1780 edition

1810 edition

*Elegy on Captain Cook*

# Seward, Anna, 1742-1809: [from The Poetical Works (1810)] VOL. II. Volume section Seward, Anna, 1742-1809 : ELEGY ON CAPTAIN COOK. [from The Poetical Works (1810)]

# ELEGY ON CAPTAIN COOK (1780)

Sorrowing , the Nine beneath yon blasted yew

Shed the soft drops of pity's holy dew;

Shed the bright drops of Pity's holy dew;

Mute are their tuneful tongues, extinct their fires;

Yet not in silence sleep their silver lyres;

To the bleak gale they vibrate sad and slow,

In deep accordance to a Nation's woe.

Ye, who ere-while for Cook's illustrious brow

Ye, who ere while for COOK's illustrious brow

Pluck'd the green laurel, and the oaken bough,

Hung the gay garlands on the trophied oars,

And pour'd his fame along a thousand shores,

Strike the slow death-bell!---weave the sacred verse,

And strew the cypress o'er his honour'd hearse;

In sad procession wander round the shrine,

And weep him mortal, whom ye sung divine!

Say first, what Power inspir'd his dauntless breast

With scorn of danger and inglorious rest,

To quit imperial London's gorgeous domes,

Where, deck'd in thousand tints, young Pleasure roams;

In cups of summer-ice her nectar pours,

Or twines, 'mid wint'ry snows, her roseate bowers;

Say first, what Pow'r inspir'd his dauntless breast

With scorn of danger and inglorious rest,

To quit imperial London's gorgeous plains,

Where, rob'd in thousand tints, bright Pleasure reigns;

In cups of summer-ice her nectar pours,

And twines, 'mid wint'ry snows, her roseate bow'rs?

Where the warm Orient loads Britannia's gales

With all the incense of Sabæan vales;

Where soft Italia's silken sons prolong

The lavish cadence of the artful song;

Where Beauty moves with undulating grace,

Calls the sweet blush to wanton o'er her face,

On each fond Youth her soft artillery tries,

Aims her light smile, and rolls her frolic eyes?

What Power inspir'd his dauntless breast to brave

The scorch'd Equator, and th' Antarctic wave?

Climes, where fierce Suns in cloudless ardors shine,

And pour the dazzling deluge round the Line;

The realms of frost, where icy mountains rise,

'Mid the pale summer of the polar skies?---

It was Benevolence! ---on coasts unknown,

The shiv'ring natives of the frozen zone,

And the swart Indian, as he faintly strays

"Where Cancer reddens in the solar blaze,"

She bade him seek;---on each inclement shore

Plant the rich seeds of her exhaustless store;

Unite the savage hearts, and hostile hands,

In the firm compact of her gentle bands;

Strew her soft comforts o'er the barren plain,

Sing her sweet lays, and consecrate her fane.

Where Beauty moves with fascinating grace,

Calls the sweet blush to wanton o'er her face,

On each fond youth her soft artillery tries,

Aims the light smile, and rolls the frolic eyes:

What Power inspir'd his dauntless breast to brave

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