

THE  
**ANATOMY OF  
MELANCHOLY,**

WHAT IT IS,

WITH

ALL THE KINDS, CAUSES, SYMPTOMS, PROGNOSTICS, AND  
SEVERAL CURES OF IT.

**IN THREE PARTITIONS.**

WITH THEIR SEVERAL

SECTIONS, MEMBERS, AND SUBSECTIONS, PHILOSOPHICALLY, MEDICALLY,

HISTORICALLY OPENED AND CUT UP.

**BY DEMOCRITUS JUNIOR.**

WITH

A SATIRICAL PREFACE, CONDUCTING TO THE FOLLOWING  
DISCOURSE.

**A NEW EDITION,**

CORRECTED, AND ENRICHED BY TRANSLATIONS OF THE NUMEROUS  
CLASSICAL EXTRACTS.

**BY DEMOCRITUS MINOR.**

**TO WHICH IS PREFIXED AN ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR.**

Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci.  
He that joins instruction with delight,  
Profit with pleasure, carries all the votes.

**HONORATISSIMO DOMINO**

**NON MINVS VIRTUTE SUA, QUAM GENERIS SPLENDORE,**

**ILLVSTRISSIMO,**

**GEORGIO BEKKLEIO,**

**MILITI DE BALNEO, BARONI DE BERKLEY, MOUBREY, SEGRAVE,**

**D. DE BRUSE,**

**DOMINO SUO MULTIS NOMINIBUS OBSERVANDO,**

**HANC SUAM**

**MELANCHOLIAE ANATOMEN,**

**JAM SEXTO REVISAM, D.D.**

**DEMOCRITUS JUNIOR.**

**ADVERTISEMENT TO THE LAST**

## LONDON EDITION.

The work now restored to public notice has had an extraordinary fate. At the time of its original publication it obtained a great celebrity, which continued more than half a century. During that period few books were more read, or more deservedly applauded. It was the delight of the learned, the solace of the indolent, and the refuge of the uninformed. It passed through at least eight editions, by which the bookseller, as WOOD records, got an estate; and, notwithstanding the objection sometimes opposed against it, of a quaint style, and too great an accumulation of authorities, the fascination of its wit, fancy, and sterling sense, have borne down all censures, and extorted praise from the first Writers in the English language. The grave JOHNSON has praised it in the warmest terms, and the ludicrous STERNE has interwoven many parts of it into his own popular performance. MILTON did not disdain to build two of his finest poems on it; and a host of inferior writers have embellished their works with beauties not their own, culled from a performance which they had not the justice even to mention. Change of times, and the frivolity of fashion, suspended, in some degree, that fame which had lasted near a century; and the succeeding generation affected indifference towards an author, who at length was only looked into by the plunderers of literature, the poachers in obscure volumes. The plagiarisms of *Tristram Shandy*, so successfully brought to light by DR. FERRIAR, at length drew the attention of the public towards a writer, who, though then little known, might, without impeachment of modesty, lay claim to every mark of respect; and inquiry proved, beyond a doubt, that the calls of justice had been little attended to by others, as well as the facetious YORICK. WOOD observed, more than a century ago, that several authors had unmercifully stolen matter from BURTON without any acknowledgment. The time, however, at length arrived, when the merits of the *Anatomy of Melancholy* were to receive their due praise. The book was again sought for

and read, and again it became an applauded performance. Its excellencies once more stood confessed, in the increased price which every copy offered for sale produced; and the increased demand pointed out the necessity of a new edition. This is now presented to the public in a manner not disgraceful to the memory of the author; and the publisher relies with confidence, that so valuable a repository of amusement and information will continue to hold the rank to which it has been restored, firmly supported by its own merit, and safe from the influence and blight of any future caprices of fashion. To open its valuable mysteries to those who have not had the advantage of a classical education, translations of the countless quotations from ancient writers which occur in the work, are now for the first time given, and obsolete orthography is in all instances modernized.

### **ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR.**

Robert Burton was the son of Ralph Burton, of an ancient and genteel family at Lindley, in Leicestershire, and was born there on the 8th of February 1576. [1]He received the first rudiments of learning at the free school of Sutton Coldfield, in Warwickshire [2]from whence he was, at the age of seventeen, in the long vacation, 1593, sent to Brazen Nose College, in the condition of a commoner, where he made considerable progress in logic and philosophy. In 1599 he was elected student of Christ Church, and, for form's sake, was put under the tuition of Dr. John Bancroft, afterwards Bishop of Oxford. In 1614 he was admitted to the reading of the Sentences, and on the 29th of November, 1616, had the vicarage of St. Thomas, in the west suburb of Oxford, conferred on him by the dean and canons of Christ Church, which, with the rectory of Segrave, in Leicestershire, given to him in the year 1636, by George, Lord Berkeley, he kept, to use the words of the Oxford antiquary, with much ado to his dying day. He seems to have been first beneficed at Walsby, in Lincolnshire, through the munificence of his noble patroness, Frances, Countess Dowager of Exeter, but resigned the same, as he tells us, for some special

reasons. At his vicarage he is remarked to have always given the sacrament in wafers. Wood's character of him is, that "he was an exact mathematician, a curious calculator of nativities, a general read scholar, a thorough-paced philologist, and one that understood the surveying of lands well. As he was by many accounted a severe student, a devourer of authors, a melancholy and humorous person; so by others, who knew him well, a person of great honesty, plain dealing and charity. I have heard some of the ancients of Christ Church often say, that his company was very merry, facetious, and juvenile; and no man in his time did surpass him for his ready and dexterous interlarding his common discourses among them with verses from the poets, or sentences from classic authors; which being then all the fashion in the University, made his company the more acceptable." He appears to have been a universal reader of all kinds of books, and availed himself of his multifarious studies in a very extraordinary manner. From the information of Hearne, we learn that John Rouse, the Bodleian librarian, furnished him with choice books for the prosecution of his work. The subject of his labour and amusement, seems to have been adopted from the infirmities of his own habit and constitution. Mr. Granger says, "He composed this book with a view of relieving his own melancholy, but increased it to such a degree, that nothing could make him laugh, but going to the bridge-foot and hearing the ribaldry of the bargemen, which rarely failed to throw him into a violent fit of laughter. Before he was overcome with this horrid disorder, he, in the intervals of his vapours, was esteemed one of the most facetious companions in the University."

His residence was chiefly at Oxford; where, in his chamber in Christ Church College, he departed this life, at or very near the time which he had some years before foretold, from the calculation of his own nativity, and which, says Wood, "being exact, several of the students did not forbear to whisper among themselves, that rather than there should be a mistake in the calculation, he sent up his soul to heaven through a slip about his neck." Whether this suggestion is founded in truth, we have no other evidence than an

obscure hint in the epitaph hereafter inserted, which was written by the author himself, a short time before his death. His body, with due solemnity, was buried near that of Dr. Robert Weston, in the north aisle which joins next to the choir of the cathedral of Christ Church, on the 27th of January 1639-40. Over his grave was soon after erected a comely monument, on the upper pillar of the said aisle, with his bust, painted to the life. On the right hand is the following calculation of his nativity:

and under the bust, this inscription of his own composition:—

*Paucis notus, paucioribus ignotus, Hic jacet Democritus junior Cui vitam dedit et mortem Melancholia Ob. 8 Id. Jan. A. C. MDCXXXIX.*

Arms:—Azure on a bend O. between three dogs' heads O. a crescent G.

A few months before his death, he made his will, of which the following is a copy:

### **EXTRACTED FROM THE REGISTRY OF THE PREROGATIVE COURT OF CANTERBURY.**

*In nomine Dei Amen.* August 15th One thousand six hundred thirty nine because there be so many casualties to which our life is subject besides quarrelling and contention which happen to our Successors after our Death by reason of unsettled Estates I Robert Burton Student of Christ-church Oxon. though my means be but small have thought good by this my last Will and Testament to dispose of that little which I have and being at this present I thank God in perfect health of Bodie and Mind and if this Testament be not so formal according to the nice and strict terms of Law and other Circumstances peradventure required of which I am ignorant I desire howsoever this my Will may be accepted and stand good according to my true Intent and meaning First I bequeath Animam Deo Corpus Terrae whensoever it shall please God to call me I give my Land in Higham which my good Father Ralphe Burton of Lindly in the County of Leicester Esquire gave me by Deed of Gift

and that which I have annexed to that Farm by purchase since, now leased for thirty eight pounds per Ann. to mine Elder Brother William Burton of Lindly Esquire during his life and after him to his Heirs I make my said Brother William likewise mine Executor as well as paying such Annuities and Legacies out of my Lands and Goods as are hereafter specified I give to my nephew Cassiblan Burton twenty pounds Annuity per Ann. out of my Land in Higham during his life to be paid at two equal payments at our Lady Day in Lent and Michaelmas or if he be not paid within fourteen Days after the said Feasts to distrain on any part of the Ground or on any of my Lands of Inheritance Item I give to my Sister Katherine Jackson during her life eight pounds per Ann. Annuity to be paid at the two Feasts equally as above said or else to distrain on the Ground if she be not paid after fourteen days at Lindly as the other *some* is out of the said Land Item I give to my Servant John Upton the Annuity of Forty Shillings out of my said Farme during his life (if till then my Servant) to be paid on Michaelmas day in Lindley each year or else after fourteen days to distrain Now for my goods I thus dispose them First I give an C<sup>th</sup> pounds to Christ Church in Oxford where I have so long lived to buy five pounds Lands per Ann. to be Yearly bestowed on Books for the Library Item I give an hundredth pound to the University Library of Oxford to be bestowed to purchase five pound Land per Ann. to be paid out Yearly on Books as Mrs. Brooks formerly gave an hundred pounds to buy Land to the same purpose and the Rent to the same use I give to my Brother George Burton twenty pounds and my watch I give to my Brother Ralph Burton five pounds Item I give to the Parish of Seagrave in Leicestershire where I am now Rector ten pounds to be given to a certain Feoffees to the perpetual good of the said *Parish Oxon* [3] Item I give to my Niece Eugenia Burton One hundredth pounds Item I give to my Nephew Richard Burton now Prisoner in London an hundredth pound to redeem him Item I give to the Poor of Higham Forty Shillings where my Land is to the poor of Nuneaton where I was once a Grammar Scholar three pound to my Cousin Purfey of Wadlake [Wadley] my Cousin

Purfey of Calcott my Cousin Hales of Coventry my Nephew Bradshaw of Orton twenty shillings a piece for a small remembrance to Mr. Whitehall Rector of Cherkby myne own Chamber Fellow twenty shillings I desire my Brother George and my Cosen Purfey of Calcott to be the Overseers of this part of my Will I give moreover five pounds to make a small Monument for my Mother where she is buried in London to my Brother Jackson forty shillings to my Servant John Upton forty shillings besides his former Annuity if he be my Servant till I die if he be till then my Servant [4]—ROBERT BURTON—Charles Russell Witness—John Pepper Witness.

An Appendix to this my Will if I die in Oxford or whilst I am of Christ Church and with good Mr. Paynes August the Fifteenth 1639.

I give to Mr. Doctor Fell Dean of Christ Church Forty Shillings to the Eight Canons twenty Shillings a piece as a small remembrance to the poor of St. Thomas Parish Twenty Shillings to Brasenose Library five pounds to Mr. Rowse of Oriell Colledge twenty Shillings to Mr. Heywood xxs. to Dr. Metcalfe xxs. to Mr. Sherley xxs. If I have any Books the University Library hath not, let them take them If I have any Books our own Library hath not, let them take them I give to Mrs. Fell all my English Books of Husbandry one excepted to her Daughter Mrs. Katherine Fell my Six Pieces of Silver Plate and six Silver spoons to Mrs. Iles my Gerards Herball To Mrs. Morris my Country Farme Translated out of French 4. and all my English Physick Books to Mr. Whistler the Recorder of Oxford I give twenty shillings to all my fellow Students Mrs of Arts a Book in fol. or two a piece as Master Morris Treasurer or Mr. Dean shall appoint whom I request to be the Overseer of this Appendix and give him for his pains Atlas Geografer and Ortelius Theatrum Mond' I give to John Fell the Dean's Son Student my Mathematical Instruments except my two Crosse Staves which I give to my Lord of Donnol if he be then of the House To Thomas Iles Doctor Iles his Son Student Saluntch on Paurrehelia and Lucian's Works in 4 Tomes If any books be left let my Executors

dispose of them with all such Books as are written with my own hands and half my Melancholy Copy for Crips hath the other half To Mr. Jones Chaplin and Chanter my Surveying Books and Instruments To the Servants of the House Forty Shillings ROB. BURTON—Charles Russell Witness—John Pepper Witness—This Will was shewed to me by the Testator and acknowledged by him some few days before his death to be his last Will Ita Testor John Morris S Th D. Prebendari' Eccl Chri' Oxon Feb. 3, 1639.

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum, &c. 11° 1640

Juramento Willmi Burton Fris' et Executoris cui &c. de bene et fideliter administrand. &c. coram Mag'ris Nathanaele Stephens Rectore Eccl. de Drayton, et Edwardo Farmer, Clericis, vigore commissionis, &c.

The only work our author executed was that now reprinted, which probably was the principal employment of his life. Dr. Ferriar says, it was originally published in the year 1617; but this is evidently a mistake; [5]the first edition was that printed in 4to, 1621, a copy of which is at present in the collection of John Nichols, Esq., the indefatigable illustrator of the *History of Leicestershire*; to whom, and to Isaac Reed, Esq., of Staple Inn, this account is greatly indebted for its accuracy. The other impressions of it were in 1624, 1628, 1632, 1638, 1651-2, 1660, and 1676, which last, in the titlepage, is called the eighth edition.

The copy from which the present is reprinted, is that of 1651-2; at the conclusion of which is the following address:

"TO THE READER.

“Be pleased to know (Courteous Reader) that since the last Impression of this Book, the ingenuous Author of it is deceased, leaving a Copy of it exactly corrected, with several considerable Additions by his own hand; this Copy he committed to my care and custody, with directions to have those Additions inserted in the next Edition; which in order to his command, and the Publicke Good, is faithfully performed in this last Impression.”

H. C. (*i.e.* HEN. CRIPPS.)

The following testimonies of various authors will serve to show the

estimation in which this work has been held:—

“The ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY, wherein the author hath piled up variety of much excellent learning. Scarce any book of philology in our land hath, in so short a time, passed so many editions.”—*Fuller's Worthies*, fol. 16.

“Tis a book so full of variety of reading, that gentlemen who have lost their time, and are put to a push for invention, may furnish themselves with matter for common or scholastical discourse and writing.”—*Wood's Athenae Oxoniensis*, vol. i. p. 628. 2d edit.

“If you never saw BURTON UPON MELANCHOLY, printed 1676, I pray look into it, and read the ninth page of his Preface, 'Democritus to the Reader.' There is something there which touches the point we are upon; but I mention the author to you, as the pleasantest, the most learned, and the most full of sterling sense. The wits of Queen Anne's reign, and the beginning of George the First, were not a little beholden to him.”—*Archbishop Herring's Letters*, 12mo. 1777. p. 149.

“BURTON'S ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY, he (Dr. Johnson) said, was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise.”—*Boswell's Life of Johnson*, vol. i. p. 580. 8vo. edit.

“BURTON'S ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY is a valuable book,” said Dr. Johnson. “It is, perhaps, overloaded with quotation. But there is great spirit and great power in what Burton says when he writes from his own mind.”—*Ibid*, vol. ii. p. 325.

“It will be no detraction from the powers of Milton's original genius and invention, to remark, that he seems to have borrowed the subject of *L' Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, together with some particular thoughts, expressions, and rhymes, more especially the idea of a contrast between these two dispositions, from a forgotten poem prefixed to the first edition of BURTON'S ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY, entitled, 'The Author's Abstract of Melancholy; or, A Dialogue between Pleasure and Pain.' Here pain is melancholy. It was written, as I conjecture, about the year 1600. I will make no apology for abstracting and citing as much of this

poem as will be sufficient to prove, to a discerning reader, how far it had taken possession of Milton's mind. The measure will appear to be the same; and that our author was at least an attentive reader of Burton's book, may be already concluded from the traces of resemblance which I have incidentally noticed in passing through the *L' Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*.”—After extracting the lines, Mr. Warton adds, “as to the very elaborate work to which these visionary verses are no unsuitable introduction, the writer's variety of learning, his quotations from scarce and curious books, his pedantry sparkling with rude wit and shapeless elegance, miscellaneous matter, intermixture of agreeable tales and illustrations, and, perhaps, above all, the singularities of his feelings, clothed in an uncommon quaintness of style, have contributed to render it, even to modern readers, a valuable repository of amusement and information.”—*Warton's Milton*, 2d edit. p. 94.

“THE ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY is a book which has been universally read and admired. This work is, for the most part, what the author himself styles it, 'a cento;' but it is a very ingenious one. His quotations, which abound in every page, are pertinent; but if he had made more use of his invention and less of his commonplace-book, his work would perhaps have been more valuable than it is. He is generally free from the affected language and ridiculous metaphors which disgrace most of the books of his time.”—*Granger's Biographical History*.

“BURTON'S ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY, a book once the favourite of the learned and the witty, and a source of surreptitious learning, though written on a regular plan, consists chiefly of quotations: the author has honestly termed it a cento. He collects, under every division, the opinions of a multitude of writers, without regard to chronological order, and has too often the modesty to decline the interposition of his own sentiments. Indeed the bulk of his materials generally overwhelms him. In the course of his folio he has contrived to treat a great variety of topics, that seem very loosely connected with the general subject; and, like

Bayle, when he starts a favourite train of quotations, he does not scruple to let the digression outrun the principal question. Thus, from the doctrines of religion to military discipline, from inland navigation to the morality of dancing-schools, every thing is discussed and determined.”—*Ferriar's Illustrations of Sterne*, p. 58.

“The archness which BURTON displays occasionally, and his indulgence of playful digressions from the most serious discussions, often give his style an air of familiar conversation, notwithstanding the laborious collections which supply his text. He was capable of writing excellent poetry, but he seems to have cultivated this talent too little. The English verses prefixed to his book, which possess beautiful imagery, and great sweetness of versification, have been frequently published. His Latin elegiac verses addressed to his book, shew a very agreeable turn for raillery.”—*Ibid.* p. 58.

“When the force of the subject opens his own vein of prose, we discover valuable sense and brilliant expression. Such is his account of the first feelings of melancholy persons, written, probably, from his own experience.” [See p. 154, of the present edition.]—*Ibid.* p. 60.

“During a pedantic age, like that in which BURTON'S production appeared, it must have been eminently serviceable to writers of many descriptions. Hence the unlearned might furnish themselves with appropriate scraps of Greek and Latin, whilst men of letters would find their enquiries shortened, by knowing where they might look for what both ancients and moderns had advanced on the subject of human passions. I confess my inability to point out any other English author who has so largely dealt in apt and original quotation.”—*Manuscript note of the late George Steevens, Esq., in his copy of THE ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY.*

### **DEMOCRITUS JUNIOR AD LIBRUM SUUM.**

Vade liber, qualis, non ausum dicere, felix,  
Te nisi felicem fecerit Alma dies.

Vade tamen quocumque lubet, quascumque per oras,  
Et Genium Domini fac imitere tui.  
I blandas inter Charites, mystamque saluta  
Musarum quemvis, si tibi lector erit.  
Rura colas, urbem, subeasve palatia regum,  
Submissee, placide, te sine dente geras.  
Nobilis, aut si quis te forte inspexerit heros,  
Da te morigerum, perlegat usque lubet.  
Est quod Nobilitas, est quod desideret heros,  
Gratior haec fors charta placere potest.  
Si quis morosus Cato, tetricusque Senator,  
Hunc etiam librum forte videre velit,  
Sive magistratus, tum te reverenter habeto;  
Sed nullus; muscas non capiunt Aquilae.  
Non vacat his tempus fugitivum impendere nugis,  
Nec tales cupio; par mihi lector erit.  
Si matrona gravis casu diverterit istuc,  
Illustris domina, aut te Comitissa legat:  
Est quod displiceat, placeat quod forsitan illis,  
Ingerere his noli te modo, pande tamen.  
At si virgo tuas dignabitur inclyta chartas  
Tangere, sive schedis haereat illa tuis:  
Da modo te facilem, et quaedam folia esse memento  
Convenient oculis quae magis apta suis.  
Si generosa ancilla tuos aut alma puella  
Visura est ludos, annue, pande lubens.  
Dic utinam nunc ipse meus [6](nam diligit istas)  
In praesens esset conspiciendus herus.  
Ignotus notusve mihi de gente togata  
Sive aget in ludis, pulpita sive colet,  
Sive in Lycaeo, et nugas evolverit istas,  
Si quasdam mendas viderit inspiciens,  
Da veniam Authori, dices; nam plurima vellet  
Expungi, quae jam displicuisse sciat.  
Sive Melancholicus quisquam, seu blandus Amator,

Aulicus aut Civis, seu bene comptus eques  
Huc appellat, age et tuto te crede legenti,  
Multa istic forsán non male nata leget.  
Quod fugiat, caveat, quodque amplexabitur, ista  
Pagina fortassis promere multa potest.  
At si quis Medicus coram te sistet, amice  
Fac circumspecte, et te sine labe geras:  
Inveniet namque ipse meis quoque plurima scriptis,  
Non leve subsidium quae sibi forsán erunt.  
Si quis Causidicus chartas impingat in istas,  
Nil mihi vobiscum, pessima turba vale;  
Sit nisi vir bonus, et juris sine fraude peritus,  
Tum legat, et forsán doctior inde siet.  
Si quis cordatus, facilis, lectorque benignus  
Huc oculos vertat, quae velit ipse legat;  
Candidus ignoscet, metuas nil, pande libenter,  
Offensus mendis non erit ille tuis,  
Laudabit nonnulla. Venit si Rhetor ineptus,  
Limata et tersa, et qui bene cocta petit,  
Claude citus librum; nulla hic nisi ferrea verba,  
Offendent stomachum quae minus apta suum.  
At si quis non eximius de plebe poeta,  
Annue; namque istic plurima ficta leget.  
Nos sumus e numero, nullus mihi spirat Apollo,  
Grandiloquus Vates quilibet esse nequit.  
Si Criticus Lector, tumidus Censorque molestus,  
Zoilus et Momus, si rabiosa cohors:  
Ringe, fremere, et noli tum pandere, turba malignis  
Si occurrat sannis invidiosa suis:  
Fac fugias; si nulla tibi sit copia eundi,  
Contemnes, tacite scommata quaeque feres.  
Freudeat, allatret, vacuas gannitibus auras  
Impleat, haud cures; his placuisse nefas.  
Verum age si forsán divertat purior hospes,  
Cuique sales, ludi, displiceantque joci,

Objiciatque tibi sordes, lascivaque: dices,  
Lasciva est Domino et Musa jocosa tuo,  
Nec lasciva tamen, si pensitet omne; sed esto;  
Sit lasciva licet pagina, vita proba est.  
Barbarus, indoctusque rudis spectator in istam  
Si messem intrudat, fuste fugabis eum,  
Fungum pelle procul (jubeo) nam quid mihi fungo?  
Conveniunt stomacho non minus ista suo.  
Sed nec pelle tamen; laeto omnes accipe vultu,  
Quos, quas, vel quales, inde vel unde viros.  
Gratus erit quicumque venit, gratissimus hospes  
Quisquis erit, facilis difficilisque mihi.  
Nam si culparit, quaedam culpasse juvabit,  
Culpando faciet me meliora sequi.  
Sed si laudarit, neque laudibus efferar ullis,  
Sit satis hisce malis opposuisse bonum.  
Haec sunt quae nostro placuit mandare libello,  
Et quae dimittens dicere jussit Herus.

## **DEMOCRITUS JUNIOR TO HIS BOOK**

### **PARAPHRASTIC METRICAL TRANSLATION.**

Go forth my book into the open day;  
Happy, if made so by its garish eye.  
O'er earth's wide surface take thy vagrant way,  
To imitate thy master's genius try.  
The Graces three, the Muses nine salute,  
Should those who love them try to con thy lore.  
The country, city seek, grand thrones to boot,  
With gentle courtesy humbly bow before.  
Should nobles gallant, soldiers frank and brave  
Seek thy acquaintance, hail their first advance:  
From twitch of care thy pleasant vein may save,  
May laughter cause or wisdom give perchance.

Some surly Cato, Senator austere,  
Haply may wish to peep into thy book:  
Seem very nothing—tremble and revere:  
No forceful eagles, butterflies e'er look.  
They love not thee: of them then little seek,  
And wish for readers triflers like thyself.  
Of ludeful matron watchful catch the beck,  
Or gorgeous countess full of pride and pelf.  
They may say “pish!” and frown, and yet read on:  
Cry odd, and silly, coarse, and yet amusing.  
Should dainty damsels seek thy page to con,  
Spread thy best stores: to them be ne'er refusing:  
Say, fair one, master loves thee dear as life;  
Would he were here to gaze on thy sweet look.  
Should known or unknown student, freed from strife  
Of logic and the schools, explore my book:  
Cry mercy critic, and thy book withhold:  
Be some few errors pardon'd though observ'd:  
An humble author to implore makes bold.  
Thy kind indulgence, even undeserv'd,  
Should melancholy wight or pensive lover,  
Courtier, snug cit, or carpet knight so trim  
Our blossoms cull, he'll find himself in clover,  
Gain sense from precept, laughter from our whim.  
Should learned leech with solemn air unfold  
Thy leaves, beware, be civil, and be wise:  
Thy volume many precepts sage may hold,  
His well fraught head may find no trifling prize.  
Should crafty lawyer trespass on our ground,  
Caitiffs avaunt! disturbing tribe away!  
Unless (white crow) an honest one be found;  
He'll better, wiser go for what we say.  
Should some ripe scholar, gentle and benign,  
With candour, care, and judgment thee peruse:  
Thy faults to kind oblivion he'll consign;

Nor to thy merit will his praise refuse.  
Thou may'st be searched for polish'd words and verse  
By flippant spouter, emptiest of praters:  
Tell him to seek them in some mawkish verse:  
My periods all are rough as nutmeg graters.  
The doggerel poet, wishing thee to read,  
Reject not; let him glean thy jests and stories.  
His brother I, of lowly sembling breed:  
Apollo grants to few Parnassian glories.  
Menac'd by critic with sour furrowed brow,  
Momus or Troilus or Scotch reviewer:  
Ruffle your heckle, grin and growl and vow:  
Ill-natured foes you thus will find the fewer,  
When foul-mouth'd senseless railers cry thee down,  
Reply not: fly, and show the rogues thy stern;  
They are not worthy even of a frown:  
Good taste or breeding they can never learn;  
Or let them clamour, turn a callous ear,  
As though in dread of some harsh donkey's bray.  
If chid by censor, friendly though severe,  
To such explain and turn thee not away.  
Thy vein, says he perchance, is all too free;  
Thy smutty language suits not learned pen:  
Reply, Good Sir, throughout, the context see;  
Thought chastens thought; so prithee judge again.  
Besides, although my master's pen may wander  
Through devious paths, by which it ought not stray,  
His life is pure, beyond the breath of slander:  
So pardon grant; 'tis merely but his way.  
Some rugged ruffian makes a hideous rout—  
Brandish thy cudgel, threaten him to baste;  
The filthy fungus far from thee cast out;  
Such noxious banquets never suit my taste.  
Yet, calm and cautious moderate thy ire,  
Be ever courteous should the case allow—

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