleness fatigues us more!
 To reason, th' ignorant are blind;
 The learned's eyes are too refin'd;
 Each wit deems every wit his foe,
 Each fool is naturally so;
 And ev'ry rank and ev'ry station
 Meet justly with disapprobation.
 Say, man, is this the boasted state,
 Where all is pleasant, all is great?
 Alas! another face you'll see,
 Take off the vail of vanity.



Is aught in pleasure, aught in pow'r,
 Has wisdom any gift in store,
 To make thee stay a single hour?

}

Tell me, ye youthful, who approve
 Th' intoxicating sweets of love,
 What endless nameless throbs arise,
 What heart-felt anguish and what sighs,
 When jealousy has gnaw'd the root,
 Whence love's united branches shoot.
 Or grant that Hymen lights his torch,
 To lead you to the nuptial porch,
 Behold! the long'd-for rapture o'er!
 Desire begins to lose its pow'r,
 Then cold indifference takes place,
 Fruition alters quite the case;
 And what before was extasy,
 Is scarcely now civility.
 Your children bring a second care,
 If childless, then you want an heir;
 So that in both alike you find
 The same perplexity of mind.
 Do pow'r or wealth more comfort own?
 Behold yon pageant on a throne,
 Where silken swarms of flattery
 Obsequious wait his asking eye.
 But view within his tortur'd breast,
 No more the downy seat of rest,

Suspicion



Suspicion casts her poison'd dart,
And Guilt, that scorpion, stings his heart.

Will knowledge give us happiness?
In that, alas! we know there's less,
For every pang of mental woe
Springs from the faculty, to *know*.

Hark! at the death-betok'ning knell
Of yonder doleful passing-bell,
Perhaps a friend, a father's dead,
Or the lov'd partner of thy bed!
Perhaps thy only son lies there,
Breathless upon the sable bier!
Say, what can ease the present grief,
Can former joys afford relief?
Those former joys remember'd still,
The more augment the recent ill,
And where you seek for comfort, gain
Additional increase of pain.
What woes from mortal ills accrue!
And what from natural ensue!
Disease and casualty attend
Our footsteps to the journey's end;
The cold catarrh, the gout and stone,
The dropsy, jaundice, join'd in one,
The raving fever's inward heat,
The pale consumption's fatal sweat,
And thousand more distempers roam,
To drag us to th' eternal home.

And