

**GEMS OF BRITISH POESY;  
COMPRISING MISCELLANEOUS  
POEMS, PATHETIC, MORAL,  
LYRICAL, AND DESCRIPTIVE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649482184

Gems of British Poesy; Comprising Miscellaneous Poems, Pathetic, Moral, Lyrical, and Descriptive by Anonymous

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**ANONYMOUS**

**GEMS OF BRITISH POESY;  
COMPRISING MISCELLANEOUS  
POEMS, PATHETIC, MORAL,  
LYRICAL, AND DESCRIPTIVE**



*M. S. R. 1824*

**GEMS**  
OF  
**BRITISH POESY;**

CONTAINING  
**MISCELLANEOUS POEMS,**  
PATHETIC, MORAL, LYRICAL, AND DESCRIPTIVE.

BY THE EDITOR OF "POEMS,  
DEVOTIONAL, ELEGIAC, AND PRECEPTIVE."

"There is a charm in poetry, which they who have never felt can never imagine: it touches with so gentle a sweetness, it kindles with so keen a fire, it animates with so thrilling a rapture, that its delights exceed the power of utterance, and can be expressed only by gestures or by tears."

---

CHISWICK:

Printed by **C. and C. Whittingham,**  
COLLEGE HOUSE.

SOLD BY **THOMAS TEGG, 73, CHEAPSIDE;**  
**R. JENNINGS, POULTRY, LONDON;**  
AND **RICHARD GRIFFIN AND CO. GLASGOW.**

1824.

*M. S. R.*

TO THE  
KIND TEMPERED, THE CHEERFUL,  
AND THE GOOD,

THESE  
**Gems of British Poetry,**

INTENDED  
TO ENFORCE THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUE ;  
TO ENCOURAGE THOSE NOBLE SENTIMENTS WHICH  
IRRADIATE THE PATH OF LIFE,  
WHICH IMPART DELIGHT TO THE YOUNG,  
AND GRATEFUL PLEASURE TO THE AGED ;  
ARE DEDICATED,

BY THE EDITOR.

## GEMS OF BRITISH POESY.

---

### THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES.

LET observation, with extensive view,  
Survey mankind from China to Peru;  
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,  
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;  
Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate  
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,  
Where wavering man, betray'd by venturous pride,  
To tread the dreary paths without a guide,  
As treacherous phantoms in the mist delude,  
Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good.  
How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,  
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice,  
How nations sink, by darling schemes oppress'd,  
When vengeance listens to the fool's request.  
Fate wings with every wish the' afflictive dart,  
Each gift of nature, and each grace of art;  
With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,  
With fatal sweetness elocution flows,  
Impeachment stops the speaker's powerful breath,  
And restless fire precipitates on death.

But, scarce observed, the knowing and the bold  
Fall in the general massacre of gold;  
Wide-wasting pest! that rages unconfin'd,  
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind;  
For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,  
For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws;

Wealth heap'd on wealth nor truth nor safety buys,  
The dangers gather as the treasures rise.

Let history tell where rival kings command,  
And dubious title shakes the madden'd land,  
When statutes glean the refuse of the sword,  
How much more safe the vassal than the lord;  
Low skulks the hind beneath the rage of power,  
And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tower,  
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,  
Though confiscation's vultures hover round.

The needy traveller, serene and gay,  
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.  
Does envy seize thee? crush the' upbraiding joy;  
Increase his riches and his peace destroy;  
Now fears, in dire vicissitude, invade,  
The rustling brake alarms, and quivering shade,  
Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,  
One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.

Yet still one general cry the skies assails,  
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales;  
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,  
The' insidious rival, and the gaping heir.

Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,  
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth;  
See motley life in modern trappings dress'd,  
And feed with varied fools the' eternal jest:  
Thou who couldst laugh where want enchain'd caprice,  
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece;  
Where wealth unloved without a mourner died;  
And scarce a scycophant was fed by pride;  
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,  
Or seen a new made mayor's unwieldy state;  
Where change of favourites made no change of laws,  
And senates heard before they judg'd a cause;  
How wouldst thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,  
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe!  
Attentive, truth and nature to desory,  
And pierce each scene with philosophic eye,



To thee were solemn toys or empty show,  
 The robes of pleasure and the veils of woe:  
 All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,  
 Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.

Such was the scorn that fill'd the sage's mind,  
 Renew'd at every glance on human kind;  
 How just that scorn ere yet thy voice declare,  
 Search every state, and canvass every prayer.

Unnumber'd suppliants crowd preferment's gate,  
 Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;  
 Delusive fortune hears the' incessant call,  
 They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.  
 On every stage the foes of peace attend,  
 Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.  
 Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door  
 Pours in the morning worshipper no more;  
 For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,  
 To growing wealth the dedicator flies;  
 From every room descends the painted face,  
 That hung the bright palladium of the place,  
 And, smoked in kitchens, or in auctions sold,  
 To better features yields the frame of gold;  
 For now no more we trace in every line  
 Heroic worth, benevolence divine:  
 The form distorted justifies the fall,  
 And detestation rides the' indignant wall.

But will not Britain hear the last appeal,  
 Sign her foes' doom, or guard her favourites' zeal?  
 Through freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,  
 Degrading nobles and controlling kings;  
 Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,  
 And ask no questions but the price of votes;  
 With weekly libels and septennial ale,  
 Their wish is full to riot and to rail.

In full blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,  
 Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand:  
 To him the church, the realm their powers consign,  
 Through him the rays of regal bounty shine;

Turn'd by his nod the stream of honour flows,  
 His smile alone security bestows:  
 Still to new heights his restless wishes tower;  
 Claim leads to claim, and power advances power;  
 Till conquest unresisted ceased to please,  
 And rights submitted left him none to seize.  
 At length his sovereign frowns—the train of state  
 Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate:  
 Where'er he turns he meets a stranger's eye,  
 His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;  
 Now drops at once the pride of awful state,  
 The golden canopy, the glittering plate,  
 The regal palace, the luxurious board,  
 The liveried army, and the manial lord.  
 With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,  
 He seeks the refuge of monastic rest;  
 Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,  
 And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.

Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine,  
 Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end, be thine?  
 Or livest thou now, with safer pride content,  
 The wisest Justice on the banks of Trent?  
 For why did Wolsey near the steep of fate  
 On weak foundations raise the' enormous weight?  
 Why, but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,  
 With louder ruin to the gulfs below.

What gave great Villiers to the' assassin's knife,  
 And fix'd disease on Harley's closing life?  
 What murder'd Wentworth, and what exiled Hyde,  
 By kings protected, and to kings allied?  
 What, but their wish indulged in courts to shine,  
 And power too great to keep or to resign!

When first the college rolls receive his name,  
 The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;  
 Resistless burns the fever of renown,  
 Caught from the strong contagion of the gown:  
 O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,  
 And Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head.

Are these thy views? proceed, illustrious youth,  
 And virtue guard thee to the throne of truth!  
 Yet should thy soul indulge the generous heat,  
 Till captive science yields her last retreat;  
 Should reason guide thee with her brightest ray,  
 And pour on misty doubt resistless day;  
 Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,  
 Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;  
 Should tempting novelty thy cell refrain,  
 And sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain;  
 Should beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,  
 Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd heart;  
 Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,  
 Nor melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade;  
 Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,  
 Nor think the doom of man reversed for thee:  
 Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,  
 And pause awhile from learning to be wise;  
 There mark what fills the scholar's life assail,  
 Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.  
 See nations, slowly wise and meanly just,  
 To buried merit raise the tardy bust.  
 If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,  
 Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end.

Nor deem, when learning her last prize bestows,  
 The glittering eminence exempt from foes;  
 See, when the vulgar scapes, despised or awed,  
 Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Lead.  
 From meaner minds, though smaller fines content,  
 The plunder'd palace, or sequester'd rent;  
 Mark'd out by dangerous parts he meets the shock,  
 And fatal learning leads him to the block:  
 Around his tomb let art and genius weep,  
 But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.

The festal blazes, the triumphal show,  
 The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,  
 The senate's thanks, the gazette's pompous tale,  
 With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.