

**THE DELIGHTS OF
THE MUSES:
SECULAR POEMS**

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The delights of the muses: secular poems by Richard Crashaw & J. R. Tutin

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RICHARD CRASHAW & J. R. TUTIN

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THE MUSES:
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The Delights . . .

of the

Muses

Secular Poems

by

Richard Crashaw.

EDITED BY

J. R. TUTIN,

Editor of Crashaw's "Carmen Duo Nostro;" "Secular Poems"
by Henry Vaughan; etc., etc.

Mart. Dic mihi quid melius desideras agas.

[Crashaw's Motto.]

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Introductory Note.

A desire having been expressed for a collection of Crashaw's non-sacred pieces, the present volume is offered as supplying the unquestionable *desideratum*.

For information about the Poet and his works we would refer the reader to our fuller edition recently issued, and for the present occasion confine ourselves to the productions contained herein, and to what follows as appendix to this edition of the secular poems.

We can readily understand and appreciate the wish for the pieces herein contained; productions free from questionable theology and even questionable taste. Without breaking from our previously expressed opinion that Crashaw is at his highest in his sacred verse—as indeed we believe is the opinion of the best critics—we can yet on several worthy grounds place these "Delights of the Muses," for fancy, delicacy, true poetry, and exquisiteness, in a perfect niche of their own; and while the non-Protestant will prize most those matchless sacred verses contained in "Carmen Deo Nostro" and in "Steps to the Temple," the more general lover of verse will revel in the ardours and sweetnesses of "The Delights of the Muses." True "Delights" indeed! for who with a receptive soul and delicate sensibility can

withold their admiration for such pieces as "Music's Duel" and "Wishes," to name only two of the principal poems of the present publication?

We would now briefly characterize the pieces herein contained. Criticism in the fullest sense we are compelled to refrain from for several reasons.

The pieces have been grouped naturally or sequentially together, and we would offer the following remarks as some slight apology for a fuller characterization and criticism of the several groups.

Music's Duel, though not strictly an original poem, we could not avoid giving it the primary position in this book. Did but the reader know its Latin original, he would excuse us had we not the example of Crashaw's first editor in regard to the position of the poem in the collection. We might have given the original Latin poem herein, but for consideration of space, etc. The Poet has transcended his original and made *Music's Duel* a marvel of sustained vigour, beauty, and music. Other versions are tame beside this one, and we would ask the reader's forgiveness for dissenting from the gentle-souled Charles Lamb's estimate of Crashaw's poem, an implied estimate, let us say, pronounced in his note to Ford's version (in *Lover's Melancholy*) of the same pathetic and beautiful story.

To the Morning and *On a Foul Morning* may be connected as pieces in which our poet deals with nature. He is more picturesque than descriptive, and an interesting

comparison might be made betwixt him and his contemporaries, Vaughan and Herbert, in this connection.

Wishes: a well-known poem, but in an abridged form as given in several of our best anthologies. The reader we hope will prefer it in its entirety as herein printed, in spite of certain editors' claims that they have brought it, by condensation, into better lyrical unity. When the thoughts of such a poet are precious, we are loth to lose a single line. It is Crashaw's best love-poem, and fitly heralds forth his exquisite *Love's Horoscope*, the last two stanzas of which are a perfect marvel of verbal melody.

The Elegiac Poems and Epitaphs are worthy of especial note among the literature of his (Crashaw's) time. They display true feeling, grace, fancy, and truth, while most of his contemporaries wrote theirs from the head rather than the heart. The poems on Herrys we would draw especial attention to in this regard.

The collection of Translations (for the first time grouped together) need not be specially commented upon. They are worthy of the Poet of *Music's Duel*, and that is no small praise.

The Epigrams—especially that on Ford's "Two Tragedies"—are surely pointed and excellent.

That hardly covers the entire ground, but we desire to be brief, and not speak with too great authority upon any of these productions. Our few remarks are merely intended to whet the appetite of the preface-reader for the entire feast, and we wish him an intellectual repast in