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Original Poems And Translations, By John Dryden, Esq; Now First Collected and Publish'd together, In Two Volumes

Containing Translations, Epistles, Prologues, Epilogues, Elegies, Epitaphs, And Songs

Dryden, John

London, 1743

To Mr. Granville*, on his excellent Tragedy called Heroic Love.

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Maintain your Poſt : That's all the Fame you need;
For 'tis impoſſible you ſhou'd proceed.
Already I am worn with Cares and Age,
And juſt abandoning th' ungrateful Stage :
Unprofitably kept at Heav'n's Expence,
I live a Rent-Charge on his Providence :
But you, whom ev'ry Muſe and Grace adorn,
Whom I foreſee to better Fortune born,
Be kind to my Remains ; and O defend,
Againſt your Judgment, your departed Friend !
Let not th' inſulting Foe my Fame purſue,
But ſhade thoſe Laurels which deſcend to You :
And take for Tribute what theſe Lines expreſs :
You merit more ; nor cou'd my Love do leſs.

To Mr. GRANVILLE *, *on his excellent Tragedy called* Heroic Love.

AUſpicious Poet, wert thou not my Friend,
How cou'd I envy, what I muſt commend!
But ſince 'tis Nature's Law in Love and Wit,
That Youth ſhou'd reign, and with'ring Age ſubmit,
With leſs regret thoſe Laurels I reſign,
Which, dying on my Brows, revive on thine.
With better Grace an ancient Chief may yield
The long contended Honours of the Field,
Than venture all his Fortune at a caſt,
And fight, like *Hannibal*, to loſe at laſt.
Young Princes, obſtinate to win the Prize,
Tho' yearly beaten, yearly yet they riſe :

---

* *Lord* Landſdowne.

Old

Old Monarchs, tho' ſucceſsful, ſtill in doubt,
Catch at a Peace, and wiſely turn devout.
Thine be the Laurel then; thy blooming Age
Can beſt, if any can, ſupport the Stage;
Which ſo declines, that ſhortly we may ſee
Players and Plays reduc'd to ſecond Infancy.
Sharp to the World, but thoughtleſs of renown,
They plot not on the Stage, but on the Town,
And, in deſpair their empty Pit to fill,
Set up ſome Foreign Monſter in a Bill.
Thus they jog on, ſtill tricking, never thriving,
And murd'ring Plays, which they miſcal Reviving.
Our Senſe is Nonſenſe, through their Pipes convey'd;
Scarce can a Poet know the Play he made;
'Tis ſo diſguis'd in Death; nor thinks 'tis He
That ſuffers in the mangled Tragedy.
Thus *Itys* firſt was kill'd, and after dreſs'd
For his own Sire, the chief invited Gueſt.
I ſay not this of thy ſucceſsful Scenes,
Where thine was all the Glory, theirs the Gains.
With length of Time, much Judgment, and more Toil,
Not ill they acted, what they cou'd not ſpoil.
Their Setting-Sun * ſtill ſhoots a glimmering Ray,
Like antient *Rome*, majeſtick in Decay:
And better Gleanings their worn Soil can boaſt,
Than the Crab-Vintage of the neighb'ring Coaſt †.
This diff'rence yet the judging World will ſee;
Thou copieſt *Homer*, and they copy thee.

---

* *Mr.* Betterton's *Company in* Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.
† Drury-Lane *Play-Houſe.*