

Landon
in
The Literary Gazette 1831

Poems in The London Literary
Gazette
during the year 1831
by
Letitia Elizabeth Landon
(L. E. L.)

compiled by
Peter J. Bolton

Contents

1st January 1831	Christmas Carol	1
2nd April 1831	Supposed to be the Prayer of the Supplicating Nymph in Mr. Lawrence Macdonald's Exhibition of Sculptures.	2
25th June 1831	The Hall of Statues	4
24th September 1831	The Hermit's Grave	9
1st October 1831	Epigram of a Miser	12

ORIGINAL POETRY.**CHRISTMAS CAROL.**

“ Ivy, holly, and mistletoe,
Give me a penny before I go.”

“ Christmas comes but once a year.”

THE rose, it is the love of June,
The violet that of spring ;
Out on the faithless and fading flowers
That take the south wind's wing !
Such craven blooms I hold in scorn—
The holly's the wreath for a Christmas morn.

Its berries are red as a maiden's lip,
Its leaves are of changeless green ;
And any thing changeless now, I wis,
Is somewhat rare to be seen.
The holly, which fall and frost has borne,
The holly's the wreath for a Christmas morn.

Its edges are set in keen array,
They are fairy weapons bared ;
And in an unlucky world like ours
'Tis as well to be prepared.
Like the crest of a warrior worn,
The holly's the wreath for a Christmas morn.

It was so with England's olden race,—
But, alas ! in this our day
We think so much of the present time,
That we cast the past away.
Let us do as they did ere we were born,—
The holly's the wreath for a Christmas morn.

The holly, it is no green-house plant,
But grows in the common air ;
In the peasant's lattice, the castle hall,
Its green leaves alike are there.
If its lesson in mind be borne,
The holly's the wreath for a Christmas morn.

L. E. L.

ORIGINAL POETRY.**LINES**

*Supposed to be the Prayer of the Supplicating Nymph in
Mr. Laurence Macdonald's Exhibition of Sculpture.**

She kneels as if in prayer, one graceful arm
Extended to implore; her face is fair,
But calm and somewhat sad: methinks the past
Has taught her life's all general lesson—grief;
But grief which has subsided on that brow
To a sweet gravity, that yet seems strange
In one so young: her lip is cold, and wears
No smile to suit its beauty or its youth.
What is its prayer?

THE myrtle wreath that I have laid
Upon thy shrine is withered all;
The bloom which once its beauty made,
I would not, if I could, recall;
No! emblem of my heart and me,
I lay it, Goddess, on thy shrine;
And the sole prayer I offer thee,
Is—let it still be emblem mine.

There was a time when I have knelt
With beating heart and burning brow;
All I once felt is now unfelt—
The depths once stirred are silent now:
I only kneel that I may pray
A future like my present time—
A calm, if not a varied way—
A still, if not a summer clime.

There comes no colour to my cheek,
Whatever step be passing by;
No glance makes mine the green earth seek,
That answer of a conscious eye;
My pulse is still as waves that sleep
When the unbroken heaven is seen;
Ah! never comes a calm so deep
As where the tempest late hath been.

Thou, Wind, that, like a gentle song,
 Scarce stirs the sleeping summer air,
 How often hast thou borne along
 The vain reproach of my despair!
 Fair fount, by whose moss-circled side
 My eyes have shed their bitter rain,
 Flow on with an unsullied tide,
 Thou'lt never see my tears again.

Time was, I loved so many things,
 The earth I trod, the sky above,—
 The leaf that falls, the bird that sings;
 Now there is nothing that I love—
 And how much sorrow I am spared,
 By loveless heart and listless eye!
 Why should the life of love be shared
 With things that change, or things that
 die?

Let the rose fall, another rose
 Will bloom upon the self-same tree;
 Let the bird die, ere evening close
 Some other bird will sing for me.
 It is for the beloved to love,
 'Tis for the happy to be kind;
 Sorrow will more than death remove
 The associate links affections bind.

My heart hath like a lamp consumed,
 In one brief blaze, what should have fed
 For years the sweet life it illumed,
 And now it lies cold, dark, and dead.
 'Tis well such false light is o'ercast,
 A light that burnt where'er it shone;
 My eagerness of youth is past,
 And I am glad that it is gone.

My hopes and feelings, like those flowers,
 Are withered, on thy altar laid—
 A dark night falls from my past hours:
 Still let me dwell beneath its shade,
 Cold as the winter midnight's air,
 Calm as the groves around thy shrine—
 Such, Goddess, is my future's prayer,
 And my heart answers, "It is mine!"
 L. E. L.

* We could wish our readers to visit the beautiful
 statue which has inspired these exquisitely descriptive,
 touching, and poetical lines.—*Ed. L. G.*

ORIGINAL POETRY.**THE HALL OF STATUES.**

RICH the crimson curtains fell,
 Coloured with the hues that dwell
 In the Tyrian's purple shell—
 That bright secret which is known
 To the mighty past alone.
 Forty pillars rose between,
 In that fine Corinthian mould
 When a life's whole task has been
 How to work the burning gold—
 Gold which some young conqueror's hand
 Brought from many a vanquish'd land ;
 Then bade genius raise a shrine—
 Thus profaning the divine—
 Till his rapine and his crime
 Grew in that false light sublime.
 Azure was the roof, and light
 Pour'd down from the crystal dome ;
 Clear the crystal was and bright
 As in its own ocean home.
 Polish'd like a warrior's shield,
 Black (for such the quarries yield
 Where the sun hath never shone,
 Which night only rests upon,)
 Was the marble floor, which gave
 Mirror like some clear dark wave.
 Silent was that hall around,
 Moved no step and stirred no sound ;
 Yet the shapes of life were there,
 Spiritual, calm, and fair—
 Statues to whose rest seem'd given
 Not the life of earth but heaven ;
 For each statue here enshrined
 What in the immortal mind
 Makes its beauty and its power—
 Genius's eternal dower :
 Those embodyings of thought
 Which within the spirit wrought
 In its most ethereal time,
 Of its own and earlier clime

Ere the shade and soil of earth
Tainted an immortal birth.
Thankful should we be to those
Who disdain a dull repose—
Who have head and heart on fire
With unquenchable desire
Of those higher hopes which spring
Heavenward on an eager wing—
Those wide aims which seek to bind
Man the closer with his kind—
By earth's most unearthly ties,
Praises, hopes, and sympathies ;
And call beauty, like a dream,
Up from life's most troubled stream.
From that mighty crystal dome,
Clear and cold the sunbeams roam
Over th' ethereal band
Which beside the column stand.

God of the West Wind, awake !
See who fain thy sleep would break*—
She, the morning's gracious power,
Born in its most lovely hour,
When the stars retire in night
For the mighty fates to write
On their rays the word and sign
Only prophets may divine ;
When the blushing clouds are breaking,
As if Love himself were waking—
When the sun first turns the mist
Into melted amethyst—
She hath bade the north wind keep
In his caverns dark and deep—
Told the south wind, that his breath
Fades too soon the morning wreath—
Sent the east wind where the sands
Sweep around the pilgrim bands—
Her sweet hand is on thy brow—
Wake thee, gentle West Wind, now.
She doth want thy wings to bear
Morning's messages through air,
Where the dewy grass is keeping
Watch above the skylark's sleeping ;
Stir the clover with thy wing,
Send him 'mid the clouds to sing.
Thou must go and kiss the rose,
Crimson with the night's repose ;
She will sigh for coming day,
Bear thou that sweet sigh away ;
On the violet's sleepy eyes
Pour the azure of the skies ;
From the rich and purple wreath
Steal the fragrance of its breath ;
Wake the bees to the sweet spoil
Which rewards their summer toil ;
Shake the bough, and rouse the bird,
Till one general song is heard ;
Fling aside the glittering leaves,
Till the darkest nook receives
Somewhat of the morning beam ;
Stir the ripples of the stream,
Till it flash like silver back
In the white swan's radiant track.
Rouse thee for Aurora's sake—
God of the West Wind, awake !

Close beside 's a child, † whose hand
 O'er a lute holds sweet command :
 Like a spirit is that child—
 For his gentle lip is mild,
 And his smile like those which trace
 Sunshine on an angel's face :
 But upon that brow is wrought
 Evidence of deeper thought,
 Higher hopes, and keener fears,
 Than should mark such infant years.
 Childhood should have laughing eye,
 Where tears pass like showers by—

When the sky becomes more bright,
 For a moment's shadowed light.
 Childhood's step should be as gay
 As the sunbeam on its way :
 There will come another hour,
 When fate rules with harsher power—
 When the weary mind is worn
 By the sorrow it hath borne—
 When desire sits down to weep
 Over hope's unbroken sleep—
 When we know our care and toil
 Cultures an ungrateful soil—
 When in our extremest need
 Only grows the thorn and weed—
 Well the face may be o'ercast
 By the troubles it has past.
 Ah, fair child ! I read it now
 By the meaning on thy brow—
 By thy deep and thoughtful eyes,
 Where the soul of genius lies ;
 Even now the shade is o'er thee
 Of the path which lies before thee ;
 For thy hand is on the lyre,
 And thy lip is living fire,
 And before thee is the wreath
 Which the poet wins by death.
 Brief and weary life is thine—
 But thy future is divine.

Near it kneels a maid in prayer,*
 Fair as the white rose is fair—
 With a sad and chastened look,
 As the spirit early took
 Bitter lessons, how on earth
 Flowers perish in their birth,
 Blossoms fall before they bloom,
 And the bud is its own tomb.
 Once she dreamed a gentle dream—
 Such, alas! love's ever seem—
 Whence she only waked to know
 Every thing is false below.
 Soon the warm heart has to learn
 Lessons of despair, and turn
 From a world whose charm is o'er
 When its hope deceives no more.
 Maiden, thy young brow is cold—
 'Tis because thy heart is old;
 And thine eyes are raised above,
 For earth hath betrayed thy love.

Dark the shades of evening fall—
 Night is gathering o'er that hall;
 All seems indistinct and pale—
 Thick falls the shadowy veil;
 All the shapes I gazed upon,
 Like the dream that raised them, gone.

L. E. L.

* Mr. Hollins' Aurora waking Zephyrus.
 † Mr. Lough's Child playing a Lyre.

* Mr. Macdonald's Supplicating Virgin.

ORIGINAL POETRY.**THE HERMIT'S GRAVE.**

THE days are gone when pilgrims knelt
 By sacred spot or shrine;
 The cells where saints have lived or died
 No more are held divine;

The bough of palm, the scallop-shell,
 Are signs of faith no more;
 The common grave is holy held
 As that on Salem's shore.

Yet, when I knew that human knee
 Had worn the rock away,
 And that here, even at my feet,
 Earth hid the righteous clay;

I felt this was no common spot
 For any common thought—
 The place's own calm sanctity
 Within my spirit wrought.

The cave was dark and damp—it spoke
 Of penance and of prayer:

Remorse that scarcely dared to hope,
 And heavy grief, were there.

But at the entrance was a scene,
 Which seemed expressly given
 To bring the heart again to earth,
 And win it thence to heaven.

For so benign an influence
 Was falling from the sky,
 And like a blessing on the land
 The sunshine seemed to lie.

The long green grass was full of life,
And so was every tree ;
On every bough there was a bud,
In every bud a bee.

And life hath such a gladdening power,
Thus in its joy arrayed—
The God who made the world so fair
Must love what he has made.

Fed by the silver rains, a brook
Went murmuring along,
And to its music, from the leaves,
The birds replied in song ;

And, white as ever lily grew,
A wilding broom essayed
To fling upon the sunny wave
A transitory shade.

Misty and gray as morning skies,
Mid which their summits stood,
The ancient cliffs encompassed round
The lovely solitude.

It was a scene where faith would take
Lessons from all it saw,
And feel amid its depths that hope
Was God's and Nature's law.

The past might here be wept away—
The future might renew
Its early confidence on high,
When years and sins were few.

Till, in the strength of penitence
 To the worst sinner given,
 The grave would seem a resting-place
 Between this world and heaven.

'Tis but a pious memory
 That lingers in this dell,
 That human tears, and human prayers,
 Have sanctified the cell.

Save for that memory, all we see
 Were only some fair scene,
 Not linked unto our present time
 By aught that e'er had been.

But now a moral influence
 Is on that small gray stone;
 For who e'er watched another's grave
 And thought not of his own,

And felt that all his trust in life
 Was leaning on a reed?
 And who can hear of prayer and faith
 And not confess their need?

If he who sleeps beneath thought years
 Of prayer might scarce suffice
 To reconcile his God, and win
 A birthright in the skies,

What may we hope who hurry on
 Through life's tumultuous day,
 And scarcely give one little hour
 To heaven upon our way?

Thou blessed grave! ah, not in vain
 Has been thy presence here,
 If it hath wrought in any heart
 One higher hope or fear.

L. E. L.

ORIGINAL POETRY.**EPIGRAM ON A MISER.**

**His heart is like a maggot-eaten nut :
There's nothing in it ; but 'tis closely shut.**
I. E. L.