Richard Gough, â??To Mrs. Sâ?? on presenting the Author with a Lock of her Hairâ?•

Description

RICHARD GOUGH

â??To Mrs. Sâ?? on presenting the Author with a Lock of her Hairâ?•

The Poets, Madam, all aver,
That once the ruthless god of war,
Who, bred amid the din of arms,
Defyâ??d the powâ??r of beautyâ??s charms;
And long had proudly scornâ??d to wear,
The pleasing fetters of the fair.
Struck with the graceful air and mein,
And roseat bloom of Cyprusâ?? queen;
His savage fierceness all forbore,
Subdued by Venus, magic lore;
And soon became her powâ??r to prove,
A convert to the force of love.
The wily Goddess, then, â??tis said,
All with an heavenly tempered brede;
Of net-work circled him around,
And to her snowy bosom bound:
Securâ??d the conquest of her eyes,
And by the rulers of the skies;
From the fierce God of war so tamed,
Thence forth was beauties goddess named.
Thus say the poets, who in fiction,
In figure and in contradiction,
To all the laws of modest nature,
Trick out a strange romantic creature;
Which, after all, they queintly feign,
No where exists but in the brain.
Might I the genuine truth reveal,
And would you listen to the tale;
Would you, more kindly still supply,
Whateâ??er I pass in silence by?
Whose was the dull, insensate breast,
Which beautyâ??s powâ??r at length confessâ??d;
Who soon became that power to prove,
A convert to the force of love:
Wouâ??d you conceive who â??tis I mean,
Then would I thus the rest explain:
The heavenly net-work, Venus snare,

Was this â?? *a ringlet of her hair*;
And she, to give her *all* her due,
Some faint resemblance was ofâ??you. 40

NOTES:

Title *Mrs. Sâ??* Unable to identify.

2 *god of war* In Roman mythology, Mars.

7 *mein* â??Physical strength, force or powerâ?• (*OED*).

8 *roseat* â??Resembling or suggestive of a rose, esp.in colourâ?• (*OED*); *Cyprusâ?? queen* Probably Cleopatra of Egypt, renowned for her beauty, who was given control of the island through her alliance with Marc Antony (*Encyclopedia Britannica*).

10 *Venus* In Roman mythology, the goddess of love.

14 *brede* â??Anything plaited, entwined, or interwovenâ?• (*OED*).

25 *queintly* An older spelling of *quaintly* (*OED*).

31 *insensate* â??Destitute of physical sense or feelingâ?• (*OED*).

Source: *The Gentlemanâ??s Magazine* (April 1770), p. 183.

Edited by Matthew Bragg