Landon in The Literary Gazette 1827

Poems in The London Literary Gazette during the year 1827 by Letitia Elizabeth Landon (L. E. L.) (and as lole)

compiled by Peter J. Bolton

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WILLOW LEAVES.

Translation of Les Feuilles de Saule. Par Mde. Aimable Tastu.

"Un jour je m'étais amusé à effeuiller une branche de suite sur un ruisseau, et à attacher une idée à chaque feuille, que le courant entrainait."—Chatembriand.

The hour was fair, but Autumn's dying Was upon leaf, and flower, and tree; The sunshine with the season flying, As I could feel my life from me.

Beside an aged trunk reclining,
All other darker days forgot,
The leaves fell, and the waves went pining,
Lost in my dreams, I marked them not.

From the old willow o'er me bending,
My hand, unconscious, stripp'd a bough,
Then watch'd I the light leaves descending,
Borne on by the blue current's flow.

Idlesse it hath the vaguest dreaming,—
From their course sought I to divine;
And mid those o'er the waters streaming
Chose I one for my fortune's sign.

Skiff-like it flow'd with peace before it,
Till choice of mine upon it fell,—
Then rudely prest the wild waves o'er it—
It sunk: I chose mine emblem well!

Another leaf! to some hope clinging,
A miracle might guard its way;
"Twas my lute's fate—the wind past, flinging
My oracle, my hope away.

To the wave where my fortunes leave me My genius passes with the gale: Shall I trust to it, to bereave me Of dearer vow?—my spirits fail.

E'en while at its own weakness blushing, My sick heart sinks beneath its fear; That heart is weak, and dark clouds rushing, Are all its omens bid appear.

Down from my hand the green bough falling,
I leave the willow and the stream;
Yet still their omens drear recalling,
Those prophet leaves haunt midnight's dream.

THE FEAR.

Will not wreathe thy sunny hair
With summer flowers;
Their breath and bloom will not outlast
A few short hours.

I am too auxious in my love
To bear to see
Those sweet but fragile flower leaves
Wasting by thee.

They are so fresh, in loveliness So much like thine, That evil omen does it seem To watch them pine.

Thus I should think, like these will fade Thy lip of rose like those blue violets, thine eyes Grow dim and close.

I know the time will come, our star Of joy must set; But that such grief must be I would At least forget.

Then let not, mid thy golden curls,
Those blossoms sigh;
I cannot bear that even a flower
Near thee should die.

For all too precious and too dear
Thou art to me,
For me to brook aught that recalls
I might lose Thee.

Iole.

BIRTHDAY IN SPRING.

THE sights and the sounds of loveliness
Are abroad upon the earth;

And flower looks smiling on flower, as each Had a share in the other's mirth.

A thousand songs from a thousand boughs The glad birds' pleasure declare;

The rills are laughing in crystal light...

For the presence of Spring is there.

Like a purple cloud that has left the west,
Is you bank with its violet crowd...
With the green leaves drooped o'er each scented
urn,

Like Love o'er its secret bowed.

And this was the time when I was born—
The time of the song and flower:
Why had not such sweet influence charm
On the star of my natal hour?

That first spring has been the only one
The year of my life has known;
And that, with a short and blighted resign,
Soon abandon'd its sunny throne.

As the birds, the flowers, and the showers of spring,

Are the heart's hopes, joys, and tears:
But my birds were caged, my hopes so checked,
That their nature turned to fears.

One after one, my flowers declined, Till there was left my Spring, Over the bitter waters of life Not one green leaf to fling.

My showers grew storms—the fount of tears
In my desert heart grew dry;
And left me a sneer, or masking smile;
And a cold and careless eye.

Years bring their spring—the green leaf comes
Again with the early shower;

And though flowers close and birds are mute—
More sweet is their waking hour.

A second green spring can be:
Oh why was I mocked with a birth in spring
Which never was spring to me!
L. E. L.

THE SPIRIT OF DREAMS.

SPIRIT of the midnight dream,
What is now upon thy wing?
Earth sleeps in the moonlight beam:
O'er that sleep what wilt thou fling?

Many a vain and shadowy thought,
All of daylight's hope and fear,
Mind's strange workings, have I brought
On the sleeper's eye and ear.

There were some who prayed me give Respite short from grief and pain; Some few who but sought to live Pleasure's fleeting hour again.

Past I o'er a purple tent,

Down and odours wooed my stay;

But remorse and hate were sent—

Guards to banish me away.

Reached I next a lonely tower,
Pale, like him, a lamp burnt there,
While its master past the hour
O'er his scroll of learned care.

Marvelled I that he should spend
Thus the hours of my sweet reign;
When his labours find their end,
He will find, too, they were vain.

Tears were in the soft dark eyes
Where I once had loved to rest;
Love had banished me, and sighs
Told he was less quiet guest.

But I bade her eyelids close
'Neath a sweet dream's gentle sway,—
False, but yet less false than those
Which the maiden dreamed by day.

I have seen the iron brow Grow yet darker in its rest; While the flushed cheek's angry glow Told what lurked in the dark breast.

I have entered the drear cell,
Where the pallid murderer past
Hours whose anguish none may tell,
Yet clung to them as his last.

I have looked on craft and crime
In the hearts of youth and age:
O Night! thine's fearful time—
Mine a weary pilgrimage!

Better love I sweet noontide,

Haunting the blue hyacinth bell,

Where the silver waters glide—

Where the falling dew-drops dwell.

Welcome to the morning hours!
Welcome to the rising sun!
I may now go haunt the flowers,—
Joy! my human task is done.

Servian Popular Poetry. Translated by John Bowring. 12mo. pp. 235. London, 1827. Baldwin and Co., and Rowland Hunter.

INTERPRETER of love, hope, sorrow,—chronicle of the brave, the faithful, the wretched;
not a nation but has given birth to some species
of poetry. The heart will ever have some feelings more highly toned than those in daily use,
and such are the origin of those imaginative
expressions universal as the feelings that inspire them. Round the bright hearths of the
North, through the fragrant groves of the
South, the spirit of song has ever sent a voice.

THE maiden turned her head away—
"You'll have no kiss from me to-day."
And why to-day, love, must I see
The roses bloom, and not for me?"
Tears filled the maiden's raven eyes—
"The lightly won, you lightly prize;
To make you prize the kiss you gain,
It must be won with toil and pain;
And seldom too: so still I say,
You'll have no kiss from me to day."

SONG.

She took a flower, and plucked the leaves,
Then flung them in the wine;
And ever thus, she said, at first
The hopes of young love shine.
The cup is drained: amid the dregs
The leaves pale scentless lie;

And ever thus, she said, at last The hopes of young love die.

THE FALCON-MESSENGER. The warrior loosed the silken string That was around his falcon's wing. "Go forth, till thou that thing shalt see More than my life-blood dear to me." The bird went forth-the red gold shone-The white steed neighed—the bird swept on ; He paused above a tower—and then Sought out his warrior lord again. " I saw a lady and a child-The infant in its slumber smiled; Methinks the mother would have wept, But 'twas such soothing watch she kept." His look grew soft, his voice sank low: " My own brave bird, well dost thou know What thou in thy wild flight couldst see, More dear than life-blood dear to me."

The desert hath a dreary waste
Of burning sand and sky;
But even there the fount and palm
Beside the pathway lie:
There may the tired pilgrim rest
Upon his wearied race.—
I would the wilderness of Love
Could boast such resting place:
But sultry sky and endless sands,
These, O Love! are for thee—
Thy constant destiny: alas,
That such should be for me!
L. E. L.

SCULPTURE: EXTRAORDINARY GENTUS.

It has been the good fortune, and we trust the characteristic of the Literary Gazette, to bring forward talent under every circumstance in which it could be found; and as far as our powers and our judgment would allow, place merit in the view of the public: and we have not been in many instances without the satisfaction of finding that our labours have not been in vain.

We do not hunt for genius, nor travel to discover precocious powers, too often resembling the ignis fatuus, which astonishes for a while, and then is seen no more: but when we discover an individual in an obscure lodging, unknown and unpatronised, under every circumstance of privation and exclusion, occupied as a sculptor, and producing stupendous works of art, it becomes a duty, and it is our pride, to call the attention of the public, and of the lovers and patrons of the Fine Arts, to the case of so gifted an individual. The person to whom we allude is a Mr. Lough, the son, we believe, of a small farmer in Northumberland; who, we fear not to predict, is destined to become, at no distant day, one of the greatest sculptors of modern This young genius, for he is yet only twenty-four years of age, has already, at an age when others are little advanced in their studies. overleaped the bounds, and burst the trammels which confine ordinary men, and produced We have just works of astonishing power. seen him, in the obscurity of a paltry lodging, in a mean street (1), Burleigh-street, Strand); but in his poor apartment, surrounded with the wonders of his talent, and the proofs of his extraordinary character. There are two models,

recently completed; the one a group of small figures, the subject, Samson slaying the Philistines; the other, a colossal figure of Milo, the Crotonian athlete, at the moment when, being unable to disengage his hands from the cleft of the tree he was endeavouring to tear asunder, he is devoured by wild beasts. They are both perfectly miraculous. There is no evasion of difficulties, but a daring defiance, and a complete conquest of them. We will not assert that there may not be slight inaccuracies of detail (although the parts are admirably marked); but we are free to declare, that they are such productions as only the most exalted and powerful genius could conceive and execute. His Milo, we are informed, tumbled to pieces three times while he was about it, from his not having money to purchase the materials necessary for its support! He will need support no longer, or England is insensible to the noblest efforts of the human mind.

As something of the history of such a being must be interesting, we shall state the result of our inquiry. In his boyhood Mr. Lough amused himself in modelling the peasantry about him in common clay. The accidental perusal of Gibbon's Decline and Fall gave a classical turn to his mind, and he sought London to improve it. In London, for about two years, his course must have been one of intense study and prodigious labour, which nothing but the most undaunted spirit and irrepressible enthusiasm could have enabled human nature to sustain.

By this notice of him we trust to be the means of putting an end to his privations—of cheering him on his glorious way—of procuring him the support he so pre-eminently deserves—and of seeing him enabled, by the prosecution of his studies in an adequate manner at home and in Italy, to reflect back an honour upon his country and age,—and we shall rejoice in having been the instrument to make his value known and appreciated.

GENIUS.

Lines suggested by a View of the Sculpture designed by Mr. Lough, and described in last week's Literary Gasette.

GLORY of earth, and light from heaven, Young Genius! but for thee,

And the wild wonders to thee given, How base our earth would be!

Bright halls, where meet the vain and cold, The idle and the gay,

With feelings cast in one set mould— Do they redeem our clay?

The mart, where for gold's sordid sake The trader sears his heart—

Is there aught of the things that make Our nature's nobler part?

Or in the hind who duly plies Each day's accustomed beat; As very dust as that which lies

As very dust as that which lies Unconscious at his feet?

Or in those higher ranks that know No world of inward thought, As vapid as their outward show,— Vanity vainly bought?

And yet this world is animate
With the fine spirit sent,
Vivid as Hope, and strong as Fate,
Mind's purer element.

Like mountains with one golden vein Of rich ore running through; Like that ore asking but the pain Of being brought to view.

Such is mankind, and such the store That dwells within his mind; Or rather, some there are whose ore Is wealth for half their kind. Young Sculptor! whose creative hand
Has waked these thoughts in me,
While thine own works around thee stand,
How proud thy soul must be!

The red fire kindling without touch;
The fountain's sudden birth;
So, Genius, dost thou rise, and such
Thy likenesses on earth.

The youth I speak of, is he not Touch'd with thy fire by thee? Has not thy guidance cast his lot, His mind, his destiny?

Strange interest must it be to know
How it within him work'd;
What chance ray caused the leaves to blow,
Whose germs within him lurk'd,

Was it beside some summer stream,
That came that haunted hour
The forms that haunt enthusiast dream,
Of grace and depth and power;

And bade him mould them for his own, Till both grew half divine? Young master of the breathing stone, It recks not,—they are thine!

Art thou not bound to that fair shore Where art's great wonders be? What miser's wealth to thee the store Of classic Italy!

And worship there her gifted band, Till thou again shalt come, With practised eye, and perfect hand, To England, fame, and home.

"STRIKE the sails again, and drop
Your anchor by the shore;
Our purple cup has yet to make
A few glad circles more.
Fair sister, seat thee by my side—
Another health to thee:
You sky shall lose its rival blush,
Ere we pass o'er the sea.
I call on thee, thou minstrel young,
To praise the ruby tide:"
Thus spoke the young Prince Henry,
And soon the song replied:—
song.

Deep, deep, drain the cup, Or leave its wealth untasted-Deep, deep, drain the cup, Or its best gift is wasted. Drink not of the purple wine For a moment's gladness. Flashing wit and careless laugh Are but transient madness :-There's sparkling light floats on the bowl, There's flashing mirth within it: But its deep forgetfulness Is the best spell in it. Drain the red wine till it be Lethe to life's sorrow; 'Tis something to forget to-day That there must come to-morrow.

'Twas sad; for aye have lute and bard
Held prophecy of tone;
But, like the shadow of a bird,
Soon was the sadness flown.
And redder, redder grew the sky,
And redder grew the brine.

The lighter rose the laugh and song,
The gayer past the wine.

'Twas like a court of fairy land,
Held by the silver main...

The young prince, and his sister fair,
Their gay and gallant train.

The last upon the east,

The last upon the west,

And both are, but one tinge more pale,

Mirror'd on ocean's breast.

No cloud is on the face of heaven,

No ruffle on the deep,

And there is but such gentle wind

As o'er the lute might sweep.

The last wine-cup is drained, and now,
Fair ship, they crowd to thee.
Ah! these are but unsteady hands
To guide thee o'er the sea.
But still it was a gallant sight
To see her breast the tide;

The queen-like countess on the deck, The royal youth beside:

And all was bright, as the White Ship Cut through the sparkling spray; Though still her shadow, omen like,

Dark on the waters lay.

One long, wild shriek—that hidden rock!

The ship has perished there:—

"Back with you all, out with the boat, Save England's royal heir."

" Pause, on your lives!" Back sprung the prince

Upon the shattered deck :

"My sister!" Safely in his arms He bore her from the wreck.

Cold, pale, the morning slowly broke;

Upheld upon the mast,

Two, only two, remained to tell What in that night had past.

The one was master of that ship, That fair ship nothing now.

O never more he'll set her sails, Or guide her stately prow!

He thought but of his royal freight:

" Is he among the dead?"

"I saw," the other said, "the wave Close o'er Prince Henry's head."

"And who shall to our native shore.
The dismal tidings bear;

And tell the king he has no son, The throne it has no heir?"

"Not I, not I, my noble prince, At least I'll share thy grave:"

The master loosed his hold and plunged Beneath the fated wave.

We was in merry England, A deep and lasting we— A father wept above the sea, His children slept below:

BROKEN VOWS. AND this is all I have left now, Silence and solitude and tears : The memory of a broken vow, My blighted hopes, my wasted years. There hangs your late; the wandering wind Will hence its only master be; But never may its numbers find More wandering master than in thee. My falcon it has slipped its band-Afar your faithless gift has flown; The bird which fed from my own hand, Alas, its stay is like your own! You swore to me you starry ranks Should sooner leave their homes above ; You river change its native banks, Than you forget your early love. Each starry world its station keeps In night's blue empire as before; The same our native river sweeps In vain-for I am loved no more. I will go weep, till rose and blue Alike from check and eye depart, A faded flower, and then adieu, My own false hopes and thy false heart. L. E. L.

EUTHEN ASIA.

[Irregular Lines.]

DEATH came like a friend to restore thee To those who had died before thee:

> Father, mother, Sister, brother.

There were none of those to mourn o'er thee.

But now that Death has found thee, Thy kindred and friends are round thee;

In their rest they are laid In the dark yew shade,

And cold sleep like their own has bound thee-

Thou wert a lonely flower, Sprung on a ruined tower,

Which, with head declined,

Awaits the first wind To end its summer hour.

Thou wert fair as a poet's dreaming, With thy black hair wildly streaming;

But the hectic sign Of thy health's decline

Was not long for this world's seeming-

All felt that thy doom was spoken— Thy brow was its own pale token;

Thy cheek's changing dye, And thy drooping eye-

These told thy young heart was broken.

Strangers who watched thy weeping, Sought to win thee from fruitless keeping

Thy thoughts of pain; Their care was in vain,

For thy heart in the grave was sleeping.

They found no joy could move thee, And coldly they censed to love thee;

Thou alone wert left

Of all hope bereft,

Save the one in the heaven above theo.

Now the sweet wild flowers are dying, And the wind o'er thy grave is sighing;

Not for thy sad sake Should we wish to break

The deep sleep upon thee lying.

BALLAD.

"O go not forth to night, my child,
O go not forth to night;
The rain beats down, the wind is wild,
And not a star has light."

"The rain it will but wash my plume, The wind but wave it dry;

And for such quest as mine, mirk gloom Is welcome in the sky.

And little will the warder know What step is gliding near; One only eye will watch below, One only ear will hear.

A hundred men keep watch and ward, But what is that to me?

And when hath ever Love been barred From where he wills to be?

Go, mother, with thy maiden band,
And make the chamber bright;
The loveliest lady in the land
Will be thy guest to-night."

He flung him on his raven steed—
He spurr'd it o'er the plain;
The bird, the arrow, have such speed:—
His mother called in vain.

"His sword is sharp, his steed is fleet,— St. Marie, be his guide;

And I'll go make a welcome meet For his young stranger-bride."

And soon the waxen tapers threw Their fragrance on the air, And flowers of every morning hue Yielded their sweet lives there. Around the walls an eastern loom Had hung its purple fold...

A hundred lamps lit up the room, And every lamp was gold.

A horn is heard, the drawbridge falls—
"Oh, welcome! 'tis my son!"

A cry of joy rang through the halls—
"And his fair bride is won."

But that fair face is very pale, Too pale to suit a bride:

All, blood is on her silvery veil— That blood flows from her side.

Upon the silken couch he laid
The maiden's drooping head;
The flowers, before the bride to fade,
Were scattered o'er the dead.

He knelt by her the livelong night,
And only once spoke he—
"Oh, when the shaft was on its flight,
Why did it not pierce me?"

He built a chapel where she slept,
For prayer and holy strain:
One midnight by the grave he wept,
He never saw again.

Without a name, without a crest,
He sought the Holy Land:
St. Marie, give his soul good rest—
He died there sword in hand.

ELISE.

O LET me love her! she has past
Into my inmost heart—
A dweller on the hallowed ground
Of its least worldly part;
Where feelings and where memories dwell
Like hidden music in the shell.

She was so like the forms that float
On twilight's hour to me,
Making of cloud-born shapes and thoughts
A dear reality:
As much a thing of light and air
As ever poet's visions were.

I left smoke, vanities, and cares,
Just far enough behind,
To dream of fairies 'neath the moon,
Of voices on the wind;
And every fantasy of mine
Was truth in that sweet face of thine.

Her cheek was very very pale,
Yet it was still more fair;
Lost were one half its loveliness,
Had the red rose been there:
But now that sad and touching grace
Made her's seem like an angel's face.

The spring, with all its breath and bloom,
Hath not so dear a flower,
As the white lily's languid head
Drooping beneath the shower;
And health hath ever waken'd less
Of deep and anxious tenderness.

And O thy destiny was love, Written in those soft eyes; A creature to be met with smiles, And to be watch'd with sighs; A sweet and fragile blossom, made To be within the bosom laid. And there are some beneath whose touch The coldest hearts expand, As erst the rocks gave forth their tears Beneath the prophet's hand; And colder than that rock must be The heart that melted not for thee. Thy voice—thy poet-lover's song Has not a softer tone; Thy dark eyes...only stars at night Such holy light have known; And thy smile is thy heart's sweet sign, So gentle and so feminine.

I feel, in gazing on thy face,
As I had known thee long;
Thy looks are like notes that recall
Some old remembered song.
By all that touches and endears,
Lady, I must have loved thee years.
FOR TEUTHA; L. E. L.

FRAGMENT.

I know but little of her history,
For feelings are veiled records, which lie deep
Within the heart that beats with them. She was
Rich:—you proud castle, with its ivied towers,
And this fair park, and youder spreading woods,
Nature's old sanctuaries, were hers:—and
young—

I think that twenty summers were the most
That she had numbered:—and, oh beautiful—
A creature like a memory for the heart;—
Hair black as is the thunder cloud—a lash
Yet blacker still, and soft large eyes, where light
And darkness met: the outline of her face
Was as a Grecian statue, but more sweet,
More feminine, from gentle smiles that seemed
Its nature:—and her name was as a chord
That wakened music—so much was she leved.

The last of all her race: one after one
Had died of strange and terrible disease,
The red insanity—and she at length
Was struck like all her house; her radiant eye
Lost its humanity; the fine clear brow
Was darkened with a shadow; and her lip
Lost rose and smile together. She was sad,
Silent, and restless; and what time the moon
Filled her pale urn with golden light, vague
fears

And unreal terrors haunted her scared nights,
And shadows seemed to compass her, and sounds,
To which she made wild answers: other time
Past away sad, but quiet; she would sit
For hours beside this fountain, while its flow,
Like music, calmed and entered in her soul.
This did not last; she visibly declined;
Flushed the rose hectic on her crimson cheek,
And her eves filled with strange and passionate
light.

As if they burnt themselves away. She died— But peacefully: 'twas like an angry child, Whose troubles end in sleep. She went to join The pure fine spirit which I must believe Had sought its heaven before. L. E. L.

FLOAT on, float on, thou lonely bark,
Across the weary brine;
I know not why I load thee with
Such cheerless freight as mine.

I know not why I wander forth,
Nor what I wish to see;
For Hope, the child of Morn and Mist,
Has long been veiled from me.

They may be very fair...

Let poet or let painter rave,

I see but ruin there.

I think upon the waste above, And on the dead below; I see but human vanity.... I see but human wo.

And cities in their hour of pomp,

The peopled and the proud—

What are they? mighty sepulchres

To gulf a wretched crowd:

Where wealth and want are both accurst, Each one the worst to bear; Where every heart and house are barred With the same sordid care.

And fairer scenes...the vine-wreathed hill, A gold and ruby mine, Grapes, nature's jewels, richly wrought Around the autumn's shrine;

The corn-fields' fairy armory,
Where every lance is gold,
And poppies fling upon the wind
Their banner's crimson gold:

The moon, sweet shadow of the sun, On the lake's tranquil breast,— Too much these gentle scenes contrast My spirit's own unrest, And I must be what I have been,
And not what I am now,
Ere these could call a smile, or chase
One shadow from my brow.

I must lay in some nameless sea.

The ghosts of hopes long fled;

Efface dark memory's scroll, and leave
A shining page instead.

I must forget youth's bloom is fled, Ere its own measured hours; I must forget that summer dies, Even amid its flowers.

And give me more than pleasure's task— Belief that they can be; Then every spreading sail were slow To bear me on the sea.

But now I care not for their course; Wherever I may roam, I bear about the weariness That haunted me at home.

I may see all around me changed,
Beneath a foreign sky;
I may fly scenes, and friends, and foes.
Myself I cannot fly.
L. E. L.