

IL LATTE: AN ELEGY.

BY THE SAME,

YE fair, for whom the hands of Hymen weave
The nuptial wreath to deck your virgin brow,
While pleasing pains the conscious bosom heave,
And on the kindling cheeks the blushes glow :

Whose spotless soul contains the better dower,
Whose life unstain'd full many virtues vouch,
For whom now Venus frames the fragrant bower,
And scatters roses o'er th' expecting couch :

To you I sing.—Ah ! ere the raptur'd youth
With trembling hand removes the jealous veil,
Where, long regardless of the vows of truth,
Unsocial coyness stamp'd th' ungrateful seal,

Alow the Poet round your flowing hair,
Cull'd from an humble vale, a wreath to twine,
To Beauty's altar with the Loves repair,
And wake the lute beside that living shrine :

That

That sacred shrine ! where female virtue glows,
 Where ev'n the Graces all their treasures bring,
 And where the lilly, temper'd with the rose,
 Harmonious contrast ! breathes an Eden spring :

That shrine ! where Nature with presaging aim,
 What time her friendly aid Lucina brings,
 The snowy nectar pours, delightful stream !
 Where fluttering Cupids dip their purple wings :

For you who bear a Mother's sacred name,
 Whose cradled offspring, in lamenting strain,
 With artless eloquence asserts his claim,
 The boon of Nature, but asserts in vain,

Say why, illustrious daughters of the great,
 Lives not the nursling at your tender breast ?
 By you protected in his frail estate ?
 By you attended, and by you carets'd ?

To foreign hands, alas ! can you resign
 The parent's task, the mother's pleasing care ?
 To foreign hands the smiling babe consign ?
 While Nature starts, and Hymen sheds a tear.

When, 'mid the polish'd circle ye rejoice,
 Or roving join fantastic Pleasure's train,
 Unheard perchance the nursling lifts his voice,
 His tears unnotic'd, and unsooth'd his pain.

Ah !

Ah! what avails the coral crown'd with gold?
 In heedless infancy the title vain?
 The colours gay the purpled scarfs unfold?
 The splendid nursery, and th' attendant train?

Far better hadst thou first beheld the light,
 Beneath the rafter of some roof obscure!
 There in a mother's eye to read delight,
 And in her cradling arm repos'd secure.—

No wonder, should Hygeia, blissful Queen!
 Her wonted salutary gifts recall,
 While haggard Pain applies his dagger keen,
 And o'er the cradle Death unfolds his pall.

The flowret ravish'd from its native air,
 And bid to flourish in a foreign vale,
 Does it not oft elude the planter's care,
 And breathe its dying odours on the gale?

For you, ye plighted fair, when Hymen crowns
 With tender offspring your unshaken love,
 Behold them not with Rigour's chilling frowns,
 Nor from your sight unfeeling remove.

Unsway'd by Fashion's dull unseemly jest,
 Still to the bosom let your infant cling,
 There banquet oft, an ever-welcome guest,
 Unblam'd inebriate at that healthful spring.

With

With fond solicitude each pain aswage,
 Explain the look, awake the ready smile,
 Unfeign'd attachment so shall you engage,
 To crown with gratitude maternal toil :

So shall your daughters in affliction's day,
 When o'er your form the gloom of age shall spread,
 With lenient converse chase the hours away,
 And soothe with Duty's hand the widow'd bed :

Approach, compassionate, the voice of Grief,
 And whisper patience to the closing ear ;
 From Comfort's chalice minister relief,
 And in the potion drop a filial tear.

So shall your sons, when beauty is no more,
 When fades the languid lustre in your eye,
 When Flattery shuns her dulcet notes to pour,
 The want of beauty, and of praise, supply.

Ev'n from the wreath that decks the warrior's brow,
 Some chosen leaves your peaceful walks shall strew.
 And ev'n the flowers on classic ground that blow,
 Shall all unfold their choicest sweets for you.

When to th' embattled host the trumpet blows,
 While at the call fair Albion's gallant train
 Dare to the field their triple-number'd foes,
 And chase them speeding o'er the frighten'd plain :

The

The mother kindles at the glorious thought,
 And to her son's renown adjoins her name ;
 For, at the nurturing breast, the hero caught
 The love of virtue, and the love of fame.

Or in the senate when Britannia's cause
 With generous themes inspires the glowing mind,
 While listening Freedom grateful looks applause,
 Pale Slavery drops her chain, and sculks behind :

With conscious joy the tender parent fraught,
 Still to her son's renown adjoins her name ;
 For, at the nurturing breast, the patriot caught
 The love of virtue, and the love of fame.