

POEMS; VOL. I

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Poems; Vol. I by Hartley Coleridge

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HARTLEY COLERIDGE

POEMS; VOL. I

POEMS

BY

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

1st edition.

I write, endite, I point, I raze, I quote,
I interline, I blot, correct, I note,
I make, allege, I imitate, I feign.

Drayton.

For I, that God of Lov's Servantes serve,
Ne dare to love, for mine unlikelnesse,
Prayin for speede, al should I therefore sterve.
So ferre am I fro his help in darknesse;
But nathelesse, if this may doe gladnesse
To any lovir, and his cause aveile,
Have he the thanke, and mine be the travaile.

Chaucer : Troilus and Cresside.

VOL. I.

LEEDS:

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AND BALDWIN AND CRADOCK,
LONDON.

1833.

DEDICATORY SONNET,

TO S. T. COLERIDGE.

Father, and Bard revered! to whom I owe,
Whate'er it be, my little art of numbers,
Thou, in thy night-watch o'er my cradled slumbers,
Didst meditate the verse that lives to shew,
(And long shall live, when we alike are low)
Thy prayer how ardent, and thy hope how strong,
That I should learn of Nature's self the song,
The lore which none but Nature's pupils know.

The prayer was heard: I "wander'd like a breeze,"
By mountain brooks and solitary meres,
And gather'd there the shapes and phantasies
Which, mixt with passions of my sadder years,
Compose this book. If good therein there be,
That good, my sire, I dedicate to thee.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

PREFACE.

Of the verses contained in this volume, a considerable number have already appeared in various periodicals. The rest are productions, for the most part, of a later time—it may be, of less leisure. None of them, with a single exception, can claim the privilege of juvenile poems. I neither deprecate nor defy the censure of the critics. No man can know, of himself, whether he is, or is not, a poet. The thoughts, the feelings, the images, which are the material of poetry, are accessible to all who seek for them; but the power to express, combine, and modify—to make a truth of thought, to earn a sympathy for feeling, to convey an image to the inward eye, with all its influences and associations, can only approve itself by experiment—and the result of the experiment may not be known for years. Such an experiment I have ventured to try, and I wait the result

with patience. Should it be favourable, the present volume will shortly be followed by another, in which, if no more be accomplished, a higher strain is certainly attempted.

As there is nothing peculiar either in the principles upon which these poems are written, or the circumstances under which they were produced, further preface would be superfluous. Wherever I have been conscious of adopting the thoughts or words of former, especially of living writers, I have scrupulously acknowledged the obligation: but I am well aware that there may be several instances of such adoption which have escaped my observation. It is not always easy to distinguish between recollection and invention. At the same time, be it remembered, that close resemblance of phrase or illustration, or even verbal identity, may arise from casual coincidence, in compositions that owe nothing to each other.

Leeds, January, 1833.

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SONNETS.

SONNET I.

TO A FRIEND.

WHEN we were idlers with the loitering rills,
The need of human love we little noted :
Our love was nature ; and the peace that floated
On the white mist, and dwelt upon the hills,
To sweet accord subdued our wayward wills :
One soul was ours, one mind, one heart devoted,
That, wisely doating, ask'd not why it doated,
And ours the unknown joy, which knowing kills.
But now I find, how dear thou wert to me ;
That man is more than half of nature's treasure,
Of that fair Beauty which no eye can see,
Of that sweet music which no ear can measure ;
And now the streams may sing for others' pleasure,
The hills sleep on in their eternity.