

**Classic Poetry Series**

# **Benjamin Tompson**

**- poems -**

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## **Benjamin Tompson (1642 - 1714)**

Born at Braintree in 1640, graduated at Harvard in 1662.

Among the first native-born Anglo-American poets, Tompson was born into a family of zealous Puritans. He became a schoolmaster for several towns around Boston, his most famous pupil being Cotton Mather. Tompson's fame as a poet arose from his volume *New England's Crisis* (1676) and its revision *New England's Tears* (London, 1676), a verse epic treating the war with the Algonkian Confederation during the 1670s as a test of the faith of the elect in New England.

This poet's best vein is satiric,—his favorite organ being the rhymed pentameter couplet, with a flow, a vigor, and an edge obviously caught from the contemporaneous verse of John Dryden. He has the partisanship, the exaggeration, the choleric injustice, that are common in satire; and like other satirists, failing to note the moral perspectives of history, he utters over again the stale and easy lie, wherein the past is held up as wiser and holier than the present. Though New England has had a life but little more than fifty years long, the poet sees within it the tokens of a hurrying degeneracy, in customs, in morals, in valor, in piety.

Tompson's tombstone at Roxbury informs us, was a "learned schoolmaster and physician and the renowned poet of New England," and is "mortuus sed immortalis." His chief production, *New England's Crises*, is a formal attempt at an epic on King Philip's War. The prologue pictures early society in New England and recounts the decadence in manners and morals that has brought about the crisis,—the war as God's punishment. The six hundred and fifty lines of pentameter couplets are somewhat more polished than those of the poet's contemporaries, and might suggest the influence of Dryden if there were any external reason for supposing that the Restoration poets gained admission to early New England. Tompson's classical allusions, part of his epic attempt, are in amusing contrast to his rugged and homely diction, but his poem as a whole has at least the virtue of simplicity, and is interesting as the first of a long line of narratives in verse which recount the events of the wars fought on American soil.

## A Neighbours Tears

O heighth! o Depthe! upon my bended knees  
Who dare Expound these Wondrous Mysteries:  
That this rare plant is cropt before mine Eyes  
(Meer Shadow) left to write her Elegies.  
Pray what brave Artist here can Understand  
What one intends that takes a pen in hand?  
Twas t'other day a place I visited  
Where stands a palme, one limb where of is dead.  
A bow'r which many years Thousands have shaded  
By whome one Church was built: and Willard aided  
Seeking the plat of Immortality  
I saw no place secure but some must die  
Treading that way their Ancient fathers did  
Whose faces are, but Vertues can't be hid.  
I saw this pretty Lamb, but t'other day,  
With a small flock of Doves, Just in my Way.  
What New made Creature's this so bright 'thought I  
Ah! pittty tis such prettiness should die.  
With rare alliances on Every side  
Had old physitians liv'd She ne're had died.  
Must then the Rulers of this Worlds Affairs  
By Providence be brought to us in tears.  
Lord keep their Eyes from such smart Judgments free  
Such mournfull Sights are more becoming mee.  
Pleasant Rebecka, heres to thee a Tear  
Hugg my sweet Mary if you chance to see her  
Had you giv'n warning ere you pleasd to Die,  
You might have had a neater Elegy.

Benjamin Tompson

## Marlburyes Fate

When Londons fatal bills were blown abroad  
And few but Specters travel'd on the road,  
Not towns but men in the black bill enrol'd  
Were in Gazetts by Typographers sold:  
But our Gazetts without Errataes must  
Report the plague of towns reduct to dust:  
And feavers formerly to tenants sent  
Arrest the timbers of the tenement.  
Ere the late ruines of old Groton's cold,  
Of Marlbury's peracute disease we're told.  
The feet of such who neighbouring dwellings urnd  
Unto her ashes, not her doors return'd  
And what remaind of tears as yet unspent  
Are to its final gasps a tribute lent.  
If painter overtrack my pen let him  
An olive colour mix these elves to trim:  
Of such an hue let many thousand thieves  
Be drawn like Scare-crows clad with oaken leaves,  
Exhausted of their verdant life and blown  
From place to place without an home to own.  
Draw Devils like themselves, upon their cheeks  
The banks for grease and mud, a place for leeks.  
Whose locks Medusaes snakes, do ropes resemble,  
And ghostly looks would make Achilles tremble.  
Limm them besmear'd with Christian Bloud and oild  
With fat out of white humane bodyes boil'd.  
Draw them with clubs like maules and full of stains,  
Like Vulcans anvilling New-Englands brains.  
Let round be gloomy forrests with crag'd rocks  
Where like to castles they may hide their flocks,  
Till oppertunity their cautious friend  
Shall jogge them fiery worship to attend.  
Shew them like serpents in an avious path  
Seeking to sow the fire-brands of their wrath.  
Most like AEneas in his cloak of mist,  
Who undiscover'd move where ere they list  
Cupid they tell us hath too sorts of darts.  
One sharp and one obtuse, one causing wounds,  
One piercing deep the other dull rebounds,  
But we feel none but such as drill our hearts.  
From Indian sheaves which to their shoulders cling,  
Upon the word they quickly feel the string.  
Let earth be made a screen to hide our woe  
From Heavens Monarch and his Ladyes too;  
And least our Jealousie think they partake,  
For the red stage with clouds a curtain make.  
Let dogs be gag'd and every quickning sound  
Be charm'd to silence, here and there all round  
The town to suffer, from a thousand holes  
Let crawl these fiends with brands and fired poles,  
Paint here the house and there the barn on fire,  
With holocausts ascending in a spire.

Here granaries, yonder the Churches smoak  
Which vengeance on the actors doth invoke.  
Let Morpheus with his leaden keyes have bound  
In feather-beds some, some upon the ground,  
That none may burst his drowsie shackles till  
The brutish pagans have obtain'd their will,  
And Vulcan files them off then Zeuxis paint  
The phrenzy glances of the sinking saint.  
Draw there the Pastor for his bible crying,  
The souldier for his sword, The Glutton frying  
With streams of glory-fat, the thin-jaw'd Miser  
Oh had I given this I had been wiser.  
Let here the Mother seem a statue turn'd  
At the sad object of her bowels burn'd.  
Let the unstable weakling in belief  
Be mounting Ashurs horses for relief.  
Let the half Convert seem suspended twixt  
The dens of darkness, and the Planets fixt,  
Ready to quit his hold, and yet hold fast  
By the great Atlas of the Heavens vast.  
Paint Papists muttering ore their apish beads  
Whome the blind follow while the blind man leads.  
Let Ataxy be mounted on a throne  
Imposing her Commands on every one,  
A many-headed monster without eyes  
To see the wayes which wont to make men wise.  
Give her a thousand tongues with wings and hands  
To be ubiquitary in Commands,  
But let the concave of her skull appear  
Clean washt and empty quite of all but fear,  
One she bids flee, another stay, a third  
She bids betake him to his rusty sword,  
This to his treasure, th'other to his knees,  
Some counsels she to fry and some to freeze,  
These to the garison, those to the road,  
Some to run empty, some to take their load:  
Thus while confusion most mens hearts divide  
Fire doth their small exchecquer soon decide.  
Thus all things seeming ope or secret foes,  
An Infant may grow old before a close,  
But yet my hopes abide in perfect strength.  
New England will be prosperous once at length.

Benjamin Tompson

## New-Englands Crisis

IN seventy five the Critick of our years  
Commenc'd our war with Phillip and his peers.  
Whither the sun in Leo had inspir'd  
A feav'rish heat, and Pagan spirits fir'd?  
Whither some Romish Agent hatcht the plot?  
Or whither they themselves? appeareth not.  
Whither our infant thrivings did invite?  
Or whither to our lands pretended right?  
Is hard to say; but Indian spirits need  
No grounds but lust to make a Christian bleed.

And here methinks I see this greazy Lout  
With all his pagan slaves coil'd round about,  
Assuming all the majesty his throne  
Of rotten stump, or of the rugged stone  
Could yield; casting some bacon-rine-like looks,  
Enough to fright a Student from his books,  
Thus treat his peers, and next to them his Commons,  
Kennel'd together all without a summons.  
"My friends, our Fathers were not half so wise  
As we our selves who see with younger eyes.  
They sel our land to english man who teach  
Our nation all so fast to pray and preach:  
Of all our countrey they enjoy the best,  
And quickly they intend to have the rest.  
This no wunnegin, so big matchit law,  
Which our old fathers fathers never saw.  
These english make and we must keep them too,  
Which is too hard for them or us to doe,  
We drink we so big whipt, but english they  
Go sneep, no more, or else a little pay.  
Me meddle Squaw me hang'd, our fathers kept  
What Squaws they would whither they wakt or slept.  
Now if you'le fight Ile get you english coats,  
And wine to drink out of their Captains throats.  
The richest merchants houses shall be ours,  
Wee'l ly no more on matts or dwell in bowers  
Wee'l have their silken wives take they our Squaws,  
They shall be whipt by virtue of our laws.  
If ere we strike tis now before they swell  
To greater swarmes then we know how to quell.  
This my resolve, let neighbouring Sachems know,  
And every one that hath club, gun or bow."  
This was assented to, and for a close  
He strokt his smutty beard and curst his foes.  
This counsel lightning like their tribes invade,  
And something like a muster's quickly made,  
A ragged regiment, a naked swarm,  
Whome hopes of booty doth with courage arm,  
Set forthwith bloody hearts, the first they meet  
Of men or beasts they butcher at their feet.

They round our skirts, they pare, they fleece they kil,  
 And to our bordering towns do what they will.  
 Poor Hovills (better far then Caesars court  
 In the experience of the meaner sort)  
 Receive from them their doom next execution,  
 By flames reduc'd to horror and confusion:  
 Here might be seen the smoking funeral piles  
 Of wildred towns pitcht distant many miles.  
 Here might be seen the infant from the breast  
 Snatcht by a pagan hand to lasting rest:  
 The mother Rachel-like shrieks out my child  
 She wrings her hands and raves as she were wild.  
 The brutish wolves suppress her anxious moan  
 By cruelties more deadly of her own.  
 Will she or nill the chastest turtle must  
 Tast of the pangs of their unbridled lust.  
 From farmes to farmes, from towns to towns they post,  
 They strip, they bind, they ravish, flea and roast.  
 The beasts which wont their masters crib to know,  
 Over the ashes of their shelters low.  
 What the inexorable flames doe spare  
 More cruel Heathen lug away for fare.  
 These tidings ebbing from the outward parts  
 Makes trades-men cast aside their wonted Arts  
 And study armes: the craving merchants plot  
 Not to augment but keep what they have got.  
 And every soul which hath but common sence  
 Thinks it the time to make a just defence.  
 Alarums every where resound in streets,  
 From West sad tidings with the Eastern meets.  
 Our common fathers in their Councils close  
 A martial treaty with the pagan foes,  
 All answers center here that fire and sword  
 Must make their Sachem universal Lord.  
 This armes the english with a resolution  
 To give the vaporeing Scab a retribution.  
 Heav'ns they consult by prayer, the best design  
 A furious foe to quel or undermine.  
 RESOLV'D that from the Massachusets bands  
 Be prest on service some Herculean hands  
 And certainly he wel deserv'd a jerke  
 That slipt the Collar from so good a work.  
 Some Volunteers, some by compulsion goe  
 To range the hideous forrest for a foe.  
 The tender Mother now's all bowels grown,  
 Clings to her son as if they'd melt in one.  
 Wives claspe about their husbands as the vine  
 Huggs the fair elm, while tears burst out like wine.  
 The new-sprung love in many a virgin heart  
 Swels to a mountain when the lovers part.  
 Nephews and kindred turn all springs of tears,  
 Their hearts are so surpriz'd with panick fears.

But dolefull shrieks of captives summon forth  
Our walking castles, men of noted worth,  
Made all of life, each Captain was a Mars,  
His name too strong to stand on waterish verse:  
Due praise I leave to some poetick hand  
Whose pen and witts are better at command.  
Methinks I see the Trojan-horse burst ope,  
And such rush forth as might with giants cope:  
These first the natives treachery felt, too fierce  
For any but eye-witness to rehearse.  
Yet sundry times in places where they came  
Upon the Indian skins they carv'd their name.  
The trees stood Centinels and bullets flew  
From every bush (a shelter for their crew)  
Hence came our wounds and deaths from every side  
While skulking enemies squat undiscr'd,  
That every stump shot like a musketeer,  
And bowes with arrows every tree did bear  
The swamps were Courts of Guard, thither retir'd  
The stragling blew-coats when their guns were fir'd,  
In dark Meanders, and these winding groves,  
Where Beares and panthers with their Monarch moves  
These far more cruel slily hidden lay,  
Expecting english men to move that way.  
One party lets them slip, the other greets  
Them with the next thing to their winding-sheets;  
Most fall, the rest thus startled back return,  
And from their by past foes receive an urn.  
Here fel a Captain, to be nam'd with tears,  
Who for his Courage left not many peers,  
With many more who scarce a number left  
To tell how treacherously they were bereft.  
This flusht the pagan courage, now they think  
The victory theirs, not lacking meat or drink.  
The ranging wolves find here and there a prey,  
And having fil'd their paunch they run away  
By their Hosts light, the thanks which they return  
Is to lead Captives and their taverns burn.  
Many whose thrift had stor'd for after use  
Sustain their wicked plunder and abuse.  
Poor people spying an unwonted light,  
Fearing a Martyrdom, in sudden fright  
Leap to the door to fly, but all in vain,  
They are surrounded with a pagan train;  
Their first salute is death, which if they shun  
Some are condemn'd the Gauntelet to run;  
Death would a mercy prove to such as those  
Who feel the rigour of such hellish foes.  
Posts daily on their Pegasean Steeds  
Bring sad reports of worse then Nero's deeds,  
Such brutish Murthers as would paper stain  
Not to be heard in a Domitians Reign.

The field which nature hid is common laid,  
 And Mothers bodies ript for lack of aid.  
 The secret Cabinets which nature meant  
 To hide her master piece is open rent,  
 The half formd Infant there receives a death  
 Before it sees the light or draws its breath,  
 Many hot welcomes from the natives arms  
 Hid in their sculking holes many alarms  
 Our brethren had, and weary weary trants,  
 Sometimes in melting heats and pinching wants:  
 Sometimes the clouds with sympathizing tears  
 Ready to burst discharg'd about their ears:  
 Sometimes on craggy hills, anon in bogs  
 And miery swamps better befitting hogs,  
 And after tedious Marches little boast  
 Is to be heard of stewd or bakt or roast,  
 Their beds are hurdles, open house they keep  
 Through shady boughs the stars upon them peep,  
 Their chrystal drink drawn from the mothers breast  
 Disposes not to mirth but sleep and rest.  
 Thus many dayes and weeks, some months run out  
 To find and quell the vagabonding rout,  
 Who like enchanted Castles fair appear,  
 But all is vanisht if you come but near,  
 Just so we might the Pagan Archers track  
 With towns and merchandize upon their back;  
 And thousands in the South who settled down  
 To all the points and winds are quickly blown.  
 At many meetings of their fleeting crew,  
 From whom like haile arrows and bullets flew:  
 The English courage with whole swarms dispute,  
 Hundreds they hack in pieces in pursuit.  
 Sed haud impunè, English sides do feel  
 As well as tawny skins the lead and steel  
 And some such gallant Sparks by bullets fell,  
 As might have curst the powder back to Hell:  
 Had only Swords these skirmishes decided  
 All Pagan Sculls had been long since divided.  
 The lingring war out-lives the Summer sun,  
 Who hence departs hoping it might be done,  
 Ere his return at Spring but ah hee'l find  
 The Sword still drawn, men of unchanged mind.  
 Cold winter now nibbles at hands and toes  
 And shrewdly pinches both our friends and foes.  
 Fierce Boreas whips the Pagan tribe together  
 Advising them to fit for foes and weather:  
 The axe which late had tasted Christian bloud  
 Now sets its steely teeth to feast on wood.  
 The forests suffer now, by waight constrein'd  
 To kiss the earth with souldiers lately brain'd.  
 The lofty oakes and ash doe wagge the head  
 To see so many of their neighbours dead;

Their fallen carcasses are caried thence  
 To stand our enemies in their defence.  
 Their Myrmidons inclos'd with clefts of trees  
 Are busie like the ants or nimble bees:  
 And first they limber poles fix in the ground,  
 In figure of the heavens convex: all round  
 They draw their arras-matts and skins of beasts,  
 And under these the Elves do make their nests.  
 Rome took more time to grow then twice six hours,  
 But half that time will serve for indian bowers.  
 A Citty shall be rear'd in one dayes space  
 As shall an hundred english men out-face.  
 Canonicus precincts there swarmes unite,  
 Rather to keep a winter guard then fight.  
 A dern and dismal swamp some Scout had found  
 Whose bosome was a spot of rising ground  
 Hedg'd up with mighty oakes, maples and ashes,  
 Nurst up with springs, quick boggs and miery plashes,  
 A place which nature coyn'd on very nonce  
 For tygers not for men to be a sconce.  
 Twas here these Monsters shapt and fac'd like men  
 Took up there Rendezvouz and brumal den,  
 Deeming the depth of snow, hail, frost and ice  
 Would make our Infantry more tame and wise  
 Then by forsaking beds and loving wives,  
 Meerly for indian skins to hazzard lives:  
 These hopes had something calm'd the boiling passion  
 Of this incorrigible warlike nation.  
 During this short Parenthesis of peace  
 Our forces found, but left him not at ease.  
 Here english valour most illustrious shone,  
 Finding their numbers ten times ten to one.  
 A shower of leaden hail our captains feel  
 Which made the bravest blades among us reel.  
 Like to some ant-hill newly spurn'd abroad,  
 Where each takes heels and bears away his load:  
 Instead of plate and jewels, indian trays  
 With baskets up they snatch and run their wayes.  
 Sundry the flames arrest and some the blade,  
 By bullets heaps on heaps of Indians laid.  
 The Flames like lightening in their narrow streets  
 Dart in the face of every one it meets.  
 Here might be heard an hideous indian cry,  
 Of wounded ones who in the Wigwams fry.  
 Had we been Canibals here might we feast  
 On brave Westphalia gammons ready drest.  
 The tauny hue is Ethiopick made  
 Of such on whome Vulcan his clutches laid.  
 There fate was sudden, our advantage great  
 To give them once for all a grand defeat;  
 But tedious travell had so cramp't our toes  
 It was too hard a task to chase the foes.

Distinctness in the numbers of the slain,  
Or the account of Pagans which remain  
Are both uncertain, losses of our own  
Are too too sadly felt, too sadly known.  
War digs a common grave for friends and foes,  
Captains in with the common souldier throws.  
Six of our Leaders in the first assault  
Crave readmission to their Mothers Vault  
Who had they fell in antient Homers dayes  
Had been enrol'd with Hecatombs of praise.  
As clouds disperst, the natives troops divide,  
And like the streames along the thickets glide.  
Some breathing time we had, and short God knowes  
But new alarums from recruited foes  
Bounce at our eares, the mounting clouds of smoak  
From martyr'd townes the heav'ns for aid invoke:  
Churches, barns, houses with most ponderous things  
Made volatile fly ore the land with wings.  
Hundreds of cattle now they sacrifice  
For aiery spirits up to gormandize;  
And to the Molech of their hellish guts,  
Which craves the flesh in gross, their ale in butts.  
Lancaster, Medfield, Mendon wildred Groton,  
With many Villages by me not thought on  
Dy in their youth by fire that usefull foe,  
Which this grand cheat the world will overflow.  
The wandring Priest to every one he meets  
Preaches his Churches funeral in the streets.  
Sheep from their fold are frighted, Keepers too  
Put to their trumps not knowing what to doe.  
This monster Warre hath hatcht a beauteous dove  
In dogged hearts, of most unfeigned love,  
Fraternal love the livery of a Saint  
Being come in fashion though by sad constraint,  
Which if it thrive and prosper with us long  
Will make New-England forty thousand strong.

But off the Table hand, let this suffice  
As the abridgment of our miseryes.  
If Mildew, Famine, Sword, and fired Townes,  
If Slaughter, Captivating, Deaths and wounds,  
If daily whippings once reform our wayes,  
These all will issue in our Fathers Praise;  
If otherwise, the sword must never rest  
Till all New-Englands Glory it divest.

Benjamin Tompson

## On A Fortification At Boston Begun By Women

A Grand attempt some Amazonian Dames  
Contrive whereby to glorify their names,  
A Ruff for Boston Neck of mud and turfe,  
Reaching from side to side from surfe to surfe,  
Their nimble hands spin up like Christmas pyes,  
Their pastry by degrees on high doth rise.  
The wheel at home counts it an holiday,  
Since while the Mistris worketh it may play.  
A tribe of female hands, but manly hearts  
Forsake at home their pasty-crust and tarts  
To knead the dirt, the samplers down they hurle,  
Their undulating silks they closely furle.  
The pick-axe one as a Commandress holds,  
While t'other at her awkness gently scolds.  
One puffs and sweats, the other mutters why  
Cant you promote your work so fast as I?  
Some dig, some delve, and others hands do feel  
The little waggons weight with single wheel.  
And least some fainting fits the weak surprize,  
They want no sack nor cakes, they are more wise.  
These brave essayes draw forth Male stronger hands  
More like to Dawbers then to Martial bands:  
These do the work, and sturdy bulwarks raise,  
But the beginners well deserve the praise.

Benjamin Tompson

## Remarks On The Bright And Dark Side

But may a Rural Pen try to set forth  
Such a Great Fathers Ancient Grace and worth  
I undertake a no less Arduous Theme  
Then the Old Sages found the Chaldae Dream  
'Tis more then Tythes of a profound respect  
That must be paid such a Melchizedeck  
Oxford this light with tongues and Arts doth trim  
And then his Northern Town doth Challenge him  
His Time and Strength he Center'd there in this  
To do good works, and be what now he is.  
His fulgent Virtues there and learned Strains  
Tall comely Presence, Life unsoil'd with Stains  
Things most on WORTHIES in their Stories writ  
Did him to move in Orbs of Service fitt  
Things more peculiar yet, my muse intend  
Say stranger things then these, so weep and End  
When he forsook first his Oxonian Cell  
Some Scores at once from Popish darkness fell  
So this Reformer studied! rare first fruits!  
Shakeing a Crab-tree thus by hot disputes  
The acid juice by miracle turn'd wine  
And rais'd the Spirits of our young Divine  
Hearers like Doves flock'd with contentios wing  
Who should be first, feed most: most homeward bring  
Laden with honey like Hyblaeen Bees  
They knead it into combs upon their knees.  
Why he from Europes pleasant Garden fled  
In the Next Age will be with horrou said  
Braintree was of this Jewel then possest  
Untill himself he labour'd into Rest  
His Inventory then with Johns was took  
His rough Coat, Girdle with the Sacred Book  
When Reverend Knowles and he sail'd hand in hand  
To Christ, Espousing the Virginian Land  
Upon a ledge of Craggy Rocks near stav'd  
His Bible in his bosome thrusting sav'd  
The Bible, the best cordial of his Heart  
Come floods, come flames (cry'd he) we'l never part  
A constellation of great converts there  
Shone round him and his Heav'nly Glory where  
With a Rare Skill in hearts, this Doctor cou'd  
Steal into them words that should do them good  
His Balsom's from the Tree of Life distill'd  
Hearts cleans'd and heal'd, and with rich comforts fill'd  
But here's the wo! Balsoms which others cur'd  
Would in his Own Turn hardly be endur'd  
Apollyon Owing him a cursed Spleen  
Who an Apollos in the Church had been  
Dreading his Traffick here would be undone  
By Numerous proselites he daily won  
Accus'd him of Imaginary faults  
And push'd him down so into dismal Vaults

Vaults where he kept long Ember weeks of grief  
'Till Heav'n alarm'd sent him in relief  
Then was a Daniel in the Lyons Den  
A man, oh how belov'd of God and men  
By his beds-side an Hebrew sword there lay  
With which at last he drove the Devil away.  
Quaker's too durst not bear his keen replies  
But fearing it half drawn the trembler flies  
Like Lazarus new rais'd from Death appears  
The Saint that had been dead for many years  
Our Nehemiah said, shall such as I  
Desert my flock, and like a Coward fly  
Long had the Churches begg'd the Saints release  
Releas'd at last, he dies in Glorious peace  
The Night is not so long, but phosphors ray  
Approaching Glories doth on high display  
Faith's Eye in him discern'd the Morning Star  
His heart leap'd; Sure the Sun cannot be far  
In Extasies of Joy, he Ravish'd Cries  
Love, Love the Lamb, the Lamb, in whome he dies.

Benjamin Tompson

## The Grammarians Funeral

Eight Parts of Speech this Day wear Mourning Gowns  
Declin'd Verbs, Pronouns, Participles, Nouns.  
And not declined, Adverbs and Conjunctions,  
In Lillies Porch they stand to do their functions.  
With Preposition; but the most affection  
Was still observed in the Interjection.  
The Substantive seeming the limbed best,  
Would set an hand to bear him to his Rest.  
The Adjective with very grief did say,  
Hold me by strength, or I shall faint away.  
The Clouds of Tears did over-cast their faces,  
Yea all were in most lamentable Cases.  
The five Declensions did the Work decline,  
And Told the Pronoun Tu, The work is thine:  
But in this case those have no call to go  
That want the Vocative, and can't say O!  
The Pronouns said that if the Nouns were there,  
There was no need of them, they might them spare:  
But for the sake of Emphasis they would,  
In their Discretion do what ere they could.  
Great honour was confer'd on Conjugations,  
They were to follow next to the Relations.  
Amo did love him best, and Doceo might  
Alledge he was his Glory and Delight.  
But Lego said by me he got his skill,  
And therefore next the Herse I follow will.  
Audio said little, hearing them so hot,  
Yet knew by him much Learning he had got.  
O Verbs the Active were, Or Passive sure,  
Sum to be Neuter could not well endure.  
But this was common to them all to Moan  
Their load of grief they could not soon Depone.  
A doleful Day for Verbs, they look so moody,  
They drove Spectators to a Mournful Study.  
The Verbs irregular, 'twas thought by some,  
Would break no rule, if they were pleas'd to come.  
Gaudeo could not be found; fearing disgrace  
He had with-drawn, sent Maereo in his Place.  
Possum did to the utmost he was able,  
And bore as Stout as if he'd been A Table.  
Volo was willing, Nolo some-what stout,  
But Malo rather chose, not to stand out.  
Possum and Volo wish'd all might afford  
Their help, but had not an Imperative Word.  
Edo from Service would by no means Swerve,  
Rather than fail, he thought the Cakes to Serve.  
Fio was taken in a fit, and said,  
By him a Mournful POEM should be made.  
Fero was willing for to bear a part,  
Altho' he did it with an aking heart.  
Fero excus'd, with grief he was so Torn,  
He could not bear, he needed to be born.

Such Nouns and Verbs as we defective find,  
No Grammar Rule did their attendance bind.  
They were excepted, and exempted hence,  
But Supines, all did blame for negligence.  
Verbs Offspring, Participles hand-in-hand,  
Follow, and by the same direction stand:  
The rest Promiscuously did croud and cumber,  
Such Multitudes of each, they wanted Number.  
Next to the Corpse to make th' attendance even,  
Jove, Mercury, Apollo came from heaven.  
And Virgil, Cato, gods, men, Rivers, Winds,  
With Elegies, Tears, Sighs, came in their kinds.  
Ovid from Pontus hast's Apparrell'd thus,  
In Exile-weeds bringing De Tristibus:  
And Homer sure had been among the Rout,  
But that the Stories say his Eyes were out.  
Queens, Cities, Countries, Islands, Come  
All Trees, Birds, Fishes, and each Word in Um.

What Syntax here can you expect to find?  
Where each one bears such discomposed mind.  
Figures of Diction and Construction,  
Do little: Yet stand sadly looking on.  
That such a Train may in their motion chord,  
Prosodia gives the measure Word for Word.

Benjamin Tompson