Time’s Eldest Son

Then Sit Thee Down

When Others Sing

Venite Exultemus

John Dowland
Time’s Eldest Son

John Dowland

\( \dot{q} = 96 \)

Time’s eldest son, Old Age, the heir of Ease,

Time’s eldest son, Old Age, Old Age, the heir of Ease,

Strength’s foe, Love’s woe, and foster to Devotion,

Strength’s foe, Love’s woe, and foster to devotion,

Bids gal-lant youth in mar-tial prowess please, As

Bids gal-lant youth in mar-tial prowess please, As

for him-self, he hath no earth-ly mo-tion.

for him-self, he hath no earth-ly mo-tion. But
But thanks, sighs, tears, vows, pray's thanks, But thanks, sighs, tears, vows, pray's

and sacrifices: As good as shows, masques, and sacrifices: As good as shows, masques,

jousts, or tilt devises. But vises.

1. 2.
Then sit thee down, and say thy Nunc Dimittis,

With De Profundis, Credo, and Te Deum:

Chant Misere re re; for what now so fit is, As that, or this; Paratum est cor meum?

That, or this; Paratum est cor meum?

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$\dot{=}$ 96

Then sit thee down, and say thy Nunc Dimittis,

With De Profundis, Credo, and Te Deum:

Chant Misere re re; for what now so fit is, As that, or this; Paratum est cor meum?

Or this; Paratum est cor meum?
O that thy saint would take in worth thy heart:

Thou canst not please her with a better part.

Then Sit Thee Down
When Others Sing *Venite Exultemus*

John Dowland

\[ \dot{=} 96 \]

When others sing, *Venite exul-te-mus,*

When others sing, *Ve-ni-te, ve-ni-te exul-te-mus,*

Stand by and turn to *No-li em-ulari:*

Stand by and turn to *No-li, to No-li em-ulari:*

For *Qua-re fre-mue-runt,* use *o-re-mus,*

For *Qua-re fre-mue-runt,* use *o-re-mus,*

*Vi-vat Eli-za,* *Vi-vat Eli-za,*

*Vi-vat Eli-za,* *Vi-vat Eli-za,*
When Others Sing

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for an Ave Mari. And teach those swains that

for an Ave Mari. And teach those swains that

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live about thy cell To sing Amen, Amen,

live about thy cell To sing Amen, Amen,

41

men, when thou dost pray so well.

men, when thou dost pray so well.
NOTES:


Text: Sir Henry Lee (1533-1611), Bodleian MS Rawlinson Poetry 148. In the first verse, at the beginning of the final couplet, Dowland has “But thinks, sighs, tears,…”; this edition follows the original poem: “But thanks, sighs, tears….”

The complete poem, with modernized spelling:

In yielding up his Tilt staff, said:

Time’s eldest son, old age, the heir of ease,
Strength’s foe, love’s woe, and foster to devotion,
Bids gallant youth in martial prowess please,
As for him self, he hath no earthly motion.

But thanks, sighs, tears, vows, prayers, sacrifices:
As good as shows, masques, jousts, or tilt devises.

Then sit thee down and say thy Nunc dimittis,
With De profundis, Credo, and Te Deum:
Chant Miserere; for what now so fit is,
That, or this; Paratum est cor meum?

O that thy saint would take in worth thy heart:
Thou canst not please her with a better part.

When others sing Venite exultemus,
Stand by and turn to Noli emulari;
For Quare fremuerunt, use oramus,
Vivat Eliza, for an Ave Mari.

And teach those swains that live about thy cell
To say Amen, when thou dost pray so well.

And when thou sadly sit’st in homely cell,
Then teach thy swains this carol for a song:
Blest be the hearts that wish my sovereign well,
Curst be the souls that think her any wrong.

Good God allow this aged man his right:
To be your beadsman now, that was your knight.

According to Molly M. Breckling, “Religious Melancholy in the Music of John Dowland” (Master’s thesis, Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007), the poem tells of the poet’s turn to spiritual matters as he ages; the second and third verses affirms the poet’s devotion to the spirituality of the Church of England, as opposed to the Roman Catholic Church.