

Classic Poetry Series

John Taylor

- poems -

Publication Date:

2004

Publisher:

PoemHunter.Com - The World's Poetry Archive

The Description Of Tyburn

I Have heard sundry men oft times dispute
Of trees, that in one year will twice bear fruit.
But if a man note Tyburn, 'will appear,
That that's a tree that bears twelve times a year.
I muse it should so fruitful be, for why
I understand the root of it is dry,
It bears no leaf, no bloom, or no bud,
The rain that makes it fructify is blood.
I further note, the fruit which it produces,
Doth seldom serve for profitable uses:
Except the skillful Surgeons industry
Do make Dissection of Anatomy.
It blooms, buds, and bears, all three together,
And in one hour, doth live, and die, and wither.
Like Sodom Apples, they are in conceit,
For touched, they turn to dust and ashes straight.
Besides I find this tree hath never been
Like other fruit trees, walled or hedged in,
But in the highway standing many a year,
It never yet was robbed, as I could hear.
The reason is apparent to our eyes,
That what it bears, are dead commodities:
And yet sometimes (such grace to it is given)
The dying fruit is well prepared for heaven,
And many times a man may gather thence
Remorse, devotion, and true penitence.
And from that tree, I think more fools ascend
To that Celestial joy, which shall never end:
I say, more fools from thence to heaven do come,
Than from all Churchyards throughout Christendom.
The reason is, the bodies are all dead,
And all the fools to joy or woe are fled.
Perhaps a week, a day, or two, or three,
Before they in the Churchyards buried be.
But at this Tree, in twinkling of an eye,
The soul and body part immediately,
There death the fatal parting blow doth strike,
And in Churchyards is seldom seen the like.
Besides, they are assistant with the alms
Of peoples charitable prayers, and Psalms,
Which are the wings that lift the hov'ring spirit,
By faith, through grace, true glory to inherit.
Concerning this dead fruit, I noted it,
Instead of paste it's put into a pit,
And laid up carefully in any place,
Yet worm-eaten it grows in little space.
My understanding can by no means frame,
To give this Tyburn fruit a fitter name,
Than Medlers, for I find that great and small,
(To my capacity) are Medlers all.
Some say they are Choked pears, and some again
Do call them Hearty Chokes, but 'tis most plain,

It is a kind of Medler it doth bear,
Or else I think it never would come there.
Moreover where it grows, I find it true,
It often turns the Herb of grace to Rue.
Amongst all Pot-herbs growing on the ground,
Time is the least respected, I have found,
And most abused, and therefore one shall see
No branch or bud of it grow near this Tree:
For 'tis occasion of man's greatest crime,
To turn the use, into abuse, of Time.
When passions are let loose without a bridle,
Then precious Time is turned to Love and Idle:
And that's the chiefest reason I can show,
Why fruit so often doth on Tyburn grow.
There are inferior Gallows which bear
(According to the season) twice a year:
And there's a kind of watrish Tree at Wapping,
Whereas Sea-thieves or Pirates are caught napping:
But Tyburn doth deserve before them all
The title and addition capital,
Of Arch or great Grand Gallows of our Land,
Whilst all the rest like ragged Lackeys stand;
It hath (like Luna) full, and change, and quarters,
It (like a Merchant) monthly trucks and barthers;
But all the other Gallows are fit,
Like Chapman, or poor Peddlers onto it.
Thus Jails and Jailers being here explained,
How both are good, and for good use ordained:
All sorts of Hanging which I could surmise,
I likewise have described before your eyes;
And further having showed what Tyburn is,
With many more inferior Gallows,
My pen from paper with this Prayer doth part,
God bless all people from their sins depart.

John Taylor

The Prayse Of The Needle

To all dispersed sorts of arts and trades
I write the needles prayse (that never fades).
So long as children shall be got or borne,
So long as garments shall be made or worne,
So long as hemp or flax, or sheep shall bear
Their linen woolen fleeces yeare by yeare,
So long as silk-wormes, with exhausted spoile,
Of their own entrails for man's gaine shall toyle,
Yea till the world be quite dissolv'd and past,
So long at least, the needles' use shall last.

John Taylor