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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

Dodsley, Robert

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The Tears of Old May-Day.

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Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
 Secure whate'er he gives, he gives the best,
 Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires,
 And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
 Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
 Obedient passions, and a will resign'd;
 For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
 For patience sov'reign o'er transmuted ill;
 For faith that panting for a happier seat,
 Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat:
 These goods for man the laws of heav'n ordain,
 These goods he grants, who grants the pow'r to gain;
 With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
 And makes the happiness she does not find.



THE TEARS of OLD MAY-DAY.

LED by the jocund train of vernal hours
 And vernal airs, uprose the gentle May;
 Blushing she rose, and blushing rose the flow'rs
 That sprung spontaneous in the genial ray.

Her locks with heav'n's ambrosial dews were bright,
 And am'rous zephyrs flutter'd on her breast:
 With ev'ry shifting gleam of morning light
 The colours shifted of her rainbow vest.

Imperial ensigns grac'd her smiling form,
 A golden key, and golden wand she bore;
 This charms to peace each fullen eastern storm,
 And that unlocks the Summer's copious store,

Onward in conscious majesty she came,
 The grateful honours of mankind to taste;
 To gather fairest wreaths of future fame,
 And blend fresh triumphs with her glories past.

Vain hope! no more in choral bands unite
 Her virgin vot'ries, and at early dawn,
 sacred to May and Love's mysterious rite,
 Brush the light dew-drops ^a from the spangled lawn.

To her no more Augusta's ^b wealthy pride
 Pours the full tribute from Potofi's mine;
 Nor fresh-blown garlands village maids provide,
 A purer off'ring, at her rustic shrine.

No more the Maypole's verdant height around
 To Valour's games th' ambitious youth advance;
 No merry bells and tabors' sprightlier found
 Wake the loud carol, and the sportive dance.

^a Alluding to the country custom of gathering May-dew.

^b The plate garlands of London.



Sudden in pensivè sadness droop'd her head,
 Faint on her cheeks the blushing crimson dy'd—
 " O! chaste victorious triumphs, whither fled?
 " My maiden honours, whither gone?" she cry'd.

Ah! once to fame and bright dominion born,
 The Earth and smiling Ocean saw me rise,
 With time coeval and the star of morn,
 The first, the fairest daughter of the skies.

Then, when at heav'n's prolific mandate sprung
 The radiant beam of new-created day,
 Celestial harps, to airs of triumph sprung,
 Hail'd the glad dawn, and angels call'd me MAY,

Space in her empty regions heard the sound,
 And hills, and dales, and rocks, and vallies rung;
 The sun exulted in his glorious round,
 And shouting planets in their courses sung.

Forever then I led the constant year;
 Saw Youth, and Joy, and Love's enchanting wiles;
 Saw the mild Graces in my train appear,
 And infant Beauty brighten in my smiles.

No Winter frown'd. In sweet embrace ally'd,
 Three sister Seasons danc'd th' eternal green;
 And Spring's retiring softness gently vy'd
 With Autumn's blush, and Summer's lofty mein.

Too

Too soon, when man prophan'd the blessings giv'n,
 And Vengeance arm'd to blot a guilty age,
 With bright Aftrea to my native heav'n
 I fled, and flying saw the Deluge rage :

Saw burfting clouds eclipse the noontide beams,
 While founding billows from the mountains roll'd,
 With bitter waves polluting all my streams,
 My nectar'd streams, that flow'd on sands of gold.

Then vanquish'd many a sea-girt ifle and grove,
 Their forests floating on the wat'ry plain :
 Then, fam'd for arts and laws deriv'd from Jove,
 My Atalantis ^c funk beneath the main.

No longer bloom'd primeval Eden's bow'rs,
 Nor guardian dragons watch'd th' Hesperian fleep :
 With all their fountains, fragrant fruits and flow'rs,
 Torn from the continent to glut the deep.

No more to dwell in fylvan fcenes I deign'd,
 Yet oft defcending to the languid earth,
 With quick'ning pow'rs the fainting mafs fustain'd,
 And wak'd her flumb'ring atoms into birth.

And ev'ry echo caught my raptur'd name,
 And ev'ry virgin breath'd her am'rous vows,
 And precious wreaths of rich immortal fame,
 Show'r'd by the Mufes, crown'd my lofty brows.

^c See *Plato*.

But



But chief in Europe, and in Europe's pride,
 My Albion's favour'd realms, I rose ador'd;
 And pour'd my wealth, to other climes deny'd,
 From Amalthea's horn with plenty stor'd.

Ah me! for now a younger rival claims
 My ravish'd honours, and to her belong
 My choral dances, and victorious games,
 To her my garlands and triumphal song.

O say what yet untasted bounties flow,
 What purer joys await her gentler reign?
 Do lillies fairer, vi'lets sweeter blow?
 And warbles Philomel a softer strain?

Do morning funs in ruddier glory rise?
 Does ev'ning fan her with serener gales?
 Do clouds drop fatness from the wealthier skies,
 Or wantons Plenty in her happier vales?

Ah! no: the blunted beams of dawning light
 Skirt the pale orient with uncertain day;
 And Cynthia, riding on the car of night,
 Through clouds embattled faintly wins her way.

Pale, immature, the blighted verdure springs,
 Nor mounting juices feed the swelling flow'r;
 Mute all the groves, nor Philomela sings
 When Silence listens at the midnight hour.

Nor

Nor wonder, man, that Nature's bashful face,
 And op'ning charms her rude embraces fear:
 Is she not sprung of April's wayward race,
 The sickly daughter of th' unripen'd year?

With show'rs and sunshine in her fickle eyes,
 With hollow smiles proclaiming treach'rous peace;
 With blushes, harb'ring in their thin disguise,
 The blast that riots on the Spring's encrease.

Is this the fair invested with my spoil
 By Europe's laws, and Senates' stern command?
 Ungen'rous Europe, let me fly thy foil,
 And waft my treasures to a grateful land:

Again revive on Asia's drooping shore
 My Daphne's groves, or Lycia's ancient plain:
 Again to Afric's sultry sands restore
 Embow'ring shades, and Lybian Ammon's fane:

Or haste to northern Zembla's savage coast,
 There hush to silence elemental strife;
 Brood o'er the region of eternal Frost,
 And swell her barren womb with heat and life.

Then Britain——here she ceas'd. Indignant grief,
 And parting pangs her fault'ring tongue suppress:
 Veil'd in an amber cloud, she sought relief,
 And tears, and silent anguish told the rest.

SONG.

