

A Poem of
Letitia Elizabeth Landon
(L. E. L.)
in
Portraits of the Children
Of the Nobility, 1838

collected by
Peter J. Bolton

The Portrait of the Hon. Frances Diana Manners Sutton, Daughter of Viscount Canterbury



HON. FRANCES DIANA MANNERS SUTTON,

Daughter of Viscount Canterbury

Artist J. Bostock Engraver H. Robinson

“ *The Portrait of the Hon. Frances Diana Manners Sutton, Daughter of
Viscount Canterbury.* By L. E. L.

Her hands are filled with early flowers, the lily and the rose,
The violet, that at the foot of some old ash-tree grows ;
And hyacinths, the deep, the blue, within whose purple bells,
A hist'ry of the olden time, a classic sorrow dwells.
Her eyes are not upon them—her deep and earnest eyes,
Where something not like childhood's thought in shadowy silence lies :
Her eyes are not upon them ; and yet they fill her sou.
With all the dreaming fancies that own their sweet control.
The sweet control of Nature, it teacheth that fair child
To love the true and beautiful, the dreaming and the wild ;
I feel those downcast lashes oft drop unbidden tears :
How many things are in that face for anxious hopes and fears ?
To think—to feel—alas ! how much is said in these brief words !—
The music and the misery of life's divinest chords.
To think—to feel—it is that makes the suffering on this earth ;
And yet are they immortal signs of an immortal birth.
Upon that young and serious brow is feeling and is thought,
With all the dreaming poetry by summer blossoms brought :
What hath the future in its hours, thou gentle girl ! for thee ?
An anxious and a lovely thing, that opening mind will be.
There are the hopes that rise at first upon the skylark's wing ;
Alas ! unlike that skylark's song, they sadden as they sing :
The generous confidence that writes upon life's first bright line,
The kindly impulses that make the fervid heart a shrine.
Long may they linger at thy side : for hope, and youth, and love,
These are the angels that bring down their heaven from above ;
A blessing, holy, infinite, beneath such presence lives ;
'Tis thine, if that fair face but keeps the promise that it gives.”