

William Collins, "Ode to Peace"

Description

WILLIAM COLLINS "Ode to Peace"

O Thou who badst thy turtles bear
Swift from his grasp thy golden hair,
And sought'st thy native skies;
When War, by vultures drawn from far,
To Britain bent his iron car, 5
And bade his storms arise!

Thou'rt Tir'd of his rude tyrannic sway,
Our youth shall fix some festive day,
His sullen shrines to burn :
But thou, who hear'st the turning spheres, 10
What sounds may charm thy partial ears,
And gain thy blest return!

O Peace, thy injur'd robes up-bind!
O rise! and leave not one behind
Of all thy beamy train: 15
The British Lion, Goddess sweet,
Lies stretch'd on earth to kiss thy feet,
And own thy holier reign.

Let others court thy transient smile;
But come to grace thy western isle, 20
By warlike Honour led;
And, while, around her ports rejoice,
While all her sons adore thy choice,
With him for ever wed!

NOTES:

1 *badst* "Commanded" (OED).

3 *sought'st* "To go in search or quest of" (OED).

4 *War* Reference to the second Jacobite rebellion (1745-1746), Charles Edward Stuart, the "Young Pretender," who was finally defeated in the Battle of Culloden, in northern Scotland, on 16 April 1746 (*Britannica*).

6 *bade* "Bid" (OED).

16 *The British Lion* – The lion as the national emblem of Great Britain; hence often used figuratively for the British nation (*OED*).

19 *transient* – Temporary; fleeting• (*OED*).

SOURCE: *The Poetical Works of Mr. William Collins* (Glasgow, 1777), pp. 48-49 [Google Books]
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