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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

Dodsley, Robert

London, 1758

To the Honourable and Reverend F. C.

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And waft to views romantic ; there present
 Some motley vifion, fhade and fun : the cliff
 O'erhanging, sparkling brooks, and ruins grey ;
 Bad me meanders trace, and catch the form
 Of varying clouds, and rainbows learn to paint.

Sometimes Ambition, brushing by, wou'd twitch
 My mantle, and with winning look sublime
 Allure to follow. What tho' fteep the track,
 Her mountain's top wou'd overpay when climb'd
 The scaler's toil ; her temple there was fine,
 And lovely thence the profpects. She cou'd tell
 Where laurels grew, whence many a wreath antique ;
 But more advis'd to fhun the barren twig,
 (What is immortal verdure without fruit ?)
 And woo fome thriving art : her num'rous mines
 Were open to the fearcher's skill and pains.

Caught by th' harangue, heart beat, and flutt'ring pulfe
 Sounded irregular marches to be gone ——
 What, pauze a moment when Ambition calls ?
 No, the blood gallops to the diftant goal,
 And throbs to reach it. Let the lame fit fill.
 When Fortune gentle, at the hill's verge extreme,
 Array'd in decent garb, but fomewhat thin,
 Smiling approach'd, and what occafion ask'd,
 Of climbing ? She already provident
 Had cater'd well, if ftomach cou'd digeft
 Her viands, and a palate not too nice.

Unfit

Unfit she said, for perilous atremp,
 That manly limb requir'd, and sinews tough.
 She took, and lay'd me in a vale remote,
 Amid the gloomy scene of fir and yew,
 On poppy beds, where Morpheus strew'd the ground:
 Obscurity her curtain round me drew,
 And syren Sloth a dull quietus fung.
 Sithence no fairy lights, no quick'ning ray,
 Nor stir of pulse, nor objects to entice
 Abroad the spirits; but the cloyster'd heart
 Sits squat at home, like pagod in a nitch
 Obscure, or grandees with nod-watching eye,
 And folded arms, in presence of the throne,
 Turk, or Indostan.—Cities, forums, courts
 And prating fanhedrims, and drumming wars,
 Affect no more than stories told to bed
 Lethargic, which at intervals the sick
 Hears and forgets, and wakes to doze again.
 Instead of converse and variety,
 The same trite round, the same stale silent scene:
 Such are thy comforts, blessed Solitude!
 But Innocence is there, but Peace all kind,
 And simple Quiet with her downy couch,
 Meads lowing, tune of birds, and lapse of streams,
 And Saunter, with a book, and warbling Muse,
 In praise of hawthorns.—Life's whole business this:
 Is it to bask i' th' sun? if so, a snail
 Were happy crawling on a southern wall.

Why

Why fits Content upon a cottage-fill
 At eventide, and blesteth the coarse meal
 In sooty corner? why sweet slumbers wait
 Th' hard pallet? not because from haunt remote
 Sequester'd in a dingle's bushy lap:
 'Tis labour makes the peasant's fav'ry fare,
 And works out his repose: for ease must ask
 The leave of diligence to be enjoy'd.

Oh! listen not to that enchantress Ease
 With seeming smile, her palatable cup
 By standing grows insipid; and beware
 The bottom, for there's poison in the lees.
 What health impair'd, and crowds inactive maim'd?
 What daily martyrs to her sluggish cause!
 Lefs strict devoir the Rufs and Persian claim
 Despotic; and as subjects long inur'd
 To servile burden, grow supine and tame,
 So fares it with our sov'reign and her train.

What tho' with lure fallacions she pretend
 From worldly bondage to set free, what gain
 Her votaries? What avails from iron chains
 Exempt, if rosy fetters bind as fast.

Bestir, and answer your creation's end,
 Think we that man with vig'rous pow'r endow'd,
 And room to stretch, was destin'd to fit still?
 Sluggards are Nature's rebels, flight her laws,
 Nor live up to the terms on which they hold
 Their vital lease. Laborious terms and hard,

But