

# POEMS

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Poems by Alonzo Lewis

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**ALONZO LEWIS**

**POEMS**





*Portrait of Henry J. Lewis*

*Henry Lewis.*

# POEMS.

## OF CALIFORNIA.

BY ALONZO LEWIS.

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The primal duties shine aloft, like stars ;  
The charities, that soothe, and heal, and bless,  
Are scattered at the feet of man, like flowers.

WORDSWORTH.

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BOSTON.

JOHN H. EASTBURN.

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1831.

953

26727

1831

TO VIND  
ALIBON

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## PREFACE.

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**GENTLE READER!** The susceptibility of poetic enjoyment is dearer than all the treasures, and most of the honors, which can be conferred on man. While the sounds of war are abroad on the winds of Europe, and rude spirits are jarring the world with civil commotion, it is grateful to repose in the shade of peaceful life, to participate the pleasures of learning, the joys of social intercourse, and the delights of song. In the calm wood-land scene, undisturbed and unmolested, delighted by the harmony of birds, lulled by the sound of waters, and refreshed by the melody of winds, the spirit is revived by the greenness and the freshness of nature, the mind holds pure converse with the wise and good of past ages, and the loved of the present, and the soul, amid the secret operations of such natural beauty and order, becomes prepared, almost unconsciously, for the happiness of heaven.

The principal objects of poetry are Pleasure and Instruction. The former is the predominating endeavor of poets, but it should never be the ultimate one. The most delightful and purely imaginative poetry, like that of Coleridge, may instruct; but no poetry, however excellent in its moral quality, which does not please, can be permanently popular.

The fairest method of estimating poetry is by the pleasure which it affords us. In passing through a forest, if we meet with a delightful spot, enlivened by the murmur of a solitary stream, and filled with sweet flowers, which look up to the sky with a loveliness peculiarly their own, we do not inquire if it be the garden of Eden, nor complain because it is not

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filled with hours. If a cup of water from its fountain has refreshed us, if we are delighted with the beauty of its sun-assuming flowers, and forget, for a few moments, the weary miles we have wandered, we view it as a relief in the landscape of life and recur to its idea with pleasing recollections.

The purest subjects of poetry are devotion, the social affections, particularly friendship and love, and descriptions of natural scenery. The unapproachable sublimity of the Bible has thrown such a sanctity over the realms of devotion, that few minds may hope to explore them with success. But though no one can expect to gather the splendid fruits of David and Isaiah, the humble and devoted worshipper of the heavenly muse, should not be discouraged in his attempt to pluck a few of the beautiful flowers, which bloom on the borders of the holy land.

That the contents of the following pages alone will entitle their author to the glorious appellation of Poet, I scarcely dare hope ; though it may well be remembered, that " a man may be a poet, without being Homer." If it shall appear that I have imparted in the least degree to the gratification of any thinking mind, it will be something added to the happiness of my future life. Of one satisfaction I may not be deprived ; the enjoyment of that glorious perception of poetic beauty, of which the following are but imperfect emanations.

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