

Done is a Battle on the Dragon Black

Done is a battell on the dragon blak

WILLIAM DUNBAR (c. 1465-c. 1530)

translated by ADAM F MCCUNE

Done is a battle on the dragon black,
Our champion Christ confounded all his might,
The gates of hell are broken with a crack,
Raised is the cross, the triumph of the light.
The devils tremble with a hideous call,
The souls are brought out and to bliss can go,
Christ paid our ransom; his blood paid it all:
Our Lord is risen from the grave below.

Struck down is the deadly dragon, Lucifer,
The cruel serpent with the mortal sting,
The old keen tiger, with his sharp teeth sure
To lay in wait to seize us and to cling,
To grip us in his strong claws, as he thought.
The gracious Lord willed that it not be so,
Caused him to fail so that we were not caught:
Our Lord is risen from the grave below.

He who for our sake suffered to be slain,
Slain like a lamb in sacrificial rite,
Is like a lion risen up again,
And as a giant raised himself on height;
Sprung is Aurora, radiant and bright,
Aloft has gone the glorious Apollo,
The blissful day departed from the night:
Our Lord is risen from the grave below.

The great victor again is risen on height
Who for our quarrel to the death was wounded;
The sun that had waxed pale is shining bright,
And, darkness cleared, our faith is now refounded.
The bell of mercy from the heaven is sounded,
The Christians are delivered of their woe,
The error of those under law confounded:
Our Lord is risen from the grave below.

The foe is chased, the battle made to cease,
The prison broken, jailers fear and flee;
The war is gone, for he confirmed the peace,
The ransom's made, the prisoners set free,
The dungeon emptied, fetters are unclasped,
The field is won, he overcame the foe,
Despoiled him of the treasure that he grasped:
Our Lord is risen from the grave below.

Middle Scots and Latin text: Donald Davie, The New Oxford Book of Christian Verse, Oxford UP, 1981.

Original Middle Scots and Latin:

Done is a battell on the dragon blak,
Our campiou Chryst confountet hes his force;
The yettis of hell ar brokin with a crak
The signe triumphall rasit is of the croce,
The divillis trymmillis with hiddous voce,
The saulis ar borrowit and to the blis can go,
Chryst with his blud our ransonis dois indoce:
Surrexit Dominus de sepulchro.

Dungin is the deidly dragon Lucifer,
The crewall serpent with the mortall stang;
The auld kene tegir with his teith on char,
Quhilk in a wait hes lyne for us so lang,
Thinking to grip us in his clows strang;
The mercifull lord wald nocht that it wer so,
He maid him for to felye of that fang:
Surrexit Dominus de sepulchro.

He for our saik that sufferit to be slane,
And lyk a lamb in sacrifice was dicht,
Is lyk a lyone rissin up agane,
And as gyane raxit him on hicht;
Sprungin is Aurora radius and bright,
On loft is gone the glorius Appollo,
The blisfull day depairtit fro the nycht:
Surrexit Dominus de sepulchro.

The grit victour agane is rissin on hicht,
That for our quèrrel to the deth was woundit;
The sone that wox all pail now schynis bricht,
And, dirknes clerit, our fayth is now refoundit;
The knell of mercy fra the hevin is soundit,
The Cristin ar deliverit of thair wo,
The Jowis and thair errour ar confoundit:
Surrexit Dominus de sepulchro.

The fo is chasit, the battell is done ceis,
The presone brokin, the jevellouris fleit and flemit;
The weir is gon, confermit is the peis,
The fetteris lowsit and the dungeoun temit,
The ransoun maid, the presoneris redemit;
The feild is win, ourcumin is the fo,
Dispulit of the tresur that he yemit:
Surrexit Dominus de sepulchro.