

**Landon**  
**in**  
**The Literary Gazette 1832**

Poems in The London Literary  
Gazette  
during the year 1832  
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**ORIGINAL POETRY.****CHRISTMAS.***Irregular Lines.*

Now out upon you, Christmas !  
 Is this the merry time  
 When the red hearth blazed, the harper sung,  
 And the bells rung their glorious chime ?

You are called merry Christmas—  
 Like many that I know,  
 You are living on a character  
 Acquired long ago.

The dim lamps glimmer o'er the streets ;  
 Through the dun and murky air  
 You may not see the moon or stars,  
 For the fog is heavy there ;

As if all high and lovely things  
 Were blotted from the sight,  
 And Earth had nothing but herself  
 Left to her own drear light.

A gloomy crowd goes hurrying by ;  
 And in the lamplight's glare,

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Many a heavy step is seen,  
 And many a face of care.

I saw an aged woman turn  
 To her wretched home again—  
 All day she had asked charity,  
 And all day asked in vain.

The fog was on the cutting wind,  
 The frost was on the flood ;  
 And yet how many past that night  
 With neither fire nor food !

There came on the air a smother'd groan,  
 And a low and stifled cry,  
 And there struggled a child, a young fair  
 child,  
 In its mortal agony.

"Now for its price," the murderer said;  
 "On earth we must live as we can;  
 And this is not a crime, but a sacrifice  
 In the cause of science and man."

Is this the curse that is laid on the earth?  
 And must it ever be so,  
 That there can be nothing of human good  
 But must from some evil flow?

On, on, and the dreary city's smoke  
 And the fog are left behind,  
 And the leafless boughs of the large old trees  
 Are stirred by the moaning wind;  
 And all is calm, like the happy dream  
 Which we have of an English home—  
 A lowly roof where cheerful toil  
 And healthy slumbers come.

Is there a foreign foe in the land,  
 That the midnight sky grows red—  
 That by homestead, and barn, and rick, and  
 stack,  
 Yon cruel blaze is fed?

There were months of labour, of rain, and sun,  
 Ere the harvest followed the plough—  
 Ere the stack was reared, and the barn was  
 filled,  
 Which the fire is destroying now.

And the dark incendiary goes through the  
night

With a fierce and wicked joy ;  
The wealth and the food which he may not  
share,  
He will at least destroy.

The wind, the wind, it comes from the sea,  
With a wailing sound it passed ;  
'Tis soft and mild for a winter's wind,  
And yet there is death on the blast.

From the south to the north hath the Cholera  
come,  
He came like a despot king ;  
He hath swept the earth with a conqueror's  
step,  
And the air with a spirit's wing.

We shut him out with a girdle of ships,  
And a guarded quarantine :  
What ho ! now which of your watchers slept ?  
The Cholera's past your line !

There's a curse on the blessed sun and air,  
What will ye do for breath ?  
For breath, which was once but a word for life,  
Is now but a word for death.

Wo for affection ! when love must look  
On each face it loves with dread—  
Kindred and friends—when a few brief hours  
And the dearest may be the dead !

The months pass on, and the circle spreads ;  
And the time is drawing nigh,  
When each street may have a darkened house,  
Or a coffin passing by.

Our lot is cast upon evil days,  
In the world's winter-time ;  
The earth is old, and worn with years  
Of want, of wo, and of crime.

Then out on the folly of ancient times—  
The folly which wished you mirth :  
Look round on the anguish, look round on  
the vice,  
Then dare to be glad upon earth !

L. E. L.

**ORIGINAL POETRY.****DEATH AND THE YOUTH.**

“ Not yet—the flowers are in my path,  
The sun is in my sky ;  
Not yet—my heart is full of hope—  
I cannot bear to die.

Not yet—I never knew till now  
How precious life could be ;  
My heart is full of love—oh, Death,  
I cannot come with thee !”

But Love and Hope, enchanted twain,  
Passed in their falsehood by ;  
Death came again, and then he said—  
“ I’m ready now to die !”



**THE DYING CHILD.***Paraphrased from the German.*

“ OH mother, what brings music here ?  
Now listen to the song—  
So soft, so sweet, so beautiful—  
The night-winds bear along !”

“ My child, I only hear the wind,  
As with a mournful sound  
It wanders mid the old oak trees,  
And strews their leaves around.”

And dimmer grew his heavy eyes,  
His face more deadly fair,  
And down dropped from his infant hand  
His book of infant prayer.

“ I know it now, my mother dear,  
That song for me is given ;  
It is the angels' choral hymn  
That welcomes me to heaven.”

## THE LITTLE SHROUD.

SHE put him on a snow-white shroud,  
A chaplet on his head ;  
And gathered early primroses  
To scatter o'er the dead.

She laid him in his little grave—  
'Twas hard to lay him there,  
When spring was putting forth its flowers,  
And every thing was fair.

She had lost many children—now  
The last of them was gone ;  
And day and night she sat and wept  
Beside the funeral stone.

One midnight, while her constant tears  
Were falling with the dew,  
She heard a voice, and lo ! her child  
Stood by her weeping too !

His shroud was damp, his face was white :  
He said—" I cannot sleep,  
Your tears have made my shroud so wet ;  
Oh, mother, do not weep !"

Oh, love is strong !—the mother's heart  
Was filled with tender fears ;  
Oh, love is strong !—and for her child  
Her grief restrained its tears.

One eve a light shone round her bed,  
And there she saw him stand—  
Her infant, in his little shroud,  
A taper in his hand.

" Lo ! mother, see my shroud is dry,  
And I can sleep once more !"  
And beautiful the parting smile  
The little infant wore.

And down within the silent grave  
He laid his weary head ;  
And soon the early violets  
Grew o'er his grassy bed.

The mother went her household ways—  
Again she knelt in prayer,  
And only asked of Heaven its aid  
Her heavy lot to bear.

L. E. L.\*

\* The hints for these poems have been taken from the German. Two were mentioned to me in conversation, but that of "the Little Shroud" was translated, in prose, a week or so ago, in that most entertaining little paper the *Oriental*, which also did me the honour of recommending it to me.

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**ORIGINAL POETRY.**

**OUR PRESENT MAY.**

“ May is full of flowers.”—*Southwell.*

“ Born in yon blaze of orient sky,  
Sweet May, thy radiant form unfold,  
Unclose thy blue voluptuous eye,  
And wave thy shadowy lock of gold.”

*Darwin.*

“ THE month of flowers,” May,  
Were they not wont to say  
That, of the Year’s twelve lovely daughters, thou  
Didst wear most perfect sweetness on thy brow ?

They said the crimson rose  
Was eager to unclose  
For thee the fragrant mysteries which lie  
Hidden in leafless boughs beneath the winter  
sky.

The poets told thy birth  
Was welcomed upon earth  
By the sweet multitude of shining flowers,  
By bursting buds, green leaves, and sunny  
hours.

And thou art come, sweet May ;  
A week beneath thy sway  
The world has been ; yet is it dull and cold :  
Doth it not own thy reign, as in the days of old ?

To-day all life is strange  
With great and utter change ;  
The power is past away from many a shrine  
And many a throne — must it, too, pass from  
thine ?

Still o’er the darkened sky  
The heavy clouds sail by,  
Till the bleak shower comes down unpitifully,  
Beating the few faint blossoms from the tree.

Where is the yellow ore  
Which the laburnum bore,  
As if transformed, the Theban princess there,  
Amid the golden shower, loosed her more golden  
hair ?

The lilac with its stars,  
 Small, shining like the spars  
 With which some sea-nymph decks her ocean-  
 bowers—  
 Lilac, that seems the jewellery of flowers ?

Where is the gelder-rose,  
 Wreathed as from Alpine snows ?  
 Where is the lime-tree's bud of faint perfume ?  
 Where is the hawthorn wealth, thine own  
 peculiar bloom ?

They do not meet thee now !  
 I see the barren bough ;  
 The earth is melancholy as a grave—  
 I see the driving rain, I hear the bleak winds  
 rave.

Is this the pilgrimage  
 Of Earth in her old age ?  
 And is the shadow all things present wear  
 Cast on the circling beauty of the year ?

Or is it but delay ?  
 Are south winds on their way,  
 And songs and blossoms bringing May once  
 more  
 The sunshine which rejoiced all hearts of yore ?

Hope whispers of their birth—  
 Hope which upon our earth  
 Doth wander like an angel, at whose feet  
 Fresh flowers spring up to gladden and to greet.

How many now may see  
 Their likeness, May, in thee !  
 Mournful and spiritless, their spring is known  
 But by its measured time, and time alone ;  
 They know there must be May within the year,  
 Else would they never dream that May was  
 here.

May 9, 1832.

L. E. L.

**ORIGINAL POETRY.****YOUTH.**

And herein have the green trees and the blossoming shrubs their advantage over us: the flower withers and the leaf falls, but the fertilising sap still lingers in their veins, and the following years bring again a spring of promise and a summer of beauty: but we, when our leaves and flowers perish, they perish utterly; we put forth no new hopes, we dream no new dreams. Why are we not wise enough, at least more preciously to retain their memory?

OH! the hours! the happy hours  
 Of our other earlier time,  
 When the world was full of flowers,  
 And the sky a summer clime!  
 All life seem'd so lovely then;  
 For it mirror'd our own heart:  
 Life is only joyful when  
 That joy of ourselves is part.

Fond delight and kind deceit  
 Are the gladness of the young—  
 For the bloom beneath our feet  
 Is what we ourselves have flung.  
 Then so many pleasures seem  
 Scatter'd o'er our onward way;  
 'Tis so difficult to deem  
 How their relish will decay.

What the heart now beats to win  
 Soon will be unloved, unsought:  
 Gradual is the change within,  
 But an utter change is wrought.  
 Time goes on, and time destroys  
 Not the joy, but our delight:  
 Do we now desire the toys  
 Which so charm'd our childhood's  
 sight?

Glory, poetry, and love,  
 Make youth beautiful, and pass  
 As the hues that shine above  
 Colour, but to quit, their glass.  
 But we soon grow calm and cold  
 As the grave to which we go ;  
 Fashion'd in one common mould,  
 Pulse and step alike are slow.

We have lost the buoyant foot—  
 We have lost the eager eye ;  
 All those inward chords are mute,  
 Once so eager to reply.  
 Is it not a constant sight—  
 Is it not most wretched too—  
 When we mark the weary plight  
 In which life is hurried through ?

Selfish, listless, Earth may wear  
 All her summer wealth in vain—  
 Though the stars be still as fair,  
 Yet we watch them not again.  
 Too much do we leave behind  
 Sympathy with lovely things ;  
 And the worn and worldly mind  
 Withers all life's fairy rings.

Glorious and beautiful  
 Were youth's feeling and youth's thought—  
 Would that we did not annul  
 All that in us then was wrought !  
 Would their influence could remain  
 When the hope and dream depart ;  
 Would we might through life retain  
 Still some youth within the heart !  
L. E. L.

Of Sir Walter Scott's legal and official career, or of his pecuniary circumstances, it is not for us to speak; and we congratulate ourselves that the touching strain which we now annex from the pen of L. E. L. enables us to leave these matters of worldly record to others:—

Our sky has lost another star,  
The earth has claimed its own,  
And into dread eternity  
A glorious one is gone.  
He who could give departed things  
So much of light and breath,  
He is himself now with the past—  
Gone forth from life to death.

It is a most unblessed grave  
That has no mourner near;  
The meanest turf the wild flowers hide  
Has some familiar tear:  
But kindred sorrow is forgot  
Amid the general gloom;  
Grief is religion felt for him  
Whose temple is his tomb.

Thou of the future-and the past,  
How shall we honour thee?  
Shall we build up a pyramid  
Amid the pathless sea?  
Shall we bring red gold from the east,  
And marble from the west,  
And carved porphyry, that the fane  
Be worthy of its guest?

Or shall we seek thy native land,  
And choose some ancient hill,  
To be thy statue, finely wrought  
With all the sculptor's skill?  
Methinks, as there are common signs  
To every common wo,  
That we should do some mighty thing:  
To mark who lies below.

But this is folly: thou needst not  
The sculpture or the shrine;  
The heart is the sole monument  
For memories like thine.  
The pyramids in Egypt rose  
To mark some monarch's fame;  
Imperishable is the tomb,  
But what the founder's name?

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Small need for tribute unto thee,  
 To let the fancy roam—  
 To thee, who hast by many a hearth  
 An altar and a home :  
 Each little bookshelf where thy works  
 Are carefully enshrined,  
 There is thy trophy, there is left  
 Thy heritage of mind.

How many such delightful hours  
 Rise on our saddened mood,  
 When we have owed to thee and thine  
 The charm of solitude !  
 How eagerly we caught the book !  
 How earnestly we read !  
 How actual seemed the living scenes  
 Thy vivid colours spread !

And not to one dominion bound  
 Has been thy varied power ;  
 In many a distant scene enjoyed—  
 In many a distant hour.  
 In childhood turning from its play,  
 In manhood, youth, and age,  
 All bent beneath the enchanter's wand,  
 All owned that spell—thy page.

Read by the glimmering firelight,  
 In the greenwood alone,  
 Amid the gathered circle—who  
 But bath thy magic known ?  
 Laid in the cottage window-seat,  
 Fanned by the open air,  
 Left by the palette and the desk,  
 Thou hast thy readers there.

Actual as friends we know and love,  
 The beings of thy mind  
 Are, like events of real life,  
 In memory enshrined :  
 We seem as if we heard their voice,  
 As if we knew their face—  
 Familiar with their inward thoughts,  
 Their beauty and their grace.



As if bound on a pilgrimage,  
 We visit now thy shore,  
 Haunted by all which thou hast gleaned  
 From the old days of yore :  
 We feel in every hill and heath  
 Romance which thou hast flung ;  
 We say, 'Twas here the poet dwelt,  
 'Twas there of which he sung.  
 Remembering thee, we half forget  
 How vainly this is said ;  
 There seemed so much of life in thee,  
 We cannot think thee dead.  
 Dead ? dead ? when there is on this earth  
 Such waste of worthless breath ;  
 There should have gone a thousand lives  
 To ransom thee from death !  
 Now out on it ! to hear them speak  
 Their idle words and vain,  
 As if it were a common loss  
 For nature to sustain.  
 It is an awful vacancy  
 A great man leaves behind,  
 And solemnly should sorrow fall  
 Upon bereaved mankind.  
 We have too little gratitude  
 Within the selfish heart,  
 Else with what anguish should we see  
 The great and good depart !  
 Methinks our dark and sinful earth  
 Might dread an evil day,  
 When Heaven, in pity or in wrath,  
 Calls its beloved away.  
 A fear and awe are on my soul,  
 To look upon the tomb,  
 And think of who are sleeping laid  
 Within its midnight gloom.  


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 What glorious ones are gone !—thus light  
 Doth vanish from our spheres :  
 Out on the vanity of words !  
 Peace now, for thoughts and tears !