

Renascence Editions

Return to
[Renascence Editions](#)

Persian Eclogues.

William Collins.

Note on the e-text: this [Renascence Edition](#) was transcribed in April 2007 by Sandra Jones from the Clarendon Press type facsimile edition of 1925.

"This reprint of *Persian Eclogues* follows Mr. Thomas J. Wise's copy of the rare original. The misprints on the title-page, *tantas* and *delectis*, have been corrected. For the autograph corrections made by Collins in the Dyce copy of the first edition, and for changes introduced into the text in *Oriental Eclogues* (J. Payne, 1757, see the edition of Collins in the *Oxford Poets*, pp. 313-314."

Content unique to this presentation is copyright © 2007 The University of Oregon. For nonprofit and educational uses only. Send comments and corrections to the publisher, [rbear\[at\]uoregon.edu](mailto:rbear@uoregon.edu)

PERSIAN ECLOGUES.

Written originally for the
ENTERTAINMENT
OF THE

Ladies of TAURIS.

And now first translated, &c.

*Quod si non hìc tantus fructus ostenderetur,
& si ex his studiis delectatio sola pete-
retur; tamen, ut opinor, hanc animi
remissionem humanissimam
ac liberalissi-mam judicaretis.*

Cic. pro Arch. Poeta.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. ROBERTS, in *Warwick-Lane*. 1742

(Price Six-pence.)

T H E P R E F A C E.

I*T is with the Writings of Mankind, in some Measure, as with their Complexi-ons or their Dress, each Nation hath a Peculiarity in all these, to distinguish it from the rest of the World.*

The Gravity of the Spaniard, and the Levity of the Frenchman, are as evident in all their Productions as in their Persons themselves; and the Stile of my Countrymen is as naturally Strong and Nervous, as that of an Arabian or Persian is rich and figurative.

There is an Elegancy and Wildness of Thought which recommends all their Compositions; and our Genius's are as much too cold for the Entertainment of such Sentiments, as our Climate is for their Fruits and Spices. If any of these Beauties are to be found in the following Eclogues, I hope my Reader will consider them as an

Argument of their being Original. I received them at the Hands of a Merchant, who had made it his Business to enrich himself with the Learning, as well as the Silks and Carpets of the Persians. The little Information I could gather concerning their Author, was, That his Name was Mahamed, and that he was a Native of Tauris.

It was in that City that he died of a Distemper fatal in those Parts, whilst he was engag'd in celebrating the Victories of his favourite Monarch, the Great Abbas. As to the Eclogues themselves, they give a very just View of the Miseries, and Inconveniencies, as well as the Felicities that attend one of the finest Countries in the East.

The Time of the Writing them was probably in the Beginning of Sha Sultan Hosseyn's Reign, the Successor of Sefi or Solyman the Second.

Whatever Defects, as, I doubt not, there will be many, fall under the Reader's Observation, I hope his Candour will incline him to make the following Reflections:

That the Works of Orientals contain many Peculiarities, and that thro' Defect of Language few European Translators can do them Justice.

ECLOGUE the FIRST.

S E L I M; *or, the Shepherd's Moral.*

S C E N E, *a Valley near Bagdat.*

T I M E, *the MORNING.*

YE *Persian* Maids, attend your Poet's Lays,

And hear how Shepherds pass their golden Days:

Not all are blest, whom Fortune's Hand sustains

With Wealth in Courts, nor all that haunt the Plains:

Well may your Hearts believe the Truths I tell,

'Tis Virtue makes the Bliss, where'er we dwell.

Thus *Selim* sung ; by sacred Truth inspir'd;

No Praise the Youth, but her's alone desir'd:

Wise in himself, his meaning Songs convey'd

Informing Morals to the Shepherd Maid,
Or taught the Swains that surest Bliss to find,
What Groves nor Streams bestow, a virtuous Mind.
When sweet and od'rous, like an Eastern Bride,
The radiant Morn resum'd her orient Pride,
When wanton Gales, along the Valleys play,
Breathe on each Flow'r, and bear their Sweets away:
By *Tigris'* Wand'rer Waves he sate, and sung
This useful Lesson for the Fair and Young.
Ye *Persian* Dames, he said, to ye belong,
Well may they please, the Morals of my Song;
No fairer Maids, I trust, than ye are found,
Grac'd with soft Arts, the peopled World around !
The Morn that lights you, to your Loves supplies
Each gentler Ray delicious to your Eyes:
For ye those Flow'rs her fragrant Hands bestow,
And yours the Love that Kings delight to know.
Yet think not these, all beauteous as they are,
The best kind Blessings Heaven can grant the Fair!
Who trust alone in Beauty's feeble Ray,

**Balsora's* Pearls have more of Worth, than they;

[*The Gulph of that Name, famous for the Pearl-fishery.]

Drawn from the Deep, they sparkle to the Sight,

And all-unconscious shoot a lust'rous Light:

Such are the Maids, and such the Charms they boast,

By Sense unaided, or to Virtue lost.

Self-flattering Sex ! your Hearts believe in vain

That Love shall blind, when once he fires the Swain;

Or hope a Lover by your Faults to win,

As Spots on Ermin beautify the Skin :

Who seeks secure to rule, be first her Care

Each softer Virtue that adorns the Fair,

Each tender Passion Man delights to find,

The lov'd Perfections of a female Mind.

Blest were the Days, when Wisdom held her Reign,

And Shepherds fought her on the silent Plain,

With Truth she wedded in the secret Grove,

The fair-eyed Truth, and Daughters bless'd their Love.

O haste, fair Maids, ye Virtues come away,

Sweet Peace and Plenty lead you on your way !

The balmy Shrub, for ye shall love our Shore,

By *Ind'* excell'd or *Araby* no more.

Lost to our Fields, for so the Fates ordain,

The dear Deserters shall return again.

O come, thou Modesty, as they decree,

The Rose may then improve her Blush by Thee.

Here make thy Court amidst our rural Scene,

And Shepherd-Girls shall own Thee for their Queen.

With Thee be Chastity, of all afraid,

Distrusting all, a wise suspicious Maid ;

But Man the most; not more the Mountain Doe

Holds the swift Falcon for her deadly Foe.

Cold is her Breast, like Flow'rs that drink the Dew,

A silken Veil conceals her from the View.

No wild Desires amidst thy Train be known,

But Faith, whose Heart is fix'd on one alone:

Desponding Meekness with her down-cast Eyes,

And friendly Pity full of tender Sighs ;

And Love the last: By these your Hearts approve,

These are the Virtues that must lead to Love.

Thus sung the Swain, and Eastern Legends say,

The Maids of *Bagdat* verify'd the Lay :

Dear to the Plains, the Virtues came along,

The Shepherds lov'd, and *Selim* bless'd his Song.

The E N D of the First ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE the SECOND.

H A S S A N; *or, the Camel-driver.*

SCENE, *the Desart.*

TIME, MID-DAY.

IN silent Horror o'er the Desart-Waste

The Driver *Hassan* with his Camels past.

One Cruise of Water on his Back he bore,

And his light Scrip contain'd a scanty Store:

A Fan of painted Feathers in his Hand,

To guard his shaded Face from scorching Sand.

The sultry Sun had gain'd the middle Sky,

And not a Tree, and not an Herb was nigh.

The Beasts, with Pain, their dusty Way pursue,

Shrill roar'd the Winds, and dreary was the View !

With desp'rate Sorrow wild th' affrighted Man

Thrice sigh'd, thrice strook his Breast, and thus began:

Sad was the Hour, and luckless was the Day,

When first from Schiraz' Walls I bent my Way.

Ah ! little thought I of the blasting Wind,

The Thirst or pinching Hunger that I find!

Bethink thee, *Hassan*, where shall Thirst assuage,

When fails this Cruise, his unrelenting Rage ?

Soon shall this Scrip its precious Load resign,

Then what but Tears and Hunger shall be thine ?

Ye mute Companions of my Toils, that bear

In all my Griefs a more than equal Share !

Here, where no Springs, in Murmurs break away,

Or Moss-crown'd Fountains mitigate the Day :

In vain ye hope the green Delights to know,

Which Plains more blest, or verdant Vales bestow,

Here Rocks alone, and tasteless Sands are found,

And faint and sickly Winds for ever howl around.

Sad was the Hour, &c.

Curd be the Gold and Silver which persuade

Weak Men to follow far-fatiguing Trade.

The Lilly-Peace outshines the silver Store,

And Life is dearer than the golden Ore.

Yet Money tempts us o'er the Desart brown,

To ev'ry distant Mart, and wealthy Town :

Full oft we tempt the Land, and oft the Sea,

And are we only yet repay'd by Thee ?

Ah ! why was Ruin so attractive made,

Or why fond Man so easily betrayed ?

Why heed we not, whilst mad we haste along,

The gentle Voice of Peace, or Pleasure's Song ?

Or wherefore think the flow'ry Mountain's Side,

The Fountain's Murmurs, and the Valley's Pride,

Why think we these less pleasing to behold,

Than dreary Desarts, if they lead to Gold ?

Sad was the Hour, &c.

O cease, my Fears ! all frantic as I go,

When Thought creates unnumber'd Scenes of Woe,

What if the Lion in his Rage I meet !

Oft in the Dust I view his printed Feet:

And fearful ! oft, when Day's declining Light

Yields her pale Empire to the Mourner Night,

By Hunger rous'd, he scours the groaning Plain,
Gaunt Wolves and sullen Tygers in his Train;
Before them Death with Shrieks directs their Way,
Fills the wild Yell, and leads them to their Prey.

Sad was the Hour, &C.

At that dead Hour the silent Asp shall creep,
If ought of rest I find, upon my Sleep:
Or some swoln-Serpent twist his Scales around,
And wake to Anguish with a burning Wound.

Thrice happy they, the wife contented Poor,
From Lust of Wealth, and Dread of Death secure;
They tempt no Desarts and no Griefs they find ;
Peace rules the Day, where Reason rules the Mind.

Sad was the Hour, &c.

O hapless Youth ! for she thy Love hath won,
The tender *Zara*, will be most undone !
Big swell'd my Heart, and own'd the pow'rful Maid,
When fast she dropt her Tears, as thus she said ;
“ Farewel the Youth whom Sighs could not detain,
“Whom *Zara's* breaking Heart implor'd in vain;

“Yet as thou go’st, may ev’ry Blast arise,

“Weak and unfelt as these rejected Sighs !

“Safe o'er the Wild, no Perils mayst thou see,

“No Griefs endure, nor weep, false Youth, like me.”

O let me safely to the Fair return,

Say with a Kiss, she must not, shall not mourn.

Go teach my Heart, to lose its painful Fears,

Recall'd by Wisdom's Voice, and *Zara's* Tears.

He said, and call'd on Heaven to bless the Day,

When back to *Schiraz'* Walls he bent his Way.

The END of the Second ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE the THIRD.

A B R A ; *or, the Georgian Sultana.*

SCENE, *a Forest.*

TIME, *the EVENING.*

IN *Georgia's* Land, where *Tefflis'* Tow'rs are seen,

In distant View along the level Green,

While Ev'ning Dews enrich the glitt'ring Glade,

And the tall Forests cast a longer Shade,

Amidst the Maids of *Zagen's* peaceful Grove,

Emyra sung the pleasing Cares of Love.

Of *Abra* first began the tender Strain,

Who led her Youth, with Flocks upon the Plain:

At Morn she came those willing Flocks to lead,

Where Lillies rear them in the wat'ry Mead ;

From early Dawn the live-long Hours she told,

'Till late at silent Eve she penn'd the Fold.

Deep in the Grove beneath the secret Shade,

A various Wreath of od'rous Flow'rs she made:

*Gay-motley'd Pinks and sweet Junquils she chose,

The Violet-blue, that on the Moss-bank grows ;

All-sweet to Sense, the flaunting Rose was there;

The finish'd Chaplet well-adorn'd her Hair.

Great *Abbas* chanc'd that fated Morn to stray,

By Love conducted from the Chace away ;

Among the vocal Vales he heard her Song,

And sought the Vales and echoing Groves among:

At length he found, and woo'd the rural Maid,

She knew the Monarch, and with Fear obey'd.

Be ev'ry Youth like Royal Abbas mov'd,

And ev'ry Georgian Maid like Abra lov'd.

[*That these Flowers are found in very great Abundance in some of the Provinces of *Persia*; see the *Modern History* of the ingenious Mr. *Salmon*.]

The Royal Lover bore her from the Plain,

Yet still her Crook and bleating Flock remain:

Oft as she went, she backward turn'd her View,

And bad that Crook, and bleating Flock Adieu.

Fair happy Maid ! to other Scenes remove,

To richer Scenes of golden Pow'r and Love !

Go leave the simple Pipe, and Shepherd's Strain,

With Love delight thee, and with *Abbas* reign.

Be ev'ry Youth, &c.

Yet midst the Blaze of Courts she fix'd her Love,

On the cool Fountain, or the shady Grove ;

Still with the Shepherd's Innocence her Mind

To the sweet Vale, and flow'ry Mead inclin'd,

And oft as Spring renew'd the Plains with Flow'rs,

Breath'd his soft Gales, and led the fragrant Hours,

With sure Return she sought the sylvan Scene,

The breezy Mountains, and the Forests green.

Her Maids around her mov'd, a duteous Band !

Each bore a Crook all-rural in her Hand :

Some simple Lay, of Flocks and Herds they sung,

With Joy the Mountain, and the Forest rung.

Be every Youth, &c.

And oft the Royal Lover left the Care,

And Thorns of State, attendant on the Fair :

Oft to the Shades and low-roof'd Cots retir'd,

Or sought the Vale where first his Heart was fir'd;

A Russet Mantle, like a Swain, he wore,

And thought of Crowns and busy Courts no more.

Be every Youth, &c.

Blest was the Life, that Royal *Abbas* led :

Sweet was his Love, and innocent his Bed.

What if in Wealth the noble Maid excel ;

The simple Shepherd Girl can love as well.

Let those who rule on *Persia's* jewell'd Throne,

Be fam'd for Love, and gentlest Love alone :

Or wreath, like *Abbas*, full of fair Renown,

The Lover's Myrtle, with the Warrior's Crown.

Oh happy Days ! the Maids around her say,

Oh haste, profuse of Blessings, haste away !

Be ev'ry Youth, like Royal Abbas, mov'd;

And ev'ry Georgian Maid, like Abra, lov'd.

The END of the Third ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE the FOURTH.

*AGIB and SECANDER; or, the
Fugitives.*

SCENE, a Mountain in Circassia.

TIME, MIDNIGHT.

IN fair Circassia, where to Love inclin'd,

Each Swain was blest, for every Maid was kind !

At that still Hour, when awful Midnight reigns,

And none, but Wretches, haunt the twilight Plains;

What Time the Moon had hung her Lamp on high,

And past in Radiance, thro' the cloudless Sky:

Sad o'er the Dews, two Brother Shepherds fled,

Where wild'ring Fear and desp'rate Sorrow led.

Fast as they prest their Flight, behind them lay

Wide ravag'd Plains, and Valleys stole away.

Along the Mountain's bending Sides they ran,

Till faint and weak *Secander* thus began.

S E C A N D E R.

O stay thee, *Agib*, for my Feet deny,
No longer friendly to my Life, to fly.
Friend of my Heart, O turn thee and survey,
Trace our sad Flight thro' all its length of Way !
And first review that long-extended Plain,
And yon wide Groves, already past with Pain !
Yon ragged Cliff, whose dang'rous Path we try'd,
And last this lofty Mountain's weary Side !

AGIB.

Weak as thou art, yet hapless must thou know
The Toils of Flight, or some severer Woe !
Still as I haste, the *Tartar* shouts behind,
And Shrieks and Sorrows load the sad'ning Wind :
In rage of Heart, with Ruin in his Hand,
He blasts our Harvests, and deforms our Land.
Yon Citron Grove, whence first in Fear we came,
Droops its fair Honours to the conqu'ring Flame :
Far fly the Swains, like us, in deep Despair,
And leave to ruffian Bands their fleecy Care.

SECANDER.

Unhappy Land, whose Blessings tempt the Sword,
In vain, unheard, thou call'st thy *Persian* Lord !
In vain, thou court'st him, helpless to thine Aid,
To shield the Shepherd, and protect the Maid,
Far off in thoughtless Indolence resign'd,
Soft Dreams of Love and Pleasure sooth his Mind:
'Midst fair *Sultanas* lost in idle Joy,
No Wars alarm him, and no Fears annoy.

A G I B.

Yet these green Hills, in Summer's sultry Heat,
Have lent the Monarch oft a cool Retreat,
Sweet to the Sight is *Zabran's* flow'ry Plain,
And once by Maids and Shepherds lov'd in vain !
No more the Virgins shall delight to rove,
By *Sargis'* Banks or *Irwan's* shady Grove :
On *Tarkie's* Mountain catch the cooling Gale,
Or breathe the Sweets of *Aly's* flow'ry Vale :
Fair Scenes! but ah no more with Peace possest,
With Ease alluring, and with Plenty blest.
No more the Shepherds whit'ning Seats appear,

Nor the kind Products of a bounteous Year;
No more the Dale with snowy Blossoms crown'd,
But Ruin spreads her baleful Fires around.

SECANDER.

In vain *Circassia* boasts her spicy Groves,
For ever fam'd for pure and happy Loves:
In vain she boasts her fairest of the Fair,
Their Eyes' blue languish, and their golden Hair !
Those Eyes in Tears, their fruitless Grief must send,
Those Hairs the *Tartar's* cruel Hand shall rend.

AG I B.

Ye *Georgian* Swains that piteous learn from far
Circassia's Ruin, and the Waste of War :
Some weightier Arms than Crooks and Staves prepare,
To shield your Harvests, and defend your Fair:
The *Turk* and *Tartar* like Designs pursue,
Fix'd to destroy, and stedfast to undo.
Wild as his Land, in native Deserts bred,
By Lust incited, or by Malice led,
The Villain-*Arab*, as he prowls for Prey,

Oft marks with Blood and wasting Flames the Way;

Yet none so cruel as the *Tartar* Foe,

To Death inur'd, and nurst in Scenes of Woe.

He said, when loud along the Vale was heard

A shriller Shriek, and nearer Fires appear'd :

Th' affrighted Shepherds thro' the Dews of Night

Wide o'er the Moon-light Hills, renew'd their Flight.

The END of the Fourth and last ECLOGUE.



Renaissance Editions