Matthew Prior, â??The Wandering Pilgrimâ?•

Description

MATTHEW PRIOR

â??The Wandering Pilgrim, or, *Will Piggotâ??s* Merry Petition to be Sir *Thomas Franklandâ??s* Porterâ?•

Humbly addressâ??d to Sir THOMAS FRANKLAND, Bart. Post-Master, and Pay-Master-General to Queen ANNE.

I.
WILL PIGGOT must to *Coxwould* go,
To live, alas! in Want,
Unless Sir THOMAS say No, no,
Thâ?? Allowance is too scant.

II.
The gracious Knight full well does weet,
Ten Farthings neâ??er will do
To keep a Man each Day in Meat,
Some Bread to Meat is due.

III.
A *Rechabite* poor WILL must live,
And drink of ADAMâ??s Ale,
Pure Element, no Life can give,
Or mortal Soul regale.

IV.
Spare Diet, and Spring-water clear,
Physicians hold are good;
Who diets thus need never fear
A Fever in the Blood.

V.
Graâ??mercy, Sirs, yâ?? are in the right,
Prescriptions All can sell,
But he that does not eat canâ??t sh***
Or piss, if good Drink fail.

VI.
But pass â??â?? The *AEsculapian* Crew,
Who eat and quaff the best,

They seldom miss to bake and brew,
Or lin to break their Fast.

VII.

Couâ??d *Yorkshire*-Tyke but do the same,
Then He like Them might thrive;
But, FORTUNE, FORTUNE, cruel DAME,
To starve Thou doâ??st Him drive.

VIII.

In WILLâ??s Old Masterâ??s plenteous Days,
His Memâ??ry eâ??er be blest;
What need of speaking in his Praise?
His Goodness stands confest.

IX.

At his fameâ??d Gate stood Charity,
In lovely sweet Array;
CERES, and Hospitality,
Dwelt there both Night and Day.

X.

But to conclude, and be concise,
Truth must WILLâ??s Voucher be;
Truth never yet went in Disguise,
For naked still is She.

XI.

There is but One, but One alone,
Can set the PILGRIM free,
And make him cease to pine and moan;
O FRANKLAND it is THEE.

XII.

Oh! save him from a dreary Way,
To *Coxwould* he must hye,
Bereft of thee he wends astray,
At *Coxwould* he must die.

XIII.

Oh! let him in thy Hall but stand,
And wear a Porterâ??s Gown,
Duteous to what Thou mayâ??st command,
Thus WILLIAMâ??s Wishes crown.

NOTES:

Subtitle Porter â??A gatekeeper or doorkeeper,â?• in this case for the building which houses the Postmaster Generalâ??s offices.

Dedication *Sir Thomas Frankland* 2nd Baronet (1665-1726), politician, served as joint Postmaster General from 1691-1715; *Queen Anne* Reigned 1702-1714.

1 *Will Piggot* â??This merry Petition was written by Mr. Prior, for Will Piggot to obtain the Porterâ??s Placeâ?• [Authorâ??s Note]; *Coxwould* Coxwold, â??Twelve Miles, North, beyond the City of Yorkâ?• [Authorâ??s Note].

4 *scant* **â??**Existing or available in inadequate or barely sufficient amount, quantity, or degree; stinted in measure, not abundantâ?• (*OED*).

5 *weet* â??To know, to know of somethingâ?• (*OED*).

6 *Farthing* â??The quarter of a pennyâ?• (*OED*).

9 *Rechabite* â??According to the Old Testament and Hebrew scriptures: A member of an Israelite family descended from Rehab, which refused to drink wine, live in houses or cultivate fields and vineyards (see Jeremiah 35)â?• (*OED*).

10 *ADAMâ??s Ale* â??Water, (as a drink)â?• (*OED*).

17 *Graâ??mercy* **â??**The salutation â??thanksâ?? or â??thank you.â?? Hence in phrases, as *worth gramercy*, worth giving thanks for, of some value or importanceâ?• (*OED*).

21 *Aesculapian* â??Relating to medicine or doctorsâ?• (*OED*).

22 *quaff* â??To drink (a liquid) copiously or in a large draughtâ?• (*OED*).

24 *lin* â??To cease, leave offâ?• (*OED*).

25 *Yorkshire-Tyke* â??A person from Yorkshire*â?•* (*OED*).

27 *FORTUNE* â??Chance, hap, or luck, regarded as a cause of events and changes in menâ??s affairs. Oftenâ?¦personified as a goddess, â??the power supposed to distribute the lots of life according to her own humourâ?? (Johnson)â?• (*OED*).

35 *CERES* Roman Goddess of agriculture.

43 *pine* â??Physical pain, discomfort, or sufferingâ?• (*OED*).

46 *hye* â??Go quicklyâ?• (*OED*).

47 *Bereft* â??Deprived ofâ?• (*OED*); *wends* â??To go, proceedâ?¦in an unhurried manner or by indirect routeâ?• (*OED*).

SOURCE: *Poems on Several Occasions*, Volume the Second, Fourth Edition (London 1742), pp. 95-97. [Google Books]

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