

A Poem of
Letitia Elizabeth Landon
(L. E. L.)
in
Heath's Book of Beauty, 1838

compiled
by
Peter J. Bolton

Mrs. Wombwell



MRS. WOMBWELL

Painted by F. Rochard Engraved by H. Cook

MRS. WOMBWELL.

BY L. E. L.

Ah, Beauty! what a charm hast thou!
 How much art thou allied
 To all the visionary glow
 With which is deified
 The sweetest things of life's dark stream;
 Whose loveliness is half a dream—
 A flower upon the tide;
 Within whose haunted leaves up-curved
 Are hints of a diviner world!

I never saw that face till now,
 I never heard the name;
 Yet, with that carved and graceful brow
 A thousand fancies came.
 Within those soft and earnest eyes
 A world of hidden feeling lies;
 Those feelings which, like flame,
 Upon the face they kindle, write
 In lines, half shadow and half light.

It is not that thy face is fair,
 Though fair it is, and young ;
But, that the mind and heart have there
 Their own enchantment flung :
And beauty the most beautiful,
Without that inward life, were dull ;
 Without the soft shades hung
By pensive thoughts — by moral grace,
That give the spirit to the face.

Young, fair, thou art ; oh, very fair !
 Still, on that face appears
The sadness deeper memories wear,
 The tenderness of tears.
These may be fancies suiting not ;
But, was there ever human lot
 That knew no troubled years ?
Life never was content to bring
The sunshine only to the spring.

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