

Classic Poetry Series

Sir William Strode

- poems -

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Kisses

My love and I for kisses played;
She would keep stakes: I was content;
But when I won she would be paid;
This made me ask her what she meant.
Pray, since I see (quoth she) "your wrangling vain,
Take your kisses; give me mine again."

Sir William Strode

Melancholy

Hence, all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights
Wherein you spend your folly!
There's nought in this life sweet,
If man were wise to see 't,
But only melancholy,
Oh, sweetest melancholy!

Sir William Strode

On Chloris Walking in the Snow

I saw fair Chloris walk alone,
Whilst feather'd rain came softly down,
And Jove descended from his tower
To court her in a silver shower.
The wanton snow flew on her breast
Like little birds unto their nest;
But overcome with whiteness there,
For grief it thaw'd into a tear;
Thence falling on her garment's hem,
To deck her, froze into a gem.

Sir William Strode

On Westwall Downes

When Westwall Downes I gan to tread,
Where cleanly wynds the greene did sweepe,
Methought a landskip there was spread,
Here a bush and there a sheepe:

The pleated wrinkles of the face
Of wave-swolne earth did lend such grace,
As shadowings in Imag'ry
Which both deceive and please the eye.

The sheep sometymes did tread the maze
By often wynding in and in,
And sometymes round about they trace
Which mylkmaydes call a Fairie ring:

Such semicircles have they runne,
Such lynes across so trymly spunne
That sheppearde learne whenere they please
A new Geometry with ease.

The slender food upon the downe
Is allwayes even, allwayes bare,
Which neither spring nor winter's frowne
Can ought improve or ought impayre:

Such is the barren Eunuches chynne,
Which thus doth evermore begynne
With tender downes to be orecast
Which never comes to haire at last.

Here and there twoe hilly crests
Amiddst them hugg a pleasant greene,
And these are like twoe swelling breasts
That close a tender fall betweene.

Here would I sleepe, or read, or pray
From early morn till flight of day:
But harke! a sheepe-bell calls mee upp,
Like Oxford colledge bells, to supp.

Sir William Strode