



MICHAEL DRAYTON

POEMS OF
MICHAEL DRAYTON

edited
with an introduction
by

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To the Virginian Voyage (1606)

You brave heroique minds,
Worthy your countries name,
That honour still pursue,
Goe, and subdue,
Whilst loyt'ring hinds 5
Lurke here at home, with shame.

Britans, you stay too long,
Quickly aboard bestow you,
And with a merry gale
Swell your stretch'd sayle, 10
With vowes as strong,
As the winds that blow you.

Your course securely steere,
West and by south forth keepe,
Rocks, lee-shores, nor sholes, 15
When Eolus scowles,
You need not feare,
So absolute the deepe.

And cheerefully at sea,
Successé you still intice, 20
To get the pearle and gold,
And ours to hold,
Virginia,
Earth's onely paradise.

Where nature hath in store, 25
Fowle, venison, and fish,
And the fruitfull'st soyle,
Without your toyle,
Three harvests more,
All greater then you wish. 30

And the ambitious vine
Crownes with his purple masse,
The Cedar reaching hie
To kisse the sky,
The Cypresse, pine 35
And use-full Sassafras.

To whose, the golden age
Still natures lawes doth give,
No other cares that tend,
But them to defend 40
From winters age,
That long there doth not live.

When as the lushious smell
Of that delicious land,
Above the seas that flowes, 45
The cleere wind throwes,
Your hearts to swell
Approching the deare strand.

In kenning of the shore
(Thanks to God first given,) 50
O you the happy'st men,
Be frolike then,
Let cannons roare,
Frighting the wide heaven.

And in regions farre 55
Such heroes bring yee fourth,

As those from whom we came,
And plant our name,
Under that starre
Not knowne unto our north. 60

And as there plenty growes
Of lawrell every where,
Apollo's sacred tree,
You it may see,
A poets browes 65
To crowne, that may sing there.

Thy voyages attend,
Industrious Hackluit,
Whose reading shall inflame
Men to seeke fame, 70
And much commend
To after-times thy wit.

To the Virginian Voyage. First printed 1606. The *Sarah Constant*, the *Godspeed*, and the *Discovery* sailed for Virginia in December. D. was well up to date with his Ode, for his book was entered 19 April 1606, only thirteen days after the patent for the expedition had been sealed. D.'s friend Chapman had celebrated Raleigh's voyage to Guiana in 1596 with *De Guiana, Carmen Epicum*. D. shows that he knew his Hakluyt well, as we should expect. Cf. *Poly-Olbion*, 19.