

An Elegy upon the Death of Dr. Donne, Dean of Paul's

CAN we not force from widow'd poetry,
Now thou art dead, great Donne, one elegy
To crown thy hearse? Why yet dare we not trust,
Though with unkneaded dough-bak'd* prose, thy dust* [dull]
Such as the unscissor'd* churchman, from the flower [unshorn]
Of fading rhetoric, short-liv'd as his hour,
Dry as the sand that measures it, should lay
Upon thy ashes on the funeral day?

...

The Muses' garden, with pedantic weed
O'erspread, was purg'd by thee; the lazy seeds
Of servile imitation thrown away,
And fresh invention plant'd. Thou didst pay
The debts of our penurious bankrupt age;
Licentious thefts, that make poetic rage
A mimic fury, when our souls must be
Possess'd, or with Anacreon's ecstasy,
Or Pindar's, not their own

...

Thou hast redeem'd, and open'd us a mine
Of rich and pregnant fancy; drawn a line
Of masculine expression

...

Since to the awe of thy imperious wit
Our stubborn language bends, made only fit
With her tough thick-ribb'd hoops to gird about
Thy giant fancy, which had prov'd too stout
For their soft melting phrases