

**1817**

**AFTER DARK VAPOURS HAVE OPPRESS'D OUR  
PLAINS**

**John Keats**

**Keats, John (1795-1821) - Widely regarded as the most talented of the English romantic poets, Keats, whose work was poorly received during his lifetime, could not have foreseen his later recognition. Ironically, he wrote for his own epitaph: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." After dark vapours have oppress'd our plains (1817) - Opening lines: After dark vapours have oppress'd our plains / For a long dreary season, comes a day**

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**AFTER DARK VAPOURS**

After dark vapours have oppress'd our plains  
For a long dreary season, comes a day  
Born of the gentle South, and clears away  
From the sick heavens all unseemly stains.  
The anxious month, relieved of its pains,  
Takes as a long-lost right the feel of May;  
The eyelids with the passing coolness play  
Like rose leaves with the drip of Summer rains.  
The calmest thoughts come round us; as of leaves  
Budding- fruit ripening in stillness- Autumn suns  
Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves  
Sweet Sappho's cheek- a smiling infant's breath  
The gradual sand that through an hour-glass runs  
A woodland rivulet- a Poet's death.

**THE END**