

The Eclogues

ECLOGAE

Virgil

tr. J. B. Greenough (1900)

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Eclogue I

MELIBOEUS TITYRUS

Meliboeus: You, Tityrus, 'neath a broad
beech-canopyReclining, on the slender oat rehearseYour
silvan ditties: I from my sweet fields,And home's familiar
bounds, even now depart.Exiled from home am I; while,
Tityrus, youSit careless in the shade, and, at your call,"Fair
Amaryllis" bid the woods resound.

Tityrus: O Meliboeus, 'twas a god vouchsafedThis ease to us,
for him a god will IDeem ever, and from my folds a tender
lambOft with its life-blood shall his altar stain.His gift it is
that, as your eyes may see,My kine may roam at large, and I
myselfPlay on my shepherd's pipe what songs I will.

Meliboeus: I grudge you not the boon, but marvel more,Such
wide confusion fills the country-side.See, sick at heart I drive
my she-goats on,And this one, O my Tityrus, scarce can
lead:For 'mid the hazel-thicket here but nowShe dropped her
new-yeaned twins on the bare flint,Hope of the flock- an ill, I
mind me well,Which many a time, but for my blinded
sense,The thunder-stricken oak foretold, oft tooFrom hollow
trunk the raven's ominous cry.But who this god of yours?
Come, Tityrus, tell.

Tityrus: The city, Meliboeus, they call Rome,I, simpleton,
deemed like this town of ours,Whereto we shepherds oft are
wont to driveThe younglings of the flock: so too I knewWhelps
to resemble dogs, and kids their dams,Comparing small with
great; but this as farAbove all other cities rears her headAs
cypress above pliant osier towers.

Meliboeus: And what so potent cause took you to Rome?

Tityrus: Freedom, which, though belated, cast at lengthHer
eyes upon the sluggard, when my beard'Gan whiter fall
beneath the barber's blade-Cast eyes, I say, and, though long

tarrying, came,Now when, from Galatea's yoke released,I
serve but Amaryllis: for I will own,While Galatea reigned over
me, I hadNo hope of freedom, and no thought to save.Though
many a victim from my folds went forth,Or rich cheese
pressed for the unthankful town,Never with laden hands
returned I home.

Meliboeus: I used to wonder, Amaryllis, whyYou cried to
heaven so sadly, and for whomYou left the apples hanging on
the trees;'Twas Tityrus was away. Why, Tityrus,The very
pines, the very water-springs,The very vineyards, cried aloud
for you.

Tityrus: What could I do? how else from bonds be freed,Or
otherwhere find gods so nigh to aid?There, Meliboeus, I saw
that youth to whomYearly for twice six days my altars
smoke.There instant answer gave he to my suit,"Feed, as
before, your kine, boys, rear your bulls."

Meliboeus: So in old age, you happy man, your fieldsWill still
be yours, and ample for your need!Though, with bare stones
o'erspread, the pastures allBe choked with rushy mire, your
ewes with youngBy no strange fodder will be tried, nor
hurtThrough taint contagious of a neighbouring flock.Happy
old man, who 'mid familiar streamsAnd hallowed springs, will
court the cooling shade!Here, as of old, your neighbour's
bordering hedge,That feasts with willow-flower the Hybla
bees,Shall oft with gentle murmur lull to sleep,While the
leaf-dresser beneath some tall rockUplifts his song, nor cease
their cooings hoarseThe wood-pigeons that are your heart's
delight,Nor doves their moaning in the elm-tree top.

Tityrus: Sooner shall light stags, therefore, feed in air,The
seas their fish leave naked on the strand,Germans and
Parthians shift their natural bounds,And these the Arar, those
the Tigris drink,Than from my heart his face and memory
fade.

Meliboeus: But we far hence, to burning Libya some, Some to the Scythian steppes, or thy swift flood, Cretan Oaxes, now must wend our way, Or Britain, from the whole world sundered far. Ah! shall I ever in aftertime behold My native bounds- see many a harvest hence With ravished eyes the lowly turf-roofed cot Where I was king? These fallows, trimmed so fair, Some brutal soldier will possess these fields An alien master. Ah! to what a pass Has civil discord brought our hapless folk! For such as these, then, were our furrows sown! Now, Meliboeus, graft your pears, now set Your vines in order! Go, once happy flock, My she-goats, go. Never again shall I, Stretched in green cave, behold you from afar Hang from the bushy rock; my songs are sung; Never again will you, with me to tend, On clover-flower, or bitter willows, browse.

Tityrus: Yet here, this night, you might repose with me, On green leaves pillowed: apples ripe have I, Soft chestnuts, and of curdled milk enow. And, see, the farm-roof chimneys smoke afar, And from the hills the shadows lengthening fall!

Eclogue II

ALEXIS

The shepherd Corydon with love was fired For fair Alexis, his own master's joy: No room for hope had he, yet, none the less, The thick-leaved shadowy-soaring beech-tree grove Still would he haunt, and there alone, as thus, To woods and hills pour forth his artless strains. "Cruel Alexis, heed you naught my songs? Have you no pity? you'll drive me to my death. Now even the cattle court the cooling shade And the green lizard hides him in the thorn: Now for tired mowers, with the fierce heat spent, Pounds Thestylis her mess of savoury herbs, Wild thyme and garlic. I, with none beside, Save hoarse cicalas shrilling through the brake, Still track your footprints 'neath

the broiling sun. Better have borne the petulant proud
disdain Of Amaryllis, or Menalcas wooed, Albeit he was so
dark, and you so fair! Trust not too much to colour, beauteous
boy; White privets fall, dark hyacinths are culled. You scorn
me, Alexis, who or what I am Care not to ask- how rich in
flocks, or how In snow-white milk abounding: yet for me Roam
on Sicilian hills a thousand lambs; Summer or winter, still my
milk-pails brim. I sing as erst Amphion of Circe sang, What
time he went to call his cattle home On Attic Aracynthus. Nor
am I So ill to look on: lately on the beach I saw myself, when
winds had stilled the sea, And, if that mirror lie not, would not
fear Daphnis to challenge, though yourself were judge. Ah!
were you but content with me to dwell. Some lowly cot in the
rough fields our home, Shoot down the stags, or with green
osier-wand Round up the straggling flock! There you with
me In silvan strains will learn to rival Pan. Pan first with wax
taught reed with reed to join; For sheep alike and shepherd
Pan hath care. Nor with the reed's edge fear you to make
rough Your dainty lip; such arts as these to learn What did
Amyntas do? - what did he not? A pipe have I, of hemlock-stalks
compact In lessening lengths, Damoetas' dying-gift: 'Mine
once,' quoth he, 'now yours, as heir to own.' Foolish Amyntas
heard and envied me. Ay, and two fawns, I risked my neck to
find In a steep glen, with coats white-dappled still, From a
sheep's udders suckled twice a day- These still I keep for you;
which Thestylis Implores me oft to let her lead away; And she
shall have them, since my gifts you spurn. Come hither,
beauteous boy; for you the Nymphs Bring baskets, see, with
lilies brimmed; for you, Plucking pale violets and
poppy-heads, Now the fair Naiad, of narcissus flower And
fragrant fennel, doth one posy twine- With cassia then, and
other scented herbs, Blends them, and sets the tender
hyacinth off With yellow marigold. I too will pick Quinces all
silvered-o'er with hoary down, Chestnuts, which Amaryllis

wont to love,And waxen plums withal: this fruit no less
shall have its meed of honour; and I will pluck
You too, ye laurels, and you, ye myrtles, near,
For so your sweets ye mingle. Corydon,
You are a boor, nor heeds a whit your gifts
Alexis; no, nor would Iollas yield,
Should gifts decide the day. Alack!
alack!What misery have I brought upon my head!
-Loosed on the flowers Siroces to my bane,
And the wild boar upon my crystal springs!
Whom do you fly, infatuate? gods ere now,
And Dardan Paris, have made the woods their home.
Let Pallas keep the towers her hand hath built,
Us before all things let the woods delight.
The grim-eyed lioness pursues the wolf,
The wolf the she-goat, the she-goat herself
In wanton sport the flowering cytissus,
And Corydon Alexis, each led on
By their own longing. See, the ox comes home
With plough up-tilted, and the shadows grow
To twice their length with the departing sun,
Yet me love burns, for who can limit love?
Ah! Corydon, Corydon, what hath crazed your wit?
Your vine half-pruned hangs on the leafy elm;
Why haste you not to weave what need requires
Of pliant rush or osier? Scorned by this,
Elsewhere some new Alexis you will find."

Eclogue III

MENALCAS DAMOETAS PALAEMON

Menalcas: Who owns the flock, Damoetas? Meliboeus?

Damoetas: Nay, they are Aegon's sheep, of late by him
Committed to my care.

MENALCAS

O every way
Unhappy sheep, unhappy flock! while he
Still courts Neaera, fearing lest her choice
Should fall on me, this hireling shepherd here
Wrings hourly twice their udders, from the flock
Filching the life-juice, from the lambs their milk.

Damoetas: Hold! not so ready with your jeers at men! We know who once, and in what shrine with you- The he-goats looked aside- the light nymphs laughed-

Menalcas: Ay, then, I warrant, when they saw me slash Micon's young vines and trees with spiteful hook.

Damoetas: Or here by these old beeches, when you broke The bow and arrows of Damon; for you chafed When first you saw them given to the boy, Cross-grained Menalcas, ay, and had you not Done him some mischief, would have chafed to death.

Menalcas: With thieves so daring, what can masters do? Did I not see you, rogue, in ambush lie For Damon's goat, while loud Lycisca barked? And when I cried, "Where is he off to now? Gather your flock together, Tityrus," You hid behind the sedges.

DAMOETAS

Well, was he Whom I had conquered still to keep the goat. Which in the piping-match my pipe had won! You may not know it, but the goat was mine.

Menalcas: You out-pipe him? when had you ever pipe Wax-welded? in the cross-ways used you not On grating straw some miserable tune To mangle?

DAMOETAS

Well, then, shall we try our skill Each against each in turn? Lest you be loth, I pledge this heifer; every day she comes Twice to the milking-pail, and feeds withal Two young ones at her udder: say you now What you will stake upon the match with me.

Menalcas: Naught from the flock I'll venture, for at home I have a father and a step-dame harsh, And twice a day both reckon up the flock, And one withal the kids. But I will stake, Seeing you are so mad, what you yourself Will own more

priceless far- two beechen cups
By the divine art of
Alcimedon
Wrought and embossed, whereon a limber
vine,
Wreathed round them by the graver's facile tool,
Twines
over clustering ivy-berries pale.
Two figures, one Conon, in the
midst he set,
And one- how call you him, who with his
wand
Marked out for all men the whole round of heaven,
That
they who reap, or stoop behind the plough,
Might know their
several seasons? Nor as yet
Have I set lip to them, but lay
them by.

Damoetas: For me too wrought the same Alcimedon
A pair of
cups, and round the handles wreathed
Pliant acanthus,
Orpheus in the midst,
The forests following in his wake; nor
yet
Have I set lip to them, but lay them by.
Matched with a
heifer, who would prate of cups?

Menalcas: You shall not balk me now; where'er you bid,
I shall
be with you; only let us have
For auditor- or see, to serve our
turn,
Yonder Palaemon comes! In singing-bouts
I'll see you
play the challenger no more.

Damoetas: Out then with what you have; I shall not
shrink,
Nor budge for any man: only do you,
Neighbour
Palaemon, with your whole heart's skill-
For it is no slight
matter-play your part.

Palaemon: Say on then, since on the greensward we sit,
And
now is burgeoning both field and tree;
Now is the forest green,
and now the year
At fairest. Do you first, Damoetas, sing,
Then
you, Menalcas, in alternate strain:
Alternate strains are to the
Muses dear.

Damoetas: "From Jove the Muse began; Jove filleth all,
Makes
the earth fruitful, for my songs hath care."

Menalcas: "Me Phoebus loves; for Phoebus his own gifts,
Bays
and sweet-blushing hyacinths, I keep."

Damoetas: "Gay Galatea throws an apple at me,Then hies to the willows, hoping to be seen."

Menalcas: "My dear Amyntas comes unasked to me;Not Delia to my dogs is better known."

Damoetas: "Gifts for my love I've found; mine eyes have markedWhere the wood-pigeons build their airy nests."

Menalcas: "Ten golden apples have I sent my boy,All that I could, to-morrow as many more."

Damoetas: "What words to me, and uttered O how oft,Hath Galatea spoke! waft some of them,Ye winds, I pray you, for the gods to hear."

Menalcas: "It profiteth me naught, Amyntas mine,That in your very heart you spurn me not,If, while you hunt the boar, I guard the nets."

Damoetas: "Prithee, Iollas, for my birthday guestSend me your Phyllis; when for the young cropsI slay my heifer, you yourself shall come."

Menalcas: "I am all hers; she wept to see me go,And, lingering on the word, 'farewell' she said,'My beautiful Iollas, fare you well.'"

Damoetas: "Fell as the wolf is to the folded flock,Rain to ripe corn, Sirocco to the trees,The wrath of Amaryllis is to me."

Menalcas: "As moisture to the corn, to ewes with youngLithe willow, as arbut to the yeanling kids,So sweet Amyntas, and none else, to me."

Damoetas: "My Muse, although she be but country-bred,Is loved by Pollio: O Pierian Maids,Pray you, a heifer for your reader feed!"

Menalcas: "Pollio himself too doth new verses make:Feed ye a bull now ripe to butt with horn,And scatter with his hooves

the flying sand."

Damoetas: "Who loves thee, Pollio, may he thither come
Where thee he joys beholding; ay, for him
Let honey flow,
the thorn-bush spices bear."

Menalcas: "Who hates not Bavius, let him also love
Thy songs,
O Maeuius, ay, and therewithal
Yoke foxes to his car, and
he-goats milk."

Damoetas: "You, picking flowers and strawberries that
grow
So near the ground, fly hence, boys, get you
gone!
There's a cold adder lurking in the grass."

Menalcas: "Forbear, my sheep, to tread too near the
brink;
Yon bank is ill to trust to; even now
The ram himself,
see, dries his dripping fleece!"

Damoetas: "Back with the she-goats, Tityrus, grazing there
So
near the river! I, when time shall serve,
Will take them all, and
wash them in the pool."

Menalcas: "Boys, get your sheep together; if the heat,
As late
it did, forestall us with the milk,
Vainly the dried-up udders
shall we wring."

Damoetas: "How lean my bull amid the fattening vetch!
Alack!
alack! for herdsman and for herd!
It is the self-same love that
wastes us both."

Menalcas: "These truly- nor is even love the cause-
Scarce
have the flesh to keep their bones together
Some evil eye my
lambkins hath bewitched."

Damoetas: "Say in what clime- and you shall be withal
My
great Apollo- the whole breadth of heaven
Opens no wider
than three ells to view."

Menalcas: "Say in what country grow such flowers as bear
The
names of kings upon their petals writ,
And you shall have fair
Phyllis for your own."

Palaemon: Not mine betwixt such rivals to decide: You well deserve the heifer, so does he, With all who either fear the sweets of love, Or taste its bitterness. Now, boys, shut off the sluices, for the fields have drunk their fill.

Eclogue IV

POLLIO

Muses of Sicily, essay we now A somewhat loftier task! Not all men love Coppice or lowly tamarisk: sing we woods, Woods worthy of a Consul let them be.

Now the last age by Cumae's Sibyl sung Has come and gone, and the majestic roll Of circling centuries begins anew: Justice returns, returns old Saturn's reign, With a new breed of men sent down from heaven. Only do thou, at the boy's birth in whom The iron shall cease, the golden race arise, Befriend him, chaste Lucina; 'tis thine own Apollo reigns. And in thy consulate, This glorious age, O Pollio, shall begin, And the months enter on their mighty march. Under thy guidance, whatso tracks remain Of our old wickedness, once done away, Shall free the earth from never-ceasing fear. He shall receive the life of gods, and see Heroes with gods commingling, and himself Be seen of them, and with his father's worth Reign o'er a world at peace. For thee, O boy, First shall the earth, untilled, pour freely forth Her childish gifts, the gadding ivy-spray With foxglove and Egyptian bean-flower mixed, And laughing-eyed acanthus. Of themselves, Untended, will the she-goats then bring home Their udders swollen with milk, while flocks afield Shall of the monstrous lion have no fear. Thy very cradle shall pour forth for thee Caressing flowers. The serpent too shall die, Die shall the treacherous poison-plant, and far And wide Assyrian spices spring. But soon As thou hast skill to read of heroes' fame, And of thy father's deeds, and inly learn What virtue is,

the plain by slow degrees
With waving corn-crops shall to
golden grow,
From the wild briar shall hang the blushing
grape,
And stubborn oaks sweat honey-dew. Nathless
Yet shall
there lurk within of ancient wrong
Some traces, bidding tempt
the deep with ships,
Gird towns with walls, with furrows
cleave the earth.
Therewith a second Tiphys shall there be,
Her
hero-freight a second Argo bear;
New wars too shall arise, and
once again
Some great Achilles to some Troy be sent.
Then,
when the mellowing years have made thee man,
No more shall
mariner sail, nor pine-tree bark
Ply traffic on the sea, but
every land
Shall all things bear alike: the glebe no more
Shall
feel the harrow's grip, nor vine the hook;
The sturdy
ploughman shall loose yoke from steer,
Nor wool with varying
colours learn to lie;
But in the meadows shall the ram
himself,
Now with soft flush of purple, now with tint
Of yellow
saffron, teach his fleece to shine.
While clothed in natural
scarlet graze the lambs.
"Such still, such ages weave ye, as ye
run,"
Sang to their spindles the consenting Fates
By Destiny's
unalterable decree.
Assume thy greatness, for the time draws
nigh,
Dear child of gods, great progeny of Jove!
See how it
totters- the world's orb'd might,
Earth, and wide ocean, and
the vault profound,
All, see, enraptured of the coming time!
Ah!
might such length of days to me be given,
And breath suffice
me to rehearse thy deeds,
Nor Thracian Orpheus should
out-sing me then,
Nor Linus, though his mother this, and
that
His sire should aid- Orpheus Calliope,
And Linus fair
Apollo. Nay, though Pan,
With Arcady for judge, my claim
contest,
With Arcady for judge great Pan himself
Should own
him foiled, and from the field retire.

Begin to greet thy mother with a smile,
O baby-boy! ten
months of weariness
For thee she bore: O baby-boy, begin!
For
him, on whom his parents have not smiled,
Gods deem not
worthy of their board or bed.

Eclogue V

MENALCAS MOPSUS

Menalcas: Why, Mopsus, being both together met,
You skilled to breathe upon the slender reeds,
I to sing ditties, do we not sit down
Here where the elm-trees and the hazels blend?

Mopsus: You are the elder, 'tis for me to bide
Your choice, Menalcas, whether now we seek
Yon shade that quivers to the changeful breeze,
Or the cave's shelter. Look you how the cavel
s with the wild vine's clusters over-laced!

Menalcas: None but Amyntas on these hills of ours
Can vie with you.

MOPSUS

What if he also strive
To out-sing Phoebus?

MENALCAS

Do you first begin,
Good Mopsus, whether minded to sing
aught
Of Phyllis and her loves, or Alcon's praise,
Or to fling taunts at Codrus. Come, begin,
While Tityrus watches o'er the grazing kids.

Mopsus: Nay, then, I will essay what late I carved
On a green beech-tree's rind, playing by turns,
And marking down the notes; then afterward
Bid you Amyntas match them if he can.

Menalcas: As limber willow to pale olive yields,
As lowly Celtic nard to rose-buds bright,
So, to my mind, Amyntas yields to you.
But hold awhile, for to the cave we come.

Mopsus: "For Daphnis cruelly slain wept all the Nymphs-
Ye hazels, bear them witness, and ye streams-
When she, his mother, clasping in her arms
The hapless body of the son she bare,
To gods and stars unpitying, poured her plaint.
Then, Daphnis, to the cooling streams were none
That drove the pastured oxen, then no beast
Drank of the river, or would the

grass-blade touch. Nay, the wild rocks and woods then voiced
the roar Of Afric lions mourning for thy death. Daphnis, 'twas
thou bad'st yoke to Bacchus' car Armenian tigresses, lead on
the pomp Of revellers, and with tender foliage wreath the
bending spear-wands. As to trees the vine Is crown of glory, as
to vines the grape, Bulls to the herd, to fruitful fields the
corn, So the one glory of thine own art thou. When the Fates
took thee hence, then Pales' self, And even Apollo, left the
country lone. Where the plump barley-grain so oft we
sowed, There but wild oats and barren darnel spring; For
tender violet and narcissus bright Thistle and prickly thorn
uprear their heads. Now, O ye shepherds, strew the ground
with leaves, And o'er the fountains draw a shady veil- So
Daphnis to his memory bids be done- And rear a tomb, and
write thereon this verse: 'I, Daphnis in the woods, from hence
in fame Am to the stars exalted, guardian once Of a fair flock,
myself more fair than they.'"

Menalcas: So is thy song to me, poet divine, As slumber on the
grass to weary limbs, Or to slake thirst from some
sweet-bubbling rill In summer's heat. Nor on the reeds
alone, But with thy voice art thou, thrice happy boy, Ranked
with thy master, second but to him. Yet will I, too, in turn, as
best I may, Sing thee a song, and to the stars uplift Thy
Daphnis- Daphnis to the stars extol, For me too Daphnis loved.

MOPSUS

Than such a boon What dearer could I deem? the boy
himself Was worthy to be sung, and many a time Hath
Stimichon to me your singing praised.

Menalcas: "In dazzling sheen with unaccustomed
eyes Daphnis stands rapt before Olympus' gate, And sees
beneath his feet the clouds and stars. Wherefore the woods
and fields, Pan, shepherd-folk, And Dryad-maidens, thrill with
eager joy; Nor wolf with treacherous wile assails the flock, Nor

nets the stag: kind Daphnis loveth peace.The unshorn
mountains to the stars up-tossVoices of gladness; ay, the very
rocks,The very thickets, shout and sing, 'A god,A god is he,
Menalcas "Be thou kind,Propitious to thine own. Lo! altars
four,Twain to thee, Daphnis, and to Phoebus twainFor
sacrifice, we build; and I for theeTwo beakers yearly of fresh
milk afoam,And of rich olive-oil two bowls, will set;And of the
wine-god's bounty above all,If cold, before the hearth, or in
the shadeAt harvest-time, to glad the festal hour,From flasks
of Ariusian grape will pourSweet nectar. Therewithal at my
behestShall Lyctian Aegon and Damoetas sing,And
Alphesiboeus emulate in danceThe dancing Satyrs. This, thy
service due,Shalt thou lack never, both when we pay the
NymphsOur yearly vows, and when with lustral ritesThe fields
we hallow. Long as the wild boarShall love the
mountain-heights, and fish the streams,While bees on thyme
and crickets feed on dew,Thy name, thy praise, thine honour,
shall endure.Even as to Bacchus and to Ceres, soTo thee the
swain his yearly vows shall make;And thou thereof, like them,
shalt quittance claim."

Mopsus: How, how repay thee for a song so rare?For not the
whispering south-wind on its waySo much delights me, nor
wave-smitten beach,Nor streams that race adown their
bouldered beds.

Menalcas: First this frail hemlock-stalk to you I give,Which
taught me "Corydon with love was firedFor fair Alexis," ay,
and this beside,"Who owns the flock?- Meliboeus?"

MOPSUS

But take youThis shepherd's crook, which, howso hard he
begged,Antigenes, then worthy to be loved,Prevailed not to
obtain- with brass, you see,And equal knots, Menalcas,
fashioned fair!

Eclogue VI

TO VARUS

First my Thalia stooped in sportive mood
To Syracusan strains,
nor blushed within
The woods to house her. When I sought to
tell
Of battles and of kings, the Cynthian god
Plucked at mine
ear and warned me: "Tityrus,
Beseems a shepherd-wight to
feed fat sheep,
But sing a slender song." Now, Varus, I-
For
lack there will not who would laud thy deeds,
And treat of
dolorous wars- will rather tune
To the slim oaten reed my
silvan lay.
I sing but as vouchsafed me; yet even this
If, if but
one with ravished eyes should read,
Of thee, O Varus, shall our
tamarisks
And all the woodland ring; nor can there be
A page
more dear to Phoebus, than the page
Where, foremost writ,
the name of Varus stands.

Speed ye, Pierian Maids! Within a cave
Young Chromis and
Mnasyllus chanced to see
Silenus sleeping, flushed, as was his
wont,
With wine of yesterday. Not far aloof,
Slipped from his
head, the garlands lay, and there
By its worn handle hung a
ponderous cup.
Approaching- for the old man many a time
Had
balked them both of a long hoped-for song-
Garlands to fetters
turned, they bind him fast.
Then Aegle, fairest of the
Naiad-band,
Aegle came up to the half-frightened boys,
Came,
and, as now with open eyes he lay,
With juice of blood-red
mulberries smeared him o'er,
Both brow and temples.
Laughing at their guile,
And crying, "Why tie the fetters? loose
me, boys;
Enough for you to think you had the power;
Now list
the songs you wish for- songs for you,
Another meed for her"
-forthwith began.
Then might you see the wild things of the
wood,
With Fauns in sportive frolic beat the time,
And stubborn
oaks their branchy summits bow.
Not Phoebus doth the rude
Parnassian crag
So ravish, nor Orpheus so entrance the
heights
Of Rhodope or Ismarus: for he sang
How through the
mighty void the seeds were driven
Of earth, air, ocean, and of

liquid fire,How all that is from these beginnings grew,And the
young world itself took solid shape,Then 'gan its crust to
harden, and in the deepShut Nereus off, and mould the forms
of thingsLittle by little; and how the earth amazedBeheld the
new sun shining, and the showersFall, as the clouds soared
higher, what time the woods'Gan first to rise, and living
things to roamScattered among the hills that knew them
not.Then sang he of the stones by Pyrrha cast,Of Saturn's
reign, and of Prometheus' theft,And the Caucasian birds, and
told withalNigh to what fountain by his comrades leftThe
mariners cried on Hylas till the shore"Then Re-echoed "Hylas,
Hylas! soothedPasiphae with the love of her white bull-Happy
if cattle-kind had never been!-O ill-starred maid, what frenzy
caught thy soulThe daughters too of Proetus filled the
fieldsWith their feigned lowings, yet no one of themOf such
unhallowed union e'er was fainAs with a beast to mate,
though many a timeOn her smooth forehead she had sought
for horns,And for her neck had feared the galling plough.O
ill-starred maid! thou roamest now the hills,While on soft
hyacinths he, his snowy sideReposing, under some dark ilex
nowChews the pale herbage, or some heifer tracksAmid the
crowding herd. Now close, ye Nymphs,Ye Nymphs of Dicte,
close the forest-glades,If haply there may chance upon mine
eyesThe white bull's wandering foot-prints: him
belikeFollowing the herd, or by green pasture lured,Some
kine may guide to the Gortynian stalls.Then sings he of the
maid so wonder-struckWith the apples of the Hesperids, and
thenWith moss-bound, bitter bark rings round the formsOf
Phaethon's fair sisters, from the groundUp-towering into
poplars. Next he singsOf Gallus wandering by Permessus'
stream,And by a sister of the Muses ledTo the Aonian
mountains, and how allThe choir of Phoebus rose to greet
him; howThe shepherd Linus, singer of songs
divine,Brow-bound with flowers and bitter parsley,

spake: "These reeds the Muses give thee, take them thou, Erst
to the aged bard of Ascrea given, Wherewith in singing he was
wont to draw Time-rooted ash-trees from the mountain
heights. With these the birth of the Grynean grove Be voiced by
thee, that of no grove beside Apollo more may boast him."
Wherefore speak Of Scylla, child of Nisus, who, 'tis said, Her
fair white loins with barking monsters girt Vexed the Dulichian
ships, and, in the deep Swift-eddying whirlpool, with her
sea-dogs tore The trembling mariners? or how he told Of the
changed limbs of Tereus- what a feast, What gifts, to him by
Philomel were given; How swift she sought the desert, with
what wings Hovered in anguish o'er her ancient home? All
that, of old, Eurotas, happy stream, Heard, as Apollo mused
upon the lyre, And bade his laurels learn, Silenus sang; Till
from Olympus, loth at his approach, Vesper, advancing, bade
the shepherds tell Their tale of sheep, and pen them in the
fold.

Eclogue VII

MELIBOEUS CORYDON THYRSIS

Daphnis beneath a rustling ilex-tree Had sat him down;
Thyrsis and Corydon Had gathered in the flock, Thyrsis the
sheep, And Corydon the she-goats swollen with milk- Both in
the flower of age, Arcadians both, Ready to sing, and in like
strain reply. Hither had strayed, while from the frost I fend My
tender myrtles, the he-goat himself, Lord of the flock; when
Daphnis I espy! Soon as he saw me, "Hither haste," he
cried, "O Meliboeus! goat and kids are safe; And, if you have an
idle hour to spare, Rest here beneath the shade. Hither the
steers Will through the meadows, of their own free
will, Untended come to drink. Here Mincius hath With tender
rushes rimmed his verdant banks, And from yon sacred oak
with busy hum The bees are swarming." What was I to do? No

Phyllis or Alcippe left at home
Had I, to shelter my
new-weaned lambs,
And no slight matter was a
singing-bout
Twixt Corydon and Thyrsis. Howsoe'er,
I let my
business wait upon their sport.
So they began to sing, voice
answering voice
In strains alternate- for alternate strains
The
Muses then were minded to recall-
First Corydon, then Thyrsis
in reply.

Corydon: "Libethrian Nymphs, who are my heart's
delight,
Grant me, as doth my Codrus, so to sing-
Next to
Apollo he- or if to this
We may not all attain, my tuneful
pipe
Here on this sacred pine shall silent hang."

Thyrsis: "Arcadian shepherds, wreath with ivy-spray
Your
budding poet, so that Codrus burst
With envy: if he praise
beyond my due,
Then bind my brow with foxglove, lest his
tongue
With evil omen blight the coming bard."

Corydon: "This bristling boar's head, Delian Maid, to
thee,
With branching antlers of a sprightly stag,
Young Micon
offers: if his luck but hold,
Full-length in polished marble,
ankle-bound
With purple buskin, shall thy statue stand."

Thyrsis: "A bowl of milk, Priapus, and these cakes,
Yearly, it is
enough for thee to claim;
Thou art the guardian of a poor
man's plot.
Wrought for a while in marble, if the flock
At
lambing time be filled,
stand there in gold."

Corydon: "Daughter of Nereus, Galatea mine,
Sweeter than
Hybla-thyme, more white than swans,
Fairer than ivy pale,
soon as the steers
Shall from their pasture to the stalls
repair,
If aught for Corydon thou carest, come."

Thyrsis: "Now may I seem more bitter to your taste
Than herb
Sardinian, rougher than the broom,
More worthless than
strewn sea-weed, if to-day
Hath not a year out-lasting! Fie for
shame!
Go home, my cattle, from your grazing go!"

Corydon: "Ye mossy springs, and grass more soft than sleep,
And arbutue green with thin shade sheltering you,
Ward off the solstice from my flock, for now
Comes on the burning summer, now the buds
Upon the limber vine-shoot 'gin to swell."

Thyrsis: "Here is a hearth, and resinous logs, here
fire
Unstinted, and doors black with ceaseless smoke.
Here heed we Boreas' icy breath as much
As the wolf heeds the number of the flock,
Or furious rivers their restraining banks."

Corydon: "The junipers and prickly chestnuts stand,
And 'neath each tree lie strewn their several fruits,
Now the whole world is smiling, but if fair
Alexis from these hill-slopes should
away,
Even the rivers you would ; see run dry."

Thyrsis: "The field is parched, the grass-blades thirst to
death
In the faint air; Liber hath grudged the hills
His vine's o'er-shadowing: should my Phyllis come,
Green will be all the grove, and Jupiter
Descend in floods of fertilizing rain."

Corydon: "The poplar doth Alcides hold most dear,
The vine Iacchus, Phoebus his own bays,
And Venus fair the myrtle:
therewithal Phyllis doth hazels love, and while she
loves,
Myrtle nor bay the hazel shall out-vie."

Thyrsis: "Ash in the forest is most beautiful,
Pine in the garden, poplar by the stream,
Fir on the mountain-height; but if more oft
Thou'ldst come to me, fair Lycidas, to thee
Both forest-ash, and garden-pine should bow."

Meliboeus: These I remember, and how Thyrsis strove
For victory in vain. From that time forth
Is Corydon still Corydon with us.

Eclogue VIII

TO POLLIO DAMON ALPHESIBOEUS

Of Damon and Alpheſiboëus now, Those ſhepherd-ſingers at
whoſe rival ſtrains The heifer wondering forgot to graze, The
lynx ſtood awe-ſtruck, and the flowing ſtreams, Unwonted
loiterers, ſtayed their courſe to hear- How Damon and
Alpheſiboëus ſang Their paſtoral ditties, will I tell the tale.

Thou, whether broad Timavus’ rocky banks Thou now art
paſſing, or doſt ſkirt the ſhore Of the Illyrian main, - will ever
dawn That day when I thy deeds may celebrate, Ever that day
when through the whole wide world I may renown thy verſe-
that verſe alone Of Sophoclean buſkin worthy found? With
thee began, to thee ſhall end, the ſtrain. Take thou theſe
ſongs that owe their birth to thee, And deign around thy
temples to let creep This ivy-chaplet ‘twixt the conquering
bays.

Scarce had night’s chilly ſhade forſook the ſky What time to
nibbling ſheep the dewy graſs Taſtes ſweeteſt, when, on his
ſmooth ſhepherd-ſtaff Of olive leaning, Damon thus began.

Damon: “Riſe, Lucifer, and, heralding the light, Bring in the
genial day, while I make moan Fooled by vain paſſion for a
faithleſs bride, For Nyſa, and with this my dying breath Call on
the gods, though little it beſtead- The gods who heard her
vows and heeded not.

“Begin, my flute, with me Maenalian lays. Ever hath Maenalus
his murmuring groves And whiſpering pines, and ever hears
the ſongs Of love-lorn ſhepherds, and of Pan, who
firſt Brooked not the tuneful reed ſhould idle lie.

“Begin, my flute, with me Maenalian lays. Nyſa to Mopsus
given! what may not then We lovers look for? ſoon ſhall we
ſee mate Griffins with mares, and in the coming age Shy deer
and hounds together come to drink.

“Begin, my flute, with me Maenalian lays. Now, Mopsus, cut
new torches, for they bring Your bride along; now,

bridegroom, scatter nuts:Forsaking Oeta mounts the evening star!

"Begin, my flute, with me Maenalian lays.O worthy of thy mate, while all men elseThou scornest, and with loathing dost beholdMy shepherd's pipe, my goats, my shaggy brow,And untrimmed beard, nor deem'st that any godFor mortal doings hath regard or care.

"Begin, my flute, with me Maenalian lays.Once with your mother, in our orchard-garth,A little maid I saw you- I your guide-Plucking the dewy apples. My twelfth yearI scarce had entered, and could barely reachThe brittle boughs. I looked, and I was lost;A sudden frenzy swept my wits away.

"Begin, my flute, with me Maenalian lays.Now know I what Love is: 'mid savage rocksTmaros or Rhodope brought forth the boy,Or Garamantes in earth's utmost bounds-No kin of ours, nor of our blood begot.

"Begin, my flute, with me Maenalian lays.Fierce Love it was once steeled a mother's heartWith her own offspring's blood her hands to imbrue:Mother, thou too wert cruel; say wert thouMore cruel, mother, or more ruthless he?Ruthless the boy, thou, mother, cruel too.

"Begin, my flute, with me Maenalian lays.Now let the wolf turn tail and fly the sheep,Tough oaks bear golden apples, alder-treesBloom with narcissus-flower, the tamariskSweat with rich amber, and the screech-owl vieIn singing with the swan: let TityrusBe Orpheus, Orpheus in the forest-glade,Arion 'mid his dolphins on the deep.

"Begin, my flute, with me Maenalian lays.Yea, be the whole earth to mid-ocean turned!Farewell, ye woodlands I from the tall peakOf yon aerial rock will headlong plungeInto the billows: this my latest gift,From dying lips bequeathed thee, see thou keep.Cease now, my flute, now cease Maenalian

lays.”

Thus Damon: but do ye, Pierian Maids-We cannot all do all things- tell me howAlphesiboeus to his strain replied.

Alphesiboeus: “Bring water, and with soft wool-fillet bindThese altars round about, and burn thereonRich vervain and male frankincense, that IMay strive with magic spells to turn astrayMy lover’s saner senses, whereuntoThere lacketh nothing save the power of song.

“Draw from the town, my songs, draw Daphnis home.Songs can the very moon draw down from heavenCirce with singing changed from human formThe comrades of Ulysses, and by songIs the cold meadow-snake, asunder burst.

“Draw from the town, my songs, draw Daphnis home.These triple threads of threefold colour firstI twine about thee, and three times withalAround these altars do thine image bear:Uneven numbers are the god’s delight.

“Draw from the town, my songs, draw Daphnis home.Now, Amaryllis, ply in triple knotsThe threefold colours; ply them fast, and sayThis is the chain of Venus that I ply.

“Draw from the town, my songs, draw Daphnis home.As by the kindling of the self-same fireHarder this clay, this wax the softer grows,So by my love may Daphnis; sprinkle meal,And with bitumen burn the brittle bays.Me Daphnis with his cruelty doth burn,I to melt cruel Daphnis burn this bay.

“Draw from the town, my songs, draw Daphnis home.As when some heifer, seeking for her steerThrough woodland and deep grove, sinks wearied outOn the green sedge beside a stream, love-lorn,Nor marks the gathering night that calls her home-As pines that heifer, with such love as hersMay Daphnis pine, and I not care to heal.

“Draw from the town, my songs, draw Daphnis home. These
relics once, dear pledges of himself, The traitor left me, which,
O earth, to thee Here on this very threshold I commit—Pledges
that bind him to redeem the debt.

“Draw from the town, my songs, draw Daphnis home. These
herbs of bane to me did Moeris give, In Pontus culled, where
baneful herbs abound. With these full oft have I seen Moeris
change To a wolf’s form, and hide him in the woods, Oft
summon spirits from the tomb’s recess, And to new fields
transport the standing corn.

“Draw from the town, my songs, draw Daphnis home. Take
ashes, Amaryllis, fetch them forth, And o’er your head into the
running brook Fling them, nor look behind: with these
will Upon the heart of Daphnis make essay. Nothing for gods,
nothing for songs cares he.

“Draw from the town, my songs, draw Daphnis home. Look,
look I the very embers of themselves Have caught the altar
with a flickering flame, While I delay to fetch them: may the
sign Prove lucky! something it must mean, for sure, And Hylax
on the threshold ‘gins to bark! May we believe it, or are lovers
still By their own fancies fooled?

Give o’er, my songs, Daphnis is coming from the town, give
o’er.”

Eclogue IX

LYCIDAS MOERIS

Lycidas: Say whither, Moeris?— Make you for the town, Or on
what errand bent?

MOERIS

O Lycidas, We have lived to see, what never yet we feared, An
interloper own our little farm, And say, “Be off, you former

husbandmen! These fields are mine." Now, cowed and out of heart, Since Fortune turns the whole world upside down, We are taking him- ill luck go with the same!- "These kids you see.

LYCIDAS

But surely I had heard That where the hills first draw from off the plain, And the high ridge with gentle slope descends, Down to the brook-side and the broken crests Of yonder veteran beeches, all the land Was by the songs of your Menalcas saved.

Moeris: Heard it you had, and so the rumour ran, But 'mid the clash of arms, my Lycidas, Our songs avail no more than, as 'tis said, Doves of Dodona when an eagle comes. Nay, had I not, from hollow ilex-bole Warned by a raven on the left, cut short The rising feud, nor I, your Moeris here, No, nor Menalcas, were alive to-day.

Lycidas: Alack! could any of so foul a crime Be guilty? Ah! how nearly, thyself, Reft was the solace that we had in thee, Menalcas! Who then of the Nymphs had sung, Or who with flowering herbs bestrewn the ground, And o'er the fountains drawn a leafy veil? Who sung the stave I filched from you that day To Amaryllis wending, our hearts' joy?-"While I am gone, 'tis but a little way, Feed, Tityrus, my goats, and, having fed, Drive to the drinking-pool, and, as you drive, Beware the he-goat; with his horn he butts."

Moeris: Ay, or to Varus that half-finished lay, "Varus, thy name, so still our Mantua live-Mantua to poor Cremona all too near-Shall singing swans bear upward to the stars."

Lycidas: So may your swarms Cyrnean yew-trees shun, Your kine with cyttus their udders swell, Begin, if aught you have. The Muses made Me too a singer; I too have sung; the swains Call me a poet, but I believe them not: For naught of mine, or worthy Varius yet Or Cinna deem I, but account

myselfA cackling goose among melodious swans.

Moeris: 'Twas in my thought to do so, Lycidas;Even now was I revolving silentlyIf this I could recall- no paltry song:"Come, Galatea, what pleasure is 't to playAmid the waves? Here glows the Spring, here earthBeside the streams pours forth a thousand flowers;Here the white poplar bends above the cave,And the lithe vine weaves shadowy covert: come,Leave the mad waves to beat upon the shore."

Lycidas: What of the strain I heard you singing onceOn a clear night alone? the notes I stillRemember, could I but recall the words.

Moeris: "Why, Daphnis, upward gazing, do you markThe ancient risings of the Signs? for lookWhere Dionean Caesar's star comes forthIn heaven, to gladden all the fields with corn,And to the grape upon the sunny slopesHer colour bring! Now, the pears;So shall your children's children pluck their fruit.

Time carries all things, even our wits, away.Oft, as a boy, I sang the sun to rest,But all those songs are from my memory fled,And even his voice is failing Moeris now;The wolves eyed Moeris first: but at your wishMenalcas will repeat them oft enow.

Lycidas: Your pleas but linger out my heart's desire:Now all the deep is into silence hushed,And all the murmuring breezes sunk to sleep.We are half-way thither, for Bianor's tombBegins to show: here, Moeris, where the hindsAre lopping the thick leafage, let us sing.Set down the kids, yet shall we reach the town;Or, if we fear the night may gather rainEre we arrive, then singing let us go,Our way to lighten; and, that we may thusGo singing, I will case you of this load.

Moeris: Cease, boy, and get we to the work in hand:We shall sing better when himself is come.

Eclogue X

GALLUS

This now, the very latest of my toils, Vouchsafe me, Arethusa! needs must I sing a brief song to Gallus- brief, but yet Such as Lycoris' self may fitly read. Who would not sing for Gallus? So, when thou Beneath Sicanian billows glidest on, May Doris blend no bitter wave with thine, Begin! The love of Gallus be our theme, And the shrewd pangs he suffered, while, hard by, The flat-nosed she-goats browse the tender brush. We sing not to deaf ears; no word of ours But the woods echo it. What groves or lawns Held you, ye Dryad-maidens, when for love-Love all unworthy of a loss so dear-Gallus lay dying? for neither did the slopes Of Pindus or Parnassus stay you then, No, nor Aonian Aganippe. Him Even the laurels and the tamarisks wept; For him, outstretched beneath a lonely rock, Wept pine-clad Maenalus, and the flinty crags Of cold Lycaeus. The sheep too stood around-Of us they feel no shame, poet divine; Nor of the flock be thou ashamed: even fair Adonis by the rivers fed his sheep-Came shepherd too, and swine-herd footing slow, And, from the winter-acorns dripping-wet Menalcas. All with one accord exclaim: "From whence this love of thine?" Apollo came; "Gallus, art mad?" he cried, "thy bosom's care Another love is following." Therewithal Silvanus came, with rural honours crowned; The flowering fennels and tall lilies shook Before him. Yea, and our own eyes beheld Pan, god of Arcady, with blood-red juice Of the elder-berry, and with vermilion, dyed. "Wilt ever make an end?" quoth he, "behold Love recks not aught of it: his heart no more With tears is sated than with streams the grass, Bees with the cytisus, or goats with leaves." "Yet will ye sing, Arcadians, of my woes Upon your mountains," sadly he replied-"Arcadians, that alone have skill to sing. O then how softly would my ashes rest, If of my love,

one day, your flutes should tell!And would that I, of your own
fellowship,Or dresser of the ripening grape had been,Or
guardian of the flock! for surely then,Let Phyllis, or Amyntas,
or who else,Bewitch me- what if swart Amyntas be?Dark is the
violet, dark the hyacinth-Among the willows, 'neath the limber
vine,Reclining would my love have lain with me,Phyllis
plucked garlands, or Amyntas sung.Here are cool springs, soft
mead and grove, Lycoris;Here might our lives with time have
worn away.But me mad love of the stern war-god holdsArmed
amid weapons and opposing foes.Whilst thou- Ah! might I but
believe it not!-Alone without me, and from home afar,Look'st
upon Alpine snows and frozen Rhine.Ah! may the frost not
hurt thee, may the sharpAnd jagged ice not wound thy tender
feet!I will depart, re-tune the songs I framedIn verse
Chalcidian to the oaten reedOf the Sicilian swain. Resolved
am IIn the woods, rather, with wild beasts to couch,And bear
my doom, and character my loveUpon the tender tree-trunks:
they will grow,And you, my love, grow with them. And
meanwhileI with the Nymphs will haunt Mount Maenalus,Or
hunt the keen wild boar. No frost so coldBut I will hem with
hounds thy forest-glades,Parthenius. Even now, methinks, I
rangeO'er rocks, through echoing groves, and joy to
launchCydonian arrows from a Parthian bow.-As if my
madness could find healing thus,Or that god soften at a
mortal's grief!Now neither Hamadryads, no, nor songsDelight
me more: ye woods, away with you!No pangs of ours can
change him; not though weIn the mid-frost should drink of
Hebrus' stream,And in wet winters face Sithonian snows,Or,
when the bark of the tall elm-tree boleOf drought is dying,
should, under Cancer's Sign,In Aethiopian deserts drive our
flocks.Love conquers all things; yield we too to love!"

These songs, Pierian Maids, shall it sufficeYour poet to have
sung, the while he sat,And of slim mallow wove a basket
fine:To Gallus ye will magnify their worth,Gallus, for whom

my love grows hour by hour,As the green alder shoots in early
Spring.Come, let us rise: the shade is wont to beBaneful to
singers; baneful is the shadeCast by the juniper, crops sicken
tooIn shade. Now homeward, having fed your fill — Eve's star
is rising-go, my she-goats, go.