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 the o'ermastering 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.

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 pompous 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?
Wouldest 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 be.

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?

Wouldest thou have empire, by sign or spell.
Over the mighty in that dwell?
Wouldest 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 round thee stand.

The impression of a woman's form, with an infant clasped to the bosom, found at the uncovering of Herculaneum.