

To Miss Cushman
 On seeing her play "Bianca" in
 Milman's tragedy of "Haji"

I thought thee wondrous when thy
 soul portrayed

The youth Verona dragged of; and the love
 Of glowing, Southern blood, by thee was made
 Entrancing as the breath of orange grove.

I felt the spirit of the great was thine:
 In the sad Boy's devotion and despair,
 I knew thou wert a pilgrim at the shrine
 Where God's high ministers alone repair.

No rote learned sighing filled thy starting moans;
 Thy grief was heavy, as thy joy was light;
 Passion and Poesy were in thy tones,
 And Mind flashed forth in its electric might.

I had seen many "fret and strut their hours";
 But my brain never had become such slave
 To Fiction, as it did beneath thy power,
 Nor owned such homage as to thee it gave.

I did not think thou could'st arouse
a thro' stronger, beating in my heart,
I did not deem thou could'st awake the
Of choking fulness, and convulsive start

But thy pale madness, and thy gasping
That breathed the torture of Widener's pain
Oh never would my bosom ask to know
Such sad and bitter sympathy again!

When the wife's anguish sears thy hope
check,
Let crowds behold and laud thee as they
But this poor breast, is shunning what
they seek,
May yield perchance a richer tribute
still.

Eliza Cook