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**A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands**

**Dodsley, Robert**

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Elegy IV. To an Officer. Written at Rome 1756.

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## E L E G Y IV.

To an OFFICER.

Written at ROME 1756.

FROM Latian fields, the mansions of Renown,  
 Where fix'd the Warrior God his fated seat;  
 Where infant Heroes learnt the martial frown,  
 And little hearts for genuine glory beat;

What for my friend, my soldier, shall I frame?  
 What nobly-glowing verse that breathes of arms,  
 To point his radiant path to deathless fame,  
 By great examples, and terrific charms?

Quirinus first, with bold, collected bands,  
 The sinewy sons of strength, for empire strove;  
 Beneath his thunder bow'd th' astonish'd lands,  
 And temples rose to Mars, and to Feretrian Jove.

War taught contempt of death, contempt of pain,  
 And hence the Fabii, hence the Decii come :  
 War urg'd the slaughter, tho' she wept the slain,  
 Stern War, the rugged nurse of virtuous Rome.

But not from antique fables will I draw,  
 To fire thy feeling soul, a dubious aid,  
 Tho' now, ev'n now, they strike with rev'rent awe,  
 By Poets or Historians sacred made.

Nor yet to thee the babling Muse shall tell  
 What mighty Kings with all their legions wrought,  
 What cities sunk, and storied nations fell  
 When Cæsar, Titus, or when Trajan fought,

From private worth, and Fortune's private ways  
 Whilst o'er yon hill th' exalted a Trophy shows  
 To what vast heights of incorrupted praise  
 The great, the self-ennobled Marius rose.

From steep Arpinum's rock-invested shade,  
 From hardy Virtue's emulative school  
 His daring flight th' expanding Genius made,  
 And by obeying nobly learnt to rule.

Abash'd, confounded, stern Iberia groan'd,  
 And Afric trembled to her utmost coasts ;  
 When the proud land its destin'd Conqueror own'd  
 In the new Consul, and his veteran hosts.  
*The trophies of Marius, now erected before the Capitol.*



Yet Chiefs are madmen, and Ambition weak,  
 And mean the joys the laurel'd harvests yield,  
 If Virtue fail. Let Fame, let Envy speak  
 Of Capsa's walls, and Sextia's watry field.

But sink for ever, in oblivion cast,  
 Dishonest triumphs, and ignoble spoils.  
 Minturnæ's Marsh severely paid at last  
 The guilty glories gain'd in civil broils.

Nor yet his vain contempt the Muse shall praise  
 For scenes of polish'd life, and letter'd worth ;  
 The steel-rib'd Warrior wants not Envy's ways  
 To darken theirs, or call his merits forth,

Witness yon Cimbrian Trophies!—Marius, there  
 Thy ample pinion found a space to fly  
 As the plum'd eagle soaring sails in air,  
 In upper air, and scorns a middle sky.

Thence too thy Country claim'd thee for her own,  
 And bade the Sculptor's toil thy acts adorn,  
 To teach in characters of living stone  
 Eternal lessons to the youth unborn.

For wisely Rome her warlike Sons rewards  
 With the sweet labours of her Artists' hands ;  
 He wakes her Graces, who her empire guards,  
 And both Minervas join in willing bands.

O why,

O why, Britannia, why untrophied pass  
 The patriot deeds thy godlike Sons display,  
 Why breathes on high no monumental brass,  
 Why swells no Arc to grace Culloden's day ?

Wait we 'till faithless France submissive bow  
 Beneath that Hero's delegated spear,  
 Whose light'ning smote Rebellion's haughty brow,  
 And scatter'd her vile rout with horror in the rear ?

O Land of Freedom, Land of Arts, assume  
 That graceful dignity thy merits claim ;  
 Exalt thy Heroes like imperial Rome,  
 And build their virtues on their love of fame.

So shall the modest worth, which checks my friend,  
 Forget its blush when rous'd by Glory's charms ;  
 From breast to breast the generous warmth descend,  
 And still new trophies rise, at once, to Arts, and Arms.

