

**THE REBELLIAID, OR, TERRIBLE
TRANSACTIONS AT THE SEAT OF
THE MUSES: A POEM IN FOUR
CANTOS, AUCTORE ENGINEAE
SOCIETATIS POETA**

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The rebelliad, or, Terrible transactions at the seat of the muses: a poem in four cantos, auctore
enginae societatis poeta by Augustus Peirce & Pi Tau

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AUGUSTUS PEIRCE & PI TAU

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Aloft in pendent dignity,
Astride her magic broom,
And wrapt in dazzling majesty,
See! see! the Goody come!
Riding sublime on billowy air,
She tun'd her instrument with care.

Peirce, Augustus, 1802-1879

THE
REBELLIA D;
OR
TERRIBLE TRANSACTIONS

AT THE SEAT OF THE MUSES;

A POEM,

IN FOUR CANTOS,

AUCTORE ENGINEÆ SOCIETATIS POETA.

EDITED AND PATRONISED BY THE PI TAU.

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1808

Hart

1815

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

FEW writings have recently been so much read in manuscript as the poem here presented. More than twenty years have elapsed since its delivery before one of the societies in Harvard University, and it is familiar to all who have since graduated, and by the major part, perhaps, has been transcribed. A quarter of a century has produced nothing *at the seat of the Muses* to vie with the character it has held for wit and pleasantry; and it still remains the text-book of the jocose, and is still regarded by all, even the melancholy, as a most happy production of humorous taste.

The *Rebelliad* is not, then, wholly unknown; nor are its merits yet to be pronounced upon. It as little requires from us an introduction, as, after the character it has so long held, it admits our commendation. We will only here add to the brief remarks we have made in the margin, that it was written principally in the recitation-room, and delivered in 1819, immediately after the *transactions* it relates, before the Engine Club then existing among the members of the University. The name of the author, which has been of late very generally mistaken, stands among the members of 1818 in the Med. Fac. Catalogue, and may be distinguished by the title, *Enginæ Societatis poeta*.

We have a word relative to the present text. On first designing printed impressions of this poem, we had no other resource for a copy than the manuscripts now in College; no two of which, on being collated, were found to be alike. The original, in many places, could not even be guessed at: copyists had, evidently, without noticing it, been continually taking these questionable liberties, the use of which makes Gassendi acknowledge of his collection of an ancient philosopher, *non habetur illi adeo scrupulose illigata, ut non utar eâ libertate, qua pleraque emoveam, transponam, et qua esse videbitur magis commodum, interjiciam.* After writing out a text from these different sources, adding our own *improvements* to those that had before been made, we were happy to have this trouble rendered useless, by receiving direct from the author of the *Rebelliad* the original MS. of his poem; from which the present edition has been printed. No copy was ever before made by his consent, and those first circulated were written only from memory. Some of those who were permitted to read it in his room while in College, attempted to procure copies by each committing a portion to be afterwards written out.

Cambridge, June, 1842.

PREFACE.

SOME of the most venerable of the antique tribe of critics have had the unaccountable audacity to assert that I have wasted, not only my time and ideas in a vain attempt to impose an Epic upon them, but even my paper, ink, and quills. I was for some time at a loss to determine whether to laugh at the ludicrous gravity of their virulence, or to answer them with soundness of argument. After due deliberation, I concluded to pursue both courses; laughing lustily three times at the close of each argument. They accuse me of wasting,

I. Time. I would remind them of that golden rule, "Do as you are done by." Now time wastes me, and *vice versa*, (which is, being interpreted, Tit for Tat,) I waste time.

II. Ideas. They are wholly immaterial, and how can immaterial substances be wasted?

III. Paper. I have used no more than was or will be absolutely *necessary*: of course there has

been no waste, since waste implies *unnecessary* consumption.

IV. Ink and quills. It has cost me nothing for these articles, as my chum can prove.

Having thus fully and unanswerably silenced objection-makers of all descriptions to the above-mentioned points, I shall now wield my pen in defence of another vulnerated punctilio. The last number of the "Podunk Pop-gun," (a semiannual publication, issued from the Brass Foundry of Peter Pam-poodle, Esq., once a century,) contains the following: "He" (meaning me) "says," say they, "that he followed that infallible guide of genius, the intellectual nose. It may be so; we follow the same guide ourselves; but we cannot perceive how that proves his Poem an epic."

There are 22222 different ways of solving this difficulty, 2 of which I shall mention.

1. By premising it to be a well-authenticated fact, that those persons who are in the habit of following their noses, are in the habit of picking them. Now what pick is to the physical nose, epic is to the intellectual.

2. By proceeding to conclude.