



THE TRANSFORMATION OF LYCON AND EUPHORMIUS.

BY WILLIAM MELMOTH, ESQ.

DEEM not, ye plaintive crew, that suffer wrong,
Ne thou, O man! who deal'st the tort, misween
The equal gods, who heaven's sky-mansions throng,
(Though viewless to the eyne they distant sheen)
Spectators reckless of our actions been.

Turning the volumes of grave sages old,
Where auncient saws in fable may be seen,
This truth I fond in paynim tale enroll'd;
Which for ensample drad my muse shall here unfold.

What time Arcadia's flowret vallies fam'd,
Pelafgus, first of monarchs old, obey'd,
There wonn'd a wight, and Lycon was he nam'd,
Unaw'd by conscience, of no gods afraid,
Ne justice rul'd his heart, ne mercy sway'd.
Some held him kin to that abhorred race,
Which heaven's high towers with mad emprise assay'd;
And some his cruel lynage did ytrace
From fell Erynnis join'd in Pluto's dire embrace.

But

But he, perdy, far other tale did feign,
 And claim'd alliaunce with the Sisters nine;
 And deem'd himself (what deems not pride so vain ?)
 The peerless paragon of wit divine.
 Vaunting that every foe should rue its tine.
 Right doughty wight ! yet, sooth, withouten smart,
 All powerless fell the Iosel's shafts malign :
 'Tis Vertue's arm to wield Wit's heavenly dart,
 Point its keen barb with force, and send it to the heart.

One only impe he had, Pastora hight,
 Whose sweet amenaunce pleas'd each shepherd's eye:
 Yet pleas'd she not base Lycon's evil spright,
 Tho blame in her not Malice moten spy,
 Clear, without spot, as summer's cloudless sky.
 Hence poets feign'd, Lycean Pan array'd
 In Lycon's form, inflam'd with passion high,
 Deceiv'd her mother in the covert glade,
 And from the stoln embrace ysprong the heavenly maid.

Thus fabling they : mean while the damsel fair
 A shepherd youth remark'd, as o'er the plain
 She drossly pac'd along so debonair :
 Seem'd she as one of Dian's chosen train.
 Full many a fond excuse he knew to feign,
 In sweet converse to while with her the day,
 'Till love unwares his heedless heart did gain.
 Nor dempt he, simple wight, no mortal may
 The blinded god once harbour'd, when he list, foresay.
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Now much he meditates if yet to speak,
 And now resolves his passion to conceal :
 But sure, quoth he, my feely heart will break,
 If aye I smother what I aye must feel.
 At length by hope embolden'd to reveal,
 The labouring secret dropped from his tong.
 Whiles frequent singults check'd his faltring tale,
 In modest wife her head Pastora hong :
 For never maid more chaste inspired shepherd's song.

What needs me to recount in long detail
 The tender parley which these lemans held :
 How oft he vowed his love her ne'er should fail ;
 How oft the stream from forth her eyne outwell'd,
 Doubting if constancy yet ever dwell'd
 In heart of youthful wight : suffice to know,
 Each rising doubt he in her bosome quell'd.
 So parted they, more blithsome both, I trow :
 For rankling love conceal'd, me seems, is deadly woe.

Estfoons to Lycon swift the youth did fare ,
 (Lagg'd ever youth when Cupid urg'd his way ?)
 And straight his gentle purpose did declare,
 And sooth the mount'naunce of his herds display.
 Ne Lycon meant his suiten to foresay :
 " Be thine, Pastora (quoth the masker fly)
 " And twice two thousand sheep her dower shall pay."
 Beat then the lover's heart with joyaunce high ;
 Ne dempt that aught his blifs could now betray,
 Ne guess'd that foul deceit in Lycon's bosome lay.

So forth he yode to seek his reverend fire;

(The good Euphormius shepherds him did call)

How sweet Pastora did his bosome fire,

Her worth, her promis'd flocks, he tolden all.

Ah ! nere, my son, let Lycon thee enthrall,

(Reply'd the sage, in wise experience old)

" Smooth is his tongue, but full of guile withal,

" In promise faithless, and in vaunting bold :

" Ne ever lamb of his will bleat within thy fold."

With words prophetick thus Euphormius spake :

And fact confirm'd what wisdom thus foretold :

Full many a mean devise did Lycon make,

The hoped day of spousal to with-hold,

Framing new trains when nought mote serve his old.

Nath'less he vow'd, Cyllene, cloud-topt hill,

Should sooner down the lowly delve be roll'd,

Than he his plighted promise nould fulfill :

But when, perdy, or where, the caitive fayen nill.

Whiles thus the tedious suns had journey'd round,

Ne ought mote now the lovers hearts divide,

Ne trust was there, ne truth in Lycon found ;

The maid with matron Juno for her guide,

The youth by Concord led, in secret hy'd

To Hymen's sacred fane : the honest deed

Each god approv'd, and close the bands were ty'd.

Certes, till happier moments should succeed,

No prying eyne they ween'd their emprise mote areed.

But prying eyne of Lycon 'twas in vain
 (Right practick in disguise) to hope beware.
 He trac'd their covert steps to Hymen's fane,
 And joy'd to find them in his long-laid snare,
 Algates, in semblaunt ire, he 'gan to swear,
 And roaren loud as in displeasaunce high;
 Then out he hurlen forth his daughter fair,
 Forelore, the houseless child of Misery,
 Expos'd to killing cold, and pinching penury.

Ah ! whither now shall sad Pastora wend,
 To want abandon'd and by wrongs oppress'd ?
 Who shall the wretched out-cast's teen befriend ?
 Live's mercy then, if not in parent's breast ?
 At Jove's right hand, to Jove for ever dear,
 Yes, MERCY lives, the gentle goddess blest,
 Aye at his feet she pleads the cause distressed,
 To Sorrow's plaints she turns his equal ear,
 And wafts to heaven's star-throne fair Vertue's silent tear.

'Twas SHE that bade Euphormius quell each thought
 That well mote rise to check his generous aid.
 Tho high the torts which Lycon him had wrought,
 Tho few the flocks his humble pastures fed,
 When as he learn'd Pastora's hapless sted,
 His breast humane with wonted pity flows.
 He op'd his gates, the naked exile led
 Beneath his roof : a decent drapet throws
 O'er her cold limbs, and sooths her undeserved woes.

Now

Now loud-tongu'd Rumor bruited round the tale :
 Th' astonied swains uneath could credence give,
 That in Arcadia's unambitious vale
 A faytor false as Lycon e'er did live.
 But Jove (who in high heaven does mortals prive,
 And every deed in golden ballance weighs)
 To earth his flaming charret baden drive,
 And down descends, enwrapt in peerless blaze,
 To deal forth guerdon meet to good and evil ways.

Where Eurymanthus, crown'd with many a wood,
 His silver stream through dasy'd vales does lead,
 Stretch'd on the flowery marge, in reckless mood,
 Proud Lycon fought by charm of jocund reed
 To lull the dire remorse of tortious deed.
 Him Jove accosts, in reverend semblance dight
 Of good Euphormius, and 'gan mild areed
 Of compact oft confirm'd, of fay yplight,
 Of nature's tender tye, of sacred rule of right,

With lofty eyne, half loth to look so low,
 Him Lycon view'd, and with swol'n surquedry
 'Gan rudely treat his sacred eld : When now
 Forth flood the God confest that rules the sky,
 In sudden sheen of drad divinity :
 " And know, false man," the lord of thunders said,
 " Not unobserv'd by heaven's all-perfent eye
 " Thy cruel deeds : nor shall be unappay'd :
 " Gd! be in form that best beseems thy thews, array'd."

Whiles yet he spake th' affrayed trembling wight
 Transmew'd to blatant beast, with hideous howl
 Rush'd headlong forth, in well-deserved plight,
 Mid'st dragons, minotaurs, and fiends to prowl,
 A wolf in form as erst a wolf in soul!
 To Pholoë, forest wild, he hy'd away,
 The horrid haunt of savage monsters foul.
 There helpless innocence is still his prey,
 Thief of the bleating fold, and shepherd's dire dismay,

Tho Jove to good Euphormius' cot did wend,
 Where peaceful dwelt the man of virtue high,
 Each shepherd's praise and eke each shepherd's friend,
 In every act of sweet humanity.
 Him Jove approaching in mild majesty,
 Greeted all hail! then bade him join the throng
 Of glit'rand lights that gild the glowing sky.
 There shepherds nightly view his orb yhong,
 Where bright he shines eterne, the brightest stars emong.