Matthew Pilkington, â??Happinessâ?•

Description

[MATTHEW PILKINGTON]

â??Happinessâ?•

Plaguâ??d with dependance on the great,
To raise me from my humble state;
With paying court to faithless friends,
Who disappointed all my ends;
With wasting all my blooming years,
In endless toils, and hopes, and fears;
How fondly longs my soul to gain
The calm, uncrowded rural scene!
To fly the man, whose treachâ??rous art
Deludes the undesigning heart.
No calumny, no pale-cheekâ??d care,
No envy shall attend me there.
There seated near a gliding stream,
Intent on some inspiring theme,
Or wandâ??ring oâ??er the flowâ??ry vale,
Imbibing joy from every gale,
I strive that blissful state to gain,
So fondly sought, so sought in vain.

Vain are our fondest hopes of bliss,
From such a faithless world as this.
Where vice in every form appears,
In wantonâ??d youth and palsyâ??d years.
Where villainy exalted shines,
And merit unregarded pines;
Angelic probityâ??s unprizâ??d,
And heavâ??n-descended truth despised:
Where friendshipâ??s name conceals a knave,
Subtle and studious to deceive;
(A Corvus, who with great success,
At once can murder and caress;)
Where triumps self-adoring pride,
Where virtueâ??s scornâ??d, and God defyâ??d.

Too long deceivâ??d, I strove to know
Felicity in things below;
But now, O powâ??r supreme, I see,
True happiness resides with thee.

With thee, whose wisdom guides on high
The worlds of light that gild the sky,
And made this earth, a place of pain,
A mixâ??d unsatisfying scene.

Let wealth have wings, and friends profest
Stab the sincere unguarded breast;
Prefermentâ??s golden showâ??r be shed
On *Clodioâ??s* undeserving head.
Or Calumnyâ??s envenomâ??d dart
Transfix me in the tendâ??rest part;
Since no distress in time or place,
Can make eternal goodness cease,
In God alone my rapturâ??d mind
Unmixâ??d felicity shall find.

NOTES:

11 *calumny* â??False charge, slanderâ?• *(OED).*

15 *vale* â??A dale or valleyâ?• *(OED).*

16 *gale* â??A song; merrimentâ?• *(OED).*

22 *palsyâ??d* â??Affected with palsy, trembling, totteringâ?• *(OED).*

25 *probity* â??Moral integrity, decencyâ?• *(OED).*

29 *Corvus* Latin for raven. May also refer to a raven in Greek mythology known as a trickster and thief.

44 *Clodio* Unable to trace.

Source: *The Magazine of Magazines*, vol. 8 (July, 1754), p. 82. [Google Books]

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