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

**Dodsley, Robert**

**London, 1758**

A Letter from Cambridge to a young Gentleman at Eton School. By Dr.  
Littleton.

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A Letter from Cambridge to a young Gentle-  
man at Eton School.

By Dr. LITTLETON.

**T**H O' plagu'd with algebraic lectures,  
And astronomical conjectures,  
Wean'd from the sweets of poetry  
To scraps of dry philosophy,  
You see, dear fir, I've found a time  
T' express my thoughts to you in rhyme.  
For why, my friend, shou'd distant parts,  
Or times, disjoin united hearts,  
Since, tho' by intervening space  
Depriv'd of speaking face to face,  
By faithful emissary letter  
We may converse as well, or better?  
And not to stretch a narrow fancy,  
To shew what pretty things I can say,  
(As some will strain at simile,  
First work it fine, and then apply ;  
Tag Butler's rhimes to Prior's thoughts,  
And chuse to mimick all their faults,  
By head and shoulders bring in a stick,  
To shew their knack at hudibrastic.)  
I'll tell you as a friend, and crony,  
How here I spend my time, and money ;

For

For time, and money, go together  
 As sure as weathercock, and weather;  
 And thrifty guardians all allow  
 This grave reflection to be true,  
 That whilst we pay so dear for learning  
 Those weighty truths we've no concern in,  
 The spark who squanders time away  
 In vain pursuits, and fruitless play,  
 Not only proves an arrant blockhead,  
 But, what's much worse, is out of pocket.  
 Whether my conduct bad, or good is,  
 Judge from the nature of my studies.

No more majestic Virgil's heights,  
 Nor tow'ring Milton's loftier flights,  
 Nor courtly Placcus's rebukes,  
 Who banter's vice with friendly jokes,  
 Nor Congreve's life, nor Cowley's fire,  
 Nor all the beauties that conspire  
 To place the greenest bays upon  
 Th' immortal brows of Addison;  
 Prior's inimitable ease,  
 Nor Pope's harmonious numbers please;  
 Homer indeed (for critics shew it)  
 Was both philosopher, and poet,  
 But tedious philosophic chapters  
 Quite stifle my poetic raptures,  
 And I to Phœbus bade adieu  
 When first I took my leave of you.



Now algebra, geometry,  
 Arithmetic, astronomy,  
 Optics, chronology, and statics,  
 All tiresome parts of mathematics ;  
 With twenty harder names than these  
 Disturb my brain, and break my peace.  
 All seeming inconsistencies  
 Are nicely solv'd by a's, and b's ;  
 Our eye-sight is disprov'd by prisms,  
 Our arguments by syllogisms.  
 If I shou'd confidently write  
 This ink is black, this paper white,  
 Or to express myself yet fuller  
 Shou'd say that black, or white's a colour ;  
 They'd contradict it, and perplex one  
 With motion, rays, and their reflexion,  
 And solve th' apparent falsehood by  
 The curious texture of the eye.  
 Shou'd I the poker want, and take it,  
 When't looks as hot, as fire can make it,  
 And burn my finger, and my coat,  
 They'd flatly tell me, 'tis not hot ;  
 The fire, say they, has in't, tis true,  
 The pow'r of causing heat in you ;  
 But no more heat's in fire that heats you,  
 Than there is pain in stick that beats you.  
 Thus too philofophers expound  
 The names of odour, taste, and sound ;

The



The salts, and juices in all meat  
 Affect the tongues of them that eat,  
 And by some secret poignant power  
 Give them the taste of sweet, and sour.  
 Carnations, violets, and roses  
 Cause a sensation in our noses;  
 But then there's none of us can tell  
 The things themselves have taste, or smell.  
 So when melodious Mason sings,  
 Or Gethring tunes the trembling strings,  
 Or when the trumpet's brisk alarms  
 Call forth the chearful youth to arms,  
 Convey'd thro' undulating air  
 The music's only in the ear.

We're told how planets roll on high,  
 How large their orbits, and how nigh;  
 I hope in little time to know  
 Whether the moon's a cheefe, or no;  
 Whether the man in't, as some tell ye,  
 With beef and carrots fills his belly;  
 Why like a lunatic confin'd  
 He lives at distance from mankind;  
 When he at one good hearty shake,  
 Might whirl his prison off his back;  
 Or like a maggot in a nut  
 Full bravely eat his passage out.  
 Who knows what vast discoveries  
 From such inquiries might arise?

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But

