

# **DEEDS OF DELIGHT**

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Deeds of Delight by J. L. L.

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**J. L. L.**

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DELIGHT**



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BY

J. L. L.

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"A thrill, which tells to thought  
That something Grand and Great  
Pants through the Universe!"

J. L. L.



LONDON:  
PROVOST AND CO.,  
36, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN.  
1876.

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## PREFACE.

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HOWEVER much the proclivity may be deprecated, the relish for Poetry is the most sustaining—the most solacing—the most noble of the attributes of the human mind. Without such a succour, this world with its hard ways could be easily valued, if not sold. Everything that excludes poetry is either mercenary or depraved. It is easy, no doubt, but very cruel, to keep human life circumscribed within the range of the wants of poor animal necessity. It is merciful—grand—heavenly—worthy of our exalted organization, to liberate the mind of that life, and draw out of it the intrinsic polish of its dormant susceptibilities. This is indeed the work of literal regeneration. Not thousands merely, but alas! millions of unprivileged mortals, die unconscious of the felicity of this second life. Many who are rich, as well as very many more who are poor, have never felt one spark of the true fire scintillate in their bosoms.

The clink of the counting-house and its associations are to many of the former of much greater moment than divine ideas. Let them live in their heaven, and pay their homage to the dross that perishes. The bliss they shun is free for all; and it is wonderfully worth the care which it requires to develop its enchanting truths. More elevating enjoyment cannot be felt here, and no mortal can be dissatisfied who has once got into the sublime sunshine.

Poetry not only seasons and vitalizes religion, but it makes a man what religion professes to make him; for the very power of religion lies in its poetry. Take out of the Bible its poetry, and a very poor skeleton would remain. With all the dry details in the writings of Moses, that masculine Lawgiver was also a masculine Poet. He prefaces his works with a splendid picture that moves the mind from chaos to creation. Awe and beauty constitute the figure-head of his ship, which has now stood the storms of thousands of years, and been the consolation of many generations. And as the Bible begins, so also it ends, in poetry. Its substrata, its surface, and its fathomless depths,

are all imperishable poetry. The "Songs of Zion," as well as the precepts and parables of Galilee, are loaded with poetic embellishment. While the "Good King" sings "The heavens declare the glory of God," the "Good Shepherd" tells of "lambs in His bosom,"—proclaims the supreme beauty of "the lilies of the field," and the Providence that "cares for a sparrow,"—cheers the "weary and heavy-laden," and not only commands us to "love our enemies," but backs up the immortal maxim with that dying example which will live till all human hearts have ceased—"Father, forgive them!"

Science and philosophy may conduce to strip poetry of its charms—religion of its hopes—and man of his pleasures. I trust, however, when properly learnt, that they do not do so. But they never can change the seasons of the year, nor alter the smallest law that obeys the foregone fiat—"Let there be." Nor can they take from the mind its innate fond devotions, nor pervert its native flexibility, which makes its thoughts recur as fresh for ever as the varying tides, the changing moon, the shades, the sunshine, and the rolling



hours. We can get poetry out of all these revolutions. Death has its poetry—the most eloquent of all—the marvel of hushed Omnipotence! Words are lost, when that Almighty solemnity holds its sceptre over stunned witnesses! But it is the power of poetry. Everything that has to do with the affections of the soul belongs to poetry: take it away, and life is a disgusting sensibility.

Invisible, but absolute reviewers! Judges, in courts secluded and profound! To you is given the mission of introducing us to the world. With you lies the responsible prerogative of testing and proclaiming the merits or mistakes of our pretensions. I have been doomed to feel your lash, and I have also been rewarded with your favour. The remembrance of both has exercised, no doubt, some influence in regulating the thoughts herein presented. I may now add, not without regret, that this is probably the last time you will have an opportunity of pre-analyzing the compositions of

J. L. L.

*London, October 1875.*

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