

Poems in The London Literary
Gazette
during the year 1820
by
Letitia Elizabeth Landon
(as L.)

compiled by
Peter J. Bolton

Contents:

11th March 1820	Rome
18th March 1820	The Michaelmas Daisy
29th July 1820	Acknowledgement
5th August 1820	Jeu d'esprit - A West Indian Anecdote
26th August 1820	Fragment (Is not this grove)
21st October 1820	Vaucluse
21st October 1820	Untitled - The bee, when varying flowers are nigh

[By Correspondents.]

ROME.

Oh ! how thou art changed, thou proud daughter
of fame,
Since that hour of ripe glory, when empire was
thine,
When earth's purple rulers, kings, quailed at
thy name,
And thy capitol worshipped as Liberty's shrine.
In the day of thy pride, when thy crest was un-
tamed,
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 when 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 yield their dead, and thy war-
riors arise,
And see thy blades rusted, thy war banners furl'd,

Would they know the proud eagle that soared
thro' the skies,
Whose glance lightened 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.

L.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

[By Correspondents.]

THE MICHAELMAS DAIRY,

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

Thy tender blush, thy simple frame,
Unnoticed might have past ;
But now thou comest 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.

In his autobiography, William Jerdan, writing of the beginnings of Letitia Landon's writing career, comments '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' (in the week before a short acknowledgement of his coaching assistance was included)—

Literary Gazette, 29th July, 1820, Page 492
Acknowledgement

On a certain Lecturer on Poetry.
**Both kinds of style our lecturer is engrossing;
Verse is his matter, and his manner prosing.**

Literary Gazette, 5th July, 1820, Page 507
Jeu-d'Esprit

A West Indian Anecdote, versified.
A West Indian dandy (not Bond Street alone
Can claim the dear exquisite thing as its own)
Stood fix'd by the glass, while the new suit displays
All its charms of stiff collars, short waists, and
tight stays.— [eyed]—
"Don't I look very well?" (here the mirror was
"Massa look like a lion," a Negro replied,
"Where have you seen a lion?"—"Oh! we
see it each day—
Ah! there's its long ears—it is coming this way."
One moment the beau turn'd away from the
glass,
Look'd back—and beheld his resemblance an Ass.
L.

[By Correspondents.]

FRAGMENT.

Is not this grove
A scene of pensive loveliness—the gleam
Of Dian's gentle ray falls on the trees,
And piercing thro' 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'er 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 forth,
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 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 legends. 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 cherish'd, wither'd 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 honey suckle and the snowy wealth
The mountain ash puts forth to welcome spring,
Her form was found reclined upon a bank,
Where nature's sweet unnurtur'd children bloom.
One white arm lay beneath her drooping head,
While her bright tresses twin'd their sunny
wreath

Around the polish'd ivory ; there was not
A tinge of colour mantling o'er her lovely 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 hover'd on her lips,
At first they thought 'twas sleep—and sleep it
was—

The cold long rest of death.

L.

VAUCLUSE.

Tall' rocks begirt the lovely valley round,
Like barriers guarding its sweet loneliness ;
Clouds rested on their summits, and their sides
Darken'd with aged woods, where ivy twined
And green moss grew unconscious of the sun :
Rushing in fury from a gloomy cave,
Black like the dwelling place of Death and Night,
An angry river came ; at first it traced
Its course in wrath, and the dark cavern rang
With echoes to its hoarse and sullen roar ;
But when it reach'd the peaceful valley, then,
Like woman's smile soothing wild rage away,
The sunlight fell upon its troubled waves—
It made the waters, like a curbed steed,
Chafed and foamed angrily, but softly flowed,
A bright unbroken mirror, for the kiss
Of the fair children of its fragrant banks,
And close beside uprose the tree whose form
Had once been beauty's refuge—sacred shade !
Which even the lightning dares not violate,
The hero's trophy and the bard's reward—
The faded laurel.—

Vaucluse ! thou hast a melancholy charm,
A sweet remembrance of departed time,
When love awoke the lyre from its long sleep,
Unbound the golden wings of poetry,
And in thy groves the graceful Petrarch sought
A shelter where his soul might wander free,
Dwelling on tender thoughts and minstrel dreams,
All that the bard can feel in solitude.
Thy name is in his songs, and it will be
Remembered, when thy woods shall wave no
more.

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 tho' my heart, by fancy led,
A wanderer for a while may be,
Yet soon returning whence it fled,
It comes more fondly back to thee.

L.

Untitled

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 tho' my heart, by fancy led,
A wanderer for a while may be,
Yet soon returning whence it fled,
It comes more fondly back to thee.

L.