

Threads of Epicureanism in Art and Literature

Post by "Joshua" of June 11, 2022 at 10:10 PM

Maybe! The problem is I remember so little--only the rough outline of a passing vignette...

I *think*;

-That it was a poem (rough start, I know!)

-The poem was written by a British man.

-And was written in the Victorian period or earlier.

-The speaker of the poem is intoxicated, possibly by opium or laudanum, or *maybe* by absinthe or wine. In any case, there's delirium.

-The speaker meets an 'exotic' man, and tries to speak to him.

-When English fails, the speaker switches to ancient Greek, possibly by reciting a few lines from Homer.

That's all I've got! I *thought* it was Thomas de Quincey (1785-1859), who wrote *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, but he was an essayist. His Greek, however, was *very* good.

Quote

[I] was very early distinguished for my classical attainments, especially for my knowledge of Greek. At thirteen, I wrote Greek with ease; and at fifteen my command of that language was so great, that I not only composed Greek verses in lyric metres, but could converse in Greek fluently, and without embarrassment-- an accomplishment which I have not since met with in any scholar of my times, and which, in my case, was owing to the practice of daily reading off the newspapers into the best Greek I could furnish extempore: for the necessity of ransacking my memory and invention, for all sorts and combinations of periphrastic expressions, as equivalents for modern ideas, images, relations of thing, &c. gave me a compass of diction which would never have been called out by a dull translation of moral essays, &c. "That boy," said one of my masters*, pointing the attention of a stranger to me, "that boy could harangue an Athenian mob, better than you or I could address an English one."