

**DELPHI POETS SERIES**

**JOHN DRYDEN**



**DELPHI CLASSICS**

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## DELPHI POETS SERIES

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# JOHN DRYDEN

(1631-1700)



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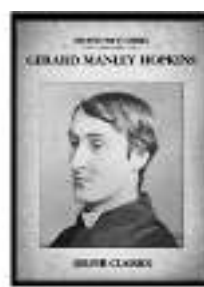
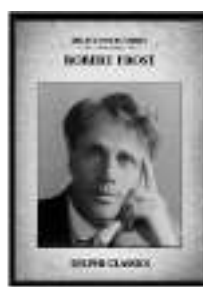
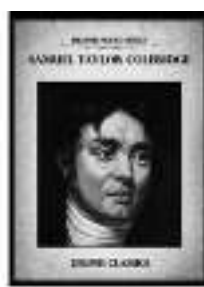
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Version 1



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**JOHN DRYDEN**



*By Delphi Classics, 2013*

## NOTE

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When reading poetry on an eReader, it is advisable to use a small font size, which will allow the lines of poetry to display correctly.

# The Poetry Collections

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*John Dryden was born in the village rectory of Aldwinckle, near Thrapston, in Northamptonshire.*





*Another view of the house*





*John Dryden by James Maubert, 1695*



John Dryden was born in the village of Aldwinckle in Northamptonshire, where his maternal grandfather was Rector of All Saints. His family was descended from Puritan landowning gentry that supported the Puritan cause and Parliament and interestingly he was also a second cousin of Jonathan Swift. As a boy Dryden lived in the nearby village of Titchmarsh, before being sent to Westminster School as a King's Scholar, under the tutelage of Dr Richard Busby. Dryden clearly respected the Headmaster and later sent two of his sons to school at Westminster. As a humanist public school Westminster maintained a curriculum which trained pupils in the art of rhetoric and the presentation of arguments for both sides of a given issue - a skill which would remain with Dryden and influence his later writing and thinking. The Westminster curriculum also included weekly translation assignments that developed Dryden's capacity for assimilation.

The young poet's years at Westminster were not uneventful and his first published poem, an elegy with a strong royalist feel on the death from smallpox of his school friend Henry, Lord Hastings, alludes to the execution of King Charles I, which took place on 30 January 1649, close to the school where Dr Busby had first prayed for the King and then locked in his schoolboys to prevent them attending the spectacle.

In 1650 Dryden joined Trinity College, Cambridge, where he experienced a return to the religious and political ethos of his childhood, as the Master of Trinity was a Puritan preacher, who had been rector in Dryden's home village. Though there is little specific information on Dryden's undergraduate years, he would most certainly have followed the standard curriculum of classical rhetoric and mathematics. In 1654 the poet obtained his degree, graduating with great distinction and in June of the same year Dryden's father died, leaving him land that generated a little income, though not enough to live on.

Returning to London during the Protectorate, Dryden obtained work from Cromwell's Secretary of State, John Thurloe. This appointment may have been the result of influence exercised on his behalf by his cousin the Lord Chamberlain, Sir Gilbert Pickering. At Cromwell's funeral on 23 November 1658, Dryden became acquainted with the Puritan poets John Milton and Andrew Marvell. Shortly after this time he published his first important poem, *Heroique Stanzas* (1658), a eulogy of Cromwell's death, serving as a cautious and prudent emotional display. In 1660 Dryden celebrated the Restoration of the monarchy and the return of Charles II with *Astraea Redux*, an authentic royalist panegyric. In this work the interregnum is illustrated as a time of anarchy and Charles is depicted as the restorer of peace and order.

After the Restoration, Dryden quickly established himself as the leading poet and literary critic of his day and he transferred his allegiances to the new government. Along with *Astraea Redux*, Dryden welcomed the new regime with two more panegyrics; *To His Sacred Majesty: A Panegyric on his Coronation* (1662), and *To My Lord Chancellor* (1662). These poems indicate that Dryden was looking to court a possible patron, though he was ultimately to make a living writing for publishers and the reading public, rather than for the aristocracy.



*The charismatic Rev. Dr. Richard Busby (1606–1695), who was an Anglican priest serving as headmaster of Westminster School for more than fifty-five years.*

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*Charles II, whose reign commenced in 1660 and was celebrated in Dryden's early work 'Astraea Redux', a royalist panegyric in which the poet welcomes the new regime. It is a vivid emotional display that overshadows the cautious 'Heroique Stanzas' that Dryden composed for Oliver Cromwell's death.*

## Upon the Death of the Lord Hastings

---

MUST Noble *Hastings* Immaturely die,  
(The Honour of his ancient Family?)  
Beauty and Learning thus together meet,  
To bring a *Winding* for a *Wedding-sheet*?  
Must *Vertue* prove *Death*'s Harbinger? Must She, 5  
With him expiring, feel Mortality?  
Is *Death* (Sin's wages) Grace's now? shall Art  
Make us more Learned, only to depart?  
If Merit be Disease, if *Vertue* Death;  
To be Good, Not to be, who'd then bequeath 10  
Himself to Discipline? Who'd not esteem  
Labour a Crime, Study self-murder deem?  
Our *Noble Youth* now have pretence to be  
Dunces securely, Ign'rant healthfully.  
Rare Linguist! whose Worth speaks it self; whose Praise, 15  
Though not his Own, all *Tongues* Besides do raise:  
Then Whom Great *Alexander* may seem less,  
Who conquer'd Men, but not their Languages.  
In his Mouth Nations speak; his Tongue might be  
Interpreter to *Greece, France, Italy.* 20  
His native Soyl was the four parts o' th' Earth;  
All *Europe* was too narrow for his Birth.  
A young Apostle; and (with rev'rence may  
I speak 'it) inspir'd with gift of *Tongues*, as They.  
Nature gave him, a Childe, what Men in vain 25  
Oft strive, by Art though further'd, to obtain.  
His body was an Orb, his sublime Soul  
Did move on *Vertue*'s and on Learning's pole:  
Whose Reg'lar Motions better to our view,  
Then *Archimedes* Sphere, the Heavens did shew. 30  
Graces and *Vertues*, Languages and Arts,  
Beauty and Learning, fill'd up all the parts.  
Heav'ns Gifts, which do, like falling Stars, appear  
Scatter'd in Others; all, as in their Sphear,  
Were fix'd and conglobate in's Soul, and thence 35  
Shone th'row his Body with sweet Influence;  
Letting their Glories so on each Limb fall,  
The whole Frame render'd was Celestial.  
Come, learned *Ptolomy*, and tryal make,  
If thou this Hero's Altitude canst take; 40  
But that transcends thy skill; thrice happie all,  
Could we but prove thus Astronomical.  
Liv'd *Tycho* now, struck with this Ray, (which shone  
More bright i' th' Morn then others Beam at Noon)

He'd take his *Astrolabe*, and seek out here 45  
What new Star 't was did gild our Hemisphere.  
Replenish'd then with such rare Gifts as these,  
Where was room left for such a Foul Disease?  
The Nations sin hath drawn that Veil which shrouds  
Our Day-spring in so sad benighting Clouds. 50  
Heaven would no longer trust its Pledge; but thus  
Recall'd it; rapt its *Ganymede* from us.  
Was there no milder way but the Small Pox,  
The very filth'ness of *Pandora's* Box?  
So many Spots, like *næves*, our *Venus* soil? 55  
One Jewel set off with so many a Foil?  
Blisters with pride swell'd, which th'row's flesh did sprout  
Like Rose-buds, stuck i' th' Lilly-skin about.  
Each little Pimple had a Tear in it,  
To wail the fault its rising did commit: 60  
Who, Rebel-like, with their own Lord at strife,  
Thus made an Insurrection 'gainst his Life.  
Or were these Gems sent to adorn his Skin,  
The Cab'net of a richer Soul within?  
No Comet need foretel his Change drew on, 65  
Whose Corps might seem a *Constellation*.  
O had he di'd of old, how great a strife  
Had been, who from his Death should draw their Life?  
Who should by one rich draught become whate'er  
*Seneca, Cato, Numa, Cæsar*, were: 70  
Learn'd, Vertuous, Pious, Great, and have by this  
An Universal *Metempsuchosis*.  
Must all these ag'd Sires in one Funeral  
Expire? All die in one so young, so small?  
Who, had he liv'd his life out, his great Fame 75  
Had swoln 'bove any *Greek* or *Romane* name?  
But hasty Winter, with one blast, hath brought  
The hopes of Autumn, Summer, Spring, to nought.  
Thus fades the Oak i' th' sprig, i' th' blade the Corn;  
Thus, without Young, this *Phœnix* dies, new born. 80  
Must then old three-legg'd gray-beards, with their Gout,  
Catarrhs, Rheums, Aches, live three Ages out?  
Times Offal, onely fit for th' Hospital,  
Or t' hang an Antiquaries room withal;  
Must Drunkards, Lechers, spent with Sinning, live 85  
With such helps as Broths, Possits, Physick give?  
None live but such as should die? Shall we meet  
With none but Ghostly Fathers in the Street?  
Grief makes me rail; Sorrow will force its way;  
And Show'rs of Tears, Tempestuous Sighs best lay. 90



The Tongue may fail; but over-flowing Eyes  
Will weep out lasting streams of *Elegies*.

---

But thou, O *Virgin-widow*, left alone,  
Now thy Beloved, Heaven-ravisht *Spouse* is gone,  
(Whose skilful Sire in vain strove to apply <sup>95</sup>  
Med'cines, when thy Balm was no remedy)  
With greater than *Platonick* love, O wed  
His Soul, tho' not his Body, to thy Bed:  
Let that make thee a Mother; bring thou forth  
Th' *Ideas* of his Vertue, Knowledge, Worth; <sup>100</sup>  
Transcribe th' Original in new Copies: give  
*Hastings* o' th' better part: so shall he live  
In's Nobler Half; and the great Grandsire be  
Of an Heroick Divine Progenie:  
An Issue which t' Eternity shall last, <sup>105</sup>  
Yet but th' Irradiations which he cast.  
Erect no *Mausolæums*: for his best  
Monument is his Spouses Marble brest.

**Heroick Stanza's: A Poem upon the Death of His Late Highness, Oliver, Lord Protector  
of England, Scotland, and Ireland in Heroick Stanza's**

---

Heroick Stanza's, Consecrated to the Memory of His Highness,

OLIVER, Late Lord Protector of This Commonwealth, &c.

Written after the Celebrating of His Funeral.

1

AND now 'tis time; for their officious haste,  
Who would before have born him to the Sky,  
Like eager *Romans* e'er all Rites were past,  
Did let too soon the sacred Eagle fly.

2

Though our best Notes are Treason to his Fame, 5  
Join'd with the loud Applause of publick Voice,  
Since Heaven, what Praise we offer to his Name,  
Hath render'd too Authentick by its Choice.

3

Though in his Praise no Arts can liberal be,  
Since they, whose Muses have the highest flown, 10  
Add not to his Immortal Memory;  
But do an Act of Friendship to their own.

4

Yet 'tis our Duty and our Interest too,  
Such Monuments as we can build, to raise;  
Lest all the World prevent what we shou'd do, 15  
And claim a Title in him by their Praise.

5

How shall I then begin, or where conclude,  
To draw a Fame so truly Circular?  
For in a Round, what Order can be shew'd,  
Where all the Parts so equal perfect are? 20

6

His Grandeur he derived from Heav'n alone,  
For he was great, e'er Fortune made him so;

And Wars, like Mists that rise against the Sun,  
Made him but greater seem, not greater grow.

---

7

No borrow'd Bays his Temples did adorn, <sup>25</sup>  
But to our Crown he did fresh Jewels bring;  
Nor was his Vertue poison'd, soon as born,  
With the too early Thoughts of being King.

8

Fortune (that easie Mistress of the Young,  
But to her ancient Servants coy and hard) <sup>30</sup>  
Him, at that Age, her Favourites ranked among,  
When she her best-lov'd *Pompey* did discard.

9

He, private, marked the Faults of others Sway,  
And set as Sea-marks for himself to shun;  
Not like rash Monarchs, who their Youth betray <sup>35</sup>  
By Acts their Age too late wou'd wish undone.

10

And yet Dominion was not his Design;  
We owe that Blessing not to him, but Heav'n,  
Which to fair Acts unsought Rewards did join,  
Rewards that less to him, than us, were giv'n. <sup>40</sup>

11

Our former Chiefs, like Sticklers of the War,  
First sought t' inflame the Parties, then to poise:  
The Quarrel lov'd, but did the Cause abhor,  
And did not strike to hurt, but make a noise.

12

War, our Consumption, was their gainful Trade; <sup>45</sup>  
We inward bled, whilst they prolong'd our Pain;  
He fought to end our Fighting, and assay'd  
To stench the Blood by breathing of the Vein.

13

Swift and resistless through the Land he pass'd,  
Like that bold *Greek*, who did the East subdue; <sup>50</sup>

And made to Battels such Heroick Haste,  
As if on Wings of Victory he flew.

---

14

He fought, secure of Fortune, as of fame;  
Till by new Maps, the Island might be shown,  
Of Conquests, which he strew'd where-e'er he came, <sup>55</sup>  
Thick as the *Galaxy* with Stars is sown.

15

His palms, tho under Weights they did not stand,  
Still thriv'd; no Winter could his Laurels fade:  
Heaven in his Portraict shew'd a Work-man's Hand  
And drew it perfect, yet without a Shade. <sup>60</sup>

16

Peace was the Prize of all his Toil and Care,  
Which War had banish'd and did now restore:  
*Bologna's* walls thus mounted in the Air,  
To seat themselves more surely than before.

17

Her Safety, rescued *Ireland*, to him owes; <sup>65</sup>  
And treacherous *Scotland*, to no Int'rest true,  
Yet bless'd that Fate which did his Arms dispose,  
Her Land to civilize, as to subdue.

18

Nor was he like those Stars which only shine,  
When to pale Mariners they Storms portend: <sup>70</sup>  
He had his calmer Influence, and his Mien  
Did Love and Majesty together blend.

19

'Tis true, his Count'nance did imprint an Awe,  
And naturally all Souls to his did bow;  
As Wands of Divination downward draw, <sup>75</sup>  
And point to Beds where Sov'raign Gold doth grow.

20

When, past all Off'rings to *Pheretrian Jove*,

He *Mars* depos'd and Arms to Gowns made yield,  
Successful Counsels did him soon approve  
As fit for close Intrigues as open Field. 80

21

To suppliant *Holland* he vouchsaf'd a Peace,  
Our once bold Rival in the *British* Main,  
Now tamely glad her unjust Claim to cease,  
And buy our Friendship with her Idol, Gain.

22

Fame of th' asserted Sea, through *Europe* blown, 85  
Made *France* and *Spain* ambitious of his Love;  
Each knew that Side must conquer, he wou'd own;  
And for him fiercely, as for Empire, strove.

23

No sooner was the *French*-Man's Cause embrac'd,  
Than the light *Monsieur* the grave *Don* out-weigh'd: 90  
His Fortune turn'd the Scale where-e'er 'twas cast,  
Tho' *Indian* mines were in the other laid.

24

When absent, yet we conquer'd in his Right;  
For tho' some meaner Artist's Skill were shown,  
In mingling Colours, or in placing Light, 95  
Yet still the fair Designment was his own.

25

For from all Tempers he cou'd Service draw  
The worth of each, with its Alloy, he knew;  
And, as the Confident of Nature, saw  
How she Complexions did divide and brew. 100

26

Or he their single Vertues did survey,  
By Intuition, in his own large Breast,  
Where all the rich *Idea*'s of them lay,  
That were the Rule and Measure to the rest.

27

When such Heroick Vertue Heaven sets out, <sup>105</sup>

~~The Stars, like Commons, sullenly obey;~~

---

Because it drains them, when it comes about;

And therefore is a Tax they seldom pay.

28

From this high Spring, our Foreign Conquests flow,

Which yet more glorious Triumphs do portend; <sup>110</sup>

Since their Commencement to his Arms they owe,

If Springs as high as Fountains may ascend.

29

He made us Free-men of the Continent,

Whom Nature did like Captives treat before;

To nobler Preys the *English* Lion sent, <sup>115</sup>

And taught him first in *Belgian* Walks to roar.

30

That old unquestion'd Pirate of the Land,

Proud *Rome*, with Dread the Fate of *Dunkirk* heard;

And trembling, wish'd behind more *Alps* to stand,

Although an *Alexander* were her Guard. <sup>120</sup>

31

By his Command we boldly cross'd the Line

And bravely fought where Southern Stars arise;

We trac'd the far-fetched Gold unto the Mine,

And that which brib'd our Fathers, made our Prize.

32

Such was our Prince, yet own'd a Soul above <sup>125</sup>

The highest Acts it could produce to show:

Thus poor Mechanick Arts in Publick move,

Whilst the deep Secrets beyond Practice go.

33

Nor dy'd he when his Ebbing Fame went less,

But when fresh Laurels courted him to live: <sup>130</sup>

He seem'd but to prevent some new Success,

As if above what Triumphs Earth could give.

34

His latest Victories still thickest came,  
As near the Centre, Motion does increase;  
Till he, press'd down by his own weighty Name, <sup>135</sup>  
Did, like the Vestal, under Spoils decease.

35

But first, the Ocean, as a tribute, sent  
That Giant-Prince of all her Watry Herd;  
And th' Isle, when her protecting *Genius* went,  
Upon his Obsequies loud Sighs conferr'd. <sup>140</sup>

36

No Civil Broils have since his Death arose,  
But Faction now, by Habit, does obey;  
And Wars have that Respect for his Repose,  
As winds for *Halcyons* when they breed at Sea.

37

His Ashes in a Peaceful Urn shall rest, <sup>145</sup>  
His Name a great Example stands to show,  
How strangely high Endeavours may be bless'd,  
Where Piety and Valour jointly go.



A Poem on the Happy Restoration and Return of His Sacred Majesty Charles the Second

NOW with a general Peace the World was blest,  
While Ours, a World divided from the rest,  
A dreadful Quiet felt, and worsèd far  
Than Armes, a sullen Interval of War:  
Thus, when black Clouds draw down the lab'ring Skies, 5  
Ere yet abroad the winged Thunder flies,  
An horrid Stillness first invades the ear,  
And in that silence We the Tempest fear.  
Th' ambitious *Swede* like restless Billows tost  
On this hand gaining what on that he lost, 10  
Though in his life he Blood and Ruine breath'd,  
To his now guideless Kingdom Peace bequeath'd;  
And Heaven, that seem'd regardless of our Fate,  
For *France* and *Spain* did Miracles create,  
Such mortal Quarrels to compose in Peace 15  
As Nature bred and Int'rest did encrease.  
We sigh'd to hear the fair *Iberian* Bride  
Must grow a Lillie to the Lillies side,  
While Our cross Stars deny'd us *Charles* his bed  
Whom Our first Flames and Virgin Love did wed. 20  
For his long absence Church and State did groan;  
Madness the Pulpit, Faction seiz'd the Throne:  
Experienc'd Age in deep despair was lost  
To see the Rebel thrive, the Loyal crost:  
Youth that with Joys had unacquainted been 25  
Envy'd gray hairs that once good Days had seen:  
We thought our Sires, not with their own content,  
Had ere we came to age our Portion spent.  
Nor could our Nobles hope their bold Attempt  
Who ruined Crowns would Coronets exempt: 30  
For when by their designing Leaders taught  
To strike at Pow'r which for themselves they sought,  
The vulgar gull'd into Rebellion, arm'd,  
Their blood to action by the Prize was warm'd;  
The Sacred Purple then and Scarlet Gown, 35  
Like sanguine Dye, to Elephants was shewn.  
Thus when the bold *Typhocus* scal'd the Sky  
And forc'd great *Jove* from his own Heaven to fly,  
(What King, what Crown from Treasons reach is free,  
If *Jove* and *Heaven* can violatèd be?), 40  
The lesser Gods that shar'd his prosp'rous State  
All suffer'd in the Exil'd Thunderer's Fate.  
The Rabble now such Freedom did enjoy,

As Winds at Sea, that use it to destroy:  
Blind as the *Cyclops*, and as wild as he, <sup>45</sup>  
They own'd a lawless savage Libertie,  
Like that our painted Ancestors so priz'd  
Ere Empire's Arts their Breasts had Civiliz'd.  
How Great were then Our *Charles* his woes, who thus  
Was forc'd to suffer for Himself and us! <sup>50</sup>  
He toss'd by fate, and hurried up and down,  
Heir to his Fathers Sorrows, with his Crown,  
Could taste no sweets of Youths desired Age,  
But found his Life too true a Pilgrimage.  
Unconquer'd yet in that forlorn Estate, <sup>55</sup>  
His Manly Courage overcame his Fate.  
His Wounds he took like *Romans* on his Breast,  
Which by his Vertue were with Laurels drest.  
As Souls reach Heav'n, while yet in Bodies pent,  
So did he live above his Banishment. <sup>60</sup>  
That Sun, which we beheld with couz'ned eyes  
Within the Water, mov'd along the Skies.  
How easie 'tis when Destiny proves kind,  
With full spread Sails to run before the Wind,  
But those that 'gainst stiff Gales laveering go <sup>65</sup>  
Must be at once resolv'd and skilful too.  
He would not like soft *Otho* hope prevent,  
But stay'd and suffer'd Fortune to repent.  
These Virtues *Galba* in a Stranger sought;  
And *Piso* to Adopted Empire brought. <sup>70</sup>  
How shall I then my doubtful Thoughts express  
That must his Suff'rings both regret and bless!  
For when his early Valour Heav'n had crost,  
And all at *Worc'ster* but the honour lost,  
Forc'd into exile from his rightful Throne, <sup>75</sup>  
He made all Countries where he came his own,  
And viewing Monarchs secret Arts of sway  
A Royal Factor for their Kingdoms lay.  
Thus banish'd *David* spent abroad his time,  
When to be Gods Anointed was his Crime, <sup>80</sup>  
And when restor'd, made his proud Neighbours rue  
Those choise Remarks he from his Travels drew:  
Nor is he only by Afflictions shown  
To conquer others Realms, but rule his own:  
Recov'ring hardly what he lost before, <sup>85</sup>  
His Right indears it much, his Purchase more.  
Inur'd to suffer ere he came to raign,  
No rash procedure will his Actions stain.  
To bus'ness ripened by digestive thought,

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