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Poems On Several Occasions

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The Tea-Table, A Town Eclogue. Doris and Melanthe.

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THE
TEA-TABLE,
A Town ECLOGUE.

DORIS and MELANTHE.



*S*AIN'T James's noon-day bell for pray'rs
had toll'd,
And coaches to the Patron's *Levée* roll'd,
When *Doris* rose. And now through all
the room

From flow'ry Tea exhales a fragrant fume.
Cup after cup they sipt, and talk'd by fits,
For *Doris* here, and there *Melantbe* sits.
Doris was young, a laughter-loving dame,
Nice of her own alike and others fame;

Melantbe's

Melanthe's tongue could well a tale advance,
 And sooner gave than funk a circumstance :
 Lock'd in her mem'ry secrets never dy'd ;
Doris begun, *Melanthe* thus reply'd.

D O R I S.

Sylvia the vain fantastic Fop admires,
 The Rake's loose gallantry her bosom fires ;
Sylvia like that is vain, like this she roves,
 In liking them she but her self approves.

M E L A N T H E.

Laura rails on at men, the sex reviles,
 Their vice condemns, or at their folly smiles.
 Why should her tongue in just resentment fail,
 Since men at her with equal freedom rail ?

D O R I S.

Last *Masquerade* was *Sylvia* nymph-like seen,
 Her hand a crook sustain'd, her dress was green ;
 An am'rous shepherd led her through the croud,
 The nymph was innocent, the shepherd vow'd ;
 But nymphs their innocence with shepherds trust ;
 So both withdrew, as nymph and shepherd must.

M E L A N T H E.

Name but the licence of the modern stage,
Laura takes fire, and kindles into rage ;

The

The whining Tragic love she scarce can bear,
 But nauseous Comedy ne'er shock'd her ear;
 Yet in the gall'ry mobb'd, she sits secure,
 And laughs at jests that turn the Box denure.

D O R I S.

Trust not, ye Ladies, to your beauty's pow'r,
 For beauty withers like a shrivell'd flow'r;
 Yet those fair flow'rs that *Sylvia's* temples bind,
 Fade not with sudden blights or winter's wind;
 Like those her face defies the rolling years,
 For art her roses and her charms repairs.

M E L A N T H E.

Laura despises ev'ry outward grace,
 The wanton sparkling eye, the blooming face;
 The beauties of the soul are all her pride,
 For other beauties nature has deny'd;
 If affectation show a beauteous mind,
 Lives there a man to *Laura's* merits blind?

D O R I S.

Sylvia be sure defies the town's reproach,
 Whose *Deshabille* is foil'd in hackney coach;
 What though the fast was clos'd, must we conclude,
 That she was yielding, when her Fop was rude?

M E L A N-

MELANTHE.

Laura learnt caution at too dear a cost.

What Fair could e'er retrieve her honour lost ?
 Secret she loves ; and who the nymph can blame,
 Who durst not own a footman's vulgar flame ?

DORIS.

Though *Laura's* homely taste descend so low ;
 Her footman well may vye with *Sylvia's* Beau.

MELANTHE.

Yet why should *Laura* think it a disgrace,
 When proud *Miranda's* groom wears *Flander's* lace ?

DORIS.

What, though for musick *Cynthia* boasts an ear ?
Robin perhaps can hum an *Opera* air.
Cynthia can bow, takes snuff, and dances well,
Robin talks common sense, can write and spell ;
Sylvia's vain fancy drefs and show admires,
 But 'tis the man alone whom *Laura* fires.

MELANTHE.

Plato's wife morals *Laura's* soul improve :
 And this no doubt must be *Platonic* love !
 Her soul to gen'rous acts was still inclin'd ;
 What shows more virtue than an humble mind ?

DORIS.

D O R I S.

What though young *Sylvia* love the Park's cool shade,
 And wander in the dusk the secret glade?
 Masqu'd and alone (by chance) she met her spark,
 That innocence is weak which shuns the dark.

M E L A N T H E.

But *Laura* for her flame has no pretence;
 Her footman is a footman too in sence.
 All Prudes I hate, and those are rightly curst
 With scandal's double load, who censure first.

D O R I S.

And what if *Cynthia Sylvia's* garter ty'd!
 Who such a foot and such a leg would hide;
 When crook-kneed *Phyllis* can expose to view
 Her gold-clock'd stocking, and her tawdry shoe?

M E L A N T H E.

If pure Devotion center in the face,
 If cens'ring others show intrinsic grace,
 If guilt to publick freedoms be confin'd,
 Prudes (all must own) are of the holy kind!

D O R I S.

Sylvia disdains reserve, and flies constraint:
 She neither is, nor would be thought a Saint,

M E L A N-



MELANTHE.

Love is a trivial passion, *Laura* cries,
 May I be blest with friendship's stricter ties ;
 To such a breast all secrets we commend ;
 Sure the whole *Drawing-room* is *Laura's* friend.

DORIS.

At marriage *Sylvia* rails ; who men would trust ?
 Yet husband's jealousies are sometimes just.
 Her favours *Sylvia* shares among mankind,
 Such gen'rous love should never be confin'd.

As thus alternate chat employ'd their tongue,
 With thund'ring raps the brazen knocker rung.
Laura with *Sylvia* came ; the nymphs arise :
 This unexpected visit, *Doris* cries,
 Is doubly kind ! *Melantbe* *Laura* led,
 Since I was last so blest, my dear, she said,
 Sure 'tis an age ! they fate ; the hour was set ;
 And all again that night at *Ombre* met.



T H E