

**Landoniana**

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**compiled by  
Peter J. Bolton**

## LANDONIANA.

*From 'Romance and Reality.'*

## HOPE.

HOPE destroys pleasure. This remark having been questioned by one to whose judgment I exceedingly defer, may I be permitted not to retract, but to defend my assertion? Hope is like constancy, the country, or solitude—all of which owe their reputation to the pretty things that have been said about them. Hope is but the poetical name for that feverish restlessness which hurries over to-day for the sake of to-morrow. Who among us pauses upon the actual moment, to own, 'Now, even now, am I happy?' The wisest of men has said, that hope deferred is sickness to the heart: yet what hope have we that is not deferred? For my part, I believe that there are two spirits who preside over this feeling, and that hope, like love, has its Eros and Anteros. Its Eros, that reposes on fancy and creates rather than calculates; while its Anteros lives on expectation, and is dissatisfied with all that is, in vague longings for what may be.

## CHILDHOOD.

Childhood, more than any other period, links its remembrance with inanimate objects, perhaps because its chief pleasures are derived from them. The hillock, whose top was left with a flying step—the oak, to scale whose leafy fortress had in it something of that sense of danger and exertion in which even the earliest age delights—the broad sheet of water, whose smooth surface has been so often skimmed and broken by the round pebble, to whose impetus the young arm lent its utmost vigour—how deeply are these things graven upon the memory! The great reason why the pleasures of childhood are so much more felt in their satisfaction, is, that they suffice unto themselves. The race is run without an eye to a prize;—the oak is climbed without reference to aught that will reward the search;—the stone is flung upon the waters, but not in the hope that, ere many days, it will be found

again. The simple exertion is its own exceeding great reward.

## TIME.

The time which passes pleasantly passes lightly; days are remembered by their cares more than by their content.

## INTENTIONS.

The difference between good and bad intentions is this:—that good intentions are so very satisfactory in themselves, that it really seems a work of supererogation to carry them into execution; whereas evil ones have a restlessness that can only be satisfied by action—and, to the shame of fate be it said, very many facilities always offer for their being effected.

## FLATTERY.

The force of flattery is, I am convinced, very much overrated. People would far sooner suppose you silly than themselves, and take for granted the compliment they have paid must be received. For my part, how much of my vanity has been mere endurance! I confess myself much of the Macedonian's opinion,—‘I would wish for the prize in the chariot race, if kings were my competitors.’ You all know the anecdote of the dustman who requested permission to light his pipe at the Duchess of Devonshire's eyes. Now, I should have been more displeased with the dustman's venturing to know whether I had eyes or not, than pleased with the compliment.

## INDIFFERENCE.

It is curious how little we speculate on what may be the impression we produce on others—unless, indeed, vanity comes into play, and then there is no bound to the speculation. Still, the general feeling is utter indifference. Take an example from London life. Some fair dame ‘in silk attire’ folds her cloak round her—if very cold half buries her face in her boa—and drives the usual morning round, without one thought given to the crowd through which she passes;—and yet how many different sensations have followed the track of that carriage! admiration, envy, even hate. Some youth has loitered on his busy way to take another

gaze at a being whose beauty and grace are of another order than his working world. Some young pedestrian of her own sex has cast a glance of envy at the bonnet of which a glimpse is just caught through the window ; and, as envy is ever connected with repining, turns regretfully to pursue a walk rendered distasteful by comparison. Then hate—that hate with which the miserably poor look on others' enjoying, what he sees, but shares not, and pursues the toil that binds him to the soil, fiercely and bitterly saying, ' Why have I no part in the good things of earth ?'

## LOVE.

There is a period in the lives of most, when the heart opens its leaves, like a flower, to all the gentle influences ;—when one beloved step is sweet in its fall beyond all music, and the light of one beloved face is dear as that of heaven ; when the thoughts are turned to poetry, and a fairy charm is thrown over life's most ordinary occurrences ; Hope, that gentlest astrologer, foretelling a future she herself has created ;—when the present is coloured by glad yet softened spirits, buoyant, though too tender for mirth. Who shall say that is a selfish feeling which looks in another's eyes to read its own happiness, and holds another's welfare more precious than its own ? What path in after-time will ever be so pleasant as that one walk which delayed on its way, and yet ended so soon ? What discourse of the wise, the witty, the eloquent, will ever have the fascination of a few simple, even infantile words—or of the still, but delicious silence which they broke ? Why does love affect childish expressions of endearment, but because it has all the truth and earnestness of childhood ? And the simplicity of its language seems the proof of its sincerity. \* Or is it that, being unworldly itself, it delights to retreat upon those unworldly days ? Go through life, and see if the quiet light of the stars, the passionate song of the poet, the haunted beauty of flowers, will ever again come home to the heart as they did in that early and only time.

Now, let no one say that I am trying to make young

people romantic. While I acknowledge that the gardens of Iran exist, I beg leave also to state that they lie in a desert—appear but for a moment—and then vanish in their beauty for ever. Every fable has its moral ; and that of love is disappointment, weariness, or disgust. Young people would avoid falling in love, if—as some story-book observes—young people would but consider. When Cromwell sent his ambassador to Spain, under circumstances which somewhat endangered his head, he encouraged him by stating, ‘ That if his head fell, that of every Spaniard in his dominions should fall too.’ ‘ A thousand thanks,’ returned the diplomatist ; ‘ but among all these heads there may not be one to fit me.’

What he said of heads may also be said of experience—there is a large stock on hand ; but, somehow or other, nobody’s experience ever suits us except our own.

#### A SPANISH PATRIOT.

Don Henriquez was a brave and honourable man, with a degree of information rare among his countrymen ; but he was not at all the person to be placed in uncommon circumstances. He had seen enough of England to have caught impressions, rather than convictions, of the advantages of a free people ; and a good constitution seemed equally necessary to the nation and the individual. But his ideas of liberty were more picturesque than practical. He dwelt on the rights of the people, without considering whether that people were in a state to enforce, or even receive them. He declaimed on tyranny like an ancient, on information like a modern. He forgot that, for change to be useful, it must be gradual ; and while enlarging on the enlightened intellect of the present time, he overlooked the fact, that our ancestors could not have been altogether so very wrong, or that society could not have gone on at all.

He had a vivid imagination—and this threw a charm, rather than a light, around the subjects it investigated. He was one of those who feel instead of think, and therefore invest their theories with a reality incom-

prehensible to a calm observer. Hence, it seemed wonderful that what was so tangible to himself was not equally so to others; and from being surprised that our opinions are not understood, is an easy step towards being angry.

His views were narrow, because they were impassioned. Moreover, he had a natural flow of eloquence—a gift which deceives no one more than its possessor: there is a difficulty in believing that what is so very easy to say, is not equally easy to do. Like many orators, he did not take into consideration, that a good argument is not always a good reason; and that, unfortunately for the peace of society, and fortunately for debaters, there never was yet a contested point without excellent arguments on both sides of the question.

Don Henriquez would have been a happy man in England: he would have taken the chair at public dinners, and said the most touching things about alleviating the distresses of our fellow-creatures: he would have delayed as much as possible the business of county meetings, by shewing how much better it might be done: he would have given dinners to politicians, and called it supporting his party—and dinners to a few successful authors, and called it encouraging genius: he would have been in the opposition, and made some eloquent speeches on retrenchment and reform, and the newspapers next day would have complimented the honourable member for Cockermonth on his brilliant and patriotic display: he would have died, and left *matériel* for a well-rounded paragraph in the obituary, without having retarded or advanced one single circumstance in the great chain of events. But, alas! for the mismanagement of fate—he was quite out of his place in the Cortez of Spain: he dilated on religious toleration to those in whose ears it sounded like blasphemy—on the blessing of knowledge, to those with whom intellect and anarchy were synonymous—and on the rights of the people, to Hidalgos, who were *preux chevaliers* in loyalty to their king.

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## EVILS.

SMALL evils make the worst part of great ones: it is so much easier to endure misfortune than to bear an inconvenience. Captain Franklin, half frozen on the Arctic shores, would not grumble one tithe so much as an elderly gentleman sitting in a draught.

## HOUSEHOLD LOVE.

Strange is it that people (unless in the way of ostentation) never value the blessings they possess. But if life has a happiness over which the primeval curse has passed and harmed not, it is the early and long-enduring affection of blood and habit. The passion which concentrates its strength and beauty upon one, is a rich and terrible stake, the end whereof is death;—the living light of existence is burnt out in an hour—and what remains? The dust and the darkness. But the love which is born in childhood—an instinct deepening into a principle—retains to the end something of the freshness belonging to the hour of its birth: the amusement partaken—the trifling quarrel made up—the sorrows shared together—the punishment in which all were involved—the plans for the future, so fairy-tale-like and so false, in which all indulged: so true it is that love's slightest links are its strongest!

There is something inexpressibly touching in the story of Ishmael, the youth who was sent into the wilderness of life with his bow and his arrow, 'his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him.' Even in our crowded, busy, and social world, on how many is this doom pronounced! What love makes allowances like household love?—what takes an interest in small sorrows and small successes like household love? God forgive those (and I would not even say forgive, were not Divine mercy illimitable,) who turn the household altar to a place of strife! Domestic dissension is the sacrilege of the heart.

## FALLING IN LOVE.

Believing, as I do, that falling in love goes by destiny, and that, of all affairs, those of the heart are those

for which there is the least accounting, I have always thought, that to give reasons for its happening, is throwing the said reasons away—a waste much to be deprecated in an age where reasons are in such great request. It is not beauty that inspires love—still less is it mind. It is not situation—people who were indifferent in a moonlight walk have taken a fit of sentiment in Piccadilly. It is not early association: indeed, the chances are rather against the Paul and Virginia style. It is not dress—conquests have been made in curl-papers. In short—to be mythological in my conclusion—the quiver of Cupid hangs at the girdle of Fate, together with her spindle and scissors.

#### AFRICAN DISCOVERY.

There is something very melancholy in the many valuable lives which have been sacrificed during the course of African discovery. But I believe that travelling is as much a passion as love, poetry, or ambition. What of less force than a passion could, in the first instance, induce men to fix their thoughts on undertakings whose difficulties and dangers were at once so obvious and so many? What but a passion (and the energy of passion is wonderful) could support them through toil, hardship, and suffering—all in the very face of death—and for what? But true it is, that of any great exertion in which the mind has part, the best reward is in the exertion itself.

#### HOME.

I do not go quite the length of the modern philosopher, who asserts that our nature is not wholly sophisticated so long as we retain our juvenile predilection in favour of apple-dumpling; but I do think that the affection which clings to the home of our childhood—the early love which lingers round the flowers we have sown, the shrubs we have planted—is, though a simple, a sweet and purifying influence on the character. I cannot help thinking, that the drooping bough, the fairy-like rose, lend something of their own grace to one who has loved them and made them her companions.



## SIMPLICITY.

A gentleman's idea of simplicity always amuses me. I have nothing to say against Nature; and I have no doubt a lady made by her would be a very charming person; but where is unsophisticated nature to be found? where is the beauty, however rustic or rural she may be, without some touch of art? And if nature is to be modelled, let it be by refinement, grace, and education. Again I say, I laugh at your idea of simplicity. It always put me in mind of the heroines in novels, from Sir Walter Scott's Di Vernon downwards. In order to give an idea of beauty unspoiled by art, the heroine's hat falls off, and her hair falls down, while she looks lovely in disbevelled ringlets. Now, they quite forget two things: first, that though the hat may come off, it is by no means a necessary consequence that the hair should come down too; and secondly, if it did, the damsel would only look an untidy fright.

## FINE ARTS.

Our English taste for the fine arts may be classed under two heads—ostentatious and domestic. Our nobility and gentry buy fine pictures and statues, as they do fine furniture, to put in fine rooms. They are indications of wealth—articles of luxury—bought far more with reference to what others will think, than to what we ourselves will feel. A gentleman fills his gallery with paintings, and his sideboard with plate, on the same principle. Then, as to objects of art that attain the greatest popularity among us—which are they? Portraits of ourselves, our wives, children, brothers, uncles, nephews, nieces, and cousins. We like paintings of horses, bulls, dogs, &c.; or we like small scenes from common life—children, especially if they are naughty, and a set of breakfast or tea-things, are irresistible. In sculpture, who will deny our preference for busts, or our passion for monuments? What are the casts which enjoy most plaster-of-Paris popularity? Napoleon in his cocked hat—the Duke of Wellington—Tam-o'Shanter and Souter Johnny—

though even these yielded in attraction to china Madame Vestris or Liston as broom-girls.

## SUFFERING.

How little do even our most intimate friends know of us! There is an excitement about intense misery which is its support: light sufferings spring to the lips in words, and to the eyes in tears; but there is a pride in deep passion which guards its feelings from even the shadow of a surmise. 'Tis strange the strength which mingles with our weakness, that even in the suffering which sends the tear to the eye—not to be shed, but there to lie in all its burning and saltness—which swells in the throat but to be forced down again, like nauseous medicine; even in this deep and deadly suffering, vanity finds a trophy of power over which to exult. It is somewhat that speaks of mental command, to think how little the careless and the curious deem of the agony which, like a conqueror, is reigning in misery and desolation within.

## GRIEF AND JOY.

The difference between past grief and past joy is this: that if the grief recurred again to-day, we should feel it as bitterly as ever; but if the joy returned, we should no longer have the same delight in it.

## SIGHTS.

The love of sight-seeing is the characteristic of humanity; and a sight that involves aught of human sorrow or human suffering, is a thousand times more popular than any display of human ingenuity or human genius. Firéworks that sweep the skies, with a rope-dancer that descends through them like a spirit, to boot, bear no comparison as a spectacle to that of a man hanged!

## ADVICE.

Advice generally does require some very powerful argument to be taken.

## ENJOYMENT.

A gastronome ought to fast sometimes on principle: we appreciate no pleasures unless we are occasionally debarred from them.