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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

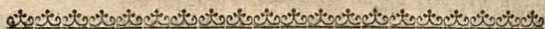
Dodsley, Robert

London, 1758

An Elegy written in an empty Assembly-Room. By the Same.

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‘ A bramble for ever! O! chance unexpected!
 ‘ But bramble prevail’d and was duly elected.”
 “ O! ho! quoth the knight with a look most profound,
 ‘ Now I see there’s some good *in good books* to be found.
 ‘ I wish I had read this same bible before:
 ‘ Of long miles at the least ’twould have sav’d us fourscore,
 ‘ You, *Plumb*, with your olives and oil might have staid,
 ‘ And myself might have tarried my wines to unlade.
 ‘ What have merchants to do from their businets to ramble!
 ‘ Your electioneer-errant should still be a bramble.”
 Thus ended at once the wise comment on *Jotham*,
 And our citizens’ jaunt to the borough of *Gotham*.



An Elegy written in an empty Assembly-Room.

By the Same.

Not. The Heroine of the Poem is Miss Townshend, now Mrs. Orme, and the Hall was given by the Duchess of Newcastle.

Sola sibi _____ *Semperque relinqui*

VIRG.

ADVERTISEMENT.

This poem being a parody on the most remarkable passages in the well-known epistle of Eloisa to Abelard, it was thought unnecessary to transcribe any lines from that poem, which is in the hands of all, and in the memory of most readers.

IN scenes where HALLER’S genius has combin’d
 With BROMWICH to amuse and cheer the mind;
 Amid this pomp of cost, this pride of art,
 What mean these sorrows in a female heart?

Ye

Ye crowded walls, whose well-enlighten'd round
 With lovers sighs and protestations found,
 Ye pictures flatter'd by the learn'd and wife,
 Ye glasses ogled by the brightest eyes,
 Ye cards, which beauties by their touch have blest,
 Ye chairs, which peers and ministers have prest,
 How are ye chang'd ! like you my fate I moan,
 Like you, alas ! neglected and alone —
 For ah ! to me alone no card is come,
 I must not go abroad — and cannot *be at home*.

Blest be that social pow'r, the first who pair'd
 The erring footman with th' unerring card.
 'Twas VENUS sure ; for by their faithful aid
 The whispering lover meets the blushing maid :
 From solitude they give the chearful call
 To the choice supper, or the sprightly ball :
 Speed the soft summons of the gay and fair,
 From distant Bloomsbury to Grosvenor's square ;
 And bring the colonel to the tender hour,
 From the parade, the senate, or the Tower.

Ye records, patents of our worth and pride !
 Our daily lesson, and our nightly guide !
 Where'er ye stand dispos'd in proud array,
 The vapours vanish, and the heart is gay ;
 But when no cards the chimney-glass adorn,
 The dismal void with heart-felt shame we mourn ;
 Conscious neglect inspires a sullen gloom,
 And brooding sadness fills the slighted room.

If



If but some happier female's card I've seen,
 I swell with rage, or sicken with the spleen;
 While artful pride conceals the bursting tear,
 With some forc'd banter or affected sneer:
 But now grown desp'rate, and beyond all hope,
 I curse the ball, the d — s, and the pope.
 And as the loads of borrow'd plate go by,
 Tax it! ye greedy ministers, I cry.

How shall I feel when Sol resigns his light,
 To this proud splendid goddess of the night!
 Then when her aukward guests in measure beat
 The crowded floors, which groan beneath their feet!
 What thoughts in solitude shall then possess
 My tortur'd mind, or soften my distress!
 Not all that envious malice can suggest
 Will sooth the tumults of my raging breast.
 (For Envy's lost amidst the numerous train,
 And hisses with her hundred snakes in vain)
 Though with contempt each despicable soul
 Singly I view, — I must revere the whole.

The methodist in her peculiar lot,
 The world forgetting, by the world forgot,
 Though single happy, tho' alone is proud,
 She thinks of heav'n (she thinks not of a crowd)
 And if she ever feels a vap'rish qualm,
 Some * *drop of honey*, or some holy balm,

* *The title of a book of modern devotion.*

The

The pious prophet of her sect distils,
 And her pure soul seraphic rapture fills ;
 Grace shines around her with serene beams,
 And whisp'ring W * * * prompts her golden dreams.

Far other dreams my sensual soul employ,
 While conscious nature tastes unholy joy :
 I view the traces of experienc'd charms,
 And clasp the regimentals in my arms.
 To dream last night I clos'd my blubber'd eyes ;
 Ye soft illusions, dear deceits arise :
 Alas ! no more ; methinks I wand'ring go
 To distant quarters 'midst the Highland snow :
 To the dark inn where never wax-light burns,
 Where in smoak'd tap'try faded Dido mourns ;
 To some assembly in a country town,
 And meet the colonel—in a parson's gown—
 I start—I shriek—

O ! could I on my waking brain impose,
 Or but forget at least my present woes !
 Forget 'em—how !—each rattling coach suggests
 The loath'd ideas of the crowding guests.
 To visit—were to publish my disgrace ;
 To meet the spleen in ev'ry other place ;
 To join old maids and dowagers forlorn ;
 And be at once their comfort and their scorn !
 For once, to read—with this distemper'd brain,
 Ev'n modern novels lend their aid in vain.

