

**LETTERS AND  
MISCELLANIES IN  
PROSE, RHYME,  
AND BLANK VERSE**

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Letters and miscellanies in prose, rhyme, and blank verse by Louise Elemjay

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**LOUISE ELEMJAY**

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LETTERS

AND

MISCELLANIES

IN

PROSE, RHYME, AND BLANK-VERSE.

*Miss. Co. to number*  
BY

LOUISE ELEMJAY,  
A LADY OF THE SOUTH.

*see P. 6*

A sigh, a smile, but folly's tidings obtain,  
These are our footprints on the sands of time.

CINCINNATI:  
MOORE, ANDERSON, WILSTACH & KEYS,  
28 WEST FOURTH STREET,  
1852.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA  
AT LOS ANGELES



## MONOLOGUE WITH THE PURCHASER.

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JUST please to lay down this book, Mr. Borrower, we don't commit black and white for you to read, and shouldn't be propitiated if you were to sit up the whole blessed night to sponge a perusal; so you see, friend Purchaser, that if we are "tedious as a king," we intend you to have the entire benefit of that uncommon idiosyncrasy.

"And you know it used to be the fashion for the poor, craven, fawning, toady of an author, to deprecate the wrath of the critics in a good set speech, anticipating and admitting their righteous verdict of denunciation, and then to smooth down the ruffled plumage of the minor literati, or reading public, with a plentiful libation of stale, fulsome commonplace, invariably winding up with a pathetic appeal for toleration, patronage, and sympathy. *Mi-rab-i-le!* Wouldn't we like to catch ourselves at anything of the kind in "*this* ENLIGHTENED AGE?" You have doubtless good sound sense and literary taste, or you wouldn't have bought our book; but as to the general enlightenment, we can't speak positively, till we see what reception it gives to these LETTERS and MISCELLANIES.

As for the critics, they may find it amusing to throw dust into other people's eyes, but we don't—gold dust more particularly; and as for making "the fine eyes" to sweeten their cream-o'-tartar visages, that's out of the question; cause why, it's much easier for some folks to make ugly faces "now-a-days," than pretty ones. And then, the supposition of their ever looking much beyond the title-page of one-half the books they undertake to praise or berate so unmercifully, is so refreshingly verdant, that it would be cruel to tantalize the locusts and caterpillars by any such pretension! So, you see, there is no help for it—they will e'en have to abuse us to their heart's content; though our own private opinion (publicly expressed) is, that they will feel far more fatigued than satisfied, when they have done; for we intend to go right off to an insurance office, and then if we are "killed with a criticism," it will be a matter for the stockholders to look into.

But, only think now, of saying GENTLE READER, to some snarling, vinegar-faced cynic—telling him your book is infinitely beneath the notice of his high mightiness—yet begging and beseeching that he will graciously please to read and condescend to praise it, nevertheless. "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!" Does the Public ever expect us to "sin our poor miserable soul" after that fashion? If it does, it needn't! And you wouldn't have us to *fib* so upon any account, would you? for, certes, you must know, we do think the book very



well worth your time and money too—otherwise we should feel very much like having swindled you out of that dollar, and that would be an uncomfortable sensation. Not but that you may be used to such operations, and also that there may be some better poetry, and even prose, extant; though ours is very good—the poetry we mean—to fill up the pages and diversify their appearance; so, on the whole, it is pretty confidently expected that you will find yourself exceedingly well entertained, for the time being, by these random gleanings from the past: Always *provided* you don't dash them down in a fury, the first time a wipe of the pen happens to come across any of your sectional, sectarian, or political prepossessions.

Don't do it, friend; in the first place, it's undignified, very, unless you happen to be a philosopher, in which case you can say, "*It's enough to provoke a saint,*" and then rave as much as you like; in the second, it won't alter the type, or the facts, or the author's opinion in the least; and then again, a woman being never very celebrated for knowing her own mind long at a time, it's just possible you may find *a recantation*, if you only keep on. That depends, though, on whether the subject comes up again of its own accord, for our readers being sensible, can not of course expect us to go out of the way merely to say, *We are a vast deal wiser now than we were twenty years ago*; for where is the use of being tossed up and down the world like Sancho Panza in his blanket, if there is nothing to be learned in the process?

But, whatever you do, don't worry yourself about identity or venue, for if ever you come to the conclusion that both are transparent as gossamer, the chances are, just then, very much in favor of your having mystified yourself most beautifully. Not that there's anything special to conceal, or that we haven't a perfect right to put ourselves in a pillory, unmasked, for your edification; but then we don't choose all our acquaintance to feel that their daguerreotypes have been stolen and hawked up and down the country; so, if you chance to belong to "that useful and ingenious class of citizens who prefer minding everybody's business beside their own," just thank your kind, and our "contrary-minded" stars, for having given you a peep into somebody's private correspondence, and some little insight into matters and things which don't concern you in the least.

"But, oh! my heart is sad, and my lips are mute,  
As I yield up to censure the dreams of my youth,  
Whose warblings brought  
Shadows of beauty to whisper with me,  
Love, hope, feeling, and fantasy,  
From the realms of thought!"

However, one's courage may be "screwed up to the sticking point," and you are just as welcome as your neighbor, so "take the goods the gods have provided, and be thankful!"

Yours, as you demean yourself,

THE AUTHOR, or, if you *insist*, THE WRITERESS.

Sharon, Mississippi, 1852.

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