

Mary Darwall, "Hymn to Plutus"

Description

[MARY DARWALL]

"HYMN to PLUTUS"

PLUTUS! to thee I bow, to thee alone,
And, prostrate, worship at thy splendid throne.
To thee, great god of ocean, earth and air,
My heart ascends, and thus prefers its prayer.

O! grant thy votary wealth, however 'tis gained, By murders blotted, by corruption stained, By grovelling arts, which virtuous fools despise, Who wish for wealth, yet scorn the ways to rise: Still let them court that empty bubble, fame, Be self-applause their riches, peace their claim.	5 10
Such rebels to thy sway my soul disdains, Theirs be the glory, Plutus! mine the gains. For me let Phoebus, with intenser ray, Pour o'er Peruvian mines the blazing day; Though Pan's fair flocks bestrew the high parch'd plains, Brown Ceres droop, and breathless faint the swains, Though sable slaves in countless myriads die, Beneath the influence of the fervid sky, What is't to me, who, in this temperate isle, At southern heat, and Greenland winters smile?	 15 20
To me propitious is the scorching beam, Though sickening nature gasp beneath the gleam; Since to this kind, prolific warmth I owe The diamond's blaze, and ruby's heighten'd glow: This to all-powerful gold matures the ore, For which the suppliant crowd thy shrine adore. Do I forget, or break a promise made, Must I be tied to servile rules of trade? No: Liberty from ample fortune springs To spurn beneath my foot such trivial things.	 25 30

Should the small number, who on honor doat,
And feast on virtue in a thread-bare coat,
Say, I by falsehood and collusion gain'd
The darling end, for which each nerve was strain'd;

Whilst I enjoy the permanent delight 35
 Of solid gold, Iâ??ll swear THEIR BLACK IS WHITE.
 Thoâ?? tongue-tied truth may blame the bold design,
 The world will honor me, whilst wealth is mine:
 Then, PLUTUS, grant me wealth; to thee I bend,
 And my devotion but with life shall end. 40

NOTES:

Title *PLUTUS* â??Greek God of Wealth, rewards the just with wealth and reduces the unjust to penuryâ?• (*Cyclopedia of Literary Characters*).

5 *votâ??ry* â??A person who has dedicated himself or herself to religious service by taking vows; a monk or nunâ?• (OED).

13 *Phoebus* â??Greek God of the sun; the sun personifiedâ?• (OED).

15 *Pan* â??Greek God of flocks and herdsâ?• (OED).

16 *Ceres* â??In Roman religion, goddess of the growth of food plantsâ?• (Britannica).

17 *myriads* â??Multitudesâ?• (OED).

36 *Iâ??ll swear THEIR BLACK IS WHITE* Proverbial for vigorously maintaining something in order to get what one wants.

SOURCE: *Poems on Several Occasions*, vol. 1 (Walsall, 1794), pp. 41-44. [Google Books]

Edited by Lauryn Orozco