Mary Leapor, â??On Sicknessâ?•

Description

MARY LEAPOR

â??On Sicknessâ?•

WHEN Heavâ??nâ??s almighty King prepares,
The angry Shaft to throw;
Evâ??n Fortitude itself despairs
To bear the deadly Blow.

Cold Tremors shake each fainting Limb,
That weeps a sickly Dew;
The Features, changâ??d to pale and dim,
Resign their cheerful Hue.

No more soft Eloquence shall flow,
Nor dress the silent Tongue;
But the dull Heart refuse to glow,
Thoâ?? charmâ??d by melting Song.

Those laughing Eyes, that lately shone
So sprightly and so gay,
Sunk down with Sickness, faint and wan,
Decline the piercing Day.

And scarcely bear a cheerful Beam,
To light the drooping Soul;
While round the weak afflicted Brain
Romantick Vapours roll.

Deceitful Earth and all its Joys
Elude our grasping Hands:
Thoâ?? Nature all her Skill employs,
To bind the failing Bands.

Death drives us to the horrid Steep;
And while we vainly mourn,
He pointing shews thâ?? unmeasurâ??d Deep,
From whence we neâ??er return.

There the grim Spectre, with a Smile,
His panting Victim fees:

Who fain wouâ??d linger here a while,
To swallow nauseous Lees.

Who Deathâ??s great Empire wouâ??d dispute,
And hugs the gilded Pill,
Not knowing That his faithful Mute,
Whose Business is to kill.

The lost, the slippâ??ry Hold to save,
To lenient Arts we run;
They cast us headlong on the Wave,
And we are twice undone.

The Powâ??r who stampâ??d the reasâ??ning Mind,
Its Partner can restore;
There we a lasting Cordial find,
And learn to sigh no more.

But if the slow-consuming Ill
Shouâ??d lead us to the Grave,
Our Faith persuades us that he will
The trembling Spirit save.

O thou, whose Bounty all things taste,
Whose Anger none can bear;
Revive the melancholy Breast,
Nor let the Wretch despair.

NOTES:

6 *Dew* â??Perspiration, sweatâ?• (*OED*).

8 *Hue* â??External appearance of the face and skin, complexion,â?• color (*OED*).

15 *wan* â??Lacking light, or lustreâ?• (*OED*).

20 *Romantick* â??Fantastic, extravagant, quixoticâ?• (*OED*).

29 *Spectre* â??An apparition, phantom, or ghostâ?• (*OED*).

32 *Lees* â??Basest part, â??dregsâ??, â??refuseâ??â?• (*OED*).

38 *lenient Arts* Here a reference to gentle, or â??soothingâ?• medical practices (*OED*).

43 *Cordial* â??A medicine, food or beverage which invigorates the heart and stimulates the circulationâ?• (*OED*).

Source: ***Poems Upon Several Occasions*** **(London, 1748), pp. 263-266. [Google Books]**

Edited by Kaitlan Gomez