

Time Past by Anna Seward

[from "Llangollen Vale with Other Poems"]

(41)

TO
TIME PAST
WRITTEN DEC. 1772.

RETURN, blest years!----when not the jocund Spring,
Luxuriant Summer, nor the amber hours
Calm Autumn gives, my heart invok'd to bring
Joys, whose rich balm o'er all the bosom pours;
When ne'er I wish'd might grace the closing day
One tint purpureal, or one golden ray;
When the loud Storms, that Favonian gales,
And Winter's bare, bleak fields, than Summer's flowery Vales!

Yet, not to deck pale hours with vain parade
Beneath the blaze of wide-illumin'd Dome;
Not for the bounding Dance;----not to pervade,
And charm the sense with Music;----nor, as roam
The mimic Passions o'er theatric scene,
To laugh, or weep;---O! not for these, I ween,
But for delights that made the *heart* their home,
Was the grey night-frost on the sounding plain
More than the Sun invok'd, that gilds the grassy lane.

(42)

Yes, for the joys that trivial joys excell,
My lov'd HONORA*, did we hail the gloom
Of dim November's eve;----and as it fell,
And the bright fires shone cheerful round the room,
Dropt the warm curtains with no tardy hand;
And felt our spirits, and our hearts expand,
Listening their steps, who still, where'er they come,
Make the keen stars, that glaze the settled snows,
More than the Sun invok'd, when first he tints the rose.

Affection,----Friendship,----Sympathy,----your throne
Is Winter's glowing hearth;----and ye were ours,
Thy smile, HONORA, made them all our own.----
Where are they *now*?----alas! Their choicest powers
Faded at thy retreat;----for thou art gone,
And many a dark, long Eve I sigh alone,
In thrill'd remembrance of the vanish'd hours,
When storms were dearer than the balmy gales,

And Winter's bare bleak fields than green luxuriant vales.

*MISS HONORA SNEYD, to whom the gallant, and unfortunate MAJOR ANDRE, was so unalienably attached. See the Author's MONODY on that Gentleman.