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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

Dodsley, Robert

London, 1758

Sonnets.

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S O N N E T S,

By T. E.

S O N N E T I.

O*, whom virtue makes the worthy heir
 Of **'s titles, and of **'s estate,
 Blest in a wife, whose beauty, though so rare,
 Is the least grace of all that round her wait,

While other youths, sprung from the good and great,
 In devious paths of pleasure seek their bane,
 Reckless of wisdom's lore, of birth, or state,
 Meanly debauch'd, or insolently vain;

Through Virtue's sacred gate to Honour's fane
 You and your fair associate ceaseless climb
 With glorious emulation, sure to gain
 A meed, shall last beyond the reign of Time:
 From your example long may Britain see,
 Degenerate Britain, what the great should be.

S O N-



SONNET II.

Wisely, O C*, enjoy the present hour,
 The present hour is all the time we have,
 High God the rest has plac'd beyond our pow'r,
 Consign'd, perhaps, to grief—or to the grave.

Wretched the man, who toils ambition's slave ;
 Who pines for wealth, or sighs for empty fame ;
 Who rolls in pleasures which the mind deprave,
 Bought with severe remorse, and guilty shame.

Virtue and knowledge be our better aim ;
 These help us Ill to bear, or teach to shun ;
 Let friendship cheer us with her gen'rous flame,
 Friendship, the sum of all our joys in one :
 So shall we live each moment fate has giv'n ;
 How long, or short, let us resign to heav'n.



SONNET III.

To F. K. Esq;

O Sprung from worthies, who with counsels wise
 Adorn'd and strengthen'd great Elifa's throne,
 Who yet with virtuous pride, may't well despise
 To borrow praise from merits not thy own.

Of as I view the monumental stone
 Where our lov'd H***'s cold ashes rest,
 Musing on joys with him long past and gone,
 A pleasing sad remembrance fills my breast. —

Did the sharp pang we feel for friends deceas'd
 Unbated last, we must with anguish die;
 But nature bids its rigour should be eas'd
 By lenient time, and strong necessity:
 These calm the passions, and subdue the mind
 To bear th' appointed lot of human kind.

S O N.

SONNET IV.

C**s, I hop'd the little heaven shall spare
 Of my short day, which flits away so fast,
 And sickness threats with clouds to overcast,
 In social converse oft with thee to share.

Ill-luck for me, that wayward fate should tear
 Thee from the haven thou had'st gain'd at last,
 Again to try the toils and dangers past
 In foreign climates, and an hostile air :

Yet duteous to thy country's call attend,
 Which claims her portion of thy useful years,
 And back with speed thy course to Britain bend,
 If, e'er again we meet, perchance should end
 My dark'ning eve, thou'lt pay some friendly tears,
 Grateful to him, who liv'd and dy'd thy friend,



SONNET V.

On a FAMILY-PICTURE.

WHEN pensive on that portraiture I gaze,
 Where my four brothers round about me stand,
 And four fair sisters smile with graces bland,
 The goodly monument of happier days;

And think, how soon insatiate death, who preys
 On all, has crop'd the rest with ruthless hand,
 While only I survive of all that band,
 Which one chaste bed did to my father raise;

It seems, that like a column left alone,
 The tottering remnant of some splendid fane,
 'Scap'd from the fury of the barb'rous Gaul,
 And wasting Time, which has the rest o'erthrown,
 Amidst our house's ruins I remain,
 Single, unprop'd, and nodding to my fall.

SON-



SONNET VI.

R**, who well haft judg'd the task too hard,
 Of this short life throughout the total day
 To follow glory's false bewitching ray,
 Through certain toils, uncertain of reward ;

A prince's service how should we regard ;
 As service still—though deck'd in livery gay,
 Disguis'd with titles, gilded o'er with pay,
 Specious, yet ill to liberty preferr'd.

Bounding thy wishes by the golden mean,
 Nor weakly bartering happiness for show,
 Wisely thou'st left the busy bustling scene,
 Where merit seldom has successful been,

In C**'s shades to taste the joys, that flow
 From calm retirement, and a mind serene.



SONNET VII.

C^here, with whom, my pilot and my guide,
 Pleas'd I have travers'd thy Sabrina's flood,
 Both where she foams impetuous foil'd with mud,
 And where she peaceful rolls her golden tide.

Never, O never let ambition's pride
 (Too oft pretexted with our country's good)
 And tinsel'd pomp, despis'd when understood,
 Or thirst of wealth thee from her banks divide.

Reflect how calmly, like her infant wave,
 Flows the clear current of a private life ;
 See the wide publick stream by tempests tofs'd,
 Of ev'ry changing wind the sport, or slave,
 Soil'd with corruption, vex'd with party strife,
 Cover'd with wrecks of peace and honour lost.



SONNET VIII.

On the CANTOS of SPENSER's Fairy Queen, lost in
the Passage from Ireland.

W O worth the man, who in ill hour assay'd
To tempt that western frith with vent'rous keel,
And seek what heav'n, regardful of our weal,
Had hid in fogs, and night's eternal shade.

Ill-star'd Hibernia! well art thou appaid
For all the woes, that Britain made thee feel
By Henry's wrath, and Pembroke's conquering steel,
Who sack'd thy towns, and castles difarray'd:

No longer now with idle sorrow mourn
Thy plunder'd wealth, or liberties restrain'd,
Nor deem their victories thy loss or shame;
Severe revenge on Britain in thy turn
And ample spoils thy treach'rous waves obtain'd,
Which sunk one half of Spenser's deathless fame.

SON-





SONNET IX.

PEACE to thy ashes, to thy mem'ry fame,
 Bright paragon of merit feminine,
 In forming whom kind nature did inshrine
 A mind angelick in a faultless frame ;

Through ev'ry stage of changing life the same,
 How did thy bright example ceaseless shine,
 And ev'ry grace with ev'ry virtue join
 To raise the virgin's and the matron's name ?

In thee religion chearful and serene,
 Unfou'rd by superstition, spleen, or pride,
 Through all the social offices of life
 To shed its genuine influence was seen ;
 This thy chief ornament, thy surest guide,
 This form'd the daughter, parent, friend, and wife.



SONNET X.

To the Author of Observations on the Conversion and
Apostleship of St. PAUL.

O***, great meed shalt thou receive,
Great meed of fame, thou and thy learn'd compeer,
Who 'gainst the sceptic's doubt, and scorner's sneer,
Assert those heav'n-born truths, which you believe.

In elder time thus heroes wont t' atchieve
Renown, they held the faith of Jesus dear,
And round their ivy-crown, or laurel'd spear,
Blush'd not religion's olive branch to weave.

Thus Raleigh, thus immortal Sidney shone
(Illustrious names) in great Eliza's days.
Nor doubt his promise firm, that such who own
In evil times, undaunted, though alone,
His glorious truth, such he will crown with praise,
And glad agnize before his Father's throne.

S O N-



SONNET XI.

Young, fair, and good! ah why should young and fair
 And good be huddled in untimely grave?
 Must so sweet flow'r so brief a period have,
 Just bloom and charm, then fade and disappear?

Yet our's the loss, who ill alas can spare
 The bright example, which thy virtues gave;
 The guerdon thine, whom gracious heav'n did save
 From longer trial in this vale of care.

Rest then, sweet faint, in peace and honour rest,
 While our true tears bedew thy maiden hearse,
 Light lie the earth upon thy lovely breast;
 And let a grateful heart with grief oppress'd
 To thy dear mem'ry consecrate this verse,
 Though all too mean for who deserves the best.

SON-

SONNET XII.

W^{*}, whose dear friendship in the dawning years
 Of undefining Childhood first began,
 Through Youth's gay morn with even tenor ran,
 My noon conducted, and my evening chears,

Rightly dost thou, in whom combin'd appears
 Whate'er for Public Life completes the Man,
 With active Zeal strike out a larger plan,
 No useles friend to Senators and Peers :

Me moderate talents and a finall estate
 Fit for Retirement's unambitious shade,
 Nor envy I who near approach the throne ;
 But joyful see thee mingle with the Great,
 See thy deserts with due distinction paid,
 And praise thy lot, contented with my own.

SON-





S O N N E T XIII.

To the Right Hon. Mr. ———, with the foregoing
S O N N E T S.

THOU, who successive in that honor'd seat
 Prefid'ft, the feuds of jarring Chiefs to 'fwage,
 To check the boift'rous force of Party rage,
 Raife modest worth, and guide the high debate,

Sometimes retiring from the toils of State,
 Thou turn'ft th' instructive Greek or Roman page,
 Or what our British Bards of later age
 In scarce inferior numbers can relate :

Amid this feast of Mind, when Fancy's Child,
 Sweet SHAKESPEAR, raps the soul to virtuous deed,
 When SPENSER warbling tunes his Doric lays,
 Or the first Man from Paradise exil'd
 Great MILTON sings, can ought my rustic reed
 Presume to sound, that may deserve thy praise ?

I N D E X