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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

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Musaeus: A Monody to the Memory of Mr. Pope. In Imitation of Milton's
Lycidas. By the Same.

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M U S Æ U S :

A

M O N O D Y

T O T H E

M E M O R Y of M r. P O P E.

In Imitation of M I L T O N 's Lycidas.

By the Same.

Sorrowing I catch the reed, and call the Muse ;
 If yet a Muse on Britain's plain abide,
 Since rapt MŪSÆUS tun'd his parting strain :
 With him they liv'd, with him perchance they dy'd.
 For who e'er since their virgin train espy'd,
 Or on the banks of Thames, or that mild plain,
 Where Isis sparkles to the sunny ray ?
 Or have they deign'd to play,
 Where Camus winds along his broider'd vale,
 Feeding each white pink, and each daïse pied,
 That mingling paint his rushy-fringed side ?

Yet ah! celestial maids, ye are not dead;
 Immortal as ye are, ye may not die:
 And well I ween, ye cannot quite be fled,
 Ere ye entune his mournful elegy.
 Stay then awhile, O stay, ye fleeting fair;
 Revist yet, nor hallow'd Hippocrene,
 Nor Theſpia's ſhade; till your harmonious teen
 Be grateful pour'd on ſome ſlow-ditted air,
 Such tribute paid, again ye may repair
 To what lov'd haunt you whilom did erect;
 Whether Lycæus, or that mountain fair
 Trim Mænelaus, with piny verdure deck'd.
 But now it boots you not in theſe to ſtray,
 Or yet Cyllene's hoary ſhade to chuſe,
 Or where mild Ladon's ſwelling waters play.
 Forego each vain excuſe,
 And haſte to Thames's ſhores; for Thames ſhall join
 Our ſad ſociety, and paſſing mourn,
 Letting cold tears bedew his ſilver urn.
 And, when the poet's wither'd grot he laves,
 His reed-crown'd locks ſhall ſhake, his head ſhall bow,
 His tide no more in eddies blithe ſhall rove,
 But creep ſoft by with long-drawn murmurs ſlow.
 For oft the poet rous'd his charmed waves
 With martial notes, or lull'd with ſtrains of love.
 He muſt not now in brisk meanders flow
 Gameſome, and kiſs the ſadly-ſilent ſhore,
 Without the loan of ſome poetick woe.

Can I forget, how erst his officers made
 Sad fullen musick, as bleak Eurus fann'd ?
 Can I forget, how gloom'd yon laureat shade,
 Ere death remorseless way'd his ebon wand ?
 How, midst yon grot, each silver-trickling spring
 Wander'd the shelly channels all among ;
 While as the coral roof did softly ring
 Responsive to their sweetly-doleful song ?
 Meanwhile all pale th' expiring poet laid,
 And sunk his awful head,
 While vocal shadows pleasing dreams prolong :
 For so, his sick'ning spirits to release,
 They pour'd the balm of visionary peace.

First, sent from Cam's fair banks, like Palmer old,
 Came a TITRUS slow, with head all silver'd o'er,
 And in his hand an oaken crook he bore,
 And thus in antique guise short talk did hold.
 " Grete clerk of Fame' is house, whose excellence
 " Maie wele besitt thilk place of eminence,
 " Mickle of wele betide thy houres last,
 " For mich gode wirkè to me don and past.
 " For syn the daies whereas my lyre ben strongen,
 " And deftly many a mery laie I songen,
 " Old Time, which alle things don maliciously,
 " Gnaven with rusty tooth continually,

Came a Tityrus, &c.] i. e. CHAUCER, a name frequently given him by Spenser, wide Shep. Cal. Ecl. 2. 6. 12. and elsewhere.



" Gnatrid my lines, that they all cancrid ben,
 " Till at the last thou smoothen 'hem haft again ;
 " Sithence full femely gliden my rhymes rude,
 " As, (if fitteth thilk similitude)
 " Whannè shallow brooke yrenneth hobling on,
 " Ovir rough stones it maken full rough song :
 " But, them stones removen, this lite rivere
 " Stealen forth by, making pleasant murmere :
 " So my fely rhymes, whoso may them note,
 " Thou maken everichone to ren right sote ;
 " And in thy verse entuneth so fetisely,
 " That men sayen I make trewe melody,
 " And speaken every dele to myne honoure,
 " Mich wele, grete clerk, betide thy parting houre !"^a

He ceas'd his homely rhyme.

When ^b COLIN CLOUT, Eliza's shepherd swain,
 The blitheft lad that ever pip'd on plain,
 Came with his reed soft-warbling on the way,
 And thrice he bow'd his head with motion mild,
 And thus his gliding numbers 'gan essay.

I.

" Ah ! luckles's swain, alas ! how art thou lorn,
 " Who once like me could'ft frame thy pipe to play
 " Shepherds devise, and chear the ling'ring morn :
 " Ne bush, ne breere, but learnt thy roundelay.
 " Ah

^b Colin Clout.] *i. e.* SPENSER, which name he gives himself throughout his works.

^c The two first stanzas of this speech, as they relate to Pastoral,

- “ Ah plight too fore such worth to equal right !
 “ Ah worth too high to meet such piteous plight !

II.

- “ But I nought strive, poor Colin, to compare
 “ My Hobbin’s, or my Thenot’s rustick skill
 “ To thy deft Swains, whose dapper ditties rare
 “ Surpafs ought else of quaintest shepherd’s quill.
 “ Ev’n Roman Tityrus, that peerless wight,
 “ Mote yield to thee for dainties of delight,

III.

- “ Eke when in Fable’s flow’ry path you stray’d,
 “ Masking in cunning feints Truth’s splendent face ;
 “ Ne Sylph, ne Sylphid, but due tendence paid,
 “ To shield Belinda’s lock from felon base,
 “ But all mote nought avail such harm to chace,
 “ Than Una fair ’gan droop her princely mein,
 “ Eke Florimel, and all my Faery race :
 “ Belinda far surpast my beauties sheen,
 “ Belinda, subject meet for such soft lay I ween.

IV.

- “ Like as in villag’d troop of birdlings trim,
 “ Where Chanticleer his red crest high doth hold,
 “ And quaking Ducks, that wont in lake to swim,
 “ And Turkeys proud, and Pigeons nothing bold ;

Pastoral, are written in the measure which Spenser uses in the first eclogue of the Shepberd’s Calendar ; the rest, where he speaks of Fable, are in the stanza of the Faery Queen.



- " If chance the Peacock doth his plumes unfold
 " Eftfoons their meaner beauties all decaying,
 " He glift'neth purple, and he glift'neth gold,
 " Now with bright green, now blue himself arraying.
 " Such is thy beauty bright, all other beauties fwaying.

V.

- " But why do I defcant this toyish rhyme,
 " And fancies light in fimple guife pourtray ?
 " Lifting to chear thee at this rueful time,
 " While as black Death doth on thy heartftrings prey.
 " Yet rede aright, and if this friendly lay
 " Thou nathlefs judgest all too flight and vain,
 " Let my well-meaning mend my ill effay :
 " So may I greet thee with a nobler ftrain,
 " When foon we meet for aye, in yon ftar-fprinkled plain."

Laft came a bard of more exalted tread,
 And ^d THYRSIS hight by Dryad, Fawn, or Swain,
 Whene'er he mingled with the fylvan train ;
 But feldom that ; for higher thoughts he fed ;
 For him full oft the heav'nly Mufes led
 To clear Euphrates, and the fetret mount,
 To Araby, and Eden, fragrant climes ;
 All which the faged bard would oft recount :

^d *Hight Thyrsis*] i. e. MILTON. *Lycidas* and the *Epitaphium Damonis* are the only *Pastorals* we have of Milton's ; in the latter of which, where he laments *Car. Deodates* under the nature of *Damon*, he calls himfelf *Thyrsis*.

And

And thus in strain, unus'd in grove or shade,
To sad *MUSÆUS* rightful homage paid.

“ Thrice hail, thou heav'n-taught warbler, last and best
 “ Of all the train! Poet, in whom conjoin'd
 “ All that to ear, or heart, or head, could yield
 “ Rapture; harmonious, manly, clear, sublime!
 “ Accept this gratulation: may it cheer
 “ Thy sinking soul; nor these corporeal ills
 “ Ought daunt thee, or appall. Know, in high heav'n
 “ Fame blooms eternal o'er that spirit divine,
 “ Who builds immortal verse. There thy bold Muse,
 “ Which while on earth could breathe Mæonian fire,
 “ Shall soar seraphick heights; while to her voice
 “ Ten thousand Hierarchies of angels harp
 “ Symphonious, and with dulcet harmonies
 “ Usher the song rejoicing. I meanwhile,
 “ To sooth thee in these irksome hours of pain,
 “ Approach thy visitant, with mortal laud
 “ To praise thee mortal. First, (as first befits)
 “ For rhyme subdu'd; rhyme, erst the minstrel rude
 “ Of Chaos, Anarch old: she near his throne
 “ Oft taught the rattling elements to chime
 “ With tenfold din; till late to earth upborn
 “ On strident wing, what time fair poesie
 “ Emerg'd from Gothick cloud, and faintly shot
 “ Rekindling gleams of lustre. Her the fiend
 “ Oppress'd; forcing to utter uncouth dirge,
 “ Runick, or Leonine; and with dire chains



" Fetter'd her scarce-fledg'd pinion. I such bonds
 " Aim'd to destroy, mistaking: bonds like these
 " 'Twere greater art t' ennoble, and refine.
 " For this superior part *MUSÆUS* came:
 " Thou cam'st, and at thy magick touch the chains
 " Off dropt, and (passing strange!) soft-wreathed bands
 " Of flow'rs their place supply'd: which well the Muse
 " Might wear for choice, not force; obstruction none,
 " But loveliest ornament. Wond'rous this, yet here
 " The wonder rests not; various argument
 " Remains for me, all doubting, where to cull
 " The primal grace, where countless graces charm.
 " Various this peaceful scene; this mineral roof;
 " This 'semblance meet of coral, ore, and shell;
 " These pointed crystals fair, 'mid each obscure
 " Bright glist'ring; all these slowly-dripping rills,
 " That tinkling stray amid the coolly cave.
 " Yet not this various peaceful scene; with this
 " Its mineral roof; nor this assemblage meet
 " Of coral, ore, and shell; nor 'mid th' obscure
 " These pointed crystals, glist'ring fair; nor rills,
 " That straying tinkle thro' the coolly cave;
 " Deal charms more various to each raptur'd sense,
 " Than thy mellifluous lay——"
 " Cease, friendly swain;
 (*MUSÆUS* cry'd, and rais'd his aching head)
 " All praise is foreign, but of true desert;
 " Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart.

" Ah!

“ Ah! why recall the toys of thoughtless youth?
 “ When flow’ry fiction held the place of truth;
 “ When fancy rul’d; when trill’d each trivial strain,
 “ But idly sweet, and elegantly vain.
 “ O! in that strain, if all of wit had flow’d,
 “ All musick warbled, and all beauty glow’d;
 “ Had liveliest nature, happiest art combin’d;
 “ That lent each grace, and this each grace refin’d,
 “ Alas! how little were my proudest boast!
 “ The sweetest trifter of my tribe at most.
 “ To sway the judgment, while he charms the ear;
 “ To curb mad passion in its wild career;
 “ To blend with skill, as loftiest themes inspire,
 “ All reason’s rigour, and all fancy’s fire;
 “ Be this the poet’s praise; with this uncrown’d,
 “ Wit dies a jest, and poetry a sound.
 “ Come then that honest fame; whose sober ray
 “ Or gilds the satire, or the moral lay;
 “ Which dawns, tho’ thou, rough *DONNE*! hew out the line,
 “ But beams, sage *HORACE*! from each strain of thine.
 “ O! if, like these, one poet more could brave
 “ The venal statesman, or the titled slave;
 “ Brand frontless Vice, strip all her stars and strings,
 “ Nor spare her basking in the smile of kings:
 “ Yet stoop to Virtue, tho’ the prostrate maid
 “ Lay sadly pale in bleak misfortune’s shade:
 “ If grave, yet lively; rational, yet warm;
 “ Clear to convince, and eloquent to charm;



" He pour'd, for her lov'd cause, serene along
 " The purest precept, in the sweetest song :
 " For her lov'd cause, he trac'd his moral plan,
 " Yon various region of bewild'ring man ;
 " Explor'd alike each scene, that frown'd or smil'd,
 " The flow'ry garden, or the weedy wild ;
 " Unmov'd by sophistry, unaw'd by name,
 " No dupe to doctrines, and no fool to fame ;
 " Led by no system's devious glare astray,
 " As earth-born meteors glitter to betray :
 " But all his soul to reason's rule resign'd,
 " And heav'n's own views fair op'ning on his mind,
 " Catch'd from bright nature's flame the living ray,
 " Thro' passion's cloud pour'd in resistless day ;
 " And this great truth in all its lustre shewed,
 " That GOD IS WISE, and ALL CREATION GOOD :
 " If this his boast, pour here the welcome lays ;
 " Praise less than this, is impotence of praise."
 " " To pour that praise be mine," fair VIRTUE cry'd,
 And shot all radiant, thro' an op'ning cloud.
 But ah ! my Muse, how will thy voice express
 Th' immortal strain, harmonious, as it flow'd ?
 Ill suits immortal strain a doric dress :
 And far too high already hast thou soar'd.
 Enough for thee, that, when the lay was o'er,
 The goddess clasp'd him to her throbbing breast.
 But what might that avail ? Blind Fate before

Had

Had op'd her shears, to slit his vital thread ;
 And who may hope gainfay her stern behest ?
 Then thrice he wav'd the hand, thrice bow'd the head,
 And sigh'd his soul to rest.

Then wept the Nymphs ; witness, ye waving shades !
 Witness, ye winding streams ! the Nymphs did weep ;
 The heav'nly Goddesses too with tears did steep
 Her plaintive voice, that echo'd thro' the glades ;
 And, "cruel gods", and "cruel stars", she cry'd :
 Nor did the shepherds, thro' the woodlands wide,
 On that sad day, or to the pensive brook,
 Or stagnant river, drive their thirsty flocks ;
 Nor did the wild-goat brouze the steepy rocks ;
 And Philomel her custom'd oak forfook ;
 And roses wan were wav'd by zephyrs weak,
 As Nature's self was sick ;
 And every lilly droop'd its velvet head ;
 And groan'd each faded lawn, and leafless grove ;
 Sad sympathy ! yet sure his rightful meed,
 Who charm'd all nature : well might Nature mourn
 Thro' all her sweets ; and flow'r, and lawn, and shade,
 All vocal grown, all weep *MUSÆUS* dead.

Here end we, Goddesses : this your shepherd sang,
 All as his hands an ivy chaplet wove.
 O ! make it worthy of the sacred bard,
 And make it equal to the shepherd's love.
 Nor thou, *MUSÆUS*, from thine ear discard,

For



For well I ween thou hear'st my doleful song ;
 Whether 'mid angel troops, the stars among,
 From golden harp thou call'st seraphick lays ;
 Or, anxious for thy dearest Virtue's fare,
 Thou still art hov'ring o'er her tuneless sphere,
 And mov'st some hidden spring her weal to raise.

Thus the fond swain on doricke oate essay'd,
 Manhood's prime honours downing on his cheek :
 Trembling he strove to court the tuneless maid
 With stripling arts, and dalliance all too weak ;
 Unseen, unheard, beneath an hawthorn shade.
 But now dun clouds the welkin 'gan to streak ;
 And now down-dropt the larks, and ceas'd their strain :
 They ceas'd, and with them ceas'd the shepherd swain.

