

**SELECTIONS FROM
THE POETICAL WORKS
OF BISHOP KEN**

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Selections from the Poetical Works of Bishop Ken by Thomas Ken

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THOMAS KEN

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Poetical Works

OF BISHOP KEN.



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THE POET.

*PROPHETS and Poets were, of old,
Made of the same celestial mould.
True Poets are a saint-like race,
And, with the gift, receive the grace ;
Of their own songs the virtue feel,
Warmed with an heaven-enkindled zeal.*

*A Poet should have heat and light,
Of all things a capacious sight ;
Serenity with rapture joined ;
Aims noble ; eloquence refined,
Strong, modest ; sweetness to endear ;
Expressions lively, lofty, clear ;*

*High thoughts ; an admirable theme ;
For decency a chaste esteem ;
Of harmony a perfect skill ;
Just characters of good and ill ;
And all concentr'd—souls to please,
Instruct, inflame, melt, calm, and ease.*

*Such graces can no where be found
Except on consecrated ground :
Where Poets fix on God their thought,
By sacred inspiration taught ;
Where each poetic votary sings,
In heavenly strains of heavenly things.*



POEMS FROM BISHOP KEN.

A PRAYER.



BOW my knee to God on high,
Father of Filial Deity,
To whom the blessed owe their birth,
Inhabiting or heaven or earth,
That from his gracious glories He
Would dart one pardoning ray on me :
That by his Holy Spirit's aid,
My soul may be His temple made :
That He by faith may in me dwell,
And all terrestrial joys expel :
That I in love may deeply root ;
And may with all the saints compute
All measures, length, breadth, depth, and height,
Of his benign, all-saving might ;
That I his loves may comprehend,
Which intellectual force transcend,
Filled with all plenitude divine,
Derivable from Godhead Trine.

HEAVEN.

THE saints in happy mansions rest,
 Of all they can desire possest :
 No misery, want, or care ;
 No death, no darkness there ;
 No troubles, storms, sighs, groans, or tears,
 No injury, pain, sickness, fears.

There, saints no disappointments meet ;
 No vanities, the choice to cheat :
 Nothing that can defile ;
 No hypocrite, no guile.
 No need of prayer, or what implies,
 Or absence, or vacuities.

There, no ill conscience gnaws the breast :
 No tempters holy souls infest ;
 No curse, no weeds, no toil ;
 No errors to embroil ;
 No lustful thoughts can enter in,
 Or possibility of sin.

Saints' bodies there the sun outvie,
 Tempered to feel the joys on high :
 Bright body and pure mind,
 In rapture unconfined,
 Capacities expand, till fit,
 Deluge of Godhead to admit.

With God's own Son they reign co-heirs ;
 Each saint with Him in glory shares :
 Like Godhead, happy, pure,
 Against all change secure,
 In boundless joys they sabbatize,
 Which love triune will eternize.

CONVERSION.

I HAD one only thing to do,
 Yet would a thousand things pursue :
 God only could exhaust my mind,
 In God alone I rest could find,
 Yet o'er the world wild flights I took,
 While I myself and God forsook.

Ah me, with what neglects have I
 Passed, Lord, thy calls and waitings by !
 To all vain things which charmed my view,
 I paid what was my Maker's due,
 The transient world my soul devoured,
 And hell my faculties o'erpowered.

My thought, things perishable filled ;
 My soul, what was my poison willed ;
 I fondly loved what I should hate ;
 Desired what horror should create :
 I lying vanities believed,
 And trusted most, where most deceived.

I languished for what wrought my bane,
 Joyed in what tends to endless pain.
 My thought, choice, love, desire, faith, trust,
 All centred in low sensual gust;
 My soul with noble reason graced,
 Its glory to vile lusts debased.

As soon might the autumnal sun,
 To *Libra*, when its course was run,
 Revolve, till it to *Aries* reeled,
 And with new spring bedecked the field,
 As I from sin my heart estrange,
 And my entire propension change.

God, shining on me from his throne,
 Benignly brake this heart of stone—
 All love to God, whose gracious stroke
 Inflamed my heart, as well as broke!
 Conscience, whom I with opiates plied,
 Now wake and be my watchful guide!

On Thee, my God, my thought shall muse,
 Thee sovereignly my will shall chuse:
 My love shall to thy love aspire,—
 The sole desirable desire.
 Thou wilt have all my heart or none,
 The world I for thy sake disown.

My soul shall long for blissful sight,
 Shall in the source of joy delight: