

ING 021

Anna Lætitia Barbauld

*Eighteen Hundred and Eleven:
A Poem; in Two Parts*

1812

PROYECTO OLE 11
ARCHIVO ELECTRÓNICO DE FUENTES PRIMARIAS
POESÍA PATRIÓTICA PROESPAÑOLA EN INGLÉS, FRANCÉS, ALEMÁN Y PORTUGUÉS (1808-1814)
TEXTO INDIVIDUAL DE OBRA ING 021

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...

Still the loud death drum, thundering from afar,
O'er the vext nations pours the storm of war:
To the stern call still Britain bends her ear,
Feeds the fierce strife, the alternate hope and fear;
Bravely, though vainly, dares to strive with Fate,
And seeks by turns to prop each sinking state.
Colossal Power with overwhelming force
Bears down each fort of Freedom in its course;
Prostrate she lies beneath the Despot's sway,
While the hushed nations curse him---and obey.

Bounteous in vain, with frantic man at strife,
Glad Nature pours the means---the joys of life;
In vain with orange blossoms scents the gale,
The hills with olives clothes, with corn the vale;
Man calls to Famine, nor invokes in vain,
Disease and Rapine follow in her train;
The tramp of marching hosts disturbs the plough,
The sword, not sickle, reaps the harvest now,
And where the Soldier gleans the scant supply,
The helpless Peasant but retires to die;
No laws his hut from licensed outrage shield,
And war's least horror is the ensanguined field.

Fruitful in vain, the matron counts with pride
The blooming youths that grace her honoured side;
No son returns to press her widow'd hand,
Her fallen blossoms strew a foreign strand.

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---Fruitful in vain, she boasts her virgin race,
Whom cultured arts adorn and gentlest grace;
Defrauded of its homage, Beauty mourns,
And the rose withers on its virgin thorns.
Frequent, some stream obscure, some uncouth name
By deeds of blood is lifted into fame;
Oft o'er the daily page some soft-one bends
To learn the fate of husband, brothers, friends,
Or the spread map with anxious eye explores,
Its dotted boundaries and penciled shores,
Asks *where* the spot that wrecked her bliss is found,
And learns its name but to detest the sound.

...

Perhaps some Briton, in whose musing mind
Those ages live which Time has cast behind,
To every spot shall lead his wondering guests
On whose known site the beam of glory rests:
Here Chatham's eloquence in thunder broke,
Here Fox persuaded, or here Garrick spoke;
Shall boast how Nelson, fame and death in view,
To wonted victory led his ardent crew,
In England's name enforced, with loftiest tone,
Their duty,---and too well fulfilled his own:
How gallant Moore, as ebbing life dissolved,
But hoped his country had his fame absolved.

...

But fairest flowers expand but to decay;
The worm is in thy core, thy glories pass away;
Arts, arms and wealth destroy the fruits they bring;
Commerce, like beauty, knows no second spring.
Crime walks thy streets, Fraud earns her unblest bread,
O'er want and woe thy gorgeous robe is spread,

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And angel charities in vain oppose:

With grandeur's growth the mass of misery grows.

For see,---to other climes the Genius soars,

He turns from Europe's desolated shores;

And lo, even now, midst mountains wrapt in storm,

On Andes' heights he shrouds his awful form;

On Chimborazo's summits treads sublime,

Measuring in lofty thought the march of Time;

Sudden he calls:--- "'Tis now the hour!" he cries,

Spreads his broad hand, and bids the nations rise.

La Plata hears amidst her torrents' roar,

Potosi hears it, as she digs the ore:

Ardent, the Genius fans the noble strife,

And pours through feeble souls a higher life,

Shouts to the mingled tribes from sea to sea,

And swears---Thy world, Columbus, shall be free.