

Extract
from

**The Autobiography
of
William Jerdan**

comprising the whole of
Volume 3: Chapters 12 and 13
with the Dedication given
at the opening of that Volume

Published 1852

TO
THE MEMORY OF THE DEEPLY LAMENTED

L. E. L.

TO WHOSE GENIUS THE "LITERARY GAZETTE" WAS, DURING MANY
YEARS,
INDEBTED FOR ITS GREATEST ATTRACTIONS,

This Volume

IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED, BY

W. JERDAN.

October, 1852

CHAPTER XII.

L. E. L.

We love the bird we taught to sing.—L. E. L.

I cannot but remember such things were,
And were most dear to me.

THE foregoing lines may suggest that I have arrived at the most difficult point in these memoirs. Of the gifted being whose career, intimately blended for nearly twenty years with my own in every intellectual and literary pursuit, it is my inevitable task to describe, I cannot write in a language addressed to common minds or submitted to mere worldly rules. I must appeal to the feeling and the imaginative ; for such was L. E. L. She cannot be understood by an ordinary estimate nor measured by an ordinary standard ; and those who have not poetry in their souls and warm and deep sympathies in their natures, will find little to interest them in this portion of my work.

Yet is the mystery of the tragedy powerfully affecting ; and when I am calling on readers to look back above thirty years upon its earliest scenes, I implore them not to view my statements as those of age and reflection, but, as they belong to a distant period ; to take all the conditions of that period into their consideration ; and put themselves in the mood to feel that what is new to them, is to me a retrospect the

most painful that can be conceived, and exciting emotions of unutterable grief.

I found in L. E. L. a creature of another sphere, though with every fascination which could render her most loveable in our every-day world. The exquisite simplicity of childhood, the fine form of womanhood, the sweetest of dispositions, the utmost charm of unaffected manners, and, above all, an impassioned ideal and poetical temperament which absorbed her existence and held all else comparatively as nothing. The development of this Psyche-phenomenon was her life, and all that pertained to it. Her whole history realised the allegory, if it be an allegory, of Apuleius, as closely as if it had been invented to shape her course, with the exception of its fatal termination on earth—death instead of slumber ; but let us hope only a different mode of raising her to that heaven where her prototype entered into the glories of immortality and the unalloyed raptures which are sought in vain in mortal communion.

“ We love the bird we taught to sing ;”

so sung she to me ; and it but weakly expressed the idolisation which the constant watch over the expansion of that extraordinary and yet most natural Intelligence inspired. From day to day and hour to hour, it was mine to facilitate her studies, to shape her objects, to regulate her taste, to direct her genius, and cultivate the divine organisation of her being. For the divine part was in Her ! She was the Myth of the Grecian tale ; and unless it can be comprehended that there are two almost distinct yet inseparably united faculties to be traced in human nature—the one celestial and the other terrestrial—I must confess it to be impossible for me by any description to convey an accurate

idea of the dual individuality of L. E. L. In exoteric society she was like others ; but in her inmost abstract and visioned moods (and these prevailed) she was the Poet, seen and glorified in her immortal writings.

And immortal they will be, despite of the critical censures which may justly be bestowed upon immature blots and careless errors : so long as love and passion animate the breast of youth, so long as tenderness and pathos affect the mind of man, so long as glowing imagery and natural truth have power over the intellect and heart, so long will the poetry of L. E. L. exert a voice to delight, touch, refine, and exalt the universal soul.

I have endeavoured to explain this subject, not metaphysically, but absolutely and truly, in order that what follows may not be mistaken for self-assumption.

It is the very essence of the being I have so faintly portrayed, not to see things in their actual state, but to imagine, create, exaggerate, and form them into idealities ; and then to view them in the light in which vivid fancy alone has made them appear. Thus it befel with my tuition of L. E. L. Her poetic emotions and aspirations were intense, usurping in fact almost every other function of the brain ; and the assistance I could give her in the ardent pursuit produced an influence not readily to be conceived under other circumstances or upon a less imaginative nature. The result was a grateful and devoted attachment ; all phases of which demonstrate and illumine the origin of her productions. Critics and biographers may guess, and speculate, and expatiate for ever ; but without this master-key they will make nothing of their reveries. With it, all is intelligible and obvious, and I have only to call on the admirers of her delicious compositions to remember this one fact to settle the question of their reality or romance—that

they are the effusions of passionate inspiration, lighted from such unlike sources, and not uncommon events, and that they must be attributed to the spirit which clothed them according to its own unreal dreams, and not to the apparent cause.

Whilst I state an interesting fact absolutely necessary for the true understanding of a destiny and vein of poetry, which at once attracted extraordinary attention, and will for ever stir responsive chords in human hearts, I would fain disarm criticism of its possible power to misinterpret what I have stated into personal application. Shakespeare, even in his Faery Land, drew exquisitely from the deepest fountains of Nature, and exhibited her illusions in the reflected enchantments of Oberon ; but that She is far more potent than he. In the "Midsummer Night's Dream"—and what is a whole life but such a vision?—Helena says—

" Things base and vile, holding no quantitie,
Love can transpose to forme and dignitie ;"

and the infatuation of Titania with a mere vulgar mortal, and with the head of an ass to boot, is thus readily accounted for.

The medium through which the Poet looks is not the atmosphere of reason, or of our accustomed day and night. Reason is overpowered by imagination ; the visible objects of the clear day are electrically lighted with halos of splendour ; and the obscure objects of night are distorted into shapes of amazement and terror. The super-Natural reigns, and exercises a dominion which could account for a hundred times greater marvels than I have candidly attempted to explain ; and I have only once more to beg for a candid construction. With this philosophy of cause and effect, it is no vain folly in me to show how I became invested with such credulous perfections. Cherishing the

ruling passion, there was an incessant community of thought; every line and every motion of a soul imbued with a quenchless thirst for literary distinction and poetic glory was submitted for my advice; mine was the counsel that pointed the course and the hand that steered the bark, and the breath that filled the sail: was it then to be wondered at that the conscious progress towards the fruit of this engrossing ambition should resolve and extend itself into an enthusiastic feeling, even on such feeble foundations of affection for the guide and the hyperbolic estimate, which magnified and illuminated every trivial and common feature till very slight, if any, resemblance to the original remained? The world was only opening and unknown to her, and she might—even holding her child-like gratitude in view—both feel and say, “For almost every pleasure I can remember I am indebted to one friend. I love poetry; who taught me to love it but he? I love praise; to whom do I owe so much of it as to him? I love paintings; I have rarely seen them but with him. I love the theatre, and there I have seldom gone but with him. I love the acquisition of ideas; he has conducted me to their attainment. Thus his image has become associated with my enjoyments and the public admiration already accorded to my efforts, and he must be all I picture of kindness, talents, and excellence.”

Gratitude is prone to such illusions, and especially where combined with the fire and fervour of genius; and if

We love the bird we taught to sing,

how much more intensely must we cherish the love of the bird that sings in such a strain?

I asked the reader to shut out the present from contemplation, and throw back his glance to the date of which I am writing—to recognise, if congenial, the character

whose outline I have traced, and the circumstances which developed it: through the intervening gloom, the retrospect, even to the sympathising stranger, must be uninviting; to me it is as the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and attempted to be recalled through floods of unavailing tears flowing from aged eyes, it is impossible to declare whether the impenetrable darkness is more dismal or the revealing light more distressing.

The Fate of Genius, the title of one of her own works, was the unhappy fate of L. E. L.

To me the return of services was great. Within a little time after the appearance of her poetical productions in the "Literary Gazette," she began to exercise her talents upon publications in general literature, principally in the provinces of poetry, fiction, and romance; and very soon evinced such power of discrimination and judgment as to aid me much in increasing the growing popularity of that journal, and lighten those labours which, even with all the assistance they received, were incessant and oppressive. By and by, the casual help became permanent, and, for a number of years, I might account L. E. L. rather an effective colleague than an occasional contributor; for she delighted in the work to the extent of craving for the employment, reading everything voraciously, forming opinions, and adding to her stores of knowledge, writing skilfully, and often beautifully upon her favourite subjects, and, in short, doing little less for the "Gazette" than I did myself.

And looking at the existing condition of periodicals of this class, amid the clashing of rivalry and the multiplicity of claimants upon the public attention, it is not easy to apprehend the station and influence of the "Literary Gazette" in its palmy days. It was the court of appeal for all the literature of the period; its voice was potential, and its

character held high throughout the sphere it essayed to occupy, in letters, and sciences, and fine arts. I am bold to say, decry it who will, that it deserved the confidence reposed in its integrity, and some share of the praise bestowed upon its ability. It could not be otherwise, for its columns were enriched from week to week with contributions from the most distinguished individuals of the age ; and it was only my good fortune, as its editor, to have much of the credit it so fairly won, reflected upon me. This, without presumption, solves the problem of the prominent position assigned to my humble deserts, and witnessed by the acknowledgments and thanks, now spread in many hundred letters around me, signed by the highest names of the present century, in the three noble, intellectual pursuits I have enumerated ; flattering and gratifying were they at the time, and still they impart a balm to the wounds since inflicted by hands which ought to have brought healing and solace instead of wrong and injury. But the fair and the foul of the world must be met as the world is constituted ; the fair with thankfulness and pleasure, the foul with endurance and regret. Much could I moralise on this tempting theme, but this is neither time nor place, and I hasten to resume my narrative.

My cottage overlooked the mansion and grounds of Mr. Landon, the father of L. E. L., at Old Brompton ; a narrow lane only dividing our residences. My first recollection of the future poetess is that of a plump girl, grown enough to be almost mistaken for a woman, bowling a hoop round the walks, with the hoop-stick in one hand and a book in the other, reading as she ran, and as well as she could manage both exercise and instruction at the same time. The exercise was prescribed and insisted upon : the book was her own irrepressible choice.

A slight acquaintance grew out of neighbourhood ; and I was surprised one day by an intimation from her mother that Letitia was addicted to poetical composition, and asking me to peruse a few of her efforts and say what I thought of them. I read, and was exceedingly struck by these juvenile productions—crude and inaccurate, as might be anticipated, in style, but containing ideas so original and extraordinary, that I found it impossible to believe they emanated from the apparent romp, and singular contradiction of the hoop and volume. An elder cousin, who took a part in her education, seemed to me to be the real, and Letitia only the ostensible writer ; and the application made under this disguise to conceal the diffidence of a first attempt at authorship. But the bill was a true bill, and my doubts were speedily dispelled.

I hope, however, it will interest my readers to note the first steps of a career so brilliant in the fictitious, so shadowed in the real world. The first two notes from the cousin, to whom I have alluded, open the scene and indicate my opinion :—

“ Old Brompton, Feb. 13th.

“ Miss Landon, though not having the pleasure of personally knowing Mr. Jerdan, from the very great politeness the family have at all times received, ventures to intrude the enclosed lines. They are written by a young friend, for whom Miss L. feels most anxious solicitude. If Mr. Jerdan will, therefore, give his candid opinion whether he considers any taste or genius is expressed, or, on the contrary, if he should only call it a waste of time from which no benefit can arise. Miss L. feels the liberty she is taking ; trusts Mr. Jerdan will believe it is an obligation never to be forgotten.”

“ Old Brompton, Feb. 14th.

“ Miss Landon feels particularly indebted to Mr. Jerdan for the trouble he has kindly taken, and more so for the very friendly and candid opinion he has given on the subject. It will prove a source of much gratification to the youthful writer that a man of Mr. Jerdan’s acknowledged talent should allow them the smallest merit; at the same time it will prove a strong inducement for further improvement, endeavouring to avoid those errors in each branch his kindness has pointed out. Miss L. cannot conclude without again apologising for the very great liberty taken, and to assure Mr. J. it will ever be remembered with gratitude.”

The manuscripts were corrected, and some other short compositions submitted to me, from all of which I was the more and more forcibly struck with the innate genius they displayed, and the unmistakeable proofs that the writer possessed the great essential elements of taste, feeling, warmth, and imagination, without which the attempt to write poetry is but a sham. On the 11th of March, No. 164 of the “Literary Gazette,” her first composition, entitled “Rome,” was printed and published, under the signature of L. I copy it:—

Oh, how art thou changed, thou proud daughter of fame,
Since that hour of *ripe* glory when empire was thine,
When Earth’s *purple* rulers, kings, quail’d at thy name,
And thy Capitol worshipp’d as Liberty’s shrine.

In the day of thy pride, when thy crest was untamed,
And the *red* star of conquest was bright on thy path,
When the meteor of death thy *stern falchion’s edge flamed*,
And earth trembled as burst the dark storm of thy wrath.

But Rome, thou art fallen, the memory of yore,
 Only serves to reproach thee with what thou art now :
 The joy of thy triumph for ever is o'er,
 And sorrow and shame set their seal on thy brow.

Like the wind-shaken reed, thy degenerate race,
 The children of those once the brave and the free—
 Ah, who can the page of thy history trace,
 Nor blush, thou lost city, blush deeply for thee !

Could the graves raise their dead, and thy warriors arise,
 And see thy blades rusted, thy war-banners furled,
 Would they know the proud eagle that soared through the skies,
 Whose glance lighted over a terror-struck world?

Yet, e'en in disgrace, in thy sadness and gloom,
 An halo of splendour is over thee cast :
 It is but the death-light that *reddens* the tomb,
 And calls to remembrance the glories long past.

It is unnecessary to point out the crudities in this exercise, such as the utter mistake in the fourth line ; but I fancied there was a redeeming quality in some of the epithets and expressions, and the sentiment of the whole an evidence of thought which broods upon its subject. But the next little effusion, in the following "Gazette," set my mind at rest ; for it spoke in the same tone of touching simplicity which has adorned later productions of a similar nature :—

THE MICHAELMAS DAISY.

Last smile of the departing year,
 Thy sister sweets are flown ;
 Thy pensive wreath is still more dear,
 From blooming thus alone.

Thy tender blush, thy simple frame,
 Unnoticed might have pass'd ;
 But now thou com'st with softer claim,
 The loveliest and the last.

Sweet are the charms in thee we find,
 Emblem of Hope's gay wing;
 'Tis thine to call past bloom to mind—
 To promise future spring.—L.

A temporary absence afforded the muse a season to reflect on friendly criticism and dogmatic rules, till August furnished a passing *jeu d'esprit* at its commencement, and the following germ of the future L. E. L. at its close :—

Is not this grove
 A scene of pensive loveliness—the gleam
 Of Dian's gentle ray falls on the trees,
 And piercing through the gloom, seems like the smile
 That pity gives to cheer the brow of grief :
 The turf has caught a silvery hue of light
 Broken by shadows, where the branching oak
 Rears its dark shade, or where the aspen waves
 Its trembling leaves. The breeze is murmuring by,
 Fraught with sweet sighs of flowers and the song
 Of sorrow, that the nightingale pours fourth,
 Like the soft dirge of Love.

There is oft told
 A melancholy record of this grove—
 It was time once the haunt of young affection,
 And now seems hallowed by the tender vows
 That erst were breathed here.

Sad is the tale
 That tells of blighted feelings, hopes destroyed ;
 But love is like the rose, so many ills
 Assail it in the bud—the cankering blast,
 The frost of winter, and the summer's storm,
 All bow it down ; rarely the blossom comes
 To full maturity ; but there is nought
 Sinks with so chill a breath as Faithlessness,—
 As she could tell, whose loveliness yet lives
 In village legend. Often, at this hour
 Of lonely beauty, would she list the tale
 Of tenderness, and hearken to the vows
 Of one more dear than life unto her soul !
 He twined him round a heart which beat with all
 The deep devotedness of early love—
 Then left her, careless of the passion which
 He had awakened into wretchedness :

The blight which withered all the blossoms love
 Had fondly cherished, withered to the heart
 Which gave them birth. Her sorrow had no voice,
 Save in her faded beauty ; for she looked
 A melancholy, broken-hearted girl.

She was so changed, the soft carnation cloud
 Once mantling o'er her cheek like that which eve
 Hangs o'er the sky, glowing with roseate hue,
 Had faded into paleness, broken by
 Bright burning blushes, torches of the tomb,
 There was such sadness, even in her smiles,
 And such a look of utter hopelessness
 Dwelt in her soft blue eye—a form so frail,
 So delicate, scarce like a thing of earth—
 'Twas sad to gaze upon a brow so fair,
 And see it traced with such a tale of woe—
 To think that one so young and beautiful
 Was wasting to the grave.

Within yon bower,
 Of honeysuckle and the snowy wealth
 The mountain ash puts forth to welcome spring,
 Her form was found reclined upon a bank,
 Where Nature's sweet unnurtured children bloom.
 One white arm lay beneath her drooping head,
 While her bright tresses twined their sunny wreath
 Around the polished ivory ; there was not
 A tinge of colour mantling o'er her face,
 'Twas like to marble, where the sculptor's skill
 Has traced each charm of beauty but the blush.
 Serenity so sweet sat on her brow ;
 So soft a smile yet hovered on her lips,
 At first they thought 'twas sleep—and sleep it was—
 The cold long rest of death.—L.

Only one other piece, called "Vaucluse," appeared this year, in October, and to it was tagged the annexed prettiness :—

The bee, when varying flowers are nigh,
 On many a sweet will careless dwell ;
 Just sips their dew, and then will fly
 Again to its own fragrant cell :
 Thus, though my heart, by fancy led,
 A wanderer awhile may be,
 Yet soon returning whence it fled,
 It comes more fondly back to thee.—L.

The "Fate of Adelaide" was published in August, 1821, dedicated to Mrs. Siddons, who was a friend of Mrs. Bishop, the grandmother of the author, and had undertaken to interest herself more for the volume than she had time or opportunity to perform. In this line of parentage there was a mystery I never understood, *i. e.*, who were the progenitors of Mrs. Bishop, herself an old lady of lady-like manners, pleasing conversation, affectionately fond of her grand-daughter, and possessed of a sufficient life-income to enable her to live genteely, and often have her pet-child to stay with her. I have a confused idea that she was the natural daughter of an aristocratic family. A contribution from her purse assisted the publication, and was the more needed, as a dissolution of the army agency partnership of Adair & Co., of which Mr. Landon was a member, and his expensive experiments in amateur model-farming, at the handsome country residence where the childhood of L. E. L., as artlessly and sweetly described by herself, was passed—not only rendered the cost an object, but even excited hopes of profitable results. That these hopes were doomed to be disappointed, I need not add; but the popularity of the poem was so decided, that it placed the gifted author in a position to negotiate for and receive considerable sums for all her subsequent works; of which I shall state the items when I come to that part of my memoir. As the composition proceeded, the anxieties about it increased; and two or three very short documents may be inserted to show the outer world some of the tribulations which young aspirants to literary fame must undergo, even when they have a popular editor, intimate with publishers, to help and cheer them on:—

“DEAR SIR,

“Having now rendered my first canto as perfect as is in my power, I now venture to intrude it on your notice. I am too well aware of my many defects, and the high advantages of your opinion, not to anxiously avail myself of your permission to submit it to your inspection. Of the poem itself I have nothing more to say than that your judgment will be most uncomplainingly and implicitly relied on. It is quite at your option to throw it behind the fire, or allow it a little longer existence.

“But however delightful your praise may be, is it presumption to say, do not let me receive from your kindness what I would owe to your real sentiments ?

“Before I conclude, I must be permitted to express my pleasure on seeing I had been honoured with a place in the “Gazette.” Pray accept my best thanks for the improvements you made.

“Believe me, dear Sir,

“Ever yours most gratefully,

“LETITIA ELIZABETH LANDON.”

My timid and docile pupil, if I may so say of this period, did not lack my sincere stimulus of genuine admiration to finish her task ; and at length all was ready for the important launch. Still there were preliminaries and considerations.

“Wednesday, Nov. 4th.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Again I am intruding upon your time, having received the enclosed from Letitia. Your former kindness induces my taking the liberty of asking you to look them over. Need I say how very anxious she is for your

opinion? I trust you will not think her arrogant, as I believe you are aware of her reasons for wishing to publish. I shall send to her next week. Perhaps you will do her the favour of then giving her your opinion. Need I say how very anxious she is to learn her fiat.

“ In very great haste,

“ Most truly yours,

“ C. J. LANDON.”

The minor pieces to fill up the volume were definitely arranged, in answer to the following note, and “ The Fate of Adelaide ” and of the author sealed :—

“ 138, Sloane-street, Nov. 27th.

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ Conscious that your time is much occupied, I feel a great repugnance in intruding my present request; but Letitia’s anxiety for your opinion will, I am afraid, make you consider us both very troublesome. Without your sanction she feels herself without a hope of success, and has no resolution to go on. She has upon her list more than sufficient to defray the expenses of publication—I do not mean by subscription.

“ Mrs. Siddons is shortly going to Oxford, and as we have connections there, and Mrs. S. is taking it up very warmly, we have hope that something may be done for our poetic sketches. A line from you, giving her your opinion, will settle the matter, whether she may proceed.

“ I am, dear sir,

“ Very gratefully yours,

“ C. J. LANDON.”

The poem has not been reprinted in the two-volume

edition of her poetical works, published by Messrs. Longman in 1850, with the biographical sketch by the lamented Laman Blanchard, who did all he could with his imperfect data and materials. Yet, with all its immaturity and want of polish, it is a performance of great promise, full of beautiful thoughts and glowing passages. The feeling and soul of poetry were there ; and mechanical requisites and a more chastened style, might surely be predicted, to add another brilliant constellation to the admired galaxy of British female genius.

CHAPTER XIII.

—•—
L. E. L.

Oh ! if Love—the sister dear
Of Youth which we have lost,—
Come not, in swift pity, here,—
Come not, with a host
Of affections strong and kind,
To hold up our sinking mind,—
If she will not, of her grace,
Take her brother's holy place,
And be, to us, at least a part
Of what he was, in life and heart—
The faintness that is on our breath
Can have no other end but death !—M. MILNES.

In the course of little more than ten years were published the *Improvvisatrice*, the *Troubadour*, the *Golden Violet*, and the *Venetian Bracelet*, which gave titles to as many volumes, filled up with shorter poems, though some of them, such as the *Lost Pleiad*, *Erinna*, the *Ancestress* (dramatic), and others were of sufficient importance to warrant separate publication. To all the popular annuals there were also numerous contributions ; the *Drawing-Room Scrap Book* was for several years the author's favourite task, without assistance from any hand, though a biography of Maginn erroneously claims a share in the compositions for him ; the *Easter Offering* was another of her productions ; and the *Literary Gazette*, as I have stated, was in almost every number enriched by her captivating poetry, and judicious, as well

as piquant, essays in criticism and original prose. *Romance and Reality*, and *Francesca Carrara*, novels in three volumes each, afforded farther proof of genius and industry, and were thus requited :—

For the <i>Improvvisatrice</i> she received	£300
For the <i>Troubadour</i>	600
For the <i>Golden Violet</i>	200
For the <i>Venetian Bracelet</i>	150
For the <i>Easter Offering</i>	30
For the <i>Drawing-Room Scrap Book</i> , per vol.	105
For <i>Romance and Reality</i>	300
For <i>Francesca Carrara</i>	300
For <i>Heath's Book of Beauty</i>	300
And certainly from other <i>Annuals, Magazines, and</i> } <i>Periodicals, not less in ten or twelve years than</i> . . }	200
In all	£2585

Say on an average (estimating the annual *Scrap-Book*) 250*l.* a year, and a close approximation will be made to the literary production and the market price. On the death of her grandmother she received a legacy of 350*l.* and I the good old lady's good old gold watch (of which my pocket was picked in the *Olympic Theatre* on a memorable dramatic evening, the first appearance, I think, of *Charles Mathews the younger*, with *Liston*, his father's old friend); and would have been, in a pecuniary sense, more easy and happy, but for certain family drawbacks which her generous soul never regretted, but rather rejoiced in, whilst her genuine economic spirit, as regarded herself, never, I believe, allowed her expenditure to exceed 120*l.* a year!! In truth, she was the most unselfish of human creatures; and it was quite extraordinary to witness her ceaseless consideration for the feelings of others, even in minute trifles, whilst her own mind was probably troubled and oppressed; a sweet disposition, so perfectly amiable, from Nature's fount, and so unalterable in its manifestations throughout her entire life,

that every one who enjoyed her society loved her, and servants, companions, intimates, friends, all united in esteem and affection for the gentle and self-sacrificing being who never exhibited a single trait of egotism, presumption, or unkindliness !

As I must, at a later date, refer to the sequel of her literary career, I think I cannot do better in this place, than anticipate a series of letters, and let her illustrate herself and her talents, under such circumstances as a visit to Paris called forth, by the correspondence with which I was favoured on the occasion. To me it appears worthy of the atmosphere of that city which has produced the cleverest letter-writers in the world of literature, and to partake of much of their *naïveté* and *spirituel* nerve, tinged with her own characteristics, and I offer it as a contrast to my own descriptions twenty years before, in 1814 (see vol. i.), when Paris was seen, indeed, under very different aspects. Two years hence, another twenty years will have elapsed, and the epochs of 1814, 1834, and 1854, would furnish ample materials for a memorable contrast and tale. But *allons* to the sprightly pictures painted by L. E. L., in the summer of 1834. The first note I refer to is preliminary, and says, “ I really must settle definitively about my going to France. As to merely going for the sake of pleasure, I care as little about it as any one can care ; but I wish to go for two or three reasons. Firstly, because of the scenes of my next novel being laid in Paris, it would be such an advantage really seeing it. Secondly, I think I should get some new ideas, which I very much want ; and last, though not least, it would be something to be out of the perpetual worry here [money short], for a little while. I wish I could have talked over ‘ Philip Van Artevelde ’ with you. Parts I think very fine, but rather, if

I may say so, acquired, than inspired, poetry. If you intend calling to-morrow, will you let me know, as Mrs. Bulwer sent here to day, and I must go and see her. I wish you would work to-morrow, and be idle all Thursday afternoon" [for some excursion up the river to visit Mrs. Hall].

Matters were arranged, and in company with a friend, Miss Turin, her senior by some years, and of independent fortune, our fair traveller set out on her first excursion from that London which she liked so well. I may merely offer an excuse for the tone of reliance on me in regard to literary projects and business, which had not lessened with the passage of time. The first letter is from Boulogne, and dated 22nd of June, 1834:—

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I began a letter to you yesterday, but on taking it up this morning, I find it is, even to you, scarcely legible, so will begin it over again. I have also another reason; I wrote on English paper, which is heavier, and I have to pay the inland postage, and to-day my time *ne vaut pas mes sous*. We parted on Thursday, though not at all too soon, much as I regretted it. You cannot think how I missed you. I really thought the morning never would pass. It did pass, however, and then I wished it back again. The wind blew directly in our teeth, and your friend the captain talked doubtfully as to whether we should reach Boulogne that night. Miss Turin was not out of bed the whole day. It was impossible to read for three reasons—the sun, the wind, and the noise. I suppose Lord Byron had the deck of a steam-vessel in his mind when he said,

‘ This is to be alone ;
This, this is solitude ;’

And when I endeavoured to get into a pleasant train of

thought, it made me melancholy to think I was leaving my native country. I was fairly dying with a desire of talking. At last I made a sort of acquaintanceship with the proprietor of the rabbits, and really but for his kindness I know not what I should have done afterwards. I am quite cured of my wish to die for some time to come, as I really think that now I quite understand what the sensation is. I was not sick—scarcely at all; but so faint! As to what Boulogne is like from the sea, I cannot tell. I scarcely recollect anything about my landing. Misfortune first recalled my scattered faculties. At the Custom House you are searched. I had nothing; but poor Miss Turin had a lace pelerine, &c., which was seized. Except that, we have had no trouble. Yesterday is almost a blank. I was scarcely able to rise from my bed. I only began to revive towards evening, when we walked out on the pier. Nothing could exceed the beauty—the sea of that peculiar green, like no colour that I ever saw before—a sky of a soft grey blue, without a tint—a rich warmth rather than a tint—upon the west—the air so clear and soft—and such a moon; ‘the luminous vibration’ of her reflection in the water was not, as we say, silvery, but golden, like sunshine without its heat or dazzling. The town is a pretty, old-looking town, seemingly surrounded with English, all looking very vulgar. As for myself, I am a perfect horror. The sun has scorched my face to such a hideous degree—forehead, nose, and cheeks are all a ‘lively crimson,’ and swelled till I do not know myself in the glass. The bread is delicious, so is the wine; but Mr. Kempe’s house, where we are, is quite English. It is a disappointment being so comfortable; but there is such a pretty little French *femme de chambre*, with such a high neck, such short petticoats, and ancles so neatly rounded. I find I can make myself pretty well

understood, and understand perfectly. We could not get places to go to Paris till Sunday. Miss Turin wanted to have taken the whole *coupé*, which would have been very comfortable ; but a gentleman has already one place, and it is scarcely worth while waiting till Tuesday. Moreover, the *conducteur* says that ‘*c’est un Monsieur si poli.*’ How he has ascertained that fact I do not know. It has a very odd effect hearing a strange language spoken under our windows ; and now I have told you everything that I can think of, which does not amount to much. However, I have taken two things for granted, first, that you would expect my first letter, and also that you would be glad to hear how I was. I fear I shall never make a traveller. I am already beginning to count the days for my return. Kind regards to all inquiring friends, and hoping that you are missing me very much,

“ I remain,

“ Most truly yours,

“ L. E. LANDON.”

The next epistles (for there are two) reached me July 1st, bear date, “ Paris, 35, Rue Louis-le-Grand, Thursday,” and describe some of the incidents of the journey thither :—

“ DEAR SIR,

“ The first thing that I did was to write to you from Boulogne, and the first thing that I do is to write to you from Paris ; but truly the pleasure of seeing my hand-writing must be sufficient. Never was there a worse traveller. I arrived in Paris more dead than alive, and till this evening have not held up my head. The beginning of our journey was delightful ; the road is like one avenue, and it was so pretty, having the children, every hill we

ascended, throwing roses into the carriage, asking for *sous*. Moreover, our *compagnon de voyage* was a very intelligent and gentlemanlike Frenchman ; but all my stock of admiration ended at the very pretty town of Abbeville. I had not a notion that fatigue could have so completely paralysed me. I was scarcely sensible when we arrived at Paris, and was just lifted out of the *diligence*. Since then the extent of my travels has been from the bed to the sofa. We have very pleasant apartments, looking on the Boulevards—such a gay scene. It seems so odd to see the people walking about in caps, looking so neat, and I must add so clean. Mercy on the French carriages and horses ; they make such a clatter ; drive far more with their tongues than the reins. We have delicious dinners, if I could but eat, which at present is an impossibility. I am still a horrid figure with my sea and sunburning. Miss Gibbon, a very pretty Scotch girl, a cousin of Miss Turin's, is staying with us, very agreeable to me, for she is so kind, and quite *au fait* at manners, customs, language, &c. I value a companion now. Poor Miss Turin is quite confined to her bed ; but sends her love to you. I hope that my next letter will be more amusing ; this is only a kind remembrance. Pray, if you can do anything polite by the Misses Lance, do.* Any tickets will be so acceptable while Miss Castleman is staying with them. Write to me by Mr. Huntly Gordon, H. M. Stationery Office, Buckingham Gate, or you have my address in the date.

“ Be sure wafer, and thin paper. I shall be very glad to see England again.

“ Yours most truly,

“ L. E. LANDON.”

* The maiden ladies who kept house in Hans Place with an old father who died of age while Miss Landon stayed there. Her attentions to the old man were beautiful ; and the attachment of the sisters to her, and hers to them, were most cordial.

In the second letter of the same day there is a terrible economising about franks and postages—evidently concerns of no small weight—but in the midst of it showing what I have mentioned, that thoughtfulness and remembrance about others in the most trivial things.

“DEAR SIR,

“I wish I could find any channel of writing by the ambassador’s bag, for the postage which I have to pay is two francs, and, what is much worse, the post-office is at the other end of the town, and even when I have a messenger, whom I must pay, the chances are that he will not pay it. Will you tell Nanon * that if she sends my letter to Gordon she must tell him that Mr. Douglas is not in Paris. I enclose a note I wrote yesterday. I am much better this evening, and have been for a short walk in the gardens of the Tuileries. How much I like the avenues. They were so crowded, the people looking so gay; but Paris is very empty—and it is unfortunate that Mrs. Fagan is just on the point of being confined, as they would have been such pleasant escorts. It is dreadfully hot. I long to see the ‘Gazette;’ and now must end abruptly or lose my opportunity. Pray write to me. I wish I were at home without the journey. I shall write the moment I have anything to tell, and must watch my means of going to the post-office. I fear that you will scarce be able to read this hasty scrawl.

“Yours truly,

“L. E. L.”

* Nanon Williams, who, with her sister Ellen and their mamma, lodged and boarded with the Misses Lance in Hans Place. They were two very pretty girls, of quite different styles of beauty—allied to *L’Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. L. E. L. was very fond of them, and they of her. They were generally made her companions in pleasures and amusements.

The next communication which I find is two days later, and it will speak for itself :—

“ Saturday.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Love and fear are the greatest principles of human existence. If you owed my letter of yesterday to the first of these, you owe that of to-day to the last. What, in the name of all that is dreadful in the way of postage, could induce you to put the ‘ Gazette ’ in your letter? welcome as it was, it has cost me dear, nearly six shillings. I was so glad to see your hand-writing that the shock was lost in the pleasure; but truly, when I come to reflect and put it down in my pocket-book, I am ‘ in a state.’ The ‘ Gazette ’ alone would have only cost twopence, and the letter *deux* francs; but altogether it is ruinous. Please when you next write, let it be on the thinnest paper, and put a wafer. Still I was delighted to hear from you, and a most amusing letter it was. The ‘ Gazette ’ is a real treat. It is such an excellent one as to make me quite jealous. I have, however, given but a hurried glance, having lent it to Colonel Fagan. I am now pretty well recovered from the fatigue of my journey, and have this evening sent round my letters. I was this morning *à l’exposition*, an admirable exhibition, a great stimulus to national industry. Such shawls! and the carpets are beautiful, and velvets which made into waistcoats would be too destructive.* Thence we went to the Louvre, certainly the most superb gallery in the world. I cannot but notice the politeness of the French to strangers; it

* This waistcoat became a sore jocular subject; for my kind friend tried to smuggle a “destructive” for me, but was detected *flagrante delicto* at Dover, stript to the skin, and *divested* not only of the male garment, but of other less fiscally obnoxious articles concealed in its vicinity.

was not one of the public days, but all foreigners are admitted on showing their passports. Who do you think I met on the Boulevards to-day? Mr. Gore. He recognised me at once; was so polite, offered his services in any possible manner; and I dare say I should have found them an agreeable acquaintance; but unfortunately Mrs. Gore is just confined; they are quite the rage here. He asked so politely after you. Miss Gibbon I find such a pleasant companion; and ladies can walk in any part of Paris without the least molestation. I really know not what I should have done without her. We walked together till nearly ten o'clock in the Tuileries last night; such a gay-looking crowd. She and another young lady are gone to-night to the Champs Elysées. I, however, have staid at home to write to you. See what the fright of a few francs can effect. Gloves, stockings, shoes, &c., are exceedingly cheap here. Whether it is, perhaps, that one is more on the look out for them; but never were so many things assembled together. The French ladies, I must say, well deserve their reputation for *tournure* and grace. There is certainly an air, or something, which it is quite impossible to describe. They are not thought pretty generally. As yet I have really had nothing to put in a journal; my only approach to an adventure has been as follows:—I was advised, as the best remedy against the excessive fatigue under which I was suffering, to take a bath, which I did early one morning. I found it quite delicious, and was reading '*La Dernière Journée*,' when I fell asleep, and was in consequence nearly drowned. I suppose the noise of the book falling aroused me, and I shall never forget the really dreadful feeling of suffocation, the ringing in my ears like a great bell with which I awakened. I think some very interesting papers might

be written on the modern French authors. We know nothing of them. If I do write them I must buy some. At Galignani's they only allow two works at a time, and I can scarcely get any that I desire. I am thinking of subscribing to a French library. One feels the want of a gentleman here very much. Poor Miss Turin is still ill. Miss Gibbon and I, even now, daily plan our return ; but she cannot leave Paris till after an event, which is, however, daily expected. The dinners are exquisite. I wish, instead of a stupid letter, I could send you some of the *plats*. We have to use what is quite a rational phrase—such a *gentil femme de chambre*. You will perceive from the paper on which I write that I have at least made one purchase in Paris. I am so very glad that the dear girls* went to the theatre. How very kind you are. Remember me to all enquiring friends, and believe me,

“ Your affectionate

“ L. E. LANDON.

“ I was so glad of your letter.

“ I have been hitherto too ill to do anything ; but I have quite arranged my plan to write in my own room four or five hours every morning, so I hope to get a good deal done. Adieu, *au révoir*.

“ On Tuesday next Miss Montgomery goes to England, and as she will take charge of letters I shall write by her. To-morrow we are going with her to a M. Dupin's *maison de campagne*, so I shall see the interior of a French family at the summit of rural felicity. You shall have a full account.

“ Many thanks for the letter to Miss Greenwood.”

* The Misses Williams.

The sprightliness of the following needs no comment :—

“ 35, Rue-le-Grand, Lundi,
“ which being done into English means Monday.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I hope you will not think that I intend writing you to death ; but I cannot let this opportunity pass. Miss Montgomery leaves Paris to-morrow, and so write I must. I am quite surprised that I should have so little to tell you ; but really I have nothing, as ill-luck would have it. I went to call on Madame Tastu, from whom I received a charming note, and while I was out Monsieur Sainte Beuve and Monsieur Odillon Barrot called ; however, the latter wrote to me offering his services as cicerone, &c., and I expect him this morning. M. Heine called yesterday ; a most pleasant person. I am afraid he did not think me a *personne bien spirituelle*, for you know it takes a long time with me to get over the shame of speaking to a stranger by way of conversation. He said, ‘Mademoiselle donc a beaucoup couru les boutiques ?’ ‘Mais non.’ ‘A-t-elle été au Jardin des Plantes ?’ ‘Mais non.’ ‘Avez vous été à l’opéra, aux théâtres ?’ ‘Mais non.’ ‘Peut-être Mademoiselle aime la promenade ?’ ‘Mais non.’ ‘A-t-elle donc apporté beaucoup de livres, ou peut-être elle écrit ?’ ‘Mais non.’ At last, in seeming despair, he exclaimed, ‘Mais Mademoiselle, qu’est que ce donc, qu’elle a fait ?’ ‘Mais—mais—j’ai regardé par la fenêtre.’ Was there ever anything *si bête* ? but I really could think of nothing else. I am enchanted with Madame Tastu ; her manners are so kind, so encouraging. I did not feel much embarrassed after the first. She has fine features, though there was something about her face that put me in mind of Miss Roberts ; but with a softened expression. If I had known as much of Paris as I do even

now, I would not have come. In the first place, there is nobody here; *à la campagne* is almost the universal answer. Secondly, it is of no use coming with only a lady; I might almost as well have stayed in London. Thirdly, it is too short a time; I shall not have made a little acquaintance before I must leave. Fourthly, Miss Turin, though she has been here so often, knows nothing of the customs, &c. Her sole reason for coming to Paris is to see the dresses, shops, &c., and her idea of a delightful morning is shopping; also she has been and is so ill. Fifthly, one ought to be married; and sixthly, I wish myself at home again. If I had the opportunity, the time, and could procure the books, I am sure a most delightful series of articles might be written on French literature. *We* know nothing of it; and it would require an immense deal of softening and adaptation to suit it to English taste. The *soirées* are where I should have met all the French *littérateurs*; but none are being given just now. It is like London in the month of September. Miss Gibbon is going to her sister's next week; and then I really shall not know what to do with myself. I can perfectly understand Paris being delightful, but it must be under other circumstances. I like the manners of the people very much; the servants even have a way of expressing themselves—*tout à fait particulier*. We have delightful weather, not too hot. How well you have done 'The Revolutionary Epic;' though with less vanity, Disraeli has all the elements of a great poet; but there is something wanting in the putting together. Taste is his great deficiency.

"I quite dread—though impatient for it—my journey back again. I shall never make a traveller. I am far too indolent, and do not care for seeing. My pleasure comes in at my ears. Lady Kingsmill, too, called the morning I

went to Madame Tastu. She asked me to spend the evening there to-day, and I am going. Last night we went to *la maison de campagne* of a French gentleman. The garden prettily laid out, while the vines and acacias gave it quite a foreign look. The flowers are so beautiful. Such carnations and such geraniums. One gentleman was seized with such a fit of poetry, that he wrote some verses in my honour, with a pea-pod on a cabbage leaf. Nothing can equal the noise of this place. I cannot even hear myself think.

“ Well, adieu, *au révoir*.

“ Yours very truly,

“ L. E. LANDON.”

A change of residence is noted in the next letter, and continued in the only other epistles till the 19th July, when the month's tour concluded ; and from which I shall make such extracts as I fancy will be interesting to all the lovers of poetry and admirers of L. E. L.

“ No. 30, Rue Taibout, Chaussée d'Antin, Paris.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ My present address ought to be well known to you.* I write on purpose to scold you. Why have you not sent me the ‘ Gazette ; ’ it would have been such a treat. Also, you have not (like everybody else) written to me, and I quite pine for news from England. I would return to-morrow if I had the opportunity. I do not think that you have properly valued my letters, for things ought to be valued according to their difficulty, and really writing is no little trouble, to say nothing of putting my epistles in the post. I have been very unwell ever since my arrival, and for

* From my translation and publication of “ L'Hermite ” of Jouy.

the last three days I have scarcely been off the sofa. The fatigue and the heat are equally overpowering. I feel so unequal to the exertion of hearing and seeing. Yesterday I was going to a little party at Lady Kingsmill's, but I was too unwell. I cannot tell you half the kindness and civility which I have received. Of all the persons I have met, or rather who have called upon me—for there is no meeting anybody now, all the *soirées* being over—I have been the most struck with M. Heine; his conversation is most original and amusing. Next to him, I like Monsieur Sainte Beuve, he is very French, very animated, and, to use the national expression, *très-spirituelle*. Monsieur Merimée, whom I met at Mr. Bulwer's, wrote me first a most polite note, asking permission to claim my acquaintance, and then called to offer his services, and made himself so agreeable. Certainly the conversation here is very delightful, far more intellectual, and with a great deal more thought in it than English talking in general. M. Odillon Barrot has been our chief cicerone, he is what we should call a remarkably quiet and gentleman-like person, — rather English than French. Another, who has shown us the very greatest *civilité*, is M. Beulot, *rédacteur de 'Revue de deux Mondes,'* a work that has the greatest reputation here. He has given us a box for the opera next Wednesday. Excepting the morning that M. Odillon Barrot took us to Notre Dame and Le Jardin des Plantes, I have scarcely been out of the house. Poor Miss Turin is still in the doctor's hands, and of course it is impossible for me to go out by myself, or accept the attendance of any gentleman alone, so that I am surrounded with all sorts of little difficulties and embarrassments. I never again would think of going anywhere with only a lady; one might almost as well stay at home. I had no idea till now how useful you gentlemen are—I might say,

how indispensable. We are very comfortably situated ; we have delightful bed-rooms, a little ante-chamber, and the prettiest saloon, looking on a charming garden. The quiet is such a relief ; for in Rue Louis-le-Grand we could not hear each other's voice for the noise ; and above my head was a printer, and opposite my window a carpenter's. I do not know what it may be in the city, but at the West End there is nothing that can give an idea of the noise of Paris ; the streets are all paved, the omnibusses innumerable, and carts and carriages all of the heaviest kind. I was delighted with the giraffe—it is like the creation of a fairy tale—with the light, graceful head, like that of a serpent, and the heavy, ill-shaped body of an animal ; it seems as if nature had been making two creatures at once, and not having time to finish both, joined them together in a hurry, being about as well matched as marriages in general.* The elephant, too, was stupendous, it gave me sensation of fear, and made me understand, better than anything else, the gigantic size of life in the East. Next to these was a tremendous cedar of Lebanon, more like a tree built than one planted. Such a tree, standing alone in a plain, would be the most magnificent temple in the world. I have read as many books as I could get, having subscribed to a French library. We have not an idea of French literature in England. As far as I can judge, it is full of novelty, vivid

* Unequal marriages are, it is true, seldom happy, but sometimes those which appear to be equal at the outset, turn out no better. Baron Bolland, of tall memory, used to tell that in walking out near London one day he saw an old wizened Italian Tramp on one side of the road with two or three monkeys, and on the other a rather buxom woman trudging along in the same manner with a tambourine. He was struck by the contrast, and entering into chat with the lady found she was the Signor's wife, and asked her, How she could marry that old man ? “ Oh, Sir,” said she, with a deep drawn sigh, and a meaning glance at the questioner, “ when I married him, he had a dromedary !”

conceptions, and, I must say, genius, but what we should call blasphemous and indelicate to the last degree. If my money holds out I shall buy several works and translate them at home, but I doubt being able to accomplish it ; for though I have bought nothing but what was indispensable, such as gloves, shoes, paper, &c., I have little more left than will bring me home. The dust here is something not to be told ; before you have walked a hundred yards your feet are of a whitish brown. A great deal of my time has hung heavily on my hands, I have been so languid and so feverish ; still I feel that I have quite a new stock of ideas, and much material for future use : and as to Paris, it has more than realised my expectations, but to have seen anything of the society I should have been here two months earlier. Now, excepting the visits that are paid me, I can see nothing of the people ; as to sights, you know me too well to suppose that I care two straws about them. I would sooner have a morning visit from an amusing person than see the Tuileries or the Louvre ten times over. One ridiculous misfortune is continually befalling me ; I am always falling down, the *parquet*, *i.e.* the floor, is so slippery, and I am never very steady on my feet. I really thought I had broken my arm yesterday. I am very anxious about getting home. Miss Gibbon and I were to have returned together, but as her sister is not yet recovered she is obliged to wait. I have settled to stay one fortnight from to-day, Sunday, with Miss Turin, in hopes of Mrs. Fagan being sufficiently restored to allow of her sister's departure. However I have set everybody to inquire that I can think of. I like our new lodgings so much. They are, according to Sir William Curtis's orthography, three C.'s, namely, clean, cool, and quiet. We are going to-day, with Monsieur Odillon Barrot, to the prison de l'Abbaye, but as we shall go

near the post-office I shall put in this letter. Tell Nanon and Ellen I am quite disappointed in not having a letter from either. I wrote them a long letter by Miss Montgomery, and have another nearly finished in my desk. I am more and more enchanted with Madame Tastu. And now, with kindest remembrances,

“ Yours very truly,

“ L. E. LANDON.”

One of the many projects of her fertile mind and invincible industry is announced in the following :—

“ 30, Rue Taibout, Chaussée d'Antin.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ This is quite a business letter, so I beg you will read it with all due attention. I have read now a considerable portion of French new works, and find a great many which, translated with *judgment*, would, I think, tell. I underline judgment, for not a little would be required. What I propose, is to make an annual, consisting entirely of French translations—prose and verse. I could get it ready in about a month. I propose first, a slight, general, and popular view of the present literature; secondly, tales, which must be abridged, altered, and adapted to our taste; thirdly, poems. To be called—what? We must think of a good title. ‘The Laurel, or Leaves from French Literature;’ ‘The Exchange, or Selection of French Authors,’ with a little vignette on the title-page of the Bourse; or ‘The Stranger,’ &c. &c.

“ I do not propose new prints; anyone who knew how to set about it might form here a collection of very pretty prints of all sorts of popular subjects. You must please see if any publisher will undertake this, and if they will, please

write as soon as possible. I feel convinced I could make a very amusing book ; shortening, softening down, omitting, and altering in my translations, according to my own discretion. I could have my part of the volume ready in about six weeks.

“ The weather is now awfully hot—it is a positive exertion to open one’s eyes—yet I went yesterday to see the Museum d’Artillerie, and one or two old churches, but truly sight-seeing is the most tiresome thing in the world. God never sent me into the world to use my hands, or my feet, or my eyes ; he put all my activity into my tongue and ears. Yesterday I had a visit from Monsieur and Madame Roget Collard, and a very pleasant visit it was. I have received so much kindness and attention from Monsieur Merimée ; he is very amusing, speaks English (a great fault in my eyes) like a native, and tells you all sorts of anecdotes in the most unscrupulous fashion. I think a young man called A. Fontanez, more realises my *beau idéal* of a young French poet than any one that I have seen, being pale, silent, *rêveur*, with a sort, too, of enthusiasm. I like Monsieur Odillon Barrot the best ; there is something so very kind in his manners. As to seeing the ‘Gazette’ at Galignani’s, first, we do not subscribe there ; secondly, it is so crowded with gentlemen ; thirdly, remember to go to any place is a matter of difficulty, as I have no walking companion. We have now very pleasant apartments, with a delightful garden, a fine view over Paris, and the windmills of Montmartre in the distance. Such a magnificent storm as we had last night. I am, however, looking out anxiously for an escort to return. If I can only get to Boulogne I should not at all mind the passage. I do not think, under your circumstances, your plan of crossing the channel at all prudent, or rather it is the very reverse, and meeting me at the custom-house will

answer every purpose. I hope to be in England in about a week from this, so you will only have one more letter and then myself. Monsieur Beulot, the *rédacteur de 'Revue de deux Mondes,'* has been exceedingly kind to me, he gave us a box at the opera the other night, where I was very much amused with the Teutchon* of Sainte Antoine. Then we went and had ices at Tortoni's—such a brilliant scene. I fear I shall not be able to manage going to Versailles. I could not go by myself, and Miss Turin has not only seen it often, but is really so ill that she would not get through the day. I have at last obtained Captain M* * *'s letter; nothing can be kinder, but there is nothing in it of any use. The misfortune is, that there really is scarcely anyone in Paris.

“ Yours most truly,

“ L. E. L.”

My last quotation affords an idea of that feature of character which is often painted in her poetry; an excess of feminine timidity, which, much as it might distress her, and intensely as it might long for protection, yet ever led her rather to suffer absolute agony, than trouble, or encroach upon the good offices of others; for though she was as complete a coward as could be imagined, (and often suffered in great concerns and small, from want of common resolution,) the asking or accepting of an ordinary civility, which would have averted the evil, was a difficulty which, I suppose, none but splendid female poltroons could account for. I knew she was terrified at the thoughts of the journey to Boulogne and passage, but here is the letter:—

* I am not sure of the name; nor of M. Beulot's.

“ Saturday, July 19.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ You quite misunderstood what I said about your coming to Boulogne. As regarded myself, it is both a convenience and a pleasure. I spoke entirely with reference to yourself, and if I see you there, I shall be as glad as it is possible to be. I have now settled everything for my departure. The *Diligence La Fitte* leaves Paris on Sunday, and arrives at Boulogne on Monday morning. The packet sails in the evening ; if there, you can easily ascertain at what inn the coach stops. I had a long kind letter from Mrs. Bulwer ; but she did even worse than you, for she wrote on the thickest paper and put a huge seal : it cost me six francs. You seem very much to over-rate my gaiety. I have only been twice out of an evening—to the theatre each time—and, to be candid, have found these said evenings very dull—not the theatrical ones. The mornings have been dreadfully hot, so that I have gone out because it seemed so ungracious to refuse ; but verily it has been making a toil of a pleasure. I went to Père la Chaise yesterday. It is a striking and beautiful place ; but oh, I was so hot. I never sent my letter to Lady Granville till yesterday ; she called that very evening—unluckily the second time I went to the theatre. Lady Kingsmill, who was here to-day, tells me her calling was the greatest possible compliment, and that if anything is given at the Embassy I shall be asked ; but nothing is going on of gaiety just now. I would joyfully have come home at least a fortnight sooner if I could have found any sort of escort ; but a journey alone in the French *Diligence* would have been not only disagreeable but so unpleasant to have it said that I did such a thing. What I

have enjoyed most at Paris has been my own reception. I have met with the most flattering kindness, and have produced a very proper effect. All say that I speak French with an '*étonnante facilité,*' and '*avec un grace tout à fait particulière.*' I am going to-day to Madame Recamier with Madame Tastu, to be presented to Chateaubriand. If you go to Boulogne try and find out Monsieur Henri Heine, who is now staying there. He is, to my taste, the wittiest and most original person that I have seen : he is a German.

"The eating here is delicious ; but I have no appetite. I am obliged to force a little down : ice is the only thing that I enjoy. The people appear to take the greatest interest in English politics. How odd you should tell me that you had read the end of '*Francesca,*' and not say what you think of it. How can you justify such an omission ?

"I have written a good deal of the Drawing-room Scrap Book, and translated some French poetry ; but for the heat, which makes one so idle, I should have got a good deal of work done.

"I hope this will be in time for the post to-day.

"Yours most truly,

"L. E. L.

"Your last letter but one—so amusing !

"This letter is re-opened by myself.

"Yours truly.

"I find that we arrive at Boulogne on Sunday, and that we must spend a night there, as the steamboat sails on Monday at 3 o'clock.

"I was delighted with my visit to-day. Madame

Recamier is really still beautiful, and with exquisite manners. I liked Chateaubriand so much.

“ I must not enter into details, for I have no time.”

I have no comment to offer on these natural and unaffected reminiscences. To my mind they combine the wonderfully mixed qualities of every-day sense and observation, the peculiarities of sex, the love of nature and the beautiful in all things, the playfulness of fancy, and the innate charm of genius. Out of them I, at least, can re-create a vivid portrait of the lamented writer.