â??T.E.,â?• â??To one quoting the common saying Words are but Windâ?•

Description

â??T.E.â?•

***â??To one quoting the common saying* Words are but Windâ?•**

Words are but wind, you say; but donâ??t you know,
Wind tears up trees, and houses down doth blow?
Of all the elements, which can you find,
That brings to man such mischief as the wind?
The strongest ships, by the windâ??s fury tost,
Are dashâ??d to pieces, or else sunk and lost.
Winds force the swelling waves beyond ye strand,
And make the boiling sea oâ??er-flow the land.
Winds kindle fires, and drive the raging flame
Beyond the powâ??r of engines to reclaim.
Winds whirl the clouds, and cause the earth to quake,
Make mountains walk, trees their old soil forsake.
All other elements may bounded be;
But who can bound ye wind, which none can see?
Fire may be quenchâ??d by water; water may
By dams of earth be forcâ??d its course to stay.
Earth may, by art, be raisâ??d, by art deprest,
As seems to the projecting owner best.
But wind, unruly wind, can by no force,
Can by no art be hindered in its course.
Oppose firm works, too strong for it to pierce,
â??Twill mount the higher, and become more fierce.
For human power can nothing raise so high,
Oâ??er which the nimble wind canâ??t soar and fly.
By swelling winds, in her deep caverns pent,
Our common motherâ??s breast is rudely rent.
Wind in her stomach makes her open her jaw,
And suck down cities to her spacious maw.
Wind in our bowels makes our vitals crack,
And far exceeds the torture of the rack.
Air is the region too, where the learnâ??d say,
Satan has greatest powâ??r his pranks to play.
Say then no more, *Words are but wind, or air,*
Except thou wouldâ??st ye two worst things compare:
For thereâ??s a strain of sharp corroding words,
Wounds deeper, and hurts more than keenest swords.

NOTES:

Title: *Words are but Wind* A common, archaic saying in England. The earliest citing of the phrase is from Shakespeareâ??s play *The Comedy of Errors* (wr. ca. 1594; pub. 1623). The saying also shows up in Jonathan Swiftâ??s satirical work *A Tale of a Tub* (1704).

5 *tost* Tossed.

16 *deprest* Depressed.

36 *keenest* â??Sharpâ?• (*OED*).

Source: *The Gentlemenâ??s Magazine,* vol. 7 (March 1737), p. 181.

Edited by Samantha Rosales