

THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
MRS. FELICIA HEMANS:

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.



NEW EDITION,

WITH

A CRITICAL PREFACE, AND A BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR.



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Yet have I known it long  
Too restless and too strong  
Within this clay hath been th' o'er-mastering flame  
Swift thoughts, that came and went,  
Like torrents o'er me sent,  
Have shaken, as a reed, my thrilling frame.

Like perfumes on the wind,  
Which none may stay or bind,  
The beautiful comes floating through my soul;  
I strive with yearnings vain,  
The spirit to detain  
Of the deep harmonies that past me roll!

Therefore disturbing dreams  
Trouble the secret streams  
And founts of music that o'erflow my breast;  
Something far more divine  
Than may on earth be mine,  
Haunts my worn heart, and will not let me rest.

Shall I then *fear* the tone  
That breathes from worlds unknown?—  
Surely these feverish aspirations *there*  
Shall grasp their full desire,  
And this unsettled fire,  
Burn calmly, brightly, in immortal air.

One more then, one more strani,  
To earthly joy and pain  
A rich, and deep, and passionate farewell!  
I pour each fervent thought  
With fear, hope, trembling, fraught,  
Into the notes that o'er my dust shall swell.

#### THE IMAGE IN LAVA.\*

Thou thing of years departed!  
What ages have gone by,  
Since here the mournful seal was set  
By love and agony!

Temple and tower have mouldered,  
Empires from earth have passed,  
And woman's heart hath left a trace  
Those glories to outlast!

And childhood's fragile image  
Thus fearfully enshrined,  
Survives the proud memorials reared  
By conquerors of mankind.

Babe! wert thou brightly slumbering  
Upon thy mother's breast,  
When suddenly the fiery tomb  
Snut round each gentle guest?

\*The impression of a woman's form, with an infant clasp-  
ed to the bosom, found at the uncovering of Herculaneum.

A strange dark fate o'ertook you,  
Fair babe and loving heart!  
One moment of a thousand pangs—  
Yet better than to part!

Haply of that fond bosom,  
On ashes here impressed,  
Thou wert the only treasure, child!  
Whereon a hope might rest.

Perchance all vainly lavished,  
Its other love had been,  
And where it trusted, nought remained  
But thorns on which to lean.

Far better then to perish,  
Thy form within its clasp,  
Than live and lose thee, precious one!  
From that impassioned grasp.

Oh! I could pass all relics  
Left by the pomps of old,  
To gaze on this rude monument,  
Cast in affection's mould.

Love, human love! what art thou?  
Thy print upon the dust  
Outlives the cities of renown  
Wherein the mighty trust!

Immortal, oh! immortal  
Thou art, whose earthly glow  
Hath given these ashes holiness—  
It must, it *must* be so!

#### FAIRY FAVOURS.

—Give me but  
Something whereunto I may bid my heart:  
Something to love, to rest upon, to clasp  
Affection's tendrils round.

WOULDEST thou wear the gift of immortal bloom!  
Wouldst thou smile in scorn at the shadowy tomb  
Drink of this cup! it is richly fraught  
With balm from the gardens of Genii brought;  
Drink, and the spoiler shall pass thee by,  
When the young all scattered like rose-leaves lie.

And would not the youth of my soul be gone,  
If the loved had left me, one by one?  
Take back the cup that may never bless,  
The gift that would make me brotherless!  
How should I live, with no kindred eye  
To reflect mine immortality?

Wouldst thou have empire, by sign or spell,  
Over the mighty in air that dwell?  
Wouldst thou call the spirits of shore and sea  
To fetch thee jewels from ocean's deep?  
Wave but this rod, and a viewless band  
Slaves to thy will, shall around thee stand!