

voice,
Herculean strength, & a Stentorian
Of wit a fund; of words a countless choice:
In learning rather various, than profound,
In truth intrepid, in religion sound:
A trembling form, & a distorted sight,
But firm in judgement, & in genius bright;
In controversy seldom known to spare,
But humble as the Publican in prayer;
Too more, than merited his kindness, kind
And, tho' in manners harsh, of friendly mind;
Deep tinged with melancholy's blackest shade,
And, tho' prepar'd to die, of death afraid—
Such Johnson was: of him with justice vain,
When will this Nation see his like again?

Th. Lear

[JOHNSON, SAMUEL]

ANONYMOUS MS. "Herculean strength, & a Stentorian voice" [sonnet on the death of Samuel Johnson].

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Notes: 1. The lines are inscribed in a contemporary hand on the verso free end sheet of Vol. 1, *The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (London: Printed for C. Bathurst et al., 1781). They are presumed unpublished.

2. Something can be said of provenance: recto of the same leaf is inscribed Th. Lear; "Scott" purchased the *Lives* at the Jerome Kern sale, 10 January 1929 (no. 731).