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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK TWENTY SIX CHOICE POETICAL EXTRACTS ***

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Twenty Six Choice POETICAL EXTRACTS.

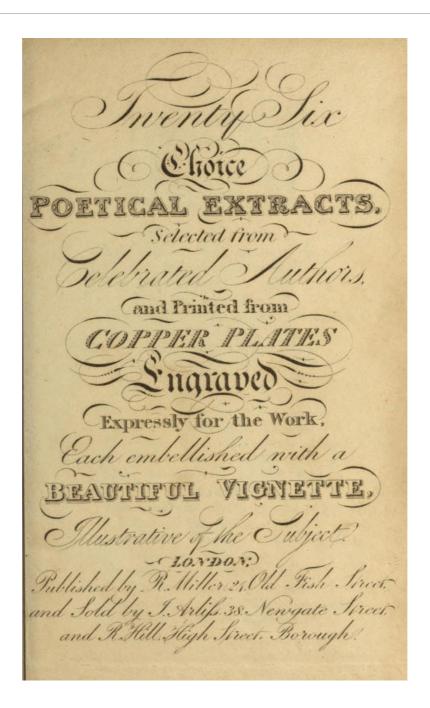
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On THE BIBLE

D^r. Stennett.

Let avarice from shore to shore Her fav'rite God pursue; Thy Word, O Lord, we value more Than India or Peru. Here mines of knowledge, love, and joy, Are open'd to our sight; The purest gold without alloy, And gems divinely bright. The counsels of redeeming grace, These sacred leaves unfold; And here the saviour's lovely face Our raptur'd eyes behold. Here, light descending from above Directs our doubtful feet: Here promises of heav'nly love Our ardent wishes meet. Our num'rous griefs are here redrest, And all our wants supply'd; Nought we can ask to make us blest, Is in this Book deny'd. For these inestimable gains, That so enrich the mind; O may we search with eager pains, Assur'd that we shall find!

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ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Dr. Watts.

Happy the humble soul that takes And binds the gospel to his heart, That tastes the love the saviour speaks, And feels the joys his lips impart. Not Sinai's dreadful thunders roll, Nor there his wrathful lightning shines; But peace to cheer the fainting soul, While grace and glory swell the lines: Come then, ye trembling souls, with joy. Accept the freely offer'd grace; The smiling saviour mourns your stay, Whilst love invites you to his face. Hark, ye that seek for perfect bliss, Ye that would walk the heav'nly road! The gospel shews where Jesus is, And leads you to his blest abode. Lord when to see thy grace display'd, This sacred volume I peruse. Send down thy spirit to my aid, Lest I that sovereign grace refuse. Oh! draw me with thy cords of love; Thy will I'll joyfully obey. Till I ascend to dwell above, In realms of everlasting day.



SOLILOQUY.

O thou all powerful, holy, just, and wise Creator and preserver of the world! Look down on me, a poor dejected worm, Part of thy work; my form thy hand bestow'd, My soul, my being, and my health, thy gifts! Desert me not, nor leave me to myself Forlorn, to wander through life's dreary waste, Unskilful where to tread; but let thy light Conduct me through each puzzling labyrinth, And thwarting stream, that happ'ly I may gain The blissful coast! where sorrow never comes, Nor pain assaults.--Oh! let thy holy grace Sit regnant in my breast! subdue the unruly will, And keep the factious powr's in due restraint, That so, no evil thought, nor word, nor deed, May taint my soul! offend thy gracious eye, And plunge me in the dreadful depths of hell: But let me move in virtues middle path, Nor err to right, or left, where danger lies. And Oh! as down the rugged road I pass, Let me adore thy love, and own thy pow'r; Inspire my heart with thanks, and let my tongue Enrapturd chaunt aloud thy sacred praise.

British Mag. 1747



THE SABBATH.

Ere yet the dawn has streak'd the eastern skies, Ere yet the lark has sung her morning lay, Early, upon that sacred day, arise, That thou may'st pass it in a pious way; 'Tis not a day in listless sleep to waste, 'Tis not a day, to lie in bed supine, But 'tis a day, by Christians to be past In ev'ry act and exercise divine! 'Tis not a day in saunt'ring to be past,--In drunkenness, or, to some bad intent, But 'tis a day which long as it does last, Should be in holy works entirely spent: A day--which in devotion we should spend,--A day--to do the business of the Lord,--A day--we should in pray'r, and reading, end,--A day--wherein our God should be ador'd,--A day--from ev'ry worldly work, to rest,--A day--to deeds of Holiness assign'd,--A day--that is beyond all others blest: And not a day for idleness, design'd.



NOAH'S ARK.

Hart.

When Noah, with his favor'd few, Was order'd to embark; Eight human souls, a little crew, Enter'd on board the Ark. Tho' ev'ry part he might secure With bar, or bolt, or pin; To make the preservation sure, Jehovah shut him in. The Waters then might swell their tides, And billows rage and roar; They could not stave th' assaulted sides, Nor burst the batter'd door. So souls that do in Christ believe, Quicken'd by vital faith; Eternal life at once receive, And never shall see death. In his own heart the Christian puts No trust; but builds his hopes On him that opes, and no man shuts, And shuts, and no man opes. In Christ his Ark he safely rides, Not wreck'd by Death or Sin: How is it he so safe abides? The Lord has shut him in.



THE RAINBOW.

Dr. Haweis.

Behold the gay Bow in the sky, How vivid the colours are seen; Its glories extended on high, With purple, and orange, and green. Thro' the drops as they fall, the Sun's beams Refracted, reflected we view, As it glows, as it fades, the sweet scenes, Our wonder, our pleasure renew. But oh! with what heighten'd delight In heav'n the bright object I trace, When by faith I contemplate the sight, As the sign of a cov'nant of grace. When over me hangs the thick cloud, And darkness with horrors outspread; Mighty thund'rings with lightnings aloud, Roll terribly over my head. No deluge of wrath shall I fear, No more can the floods of the deep, Their billows affrighted uprear, The globe with destruction to sweep. Tho' the heav'ns all on fire be dissolv'd, The elements melting with heat, The earth with fierce flames be involv'd, Unmov'd I these terrors can meet. That emerald Bow round the throne, The pledge of his favor I see: Come, welcome, dear Lord, to thine own, I long to be ever with thee.



"After this manner therefore pray ye."

Father of all! we bow to thee, Who dwells in heav'n ador'd; But present still thro' all thy works, The universal Lord. All hallow'd be thy sacred name, O'er all the nations known; Advance the kingdom of thy grace, And let thy glory come. A grateful homage may we yield, With hearts resign'd to thee; And as in heav'n thy will is done, On earth so let it be. From day to day we humbly own The hand that feeds us still: Give us our bread, and let us rest Contented in thy will. Our sins and trespasses we own: O may they be forgiv'n! That mercy we to others shew, We pray the like from heav'n. Our life let still thy grace direct, From evil guard our way, And in temptation's fatal path Permit us not to stray. For thine the pow'r, the kingdom thine, All glory's due to thee: Thine from eternity they were, And thine shall ever be.

Addison.



RETIREMENT

Far from the world, O Lord, I flee, From strife and tumult far! From scenes, where Satan wages still His most successful war. The calm retreat, the silent shade, With pray'r and praise agree: And seem, by thy sweet bounty made, For those who follow thee. There, if thy Spirit touch the soul, And grace her mean abode: Oh, with what peace, and joy, and love, She communes with her God. There, like the nightingale she pours Her solitary lays; Nor asks a witness of her song, Nor thirsts for human praise. Author and guardian of my life; Sweet source of light divine; And (all harmonious names in one) My Savior, Thou art mine! What thanks I owe Thee, and what love, A boundless, endless store; Shall echo thro' the realms above, When time shall be no more.



CHRISTMAS MORN.

Awake my soul, your hallelujahs sing To your omnipotent, your new born king, Assist ye ev'ry power the lofty theme, To sound incessant his almighty name, Let heaven and earth revere the joyous morn, Whereon the Saviour of the World was born, Angels and Seraphs spread hosanna's round, Ye rolling spheres return the blissful sound: To conquer sin and break its stubborn chain, The Son of God becomes the son of man. Man (doom'd to miseries thro Adams fall) He came to save and to redeem us all, Thy sacred limbs were in a manger laid, While by thy side, an ox, and ass, were fed, Lord of the world! thou there didst deign to lie, To teach weak mortals thy humility. Almighty Jesus I with bended knee, My daily thanks and praise do offer thee, Light on my mind the lamp of heav'nly grace, For ever guide me in the paths of peace, That when this earthly frame returns to clay, My soul may fly where reigns eternal day.

British Mag 1747.



NEW YEAR'S DAY.

Newton.

While with ceaseless course the sun Hasted thro' the former year, Many souls their race have run, Never more to meet us here: Fixt in an eternal state, They have done with all below, We a little longer wait, But how little--none can know. As the winged arrow flies, Speedily the mark to find; As the lightning from the skies Darts, and leaves no trace behind: Swiftly thus our fleeting days Bear us down life's rapid stream; Upwards, Lord, our spirits raise, All below is but a dream. Thanks for mercies past receive, Pardon of our sins renew; Teach us henceforth, how to live With eternity in view: Bless thy word to young and old, Fill us with a Saviour's love; And when life's short tale is told, May we dwell with thee above.



WINTER'S NIGHT.

Cowper.

Poor yet industrious, modest, quiet, neat, Such claim compassion in a night like this, And have a friend in ev'ry feeling heart. Warm'd, while it lasts, by labour, all day long They brave the season, and yet find at eve, Ill clad, and fed but sparely, time to cool. The frugal housewife trembles when she lights Her scanty stock of brushwood, blazing clear, But dying soon, like all terrestrial joys. The few small embers left she nurses well; And, while her infant race, with outspread hands, And crowded knees, sit cow'ring oer the sparks, Retires, content to quake, so they be warm'd. The man feels least, as more inur'd than she To winter, and the current in his veins More briskly mov'd by his severer toil; Yet he too finds his own distress in theirs. The taper soon extinguished, which I saw Dangling along at the cold finger's end Just when the day declin'd; and the brown loaf Lodg'd on the shelf, half eaten without sauce Of savory cheese, or butter, costlier still; Sleep seems their only refuge: for alas, Where penury is felt the thought is chain'd, And sweet colloquial pleasures are but few! They live, and live without extorted alms From grudging hands; but other boast have none, To soothe their honest pride, that scorns to beg, Nor comfort else, but in their mutual love.



On Providence

Thomson.

Think not, when all your scanty stores afford, Is spread at once upon the sparing board; Think not, when worn the homely robe appears, While on the roof the howling tempest bears; What further shall this feeble life sustain And what shall clothe these shiv'ring limbs again. Say, does not life its nourishment exceed? And the fair body its investing weed? Behold! and look away your low despair, See the light tenants of the barren air: To them nor stores, nor granaries belong, Nought but the woodland, and the pleasing song; Yet your kind heav'nly Father bends his eye On the least wing that flits along the sky. To him, they sing when Spring renews the plain; To him, they cry in Winter's pinching reign; Nor is their music, nor their plaint in vain: He hears the gay, and the distressful call, And with unsparing bounty fills them all. Observe the rising lily's snowy grace; Observe the various vegetable race; They neither toil, nor spin, but careless grow; Yet see how warm they blush, how bright they glow! What regal vestments can with them compare! What King so shining, or what queen so fair! If ceaseless thus the fowls of heav'n he feeds, If o'er the fields such lucid robes he spreads; will he not care for you, ye faithless say! Is he unwise? or are ye less than they?



THE PRODIGAL.

Watts.

Behold the wretch whose lust and wine Had wasted his estate, He begs a share among the swine, To taste the husks they eat. I die with hunger here (he cries) I starve in foreign lands; My father's house has large supplies, And bounteous are his hands. I'll go, and with a mournful tongue Fall down before his face; Father, I've done thy justice wrong, Nor can deserve thy grace. He said, and hasten'd to his home, To seek his father's love; The father saw the rebel come, And all his bowels move. He ran, and fell upon his neck, Embrac'd and kiss'd his son. The rebels heart with sorrow brake, For follies he had done. Take off his clothes of shame and sin, (The father gives command) Dress him in garments white and clean, With rings adorn his hand. A day of feasting I ordain, Let mirth and joy abound; My son was dead, and lives again, Was lost, and now is found.



THE DEATH of the RIGHTEOUS.

Blair.

-----Sure the last end Of the good man is peace. How calm his exit! Night-dews fall not more gently on the ground, Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft. By unperceiv'd degrees he wears away; Yet, like the sun, seems larger at the setting! High in his faith and hopes, look how he reaches After the prize in view! and, like a bird That's hamper'd, struggles hard to get away! Whilst the glad gates of sight are wide expanded To let new glories in, the first fair fruits Of the fast-coming Harvest! Then! oh then! Each earth-born joy grows vile, or disappears, Shrunk to a thing of nought. O how he longs To have his passport sign'd, and be dismiss'd! 'Tis done, and now he's happy.



DAVID AND GOLIATH

Fellows.

Let no man dread, the youth began, This haughty monster of a man; That dares all Israel's host defy, His time is come, his end is nigh! And, trusting in Jehovah's might, Myself will undertake the flight--Thou hast not strength, the monarch cries, Against this man of war to rise! Unus'd to arms, unknown to war. Thy bleating flocks have been thy care; But he in camps his life hath led, To all the toils of battle bred; Beside his strength:--The youth rejoins, Jehovah's pow'r the brighter shines When great designs his spirit breeds, And infants dare immortal deeds. The track of war I never trod. But still have felt th' inspiring God For when I watch'd my fleecy care, I slew a lion and a bear, Which did my fenceless fold invade, And in the dust the monsters laid. 'Twas Israel's God that deign'd to bless My youthful arm with such success. Like one of these the wretch shall bleed, And wond'ring armies mark the deed--The monarch hears with glad surprize, And to the youth in rapture cries, Then go to meet him void of fear, And may thy God indeed be there!



Against PRIDE of BEAUTY.

D^r. Collyer.

Behold the blushing rose Her lovely tints display, The queen of ev'ry flow'r that blows Beneath the eye of day! Yon lily of the vale, Scarce peeping thro' the green, That folds around her bosom pale, Aspires not to be seen. The same Almighty hand That decks with gems the skies, Makes the Fly's painted wings expand, And the gay tulip rise. When tempests threaten loud, His rays of light he pours, And forms the rainbow in the cloud, Dissolving soon in show'rs! And shall a child be vain, Less than the lily fair? Can I so soft a tint obtain, Or with the rose compare? The beauty of the mind Let me then learn to prize, Nor boast of features far beneath The pride of flow'rs and flies! If I am not as fair, I am as frail as they. To honour God be all my care, And that without delay.



The VILLAGE PREACHER

Goldsmith.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smil'd, And still where many a garden flow'r grows wild, There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose, The village preacher's modest mansion rose. A man he was to all the country dear, And passing rich with forty pounds a year; Remote from towns he ran his godly race, Nor e'er had chang'd, nor wish'd to change his place; Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for pow'r, By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour; Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize, More bent to raise the wretched than to rise. Beside the bed, where parting life was laid, And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismay'd, The rev'rend champion stood. At his controul Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul; Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise, And his last falt'ring accents whisper'd praise. At church with meek and unaffected grace, His looks adorn'd the venerable place; Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway; And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray. The service past, around the pious man, With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran; Ev'n children follow'd with endearing wile, And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile, His ready smile a parents warmth express'd, Their welfare pleas'd him, and their care distress'd; To them his heart, his love, his griefs were giv'n, But all his serious thoughts had rest in heav'n.



THE CRUCIFIXION.

 D^{r} . Stennett

'Tis finish'd!--so the Saviour cry'd, And meekly bow'd his head and dy'd. 'Tis finish'd--yes, the race is run, The battle fought, the vic'try won. 'Tis finish'd--all that heav'n decreed, And all the ancient prophets said, Is now fulfill'd, as was design'd, In me, the Saviour of mankind. 'Tis finish'd--Aaron now no more Must stain his robes with purple gore, The sacred veil is rent in twain, And Jewish rites no more remain. 'Tis finish'd--this my dying groan Shall sins of ev'ry land atone, Millions shall be redeem'd from death, By this my last expiring breath. 'Tis finish'd--heav'n is reconcil'd, And all the pow'rs of darkness spoild; Peace, love, and happiness again Return, and dwell with sinful men. 'Tis finishd--let the joyful sound Be heard thro' all the nations round: 'Tis finish'd--let the echo fly Thro heav'n and hell, thro earth and sky.



EASTER DAY.

M^{rs}. Barbanld.

This day be grateful homage paid, And loud hosannas sung: Let gladness dwell in ev'ry heart, And praise on ev'ry tongue. Ten thousand diff'rent lips shall join, To hail this welcome morn, Which scatters blessings from its wings, To nations yet unborn. Jesus the friend of human kind, With strong compassion mov'd, Descended, like a pitying God, To save the souls he lov'd. The pow'rs of darkness leagu'd in vain, To bind his soul in death; He shook their kingdom, when he fell, With his expiring breath. Not long the toils of Hell could keep The hope of Judah's line; Corruption never could take hold On aught so much divine. And now his conqu'ring chariot wheels Ascend the lofty skies; While broke, beneath his pow'rful cross, Death's iron sceptre lies. Exalted high at God's right hand, The Lord of all below: Thro him is pard'ning love dispens'd, And boundless blessings flow.



A THOUGHT ON WAKING. Anonymous.

Sleep by night, and cares by day, Bear my fleeting life away: Lo! in yonder eastern skies, The Sun appears, and bids me rise: Tells me, Life is on the wing, And has no returning spring: Death comes on with steady pace, And life's the only day of grace.--Shining Preacher! happy morning, Let me take th' important warning: Rouse then all my active pow'rs, Well improve the coming hours: Let no trifles kill the day, (Trifles oft our hearts betray) Wisdom, Virtue, Knowledge, Truth, Guide th' enquiries of my youth. Wisdom and experience sage, Then shall soothe the cares of age; These with time shall never die; Those will lead to joys on high; Those the path of life display, Shining with celestial day; Blissful path! with safety trod, The end of which is heav'n and God.



INDUSTRY.

Anonymous.

Behold, fond youth, that busy bee;
How swift she flies from tree to tree;
Extracting flow'ry sweets;
Thus cheerful all the day she'll roam,
At evening seek her much lov'd home,
To treasure all she meets.

Full well she knows, that winter keen,
Must come to blast this painted scene,
With famine on his wing:
Her prudent labors find repose;
Nor winters cold, nor want she knows,
Till time renews the spring.

While yonder drone in sunny haunts,
Who just supplies his present wants,
Nor heeds the passing hours;
Soon bleak december's piercing air,
Shall mock his want of timely care,
And chill his vital powers.

Like the dull drone, should he who throws Away what Providence bestows. Feel pinching hours of need; While they whose care is to increase, Find, like the bee, in winter peace, And every good succeed.



JOURNEY TO EMMAUS.

Cowper.

It happen'd on a solemn eventide Soon after he that was our surety died, Two bosom friends, each pensively inclin'd. The scene of all those sorrows left behind, Sought their own village, busied as they went In musings worthy of the great event; They spake of him they lov'd, of him whose life Tho' blameless, had incur'd perpetual strife, Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts, A deep memorial graven on their hearts. The recollection, like a vein of ore, The further trac'd, enrich'd them still the more; They thought him, and they justly thought him, one Sent to do more than he appear'd t' have done T' exalt a people, and to place them high Above all else, and wonder'd he should die, Ere yet they brought their journey to an end, A stranger join'd them, courteous as a friend. And ask'd them with a kind engaging air What their affliction was, and begg'd a share. Inform'd, he gather'd up the broken thread, And truth and wisdom gracing all he said, Explain'd, illustrated, and search'd so well The tender theme on which they chose to dwell That, reaching home, the night, they said is near, We must not now be parted, sojourn here. The new acquaintance, soon became a quest And made so welcome at their simple feast He bless'd the bread, but vanish'd at the word, And left them both exclaiming, 'T'was the Lord'! Did not our hearts feel all he deign'd to say. Did they not burn within us by the way?



A COUNTRY PROSPECT. Sir Rich $^{\rm d}$ Hill.

While all thy glories, O my God! Thro the creation shine; While rocks, and hills, and fertile vales Proclaim the hand divine. O may I view with humble heart The wonders of thy pow'r, Display'd alike in wilder scenes, As in each blade and flow'r. But while I taste thy blessings, Lord, And sip the streams below, O may my soul be led to thee, From whence all blessings flow; And if such footsteps of thy love, Thro this lost world we trace; How far transcendent are thy works Throughout the world of grace. Just as before you noontide sun, The brightest stars are small. So earthly comforts are but snares, Till grace has crown'd them all.



HAY TIME.

Newton.

The grass and flow'rs which clothe the field,
And look so green and gay,
Touch'd by the scythe, defenceless yield,
And fall, and fade away.

Fit emblem of our mortal state:
Thus in the scripture glass,
The young, the strong; the wise, the great;
May see themselves but grass.

O! trust not to your fleeting breath, Nor call your time your own; Around you see the scythe of death Is mowing thousands down.

And you, who hitherto are spar'd,
Must shortly yield your lives:
Your wisdom is to be prepar'd,
Before the stroke arrives.

The grass, when dead, revives no more; You die to live again; But oh! if death should prove the door To everlasting pain.

Lord, help us to obey thy call,
That from our sins set free,
When like the grass our bodies fall,
Our souls may spring to thee.



SAMUEL.

Anonymous.

When I survey this holy child, With bended knee, and count'nance mild, With eyes and hands uplift in prayer, The approving ray from heaven there.

What that implies O could I be, Whene'er to God I bend the knee! Thus fervent, reverent, and meek, When I for heavenly blessings seek!

But ah! I have a foe within, No print can shew the power of sin! This cools my fervour and desires, This unbelief and dread inspires.

O for thy holy Spirit, Lord! This to my prayers shall life afford! With Samuel's faith my soul supply, Whene'er I to thy throne draw nigh.



WHITSUNDAY.

Watts.

Great was the day, the joy was great, When the divine disciples met, Whilst on their heads the Spirit came, And sat like tongues of cloven flame.

What gifts, what miracles he gave! And pow'r to kill, and pow'r to save! Furnish'd their tongues with wond'rous words, Instead of shields, and spears, and swords!

Thus arm'd, he sent the champions forth, From east to west, from south to north; "Go, and assert your Saviour's cause; "Go, spread the myst'ry of his cross.

These weapons of the holy war, Of what almighty force they are, To make our stubborn passions bow, And lay the proudest rebel low.

Nations, the learned and the rude, Are by these heavenly arms subdued; While satan rages at his loss, And hates the doctrine of the cross.

Great King of grace! my heart subdue! I would be led in triumph too. A willing captive to my Lord, And sing the victories of his word.

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