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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

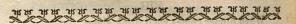
Dodsley, Robert London, 1758

A Panegyric on Ale.

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Never enquire about the Rhine; But fill your glafs, and drink your wine; Hope things may mend in Flanders: The Dutch we know are good allies, So are they all with fubfidies, And we have choice commanders.

Then here's the King, God bless his gr Tho' neither you nor I have place, He hath many a fage adviser; And yet no treason's fure in this, Let who will take the pray'r amis, God fend 'em all much wifer.



A PANEGYRIC on ALE.

___ Mea nec Falernæ Temperant vites, neque Formiani Pocula colles.

By T. W * * * * *

ALM of my cares, fweet folace of my toils, Hail, juice benignant! o'er the coftly cups Of riot-stirring wine, unwholfome draught, Let Pride's loofe fons prolong the wasteful night: My fober ev'ning let the tankard blefs, which has half With toast imbrown'd, and fragrant nutmeg fraught, While [259]

While the rich draught with oft repeated whiffs
Tobacco mild improves: divine repail!
Where no crude furfeit, or intemperate joys
Of lawless Bacchus reign: but o'er my foul
A calm Lethean creeps: in drowfy trance
Each thought subsides, and sweet oblivion wraps
My peaceful brain, as if the magic rod
Ofleaden Morpheus o'er mine eyes had shed
It's opiate influence. What tho' fore ills
Oppress, dire want of chill-dispelling coals,
Or chearful candle, save the makeweight's gleam
Hap'ly remaining; heart-rejoicing ale
Chears the sad scene, and ev'ry want supplies.

Meantime not mindless of the daily task

Of tutor sage, upon the learned leaves

Of deep Smiglecius much I meditate;

While ale inspires, and lends her kindred aid

The thought-perplexing labour to pursue,

Sweet Helicon of logic!——But if friends

Congenial call me from the toilsome page,

To pot-house I repair, the facred haunt,

Where, Ale, thy votaries in full resort

Hold rites nocturnal. In capacious chair

Of monumental oak, and antique mould,

That long has stood the rage of conqu'ring Time

Inviolate, (not in more ample seat

Smokes rosy justice, when th' important cause,

Whether of henroost or of mirthful rape,

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In all the majesty of paunch, he tries:) Studious of ease, and provident I place My gladfome limbs, while in repeated round Returns replenish'd the successive cup, And the brisk fire conspires to genial joy. Nor feldom to relieve the ling'ring hours In innocent delight, amusive putt On fmooth joint-stool in emblematic play The vain viciflitudes of fortune shews. Nor reck'ning, name tremendous, me disturbs, Nor, call'd-for, chills my breaft with fudden fear, While on the wonted door (expressive mark !) The frequent penny stands describ'd to view In fnowy characters, a graceful row. Hail Ticking! furest guardian of distress, Beneath thy shelter pennyless I quaff The chearing cup: tho' much the poet's friend Ne'er yet attempted in poetic strain, Accept this humble tribute of my praise. Nor proctor thrice with vocal heel alarms Our joys fecure, nor deigns the lowly roof Of pot-house snug to visit: wifer he The fplendid tavern haunts, or coffee-house Of James or Juggins, where the grateful breath Of mild tobacco ne'er diffus'd its balm; But the lewd spendthrift, falsely deem'd polite, While steams around the fragrant Indian bowl Oft damns the vulgar fons of humbler Ale: [261]

In vain—the proctor's voice alarms their joy; Just fate of wanton pride, and vain excess!

Nor less by day delightful is thy draught, Heart-easing Ale, whose forrow-foothing fweets Oft I repeat in vacant afternoon, When tatter'd flockings ask my mending hand Not unexperienc'd, while the tedious toil Slides unregarded. Let the tender fwain Each morn regale on nerve-relaxing tea, Companion meet of languor-loving nymph: Be mine each morn with eager appetite And hunger undiffembled, to repair To friendly butt'ry, there on fmoaking crust And foaming Ale to banquet unrestrain'd, Material breakfast! Thus in ancient times Our ancestors robust with liberal cups Usher'd the morn, unlike the languid fons Of modern days; nor ever had the might Of Britons brave decay'd, had thus they fed, With English Ale improving English worth. With ale irriguous, undifmay'd I hear The frequent dun afcend my lofty dome Importunate: whether the plaintive voice Of laundress shrill awake my startled ear, Or taylor with obsequious bow advance; Or groom invade me with defying look And fierce demeanor, whose emaciate steeds Had panted oft beneath my goring fteel: In vain they plead or threat; all-powerful Ale

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Excuses new supplies, and each descends
With joyless pace and debt-despairing looks.
E'en Sp—y with indignant bow retires,
Sterness of duns! and conquer'd quits the field.

Why did the gods fuch various bleffings pour On helpless mortals, from their grateful hands So foon the fhort liv'd-bounty to recal? Thus while, improvident of future ill I quaff the luscious tankard unrestrain'd, And thoughtless riot in ambrofial bliss, Sudden (dire fate of all things excellent!) The unpiting burfar's crofs affixing hand Blasts all my joys, and stops my glad career. Nor now the friendly pot-house longer yields A fure retreat when ev'ning shades the skies, Nor * Sheppard, ruthless widow, now vouchsafes The wonted trust, and * Winter ticks no more. Thus Adam exil'd from the blifsful fcenes Of Eden griev'd, no more in hallow'd bow'r On nect'rine fruits to feast, fresh shade or vale No more to vifit, or vine mantled grot; But all forlorn the naked wildernefs, And unrejoicing folitudes to trace. Thus too the matchless bard, whose lay resounds The Splendid Shilling's praife, in nightly gloom Of lonesome garret pin'd for chearful Ale: Whose steps in verse Miltonic I pursue, Mean follower! like him with honest love Of Ale divine inspir'd, and love of song, * Noted alehouses in Oxford.