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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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X.

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 subsidies,
And we have choice commanders.

XI.

Then here's the King, God blefs his gr
Tho' neither you nor I have place,

He hath many a fage advifer;
And yet no treason's fure in this,
Let who will take the pray'r amifs,
God fend 'em all much wifer.



A PANEGYRIC on ALE.

— *Mea nec Falernæ*

Temperant vites, neque Formiani

Pocula colles.

HOR.

By T. W*****

BALM of my cares, sweet solace of my toils,
Hail, juice benignant! o'er the costly cups
Of riot-stirring wine, unwholsome draught,
Let Pride's loose sons prolong the wasteful night:
My sober ev'ning let the tankard blefs,
With toast imbrown'd, and fragrant nutmeg fraught,

While

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



In all the majesty of paunch, he tries :)
 Studious of ease, and provident I place
 My gladsome limbs, while in repeated round
 Returns replenish'd the successive cup,
 And the brisk fire conspires to genial joy.
 Nor seldom to relieve the ling'ring hours
 In innocent delight, amusive putt
 On smooth joint-stool in emblematic play
 The vain vicissitudes of fortune shews.
 Nor reck'ning, name tremendous, me disturbs,
 Nor, call'd-for, chills my breast with sudden fear,
 While on the wonted door (expressive mark !)
 The frequent penny stands describ'd to view
 In snowy characters, a graceful row.
 Hail Ticking ! surest guardian of distress,
 Beneath thy shelter pennylefs 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 secure, nor deigns the lowly roof
 Of pot-house snug to visit : wiser he
 The splendid 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 sons of humbler Ale :

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 sorrow-foothing sweets
 Oft I repeat in vacant afternoon,

When tatter'd stockings ask my mending hand

Not unexperienc'd, while the tedious toil
 Slides unregarded. Let the tender swain

Each morn regale on nerve-relaxing tea,

Companion meet of languor-loving nymph :

Be mine each morn with eager appetite

And hunger undissembled, to repair

To friendly butt'ry, there on smoaking 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 sons

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, undismay'd I hear

The frequent dun ascend 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 steel :

In vain they plead or threat ; all-powerful Ale

R 3 Excuses

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

Why did the gods such various blessings pour
 On helpless mortals, from their grateful hands
 So soon the short liv'd-bounty to recal?
 Thus while, improvident of future ill
 I quaff the luscious tankard unrestrain'd,
 And thoughtless riot in ambrosial bliss,
 Sudden (dire fate of all things excellent!)
 The unpitied burfar's cross affixing hand
 Blasts all my joys, and stops my glad career.
 Nor now the friendly pot-house longer yields
 A sure 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 blissful scenes
 Of Eden griev'd, no more in hallow'd bow'r
 On nest'rine fruits to feast, fresh shade or vale
 No more to visit, or vine-mantled grot;
 But all forlorn the naked wilderness,
 And unrejoicing solitudes to trace.
 Thus too the matchless bard, whose lay resounds
 The Splendid Shilling's praise, 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.*