Oxygen Gas

Oxygen Gas
(John Shield)

On Rhenish, Madeira, Port, Claret and Sherry
Your fulsome eulogiums, bon-vivants, pray spare
'Tis granted, when sad, wine can render us merry,
And lighten our bosoms of sorrow and care ;
    But what vintage can fire us,
    Enrapture, inspire us,
As Oxygen! what so delicious to quaff!
    It is so animating,
    And so titillating,
E'en grey-beards turn frisky, dance, caper, and laugh,
For what can so fire us, etc.

O wond'rous indeed is this bev'rage ethereal!
The mortal who quaffs it, altho' a mere clod,
Is straightway transformed to a being aerial,
And moves on earth's surface in fancy a God.
    In a bumper is given
    A foretaste of Heaven,
All earthly vexation straight cease to annoy,
    Whilst laughing and crying,
    And efforts at flying,
Bespeak the soul tost in a tempest of joy.

For what can so fire us, etc.

Haste, haste to partake on't, ye men of grave faces,
Ye Quakers, and Methodist parsons likewise;
What tho' ye seem lost to the flexible graces,
And dormant the risible faculty lies
    One quaff of the vapor
    Will cause you to caper,
And swiftly relax your stiff solemniz'd jaws
    You'll acknowledge the change too,
    As pleasing as strange too,
And make the air ring with loud ha! ha! ha! ha's!
   For what can so fire us, etc.

Let gin, rum, and brandy grow dearer and dearer,
Distillers stop working---no toper will mourn;
Of Gas we can make a delectable cheerer,

Which, nor reddens our noses, nor livers will burn;
Unbeholden to whisky
We'll drink and get frisky,
Nor fear that tomorrow our temples may ache;
Neither stomach commotions,
Nor camomile potions,
Shall evermore cause us with terror to quake ;
For what can so fire us, etc.

Let the miser's deep coffers be fill'd to his mind now,
Let the man of ambition with honours abound,
Give the lover his mistress, complying and kind too,
And with laurel let Poets and Heroes be crown'd.
Let all be blest round me,
No envy shall wound me,
Contented and cheerful thro' life will I pass,
If fortune befriends me,
And constantly sends me
A quantum sufficit of Oxygen Gas.
For what can so fire us etc.

From Rhymes of Northern Bards, Bell

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