

Lines Addressed to Lady Byron

Mary Cockle

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WHEN suffering virtue heaves the secret sigh,
Or turns to heav'n alone the imploring eye,
And, in the agony of struggling woe,
Bids the full tear of *silent* sorrow flow,
Ask *where's* the heart, that is not prompt to share
The wife's chaste sorrow, and the mother's care?
Or *where* the breast, that is not quick to prove
Its genuine sympathy with wounded love?
But ah! if sympathy alone can claim
The sigh, the tear that trembles at thy name,
Ask what *that stronger* sympathy must be
From one, who *suffers mourns and weeps, like Thee* ,
O'er marriage vows, dissolv'd as soon as tied
Like thine dissolv'd ere scarcely ratified;
Who gives (perhaps, like Thee,) one pleading pray'r,
For erring Nature in its weakness here
Or bends, unseen, to heav'n the suppliant knee,
For the frail child of poor mortality
Yet ah! how keen that pang of sharpest woe,
The pang of *answering* grief alone can know,
In whose comparison *all* ills are less,
Or but as *dreams* , disturb'd, of happiness:
Yet turn to heav'n again the tearful eye
There shalt thou learn to hush affliction's sigh,
And thence with *tried* with trusting faith confess,
The hand that *wounds* hath also power to bless.
He hides his mercies from our feeble eyes,
Or clothes them oft in sorrow's dark disguise,
To fix our trembling hopes and wishes there,
Beyond the influence of this little sphere,
And make us feel, beneath his chast'ning rod,
Though bow'd to earth, yet lifted to OUR GOD .
Can He, who bids the stormy waves subside,
In its wild ragings, stays th' impetuous tide,
Sees clouds, and storms obedient to his will,
His great commands his high behests fulfil,
Shall he not bid the *bosom's* tempest cease,
And, in this *stronger* conflict, whisper peace?
Ah! turn to where in opening beauty gay,

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Blooms the sweet rose-bud of thy blighted May;
No chilling winds shall bow her little form,
Rear'd on thy bosom shelter'd from life's storm;
But rich in promis'd charms this flower shall live
With ev'ry care, thy guardian hand can give
And, though awhile the passing tempest lours,
Shed its pure fragrance o'er thy wintry hours
Veil, with its blushing beauty, sorrow's dart,
And twine, exulting, round a mother's heart;
Recall the graces of her happier morn
And bloom for her ONE Rose without its Thorn.
