Stephen Duck, â??On Musicâ?•

Description

STEPHEN DUCK

â??***On* MUSIC**â?•

I.

MUSIC the coldest Heart can warm,
The hardest melt, the fiercest charm;
Disarm the Savage of his Rage,
Dispel our Cares, and Pains assuage;
With Joy it can our Souls inspire,
And tune our Tempers to the Lyre;
Our Passions, like the Notes, agree,
And stand subduâ??d by Harmony.
This found the *melancholy* King,
When David tunâ??d the trembling String:
Sweet Music chasâ??d the fullen Spleen away,
And made his clouded Soul serenely gay.

II.

WHILE Music breathes in martial Airs,
The Coward dares forget his Fears;
Or, if the Notes to Pity sound,
Revenge and Envy cease to wound:
The Powâ??r of MUSIC has been known,
To raise or tumble Cities down:
Thus *Theban* Turrets, Authors say,
Were raisâ??d by MUSICâ??s Magick Lay;
And antient *Jericho*â??s Heavâ??n-hated Wall,
To sacred MUSIC, owâ??d its destinâ??d Fall.

III.

NOR Mortals only MUSIC love;
It chears celestial Saints above:
Sweet Hallelujahs Angels sing
Around their great Ethereal King;
CeaslessCeasless they sound the FATHERâ??S Praise,
The FATHER too approves their Lays;
For HE (as all Things) MUSIC made,
And SERAPHIMS before Him playâ??d:

When over *Horeb*â??s Mount He came,
Arrayâ??d in Majesty and Flame;
After the sounding Trump, sublime, He rode;
The sounding Trump proclaimâ??d theâ?? approaching GOD.

IV.

MUSIC had Being, long before
The solemn Organ learnt to roar:
When MICHAEL, oâ??er the heavâ??nly Plain,
Advancâ??d, to fight the rebel Train;
Loud Trumpets did his Wrath declare,
In MUSIC, terrible to hear:
And when the Universe was made,
On golden Harps the Angels playâ??d:
And when it falls, (as fall it must)
MUSIC shall penetrate the Dust;
The Trump shall sound with the Archangelâ??s Breath;
And, sweetly dreadful! wake the Dead from Death.

NOTES:

6 *Lyre* â??A stringed instrument of the harp kind, used by the Greeks for accompanying song and recitationâ?• (*OED*).

9 *melancholy King* An allusion to King Saul in the Bible.

10 *David tunâ??d the trembling String* In the first book of Samuel, David would play the lyre to calm Saul when the evil spirit of God was upon him (1 Samuel 16:23).

11 *Spleen* â??Excessive dejection or depression of spirits; gloominess and irritability.â?• (*OED*).

19 *Theban Turrets* A structure or tower belonging to Thebes, ancient capital of Boeotia in Greece.

20 *Lay* â??A short lyric or narrative poem intended to be sungâ?• (*OED*).

21 *Jerichoâ??s Heavâ??n-hated Wall* In the Bible Joshua is instructed to sound trumpets before taking over the city of Jericho (Joshua 6:20).

30 *Seraphims* Biblical angels.

31 *Horebâ??s Mount* The mountain where Moses received the Ten Commandments from God.

32 *Majesty and Flame* Allusion to the Burning bush that the Lord appeared as to give Moses the Ten Commandments.

37 *MICHAEL, oâ??er the heavâ??nly Plain* Michael was an archangel who fought the Devil in heaven.

45-46 *The Trump shall sound with the Archangelâ??s Breath/â?¦wake the Dead from Death* Alludes to the literary tradition of the archangel Gabriel sounding a trumpet to welcome Christ back to Earth for the Last

Judgement (see John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book XI, ll. 72-76). In the Biblical tradition, Gabriel is neither an archangel, not is it clear that heâ??s the trumpeter (see I Corinthians 15:52).

Source: *Poems on Several Occasions*, (3rd Edition) (London, 1753), pp. 49-51. [Google Books]

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