

64/ *The Argument of His Book*

I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,  
 Of April, May, of June, and July flowers.  
 I sing of Maypoles, hock carts, wassails, wakes,  
 Of bridegrooms, brides, and of their bridal cakes.  
 I write of youth, of love, and have access  
 By these to sing of cleanly wantonness. 5  
 I sing of dews, of rains, and, piece by piece,  
 Of balm, of oil, of spice, and ambergris.  
 I sing of times trans-shifting, and I write  
 How roses first came red and lilies white. 10  
 I write of groves, of twilights, and I sing  
 The court of Mab and of the fairy king.  
 I write of hell; I sing (and ever shall)  
 Of heaven, and hope to have it after all.

Herrick's introduction offers a summary of his main themes in pentameter couplets. The Garden of the Hesperides, alluded to in the title of the book, was a mythological sacred grove containing golden fruit and presided over by the goddess Juno. It is also a kind of Garden of Eden to which poetry and imagination are the means of access. Most of his poetic themes are therefore pastoral in nature, connected with the rural landscape and the activities of the countryside rather than with urban or sophisticated courtly life.

**Title**

*Argument* subject; *His Book* Herrick's poetry was published in one book as two parts, *Hesperides* (for the non-religious poems) and *His Noble Numbers* (for the religious ones); this poem serves as introduction to the whole.

**[1] I sing of**

'I tell of' – a traditional formula for opening a long poem, though this poem was obviously meant to be read or recited rather than sung; nevertheless, lyric poetry implies, by its nature, at least a suggestion of some sort of musical connection; *brooks* . . . *bowers* i.e. subjects having to do with nature (*bower* a space enclosed by leafy branches; a shady recess).

**[2] April . . . July**

the blooming season in England; *July* pronounced to rhyme with 'truly'.

**[3] Maypoles . . . wakes**

various social customs practised in rural communities during the period; *Maypole* a tall pole, painted with varicoloured spiral stripes and decorated with flowers, placed in an open space as the focal point of May Day festivities; *hock cart* the celebration wagon that carried home the last fruits of the harvest; *wassail* a salutation used in presenting a cup or drinking a person's health (literally 'be fortunate' or 'be of good health'); *wake* a parish festival.

**[6] by**

by means of (youth and love); *cleanly wantonness* chaste unchastity, an oxymoron with not a few ambiguities – *cleanly* (a) spiritually or morally innocent, pure, sinless; but also (b) clever, neatly executed, elegant in language, artful; *wantonness* (a) lust,

lasciviousness or naughtiness; (b) revelry, extravagance of behaviour or language; (c) whim, unrestrained licence of imagination. As a priest of the Church of England, Herrick defends his subject matter by reminding his reader that this poetry is a celebration of innocence and natural freedom.

**[7] piece by piece**  
in succession.**[8] balm**

any aromatic fragrance or ointment; *ambergris* a wax-like, fragrant excretion from whales used in perfume-making.

**[9] times trans-shifting**

(a) the changing of the various seasons; (b) the temporary nature of all things subject to time (*times* time's); (c) metamorphosis (a classical theme, derived principally from Ovid, the

Roman author of *Metamorphoses*); (d) changes in circumstances (*trans-shifting* moving across or away).

**[10] came**

became, came to be; stories of this sort, which deal with the causes or origins of things, are called 'aetiological' and are frequent in myth, legend and fable.

**[12] Mab . . . fairy king**

Herrick wrote a number of poems on English fairies; Queen Mab also appears in Milton's 'L'Allegro' (see p. 371, line 102 and note).

**[13–14] I write . . . after all**

A reference to the poems on religious themes in *His Noble Numbers*.

**[13] after all**

(a) when life is over; (b) in spite of any sins he may have committed.

## 65/

*The Vine*

I dreamed this mortal part of mine  
 Was metamorphosed to a vine,  
 Which, crawling one and every way,  
 Enthralled my dainty Lucia. 5  
 Methought her long small legs and thighs  
 I, with my tendrils, did surprise:  
 Her belly, buttocks, and her waist  
 By my soft nervelets were embraced.  
 About her head I writhing hung,  
 And with rich clusters (hid among 10  
 The leaves) her temples I behung,  
 So that my Lucia seemed to me  
 Young Bacchus ravished by his tree.  
 My curls about her neck did crawl,  
 And arms and hands they did enthrall, 15  
 So that she could not freely stir  
 (All parts there made one prisoner).

But ah! what sweets smelled everywhere,  
 As heaven had spent all perfumes there.  
 At last, when prayers for the dead  
 And rites were all accomplishèd,  
 They, weeping, spread a lawny loom  
 And closed her up, as in a tomb.

15

The rose is the traditional symbol of fragility and transitoriness, particularly in relation to love and feminine beauty, but it has also been associated with the divine and the holy (i.e. Dante's mystic rose in *The Divine Comedy*). This whimsical account in tetrameter couplets suggests all these themes, but it also presents a natural world that has a kind of sanctity and charitableness, cares for itself, and leads to holiness. It presents a small image of Herrick's view of the nature he celebrates.

- [1] **smiling**  
 flowers are often said to 'smile' metaphorically.  
 [2] **being to be**  
 about to be; *sanctified* (a) taken up to heaven; (b) declared a saint.  
 [3] **bed**  
 (a) deathbed; (b) flower bed.  
 [4] **sisterhood**  
 (a) surrounding flowers; (b) nuns.  
 [5] **hung the head**  
 in mourning.  
 [6] **to wash her**  
 i.e. to prepare her body for burial; *spring* (a) river or fountain; (b) season of rain showers.  
 [7] **laid her forth**  
 laid out the corpse; *other* others.

- [8] **solemn fast**  
 abstinence from food in honour of the dead.  
 [9] **holy sisters some among**  
 some from among the 'nuns'.  
 [10] **dirge**  
 song sung at the burial; *trental* an elegy or dirge, originally a set of thirty requiem Masses.  
 [12] **spent**  
 exhausted.  
 [15] **lawny**  
 (a) made of fine linen; (b) made of grass; *loom* (a) web, shroud; (b) loam (? as a pun).

72/

His Prayer to Ben Jonson

When I a verse shall make,  
 Know I have prayed thee,  
 For old religion's sake,  
 Saint Ben, to aid me.

Make the way smooth for me  
 When I, thy Herrick,

5

Honouring thee, on my knee,  
 Offer my lyric.

Candles I'll give thee  
 And a new altar;  
 And thou Saint Ben shall be  
 Writ in my psalter.

10

In this amusing little poem, consisting of three trimeter quatrains rhyming *a b a b* with feminine rhymes in every other verse, Herrick pays a tribute to his old friend and master Ben Jonson, with a typical jocular touch that exaggerates yet graciously acknowledges his influence.

Title

*Prayer* Herrick offers this mock-prayer in a spirit of fun, but he is serious to the extent that he esteems Jonson's person and poetry very highly.

[2] **I have prayed thee**  
 (a) prayed to you; (b) begged you. Jonson is made to play a role that combines the intercessory powers of the Roman Catholic saint with the inspiring powers of the poetic Muse. It was believed that one could pray to saints not as divinities but as sympathetic listeners in heaven who might pray to God on one's behalf.

[3] **old religion's sake**  
 i.e. out of respect for the 'old' religion (i.e. Roman Catholicism), with which Herrick, as a High Churchman and a man with a lifelong interest in rituals and folklore, had some sympathy.

[4] **Saint Ben**  
 Since Jonson was not particularly noted for his piety, it is obvious that this 'canonisation' or designation of sainthood is the consequence of his poetic achievement.

[6] **thy Herrick**  
 The expression parodies the intimacy of the language of prayer.

[7] **on my knee**

One goes down on one knee before a person, on two to pray before God.

[8] **Offer my lyric**  
 an appropriate thing to offer a 'saint' whose inspiration has made it come into being.

[8-10] **Candles . . . altar**  
 Although it was considered permissible to make an offering gesture before a shrine honouring a saint, Herrick's attitude is more appropriate for a worshipper before the shrine of a pagan god, to whom such inducements were often proffered in a quasi-contractual fashion in return for requested favours. The poem is an amusing illustration of Herrick's way of combining classical and Christian modes.

[12] **psalter**  
 an edition of the Psalms arranged for devotional recitation or singing; here understood more generally as a book of liturgical hymns or prayers. To enter the name of a dead person into the psalter would be to declare him or her an official saint – in other words, to canonise them, as Herrick implies. Jonson should be honoured among poets.

## TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,  
 Old Time is still a-flying:  
 And this same flower that smiles to-day,  
 To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,  
 The higher he 's a-getting, 5

TO THE VIRGINS: È la lirica più conosciuta nella seconda metà del secolo. Si trova in quasi tutte le raccolte e le antologie del tempo. Fu musicata da W. Lawes (cfr. autografo al British Museum, Add. 31432). Martin rimanda a un brano di R. BURTON, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (3.2.5.5.), per un confronto: « A virgin, as the Poet holds, a desirous and sportive girl, is like a flower, a Rose withered on a sudden: 'She that was erst a Maid as fresh as May, / Is now an old Crone, time so steals away' (AUSONIUS). Let them take time then while they may, make advantage of youth, and as he prescribes. 'Fair Maids, go gather roses in the prime, / And think that as a flower so goes on time' (AUSONIUS). Let's all love, whiles we are in the flower of years, fit for Love-matters, and while time serves: for 'Suns that set may rise again / But if once we lose this light, / 'Tis with us perpetual night' » (CATULLUS). E qui Burton specifica in nota che si tratta della traduzione di Ben Jonson. La lirica herrickiana è dunque una versione del noto motivo del *carpe diem* e soprattutto riecheggia il *Carmen V* di Catullo: « Vivamus mea Lesbia, atque amemus, etc. » Ma ciascuna stanza può, come vedremo, essere avvicinata ad un passo di uno degli elegisti latini (cfr. P. AIKEN, *Op. cit.*, pp. 75-6). <sup>1</sup> *Gather ... may* — cfr. SPENSER, *Faerie Queene*, II, xii, 75, vv. 6-9 (M): « Gather therefore the Rose, whilest yet is prime, / For soone comes age, that will her pride deflowre; / Gather the Rose of loue, whilest yet is time, / Whilest loving thou mayst loued be with equale crime ». <sup>2</sup> *is still a-flying* = *semper vola*. <sup>2-4</sup> Cfr. TIBULLO, I, 4, vv. 27-30: « . . . transiet aetas. / Quam cito non segnīs stat remeatque dies! / Quam cito purpureos deperdit terra colores! / Quam cito formosas populus alba comas! » e CATULLO, LXII, vv. 39-48: « Vt flos in saeptis secretus nascitur hortis, / ignotus pecori, nullo conuulsus aratro, / quem mulcent aerae, firmat so, educat imber; / muli illum pueri, multae optauere puellae: / idem cum tenui carptus defloruit ungui, / nulli illum pueri, nullae optauere puellae: / sic uirgo, dum intacta manet, dum cara suis est; / cum castum amisit polluto corpore florem, / nec pueris iocunda manet, nec cara puellis. / Hymen o Hymenaeae, Hymen ades o Hymenaeae! » <sup>5</sup> *The glorious lamp of heaven* — cfr. « Heau'ns glorious lampe »

The sooner will his race be run,  
 And nearer he 's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,  
 When youth and blood are warmer; 10  
 But being spent, the worse, and worst  
 Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time;  
 And while ye may, go marry:  
 For having lost but once your prime, 15  
 You may for ever tarry.

*Hesperides*, 1648.

## THE HOCK-CART, OR HARVEST HOME

*To the Right Honourable Mildmay, Earl of Westmorland*

Come, sons of summer, by whose toil  
 We are the lords of wine and oil;

in E. FAIRFAX, *An Ottava Rima Translation of Tasso's Gerusalemme Liberata*, 1581, VII, v. 116, I (M.). <sup>5-8</sup> Cfr. PROPERZIO, III, 7, v. 24: « Nox tibi longa venit nec reditura dies ». <sup>9-12</sup> Cfr. OVIDIO, *Ars Amatoria*, III, vv. 65-66: « Utendum est aetate. Cito pede labitur aetas; / Nec bona tam sequitur, quam bona prima fuit ». Vedansi anche: TIBULLO, I, 8, vv. 47-48; PROPERZIO, IV, 5, vv. 59-60; PUBLIUS SYRUS, 19 (Diehl); VIRGILIO, *Georg.*, III, 67, 284, *Aen.*, VI, 275. Cfr. anche BEN JONSON, *Epig.* LXX, 6, *Epicoene*, IV, sc. 3, vv. 40-2 (M.). <sup>13-16</sup> Cfr. TIBULLO, I, VIII, vv. 77-8: « At the poena manet ni desinis esse superba, / Quam cupies votis hunc revocare diem! » <sup>14</sup> *go marry* — si osservi l'uso particolare del verbo *to go*, seguito da un infinito, che indica lo scopo dell'azione, senza *to*. Cfr. SPENSER, *The Tears of the Muses*, v. 398: « Now thou maist go pack ». <sup>15</sup> *prime* = *prime of youth* = primavera della vita (cfr. Lat. *prima hora*). <sup>16</sup> *tarry* = aspettare, rimanere in attesa.

THE HOCK-CART, etc.: Mildway Fane, Conte di Westmoreland, era un cortigiano influente che divenne patrono e mecenate del Herrick.

By whose tough labours and rough hands  
 We rip up first, then reap our lands.  
 Crown'd with the ears of corn, now come, 5  
 And to the pipe sing harvest home.  
 Come forth, my Lord, and see the cart  
 Dress'd up with all the country art!  
 See, here a maukin, there a sheet,  
 As spotless pure as it is sweet. 10  
 The horses, mares, and frisking fillies,  
 Clad, all, in linen white as lilies.  
 The harvest swains and wenchies bound  
 For joy to see the hock-cart crown'd.  
 About the cart, hear, how the rout 15  
 Of rural younglings raise the shout;  
 Pressing before, some coming after,  
 Those with a shout, and these with laughter.  
 Some bless the cart, some kiss the sheaves,  
 Some prank them up with oaken leaves. 20  
 Some cross the fill-horse, some with gear

Questi dichiarò di dovere a lui, come a Philip Herbert, Conte di Pembroke, « the oil of maintenance ». *Hock-cart* = il carro che trasporta dai campi l'ultimo carico del raccolto — cfr.: *The Argument of his Book*, v. 3: « I sing of May-poles, Hock-carts, Wassails, Wakes ». Anche il Conte di Westmoreland allude nei suoi *Otia Sacra* (pubbl. 1879), v. 175, allo stesso *hock-cart*: « How the Hock-cart with all its gear / Should be trick'd up » (M.). L'etimo di *hock* non è noto; sappiamo soltanto che *hockey* veniva chiamata, nelle campagne orientali d'Inghilterra, la festa del raccolto. La lirica può vagamente ricordare TIBULLO, II, 1. <sup>4</sup> *We ... lands* — gioco fra *rip* e *reap*. Il complemento diretto del primo è ancora *lands*; perciò = Noi prima dissodiamo (ma c'è il senso di spaccare, aprire la terra), poi mietiamo la messe. <sup>5-6</sup> Per la rima *come / home* cfr. quanto abbiamo osservato a vv. 3-4 di *To Perilla*. <sup>8</sup> *with all ... art* — l'ultimo carro del raccolto, dopo il quale tutta la messe era ormai nei granai (*harvest home*), veniva addobbato per i festeggiamenti. <sup>9</sup> *maukin* — *mawkin* o più comunemente *malkin*, diminutivo di *Matilda*, *Maud* = umile ragazza di campagna. Cfr. SHAKESPEARE, *Coriolanus*, II, sc. 1, vv. 224-25: « . . . the kitchen malkin pins / Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck ». <sup>21</sup> *cross the*

Devotion stroke the home-borne wheat;  
 While other rustics, less attent  
 To prayers than to merriment,  
 Run after with their breeches rent. 25  
 Well, on, brave boys, to your Lord's hearth  
 Glittering with fire, where, for your mirth,  
 Ye shall see first the large and chief  
 Foundation of your feast, fat beef!  
 With upper stories, mutton, veal 30  
 And bacon, which makes full the meal,  
 With several dishes standing by,  
 As here a custard, there a pie,  
 And here all tempting frumenty.  
 And for to make the merry cheer, 35  
 If smirking wine be wanting here,  
 There 's that, which drowns all care, stout bee,  
 Which freely drink to your Lord's health,  
 Then to the plough, the common-wealth,  
 Next to your flails, your fans, your fats, 40  
 Then to the maids with wheaten hats,  
 To the rough sickle and crooked scythe,  
 Drink, frolic boys, till all be blithe!  
 Feed and grow fat, and as ye eat  
 Be mindful that the labouring neat, 45  
 As you, may have their fill of meat.  
 And know, besides, ye must revoke  
 The patient ox unto the yoke

*fill-horse* = *bestride the shaft-horse* (M.) = cavalcano il cavallo alle stanghe (cioè quello che è attaccato al carro). <sup>28</sup> *Well ... boys* = orsù, avanti, etc. <sup>34</sup> *frumenty* = cibo fatto di frumento cotto nel latte. La parola rima con *pie* — cfr. quanto abbiamo detto in proposito a vv. 53-54 di *To the Memory of my Beloved ... W. Shakespeare* di Ben Jonson. <sup>36</sup> *smirking wine* = vino scintillante. <sup>40</sup> *fans* = vagli. *Fats* = botti. <sup>39-50</sup> *And all ... now* — uso,

And all go back unto the plough  
 And harrow, though they 're hang'd up now. 50  
 And, you must know, your Lord's word 's true,  
 Feed him ye must, whose food fills you;  
 And that this pleasure is like rain,  
 Not sent ye for to drown your pain  
 But to make it spring again. 55

*Hesperides*, 1648.

### CORINNA'S GOING A-MAYING

Get up, get up for shame! The blooming morn  
 Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.  
 See how Aurora throws her fair

osserva M., non inglese ma romano. Cfr. OVIDIO, *Fasti*, I, v. 665: « Rusticus emeritum palo suspendat aratum ». Vedasi anche TIBULLO, II, I, vv. 5-6: « . . . requiescat arator, / Et grave suspensio vomere cesset opus ». <sup>52</sup> *And that* — ancora alla dipendenza di *you must know* (v. 51).

CORINNA'S GOING A-MAYING: *Go a-maying* = partecipare ai festeggiamenti del primo maggio, — durante i quali si raccoglievano fiori, si componevano ghirlande, si sceglieva la Regina, si levava il *May-pole* per danzarvi attorno (forse per ricordo dei *Floralia* romani). Dice Philipp Stubbes nella sua *Anatomy of Abuses*, 1583 (2<sup>a</sup> ed.): « Against May, Whitsunday, or some other time of the year, every parish, town or village assemble themselves together, both men, women and children, old and young, even all indifferently; and either going all together or dividing themselves into companies, they go some to the woods and groves, some to the hills and mountains, some to one place and some to another, where they spend all the night in pleasant pastimes; and in the morning they return, bringing with them birch boughs and branches of trees, to deck their assemblies withal (cfr. nella nostra lirica i vv. 32-33) . . . But their chiefest jewel they bring from thence is their May-pole, which they bring home with great veneration . . . ». Al mattino, la gente del paese si alzava innanzi tempo per vedere i festeggiamenti: « They rose up early to observe / The rite of May » (Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV, sc. I, vv. 138-39). Cfr. anche « May Day Customs » in *Popular Antiquities* del Brand, *cit.*, I, pp. 120-28. Il tema è frequente nella lirica inglese fin dai tempi più antichi — com-

Fresh-quilted colours through the air:  
 Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see 5  
 The dew bespangling herb and tree!  
 Each flower has wept and bow'd toward the east  
 Above an hour since, yet you not drest;  
 Nay! not so much as out of bed?  
 When all the birds have matins said 10  
 And sung their thankful hymns, 'tis sin,  
 Nay, profanation, to keep in,  
 Whereas a thousand virgins on this day  
 Spring sooner than the lark, to fetch in May.

pare variamente in raccolte del Quattrocento e del Cinquecento, con inviti alla danza e desideri di evasione nell'aperta campagna a far l'amore e godersi la natura. Si potrebbero citare, del periodo del Herrick: *To Eliza, Upon May Day Morning*, 1649 in *Pocula Castalia* (1650), di Robert Baron, *The Goddesses Glory*, anonima, ristamp. da N. Ault in *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, Londra 1928 (2<sup>a</sup> ed. 1950), p. 426, *The First of May* di George Buchanan e *On May Morning* di J. Milton. Ma forse il componimento più vicino a quello del Nostro è il seg., di Thomas Bateson (*First Set of English Madrigals*, 1604): « Sister, awake! close not your eyes! / The day her light discloses; / And the bright morning doth arise / Out of her bed of roses. / See, the clear sun, the world's bright eye, / In at our window peeping: / Lo! how she blusheth to espy / Us idle wenches sleeping. / Therefore, awake! make haste, I say, / And let us without staying, / All in our gowns of green so gay / Into the park a-maying ». La nostra lirica è stata commentata in C. BROOKS, *The Well-Wrought Urn*, New York 1947, pp. 62-73; ROY H. PEARCE, « Pure Criticism and the History of Ideas », *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, VII (Dicembre 1948), pp. 126-29. Si tratta, senza dubbio, di una delle migliori poesie del Herrick, una di quelle in cui il suo genio è meglio rappresentato. <sup>2</sup> *god unshorn* — si riferisce ad Apollo, con imitazione classica: *intonsus Apollo*. Cfr., ancora di Herrick, *To his Worthy Friend M. John Hall*, vv. 12-13. E vedi: J. MILTON, *At a Vacation Exercise*, v. 37: « Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings »; J. DRYDEN, trad. *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, I, v. 766: « As the Locks of Phoebus are unshorn ». <sup>4</sup> *Fresh-quilted* (*to quilt* = cucire assieme) = colori vari, di fresco uniti insieme. <sup>5</sup> *slug-a-bed* — cfr. CHAUCER, *Canterbury Tales*, A., v. 1042: « For May wole have no slogardrie a nyght » (M.) <sup>7</sup> *east* — veniva pronunciata con *e*. Cfr. KÖCKERITZ, *Op. cit.*, p. 202. <sup>9</sup> *not ... bed?* = non ancora fuori del letto? <sup>10</sup> *matin* = mattutino. <sup>11</sup> *to fetch*



THE GRASSHOPPER

TO MY NOBLE FRIEND MR. CHARLES COTTON - ODE

O thou that swing'st upon the waving hair  
Of some well-filled oaten beard,  
Drunk ev'ry night with a delicious tear  
Dropt thee from heav'n, where now th'art rear'd:  
The joys of earth and air are thine entire, 5  
That with thy feet and wings dost hop and fly;  
And when thy poppy works thou dost retire  
To thy carv'd acorn-bed to lie.  
Up with the day, the sun-thou welcom'st then,  
Sport'st in the gilt plats of his beams, 10  
And all these merry days mak'st merry men,  
Thyself, and melancholy streams.  
But ah the sickle! golden ears are cropt;  
Ceres and Bacchus bid good night;  
Sharp frosty fingers all your flow'rs have topt, 15  
And what scythes spar'd, winds shave off quite.  
Poor verdant fool, and now green ice! thy joys,  
Large and as lasting as thy perch of grass,  
Bid us lay in'gainst winter rain, and poise  
Their floods with an o'erflowing glass. 20  
Thou best of men and friends! we will create  
A genuine Summer in each other's breast;  
And spite of this cold Time and frozen Fate,  
Thaw us a warm seat to our rest.  
Our sacred hearths shall burn eternally 25  
As vestal flames; the North-wind, he  
Shall strike his frost-stretch'd wings, dissolve, and fly  
This Etna in epitome.  
Dropping December shall come weeping in,  
Bewail th' usurping of his reign; 30  
But when in show'rs of old Greek we begin,  
Shall cry he hath his crown again.

LA CAVALLETTA

AL MIO NOBILE AMICO MR. CHARLES COTTON - ODE

O tu che voli sulla chioma ondeggiante di qualche ben  
riempita resta d'avena, briaca ogni notte di una lacrima  
deliziosa lasciata cadere per te dal cielo, dove ti sei  
ora innalzata!

Le gioie della terra e dell'aria sono tutte quante tue, che  
con le zampe e le ali saltelli e voli; e quando ha effetto  
il tuo infuso di papavero, ti ritiri nel tuo scolpito letto di  
ghiande.

Desta allo spuntar del giorno, tu dà il benvenuto al sole,  
ti trastulli fra le treccè dorate dei suoi raggi; e per tutti  
questi lieti giorni rallegrì gli uomini, te stessa, e i malin-  
conici rivi.

Ma ah, la falce! le spighe d'oro sono recise; Cerere e  
Bacco augurano la buonanotte; gelide dita affilate hanno  
cimato tutti i vostri fiori, e quanto hanno risparmiato le  
falci, i venti radono completamente.

Povera sciocca verdeggiante! e ora verde ghiaccio! le  
tue gioie, vaste e durevoli quanto la pertica d'erba su  
cui si posavi, ci ingiungono di premunirci contro l'in-  
verno, la pioggia, e di bilanciare le loro alluvioni con una  
coppa traboccante.

Tu, il migliore fra gli uomini e gli amici! noi creeremo  
un'estate genuina nel petto di entrambi; e a dispetto di  
questo tempo freddo e del gelido destino, sgeleremo  
una calda sede per il nostro riposo.

I nostri sacri focolari arderanno eternamente come fuo-  
chi di vestali; la tramontana ammainerà le sue ali tese  
dal gelo, si dissolverà e fuggirà questa compendiata Etna.

Il cadente Dicembre entrerà piangendo, lamenterà l'usur-  
pazione del suo regno; ma quando cominceremo con gli  
acquazzoni del vecchio greco, esclamerà di aver riavuto  
la sua corona.

Night as clear Hesper shall our tapers whip  
From the light casements where we play,  
And the dark hag from her black mantle strip, 35  
And stick there everlasting day.

Thus richer than untempted kings are we,  
That asking nothing, nothing need:  
Though lord of all what seas embrace, yet he  
That wants himself is poor indeed. 40

#### LUCASTA WEEPING

##### SONG

Lucasta wept, and still the bright  
Enamour'd God of Day,  
With his soft handkerchief of light,  
Kiss'd the wet pearls away.

But when her tears his heat o'ercame, 5  
In clouds he quench'd his beams,  
And griev'd, wept out his eye of flame,  
So drowned her sad streams.

At this she smil'd, when straight the sun  
Clear'd with her kind desires, 10  
And by her eyes' reflection  
Kindled again his fires.

Come Espero è più chiaro quando finisce il giorno, così  
le nostre candele scacceranno a frustate la notte dalle  
finestre illuminate della stanza dove noi ci divertiamo,  
strapperanno il nero mantello di dosso alla buia strega,  
e vi stabiliranno eterno giorno.

Così siamo noi più ricchi di Re non molestati, che nulla  
chiedendo, di nulla abbisognano: benché signore di quanto  
i mari abbraccino, è tuttavia povero colui al quale manca  
se stesso.

#### LUCASTA CHE PIANGE

##### CANZONE

Lucasta piangeva e sempre lo splendente Dio Innamorato  
del giorno, con il suo soffice fazzoletto di luce, asciugava  
con un bacio le umide perle. Ma quando le lacrime  
di lei sopraffecero il suo calore, tra nuvole soffocò i suoi  
raggi, e s'attristò, si spremette l'occhio di fiamma, per  
sommargere i di lei tristi rivi.

Di ciò ella sorrise quando il sole si rischiarò dei di lei  
desideri gentili, e al riflesso dei suoi occhi tornò ad  
accendere i suoi ardori.