

LANDOR, THE ODD POET.

PASTOR FELIX TELLS OF THE LIFE OF THIS STRANGE WRITER.

Various Accounts of the Man—A Just Appreciation of His Difficult—Contradictory Opinions as to What He Was and What He Was Not.

Our first real acquaintance with Landor was made through the poem of "Gebir" and the closet drama of "Count Julian;" and though our knowledge of him has been improved by "the Imaginary Conversation" the first impressions strongly remain. The first-named poem is perhaps the most remarkable written by a youth just out of school, and shows as little juvenescence as the earlier poems of Milton. Written in Latin, and again in the compactest English, there is in its classic mould the perpetual gleam of gold and jewels,—a magnificence of poetry that charmed Southey, and delighted some of the subtlest poets of his time. It is recorded of Shelley that when he was at Oxford, in 1811, "there were times when he would read nothing but 'Gebir'." His friend Hogg says that when he went to Shelley's rooms one morning to tell him something of importance, he could not draw his attention away from "Gebir." Hogg impatiently threw the book out of the window. It was brought back by a servant, and Shelley immediately fastened upon it again. It won a slow way, however; and DeQuincy declared that for some time it had the sublime distinction of having enjoyed only two readers—Southey and himself; while Byron declared him to be the "deep-mouthed Boeotian," who cultivated private renown, in the shape of Latin poems and essays. "Count Julian" is a poem of a severer type, and far less prodigal of color, but rich in noble sentiments, and containing passages of remarkable power. He dealt with the same poetic material that Scott and Southey did, but with a finer heroic and artistic result. DeQuincy grew eloquent in his admiration of this play. "Mr. Landor," he wrote, "who always rises with his subject, and dilates like Satan into Tenerife or Atlas when he sees before him an antagonist worthy of his powers, is probably the one man in Europe that has adequately conceived the situation, the stern self-dependency, and the monumental misery of Count Julian. That sublimity of penitential grief, which cannot accept consolation from man, cannot bear external reproach, cannot condescend to notice insult, cannot so much as see the curiosity of bystanders; that awful carelessness of all but the troubled depths within his own heart, and of God's spirit brooding upon their surface and searching their abysses; never was so majestically described."

A just appraisal of Walter Savage Landor is almost as difficult as of Napoleon Buonaparte. Such inconsistent views of a character and a product are rarely to be found. The warmth of admiring enthusiasm, or the coldness of dislike, meets the student of his career at every turn. With Swinburne, he is a genius, almost sublime and unerring who wears "such a double crown of glory in verse and in prose as has been won by no other Englishman but Milton;"—a man who through a long illustrious, beneficent career, had the same constancy to the same principles, the same devotion to the same ideal of civic and heroic life; the same love, the same loyalty, the same wrath, scorn, and hatred, for the same several objects respectively; the same affection and kinship to the spirit of the Romans, the same natural enjoyment and mastery of their tongue. We turn elsewhere, and learn that his writings "bear the stamp of the old mocking paganism;" to another, and are informed that in him "a moody, egotistic nature, ill at ease with the common things of life, had flourished up in his case into a most portentous crop of crotchets and prejudices, which, regardless of his fellow-men, he issued forth in prodigious confusion (?) often in language offensive in the last degree to good taste." He is credited with an over-eagerness of contradiction, a choicest impatience of everyone differing with himself, and a poor memory of what he himself had said, resulting in self-contradiction. He is said to be the father of the most absurd heresies, social, political and literary, that have ever been propagated in English. We look into Taine's brilliant book, and find that Landor is not mentioned—so far as we can hastily determine from the index; and cannot therefore, be reckoned by him a force in English letters at all. Jeffrey describes him as being a literary Jacobite,—flying at all game, running amuck at all opinions, and at continual cross-purposes with his own. His spirit is one "that admits neither of equal nor superior, follower nor precursor." He "travels in a road so narrow, where but one goes abreast." He belongs to the class who claim "a monopoly of sense, wit, and wisdom." The ambition and endeavor of which is, to seem wiser than the whole world besides. He is foremost of those who "hate whatever falls short of whatever goes beyond, their favorite theories;" who "in the one case hurry on to get the start of you; and in the other, turn suddenly back to hinder you, and defeat themselves." And what is the moving cause? An indominate, restless, incorrigible self-love is the key to all their actions and opinions, extravagances and meanness, servility and arrogance. Whatever soothes and pampers this, they applaud; whatever wounds and interferes with it, they utterly and vindictively abhor. A general is with them a hero, if he is unsuccessful as a traitor; if he is a conqueror in the cause of liberty, or a martyr to it, he is a poltroon. Whatever is doubtful, remote visionary in philosophy,

and dangerous in politics, they fasten upon eagerly, recommending and insisting on nothing less; reduce the one to demonstration, the other to practice, and they turn their backs upon their own most darling schemes, and leave them in the lurch immediately."

Turning from this sort of criticism, which has the accent of those "whose withers have been wrung," we consult an authority more ardent, if anything, than Swinburne. With William Howitt, Landor is one of the world's great teachers; gifted with extraordinary genius and possessing advantages of birth, intellect, education, and property, which he used, as a man should, for the common welfare. His personality was vigorous and assertive; his mind vivid and capacious; his experience extensive and varied. His temper and excesses were the overplus of a warm, generous, vigorous, abounding nature. A ripe, classical scholar, we have his intellectual character in its due degrees. "To him, classical literature was but the literature of one, though of a fine portion of the human race. He imbued it with a feeling of freshness where it grew, but at the same time he did not avert his eyes from the world of today. It was humanity in its totality which interested him. Hence the universality of his genius; the healthiness of his tastes; the soundness of his opinions." He is one who has used his prestige of rank and wealth as instruments, offensive and defensive, in the promulgation of truth; who uttered safely and fearlessly such brave and needful words as would have recoiled to the destruction of a less independent man, who must rely upon his pen for a subsistence. He is a man exhibited alike by "his prose and his poetry, his life and his conversation" as "of large and powerful physical frame, of a passionate, impulsive, yet reflective mind," in whom there is no disguise; who exerted himself in all directions "from the vigorous strength of his great and equally developed nature"; a man whose "sentiments and doctrines seemed continually to radiate on all around him, from the living central fire of a heart which felt, as a sacred duty, every great truth which the mind had received into its settled conviction."

PASTOR FELIX.

FACTS ABOUT RUBIES.

Gems of Great Beauty and Value—The Collection of Burmah's King.

The story of the theft and possible recovery of King Theebaw's crown jewels, which has been so thoroughly discussed of late, is likely to bring rubies into more common appreciation, suggests an English paper. The real value of the lost rubies is not known, because Orientals prize their jewels for their weight rather than great perfection, and another consideration is the fact that red spinels often pass in the East for the genuine ruby, with which they have nothing in common except the color, although they are found in the same bed with rubies and sapphires. The famous Black Prince ruby in the royal crown of England is only a spinel. Rubies and sapphires are identical in their component parts. The form of crystallization is the same. Their hardness and specific gravity are equal, and they are found in the same bed of clay so closely together that one side of a stone will be bright blue and the other as red as blood. In both aluminium is the principal ingredient, but the mystery of their real difference has never been solved by science.

Among the finest of historical rubies were three of the French crown jewels, and one of these formed part of the dowry of Catherine de Medicis on her marriage to Henry II., and it weighed 241 carats. The other two were reset for Marie Stuart when she reigned as Queen of France. It is said that the kings of Burmah possessed at one time the finest collection of rubies in the world, and they took great precautions to prevent strangers from reaching their mines. Before the annexation of the country by England all rubies valued at 1,000 rupees were claimed by the king, and the finder received no reward except the king's favor. Ordinary travel was forbidden, and merchants had great difficulty in dealing with the chiefs of the mining districts. In order to purchase jewels a man had to first obtain a license, then report himself at Ruby Hall in Mandalay, stating the exact amount of money and merchandise he wished to take with him. This information was sent to the officials at the mines, and at every stopping place on the way, both going and coming, the merchant and his baggage were carefully examined. If he returned with rubies beyond the value he declared in starting he was dealt with as being a smuggler.

Added to the value and beauty of the ruby were its magical properties, which the ancients considered powerful enough to guard them from "poison, plague, sadness, evil thoughts, and wicked spirits," and to keep them in health and cheered in mind. Although superstition is not such a powerful influence in these modern days, the cheering qualities of the ruby are fully appreciated by the woman who are fortunate enough to possess a gem.

Taking No Risks.

"Waiter," said the cautious guest, "I see you have canvasback duck on the bill of fare. Can you warrant it to be canvasback duck?"

"I can, sir," replied the waiter.

"I don't believe it. I see you also claim to serve tenderloin steaks. Are they really tenderloin steaks?"

"They are."

"It is impossible. There is only one real, genuine tenderloin steak in a beef, and you can't kill a cow for every man who calls for a steak of that kind. Hm—let me see: Broiled, red snapper. Sure it's red snapper?"

"Yes, sir."

"I doubt it. You can easily make Mississippi River buffalo look like red snapper. Um—spring lamb, mint sauce. Old mutton without a doubt. Waiter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Bring me some fried liver."

"In the slow evolution of the race," mused the elephant, looking with languid interest at the throng of curious gazers that stood on the outside of the ropes and fed him with cakes, peanuts, and candy, "how many millions of years it must require to evolve from the shapeless and rudimentary projection on the face of the creature called man the full and perfect proboscis!"

SEEKING HIDDEN TREASURES.

The British Government is Seeking for Money Buried in India.

Some time ago a private in the 2d. Battalion of the Royal West Surrey Regiment died at Wandsworth, England. On his death-bed he stated he took part in the war with Burmah in the autumn of 1855, and was among the troops who surrounded King Theebaw's palace at Mandalay. According to his death-bed confession he and another private entered the palace during the night, and after several exciting adventures, discovered quite by accident, the King's crown and regalia. These they at once took possession of, and promptly conveyed them out of the palace. The jewels, it is stated, were worth an immense sum, but their massive gold settings made them bulky and cumbersome. The two soldiers afraid of detection, determined to bury the treasure, and did so without delay. Shortly afterwards a sentry box was placed upon the very site, and according to the statement made by the dying soldier the jewels are still there.

The gentleman who received this confession at once sought out the other soldier, who was living at Southampton on a pension. When first questioned on the subject this man appeared to be greatly frightened, but upon being told that no harm would befall him he admitted that the statement made by the other soldier was correct. The Secretary of State for India was then communicated with, and eventually a report of the matter was sent to the Chief Commissioner of Burmah. After some delay the latter wrote to say that the survivor of the two soldiers would not be punished for any part he had taken in burying the treasure, and he recommended that the man should be sent out at once to find it. Subsequently the Earl of Kimberley, through his secretary, wrote stating that the Government of India was prepared to give the man 10 per cent on any property he might discover up to the value of 100,000 rupees and 5 per cent on the remainder, if any should be found in excess of that value. The authorities also offered to pay his passage to India, and provide him with an outfit.

The man is now on his way to India, and is confident of his ability—a confidence apparently shared by the authorities—to find the buried treasure. It is remembered now that the jewels found in the palace were not so numerous or valuable as had been expected, but it was thought at the time that many had been taken away by the woman who were allowed to leave.

London's Tower Bridge.

I suppose no American would come to London without seeing the tower, and that no structure is more familiar to residents in the United States, either from personal knowledge or pictorial representation, than the Tower of London—not even St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey, says a writer in the Providence Journal. To-day the historic building is more dwarfed than ever—it always did seem disappointingly small to strangers—by the two towers that now stand in the river near it. These towers are the promised feature of the new Tower bridge.

They stand 100 feet apart right in the bed of the river. They are connected with lower towers on the river banks by suspension bridges, each 270 feet long. The 200 feet between them in the middle of the river is spanned at the height of 140 feet from high water level by footways thrown out on the cantilever principle. Much lower down are the great leaves of the opening bridge, which, when closed to allow traffic to pass, leave a space between their under sides and the high water level of only thirty feet. These lofty towers are a fraud in their way. They are to all appearance substantial masonry, supporting the mighty drawbridge in the centre and the suspension chains of the side spans. But the masonry is but sheep's clothing. The mighty power is of steel. It is a steel bridge, resting on great piers in the river bed. The soil at the bottom of the river, after a surface layer of river mud and gravel, is what is known to geologists as the London clay. Into this London clay caissons were sunk to the depth of nineteen feet. The men working inside filled this space up with concrete, making a solid foundation for piers 70 feet wide and 185 feet long, built of hard Staffordshire brick and faced with granite.

Inside these piers are rooms for the hydraulic machinery of the bridge and for the arms of the leaves of the drawbridge. This great bridge has been in course of erection since the end of 1886. The cost of the bridge expressed in American money will be close upon \$4,000,000. The formal opening of the bridge will take place in June next by the Prince and Princess of Wales.

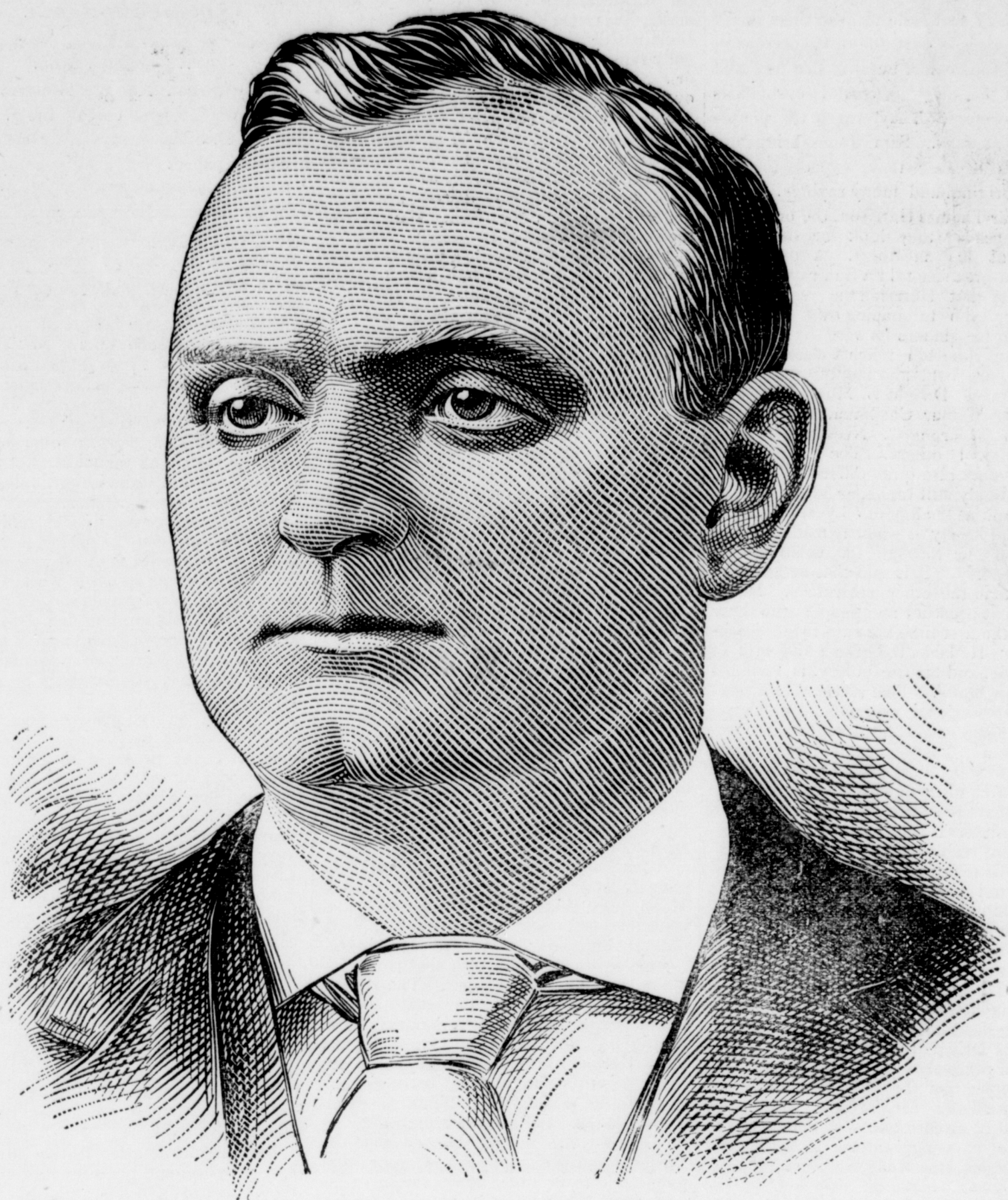


M. Hammerly, a well-known business man of Hillsboro, Va., sends this testimony to the merits of Ayer's Sarsaparilla: "Several years ago, I hurt my leg, the injury leaving a sore which led to erysipelas. My sufferings were extreme, my leg, from the knee to the ankle, being a solid sore, which began to extend to other parts of the body. After trying various remedies, I began taking Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and, before I had finished the first bottle, I experienced great relief; the second bottle effected a complete cure."

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The name of Donohue's Magazine, founded by Mr. Patrick Donohue, of Boston, in 1870, is known and respected throughout the English speaking world.

Within the past year it has achieved almost marvellous success, and stands to-day peerless in its field, doing splendid work for greater religious tolerance and better economic conditions. This success has been won under the direction of its new publisher, Hon. Daniel P. Toomey, who, in addition, is at the head of one of Boston's best publishing companies and is a representative from that city in the legislature of Massachusetts.

Mr. Toomey writes as follows in a candid and interesting letter:

"I believe in Paine's Celery Compound. If I tell you why, you may, perhaps, wish to publish my words. But even that does not defer me from writing you the truth

I have no sympathy with the man who helps tear down 'the bridge that carried him over.' Neither do I sympathize with the man who hides facts just because their publication may promote the success of others. Paine's Celery Compound helped me. That's the fact of the case.

"Finding myself run down and getting into a state of nervousness, recently, I took the advice of a medical friend, and bought Paine's Celery Compound. Its use gave me strength, energy and buoyancy. Business cares were made lighter than before.

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