

POEMS

BY

ELIZABETH BATH

Freeeditorial 

***Chiefly composed during an Evening's Ramble near the
Bristol Hotwells.***

BLEST with thy friendly rays, mild orb of night!
That deck these rugged rocks' tremendous height,
Amusing sportive fancy, as she sees
Fantastic shapes among the waving trees;
The sparkling lustre of whose placid ray
Adorns the mantle of retiring day;
My elevated spirit seems to rise
Above the azure vault and spangled skies;
Quitting the busy scenes where mortals dwell,
To seek retirement in her tranquil cell.
The rocky barriers rise on either side,
To guard the passage of the murm'ring tide,
Whose soothing sound a mental calm creates,
While hope the mind possesses and dilates;
Hope that extends beyond life's fleeting hour,
Passes the buds of joy and plucks the flow'r.
Tho' memory often prompts the heart-felt sigh,
For all the sorrows of mortality;

Present or past that crowd upon the view,
Which only hope eternal can subdue.
I feel the silence of the rocks and groves,—
These are the scenes that Contemplation loves.

Thought is supplied from mem'ry's ample page,
Whose retrospective scenes my soul engage;
Now while I see bright Cynthia's trembling beam,
So sweetly sporting on the passing stream,
With thousand brilliants that around her lie,
And deck the glorious canopy on high;
How they recal the image of a friend,
While scenes long pass'd with present objects blend;
These active pow'rs are not to be confin'd:
Who then can tell the treasures of the mind?

Ye heavenly witnesses who reign on high,
But chiefly thou, sole Empress of the sky,
Reigning supreme o'er all the realms of night,
Whose throne is darkness—but whose sceptre, light;
O grant my Emma one unsullied ray,
To light and cheer her on her future way:
Thy softening beams a pensive joy impart,
And give new feeling to the tender heart;
O then may friendship seize the favour'd hour,
Increase her influence and extend her pow'r.

But see at distance moves the whit'ning sail,
A human voice floats gently on the gale;
The hardy sailor plies the dashing oar,
Nor heeds the rocks that bound this rugged shore:

His little bark divides the wat'ry plain,
Whose yielding waters part to close again:
Not so, in life, on whose unruffled tide,
The gentle undulations smoothly glide,
Till sorrow enters to disturb our rest,
And leaves its deep impressions on the breast.
When thus she enters on the mind's repose,
The waves of tranquil pleasure never close;
For tho' a momentary joy may yield
A passing lustre, and the prospect gild,
Still we suspect some disappointment near,
And 'mid surrounding calm, some sad reverse we fear.
In this still hour of night, my voice I'll raise,
While feeling prompts the secret song of praise.
Come Inspiration, guide me in my flight—
Come sacred stream of pure celestial light;
Assist my thoughts to soar beyond the sky,
Above the azure canopy on high,
To Him who dwells in everlasting day—
Who leads his children in the narrow way

Of life eternal. He can fill the soul—
Conquer each passion—ev'ry wish controul.
Without Him all is dark, no ray shall shine
To light the spirit, but a ray divine.

ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND

IF, when far distant, memory should pourtray
The sweet enjoyments of a former day;
If she should reign and by her strong controul,
Melt the fond heart and captivate the soul;
Still let her work, till she has drawn the scene
As fair and smiling as it once had been;
When hope, approaching with her aspect bland,
Shall take the pencil from her rival's hand,
And to thy view shall copy the design,
Till doubly beautified the work shall shine.
Hope's glowing tints can ev'ry charm supply,
Her radiant beams enrich the azure sky;
While friendship's altar in the front is plac'd,
Which, nor by adverse storms nor time defac'd,
Shall stand a lasting monument confess'd,
With garlands of unfading roses dress'd.
These wreaths shall round the sacred structure twine,
These opening blossoms decorate the shrine;
Which, tho' contending elements assail,
Shall still survive till time itself shall fail.

E'en now in fancy's mirror I survey
The embryo treasures of a future day,
Which shall restore the sweet perennial joy,

That absence may suspend, but not destroy.
When mutual feelings mutual charms impart,
And friendship reigns unrivall'd in the heart,
Of heav'n's pure sunshine is the mind possess'd,
When sympathetic pleasures fill the breast;
For tho' distress the feeling bosom tear,
When taught to feel the woes a friend may bear;
Yet while his griefs the anxious mind employ,
The pains of sympathy are mix'd with joy;
Her's is the tranquil stream, the placid sky,
And rich the draught her ceaseless springs supply.
Cold is the breast when she resigns her throne,
And worthless he who lives for self alone.

I dread no evils for my distant friend,
If worth can shield, or merit can defend;
And if Louisa should remember'd be,
Enshrine her image in sincerity.

***EXPECTATION, Occasioned by a Friend's revisiting her
native City, with her infant Boy***

CEASE to flutter round my heart,
Hope too potent for expressing;
Can thy most tumultuous throbs,
Sooner bring the promis'd blessing?

Warm'd by friendship's pure affection,
Soon to clasp its darling treasure;
All her joys around me gather,
Heighten'd by maternal pleasure.

On the wings of expectation,
Still too slow the moments fly;
Is there in the vast creation,
One so greatly blest as I?

Late the days were mark'd with sorrow,
Late the nights were mark'd with care;

Now the near anticipation,
Rises brighter from despair.

Lovely infant, smiling cherub,
Heav'n's rich blessings thee attend;
And thro' life's ensuing moments,
May'st thou own thy early friend.

While each fond caress returning,
Friendship's joys thou wilt improve;
Her maturer bliss enlivening,
With the charms of infant love.

Now o'er all the brightening prospect,
Dawns the long-expected day;
Which in one ecstatic moment,
Absent months can well repay.

Golden glows the wide horizon,
When the radiant orb of light
To the east his course advances,
From the ebon throne of night.

Lovely blooms the smiling landscape,
Fresher fragrance fills each flower;
Nature thro' her whole dominion,
Owns his influence, feels his power.

So when expectation rising,
Cheers us with her ray benign;
How with ev'ry branch of sorrow,
Hope's celestial tendrils twine.

Balmy odours round us playing,
From her opening blossoms rise;
Till the radiant morn expanding,
Not a cloud obscures the skies

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