POEMS. VOLUME I

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649675180

Poems. Volume I by William Cowper

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WILLIAM COWPER

POEMS. VOLUME I

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POEMS.

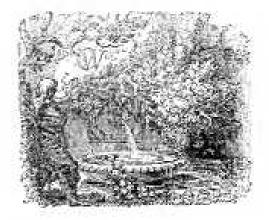
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WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ.

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VOL. I.

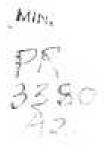


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POEMS.

TABLE TALK.

A. You told me, I remember, glory, built On selfish principles, is shame and guilt; The deeds that men admire as half divine, Stark naught, because corrupt in their design. Strange doctrine this! that without scruple tears The laurel that the very lightning spares; Brings down the warrior's trophy to the dust, And eats into his bloody sword like rust.

B. I grant that, men continuing what they are, Fierce, avaricious, proud, there must be war; And never meant the rule should be applied To him that fights with justice on his side.

Let laurels, drench'd in pure Parnassian dows, Reward his memory, dow to every Muse, Who, with a courage of anshaken root, In Honour's field advancing his firm foot, Plants it upon the line that Justice draws, And will prevail or perish in her cause. "Tis to the virtues of such men, man owes His portion in the good, that Heaven bestows. You. 1. B

TABLE TALK,

And when recording History displays Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days. Tells of a few stout hearts, that fought and died. Where duty placed them, at their country's side ; The man, that is not moved with what he reads, That takes not fire at their heroic deeds, Unworthy of the blessings of the brave, Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.

But let eternal infamy pursue The wretch to nought but his purbition true. Who, for the sake of filling with one blast The post-homs of all Europe, lays her waste, Think yourself station'd on a towering rock, To see a people scatter'd like a flock, Some royal mastiff panting at their heels, With all the sayage thirst a tiger feels; Then view him self-proclaim if in a gazette. Chief monster, that has plagued the pations yet: The globe and scentre in such hands misplaced. Those cusigus of dominion, how disgraced ! The glass, that hids much mark the fleeting hour, And Death's own softhe would better speak his power : Then grace the heav plushtom in their stead With the king's shoulder-knot and gay rockade : Clethe the twin brothron in each other's dress, The sume their occupation and success.

A. 'The your belief the world was made for man : Kings do but reason on the self-same plan : Maintaining yours, you causet theirs condemn, Who think, or seem to think, man made for them.

B. Seldom, alas! the power of logic reigns With much sufficiency in royal brains; Such reasoning falls like an inverted cone, Wanting its proper base to stand upon. Man much for kings! those optics are but dim. That tell you so-way, rather, they for him. That tell you so-way, rather, they for him. That were indeed a king-canobling thought. Could they, or would they, reason as they ought.

TABLE TALS.

The diadem, with mighty projects lined To catch renown by ruining mankind, Is worth, with all its gold and glittering store. Just what the toy will sell for, and no more. Oh! bright occasions of dispensing good, How seldom used, how little understand ! To pour in Virtue's lup her just reward ; Keep Vice restrain'd behind a double guard : To quell the faction, that allounts the throne, By silent magannimity alone ; To nurse with tender care the thriving arts ; Watch every beam Philosophy imparts; To give Religion her unbridled scope, Nor indge by statute a heliever's bope ; With close lidelity and love unleign'd To keep the matrimanial bond unstain'd ; Covetous only of a virtuous praise ; His life a lesson to the land he sways : To touch the sword with conscientious awe. Nor draw it but when duty hids him draw : To sheath it in the peace-restoring close With joy beyond what victory hestows ; Bless'd country, where these kingly glories shine ! Bless'd England, if this happiness be time!

A. Guard what you say; the patriotic tribe
Will sneer, and charge you with a bribe.—B. A bribe?
The worth of his three kingdoms I defy.
To lare me to the baseness of a lie:
And, of all lies (be that one poet's boast).
The lie that flatters I abhor the most.
Those acts be theirs who hate bis gentle reign.
But he that loves bim has no need to feign.
A. Your smooth enlogium to one crown address'd

Seems to imply a censure on the rest.

B. Quevedo, as he tells his sober tale,
Ask'd, when in Hell, to see the royal gool;
Approved their method in all other things;
But where, good sir, do you couldne your kings?