

An elegy sacred to the memory of ... John Till Adams, M.D. of Bristol / [E. Sibly].

Contributors

Sibly, E. (Ebenezer), 1751-1800.

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Bxxiv. Adams

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(Adams)

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By Ebenezer Sibly.



A N
E L E G Y:
S A C R E D T O T H E M E M O R Y
O F T H A T P A T R O N O F V I R T U E,
T H E T R U L Y A D M I R E D A N D P I O U S
J O H N T I L L A D A M S, M. D.
O F B R I S T O L.

Whose Heaven-born Soul, leaving its Earthly
Shrine, chose its native Home, and was taken
to Rest on MONDAY the 20th Day of *February*,
One Hour P. M. (or Afternoon) 1786.

B R I S T O L:

Printed for E. SIBLY, Castle-Street; and sold by T. MILLS,
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Goswell-Street, London.

M,DCC,LXXXVI.



An E L E G Y.

STOP thou my Muse, that often soar on high,
What awful scene presents unto thine eye ?
What means this weeping ? Why this direful woe ?
From whence the cause, and why so plenteous flow
Those briny tears, and this dire lamentation ?
What evil's near ? What means this sore vexation ?
Are you a stranger to our present grief ?
Know not the cause ; *we mourn without relief.*
These trembling accents to you well may shew
Our grief proceeds from more than common woe ;
Are you a friend ? with us our loss deplore,
While we relate,—“ TILL ADAMS is no more.”

What was he then ? I beg you will explain ;
 And why invite me to join in the train ?
 To whom allied, or to whom belong ?
 Why thus the Muses and the Graces throng
 To hold his bier ? come ease my anxious fear,
 That I with you may drop the chrystal tear :
 The task is large, but his capacious soul
 Was far more large than the bright stars that roll
 Within their orbs, or space infinitely,
 For nought suffic'd him but the Deity,
 And that ethereal state, where souls aspire ;
 He wing'd his way, and there he tunes his lyre.
 Come now some Angel that beholds him there,
 Instruct me to relate what he was here :
 Touch now my tongue with an Empyrean flame,
 While I rehearse the great TILL ADAMS' fame ;

For

For sure to speak his merits, tho' but young,
 Will need require not less than Angel's tongue;
 And while his personal perfections tell,
 Must drink a draught at the Heliconian Well.
 To speak is easy—but to speak on thee,
 Truth would be thought to forfeit modesty:
 Yet a reflection from thy altitude
 Would thaw my frozen heart's ingratitude—
 So speak I will, tho' Envy bites her chain,
 And pois'ning Malice whets her sting again:
 His force of genius burn'd in early youth
 With thirst of knowledge, and in love of truth;
 In every speech persuasive wisdom flow'd,
 In every act refulgent virtue glow'd;
 Strict on the right he fix'd his steadfast eye,
 With temp'rate zeal and wise anxiety,

Nor

Nor e'er from Virtue's path was lur'd aside,
 To pluck the flow'rs of Pleasure or of Pride ;
 His firm and noble courage scorn'd to bend,
 Or stoop, in danger, to desert a friend ;
 Was plain and true, ne'er scann'd by hostile eyes,
 Disdain'd the mean advantage of disguise ;
 Was pure of hand, whom knaves for idiots hold,
 Despising lustre of ill-gotten gold ;
 But sweet humility in look and mind,
 A soul most noble, and his nature kind ;
 There dwelt the scorn of vice, and pity too
 For those, who did what he disdain'd to do ;
 So gentle and severe, that what was bad
 At once his hatred and his pardon had ;
 Gracious to all, but where his love was due,
 So fast, so friendly, faithful, and so true,

That

That a bold hand as soon might hope to force
 The rolling lights of Heaven as change his course ;
 His breast with sympathetic pity heav'd,
 Who languish'd with disease to be reliev'd,
 And often, tho' they could not give him pay,
 From their affliction would not turn away ;
 But like the good Samaritan we read,
 Provide for them and their complaints with speed.
 Thus, in the steady line of doing good
 He, Enoch like, did daily walk with God ;
 All sciences lov'd, and sought with pleasure
 The arts worthy to be deem'd a treasure ;
 And tho' the footsteps of the ancients trod,
 He look'd through Nature up to Nature's God :
 A mind susceptible, and temper even,
 By mighty Nature and the Stamp of Heaven ;

So

So that some skilful eye might read his race,
 From Jove and Venus, if they'd view'd his face :
 Praise him who list, yet he shall be a debtor,
 For Art ne'er feign'd, or Nature fram'd a better ;
 His virtues were so great that they do raise
 A work to trouble Fame—astonish Praise.

How false is Hope, and how regardless Fate,
 That such a life should have so short a date ;
 Urg'd with just grief, we oft' petition'd Heav'n,
 Pleading the promise to th' Obsequious giv'n,
 Of longer life, for ne'er was pious soul
 More apt t' obey, more worthy to controul :
 Oh ! what pathetic, earnest exhortations
 Did he make use of to his near relations,
 When death approach'd, and time was almost past,
 That they would live as tho' it was their last ;

So

So be prepar'd, as was his situation,
To meet his Lord, and joyful resurrection.

He's gone, he's fled, we no advantage have,
But, step by step, pursue him to the grave.
Ask not why ev'ry face a sadness shrouds,
The setting sun o'ercast us hath with clouds ;
Ask not why the great glory of the sky,
That gilds the stars with heav'nly alchymy,
Which all the world doth lighten with his rays,
Pale was at noon, the monarch of the days ;
The low'ring Heav'ns* may well seem to express
The world's great loss, and their unhappiness,
Behold, how tears flow from the learned hill,
How the bereaved Nine do daily fill
The bosom of the floating air with groans,
And mournful accents which witness their moans :

* Dull, heavy Weather when he died.

Methinks I hear divine Urania say,
 In heav'nly calends be record this day,
 And as it yearly comes, let every one
 Weep o'er his urn, remember him my son,
 Who often rais'd his contemplation high,
 Least Ignorance should live, or Art should die :
 Nought but the fervour of such ardent beams
 Hath power to dry the torrent of these streams.

Are these his merits ? then I will draw near,
 And join you in the sympathetic tear ;
 But as such virtues, which were all divine,
 In him thus center'd, therefore did combine
 To wrest him from the evil hand of time. }
 Then grieve no more, that one so heav'nly shap'd
 The crooked power of trembling age escap'd ;

Rather

Rather since we beheld him not decay,
 But that he vanish'd so intire away ;
 For if we but view his goodness—merit,
 It will appear like some propitious spirit,
 In that terrestrial form frequented here,
 And is not dead, but ceases to appear ;
 Or else the days are so degen'rate grown,
 The Lord his servants is a calling home,
 Before he send among us gospel dearth,
 Or equal evil to afflict this earth ;
 Yet, as it is his righteous dispensation
 We ought to yield a perfect resignation
 Unto his will, and this bereaving stroke,
 Who in his word has left a certain hope
 Beyond the grave, to those who like him die,
 That they shall reign with Christ eternally.

And

And you, his Widow, like a mourning dove,
 Who often weep on recollecting love,
 And his endearing ways, while with you here,
 Yet still remember hope, so banish fear :
 Well-chosen love was never taught to die,
 But with our noble part invades the sky,
 Where the re-union of that God-like grace
 Will both fall down before the Saviour's face ;
 And in such pleasure and transporting lays
 Shall join with Cherubs round his throne, to praise
 The Father, Son and Holy Ghost—those Three,
 Self, undivided, glorious Trinity.

F I N I S.