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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

Dodsley, Robert

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Canto I. Argument.

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CANTO I,

A R G U M E N T.

The Squire of Dames to Satyrane

His history doth tell,

With all the toils he underwent

To gain his Columbel,

I.

THE Squire of Dames his tale thus 'gan to tell;

Sith you command my tongue, fir Satyrane,
I now will all declare that me befell

The cause of muchel scath and dol'rous pain,

Ne shall thy gentle eye from tears refrain.

Me Columbel commanded far to go

'Till I should full three hundred nymphs attain,

Whose hearts should aye with Virtue's lessons glow,

And to all swains but one cry out for ever, No.

II.

To find the fortilage that ne'er will yield

Is not an easy matter, good fir Knight;

Troy town, they say, is now a grafs-grown field,

That long withstood the force of Grecian might;

And castles fall tho' deep in earth empight ;
 Ne ought so strong is found but what may fail ;
 The sun at last shall lose his glorious light,
 And vows or bribes o'er women may prevail ;
 Their hearts are made of flesh, and mortal flesh is frail.

III.

With heavy heart, and full of cark I go
 And take away my congé of my blooming maid,
 I kiss'd her hond, and, louting very low,
 To her beheft at length myself array'd :
 The fair we love expects to be obey'd,
 Altho' she bid us with the kestrel fly ;
 So forth I prick, tho' much by doubt dismay'd,
 The hard experiment resolv'd to try :
 For she was wond'rous fair, and much in love was I.

IV.

A grove I reach'd, where tuneful throftles sung,
 The linnét here did ope his little throat,
 His twitting jests around the cuckoo flung,
 And the proud goldfinch show'd his painted coat,
 And hail'd us with no inharmonious note :
 The robin eke here tun'd his sonnet shrill,
 And told the soothing ditty all by rote,
 How he with leaves his pious beak did fill,
 To shroud those pretty babes, whom Sib unkind would kill.

V, And



V.

And many a fair Narcissus deck'd the plain,
 That seem'd anew their passions to admire;
 Here Ajax told his dolours o'er again,
 And am'rous Clytie ficken'd with desire;
 Here the blown rose her odors sweet did spire;
 Thro' the dun grove a murm'ring river led
 His chrystal streams that wound in many a gyre;
 The baleful willow all the banks bespread,
 And ever to the breeze ycurl'd his hoary head,

VI.

Soon to the grove there came a lovely maid,
 For maiden sure she did to me appear,
 In plain check-laton was the nymph array'd,
 Her sparkling eyes stood full of many a tear,
 And she bewept the absence of her dear.
 Alas! should beauty be to woe ally'd?
 Beauty, methinks, should meet with better cheer,
 Content should never wander from her side;
 Good luck, I pray to heav'n, the face that's fair betide.

VII.

“ Ah! woe is me, she cry'd, since Colin's fled,
 “ Whose gentle presence did these plains adorn,
 “ Soon was he ravish'd from the nuptial bed,
 “ Torn from these arms, from his dear leman torn!

“ O

- " O grief! far sharper than the pointed thorn.
 " I saw him ill-bestad by martial band.
 " Alas the day that ever I was born!
 " Where roves my Colin, on what foreign strand,
 " Arraught from Laura's eyes, and his dear native land?

VIII.

- " Alas! he only knew to prune the vine,
 " Or thro' the earth to urge the biting share,
 " To twist the bower with fragrant eglantine,
 " Where free from heat we shun'd the noon-tide air,
 " Or to the mart to lead his fleecy care.
 " And is it fit in hacqueton and mail
 " The youth for war's grim terrors should prepare!
 " His voice outfung the love-lorn nightingale,
 " And deftly could he daunce, or pipe along the dale.

IX.

- " The gos-hawk fierce may pounce the trembling dove,
 " The savage wolf may tear the bounding fawn,
 " But sparrows mild are form'd for feats of love,
 " And kids siew not with blood the flow'ry lawn;
 " Then how shall he, in whom all graces dawn,
 " In the red field the cruel paynim kill?
 " For scenes like these find men of hellish spawn.
 " 'Tis his with joy the virgin's heart to fill,
 " And not on foreign shore his foemen's blood to spill.

X. " No



X.

- " No days of blifs my sorrows shall aflake,
 " For him I'll ever drop the dol'rous tear.
 " Adieu the circled green, the buxom wake,
 " Since Colin's gone I taste of nought but drear.
 " Stretch me, ye maidens, stretch me on the bier,
 " And let my grave-stone these true words adorn :
 " A wretched maiden lies intombed here,
 " Who saw a shepherd brighter than the morn,
 " Then pin'd her heart away, and dy'd of love forlorn."

XI.

Much was I grieved at her piteous plaint,
 And greeted to myself, O happy Squire !
 At length, tho' late, thou hast found out a faint,
 Who, but for Colin, feels no warm desire.
 Perdie, quoth Satyrane, I her admire ;
 No lozel loose shall here discover'd be.
 The other answer'd with his cheeks on fire,
 Now by my hallidom you soon shall see
 That words may with the heart full often ill agree.

XII.

I, nought accoy'd, came up unto the fair,
 And swore to love her all my length of life ;
 Then offer'd her to gorgeous domes to bear,
 Where haidegives are daunc'd to harp and fife.

She soon forgot she was another's wife,
 And granted with me to desert the plain.
 Are such ensamples among women rife?
 If so, my Columbel I ne'er shall gain,
 But hunt around the world, and find my labours vain;

XIII.

My lips I 'gan to royne in fell despite,
 And forth I rushed from her false embrace,
 Thro' the thick wood I wander'd day and night,
 Ne met I living creature face to face:
 At length a rising city far I trace;
 Thither in hopes my hasty steps I bend.
 Perchance, thought I, true Virtue may embrace
 The courtly dome, and from the country wend.
 Thus, where we least expect, we often find a friend,

XIV.

At e'en the town I reach'd and eke a hall,
 Which waxen tapers made as light as day;
 Fair jovisaunce sat on the face of all,
 And to the daunce the sprightly minstrels play,
 Each seem'd as sportive as the wanton jay.
 The dame, who own'd the house, was passing old,
 And had, it seems, that morning dealt away
 To her kind grandson many bags of gold,
 Who took a bonnibel to haven and to hold.

XV. The



XV.

The bride was named Viola the fair,
 The loaded rosiere is not half so sweet.
 Aye, aye, quoth I, ensamples are but rare
 To find so many charms in one discreet ;
 With you, fair lass, I mean not now to treat.
 The springal was in wholesom lusted,
 And him by name of Pamphilus they greet ;
 He was to doughty chevifance ybred,
 Yet oft in courtly halls the active measure led.

XVI.

The auncient dame they do Avara call,
 And much she hobbled as she trod the ground ;
 Yet many angels in her crumenal,
 If fair report speaks true, were always found.
 Where riches flow there virtues too abound.
 Her pannikel was as a badger grey,
 And, as she walk'd the company around,
 It nodded with such force, that, by my fay,
 I thought it meant to fly from her old crag away.

XVII.

The lofty roof was fretted o'er with gold,
 And all around, the walls depeinten were
 With many histories of times of old,
 Which brought not muchel credit to the fair.

There

There Leda held her swan, with shoulders bare,
 And here the dame of Ephesus was found,
 Lick other dames, whom my kind tongue shall spare,
 And here stood Helen for her charms renown'd,
 Who soon her lord forsook, when she a leman found.

XVIII.

And many a beauteous dame and courtly knight
 Came there the nuptials to celebrate :
 Some vers'd to wing from bow the nimble flight,
 Some the near foe with brondir'n to amate ;
 Me too they welcome to the hall of state ;
 With bel accoil they wish'd me to take
 A round or two, and chuse me out a mate :
 But my fond love which nothing could aslake,
 Caus'd me to flight them all, for Columbella's sake.

XIX.

And now to artful steps the floor rebounds,
 In graceful ease the shining beavys move,
 The noice like thunder at a distance founds.
 Mean time I sat beneath a proud alcove,
 And told Avara gentle tales of love.
 Thought I, in eld the passions are more tame,
 And here by craft I may successful prove ;
 For she perforce must now be void of blame
 As wife Ulysses' wife, Penelopé by name.

XX. Ne



XX.

Ne wants she gelt, which oft the mind miscads
 To actions which it otherwise would shun.
 The courtier lythe, if right report areeds,
 Will unawhap'd to seize his vantage run ;
 And so will most men underneath the sun,
 Or be they patriot call'd, or bard, or knight ;
 But when they once the gilded prize have won,
 They seek to clear their name, with shame bedight :
 Befits to scour the steel, when rust offends the sight.

XXI.

At ev'ry word I said she look'd askaunce,
 Then said, in unfoot whispers, Fye ! Sir, fye !
 And turn'd as tho' she seem'd to mind the daunce,
 Nathless on me she cast a languid eye :
 Blift by thy form, my liefest life, quoth I,
 Cast your belgards upon an humble slave :
 From love, alas ! in vain my heart would fly ;
 Then with a word thy quailing leman save,
 For if you frown, perdie, you doom me to the grave.

XXII.

It hap'd by chance she saw a golden heart
 With flaming diamonds around beset ;
 This, the whole guerdon of my tedious smart,
 I, on a time, from Columbel did get.

As simple birds are caught in fowler's net,
 And 'cause they see no danger none they fear,
 Ev'n so Avara her eyen here did set,
 And turned round and whisper'd in mine ear,
 Give me that di'mond heart, and be mine leman dear.

XXIII.

I started from the couch where I was pight,
 And thus I her bespake with muchel rage,
 Avaunt, thou faytor false, thou imp of night!
 I hate myself, that I should thus engage,
 On any terms, to treat with wrizled age.
 So, forth I flung, and left the frowy witch
 To share her bed with coachman, groom or page;
 The castle too I quit, mine ire was sich,
 And out I set again, tho' night was dark as pitch.

XXIV.

But did I here relate, Sir Satyrane,
 The many weary miles I've travelled,
 What dangers I've affoil'd, yet all in vain,
 (For, by my truth, but ill my days I've sped)
 Your hair would stand upright upon your head.
 Three hundred virtuous females side by side,
 By me to Columbella must be led:
 Can you direct me where for such to ride?
 I cannot, in good sooth, the courteous knight reply'd.

XXV.

The Squire purfu'd his tale ; 'tis now three years
 Since curst Avara's vifage first I faw ;
 Convents I've try'd, but there the luscious freers
 The fair-fac'd nuns to fornication draw ;
 Nor palaces are free from Cupid's law ;
 His darts are fiercer than the levin-brond ;
 Few, very few, there 'scape his mighty paw,
 And thofe in golden palls, who proudly ftond,
 Had lever kifs their love's, than Keyfar's royal hond.

XXVI.

Fair Jenny of the mill I ftove to win,
 And her benempt Pastora of the dale ;
 But they bilive agreed with me to fin ;
 One ask'd an owch, and one a watchet veil.
 Some with o'er ev'ry female to prevail ;
 My hope, my conqueft is to be deny'd.
 The ftage I've try'd, but there my projects fail ;
 For there is fcarce a fingle wedded bride
 But doth her husband's noul with horns of ront provide.

XXVII.

As couthful fifhers at the benty brook,
 By various arts affot the feely fry,
 Now wriggling worms, now paffe conceals the hook,
 And now they hide it with a colour'd fly ;

This takes the perch, and that the tench's eye ;
 So diff'rent nymphs a diff'rent charm invites,
 Some yield for vantage, some for vanity,
 A song this one, a daunce that maid delights :
 Man throws the wimble bait, and greedy woman bites.

XXVIII.

With sorrow overhent, the other day
 I laid my weary limbs adown to rest,
 Where a tall beech o'erspread the dusky way ;
 My noyous thoughts a dream awhile suppress'd,
 Oft weighty truths are in this garb ydrefs'd.
 Grant that it so may happen unto me ;
 Then joyance once again shall footh this breast,
 My pining soul shall be from anguish free,
 And I shall taste true blifs, dear Columbel, with thee.

XXIX.

Methought I saw a figure fair and tall,
 And gentle smiles sat dimpling on her face,
 Yet seemed of a beauty nought at all,
 'Till much beholding did improve each grace ;
 At length she seem'd too fair for human race.
 Her kirtle white might vie with winter snows,
 Ne could you ought of her fair bosom trace,
 Nought but her face would she to fight expose,
 So modest maiden wends, the frannion muchel shows.



XXX.

- With visage bland, methought, she hail'd me oft ;
 " Ne fear, quoth she, a female's mild request.
 " The bark by tempests that is whirl'd aloft,
 " At length, the tempest o'er, enjoyeth rest.
 " My name is Chastity, tho' out of quest
 " With modern dames, yet thou shalt still survey
 " A clime where beauty is with virtue blest.
 " Good fortune speed you on your happy way ;
 " Go, gentle Squire of dames, and here no longer stay.

XXXI.

- " To Fairy lond your instant journey bend,
 " There Columbel may find her will obey'd ;
 " There Chastity may boast of many a friend,
 " She visits there each rosy-featur'd maid.
 " Go on, nor be by former toils affray'd :
 " Go where yon oaks display their verdant pride,
 " 'Till, from the mountains torn and stripp'd of shade,
 " On Neptune's billows they triumphant ride,
 " Protect their happy lond, and conquer all beside.

XXXII.

- " Hail happy lond ! for arms and arts renown'd,
 " For blooming virgins free from loose desire ;
 " A Drake, a Bacon, there a birth-place found,
 " And chaste Eliza time shall e'er admire :

" The hero wields the sword and poet's lyre :
 " This Sidney knew, who still with lustre shines,
 " For whom Dan Spenser wak'd the warbling quire,
 " And many more whose names might grace his lines ;
 " There round the warrior's palm the lover's myrtle
 XXXIII. [twines."

At this I woke, and now resolve to brave
 The utmost perils for my Columbel ;
 For, know, I mean to cross the briny wave,
 Where Albion's chalky cliffs the sea repel :
 And, if no mage have laid a magick spell,
 Perchance my lot may be at length to find
 Three hundred nymphs, who wicked love can quell ;
 If not, I must desert all womankind,
 And, what me most amates, leave Columbel behind.

XXXIV.

The Squire of dames surceased here his fay,
 And forth he yode to seek the British isle,
 Sir Satyrane prick'd on his dapple-grey,
 Ne ought forefwonk he travell'd many a mile
 To spend his days in hardiment and toil :
 But first in courteous guise they bid farewell,
 As well befits men bred in courtly soil.
 Now how the Squire has sped, or ill, or well,
 A future canto may, perhaps, at leisure tell.

