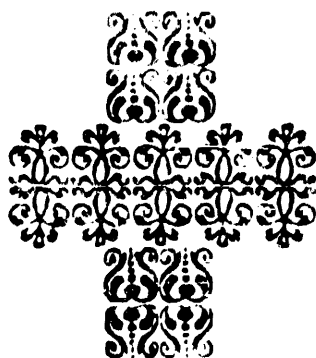


THE

CHRISTIAN RAPTURE.

A

POEM.



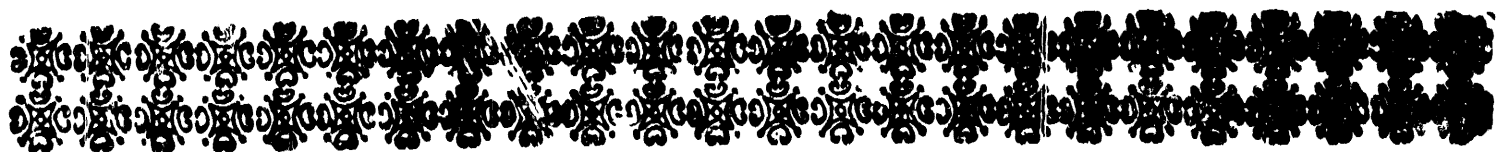
By Andrew C. McLean



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MDCCLXVII.



THE following POEM is brought me by the Reverend Author, Mr. LeMercier, Pastor of the French Church in this Town, with his Desire, that I should introduce it, by a few Lines, into the Publick : It may seem indeed Assuming in me to undertake this, for him, who is one of the Senior Pastors in the Town, and so much my Superior ; But my Honour for my Friend, and my Approbation of his Performance, determine me to a ready Compliance with his Request.

I have my self been much gratified with the beautiful Images and Descriptions ; the well chosen Diction, and happy Numbers, as well as the Devotion of this poetical Performance : And I hope the Reader of Taste and Piety will share with me in these Pleasures.

The Poem was written, as I am informed, some Years ago in French, the native Language of the Author; and more lately translated into English. If any object to its looser Method, it must be remembered, that Nature is best copied in this graceful Negligence, where the warm Devotion of the

P R E F A C E.

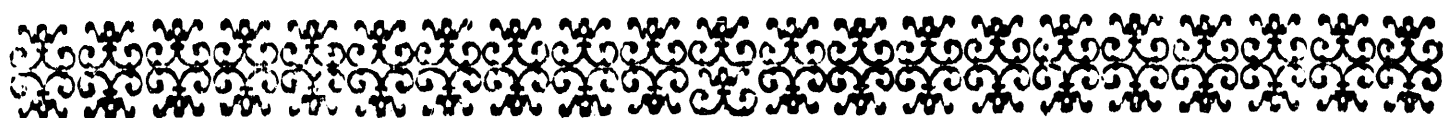
the Heart is designed to be truly represented. The Psalms of David are sacred Instances of this Kind : As Virgil Speech of the Sibyl, and Pope's Messiah shine in the same Beauty among the Pages of Secular Writers.

Not that the Poem is wholly destitute of Method. It represents a Soul examining its Dispositions and Conduct by the exceeding broad Law of G O D ; condemning itself entirely at this Impartial Tribunal ; flying in Anguish and with Hope to the Divine Mercy through the Mediator ; and hence rising to the most glorious Prospects, and elevated Transports. So that the most noble Themes of Christianity are, in a practical Manner, collected and set a glowing.

For the Advantage of the Memory, and also to adapt it for a Tune, it is divided into Stanzas of eight Lines. And it is certain the Cause of Religion and Honour would be better served by the Charms of Musick so employed, than by many of those light and idle Airs which debase the Spinetts of the Fair, in their soft and sprightly Amusements.

I have nothing to add, but my Wishes that this may be an happy Effect of this Publication ; and that the polite Arts of Harmony, and the Muses, may ever be retained on the Side of Piety and Virtue.

M. B Y L E S.



T H E
Christian Rapture.

A
P O E M.

A Heart sincere Thou dost, O LORD, demand;
Th' Upright alone shall in thy Presence
stand.

To gain thy Favour, and thy Face to see,
Thee must we follow, and be pure like Thee:
Justice and Truth and Charity divine
Must grace our Lives, and in our Actions shine :
Each Word we speak, each Thought, each Breath
we draw
Must be submissive to thy sacred Law.

Thy

The Christian Rapture.

Thy sacred Law! from which more Transport flows
 Than all the Pleasures the wide World bestows;
 This to the Soul can solid Joys impart,
 The Mind enlightens, and elates the Heart:
 But I unhappy in my Members feel
 A Law rebellious to thy sacred Will;
 Carnal and violent in my Breast it reigns,
 And th' Understanding's juster Light disdains.

Pride, and vain Ign'rance, and a numerous Throng
 Of dreadful Lusts have rag'd within me long.
 My Soul defil'd, and (for its Crimes) abhorr'd,
 Amaz'd I see, by Heav'n's offended LORD.
 O Thought! What Pangs, what Agonies I feel!
 How Conscience tears me with its Whips of Steel!
 What keen Remorse devours my Soul within,
 By Heav'n commission'd to pursue our Sin?

Thy Goodness, Lord! beyond the Skies extends,
 It knows no Limits, and all Thought transcends.
 Do Thou (for sure thou can'st) the Storms controul,
 And still the Tumults of my troubled Soul.

Tho'

'Tho' Conscience stings, tho' Passions wild as Flame,
With Woes unnumber'd rack this brittle Frame ;
One Word from Thee shall wish'd-for Peace restore,
Passions subside, and Conscience stings no more.

Let then thy Grace, which in thy SON appears,
Forgive my Sins, the Cause of all my Fears.
In me, made free from ev'ry guilty Stain,
Come, HOLY SPIRIT, and resistless reign ;
Lead me to Wisdom, turn'd from Folly's Road,
And from Rebellion, to the Fear of GOD.
Speak but the Word, the Winds and Waves shall fall,
Shall cease their Fury, and obey thy Call.

O GOD ! my Heart to thine Obedience turn,
And let my Breast with pure Affection burn.
Whate'er offends thy heav'nly MAJESTY,
The World shall see me, conscientious, flee.
As the High Priest alone thou did'st permit
To enter in thy Temple's holiest Seat,
So thy Laws only shall my Thoughts employ,
From thence alone shall spring my constant Joy.
Freed

4 *The Christian Rapture.*

Freed thus from filthy Lufts imperious Sway,
My faithful Soul shall Thee alone obey.
Give me to taste those boundless Pleasures, LORD,
That swell the Breasts of those that keep thy Word,
Those Draughts of heav'nly Rapture let me feel
Thy Precepts on the faithful Heart distill.
With what a Relish do they suck those Springs,
Whose Souls are fix'd on everlasting Things !

Unhappy me ! How longs my Soul to go,
Whence rise these Springs, and where these Waters
 flow.

Tir'd with the Chace, and scorch'd with noon-tide
 Beams,

So pants the weary Stag for cooling Streams.
While in this Vale of Miseries we live,
We all these Pleasures insincere receive.
Heav'n is the Place,---Thou, GOD, who'rt all in all,
O take us up and burn this worthless Ball.

Thou art the only Source of real Bliss :
If Peace we have, 'tis Thou that giv'st that Peace.

GOD

God can be nor unhappy, nor more blest,
Since all Perfections shine in him confest.
'Tis only for ourselves, if we do good,
And if we're impious, still Thou liv'st THE GOD.
When shall we, chang'd into thine Image, shine,
(Blest State!) immortal, like Thyself, divine?

When, gracious FATHER, shall we see those Joys,
Those Joys for ever veil'd from human Eyes?
Those Sounds ineffable, when shall we hear,
Those Sounds! which ne'er yet pierc'd the mortal Ear?
What dazzling Splendor! what amazing Height!
Imagination faints beneath the Weight.
To these unbounded Joys my Wishes rise;
My Breast dilates, and burns to gain the Skies.

Dear LORD, ! I feel, I feel those Joys impart
Immortal Love to this exulting Heart.
Firm Faith and Hope thro' all my Bosom glow,
Empires I scorn, nor taste one Joy below.
E'en now I seem to tread the heav'nly Road,
By Faith I see HIM, and adore the GOD.

What more than Transport ! What unknown Delight
Thrills in each Vein, at this thrice glorious Sight !

JESUS the GOD ! (O wonderful to tell !)
With wretched Mortals, humbly deigns to dwell ;
The New *Jerusalem* stands in full Light,
And all its Charms attract my eager Sight.
Hark ! his glad Saints he bids dismiss each Fear.
See ! from each Eye he wipes the falling Tear.
While, wretched Mortals ! on this Globe we dwell,
For one true Joy a Thousand Grievs we feel.

The Realms of Light, and only those, can show
The Peace we seek, but seek in vain below.
There fright no Terrors, there afflict no Pains ;
Pleasures sincere, and Joy eternal reigns !
This is the City of th' Almighty King,
Of Bliss immense the 'unexhausted Spring,
Surpassing Nature, join'd to perfect Art,
And endless Rapture gladdens all the Heart.

Ten Thousand Glories o'er the Pavement play ;
And ev'ry Stone reflects the gilded Day.

The Christian Rapture.

7

Twelve beamy Gates in vary'd Lustre turn,
And all around unnumber'd Jewels burn.
On their tall Tops imperial Diamonds blaze ;
Bencath, the Topaz shoots its yellow Rays.
O beauteous Glory, O divinely bright !
It beams too fiercely for the mortal Sight !

There shine no Temples, rais'd aloft in Air :
God and the LAMB are all the Temple there.
No rising Sun there sheds the rosy Light ;
No Moon there dimly gleams along the Night.
God and the LAMB diffuse the smiling Day :
From their Refulgence darts the heavenly Ray.
The ravish'd Nations see the Splendor shine,
They bow and own the Glory all Divine.

The proudest Monarch of this earthly Ball
Salutes THEE, sacred THREE, the LORD of all.
Each his inferior Crown and Purple State
Eager brings in, and lays them at thy Feet.
Fearless of any bold, invasive Hand
Their Gates for ever wide unfolded stand.
Fearless of Night--- None visits that Abode
Dispell'd for ever by the Face of God.

Al-

8 *The Christian Rapture.*

Almighty God, I see from thy bright Throne
And from the LAMB's the chrystal Currents run.
Eternal Source ! that does such Love display
And glads all Heav'n with Deluges of Day.
The perfect Spirits quaff these Streams of Bliss,
Secure of Life and of immortal Peace.
Fast by a Tree, full water'd from this Stream
Spreads its fair Boughs : *The Tree of Life* its Name.

Celestial Tree ! whose healing Fruits impart
Unfading Life and Vigor to the Heart,
Whose Fruits have, from the Nations chas'd the Night,
And o'er their Eyes diffus'd the heav'nly Light.
Happy, thrice happy they ! no more they hear
The Curse of God sound dreadful in their Ear.
Fair Peace and Holineſs together join,
And in their Souls shall never cease to shine.

Those gen'rous Souls who have by JESUS' Force
Fought the good Fight, and finish'd well their Course,
Seal'd with his Name, thro' an immortal Life
Shall bless the Banners, and adore the Chief.

Shall

The Christian Rapture.

Shall see the Light'ning playing round his Face,
Yet still shall live amidst the dreadful Blaze.
O happy ! Can your Wishes higher rise !
Blest by the Father of this Globe and Skies !

This mighty LORD confesses you his Sons,
And gives, indulgent, undecaying Crowns.
Live, reign for ever with the SAVIOUR GOD,
And own the Blessings springing from his Blood.
Before the World was on its Basis rear'd,
This was for you, and only you, prepar'd.
No *Sinai* there, GOD's Terrors to display,
No rushing Light'nings flash devouring Day.

There, God propitious, shows his gentle Face,
There all is Love, and all attractive Grace.
Thick Clouds at present, veil from us his Throne,
To *Moses* self not half his Glory shone.
Not so, in Heav'n his Goodness he confines,
'Tis there the GODHEAD in full Lustre shines.
When JESUS in this sinful World abode
His human Nature veil'd the hidden GOD.

The Christian Rapture.

So here whilst we converse with Things of Sense,
Thou fainter Fires, blest'd Spirit, dost dispense
To Christian Souls. Above and only there,
The Flames burn strongly, and divinely clear.
GOD there, not dimly shadow'd from a Glass,
The Saints shall see, but clearly Face to Face.
There shall they shine, as when the rising Ray
O'er the gl' Ether paints the golden Day.

Me, Gracious GOD, thou hast been pleas'd to show
The Land where Floods of Milk and Honey flow.
Oh ! I have seen, dear LORD the promis'd Land
Where Joys unnumber'd bloom without an End.
My GOD ! Let not my Sins against me rise,
(How vast the Sum !) and barr me from the Skies.
No Sin shall e'er pollute the blest Abode,
Abhorr'd for ever by a righteous GOD.

He, who thro' ev'ry changing Part of Life
Resists each Lust, and bold maintains the Strife,
This Man, and only this, shall find his Name
Writ in the living Volumes of the LAMB.

And

The Christian Rapture. //

And since 'tis Death must bring me to the Place,
Where in full Glory thou unveil'st thy Face,
O thence, dear LORD ! one Drop of Comfort pour
To cheer my Bosom in that gloomy Hour.

Let me, triumphant, with my latest Breath,
Defy the Grave, and mock the Pangs of Death.
To me, O Grave ! no Dread thy Conquests bring ;
O Death ! thou boastest but a pointle^d thing.
JESUS, I see in more inviting Charms :
Come, my dear SAVIOUR, take me to thy Arms ;
While here below I dwell confin'd in Clay,
I'll wait, my GOD ! with Patience for that Day.

All sing thy Praises, and with Reverence meet,
Approach thy Throne, and lay them at thy Feet.

Thrice holy LORD, of Kings the Almighty KING,
Nature, and Grace, and Glory from Thee ^{spring}.

This beauteous All, rais'd by thy pow'rful Hand,
Obsequious still obeys thy great Command,

To Thee, high Sovereign of this World and Heav'n,
All Honour, Glory, Majesty, be giv'n.

A M E N.