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# An Exhortation

Percy Bysshe Shelley

1820

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Camelions feed on light and air:  
Poets' food is love and fame:  
If in this wide world of care  
Poets could but find the same  
With as little toil as they,  
Would they ever change their hue  
As the light camelions do,  
Suiting it to every ray  
Twenty times a-day?  
Poets are on this cold earth,  
As camelions might be,  
Hidden from their early birth  
In a cave beneath the sea;  
Where light is camelions change:  
Where love is not, poets do:  
Fame is love disguised: if few  
Find either never think it strange  
That poets range.

Yet dare not stain with wealth or power  
A poet's free and heavenly mind:  
If bright camelions should devour  
Any food but beams and wind,  
They would grow as earthly soon  
As their brother lizards are.  
Children of a sunnier star,  
Spirits from beyond the moon,  
O, refuse the boon!