Michael Bruce, â??Anacreontic: To a Waspâ?•

Description

MICHAEL BRUCE

â??Anacreontic: To a Waspâ?•

The following is a ludicrous imitation of the usual Anacreontics; the spirit of composing which was raging, a few years ago, among all the sweet singers of GREAT BRITAIN.

WINGED wandâ??rer of the sky!
Inhabitant of heavâ??n high!
Dreadful with thy dragon tail,
Hydra-head, and coat of mail!
Why dost thou my peace molest?
Why dost thou disturb my rest?
When in May the meads are seen,
Sweet enamel! white and green;
And the gardens, and the bowâ??rs,
And the forests, and the flowâ??rs,
Don their robes of curious dye,
Fine confusion to the eye!
Did I â??â?? chase thee in thy flight?
Did I â??â?? put thee in a fright?
Did I â??â?? spoil thy treasure hid?
Neverâ??neverâ??neverâ??did.
Envious nothing! pray beware;
Tempt mine anger, if you dare.
Trust not in thy strength of wing;
Trust not in thy length of sting.
Heavâ??n nor earth shall thee defend;
I thy buzzing soon will end.
Take my counsel, while you may;
Devil take you, if you stay.
Wiltâ??thouâ??dareâ??myâ??faceâ??toâ??wound?â??
Thus, I fell thee to the ground.
Down amongst the dead men, now
Thou shalt forget thou ere wast thou.
Anacreontic Bards beneath,
Thus shall wail thee after death.

CHORUS OF ELYSIAN BARDS.

â?? A Wasp, for a wonder,
To paradise under
Descends: see! he wanders
By STYXâ??S meanders!
Behold, how he glows,
Amidst RHODOPEâ??S snows!
He sweats, in a trice,
In the regions of ice!
Lo! he cools, by GODâ??S ire,
Amidst brimstone and fire!
He goes to our king,
And he shows him his sting.
(God PLUTO loves satire,
As women love attire;)
Our king sets him free,
Like famâ??d EURIDICE.
Thus a Wasp could prevail
Oâ??er the Devil and hell,
A conquest both hard and laborious!
Thoâ?? hell had fast bound him,
And the Devil did confound him,
Yet his sting and his wing were victorious.â?•

NOTES:

Title*: Anacreontic* â??A poem written in the metre or style of the ancient Greek poet Anacreon (c. 570-c. 495 B.C.), esp. one on the theme of love or wineâ?• (*OED*).

3 d*ragon tail* A stinger.

4 *Hydra-head* In Greek legend, â??a gigantic water-snake-like monster with nine headsâ?• (*Britannica*); *mail* Armor.

7 *meads* Meadows.

8 *enamel* â??Applied to any smooth and lustrous surface-colouringâ?¦*esp.* to verdure or flowers on the groundâ?• (*OED*).

9 *bowâ??rs* A shady place.

31 *ELYSIAN BARDS* Alluding to â??the supposed state or abode of the blessed after death in Greek mythologyâ?• (*OED*).

35 *STYX* In Greek mythology, the River Styx flows through the underworld.

37 *RHODOPE* A mountain range in Southeastern Europe that extends into Greece.

38 *in a trice* â?•A very brief periodâ?• (*OED*).

40 *ire* â??Wrathâ?• (*OED*).

41 *brimstone and fire* A biblical description of Hell.

44 *PLUTO* Roman God of the dead.

47 *EURIDICE* The wife of Orpheus; a mythical figure who nearly made it out of the underworld.

SOURCE: ***Poems on Several Occasions*** **(Edinburgh, 1782), pp. 63-66. [HathiTrust]**

Edited by Louis Denson