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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

Dodsley, Robert

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A Love Letter. By the Same.

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A LOVE LETTER.

By the Same.

WHAT shall I say to fix thy wav'ring mind,
 To chase thy doubts, and force thee to be kind ?
 What weight of argument can turn the scale,
 If intercession from a lover fail ?
 By what shall I conjure thee to obey
 This tender summons, nor prolong thy stay ?
 If unabated in this constant breast
 That passion burns which once thy vows profess'd ;
 If absence has not chill'd the languid flame,
 Its ardour and its purity the same ;
 Indulge those transports, and no more controul
 The dictates of thy fond consenting soul ;
 By no vain scruple be thy purpose sway'd,
 And only Love implicitly obey'd :
 Let inclination this debate decide,
 Nor be thy prudence, but thy heart thy guide :
 But real prudence never can oppose
 What Love suggests, and Gratitude avows :
 The warm dear raptures which thy bosom move,
 'Tis virtue to indulge, 'tis wisdom to improve :
 For think how few the joys allow'd by Fate,
 How mix'd the cup, how short their longest date !

How

How onward still the stream of pleasure flows!
 That no reflux the rapid current knows!
 Not ev'n thy charms can bribe the ruthless hand
 Of rigid Time, to stay his ebbing sand;
 Fair as thou art, that beauty must decay;
 The night of age succeeds the brightest day:
 That cheek where Nature's sweetest garden blows,
 Her whitest lily, and her warmest rose;
 Those eyes, those meaning ministers of Love,
 Who, what thy lips can only utter, prove;
 These must resign their lustre, those their bloom,
 And find with meaner charms one common doom:
 Pass but a few short years, this change must be;
 Nor one less dreadful shalt thou mourn in me:
 For tho' no chance can alienate my flame,
 While thine to feed the lamp, shall burn the same,
 Yet shall the stream of years abate that fire,
 And cold esteem succeed to warm desire:
 Then on thy breast unraptur'd shall I dwell,
 Nor feel a joy beyond what I can tell:
 Or say, should sickness antedate that woe,
 And intercept what Time would else allow;
 If Pain should pall my taste to all thy charms,
 Or Death himself should tear me from thy arms;
 How would'st thou then regret with fruitless truth,
 The precious squander'd hours of health and youth?
 Come then, my love, nor trust the future day,
 Live whilst we can, be happy whilst we may:

For



For what is life unless its joys we prove ?
 And what is happiness but mutual love ?
 Our time is wealth no frugal hand can store,
 All our possession is the present hour,
 And he who spares to use it, ever poor.
 The golden *now* is all that we can boast ;
 And that (like snow) at once is grasp'd and lost.
 Haste, wing thy passage then, no more delay,
 But to these eyes their sole delight convey.
 Not thus I languish'd for thy virgin charms,
 When first surrender'd to these eager arms,
 When first admitted to that heav'n, thy breast,
 To mine I strain'd that charming foe to rest :
 How leaps my conscious heart, whilst I retrace
 The dear idea of that strict embrace ?
 When on thy bosom quite entranc'd I lay,
 And lov'd unsated the short night away ;
 Whilst half reluctant you, and half resign'd,
 Amidst fears, wishes, pain and pleasure join'd,
 Now holding off, now growing to my breast,
 By turns reprov'd me, and by turns caref'd.
 Oh ! how remembrance throbs in every vein !
 I pant, I sicken for that scene again ;
 My senses ach, I can no word command,
 And the pen totters in my trembling hand.
 Farewel, thou only joy on earth I know,
 And all that man can taste of heav'n below.

VERSES

* VERSES to Dr. GEORGE ROGERS, on his taking in the Degree of Doctor in Physic at Padua, in the Year 1664.

By Mr. WALLER.

WHEN as of old the earth's bold children strove,
 With hills on hills, to scale the throne of Jove;
 Pallas and Mars stood by their sovereign's side,
 And their bright arms in his defence employ'd:
 While the wife Phœbus, Hermes, and the rest,
 Who joy in peace and love the Muses best,
 Descending from their so distemper'd seat,
 Our groves and meadows chose for their retreat.
 There first Apollo tried the various use
 Of herbs, and learn'd the virtue of their juice,
 And fram'd that art, to which who can pretend
 A juster title than our noble friend,
 Whom the like tempest drives from his abode,
 And like employment entertains abroad?
 This crowns him here; and, in the bays so earn'd,
 His country's honour is no less concern'd;
 Since it appears, not all the English rave,
 To ruin bent: some study how to save.
 And as Hippocrates did once extend
 His sacred art, whole cities to amend;

* This little poem was, among several others on the same occasion, printed by Dr. Rogers, with his inaugural exercise at Padua; and afterwards in the same manner re-published by him at London, together with his Harveian oration before the college of physicians, in the year 1682; while Mr. Waller was yet living.

So

