

POEMS

BY

ELIZABETH BATH

Freeeditorial 

WRITTEN AT THE CLOSE OF DAY

WAKED to reflection at this solemn hour,
When day retiring leaves the mind to tread
The distant path, by fond remembrance led,
Guided by memory—soul-soothing power!
I view each former scene, long since passed by,
And only wish to live to learn to die.

The hours of infant mirth I love to trace,
Those days long pass'd, now like a distant dream;
And as I see the myriads in the stream
Of giddy fashion, eager in the chase,
I mourn to see each day with folly crown'd,
While time fast travels his uncertain round.

Amidst this solemn darkness spread around,
The mind celestial glows with purer light;
Calls down fair Fancy to assist her flight,
And bids her fathom the immense profound
Of future life,—remove the veil between,
And with her fairy pencil paint the scene.

Say, sweet enchantress! why shouldst thou delight
To deck the distant scene with promis'd joy;
When one sad moment shall the charm destroy,
And turn thy brightest tints to darkest night?
Is it to wean us from this world of woe,
And picture joys which time shall ne'er bestow?

Then fly far hence, thou visionary maid;
Since disappointment hovers in thy train,
Thy fancied joys are turn'd to real pain;
And seeing thus thy bright illusions fade,
No more I'll call on thee, thou faithless friend!
But trust a Power Supreme, and on His love depend.

AN ESTIMATE OF THE PLEASURES OF LIFE

WHAT are all our promis'd pleasures,
But the dew drops of the morn;
Little, trembling, glittering treasures,
Transient gems that deck the thorn:
Scarce can hope her rays supply,
Scarce they glitter ere they die.

Yet to see the sons of folly
Chase the bubble as it flies;
How it calls on melancholy,
To record the sacrifice:
Sacrifice of heavenly treasure,
To procure a fleeting pleasure.

Tho' the joys of time are failing,
Tho' its sorrows are renew'd;
Still the love of life, prevailing,
Drives us from our greatest good;
Since affliction then is kind,
Let us seek to be resign'd.

Sorrow is design'd to try us,
Hastening us thro' life's rough way;
Ev'ry cloud that passes by us,
Should a friendly voice convey:
Let us aid the great design,
And to God our wills resign.

A SUMMER'S EVENING'S CONTEMPLATION

THO' around on creation I gaze,
And am struck with its wonderful plan;
Yet regret must be mingled with praise,
While I feel for the follies of man.

Tho' the sun still illumines the sky,
And beauty enriches the scene:
Yet he cannot their beauties descry,
While the tempest is raging within.

For while the wild winds are confin'd,
And the tempests their fury restrain;
If the passions embitter the mind,
These blessings are given in vain.

As I gaze on the wide-spreading main,
And regard the wild waves as they roll;
The attention they seem to detain,
As pourtraying the state of the soul.

But the steep rocks imprison the deep,
When the waves are impell'd to the shore;
A watch they incessantly keep,
Nor are mov'd by the sound of its roar.

Not so when the passions assail,
No longer by reason confin'd;
For what shall her barriers avail,
To repel the rude waves of the mind.

Conscience' small speaking voice of controul,
That whispers and dies on its shore;
Is not heard 'mid the storms of the soul,
But is lost in their deaf'ning roar.

Now the evening is closing around,
And solemnity dwells on the scene;
While the dews are refreshing the ground,
And darkness has shadow'd the green.

And shall man so insensible prove,
To whom these rich blessings are giv'n?
Is not gratitude due for the love
And parental affection of heav'n?

Sweet gratitude, gem of the mind,
Which Angels delight to behold;
Thou surely for man wert design'd,
More enriching than silver or gold.

E'en the sun which has sunk from our sight,
Ingratitude seem'd to reprove;
Unfailing that fountain of light,
Ordain'd by the father of love.

His rays are extended to all,
They beam on each flower that grows;
From him they impartially fall
On the thistle as well as the rose.

So all that inhabit below,
Partake of the blessings of heav'n;
From *one* source true enjoyment must flow,
To all his rich blessings are given.

One Father provides for the whole,
Who lived ere all Being began;
Who regards the soft sigh of the soul,
And dispenses his bounty to man.

TO ECHO

ENCHANTRESS of the rocks! in accents sweet,
Again those deep mysterious notes repeat;
Once more thy vocal efforts I engage,
To swell with love, or pity, grief, or rage;
How oft the pensive spirit wanders near,
And listening stops thy well-known voice to hear.
Say, lovely Nymph, what sorrows hast thou known,
To make the powers of sympathy thy own?
Tho' torn by faithless love, thou once hast pin'd,
And hope, and life, and mortal form, resign'd;
Yet many a pensive pleasure lingers near,
To pour responsive notes in Sorrow's ear;
To catch the soft complainings as they rise,
And chain each feeling in a mute surprise.
I hail thee not where from thy gloomy cave,
Whose rocky base the waves of ocean lave,
The din of battle and the cannon's roar,
Awake thy voice along the sounding shore;
From scenes like these each soft emotion flies,
Where vengeance pours her arrows thro' the skies;

From blood and arms remote, our happy land
Raises a softer note at thy command;
Here concord reigns, her banners all unfurl'd,

Proclaiming *this* the haven of the world:
While for these blessings, thro' the sacred grove,
We raise the song of gratitude and love.
Still would I wander thro' thy secret shades,
Thy woods, thy mountains, and thy vocal glades;
For much the calm, the pensive mood I prize,
And love those joys the busy world despise.
As on the margin of th' extended main,
We trace our likeness in the crystal plain;
Intent survey each attitude and air,
And ev'ry ornament adjust with care;
Enchanting Nymph! by thee we learn to trace
Mental proportion, energy or grace;
Reflected sounds enchant the listening ear,
And, pleased, thy oft-returning notes we hear.
When barren rocks around the trav'ller rise,
And lift their rugged summits to the skies;
Thy deep resounding voice salutes his ear,
He calls on thee, and finds a friend is near;
Thy soothing notes each toilsome step beguile,
For thou canst bid the dreary desert smile.

Such power, O Nymph! have nature's laws ordain'd,
In recompence for love by falshood pain'd;
The faithless youth a meaner fate shall try,
Condemned unlov'd to live, and unlamented die.

Freeeditorial 