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Baum Henry Flaubert Nietzsche Willis
Leslie Dumas Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Harte
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Hale James Hastings Shakespeare Irving
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**Poemata : Latin, Greek and Italian
Poems by John Milton**

John Milton

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Complimentary Pieces Addressed to the Author.

1 Well as the author knows that the following testimonies are not so much about as above him, and that men of great ingenuity, as well as our friends, are apt, through abundant zeal, so to praise us as rather to draw their own likeness than ours, he was yet unwilling that the world should remain always ignorant of compositions that do him so much honour; and especially because he has other friends, who have, with much importunity, solicited their publication. Aware that excessive commendation awakens envy, he would with both hands thrust it from him, preferring just so much of that dangerous tribute as may of right belong to him; but at the same time he cannot deny that he sets the highest value on the suffrages of judicious and distinguished persons.

1 Milton's Preface, Translated.

1 These complimentary pieces have been sufficiently censured by a great authority, but no very candid judge either of Milton or his panegyrist. He, however, must have a heart sadly indifferent to the glory of his country, who is not gratified by the thought that she may exult in a son whom, young as he was, the Learned of Italy thus contended to honour. — W.C.

The Neapolitan, Giovanni Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa,
to the Englishman, John Milton.

What features, form, mien, manners, with a mind
Oh how intelligent, and how refined!
Were but thy piety from fault as free,
Thou wouldst no Angle¹ but an Angel be.

¹ The reader will perceive that the word "Angle" (i.e. Anglo-Saxon) is essential, because the epigram turns upon it. — W.C.

An Epigram Addressed to the Englishman, John Milton, a Poet
Worthy of the Three Laurels of Poesy, the Grecian, Latin, and
Etruscan, by Giovanni Salzilli of Rome

Meles¹ and Mincio both your urns depress!
Sebetus, boast henceforth thy Tasso less!
But let the Thames o'erpeer all floods, since he,
For Milton famed, shall, single, match the three.

¹ Meles is a river of Ionia, in the neighborhood of Smyrna, whence
Homer is called Melesigenes.

The Mincio watered the city of Mantua famous as the birthplace
of Virgil.

Sebetus is now called the Fiume della Maddalena — it runs through
Naples. — W.C.

To John Milton.

Greece sound thy Homer's, Rome thy Virgil's name,
But England's Milton equals both in fame.
—Selvaggi.

To John Milton, English Gentleman.

An Ode.

Exalt Me, Clio,¹ to the skies,
That I may form a starry crown,
Beyond what Helicon supplies
In laureate garlands of renown;
To nobler worth be brighter glory given,
And to a heavenly mind a recompense from heaven.

Time's wasteful hunger cannot prey
On everlasting high desert,
Nor can Oblivion steal away
Its record graven on the heart;
Lodge but an arrow, Virtue, on the bow
That binds my lyre, and death shall be a vanquished foe.

In Ocean's blazing flood enshrined.
Whose vassal tide around her swells,
Albion. from other realms disjoined,
The prowess of the world excels;
She teems with heroes that to glory rise,
With more than human force in our astonished eyes.

To Virtue, driven from other lands,
Their bosoms yield a safe retreat;
Her law alone their deed commands,
Her smiles they feel divinely sweet;
Confirm my record, Milton, generous youth!
And by true virtue prove thy virtue's praise a truth.

Zeuxis, all energy and flame,
Set ardent forth in his career,
Urged to his task by Helen's fame,
Resounding ever in his ear;
To make his image to her beauty true,

From the collected fair each sovereign charm he drew.²

The bee, with subtlest skill endued,
Thus toils to earn her precious juice,
From all the flowery myriads strewed
O'er meadow and parterre profuse;
Confederate voices one sweet air compound,
And various chords consent in one harmonious sound.

An artist of celestial aim,
Thy genius, caught by moral grace,
With ardent emulation's flame
The steps of Virtue toiled to trace,
Observed in every land who brightest shone,
And blending all their best, make perfect good thy own.

Front all in Florence born, or taught
Our country's sweetest accent there,
Whose works, with learned labor wrought,
Immortal honors justly share,
Then hast such treasure drawn of purest ore,
That not even Tuscan bards can boast a richer store.

Babel, confused, and with her towers
Unfinished spreading wide and plain,
Has served but to evince thy powers,
With all hot, tongues confused in vain,
Since not alone thy England's purest phrase,
But every polished realm thy various speech displays.

The secret things of heaven and earth,
By nature, too reserved, concealed
From other minds of highest worth,
To thee ate copiously revealed;
Thou knowest them clearly, and thy views attain

The utmost bounds prescribed to moral truth's domain.

Let Time no snore his wing display,
And boast his ruinous career,
For Virtue, rescued front his sway.
His injuries may cease to fear;
Since all events that claim remembrance find
A chronicle exact in thy capacious mind.

Give me, that I may praise thy song,
Thy lyre, by which alone I can,
Which, placing thee the stars among,
Already proves thee more than man;
And Thames shall seem Permessus,³ while his stream
Graced with a swan like thee. shall be my favorite theme.

I, who beside the Arno, strain
To match thy merit with my lays,
Learn, after many an effort vain,
To admure thee rather than to praise;
And that by mute astonishment alone,
Not by the fathering tongue, thy worth may best be shown.

—Signor Antonio Francini, Gentleman, of Florence.

1 The muse of History.

2 The portrait of Helen was painted at the request of the people of Crotna, who sent to the artist all their loveliest girls for models. Zeuxis selected five, and united their separate beauties in his picture.

3 A river in Boeotia which took its rise in Helicon. See Virgil Ecl. vi.64

To Mr. John Milton of London

A youth eminent from his country and his virtues,

Who in his travels has made himself acquainted with many nations, and in his studies, with all, that, life another Ulysses, he might learn all that all could teach him;

Skilful in many tongues, on whose lips languages now mute so live again, that the idioms of all are insufficient to his praise; happy acquisition by which he understands the universal admiration and applause his talents trace excited;

Whose endowments of mind and person move us to wonder, but at the same time fix us immovable: whose works prompt us to extol him, but by their beauty strike us mute;

In whose memory the whole world is treasured; in whose intellect, wisdom; in whose heart, the ardent desire for glory; and in whose mouth, eloquence. Who with Astronomy for his conductor, hears the music of the spheres; with Philosophy for the teacher, deciphers the hand-writing of God, in those wonders of creation which proclaim His greatness; and with the most unwearied literary industry for his associate, examines, restores, penetrates with ease the obscurities of antiquity, the desolations of ages, and the labyrinths of learning;

"But wherefore toil to reach these arduous heights?"

To him, in short, whose virtues the mouths of Fame are too few to celebrate, and whom astonishment forbids us to praise as he deserves, this tribute due to his merits, and the offering of reverence and affection, is paid by Carlo Dati, a patrician Florentine. This great man's servant, and this good man's friend.

In Miltonum.1

Tres tria, sed longe distantia, saecula vates
Ostentant tribus e gentibus eximios.
Graecia sublimem, cum majestate disertum
Roma tulit, felix Anglia utrique parem.
Partubus ex binis Natura exhausta, coacta est,
Tertis ut fieret, consociare duos.

—Joannem Dridenum.

1 Translation of Dryden's Lines Printed Under the Engraved Portrait of Milton in Tonson's Folio Edition of "Paradise Lost," 1688.

Stanzas on the Late Indecent Liberties Taken with the Remains of the Great Milton, by Wm. Cowper, Esq.¹

Me too, perchance, in future days,
The sculptur'd stone shall show,
With Paphian myrtle, or with bays
Parnessian, on my brow.

But I, before that season come,
Escap'd from ev'ry care,
Shall reach my refuge in the tomb,
And sleep securely there.

So sang in Roman tone and style
The youthful bard, ere long
Ordain'd to grace his native isle
With her sublimest song.

Who then but must conceive disdain,
Hearing the deed unblest
Of wretches who have dar'd profane
His dread sepulchral rest?

Ill fare the hands that heav'd the stones
Where Milton's ashes lay!
That trembled not to grasp his bones.
And steal his dust away!

Oh! ill-requited bard! Neglect
Thy living worth repaid,
And blind idolatrous respect
As much affronts thee dead.

1 This shocking outrage took place in 1790 whilst the Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, was repairing. The overseers (for the sake of gain) opened a coffin supposed to be Milton's, found a body, extracted its teeth, cut off its hair, and left the remains to the gravediggers, who exhibited them for money to the public.

Forsitan & nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
Nectens aut Paphia myrti aut Parnasside lauri
Fronde comas, at ego secure pace quiescam.
—Milton. "Mansus" ("Manso")

Cowper's translation :

To honour me, and with the graceful wreath
Or of Parnassus or the Paphian isle
Shall bind my brows—but I shall rest the while."

POEMATA

1. ELEGIES

ELEGY I

To Charles Diodati.¹

At length, my friend, the far-sent letters come,
Charged with thy kindness, to their destin'd home,
They come, at length, from Deva's² Western side,
Where prone she seeks the salt Vergivian tide.³
Trust me, my joy is great that thou shouldst be,
Though born of foreign race, yet born for me,
And that my sprightly friend, now free to roam,
Must seek again so soon his wonted home.
I well content, where Thames with reflux tide
My native city laves, meantime reside, 10
Nor zeal nor duty, now, my steps impell
To reedy Cam,⁴ and my forbidden cell.⁵
Nor aught of pleasure in those fields have I,
That, to the musing bard, all shade deny.
Tis time, that I, a pedant's threats⁶ disdain,
And fly from wrongs, my soul will ne'er sustain.
If peaceful days, in letter'd leisure spent
Beneath my father's roof, be banishment,
Then call me banish'd, I will ne'er refuse
A name expressive of the lot I chuse. 20
I would that exiled to the Pontic shore,
Rome's hapless bard⁷ had suffer'd nothing more!
He then had equall'd even Homer's lays,
And, Virgil! thou hadst won but second praise.
For here I woo the Muse with no control,
And here my books – my life – absorb me whole.
Here too I visit, or to smile, or weep,

The winding theatre's majestic sweep;
 The grave or gay colloquial scene recruits
 My spirits spent in Learning's long pursuits. 30
 Whether some Senior shrewd, or spendthrift heir,
 Wooer, or soldier, now unarm'd, be there,
 Or some coif'd brooder o'er a ten years' cause
 Thunder the Norman gibb'rish of the laws.
 The lacquey, there, oft dupes the wary sire,
 And, artful, speeds th'enamour'd son's desire.
 There, virgins oft, unconscious what they prove,
 What love is, know not, yet, unknowing, love.
 Or, if impassion'd Tragedy wield high
 The bloody sceptre, give her locks to fly 40
 Wild as the winds, and roll her haggard eye,
 I gaze, and grieve, still cherishing my grief.
 At times, e'en bitter tears! yield sweet relief.
 As when from bliss untasted torn away,
 Some youth dies, hapless, on his bridal day,
 Or when the ghost, sent back from shades below,
 Fills the assassin's heart with vengeful woe,
 When Troy, or Argos, the dire scene affords,
 Or Creon's hall laments its guilty lords.
 Nor always city-pent or pent at home 50
 I dwell, but when Spring calls me forth to roam
 Expatriate in our proud suburban shades
 Of branching elm that never sun pervades.
 Here many a virgin troop I may descry,
 Like stars of mildest influence, gliding by,
 Oh forms divine! Oh looks that might inspire
 E'en Jove himself, grown old, with young desire!
 Oft have I gazed on gem-surpassing eyes,
 Outsparkling every star that gilds the skies.
 Necks whiter than the iv'ry arm bestow'd 60
 By Jove on Pelops, or the Milky Road!
 Bright locks, Love's golden snares, these falling low,
 Those playing wanton o'er the graceful brow!
 Cheeks too, more winning sweet than after show'r,
 Adonis turn'd to Flora's fav'rite flow'r!
 Yield, Heroines, yield, and ye who shar'd th'embrace

Of Jupiter in ancient times, give place;
 Give place ye turban'd Fair of Persia's coast,
 And ye, not less renown'd, Assyria's boast!
 Submit, ye nymphs of Greece! Ye once the bloom 70
 Of Iliion,⁹ and all ye of haughty Rome,
 Who swept of old her theatres with trains
 Redundant, and still live in classic strains!
 To British damsels beauty's palm is due,
 Aliens! to follow them is fame for you.
 Oh city,¹⁰ founded by Dardanian hands,
 Whose towering front the circling realm commands,
 Too blest abode! no loveliness we see
 In all the earth, but it abounds in thee.
 The virgin multitude that daily meets, 80
 Radiant with gold and beauty, in thy streets,
 Outnumbers all her train of starry fires
 With which Diana gilds thy lofty spires.
 Fame says, that wafted hither by her doves,
 With all her host of quiver-bearing Loves,
 Venus, preferring Paphian scenes no more,
 Has fix'd her empire on thy nobler shore.
 But lest the sightless boy inforce my stay,
 I leave these happy walls, while yet I may.
 Immortal Moly¹¹ shall secure my heart 90
 From all the sorc'ry of Circean art,
 And I will e'en repass Cam's reedy pools
 To face once more the warfare of the Schools.
 Meantime accept this trifle; Rhymes, though few,
 Yet such as prove thy friend's remembrance true.

1 Diodati was a schoolfellow of Milton at St. Paul's, of Italian extraction, nephew of Giovanni Diodati, the translator of the Bible into Italian, and son of Theodore Diodati, a physician of eminence, who married and settled in England. Charles Diodati's early death formed the subject of The "Epitaphium Damonis" ("The Death of Damon").

2 The Dee of Chester.

3 The Vergivian Sea, so called by Ptolemy, was the Irish Sea between England and Ireland.

4 Cambridge.

5 Milton had been rusticated (suspended) on account of a quarrel with his tutor, Chappell.

6 Chappell.

7 Ovid.

8 In Thebes—the guilty lords are Eteocles and Polynices the brothers-sons of Oedipus and Jocasta, who fell in their unnatural strife.

9 Troy.

10 London. The Dardanian (i.e. Trojan) hands are those of Brutus, the legendary founder of London.

11 The magical plant by which Odysseus was enabled to escape from Circe. See Homer (*Odyssey*, x. 370-375).

ELEGY II

On the Death of the University Beadle at Cambridge.¹

Thee, whose refulgent staff and summons clear,
Minerva's flock longtime was wont t'obey,
Although thyself an herald, famous here,
The last of heralds, Death, has snatch'd away.
He calls on all alike, nor even deigns
To spare the office that himself sustains.

Thy locks were whiter than the plumes display'd
By Leda's paramour² in ancient time,
But thou wast worthy ne'er to have decay'd,
Or, Aeson-like,³ to know a second prime, 10
Worthy for whom some Goddess should have won
New life, oft kneeling to Apollo's son.⁴

Commission'd to convene with hasty call
The gowned tribes, how graceful wouldst thou stand!
So stood Cyllenius⁵ erst in Priam's hall,
Wing-footed messenger of Jove's command,
And so, Eurybates⁶ when he address'd
To Peleus' son Atrides' proud behest.

Dread Queen of sepulchres! whose rig'rous laws
And watchful eyes, run through the realms below, 20
Oh, oft too adverse to Minerva's cause,
Too often to the Muse not less a foe,
Chose meaner marks, and with more equal aim
Pierce useless drones, earth's burthen and its shame!

Flow, therefore, tears for Him from ev'ry eye,
All ye disciples of the Muses, weep!
Assembling, all, in robes of sable dye,
Around his bier, lament his endless sleep,
And let complaining Elegy rehearse
In every School her sweetest saddest verse. 30

1 Richard Redding of St. John's College, M.A. He died in October, 1626.

2 The Swan—Jove had turned himself into that bird.

3 i.e. Jason, who was restored to youth by his daughter Medea.

4 Esculapius, the god of medicine.

5 Hermes.

6 One of the heralds sent to Achilles by Agamemnon.

ELEGY III
Anno Aetates 17.1

On the Death of the Bishop of Winchester.²

Silent I sat, dejected, and alone,
 Making in thought the public woes my own,
 When, first, arose the image in my breast
 Of England's sufferings by that scourge, the pest.³
 How death, his fun'ral torch and scythe in hand,
 Ent'ring the lordliest mansions of the land,
 Has laid the gem-illumin'd palace low,
 And level'd tribes of Nobles at a blow.
 I, next, deplor'd the famed fraternal pair⁴
 Too soon to ashes turn'd and empty air, 10
 The Heroes next, whom snatch'd into the skies
 All Belgia saw, and follow'd with her sighs;
 But Thee far most I mourn'd, regretted most,
 Winton's chief shepherd and her worthiest boast;
 Pour'd out in tears I thus complaining said —
 Death, next in pow'r to Him who rules the Dead!
 Is't not enough that all the woodlands yield
 To thy fell force, and ev'ry verdant field,
 That lilies, at one noisome blast of thine,
 And ev'n the Cyprian Queen's own roses, pine, 20
 That oaks themselves, although the running rill
 Suckle their roots, must wither at thy will,
 That all the winged nations, even those
 Whose heav'n-directed flight the Future shows,
 And all the beasts that in dark forests stray,
 And all the herds of Proteus⁵ are thy prey?
 Ah envious! arm'd with pow'rs so unconfined
 Why stain thy hands with blood of Human kind?
 Why take delight, with darts that never roam,
 To chase a heav'n-born spirit from her home? 30
 While thus I mourn'd, the star of evening stood,
 Now newly ris'n, above the western flood,
 And Phoebus from his morning-goal again
 Had reach'd the gulphs of the Iberian main.
 I wish'd repose, and, on my couch reclined
 Took early rest, to night and sleep resign'd,
 When— Oh for words to paint what I beheld!
 I seem'd to wander in a spacious field,
 Where all the champain glow'd with purple light