

**POETRY**

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Poetry by Thomas Oldham

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**THOMAS OLDHAM**

**POETRY**



THOMAS OLDHAM OF ALLESLEY

POETRY.

# POETRY.

BY THOMAS OLDHAM.

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O ! should I ever dare profane  
With venal touch the hallow'd lyre,  
Let me be banish'd from the Muses' train ;  
Ne'er let me feel their heart-ennobling fire !  
Unworthy of a Poet's glorious name,  
Let me be doom'd to everlasting shame !

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## PREFACE.

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THE writer of the following pages has been in the habit, for many years, of amusing himself with the composition of Poetry. Often has he been advised by his friends to publish; and at length, influenced by their persuasion, and feeling a sort of paternal fondness for the offspring of his own brain, he ventures to present this small volume to the notice of the Public.

It contains Poems of many different kinds, composed, of course, in as many varieties of style; and the author has exerted his best

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endeavours to render them worthy of approbation.

The present times—he is well aware—are unfavourable for the publication of poetical works. The booksellers complain generally of the little demand for them. Nevertheless, it is very improbable that Poetry,—if excellent, (as it ought to be to deserve the name,) should ever be totally neglected. The seed of poetic taste is sown by the hand of Nature in the souls of all men; though in a small number only it is by culture brought to maturity.

The author has exalted ideas of Poetry. He deems it—decidedly—the first of the Fine Arts. It is the most intellectual,—the most



comprehensive,—the most powerful,—the most delightful,—and, also,—hear it, Utilitarians! —the most useful. In remote antiquity, as is well known, it was chiefly instrumental in teaching and civilising the then-barbarous human race. To lure their wild minds into reflection, it invested truth and morality with the many-coloured garb of Fiction, and introduced them, through their delighted imagination, to their understanding and their heart; while, by the charm of harmonious numbers, it soothed their fierce and licentious passions into submission to the laws of social life. It was believed to have something divine in its nature, and was universally held in the highest veneration. From ancient times, even to this

day, it has continued to be a favourite study with many of the most illustrious characters.

Finally,—and let this be for ever remembered, as conferring on it the highest honour ! Poetry has been deemed worthy by the Sacred Writers to be made an instrument in the cause of Religion ; and by its sublime descriptions it has assisted human imagination in forming grand, and awful conceptions of the Almighty Creator !

Park-Fields, Allesley, near Coventry,

22d January, 1840.

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