

Poems of  
Felicia Hemans  
in  
The Pledge of Friendship, 1828

Compiled  
by  
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Due to the poor quality of the only scan currently available, these have been gathered from other sources.

Title from *The Lyre*, 1841

Poem from a review in *Spirit and Manners of the Age*, 1827, Vol IV, page 304

## A STRAIN OF MUSIC.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

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I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

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Oh! joyously, triumphantly, sweet sounds! ye swell and float,  
A breath of hope, of youth, of spring, is pour'd on every note;  
And yet my full o'erburden'd heart grows troubled by your power,  
And ye seem to press the long past years into one little hour.

If I have look'd on lovely scenes, that now I view no more,—  
A summer sea, with glittering ships, along a mountain shores;  
A ruin girt with solemn woods, and a crimson evening sky;—  
Ye bring me back those images fast as ye wander by.

If in the happy walks and days of childhood, I have heard,  
And unto childhood's memory link'd, the music of a bird—  
A bird that with the primrose came, and in the violet's train;  
Ye give me that wild melody of early life again.

Or if a dear and gentle voice, that now is changed or gone,  
Hath left within my bosom deep the thrilling of its tone;  
I find that murmur in your notes—they touch the chords of thought,  
And a sudden flow of tenderness across my soul is brought.

If I have bid a spot farewell, on whose familiar ground,  
To every path, and leaf, and flower, my soul in love was bound;  
If I have watch'd the parting step of one who came not back—  
The feeling of that moment wakes in your exulting track.

Yet on ye float! the very air seems kindling with your glee!  
Oh! do ye fling this mournful spell, sweet sounds! alone with me?  
Or have a thousand hearts replied, as mine doth now, in sighs,  
To the glad music breathing thus of blue Italian skies?

I know not!—only this I know, that not by me on earth,  
May the deep joy of song be found untroubled in its birth;  
It must be for a brighter life—for some immortal sphere,  
Wherein its flow shall have no taste of the bitter fountains here.

Taken from Poems of Felicia Hemans, 1872, page 507.

THE FAITH OF LOVE.

THOU hast watch'd beside the bed of death,  
O fearless human Love!  
Thy lip received the last, faint breath,  
Ere the spirit fled above.

Thy prayer was heard by the parting bier,  
In a low and farewell tone;  
Thou hast given the grave both flower and tear—  
—O Love! thy task is done.

Then turn thee from each pleasant spot  
Where thou wert wont to rove;  
For there the friend of thy soul is not,  
Nor the joy of thy youth, O Love!

Thou wilt meet but mournful Memory there;  
Her dreams in the grove she weaves,  
With echoes filling the summer air,  
With sighs the trembling leaves.

Then turn thee to the world again,  
From those dim, haunted bowers,  
And shut thine ear to the wild, sweet strain  
That tells of vanish'd hours.

And wear not on thine aching heart  
The image of the dead;  
For the tie is rent that gave thee part  
In the gladness its beauty shed.

And gaze on the pictured smile no more  
That thus can life outlast:  
All between parted souls is o'er.—  
Love! Love! forget the past!

“Voice of vain boding! away, be still!  
Strive not against the faith

That yet my bosom with light can fill,  
Unquench'd, and undim'd by death.

"From the pictured smile I will not turn,  
Though sadly now it shine;  
Nor quit the shades that in whispers mourn  
For the step once link'd with mine;

"Nor shut mine ear to the song of old,  
Though its notes the pang renew.  
—Such memories deep in my heart I hold,  
To keep it pure and true.

"By the holy instinct of my heart,  
By the hope that bears me on,  
I have still my own undying part  
In the deep affection gone.

"By the presence that about me seems  
Through night and day to dwell,  
Voice of vain bodings and fearful dreams!  
—I have breathed no *last* farewell!"

Taken from The Christian Reformer, Vol 14, page 14

THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD. BY MRS. HEMANS.

[From "The Pledge of Friendship; a Christmas Present and New-Year's Gift," for 1828,—another of the beautiful Annuals.]

By giving her, in idea, a perpetual presence, I found that relief which others can only find by banishing things from their memories.—  
*De Vere.*

FORGET them not ! though now their name  
 Be but a mournful sound ;  
 Though by the hearth its utterance claim  
 A stillness round ;  
 Though for their sake this earth no more  
 As it hath been may be ;  
 And shadows never mark'd before,  
 Brood o'er each tree.  
 And though their image dim the sky,  
 Yet, yet forget them not !  
 Nor, when their life and love went by,  
 Forsake the spot !  
 They have a breathing influence there,  
 A charm not elsewhere found ;  
 Sad—but it sanctifies the air,  
 The stream, the ground.  
 Then, though the wind an alter'd tone  
 Through the young foliage bear ;  
 Though every flower, of something gone,  
 A tinge may wear ;  
 Oh ! fly it not !—No fruitless grief  
 Thus in their presence felt,  
 A record links to every leaf,  
 There, where they dwelt.  
 Still trace the path which knew their tread,  
 Still tend their garden-bower,  
 And call them back, the holy dead,  
 To each lone hour !  
 The *holy* dead !—Oh ! blest we are,  
 That we may name them so,  
 And to their spirits look afar,  
 Through all our woe !  
 Blest, that the things they lov'd on earth,  
 As relics we may hold,  
 Which wake sweet thoughts of parted worth,  
 By springs untold.  
 Blest, that a deep and chastening power,  
 Thus o'er our souls is given,  
 If but to bird, or song, or flower,  
 Yet, all for heaven !